



States of Change The Arts Leading the Way for Student Success

Speaker Bios

Mary-Dean Barringer, Interim Strategic Initiative Director, Council of Chief State School Officers



Mary-Dean Barringer has had a thirty plus career in education distinguished as a nationally recognized special education teacher, expert on a variety of teacher quality and reform issues and a leader in the emerging field of neurodevelopment and learning variation.

Mary-Dean currently serves as the director of the Council of Chief State School Officers' (CCSSO) portfolio of initiatives supporting the transformation of educator preparation. The major initiative is the Network for Transforming Educator Preparation (NTEP), supporting the work of 7 states and 21 national partners in their efforts to implement policy recommendations to create performance based systems of educator preparation designed to support continuous instructional improvement. Prior to joining CCSSO in December 2011, she was the Chief Executive Officer of All Kinds of Minds Institute in North Carolina. She is the author of *Schools for All Kinds of Minds* published in 2010 by Jossey-Bass.

David Dik, National Executive Director, Young Audiences Arts for Learning



David was appointed the National Executive Director of Young Audiences Arts for Learning in July 2010. Prior to this position, he served as the Managing Director of the Metropolitan Opera Guild.

David serves on the Leadership Team of the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, the Advisory Committee of the Arts Education Partnership (AEP), and the Harvard Graduate School of Education Arts in Education Advisory Council.

David has a BM in Music Education from the Crane School of Music, Potsdam, NY; a MM in Choral Conducting from Westminster Choir College, Princeton, NJ; and a post-graduate degree in School Administration from the City University of New York.

Rachel Goslins, Executive Director, President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities



Rachel was appointed by President Obama to manage the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities in 2009. The President's Committee is a high-profile federal organization tasked with elevating the role of the arts and humanities across the country and advising the White House on cultural policy.

Under her management, the Committee has facilitated significant private investments in the arts and humanities, expanded two of its signature programs in education and cultural diplomacy, and launched three new national initiatives, including the National Student Poets Program and Turnaround Arts, the first federally-led public/private partnership to bring arts education to a group of the country's lowest-performing elementary schools.

Prior to her appointment, Rachel founded a documentary production company, directing two independent feature documentaries and working on productions for PBS, the Discovery Channel, the National Geographic Channel, and History. She also served as the Director of the Independent Digital Distribution Lab, a joint PBS/ITVS project. Before working in the arts, Rachel was an international copyright attorney with Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher and the U.S. Copyright Office. Rachel received her B.A. in English Literature and her J.D. from UCLA's School of Law. She is a member of the 2012 Class of Henry Crown Fellows at the Aspen Institute.

Sunil Iyengar, Research & Analysis Director, National Endowment for the Arts



Sunil Iyengar directs the Office of Research & Analysis at the National Endowment for the Arts. Since his arrival at the NEA in June 2006, the office has produced over 25 research publications, hosted several research events and webinars, twice updated the NEA's five-year strategic plan, and overseen a new and expanded survey about arts participation. In that time, the office also has created an arts system map and long-term research agenda, and has launched a research grants program.

Sunil also chairs the Interagency Task Force on the Arts and Human Development. Some of the NEA's most recent research includes *Valuing the Art of Industrial Design* (2013), *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth* (2012), *An Average Day in the Arts* (2012), and *The Arts and Human Development* (2011). Sunil and his team have partnered with organizations such as the Brookings Institution, the National Academy of Sciences, and the National Institutes to Health to study the arts in relation to such topics as economic development and the health and well-being of older adults.

For a decade, Iyengar worked as a reporter, managing editor, and senior editor for a host of news publications covering the biomedical research, medical device, and pharmaceutical industries. He writes poetry, and his book reviews have appeared in publications such as the *Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *The American Scholar*, *The New Criterion*, *Essays in Criticism*, and *Contemporary Poetry Review*. Iyengar has a B.A. in English from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

Christopher Koch, Superintendent of Education, Illinois State Board of Education



Dr. Christopher A. Koch was appointed by the State Board of Education to serve as Illinois State Superintendent of Education effective December 1, 2006. Dr. Koch has been with the Illinois State Board of Education since 1994, serving in a variety of administrative capacities, including Director of Special Education and the state's Chief Education Officer.

As State Superintendent, Dr. Koch has led efforts to bring coherence between state standards, curriculum, assessments and college entry requirements in Illinois through state membership in the American Diploma Project and the 21st

Century Skills initiative.

Dr. Koch has experience as a special educator having taught in four states in various settings including an Outward Bound program, a college preparatory school, a youth detention center, and a psychiatric hospital. He served at the federal level with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education where he administered programs in correctional education and School-to-Work transition.

Dr. Koch is an Illinois native, graduating from Brown County High School in Mt. Sterling, Illinois, and from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. He obtained his master's and doctoral degrees in Educational Policy and Leadership from George Washington University in Washington, DC.

Joe Landon, Executive Director, California Alliance for Arts Education



Joe Landon is the Executive Director of the California Alliance for Arts Education, a nonprofit organization that advances visual and performing arts education in K-12 public schools. Prior to joining the Alliance staff in 2006 as its Policy Director, Joe worked in the State Capitol as a principal consultant and speechwriter.

The bulk of Landon's professional career was spent as a practicing artist. Joe was a Playwright in Residence at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, and his plays and musicals were produced there as well as at the Manhattan Theater Club in New York and the Z Space in San Francisco. He also spent 15 years writing for television in Los Angeles, with credits that include the movie "The Comeback Kid" and the series "The Paper Chase."

He lives in Davis with his wife Laura, and the comings and goings of three fully grown children.

Lillian Lowery, Superintendent of Schools, Maryland Department of Education



Dr. Lillian M. Lowery became Maryland State Superintendent of Schools and Secretary-Treasurer of the State Board on July 1, 2012. Dr. Lowery's focus has been on raising achievement for all students, closing the achievement gap, preparing graduates for college and career, and supporting educator effectiveness. She has paid particular attention to strengthening Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education. She moved to Maryland from Delaware, where she served as Secretary of Education.

Dr. Lowery has worked in various education institutions and programs since 1976. She served for three years as the Superintendent of the Christina School District in New Castle County, DE, served as an Assistant Superintendent in Fairfax County, VA, and as an Area Superintendent in Fort Wayne, IN. She held other administrative positions, and began her career as an English teacher at the middle and high school levels in Virginia.

A graduate in English and Secondary Education at North Carolina Central University, Dr. Lowery received her Master's of Education in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of North Carolina, and her Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from Virginia Polytechnic and State University.

Robert Lynch, President and CEO, Americans for the Arts



Robert L. Lynch is president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. With more than 40 years of experience in the arts industry, he is motivated by his personal mission to empower communities and leaders to advance the arts in society, and in the lives of citizens.

In 1996, Lynch managed the successful merger of the National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies, where he had spent 12 years as executive director, with the American Council for the Arts to form Americans for the Arts. Under his direction, Americans for the Arts has become a leader in documenting and articulating the key role played by the nonprofit arts and culture industry, and their audiences, in strengthening our nation's economy.

Lynch earned a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and plays the piano, mandolin, and guitar. He lives in Washington, DC.

Chris Minnich, Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers



Chris Minnich assumed his role as Executive Director of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in December, 2012. Chris has worked at CCSSO since 2008, when he was hired to direct the Council's standards program—the work that would later become the Common Core State Standards (Common Core). In 2009 he assumed the role of Strategic Initiative Director of Standards, Assessment and Accountability, where he led the development and adoption of the Common Core in 45 states. In 2010, Minnich became the Senior Membership Director, where he served as the lead contact for all 57 of CCSSO's members. In the last two years, Minnich has led the Council's advocacy and communications teams in rallying states to collaboratively reform their standards and accountability systems. His efforts have been invaluable in advancing the national implementation of the Common Core, and cultivating essential cooperation between states and the federal

government to improve education for all students.

Minnich holds a Bachelor of Science in Political Science from the University of Washington, Seattle, as well as a Masters of Public Policy from the University of Maryland, College Park. Minnich lives in Alexandria, VA with his wife Whitney and his son Carson.

Alex Nock, Principal, Penn Hill Group



Alex Nock brings more than 20 years of experience in federal education, disability, labor, and health policy to Penn Hill Group. During his time in Washington, DC, Nock has been a part of every major piece of federal education and disability policy legislation.

Prior to his position with Penn Hill Group, Nock served as the Democratic deputy staff director for the U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor. From 2007–2010, Nock oversaw all aspects of the committee's work on elementary and secondary education, higher education, disability policy, early childhood education, health care, retirement security, workplace safety, mine safety, workforce training, and national service.

Nock has led numerous reauthorizations while working on Capitol Hill, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Workforce Investment Act, the Higher Education Act, and the Head Start Act. He was one of the lead staff members responsible for the No Child Left Behind Act.

Nock previously served as the director of the Commission on No Child Left Behind, a bipartisan, independent effort to improve the No Child Left Behind Act. Prior to the commission, Nock developed education and social policy on Capitol Hill.

Heather Noonan, Vice President for Advocacy, League of American Orchestras



Heather Noonan is the Vice President for Advocacy for the League of American Orchestras. The League leads, supports, and champions America's orchestras and the vitality of the music they perform and delivers meaningful information, learning and leadership opportunities, grass-roots advocacy and other services to its diverse membership, which encompasses more than 800 member symphony, chamber, youth, and collegiate orchestras of all sizes.

From the League's Washington, D.C. office, Ms. Noonan represents orchestras before Congress, the White House, and federal agencies. Her legislative portfolio includes federal policies related to the National Endowment for the Arts, education, immigration, cultural exchange, and nonprofit tax issues. Ms. Noonan serves on the national advisory committee of the Arts Education Partnership and co-convenes the national Arts Education Policy Working Group, a coalition of more than a dozen national arts and education organizations dedicated to advancing federal funding and policy in support of more equitable access to arts learning. She has participated in the drafting teams for *No Subject Left Behind: A Guide to Arts Education Opportunities in the 2001 NCLB Act*, *Arts Education: Creating Student Success in School, Work and Life*, and the *Arts Access in U.S. Schools (2009-10)* toolkit. She has served on the U.S. Department of Education's steering committees for the America Goes Back to School project and Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, as news editor for the *Teaching Artist Journal*, and on the board of directors of the American Youth Philharmonic Orchestras and the OMG Center for Collaborative Learning.

Scott Shanklin-Peterson, Senior Fellow, College of Charleston



Scott Shanklin-Peterson's professional career reflects a commitment to the development of the arts, arts education, and building public/private arts partnerships to help address the concerns of America's communities.

As Deputy Chairman and Sr. Deputy Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), Scott helped both Chairman Jane Alexander and Chairman Bill Ivey develop national initiatives including the national Arts Education Partnership and the Challenge America grants program. Scott also served as the Executive Director of the South Carolina Arts Commission developing arts and education policies, partnerships, and programs, including the Arts in Basic Curriculum (ABC) Project.

Scott returned to South Carolina in 2002 as the Sr. Fellow and Director of the Arts Management Program in the School of the Arts at the College of Charleston. Also In cooperation with the Charleston County School District and Gigi Antoni, CEO of "Big Thought – Dallas," Scott helped lead the establishment of "Engaging Creative Minds," a tri-county public-private education partnership designed to help students achieve academically, stay engaged in learning, and

stimulate creativity and innovation through access to quality creative learning opportunities and more engaging arts infused curriculum and instruction. She now serves as its Chairman.

Terry Peterson, Senior Fellow, College of Charleston



Terry K. Peterson, PhD, has worked on successful education improvements from the school house to various state houses and to the White House. He develops innovative strategies and partnerships for education reforms and expanded learning opportunities across America and in developing countries.

Terry has helped initiate numerous nationwide education policies positively affecting millions of students. At the state level, he has developed funding proposals for early childhood education; teacher recruitment; performance pay; school innovation funds; accountability systems; and the arts in the basic curriculum.

Terry serves on ten national, state, and local education organizations including chairing the national Afterschool Alliance.

He is the editor of the 2013 landmark compendium, *Expanding Minds and Opportunities: Leveraging the Power of Afterschool and Summers for Student Success*. He is a Senior Fellow at the College of Charleston and at the Riley Education Institute and a consultant to the CS Mott Foundation.

Jane Polin, Philanthropic Advisor



Jane Polin brings innovative leadership experience within the nonprofit and private sectors, creating initiatives such as *Transforming Arts Teaching: The Role of Higher Education* (2007) and *Acts of Achievement: The Role of Performing Arts Centers in Education* (2003) for The Dana Foundation, and the *National Fund for Workforce Solutions* (2007) with Jobs for the Future. During her GE years, she produced *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning* (1999) and *Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons from School Districts That Value Arts Education* (1999).

She earned her B.A. (music) from Wesleyan University and M.B.A. (marketing) from Columbia University.

Narric Rome, Vice President of Government Affairs and Arts Education, Americans for the Arts



Narric is responsible for promoting the Americans for the Arts message to Congress and the Administration. He serves as senior lobbyist for the Americans for the Arts legislative portfolio and manages the organization's arts education program. Narric has 20 years of experience in the public policy and congressional arena, having worked on the Dean For America presidential campaign and served as a legislative aide to Secretary Riley at the U.S. Department of Education. Earlier in his career Narric worked on Capitol Hill, at the Podesta Group and on several political campaigns. Narric holds a BA in political science from the University of Vermont and an MPA from Columbia University.

Sandra Ruppert, Director, Arts Education Partnership



Sandra Ruppert is Director of the Arts Education Partnership (AEP), which is part of the Council of Chief State School Officers, a Washington DC-based nonprofit and nonpartisan membership organization representing the top leaders of state education agencies. Sandra leads AEP's national network of 100+ organizations dedicated to ensuring every young person in America receives a complete and competitive education that includes the arts. She is responsible for the design and development of AEP's *ArtsEdSearch.org*, the nation's first digital research and policy clearinghouse of educational outcomes associated with learning in and through the arts. Sandra is also the author of numerous AEP publications, including *A Snapshot of State Policies for Arts Education* (2014), *What School Leaders Can Do to Increase Arts Education* (2011), and *Critical Evidence: How the Arts Benefit Student Achievement* (2006). Prior to her appointment as AEP Director in June 2008, she was a Program Director with the Education Commission of the States, a Denver-based national nonprofit organization that advises state policymakers on education issues. While at ECS, she directed the Arts in Education Initiative of ECS Chairman, Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee. Sandra holds a Master of Arts degree in Anthropology from the University of Arizona.

Barbara Shepherd, Director of National Partnerships, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts



At the Kennedy Center, Barbara Shepherd directs National Partnerships for the Education Division. Currently 136 collaborations in 48 states participate in National Partnerships programs. Ms. Shepherd facilitated the National Conversation on Artist Professional Development which led to the publication of *A Framework for Providing Professional Development Opportunities for Teaching Artists*, for which she is a contributing author. She served as a task force member and contributing author of the Arts Education Partnership publication, *Young Children and the Arts: Making Creative Connections*. From 2002-2006 she was an associate editor of the *Teaching Artist Journal*. Since 2008, she has served on the National Artist Advisory Committee for the Hermitage Artist Retreat.

Sarah Triplett, Director of Public Policy, Creative Many Michigan



Sarah Gonzales Triplett, Director of Public Policy, strategically directs advocacy and public policy initiatives for Michigan's creative economy to build support for the arts, culture, arts education, and the creative industries within Michigan leadership. Triplett serves on the State Arts Advocacy Network for Americans for the Arts and has been elected to serve on the SAAN Council for 2014-15. Prior to her time at Creative Many, Triplett worked in early childhood advocacy and policy and spent several years within the Michigan State Legislature where she last served as Deputy Chief of Staff to the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Peter Zamora, Director of Federal Relations, Council of Chief State School Officers



Peter A. Zamora is Director of Federal Relations for the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). In this capacity, he represents state superintendents of education in K-12 education policy matters before Congress, the U.S. Department of Education, and other federal agencies. Prior to joining CCSSO, Mr. Zamora served as Senior Education Counsel for Senator Jeff Bingaman, a senior member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee.

From 2004 to 2009, Mr. Zamora served as Washington, D.C. Regional Counsel for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), where he developed and implemented legislative and administrative strategies regarding federal education law and policy, voting rights, immigration, and other civil rights priorities. He served as Co-Chair of the Hispanic Education Coalition, which unites 26 organizations in support of improved educational opportunities for Latino students and families.

Mr. Zamora is a former bilingual-credentialed public high school teacher who holds degrees from the University of California at Berkeley, the University of San Francisco, and the Georgetown University Law Center.