

2010 Washington Policy Seminar
A Nation 'Racing to the Top': Are We On the Right Track?

Session Descriptions

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14

PLENARY SESSIONS

**SHARING YOUR "ELEVATOR SPEECH" –
NETWORKING ACTIVITY**

At your cross-site tables, share your short statement about your work, your commitment to advancing change in education, or your hopes for growth and learning at the WPS with a Fellow you have not yet met. Participants will have several opportunities to switch partners and debrief with the larger group.

WASHINGTON FROM THE INSIDE OUT – NORM ORNSTEIN
Norm will set the stage by giving us an insider's view of how things work – or don't work – in the nation's capital. He will provide you with a sharper understanding of the people, personalities, institutions, and events that have created the shape and texture of the current policy arena and are destined to guide the course of things to come.

**CONGRESSIONAL INSIGHT –
STENNIS INSTITUTE SIMULATION**

Find out what it's like to be a member of the U.S. Congress in this fast-paced, performance-oriented simulation that immerses you in the real world of the federal legislator. Working with your team, you must make tough choices and get instant feedback on how your decisions helped – or hurt – your chances for reelection.

10th ANNUAL DANZBERGER MEMORIAL LECTURE
**ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION THELMA MELÉNDEZ DE SANTA ANA**

Assistant Secretary Meléndez serves as the principal adviser to the U.S. secretary of education on all matters related to pre-k, elementary and secondary education. Prior to her appointment, Meléndez served as superintendent of the Pomona Unified School District (Calif.), a diverse district serving a high proportion of low-income and English language learners. In 2009, her success as an education leader was recognized by the American Association of School Administrators, which voted her California Superintendent of the Year. She will share her thoughts on leadership in American education, paying special attention to how the current Administration's policies may impact local districts like the one in which she served.

THURSDAY, APRIL 15

PLENARY SESSIONS

THE SHIFTING FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION – PANEL
Led by Moderator Linda Perlstein, author of *Tested: One American School Struggles to Make the Grade*, Michael Usdan, Michael Cohen, and Michael Petrilli, will discuss the historical role of the federal government in education and the shifting landscape as the federal role has grown in the last two decades. They will explore the political and policy implications of this expanding federal role.

**POLICY, POLITICS, & PROCEDURES INSIDE CONGRESS –
JUDY SCHNEIDER**

Judy will add further to the backdrop of the day's activities on Capitol by taking us behind the scenes to describe the realities of the interaction of policy, politics, and procedures in both the House and Senate. After her presentation, you might never look at your senators and members of Congress quite the same way. Nor, perhaps, will you think of policy as the result of anything that remotely resembles a rational process.

SPECIAL EVENT

THE CAPITOL STEPS

Experience the side-splitting comedy of this musical troupe of political satirists who have been called "the only group in Washington that attempts to be funnier than the Congress."

FRIDAY, APRIL 16

PLENARY SESSIONS

**EDUCATION FUNDING IN A TIME OF FEDERAL BUDGET
MADNESS – STAN COLLENDER**

Stan will help us understand the world of the federal budget and analyze the ominous fiscal outlook confronting the country. He will talk about the way the federal budget is developed, what the numbers really mean, why they are so alarming, and what the implications are for our future.

FRIDAY, APRIL 16

PLENARY SESSIONS

(CONT.)

LATINO/A ISSUES IN EDUCATION – NEW AMERICA ALLIANCE SPONSORED PANEL

Latinos/as make up 20 percent of the school age population and one quarter of all births. This is the first time in our nation's history when one ethnic minority group has made up such a large percentage of America's youth. The CEO of the New America Alliance, John Guerra, will lead a timely panel of Richard Fry, Jose Rico, and Angela Valenzuela in discussing the most pressing issues facing Latinos/as at all levels of education.

MAKING MEANING – THE FEDERAL POLICYMAKING PROCESS

At your cross-site table, choose a recorder, timekeeper, facilitator, and reporter. Take a few minutes and reflect as a group on your Hill visits and other activities unique to your site's Thursday agenda. Consider what you found most interesting, surprising, and challenging about the federal policymaking process.

IMPACT OF FEDERAL POLICIES ON STATES & LOCALITIES – LUNCH PANEL

Led by Georgia EPFP Coordinator Kelly Dean and featuring Bruce Hunter, Becky Pringle, and Brenda Welburn, this panel will provide participants with a timely assessment of the impact of current and past Administrations' education policies on states and localities.

MAKING MEANING: MEETING DIVERSE NEEDS WITH LIMITED RESOURCES

At your cross-site table, choose a recorder, timekeeper, facilitator, and reporter. Reflect as a group on what you have heard up to this point about the federal role in education, the implications of scarce resources, the growing diversity of our public school population, and/or the impact of federal policies on states and localities. Summarize your thoughts into 2-3 overarching themes.

LOOKING AHEAD TO REAUTHORIZATION OF ESEA – EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE SPONSORED PANEL

IEL President Marty Blank will moderate a panel which will share the latest updates on the likely timing and shape of reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, to include MaryEllen McGuire, David Shreve, and other national education policy experts.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A. USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR EDUCATION ADVOCACY

Presenters: Elizabeth Elliott, Project Manager, Michigan Virtual University (EPFP 09-10); Heather Wachter, Teacher Leader, Achievement First Charter School, New Haven, CT (EPFP 09-10); Karen Cator, Director, Office of Educational Technology, U.S. Department of Education (invited)

Facilitator: Dan Schultz (EPFP 76-77), Co-Coordinator, Michigan EPFP

To what degree and in what forms have educators, advocates, and policymakers embraced technology and online social networking as a means to advance reform in education? This panel will seek to answer this question and also explore how tools like blogs, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn are putting a new spin on education advocacy.

B. NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE RECRUITMENT & PREPARATION OF TEACHERS

Presenters: Jane West, Senior Vice President for Government Relations and Advocacy, American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education; James G. Cibulka, President, National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education; Rosalinda B. Barrera, Dean of the College of Education, Texas State University-San Marcos

Facilitator: TBD

Explore timely topics in the arena of teacher recruitment and preparation, including: the future of clinical preparation for teachers; the trajectory toward greater accountability for institutions of teacher preparation; the implications of the common core standards movement on preparing the next generation of teachers; and the need to prepare a more diverse and highly skilled teacher workforce equipped with best practices for educating racial, ethnic, and language minority youth.

FRIDAY, APRIL 16

CONCURRENT SESSIONS (CONT.)

C. BRINGING SUCCESSFUL CROSS-SECTOR REFORM TO SCALE: PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS & OTHER MODELS

Presenters: Larkin Tackett, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement; Lisbeth Schorr, Senior Fellow, Center for the Study of Social Policy
Lecturer in Social Medicine, Harvard University

Facilitator: TBD

Join the national conversation about the opportunities and challenges of bringing successful cross sector reform models (like full service community schools or the Harlem Children's Zone) to scale. This panel will include a discussion of President Obama's Promise Neighborhoods initiative, an attempt to apply the core concepts of these model programs and work with non-profit and community organizations to ratchet up efforts to address the interconnected problems of poverty and educational inequality.

D. IS THE U.S. MAKING PROGRESS TOWARD IMPROVING GRADUATION RATES AND PREVENTING SCHOOL DROPOUT?

Presenters: Christopher Swanson, Vice President Research and Development, Editorial Projects in Education; Robert Balfanz, Co-Director, Everyone Graduates Center and Research Scientist, Center for Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University (invited)

Facilitator: TBD

Discuss with experts recent trends in high school graduation rates and whether states are making progress toward a common metric for high school graduation. This panel will also explore current federal initiatives to identify and remediate the nation's "dropout factories", the roughly 15 percent of high schools that produce close to half of the nation's dropouts.

E. PREPARING RURAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN/FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Presenters: Elizabeth Schneider, Vice President, Alliance for Excellent Education; John White, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Rural Outreach, U.S. Department of Education (invited)

Facilitator: Betty Hale (EPFP 73-74), Senior Fellow, Institute for Educational Leadership

Learn about the February 2010 report of the Alliance for Excellent Education, *"Current Challenges and Opportunities in Preparing Rural High School Students for Success in College and Career."* Elizabeth will talk about the challenges and the opportunities identified through this high level review of rural high schools and will conclude with recommendations for federal policies that will make a difference. John has been invited to share the Department's perspective on the challenges to and opportunities in preparing rural high school students for success.

F. PREPARING SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL LEADERS

Presenters: Richard A. Flanary, Senior Director, Leadership Programs & Services, NASSP; Jonathan Schnur, Chief Executive Officer and co-founder, New Leaders for New Schools; Michael Schooley, Chief Advocacy & Membership Officer, National Association of Elementary School Principals (invited)

Facilitator: TBD

Examine best practices in preparing existing and prospective administrators for successful school leadership. This session will also explore the characteristics of highly effective principals at the elementary and secondary levels and the ways in which successful school leaders develop and guide learning communities.

G. OPEN SPACE – PARTICIPANT DIRECTED SESSION

Facilitator: Shital Shah (EPFP 08-09), Research Associate, Coalition for Community Schools, Institute for Educational Leadership

Share perspectives on a pressing question (to be determined by participants during the conference) that is not recognized on the agenda.

SPECIAL EVENT | BlackFinn DC, 1620 "I" Street NW (202) 429-4350

OPTIONAL ALUMNI/FELLOWS NETWORKING EVENT

Enjoy tasty snacks and a drink while you hear the results of a two-year evaluation of EPFP funded by Lumina Foundation for Education. Renew ties and forge new bonds with current EPFP Fellows and Alumni. Cost: \$10

SATURDAY, APRIL 17

PLENARY SESSIONS

**A SYSTEMIC APPROACH TO EDUCATION REFORM –
MARC TUCKER**

Given the bottom-up, incremental change that is typically the hallmark of U.S. education policy, it seems unlikely that the U.S. will approach sweeping systemic change at the federal level in the near term. Marc will explore the work of select states to implement the *Tough Choices or Tough Times* education reform framework, a major redesign of their states' education systems, and other state-level initiatives to use the world's best instructional systems and examinations to dramatically increase the number of students who leave high school ready to succeed in college.

MAKING MEANING: FINAL REFLECTIONS

At your cross-sector state table, choose a recorder, timekeeper, facilitator, and reporter. Reflect as a group about the ideas and intentions that you will carry home from the conference for your work in the months and years to come. Summarize your thoughts into 2-3 overarching themes

**ENSURING A FAIR START IN THE 'RACE TO THE TOP' –
FREEMAN HRABOWSKI, III**

Educational trailblazer Freeman Hrabowski, III will offer the closing address, sharing his amazing personal history as a child-leader of the civil rights movement who rose to prominence as a mathematician, University of Maryland Baltimore County President, and author. He will speak candidly about the leadership it will take to educate all of our children and young people and give them a fair start in the 'Race to the Top'.