



The Education Recovery Scorecard: Results and Implications

A CGLR Partner Webinar

April 9, 2024 | 3:00-4:30 pm ET/12:00-1:30 pm PT

Panelist Bios

MODERATOR



John Gomperts

Executive Fellow

Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

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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 including FoodCorps (Chair), Points of Light, Presidio Institute, News Literacy Project, and others.

PRESENTERS



Adrienne Battle, Ed.D.

Superintendent

Metro Nashville Public Schools

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Dr. Adrienne Battle was named director (superintendent) of Metro Nashville Public Schools by a unanimous vote of the city's Board of Education on March 13, 2020, after serving 11 months as interim director. With more than 150 schools, 80,000 students, 11,000 employees and a budget of more than \$1 billion, MNPS is one of the nation's largest school districts and one of Nashville's largest employers.

Dr. Battle, a Nashville native, has spent almost her entire career with MNPS. She is a graduate of the district's John Overton High School, Missouri State University and Tennessee State University, where she earned her master's, education specialist and doctorate degrees in Educational Administration and Supervision.

Dr. Battle previously served MNPS as a math, reading and language arts teacher; an assistant principal, academic principal and executive principal; a turnaround coach for principals of the district's priority schools; and as a community superintendent overseeing all schools in the southeast quadrant as well as high schools across the district. She is an expert on school turnaround strategies and practices. Antioch High School made strong academic gains, including becoming the first zoned high school ever to earn Tennessee Reward School status in 2014 as one of the state's fastest-improving schools, under Dr. Battle's leadership. She led the transformation of a school that had been designated as low-performing in 2010 into one of the fastest-growing schools in the state.

Dr. Battle was a member of Leadership Nashville's 2021-22 class and is now participating in Leadership Tennessee in 2023-24. She was named the Professional Educators of Tennessee's 2022 Superintendent of the Year, and in 2021 she was named the Tennessee Principals Association's Supervisor of the Year and received the Nashville NAACP's Legacy Award. She was featured in the Nashville Post's Most Powerful Women in 2023. She won the Academies of Nashville Executive Principal of the Year Award and the William J. and Lucille H. Field Award in Support of Excellence in Tennessee Secondary Leadership from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville in 2015 and was named the MNPS Coach of the Year in 2010. She has served on the board of the Northwest YMCA in Nashville and is a member of the American Educational Research Association and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.



Susana Córdova, Ed.D.

**Commissioner
Colorado Department of Education**

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In June 2023 Susana Córdova was named Colorado's 18th education commissioner and the first Latina to hold the state's top education position. Prior to being named commissioner, Córdova spent more than 30 years in education. She served as an assistant principal, principal, director, chief academic officer, chief schools officer, and deputy superintendent before becoming the superintendent of Denver Public Schools. She also served as deputy superintendent in Dallas ISD, the second-largest district in Texas.

Córdova grew up in Denver and was a student in the district she later went on to lead. She spent her entire student career in DPS and graduated from Abraham Lincoln High School in 1984. After obtaining a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Denver in 1988, Córdova became a bilingual language arts educator at the now-closed Horace Mann Middle School in Northwest Denver. She then taught at West High School before becoming an assistant principal at Bryant-Webster Elementary School and then principal of Remington Elementary School – all high-poverty schools on Denver's west side. During her tenure as principal, Remington improved by more than 33% over four years on the state reading assessment.

She was then promoted to the district's administration as executive director of teaching and learning, chief academic officer, chief schools officer and deputy superintendent before becoming the first Latina superintendent in the district where more than half of the students are Hispanic. Among her priorities as superintendent was to “break the historical patterns of inequity that have resulted in far too few black, brown and low-income children succeeding at high levels.”

As the DPS superintendent, Susana led significant improvements in student outcomes, including an 8% increase in graduation rates for African American Students and a 10% improvement in Latino/a student graduation rates. In 2020, under her leadership, students completed more than 31,000 rigorous courses with a passing rate of 89%, and elementary multilingual students outperformed their peers across the state in reading. She is very proud of her commitment to biliteracy and bilingualism and helped shift the district to an asset-based approach to supporting multilingual students.

After leaving DPS, Córdova served as deputy superintendent for Dallas Independent School District from January 2021 to August 2022. She then became superintendent in residence for the educational nonprofit Transcend, leading their work to support systems leaders who are dedicated to creating innovative schools that provide equitable and exceptional learning experiences and outcomes.

Córdova's educational background includes a master's degree in curriculum and instruction/education administration from the University of Colorado Denver, and she anticipates receiving a doctorate in education from Southern Methodist University in 2024. She lives in Denver with her husband Eric Duran. Her son is a high school teacher in Denver, and her daughter is a recent graduate of Stanford University.



Thomas Kane, Ph.D.

**Walter H. Gale Professor of Education and Economics
Harvard Graduate School of Education**

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Thomas Kane is an economist and Walter H. Gale Professor of Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He is faculty director of the Center for Education Policy Research, a university-wide research center that works with school districts and state agencies. Between 2009 and 2012, he directed the Measures of Effective Teaching project for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. His work has spanned both K-12 and higher education, covering topics such as the design of school accountability systems, teacher recruitment and retention, financial aid for college, race-conscious college admissions and the earnings impacts of community colleges. From 1995 to 1996, Kane served as the senior economist for labor, education, and welfare policy issues within President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers. From 1991 through 2000, he was a faculty member at the Kennedy School of Government. Kane has also been a professor of public policy at UCLA and has held visiting fellowships at the Brookings Institution and the Hoover Institution at Stanford University.



Sean Reardon, Ed.D.

**Professor of Poverty and Inequality in Education
Stanford Graduate School of Education**

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Sean Reardon is the endowed Professor of Poverty and Inequality in Education and Professor (by courtesy) of Sociology at Stanford University. He directs the Educational Opportunity Project (EOP) and developed the Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA), containing 500 million 3-

8th grade standardized test scores for assessing educational opportunity nationwide. Dr. Reardon's research investigates the causes, patterns, trends, and consequences of social and educational inequality. In particular, he studies issues of residential and school segregation and of racial/ethnic and socioeconomic disparities in academic achievement and educational success. In addition, Dr. Reardon's work develops methods of measuring social and educational inequality (including the measurement of segregation and achievement gaps) and methods of causal inference in educational and social science research.



Adam Schott

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

U.S. Department of Education

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Adam Schott most recently served as Special Assistant to Pennsylvania's Secretary of Education, where he led efforts to redesign the state's accountability system, strengthen oversight of the state's virtual school sector, and implement the nation's first commissioned research on school reopening to include modeling on disease transmission. Schott previously led the policy research arm of Philadelphia-based Research for Action and served as Executive Director of the PA State Board of Education. He is a graduate of Penn State and Harvard.



Mark A. Sullivan, Ed.D.

Superintendent

Birmingham City Schools

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Dr. Mark A. Sullivan is a well-respected educator who began his tenure in Birmingham City Schools more than 25 years ago as a 5th grade teacher at Dupuy Elementary School. With a move from the classroom to school administration, Dr. Sullivan served as principal of Spaulding Elementary School where he led faculty and staff efforts resulting in moving the school to "academic clear" status for the first time. Subsequently, he was tapped to serve as Director of Area III, where he worked with the Senior Executive Director in the supervision of twenty-two elementary and middle schools. In meeting various district leadership needs, other positions of service have included: interim principal of Elyton Elementary School; Director of K-8 School Operations; principal of Glen Iris Elementary School; interim assistant superintendent; principal of John Herbert Phillips Academy (International Baccalaureate School); principal of Ramsay High School (International Baccalaureate School); Academic Officer, and Chief of Staff. Dr. Sullivan currently serves as Superintendent of Birmingham City Schools.

Dr. Sullivan is a native of Birmingham and attended Birmingham City Schools from kindergarten through 12th grade, graduating from Woodlawn High School. He received a B.S. degree in elementary education from

Alabama A&M University, a master's degree from Alabama State University, an educational specialist degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and a doctorate degree in educational leadership from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Dr. Sullivan holds membership in a number of professional organizations including Phi Delta Kappa, the National Association of Black School Educators, and the National Education Association.

Dr. Sullivan retired from service to his country with 24 years in the United States Naval Reserves and has served his community through organizations such as Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, 100 Black Men of Birmingham, and Boy Scouts of Central Alabama. On a personal note, Dr. Sullivan is the proud father of one daughter, Morgan, who serves as his inspiration to pursue and provide the best academic options and opportunities for all scholars.



Tony B. Watlington Sr., Ed.D.

Superintendent

School District of Philadelphia

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On June 16, 2022, Dr. Tony B. Watlington Sr. was appointed superintendent of the School District of Philadelphia, the nation's 8th largest school district with nearly 200,000 students. A collaborative and results-oriented leader, Dr. Watlington began his tenure by launching an aggressive Entry Plan composed of 3 phases. Phase one included a listening and learning tour with 90 sessions in his first 100 days, phase 2 included a Transition Team composed of 100 diverse Philadelphians and K-12 national experts who issued a formal report with short and long-term recommendations, and phase 3 includes the development of an aggressive 5-year strategic planning process to position the school district to become the fastest improving large, urban school district in the country.

Prior to joining The School District of Philadelphia, Dr. Watlington served as superintendent of the Rowan-Salisbury Schools, North Carolina's first and only Renewal School District where he launched a new equity-focused strategic plan and accountability model. Under his leadership, the district's 3rd-grade district literacy ranking among the state's 115 school districts rose from 96 in 2019 to 74 in 2021, the percentage of schools that met or exceed state growth targets increased from 55% to 71%, and the percentage of schools that exceeded state growth targets increased from 6% to 29%. Additionally, the district ranked #4 among 115 school districts in the state for career and technical (CTE) concentrator students and Dr. Watlington and his team were featured on the NBC Nightly News for innovative leadership during the COVID-19 Pandemic as a result of efforts to keep schools safe and open to mitigate disruption.

Dr. Watlington previously served as Chief of Schools in Guilford County Schools, the third largest school district in North Carolina and the 47th largest among 14,000 school districts in the United States. He was responsible for improving systems that lead to excellence and equity for all students, which resulted in improved academic outcomes in all subjects, at all grade levels, and for all student groups. In addition to achieving 4 of the 5 top-ranked high schools in the state of North Carolina (according to US News and World Report), the district increased graduation rates and teacher satisfaction while reducing teacher turnover, student absenteeism, and student discipline incidents.

Dr. Watlington began his career as a history teacher in Guilford County, NC in 1994 and was named district Teacher-of-the-Year in 1998. He was honored as the North Carolina PTA Administrator of the Year in 2014 and he received the Communities-in-Schools (CIS) Champion's Cup and Business Leaders Movers and Shakers Award. He received his undergraduate degree in History Education from N.C. A&T State University, a master's degree in American political history from The Ohio State University, a Master's of School Administration and a Doctoral degree in Educational Leadership degree from UNC-Chapel Hill (where he was a NC Principal Fellow). He also holds training certificates from Harvard and Yale Universities and is a member of the National Urban Superintendent's Academy sponsored by Howard University and the American Association of School Administrators (AASA). Dr. Watlington is also a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. He also has three sons, Tony Jr., Aaron, and Caleb.