

GLR Learning Tuesdays Webinar
Building Parent Power:
Fostering A Movement of Informed Learning Agents

October 24, 2023 * Moderator and Panelist Bios

MODERATOR

John Gomperts

Executive Fellow, Campaign for Grade-Level Reading



John Gomperts is a long-time leader in non-profits and government organizations devoted to civic engagement and to creating greater opportunity for children and youth. From 2012 - 2020, John served as President & CEO of America's Promise Alliance. Prior to that, John served as the Director of AmeriCorps in the Obama Administration. Earlier in his career, John worked in the US Senate (Sens. Wofford, Kerry, Daschle), practiced law and served as a judicial clerk. John earned his JD from Georgetown University Law Center and his AB in History from University of California, Berkeley. John has served on a wide range of boards in including FoodCorps (Chair), Points of Light, Presidio Institute, News Literacy Project, and others.

PANELISTS

Daniel Anello

CEO, Kids First Chicago



Daniel Anello has served as CEO of Kids First Chicago since 2015. Daniel Anello brings deep quantitative analytical skills and authentic lived experience to his role in supporting parent-led and data-informed change within Chicago's public schools. He partners with families to help them gain the resources, information, access, and voice they need to achieve their vision for their children's education. In recent years, parent leaders and Kids First Chicago have spearheaded Chicago's

groundbreaking digital equity program, Chicago Connected, led CPS's most inclusive accountability policy redesign initiative to date, established a universal factbase for schools across the city, developed a universal enrollment platform for high schools, and organized local education improvements in communities across the city. In 2015, Daniel was named in the inaugural class of Presidential Leadership Scholars, an initiative that draws upon the resources of the U.S. presidential centers of Lyndon B. Johnson, George H.W. Bush, William J. Clinton, and George W. Bush. He was a member of the Pahara-Aspen Education Fellowship Summer 2016 cohort and the Leadership Greater Chicago 2018-19 cohort. . In 2021, Daniel received a Medal of Honor from Chicago Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot for his leadership of the Chicago Connected program. Daniel received a BA in Mathematics from Williams College and an MBA from University of Chicago Booth.

Duanecia Evans Clark

Chief Strategy Officer, Faith Acts for Education, Connecticut



Duanecia leads the team responsible for organizational strategy, finance, operations, executive support, and talent. Throughout her career in public education, Duanecia has ensured the recruitment and retention of Black educators and has forged partnerships between national organizations like Teach For America, the United Negro College Fund, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., and the National Women’s Law Center. This work has afforded educators the opportunity to be trained

and advocate for equitable school discipline practices and end the inequitable push out of girls of color in our nation’s schools. Born and raised in Harlem, New York – Duanecia holds a master’s degree in Education Policy and Management from Harvard University, a bachelor’s degree in Mass Communications from the University of Bridgeport, and is a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Education Leaders of Color, and is a 2020 Pahara Institute alum. Duanecia is co-founder of The Creative Summer Company, a consulting firm focused on people-centered social impact strategies for national and local brands. She lives in New Haven with her husband, Michell, and their daughter, Ada.

Alex Cortez

Partner, Strategic Advising, Bellwether



Alex Cortez is a partner with Bellwether in the Strategic Advising practice area. Alex has 17 years of experience working in education and social change as a consultant, a school operator, and in philanthropy. Alex has deep experience helping organizations scale a combination of their direct impact in serving students; their widespread impact by building the capacity of partners to replicate their model; and their systemic impact by shifting mindsets, relationships, and power to in turn

shift policy, practice, and resource flows. Prior to joining Bellwether, Alex was a managing partner with New Profit, a national venture philanthropy, where he focused on funding and advising nonprofits growing their impact in K-12 and postsecondary education. He also led an initiative to scale efforts that supported parents in exercising their innate power to create and sustain change. Alex formerly served as a regional director of growth and sustainability at the KIPP Foundation, leading network-wide efforts to increase performance and serving as a trusted advisor to the executive teams of five KIPP regions. He also served as chief of staff, strategy and execution for KIPP Houston Public Schools, leading efforts to improve performance and prepare the strategy and organizational systems to grow from 20 to 50 schools. Alex began his career in for-profit consulting, and then nonprofit consulting as a manager with The Bridgespan Group. Originally from New Orleans, Alex resides in Brookline, Massachusetts. He serves on the boards of multiple education organizations, and serves his community as a member of the Massachusetts State Board of Higher Education. He has a bachelor’s degree from Columbia University, and an MBA and MPA from Harvard University.

Shana McIver

Senior Director of Learning and Practice, Learning Heroes



Shana joins Learning Heroes with 25+ years of experience in education spanning pre-k, K-12, and family services. A former elementary school teacher, Shana most recently was the Family Engagement Director with Baltimore City Public Schools where she took pride in being the voice of families as a district leader. She doesn't shy away from courageous conversations or elevating the needs of children and families first when making decisions that impact them. Shana has led system-level efforts to build the capacity of principals and school teams around family-school partnerships, from developing the district's first Community School policy to bridging community partnerships in support of summer learning for 24k+ families. She serves the broader Baltimore community as Education Development Committee co-chair of Baltimore Metropolitan alumnae chapter of Delta Sigma Theta and has a deep love for lifting the voices of underrepresented communities.

Joann Mickens

Executive Director, Parents for Public Schools



Since 2018, Joann Mickens has served as the Executive Director of Parents for Public Schools® (PPS), a national organization headquartered in Jackson, MS. Before joining PPS, Joann taught history and civics, first in Richmond, VA and then in Warrensville Heights, OH. She also taught remedial English and English as a second language at Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, OH. She was also a manager with BellSouth Telecommunications and for several years ran her own consulting company. Joann holds a bachelor's degree from Notre Dame College of Ohio and an MBA from Millsaps College in Jackson, MS.

Bridget Ratajczak

Child and Family Development Supervisor, Georgia Department of Early Care



Bridget Ratajczak is the Child and Family Development Supervisor at the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning and the CDC's Act Early Ambassador for Georgia. She provides support for early childhood professionals and families on the topics of developmental monitoring, child development and family engagement. She has a M.A. in early childhood special education from the University of Georgia. Her experience includes being an instructor in a teacher preparation program, early intervention specialist and a preschool special-education teacher. Her areas of expertise include early identification of developmental delays and family engagement in early learning settings.