

MISSOURI PANEL ON SCHOOL READINESS: FOCUS ON PRE-KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

Participant Biographical Information

Diane Addison

Ms. Addison is the Early Childhood Director for Hannibal Public Schools in Hannibal, Missouri. She currently oversees prenatal through pre-kindergarten services for 1,200 families, as well as Parents as Teachers services for incarcerated women at WERDCC in Vandalia, Missouri. She is a Missouri Region C Parents as Teachers Coordinator and Trainer.

Representative Joe Aull

Representative Aull (D-26) represents Saline and Lafayette Counties. Elected to the House in 2004, he is a retired school administrator. During his 34-year career in education, he served as a teacher, coach, middle school principal, high school principal and school superintendent. Most recently, he served as superintendent of the Lexington and Marshall School Districts. He received the 2002 Pearce Award for Outstanding School Superintendents. In addition to his legislative duties, he is a past president of the Marshall and Lexington Rotary Clubs, and a member of the Butterfield Youth Services Board and the Marshall Education Foundation Board. He received a bachelor's degree from Westminster College, a master's from Central Missouri State University and is currently working on his doctorate degree. He and his wife have five children.

Karen Bartz, Ed.D.

Dr. Bartz is the chair of the Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood. She retired from Hallmark Cards in Kansas City in 2007 where for 17 years she was manager of corporate community involvement, including all cash and product contributions and volunteer programs for the company. She has a doctorate in adult education/child and family life from the University of Wyoming. She has been involved for many years in Partners in Quality, a Kansas City initiative to improve the quality of early education. Also she has served as a CASA advocate and is a licensed realtor. She is married with two sons, one adult foster son, five grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

James M. Caccamo, Ph.D.

Dr. Caccamo is currently the Director of the Mid-America Regional Council's Department of Early Learning which includes the Metropolitan Council on Early Learning and Mid-America Head Start. He earned his doctoral degree at St. Louis University in 1971. For the next six years, he worked as the director of evaluations for a mental health facility. From there, he moved to the Independence school district where, for 17 years, he was an assistant superintendent. In 1994, he became executive director of the Partnership for Children and in 2000 he became President of Caccamo & Associates,

LLC. He has written numerous publications on children, health, and community issues. He is married and has two children and three grandchildren.

Phyllis A. Chase, Ph.D.

Dr. Chase began her tenure as superintendent of the Columbia Public School District in July 2003. Prior to that she has held teaching, counseling and administrative positions in Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri school districts. She has received numerous awards and recognitions, including being named one of the 20 Most Outstanding Business Leaders of Springfield, Missouri, in 2002. She is a native of Kansas City, Missouri, and holds degrees from the University of Kansas and Creighton University. She has three adult children.

Candace Cheatem

Ms. Cheatem is the Deputy Director for the Kansas City Local Investment Commission (KC LINC). She oversees Educare, before- and after-school and 1519 programs. She worked for 10 years with the Kansas City Parents as Teachers program and was a national trainer for the PAT National Center. She has degrees from Penn Valley Community College and Nazarene College. She also attended the American Institute of Banking. She has two children.

Wray Clay

Ms. Clay has worked with the United Way of Greater St. Louis since 1984. She is currently vice president for community investment, responsible for developing impact initiatives and community partnerships in line with the United Way 's strategic vision. Prior to this position she was vice President of allocations/agency relations. From 1997-2004, she was elected to serve on the Edwardsville (IL) School Board. She volunteers with College Summit, St. Louis Children's Hospital's Healthy Kids at Play Initiative, Parents As Teachers Advisory Board, and the Susan B. Komen Grants Committee. She attended Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, obtaining a bachelor's degree in human services and a master's in public administration. She has two adult sons.

Senator Rita Heard Days

Senator Days (D-14) was first elected as State Representative for the 71st District, St. Louis County, in a special election in November 1993. She was elected Majority Whip in 1996 and held that position for the remainder of her time in the House of Representatives. In 2002, she ran for the senatorial seat for District 14 and became the first African American senator from St. Louis County. She has chaired the Children's Services Commission since 2006. She has also been involved with the Commission on the Future of Higher Education, Joint Commission for Court Automation, Southern Legislative Conference Education Committee, Reappointment Task Force Committee on the Assembly on State Issues of the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the Elections Task Force, Council of State Government.

Representative Jeffery Grisamore

Jeff Grisamore (R-47) represents the Lee's Summit area. He was elected to the House in 2006 and was recipient of the Freshman Legislator of the Year for Children and Senior Advocacy. He is on the Children's Services Commission, the House Appropriations—Health, Mental Health and Social Services Committee, special Committee on Small Business (vice-chair); and Energy and Environment Committee. He has also been active in writing, speaking and consulting. He is a humanitarian leader who engages in care for orphans, widows and the poor. In addition to serving as a former pastor and missionary, his professional career over the last 30 years has included broad involvement in the corporate, civic, governmental and faith communities. He graduated from Trinity International University with a bachelor's degree in communications. He is married and has eight children.

Jim Hinson, Ph.D.

Dr. Hinson began his educational career as an elementary teacher in Carthage, Missouri in 1984. He was an elementary principal in Carthage from 1990-1996; superintendent in Greenfield School District (1996-1998) and Granby (East Newton School District 1998-2001), Missouri. He came to the Independence School District as Deputy Superintendent in 2001 and has been Superintendent of Schools since 2002. He is chair of the Missouri Partnership for Educational Renewal and an adjunct professor for the University of Missouri and the St. Louis University. The Independence School District is a national demonstration site for the Yale University School of the 21st Century. He is married and has three children:

John Heskett, Ph.D.

Dr. Heskett is currently the Director of the Office of Comprehensive Child Mental Health in the Department of Mental Health. The Office is responsible for designing and implementing a comprehensive mental health service delivery system for children in Missouri. He has also served as an Adjunct Professor of Educational Leadership and Special Education, the Assistant Commissioner and State Director of Special Education for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, superintendent and assistant superintendent for schools in Missouri, and as a speech/language pathologist. He was designated by the Department of Mental Health to represent the department on the Missouri Panel on School Readiness.

Wendell Kimbrough

Mr. Kimbrough is CEO of Area Resources for Community and Human Services (ARCHS) in St. Louis. ARCHS is the state of Missouri's designated area nonprofit community partnership that provides financial and management services to for-profit and nonprofit businesses. Before joining ARCHS, he worked for the Coca-Cola Company in Atlanta as national marketing manager. His community activities have included Mayor Francis Slay's Commission on Children, Youth and Families and Governor Blunt's 2006 summit on math, engineering, technology and science. He is a member of the 2007

FOCUS St. Louis Leadership Class. He graduated from Clark Atlanta University and he has three adult children.

D. Kent King, Ed.D.

Dr. King was appointed Commissioner of Education on September 22, 2000 by the Missouri State Board of Education. He has spent his entire career in Missouri's public school system, serving as a teacher, principal, superintendent and state education official. He joined the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in 1996. For three years, he directed the Missouri School Improvement Program, the state's accreditation program for public school districts. He was appointed by Governor Blunt to the Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood in 2006. He received his bachelor's degree from Central Missouri State University, Warrensburg; his master's degree from Drury College, Springfield, Missouri; and his doctorate in educational administration from Oklahoma State University.

Senator Brad Lager

Senator Brad Lager (R-12) represents 16 counties in northern Missouri. He began his career in public service in 2001, when he was elected to the Maryville City Council. From 2002 to 2006, he served as the 4th District Representative in the Missouri House of Representatives. During this time he served as vice-chair and then later as chair of the House Budget Committee. He currently serves as the chairman of the Joint Committee on Tax Policy and as the vice-chair of both the Commerce, Energy, and Environment Committee and the Governmental Accountability and Fiscal Oversight Committee. He is a life-long resident of Northwest Missouri, graduating from Northeast Nodaway High School and earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Management Systems from Northwest Missouri State University. He is married with one daughter.

Valeri Lane, Ph.D.

Dr. Lane has worked for the past 15 years at the Children's Therapy Center in Sedalia as director of family and child development programs and special projects. Her work focused on an array of prevention and early intervention programs, including First Steps, Early Head Start, early care and education, and child abuse and neglect prevention. She is on the adjunct faculty for early childhood at the State Fair Community College and a member of multiple state and local boards. She was appointed by Governor Blunt to the Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood in 2006. She currently serves as a program analyst/writer for the National Infant and Toddler Child Care Initiative at the Zero to Three organization in Washington, DC. She has a doctorate in Human Development and Family Studies, University of Missouri – Columbia with an emphasis in children, families, and public policy and a master's in Early Childhood Special Education.

Jamie Leeling

Mrs. Leeling lives in Boonville, MO. She moved from Colorado to Missouri in July 2005. She is married with two daughters ages two and four. She is currently a stay at

home mom due to necessity caring for a medically compromised baby. Her youngest was born with a congenital heart defect and has gone through several medical procedures and has many developmental delays.

Steven Lopez II

Mr. Lopez has worked in the HVAC and Appliance Service Industry for six years. He currently volunteers at and serves as a parent representative for Excelsior Springs Head Start. He is chairman of the Mid-America Head Start-YMCA Policy Committee and recording secretary for the Mid-America Head Start Policy Council. He is a parent representative to the Missouri Head Start Association and serves on their Advocacy and Legislative Call Committee. He is a native of Kansas City, Missouri, now residing in Excelsior Springs He is an army veteran and has four children.

Paula Nickelson

Ms. Nickelson serves as Prevention Services Coordinator in the Office of the Director for the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS). She serves as the Coordinator for the Missouri Early Childhood Comprehensive System (ECCS) plan and chair of the steering team with oversight for implementation. As coordinator of the ECCS plan, she attends all meetings of the Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood. Paula also serves on the comprehensive system management team providing oversight to the implementation of the children's mental health plan for the state, as well as the Child Care Advisory Council for the Children's Division of Department of Social Services. She was designated by the director of Health and Social Services to serve as the department representative to the Missouri Panel of School Readiness.

Roderick (Rod) Nunn

Mr. Nunn was appointed Director of Education and Workforce Innovation by Missouri Governor Matt Blunt in October of 2007. In this unique capacity, Rod serves as Executive Director of the Missouri P-20 Council and principal advisor to the Governor on math, engineering, technology and science initiatives as well as other high profile projects aimed at aligning education, workforce and economic development systems to help improve Missouri's long-term economic competitiveness. Rod previously served as Director of the Missouri Department of Economic Development's Division of Workforce Development. He has a master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Illinois at Springfield and a bachelor's degree from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. He also completed the Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government at Harvard.

Nancy Parman

Ms. Parman is superintendent of North Harrison R-III Schools in Eagleville, MO. Prior to that she was a secondary principal. She began her teaching career in Kansas City and has taught english and math in all sizes of schools. She has actively sought alternatives to the

lack of finances and resources for rural schools. North Harrison is the only district in the state to fully implement eMINTS, a state effort to inspire educators to use instructional strategies powered by technology. The district opened an early childhood center in August 2007 to serve children six weeks of age and older. She has a bachelor's degree at the University of Kansas in secondary education and advanced degrees from Northwest Missouri State University in secondary administration and the superintendency. She has two children who are college graduates.

Peggy S. Pearl, Ph.D.

Dr. Pearl is a professor of early childhood and family studies at Missouri State University. In 2007 she was appointed by Governor Blunt to the Child Abuse and Neglect Review Board. She holds a bachelor's degree in vocational home economics education from Southwest Missouri State College, master's in home economics from Central Missouri State University and a doctorate in vocational home economics education from the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville.

Kim G. Ratcliffe, Ed.D.

Dr. Ratcliffe is the associate executive director for the Missouri School Boards' Association (MSBA). Before joining the MSBA in 2003, she worked for 10 years as Columbia Public School's director of special education and spent 19 years working in Marshall, Mo. as principal of the Special Education Center. Before Parents as Teachers was established, Ratcliffe created a parent program in Marshall. She also worked as an adjunct professor for MU and Stephens College. She was recently appointed by Governor Blunt to the Children's Vision Committee. She holds a bachelor's degree in education, a master's degree in education, and a doctorate in education from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She has three daughters.

Deborah Scott

Ms. Scott was appointed as Director of the Department of Social Services (DSS) in 2006. In her tenure with DSS, Deborah has served as Deputy Director, Special Assistant to the Director, and Director of the Office of Early Childhood. She has also held leadership positions in the department's Children's Division and Human Resources. She was appointed by Governor Blunt to the Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood in 2006. She began working for the state of Missouri in 1986 as a disability examiner and over the past 21 years has held various administrative positions within the Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education, Health and Senior Services and DSS. Prior to becoming a state employee, she was a teacher and school administrator. She holds a bachelor's degree in secondary education from Truman State University. She has completed graduate work in social science and theology.

L. Carol Scott, Ph.D.

Dr. Scott was selected as the Executive Director of the Missouri Child Care Resource and Referral Network (MOCCRRN) in January 2008. She has 30 years of experience in the

field of early childhood care and education, including more than 10 years in teacher education and management of model pre-k programs at the University of Maine and the University of Kansas. Positions she has held since then include Director of the Metropolitan Council on Early Learning (MCEL) in Kansas City, and Senior Researcher for Pre-K Now in Washington DC. In 1985 she established a consulting firm, LC Associates, through which she facilitated collaborative partnerships for early childhood systems development in several states. She holds a master's in early childhood education and a doctorate in developmental and child psychology, both from the University of Kansas.

Sybl Slaughter

Ms. Slaughter has served on the Missouri State Board of Education since 2003. She has served on the Missouri Early Childhood Committee to write Missouri standards, the National Association of School Boards Early Childhood Committee working on national standards, the NASBE/NCATE partnership to develop standards for teacher accreditation, and the METS (Missouri Engineering Technology & Science) committee. She began her career in Shawnee Mission, Kansas as a teacher and retired as an elementary principal in Lebanon, Missouri after working for 32 years. During this time she taught kindergarten for 17 years, served as Title I Director and wrote and supervised grants. Since retirement she has continued to remain active in the Lebanon community. She has a bachelor's degree in elementary education.

Holly Smith

Ms. Smith is the Early Childhood Development Coordinator for Three Rivers Community College. She has a bachelor's in early childhood education and master's in early childhood special education. She has taught for 12 years in preschool, kindergarten, upper elementary and special education. For the last four years she has been in higher education teaching others how to teach and coordinating the Early Childhood Development Program. She has always had a passion for children and helping others, and is the mother of two teenagers.

Robert Stein, Ph.D.

Dr. Stein works as Missouri's Commissioner of Higher Education (MDHE), a post held since 2006, and has worked with the department for more than 20 years. Prior to joining the MDHE, he served in faculty and administrative roles including department chair, interim dean of the College of Arts and Science, and as assistant vice president for Academic Affairs. He is Professor Emeritus from the University of Northern Colorado and is actively involved in local, state, and national groups championing the benefits of higher education, providing leadership in Missouri for the development of state policies, and promoting initiatives designed to improve student learning and success in postsecondary education. He received a bachelor's degree in sociology and philosophy from Beloit College and a master's and doctorate degrees in sociology from Vanderbilt University.

Robbyn Wahby

Ms. Wahby has over 25 years experience supporting public education and community development. She has served as Mayor Francis Slay's executive assistant for education since 2001 and works with community based organizations, government agencies and business to create collaborations to advance the well-being of children in the City of St. Louis. Her responsibilities include providing direction to the City's efforts at: supporting public school reform; expanding educational options including quality charter school development, private and parochial schools; increasing the supply, access and quality of early childhood success after school expansion; re-engagement of disconnected youth; and college access. She holds a master's in public administration and a bachelor's degree from the University of Missouri – St. Louis.

Thomas D. Watkins, Esq.

Mr. Watkins was born and raised in St. Joseph. He joined his father in the practice of law in St. Joseph in 1971 as a business lawyer, following his father and grandfather in representing many of the family owned businesses in St. Joseph as well as nationally recognized companies such as Mead, Quaker Oats and Friskies. He has served on more than 20 community boards, among them the St. Joseph Charter Commission, corporate council for the Chamber of Commerce, president of the Pony Express Counsel of the Boy Scouts and a recipient of the Silver Beaver Award, and a member of the Board of St. Joseph Hospital. He is currently the chairman of Success By Six in St. Joseph, a Trustee of the Missouri Western State University Foundation and a member of its Finance and Audit Committees, a trustee and vice president of the Albrecht Kemper Art Museum and a member of several charitable foundations. He was asked by the Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood to chair the Missouri Panel on School Readiness. He is married with two children and four grandchildren.

Michael A. White

Mr. White has been employed by Hutchens Industries, Inc. for 44 years and is currently Vice President of Sales. In the Springfield community, he has been involved with the mentally retarded/developmentally disabled community for many years, serving on the board of directors of the Developmental Center of the Ozarks and subsequently serving 15 years on the Greene County Board for Developmental Disability. The board has recently established a single system point of entry for the First Steps program in twelve counties in south central Missouri. Golf is his principle hobby and he currently serves on the Regional Affairs Committee of the United States Golf Association and is president of the Missouri Golf Association. He is married with one daughter and two granddaughters.