

GLR Learning Tuesdays Webinar

Decoding NAEP: Who’s “Below Basic” And Why?

February 11, 2025

Moderator and Presenter Bios

MODERATOR

John Gomperts

Executive Fellow

The 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.

PRESENTERS

Melissa Castillo, Ph.D.

Former Senior Advisor, Office of the Secretary

U.S. Department of Education



Dr. Melissa Castillo, former Senior Advisor to the U.S. Secretary of Education under the Biden-Harris administration has over 30 years of experience in education. She served as key advisor, providing expert advice, guidance and support to the Secretary of Education and Assistant Secretary and Director of the Office of English Language Acquisition regarding major initiatives focused on academic and linguistic equity for diverse learners. Before her work in Washington, she served as an Associate Superintendent for the Arizona Department of Education, responsible for advancing educational opportunities and outcomes for all students. Castillo's professional career includes elementary teacher in dual language and bilingual programs, instructional coach, site and district administrator and educational consultant. Dr. Castillo co-authored the book *Language and Literacy for ELLs; Creating Systematic Change for Academic Achievement* and contributing author to *99 Ideas and Activities for Teaching English Learners with the SIOP® Model*. Dr. Castillo continues to work with educators and leaders across the country on planning and implementing asset-based systems, programs, and instructional practices to meet the needs of all students.

Ian Rowe
Senior Fellow
American Enterprise Institute



Ian Rowe is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, focusing on education, upward mobility, family formation, and adoption. He co-founded Vertex Partnership Academies, a virtues-based, International Baccalaureate high school in the Bronx, and the National Summer School Initiative, serves as chairman of the board at Spence-Chapin, and is a senior visiting fellow at the Woodson Center.

Following the publication of his book [*Agency: The Four Point Plan \(F.R.E.E.\) for All Children to Overcome the Victimhood Narrative and Discover Their Pathway to Power*](#) (Templeton Press, 2022), Mr. Rowe leads AEI's [FREE Initiative](#). The FREE Initiative cultivates a deeper understanding of how family, religion, education, and entrepreneurship weave together a moral fabric that shapes and develops agency in children.

Mark Schneider, Ph.D.
Nonresident Senior Fellow
American Enterprise Institute



Mark Schneider is a nonresident senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), where his work focuses on education research and development and higher education administration. He is concurrently a distinguished professor emeritus at Stony Brook University. Before joining AEI, Dr. Schneider was the director of the Institute of Education Sciences, a vice president and institute fellow at the American Institutes for Research, and the commissioner of the National Center for Education

Statistics.

He has been published widely in scholarly outlets, including in the *American Political Science Review*, the *American Journal of Political Science*, and the *Public Administration Review*. His work has also appeared in the popular press, including in the *Wall Street Journal*, *The 74*, *Education Week*, *The Hill*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, and *Education Next*.

Additionally, Dr. Schneider has written and edited a number of books: [*Choosing Schools: Consumer Choice and the Quality of American Schools*](#) (with Paul Teske and Melissa Marschall, 2021); [*The University Next Door: What Is a Comprehensive University, Who Does It Educate, and Can It Survive?*](#) (with KC Deane, 2015); [*Getting to Graduation: The Completion Agenda in Higher Education*](#) (with Andrew Kelly, 2012); [*Public Entrepreneurs: Agents for Change in American Government*](#) (with [Paul Teske](#) and [Michael Mintrom](#), 2011); [*Accountability in American Higher Education*](#) (with Kevin Carey, 2010); and [*Charter Schools: Hope or Hype?*](#) (with Jack Buckley, 2007).

Katharine Stevens, Ph.D.
Founder and CEO
Center on Child and Family Policy



Katharine Stevens is the founder and president of the Center on Child and Family Policy (CCFP). Prior to launching CCFP, she served for more than six years as a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), leading AEI's early-childhood program.

Dr. Stevens's analyses and commentary have been published in *Early Learning Nation*, *Education Week*, *The Hill*, *HuffPost*, *Institute for Family Studies*, *Los Angeles Times*, *National Review*, *New York Daily News*, *New York Post*, *USA Today*, *US News & World Report*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. Her publications include *Renewing Childhood's Promise: The History and Future of Federal Early Care and Education Policy*; *Does Pre-K Work?: The Research on Ten Early Childhood Programs—And What It Tells Us*; and *Still Left Behind: How America's Schools Keep Failing Our Children*.

Before joining AEI, Dr. Stevens founded and led *Teachers for Tomorrow*, one of the first teacher-apprenticeship programs in the United States, which recruited and trained teachers for New York City's lowest-performing schools. She began her career in public education as a preschool teacher in New Haven, Connecticut, and St. Louis, Missouri. She has a Ph.D. in education policy from Columbia University, an M.Ed. from Teachers College, an MBA from Columbia Business School, and a B.A. in US history from the University of Chicago.