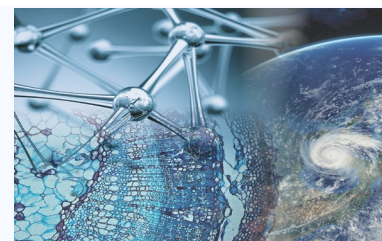


Mapping STEM Opportunity: A Dissemination Workshop of the Call to Action for Science Education

Speaker Bios



FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2023

Moderator

Susan Singer is Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost at Rollins. Previously, she was Division Director for Undergraduate Education at NSF and Gould Professor of Biology at Carleton, where she directed the Perlman Center for Learning and Teaching. She pursues a career integrating science and education aimed at improving undergraduate education at scale, including research on networks of organizations working to advance undergraduate STEM education. Susan is an AAAS fellow, and recipient of the American Society of Plant Biology teaching award and Botanical Society of America Charles Bessey award. She is a past-chair of AAAS' Education Section. Currently, Susan is an AAU Senior Scholar for the Undergraduate STEM Education Initiative, chairs the NASEM Board on Science Education and serves on the Board on Life Sciences and the Roundtable on Systematic Change in Undergraduate STEM Education. She chaired the several National Academies' studies, including Discipline-based Education Research. Her Ph.D. is in Biology from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Panelists from Panel I: Examples of Different Approaches to Data Use in Mapping Opportunity and Access

Paula Bales is currently the senior decision support analyst in the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis at The University of Texas System, where she has worked for nearly 20 years. She began her career at UT System in the Office of Public Affairs, which really informed her views of data. She approaches data from a communications perspective, analyzing the data to find the compelling narratives and then developing supporting visuals and language that help tell that story. She specializes in using data to produce easy-to-consume data visualizations and data-informed messaging for various stakeholders with varying levels of understanding and knowledge. Paula has been instrumental in the creation of the UT System Dashboard; the seekUT earnings outcomes data tool and its complementary tool for UT career advisors, Career Insights; and UT System's online fact book, SmartBook. As much as she enjoys creating these and other similar public-facing data tools, Paula enjoys most digging deep into a complex dataset, finding patterns and exploring connections, and then bringing all of that to life through powerful visuals or detailed briefs on special complex topics. She is currently working on a brief with others from her team that explores the employment and unemployment patterns of UT graduates with education degrees or who work in the educational services industry, with a focus on the impact of COVID.

Jen Kretchmar is Director of Admission Innovation at the College Board where she supports institutions in their use of Landscape, a tool designed to improve equity and access in higher education. She previously served as Associate Director of Research and Reporting in undergraduate admissions at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and as a research analyst at Westat. She holds a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, an MAT in Secondary English from North Carolina State University, and a B.A. in psychology from Penn State University.

Sola Takahashi, Senior Research Associate with the Improvement Science program, leads WestEd's improvement analytics work. For over a decade she has led large-scale efforts to develop and use measurement to improve educational systems through a continuous improvement approach. A seasoned designer and facilitator of trainings, she integrates continuous improvement methods into a wide range of coaching, technical assistance, and research. Currently, Sola leads a multi-year project funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to gather, develop, and support the use of "practical measurement" to advance equity in middle grades math instruction. She is deeply committed to educational equity and centers this commitment in her work. Sola received her EdD from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, her MA in Education from the University of California at Berkeley, and her BA from Wesleyan University.

Kirk Walters is the Senior Managing Director of Mathematics and Improvement Science at WestEd. He leads strategic activities for the agency as well as projects that focus broadly on improving math teaching and learning. These projects include designing and executing experimental evaluations of promising math interventions; developing and evaluating math teacher PD programs; leading research partnerships with math teachers and instructional leaders, with an emphasis on improvement science methods and networked improvement communities; and designing and conducting mixed methods evaluations of math programs. For almost a decade, Walters was a middle and high school math teacher in urban public schools in the greater Los Angeles and Washington, DC, areas. This experience continues to inform his work and commitment to strengthening connections between practice and research. Walters studied mathematics and social studies as an undergraduate and curriculum and instruction as a master's student, and earned his PhD from the University of Maryland in Social Foundations of Education.

Melissa Moritz serves as the director of policy for the STEM Next Opportunity Fund and a Policy Entrepreneur in Residence for the Federation of American Scientists. Melissa previously served as the deputy director for STEM at the U.S. Department of Education during the Obama-Biden Administration and recently finished a fellowship where she served as the Afterschool and Summer Learning Fellow at the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. She previously held leadership roles at the National Math and Science Initiative and Teach For America. Melissa graduated from MIT with a degree in biology prior to joining Teach for America and serving as a middle-school science teacher in Washington Heights, NYC. She resides in DC with her husband and two daughters.

Panelists from Panel II: How to Use Data to Make Decisions that Improve Equity and to Guide Improvement

Kate Akers joined the Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education in January of 2019 and serves as the Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Data Officer for Advanced Data Analytics. In this role, she serves as an advisor to the Chancellor and oversees the work of the Advanced Data Analytics Shared Service team. She and her team work closely with university staff and faculty to collect accurate, timely data and create actionable research and reports for the System. Prior to joining the State System, Kate led the work of the Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYStats), Kentucky's comprehensive, centralized, longitudinal data system. KYStats is responsible for producing meaningful, actionable statistics on Kentucky's education and workforce system. She received national recognition as an education data strategist and thought leader in the areas of longitudinal data and data governance. Kate began her postsecondary experience at Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky where she earned a BA in Mathematics. Discovering her passion for institution and education research, she then pursued a MEd in Higher Education and a graduate certificate in college teaching and learning from the University of Kentucky. She received her PhD in educational policy studies and evaluation with an emphasis in quantitative research methods, measurement, and evaluation from the University of Kentucky.

Claus von Zastrow is a senior policy director at Education Commission of the States, where he works with his colleagues to promote timely and relevant education policy and research. He has held senior positions in education organizations for more than 20 years and has spent much of that time helping diverse stakeholders find consensus on important education issues. Before joining Education Commission of the States, Claus was COO and director of research at Change the Equation, a nonprofit organization devoted to improving STEM Education, and executive director of the Learning First Alliance, a partnership of leading education organizations representing more than 10 million parents, educators and policymakers. Claus is dedicated to ensuring that state leaders have the information and guidance they need to make the best possible decisions affecting young people.