

20 | OHIO  
24 | LEGISLATORS  
RETREAT

PROGRAM BOOK

# DAY 1. WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 2024

5:30 - 6:30 PM REGISTRATION & RECEPTION

FRANKLIN BALLROOM

6:30 - 8:00 PM DINNER AND DISCUSSION  
WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

- 🕒 **Dr. Javaid Siddiqi**, President and CEO, The Hunt Institute
- 🕒 **Paul Craft**, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Ohio State Board of Education

## INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO SCHOOL FUNDING

Both the amount of funding states invest in education and how they allocate those funds impacts the quality of the education students receive. Across the nation, states are seeking ways to innovate school funding in order to improve educational outcomes. In this session, national, and state resource experts will discuss how Ohio's current funding formula works and how the state might rethink education finance to better support the needs of students and families moving forward.

**MODERATOR**

**RESOURCE EXPERT**

- 🕒 **Dr. Tanisha Pruitt**, Youth, Opportunity and Education Researcher, Policy Matters Ohio
- 🕒 **Aaron Churchill**, Ohio Research Director, Thomas B. Fordham Institute
- 🕒 **Aaron Rausch**, Deputy Chief of Staff and Chief of Budget and School Funding, Ohio Department of Education and Workforce

# DAY 2. THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 2024

8:00 - 9:00 AM BREAKFAST

SCIOTO A

9:00 - 9:15 AM WELCOME

- 🕒 **Dr. Javaid Siddiqi**, President and CEO, The Hunt Institute

FRANKLIN BALLROOM

9:15 - 10:15 AM OHIO'S EARLY CHILDHOOD LANDSCAPE

As of 2021, 39 percent of Ohio's population lives in a child care desert. A family making the state's median income can expect to spend 58 percent of their earnings to cover the cost of child care. During this session, legislators will learn about Ohio's system of early childhood education, and the state of the early childhood workforce.

**MODERATOR**

**RESOURCE EXPERTS**

- 🕒 **Dr. Valora Washington**, CEO and President, CAYL Institute
- 🕒 **Lynanne Gutierrez**, President, Groundwork Ohio
- 🕒 **Eric Karolak**, CEO, Action for Children, Board Member, Ohio Childcare Resource & Referral Association

**X**

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**10:15 - 11:05 AM** : **INNOVATIVE COMPENSATION MODELS FOR EARLY LEARNING**

After years of federal guidance requiring states to conduct market rate surveys to set childcare subsidy rates, the shortcomings of this model have become increasingly evident and may be exacerbating the nation’s childcare crisis. Cost modeling is an alternate approach that may better reflect the actual costs of quality care, to include a living wage for childcare staff. This panel will share how states have used innovative approaches to develop more effective funding policy and stabilize the industry.

**MODERATOR**

**Sarah Eicher**, Cost Modeling Coach, Children’s Funding Project

**RESOURCE EXPERTS**

**Nancy Mendez**, President and CEO, Starting Point

**Kimberly Tice**, CAE, Co-Executive Director, Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children

**11:05 - 11:15 AM** : **BREAK**

**11:15 - 12:15 PM** : **SUPPORTING STUDENT WELLNESS AND ENGAGEMENT**

Many factors, such as school environment, workforce, and curricula, directly impact students’ sense of belonging. Evidence has shown that a student’s sense of belonging improves academic outcomes, increases continuing enrollment, and is protective for mental health. With a rise of student mental health needs and chronic absenteeism, new strategies are needed to support traditional public schools and student engagement. In this conversation, legislators will hear from experts across the state and nation to discuss how to best support Ohio’s students, including current challenges and opportunities for ensuring all Ohioans have access to a high quality, public education.

**MODERATOR**

**Kathleen Hallissey**, Senior Director, Responsive Grantmaking, Cleveland Foundation

**RESOURCE EXPERTS**

**Laura Hogue**, President-Elect, Board of Directors, Ohio School Counselor Association

**Dr. Rhodesia McMillian**, Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Studies, The Ohio State University

**12:15 - 1:35 PM** : **LUNCH**

**SCIOTO A**

**REMARKS**

**Steve Dackin**, Director, Ohio Department of Education and Workforce

**Kara B. Wentz**, Director, Ohio Department of Children and Youth



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1:35 - 2:35 PM

**PROFESSIONAL PERSPECTIVES | STATE OF THE TEACHER WORKFORCE**

SCIOTO A

As teacher shortages continue to be a challenge across the country, including in Ohio, Grow Your Own programs that recruit teachers from members of the community offer a promising solution, as well as the opportunity to increase equitable racial representation in the profession. In addition, evidence shows that teachers hired from within low-resourced communities tend to teach long-term in the communities that originally hired them. During this session, legislators engage with leaders from teachers and teacher preparation programs from across Ohio to explore efforts being leveraged to recruit and support a diverse teaching corps that reflects Ohio’s student body.

2:35 - 2:45 PM

**BREAK**

2:45 - 3:45 PM

**THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY EXPOSURE TO POSTSECONDARY AND CAREER PATHWAYS**

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Studies show that connecting students to career pathways prior to high school graduation is integral in ensuring those students to go on to find success in the workforce – especially first-generation students and students from marginalized communities. Conversations will focus on how state leaders can foster connections between institutions of higher education (IHEs), school districts, and regional business leaders and expand opportunities for early exposure to career-relevant pathways.

MODERATOR

**Dr. Michele Scott Taylor**, President, College Now Greater Cleveland

RESOURCE EXPERTS

**Carlos Bing**, State Director, College Access Programs, Ohio Department of Higher Education

**Dr. JaNice Marshall**, Vice President of Access and Community Connections, Cuyahoga Community College

3:45 - 4:45 PM

**ACHIEVING OHIO’S POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT GOAL**

In 2016, Ohio set a goal that 65 percent of its workforce population ages 25-64 will attain a postsecondary degree or credential of value by 2025. As of 2023, however, Ohio’s attainment rate is 51.2 percent. Moving forward, Ohio will need to significantly increase the number of people who enroll in programs and earn credentials beyond high school to meet this goal. This session will discuss important strategies for meeting the state’s attainment goal such as career and technical education, polytechnic education and institutions, as well as highlight the significance of community colleges and career academies. Experts will also discuss ways to support current postsecondary students in completing their programs and re-engage others who may have stopped-out of their education along the way.

MODERATOR

**Kermit Kaleba**, Strategy Director, Lumina Foundation

RESOURCE EXPERTS

**Laura Conley**, Director, Adult Focus, University of Akron

**Calista Smith**, President, Scale Strategic Solutions

4:45 - 5:00 PM

**CLOSING REMARKS**

# SPECIAL GUESTS



### Paul Craft

*Superintendent of Public Instruction, Ohio State Board of Education*

Superintendent Paul Craft began his service with the State Board of Education in January 2024 and has served both his local school community and the U.S. Military for over 30 years. With experience in education and a distinguished military career, Craft has served in various roles including physics teacher, coach, and superintendent, in addition to retiring at the rank of Colonel. Mr. Craft received his Bachelor’s Degree in Secondary Education and Teaching from the University of Montana, his Master’s degree in Educational Leadership from The Ohio State University, and a Master’s in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.



### Steve Dackin

*Director, Ohio Department of Education and Workforce*

With more than 40 years working in multiple educational settings, Stephen Dackin has amassed extensive experience in state education policy, instructional leadership, postsecondary education, and workforce readiness. Director Dackin’s career has been guided by a personal focus to work in service to children and families. Prior to being appointed as director of the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce by Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, Director Dackin served in roles ranging from a classroom educator, school and district leader, and at the former Ohio Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and in higher education. He continues to elevate the role partnerships play in achieving statewide goals, and is a member of several education, community, and workforce boards. Education is part of the fabric of the Dackin family. Director Dackin’s wife, Susan, is a retired educator and they are the proud parents of two daughters, one of whom is an educator and the other an attorney, both in Central Ohio.

X @OHEducation



### Kara Wentz

*Director, Ohio Department of Education and Workforce*

Kara Wentz has spent her career advocating for children. In August, 2023, Governor Mike DeWine nominated her to be the director of the Department of Children and Youth. She has served as the Director of the Governor’s Children’s Initiative since January 2023, and was previously the Chief Operating Officer for Future Ready Columbus. With more than 20 years in dedicated state service, Wentz has extensive experience in serving the most vulnerable children and families in Ohio. She used data as an accountability tool for systemic change during her time as the Assistant Director of Health and Human Services at the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services and led several large-scale system and policy changes as Deputy Director at the Office of Family Assistance. Wentz holds a Master’s in Education and Allied Professions from the University of Dayton and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from The Ohio State University.

X @OhioDCY



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## CO-CHAIRS



### The Honorable Andrew Brenner

*District 19, Senate 2018-Current, Cohort 9*

Senator Andrew Brenner is currently serving in his first term in the Ohio Senate. He previously served four terms in the Ohio House of Representatives from 2011-2018 and as Delaware County Recorder from 2005-2010. Upon graduating from The Ohio State University in 1993, where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration, majoring in marketing and economics, Brenner spent 11 years as an entrepreneur in the real estate and mortgage fields. He also recently earned a Master of Education in Teaching and Learning with an emphasis in leadership from Liberty University.



### The Honorable Catherine Ingram

*District 9, Senate, House of Representatives, 2019-2022 Senate, 2023-Current*

Senator Ingram currently represents Ohio's 9th Senate District. Prior to her time in the Senate, Ingram served three terms in the Ohio House representing the 32nd House District. Senator Ingram has been a member of the Cincinnati Board of Education for over 20 years, serving as president and vice president in the mid-90s. Senator Ingram has served on numerous board committees and, for many years, in a leadership role as Finance Committee chair in the Ohio House. Ingram currently serves as the Ranking Member on the Senate Primary and Secondary Education, Workforce and Higher Education, and Medicaid Committees. She also serves on the Senate Health and Insurance Committees. Senator Ingram represents the 9th Senate District, which encompasses parts of Hamilton County, including Cincinnati, Elmwood Place, Norwood, Springfield Township, St. Bernard, Amberly, Arlington Heights, Columbia Township (part), Fairfax, Golf Manor, Lincoln Heights, Lockland, Mariemont, Silverton, Sycamore Township (part), Woodlawn and Wyoming.



### The Honorable Adam Bird

*District 63, House of Representatives, 2021-Current, Cohort 10*

State Representative Adam Bird is currently serving his second term as State Representative for the 63rd Ohio house district, which includes northeastern and southeastern portions of Clermont County and the western portion of Brown County. Representative Bird is an advocate for Ohio's schools and students. He has spent the past three decades working as a leader in public education as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, and superintendent at Western Brown Senior High School, Batavia Middle School and New Richmond Exempted Village School District in Brown and Clermont County.



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**The Honorable Gayle Manning**

*District 52, House of Representatives, Senate 2011-2018, House of Representatives, 2019-Current*

State Representative Gayle Manning is currently serving her third term in the Ohio House of Representatives, after serving two four-year terms in the Ohio Senate where she was elected to the leadership team as majority whip. Prior to her time in the House and Senate, Manning spent 37 years as an elementary school teacher. Representative Manning also served as a member of the North Ridgeville Planning Commission and on the North Ridgeville City Council from 2006- 2007, where she was appointed finance chairwoman and Council president pro tempore. She received her bachelor's degree from Kent State University and her master's degree from The University of Akron.



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# RESOURCE EXPERTS



X @OhioHigherEd

### Carlos Bing

*State Director, College Access Programs, Ohio Department of Higher Education*

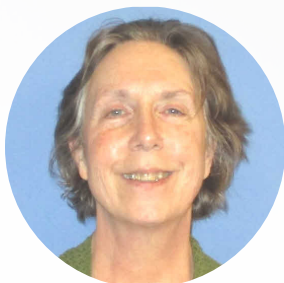
Carlos Bing serves as the Senior Director of College Access Programs and GEAR UP Ohio for the Ohio Department of Higher Education and has 20+ years of experience implementing initiatives for the state of Ohio with the goal of improving college access, retention, graduation, and career awareness for all citizens. As Senior Director, Bing oversees the GEAR UP Ohio program, administers the GEAR UP Scholarship program, leads the FAFSA Completion team, and coordinates the Ohio Access & Success Network. Having served on the GEAR UP team since 2008, Bing has had the opportunity to build the GEAR UP program while also amplifying the importance of college access work across the state. Bing serves as the Ohio program coordinator for the American College Application Campaign where the 3 To Get Ready, 4 To Go!!! Campaign launched. Bing brings together college access stakeholders from across the state with the goal of increasing access to all citizens who wish to pursue a post-secondary educational pathway. Bing is a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor and is a doctoral student at Franklin University in the Education in Organizational Leadership program.



### Aaron Churchill

*Ohio Research Director, Thomas B. Fordham Institute*

Aaron Churchill is the Ohio research director for the Thomas B. Fordham Institute. In this role, Aaron oversees research and commentary aimed at strengthening education policy in Ohio. He writes regularly on Fordham’s blog, the Ohio Gadfly Daily on topics such as state assessment and school accountability, school funding, and educational choice. He has also regularly contributed op-eds that appear in the Ohio media. Aaron earned degrees from the University of Maryland, Wheaton College (IL), and Carnegie Mellon University.



X @uakron

### Laura Conley

*Director, Adult Focus, University of Akron*

Laura Conley has more than thirty-five years of experience working with adult and veteran populations in higher education and federal and state funded agencies. Conley has worked as an occupational specialist, advocate, academic advisor, and since 2007, as director of Adult Focus, an academic support unit for nontraditional students at The University of Akron. In addition, Conley represents The University of Akron as outreach and coordinator for the Ohio Campus Comeback Compact, a program aimed at returning students with past due balances to The University of Akron and other participating institutions. As director of The University of Akron’s Adult Focus, her emphasis is twofold; increase enrollment and retention of non-traditional and veteran students by building internal support services and programming, which includes administration of more than \$145,000 in scholarship monies each year specifically aimed at nontraditional students. Conley also initiated and built collaborative relationships with local community agencies and organizations to encourage educational opportunities and pathways for first generation nontraditional students.



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X @FundOurKids

**Sarah Eicher**

*Cost Modeling Coach, Children's Funding Project*

Sarah Eicher serves as the cost modeling coach at Children's Funding Project, a nonprofit social impact organization that helps communities, states, and Native nations expand equitable opportunities for children and youth through strategic public financing. In her role, she partners with communities and states to develop cost models that clarify the resources needed to achieve the goals and desired impacts for children and youth with quality and at scale. Prior to joining Children's Funding Project, Sarah worked for The Forum for Youth Investment's Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality, where she supported youth development professionals to build capacity for continuous quality improvement and advanced policy strategies to support the out-of-school time field. She holds a master's degree in social work from the University of Michigan.



X @GroundworkOhio

**Lynanne Gutierrez**

*President, Groundwork Ohio*

Lynanne Gutierrez leads Groundwork Ohio's statewide mission, spearheading a powerful early childhood movement. A dedicated child advocate, Lynanne oversees the development of Groundwork's policy agenda and shapes strategies through effective communication, advocacy, research, and data analysis. She orchestrates key initiatives, fosters state and national partnerships, and manages the overall operations and development of the organization. A pivotal figure in Groundwork's strategic growth over the past seven years, Lynanne played a crucial role in expanding the organization's Statehouse footprint, relationships, and reputation across the state. Recognized as a respected early childhood expert in Ohio and nationwide, Lynanne was appointed by Governor DeWine to the state's Early Childhood Advisory Council, serving since 2019. Lynanne's experience includes prior roles in advocacy and private law practice focused on children. Before becoming an attorney, she served as a Senior Legislative Aide in the Ohio Senate. An alumna of The Ohio State University and Capital Law School, Lynanne is also a 2023 graduate of the prestigious Leadership Ohio program.



X @CleveFoundation

**Kathleen Hallissey**

*Senior Director, Responsive Grantmaking, Cleveland Foundation*

Kathleen Hallissey has been an integral part of The Cleveland Foundation since 2005, joining as a program officer with a focus on education, health, human services, and nonprofit capacity building in Greater Cleveland. Over the years, she has ascended to the role of Senior Director of Community Responsive Grantmaking, leading a team of program officers to tailor grantmaking strategies to community needs and the foundation's priorities. Prior to the foundation, Kathy was a management consultant within the Head Start community, specializing in diverse projects around grantee monitoring systems, data analysis, and training material development. Her experience extends to program analyst with the Department of Health & Human Services in Washington, DC, where she focused on policies impacting children, youth, and families, particularly within the Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Kathy's career began as a Presidential Management Fellow, where she honed her skills in legislative affairs, planning, evaluation, and program implementation in the federal government. She holds a Master of Public Administration from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts from Drew University.



X @CentralState87

**Laura Hogue**

*President-Elect, Board of Directors, Ohio School Counselor Association*

Laura Hogue has a Masters degree in School Counseling from Kent State University. She has been a School Counselor for 13 years, at Heskett Middle School in the Bedford City School District. At Heskett, she is the advisor of Student Council and the BIONIC team (Believe it or not I care) kindness club. In 2022, she was named Heskett’s Teacher of the Year and the District SEL Team member of the year. Laura is the President Elect of the Ohio School Counselor Association. Previously she has served as the Middle School Level Representative, Advocacy and Outreach Committee Chair, and Secretary for OSCA. She has presented and spoke on School Counseling topics at the local, state, and national level.



X @bgsu

**Tracy Huziak-Clark**

*Assistant Dean of Educator Preparation and Partnerships, Bowling Green State University*

Dr. Huziak-Clark is a Professor and Director of the School of Inclusive Teacher Education at Bowling Green State University. As a former science teacher, science teacher educator and researcher, she brings her passion for the education profession to all of her work. Her research agenda has focused on improving teacher content knowledge and pedagogy to improve student learning. Specifically, her focus has been in increasing content knowledge in physical science at the elementary and high school levels. Through this research lens, Dr. Huziak-Clark has obtained more than 10 million dollars in external funding for professional development of practicing science teachers, as well as deep partnerships with K-12 schools. Dr. Huziak-Clark served as a member of the Education Standards Board, is currently a Board Member of the Ohio Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (OACTE) and a regular participant in the State University Deans of Education (SUED). Through the work of these state committees, Dr. Huziak-Clark has focused on diversifying the teacher pipeline and preparing quality future educators.



X @KermitKaleba1

**Kermit Kaleba**

*Strategy Director, Lumina Foundation*

Kermit Kaleba is the strategy director of employment-aligned credential programs for Lumina Foundation, an independent, private foundation in Indianapolis that is committed to making opportunities for learning beyond high school available to all. Kaleba leads a portfolio designed to increase the number of occupational short-term credential and AA degree programs. Kaleba previously served as managing director for policy at National Skills Coalition. He also served as executive director of the Washington D.C. Workforce Investment Council. Kermit has J.D. and bachelor’s degrees from the College of William and Mary.



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X @Act4Kidz

**Eric Karolak**

*CEO, Action for Children; Board Member, Ohio Childcare Resource & Referral Association*

Eric Karolak leads Action for Children, the child care resource and referral agency for central Ohio, which provides training, coaching, and technical assistance to 9,000 early childhood practitioners and parents, and impacts more than 50,000 children across 10 counties in central Ohio. Previously, he was the founding director of the Early Care and Education Consortium, a national alliance of more than 8,000 early learning programs enrolling nearly 1 million children across the U.S., and also led the National Child Care Information Center, then the largest federal clearinghouse and technical assistance center focused on child care and early education. Dr. Karolak has worked closely with states developing the technical aspects of child care assistance programs, quality rating systems, and partnerships across early childhood programs. He has conducted policy research and fiscal analysis in the areas of child care, women’s labor force participation, child welfare, and public housing. Dr. Karolak has testified before both houses of Congress as an expert witness called by both political parties. He also has served on boards and advisory panels at national, state, and local levels, currently including the board of the Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association.



X @TriCedu

**Dr. JaNice Marshall**

*Vice President of Access and Community Connections, Cuyahoga Community College*

Dr. JaNice Marshall is a transformative leader and strategic trailblazer with expertise in the intersection of innovation and service design, specific to P-20, career-technical education, workforce development and training, fundraising/development establishments, and community development and engagement. She is committed to increasing access to high-quality academic and workforce programming, and student success and completion for more residents. This is proven by evidenced outcomes in her current role as the College-wide Vice President for Access & Community Connections at Cuyahoga Community College. She is a thought leader amongst college presidents, K-12 superintendents, national philanthropic organizations, and business associations, and has worked with governmental officials in the creation and implementation of disruptive and transformative strategies. Her work has impacted the national, regional, and local boards and organizations. She currently serves on the boards, councils, and alliances of Milestones Autism, CSMLearn national advisory board, Cleveland Boys and Girls Club, and Regional Northeast Ohio Boys and Girls Club, where she leads the Education Coalition, National Alliance of Community and Technical College



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X @CentralState87

**Dr. Rhodesia McMillian**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Studies, Ohio State University*

Rhodesia McMillian, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Education Policy at The Ohio State University. Dr. McMillian is an interdisciplinary scholar whose research bridges K-12 education reform law, education policy, elementary and secondary educational governance, special education law, and sociology. Rhodesia McMillian received her Ph.D. from the University of Missouri-Columbia after consecutive careers as an autism teacher and a school psychologist. Dr. McMillian has over a decade of experience working in elementary and secondary schools as a school psychologist and an Autism Teacher. Dr. McMillian is the recipient of a Spencer Foundation equity grant that examines constitutional provisions for public education titled A Constitutional Right to Education: A Multi-case Analysis of K-12 Educational Jurisprudence Among the United States Circuit Courts. Dr. McMillian is also the co-principal investigator of a U.S. Department of Education grant of \$5.2 million, a five-year grant focusing on increasing school psychological services for pre-kindergarten to 8th-grade students. As an active member of the Education Law Association (ELA), University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), and the American Educational Administration (AERA), Dr. McMillian regularly contributes to the field through presentations at their annual conferences.



X @Dr\_TSPruitt

**Dr. Tanisha Pruitt**

*Youth, Opportunity and Education Researcher, Policy Matter Ohio*

Dr. Tanisha Pruitt, Ph.D. is currently the Youth, Opportunity, and Education researcher with Policy Matters Ohio focused on K-12, Higher Education, and juvenile justice. Dr. Pruitt received her doctorate degree in Public Policy and Urban Affairs with a concentration in International Development from Southern University and A & M College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Tanisha received her bachelor's degree from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, in Sociology with a minor in Child and family relationships. In 2015, Tanisha received her master's in Applied Behavioral Science from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. Dr. Pruitt is also currently a 2023-2024 Fellow with the Educational Policy Leadership Fellows program through the Center for Educational Leadership at Cleveland State University. Tanisha serves the Board of Directors for New Leaders Council Columbus Chapter, the Board of the Miami University Alumni Columbus chapter. Dr. Pruitt has an extensive research portfolio from journal publications to research reports. She is dedicated to ensuring that all people regardless of what they look like or where they live both nationally and in Ohio have the tools and resources they need to thrive.



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X @OHEducation

**Aaron Rausch**

*Deputy Chief of Staff and Chief of Budget and School Funding, Ohio Department of Education and Workforce*

Aaron Rausch is the Deputy Chief of Staff and Chief of Budget and School Funding at the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW), where he oversees operations, manages an agency budget of more than \$17 billion, and administers the state’s school funding program. In 2019, he received the Dick Maxwell School Finance Award from the Buckeye Association of School Administrators. Prior to joining the Department in 2014, he worked for the Ohio Office of Budget and Management as a budget analyst in the education section. Aaron got his start in state government as a performance auditor, focusing on school district performance audits at the Ohio Auditor of State’s Office. Active in his community, he serves as an advisory board member on the Columbus and Central Ohio Children’s Chorus Foundation, sings with the Choral Union at Capital University, and rides in Pelotonia every year to raise funds for cancer research at the Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center.



X @Scale\_Strategic

**Calista Smith**

*President, Scale Strategic Solutions*

In 2011, Calista H. Smith began Scale Strategic Solutions to transform information into action with expertise and love. Smith leads the organization in continuous improvement projects in education, public health, and social services. As president of Scale Strategic Solutions, Calista has served as project manager and lead consultant on implementation projects and program evaluations. Education clients have included the Institute of Higher Education Policy, Ohio Department of Higher Education, Ohio Excels, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, and Westat. Smith served as a project manager for the effort to set Ohio’s postsecondary attainment goal. She recently led the research on Promoting High Value Education Beyond High School in Ohio sponsored by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. She has also coached or facilitated postsecondary institutions in organizational change nationally from Massachusetts to California. Her commitment to the public sector stretches beyond education. Smith and her team support program evaluation work for Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services, Ohio Partners for Cancer Control, and regional councils of the Ohio Children’s Trust Fund. Recently, she led the firm in expanding its eLearning o



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X @CollegeNowGC

**Dr. Michelle Scott Taylor**

*President, College Now Greater Cleveland*

Dr. Michele Scott Taylor is the President at College Now Greater Cleveland where she leads programmatic efforts, and provides oversight of organizations strategic approach. Her research and practice ensure that College Now’s programming reflects “best in class” thinking and is on the cutting-edge of research in the college access and success field. She also teaches at the undergraduate and graduate levels at local universities. Formerly a senior research analyst for Cosmos Corporation, she conducted applied research, policy analysis, and evaluations for federally funded projects typically funded by the Department of Education, National Science Foundation, and the Department of Justice. She earned a Master of Education degree from Kent State University specializing in college student personnel as well as a Doctor of Education degree from the University of Pittsburgh with a concentration in higher education administrative and policy studies. In the community, Michele takes pride in serving as the board President of the Black Professionals Association Charitable Foundation, the Vice-President of the Cuyahoga County Arts & Culture board, as well as serving as a member of the Euclid Schools Foundation board.



X @OhioAEYC\_ECE

**Kimberly Tice**

*CAE, Co-Executive Director, Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children*

Kimberly Tice is a respected figure in early childhood education, boasting over four decades of diverse experience across multiple sectors. Her roles as a family child care provider, child care teacher, program director, and executive leader have provided her with a deep understanding of the industry’s intricacies, spanning for-profit, non-profit, Early Head Start/ Head Start, faith-based, and public sectors. In 2017, Kimberly recognized the pressing need for effective leadership in the early childhood field and founded the National Early Childhood Leadership Center. Through this initiative, she has played a pivotal role in offering state-of-the-art leadership development, coaching, and consulting services, empowering professionals, and catalyzing transformative practices in the early childhood arena. Currently serving as Co-Executive Director for the Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children (Ohio AEYC), Kimberly is at the forefront of shaping Ohio’s early childhood care and education landscape. With Ohio AEYC’s inclusive representation across all sectors and roles within the child care system, Kimberly and her team provide a comprehensive and unbiased perspective, positioning Ohio AEYC as a trusted authority in navigating the complexities of early childhood care and education. Together, they remain steadfast in their commitment to ensuring every child receives the highest quality of care and education, facilitated by knowledgeable and professionally compensated early childhood educators, during their most formative years.



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X @caylinstitute

**Dr. Valora Washington**

*CEO and President, CAYL Institute*

Dr. Valora Washington is an internationally recognized authority in early childhood education. She is known for conceptualizing, leading, and executing significant change initiatives impacting policy, programs, and practice in higher education, philanthropy, and national nonprofits as well as in local, state, and federal government programs. Dr. Washington is considered a pioneer in early education, having been named as a Legacy Leader by the Center for Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO), for having shaped the early childhood education field, having a unique perspective on the history and context of today’s policy initiatives, and for developing strategies to address the issues that impact child outcomes. Certified as an Association Executive and as a Credentialing Specialist, Dr. Washington co-founded Voices for Michigan’s Children, the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, and The CAYL Institute (a leadership development program for practitioners). She has held leadership roles with the Massachusetts Governor’s School Readiness Commission; Voices for America’s Children; NAEYC; Black Caucus of the Society for Research in Child Development; National Head Start Association Commission on 2010; Boston Children’s Museum; and Wheelock College. Dr. Washington has authored over 50 publications including Children of 2010 and Children of 2020. In addition to a Ph.D. in Child Development/Education from Indiana University at Bloomington, Dr. Washington holds four honorary degrees and professional recognition from numerous organizations including the Barr Fellowship; Leadership Greater Washington; Boston AEYC; NAEYC Black Caucus; Cambridge Resource and Referral; Center for Adoption Research; National Association of Black Social Workers; United Way of Massachusetts Bay; and numerous others.



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# THE HUNT INSTITUTE LEADERSHIP & STAFF



### The Honorable Arne Duncan

*U.S. Secretary of Education, 2009-2016 | Chair, Board of Directors*

After serving as a cabinet member under President Barack Obama, Arne Duncan returned home to Chicago in 2016, committed to trying to dramatically reduce the amount of gun violence in our city and allow children on the South and West sides to grow up free of fear and trauma.

[View full bio on our website](#) ➔



### The Honorable Susana Martinez

*Governor of New Mexico, 2011-2018 | Vice Chair, Board of Directors*

In 2010, Susana Martinez was elected governor of the State of New Mexico. She became New Mexico's first female governor and the first Hispanic female governor in the history of the United States. Prior to being elected governor, Martinez was a prosecutor for 25 years along the nation's southern border and served as Doña Ana County's elected district attorney for over half that time. As governor, she prioritized keeping New Mexico's communities safe, ensuring all students receive a high-quality education, and diversifying and growing the state's economy.

[View full bio on our website](#) ➔



### Javaid E. Siddiqi, Ph.D.

*President & CEO*

Former Virginia Secretary of Education Dr. Javaid Siddiqi is the President and CEO of The Hunt Institute. During his tenure The Institute has more than tripled its staff and has expanded its scope of work beyond K-12 to include the entire education continuum from early childhood to postsecondary and the workforce. Javaid works with the leadership team to guide the strategic plan for The Institute and develops The Institute's relationships with partners and funders across the nation. He works with senior-level elected officials across the political aisle to help design strategy, shape policy, and drive educational improvements on the national and state levels.

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Established in 2001, [The Hunt Institute](#) honors the legacy of James B. Hunt, Jr., the former governor of North Carolina who distinguished himself as an ardent champion of education.

The Hunt Institute brings together people and resources to inspire and inform elected officials and policymakers about key issues in education, resulting in visionary leaders who are prepared to take strategic action for greater educational outcomes and student success.

In 2016, The Hunt Institute became an independent, nonprofit entity and joined forces with Duke University's Sanford School of Public Policy to pursue research, educational partnerships, and events related to improving education policy.

*Learn more at [www.hunt-institute.org](http://www.hunt-institute.org).*



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