



**National Postsecondary
Strategy Institute**

NPSI 1.0—NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR FOUNDATIONAL DISTRICTS
Loyola University Water Tower Campus, Chicago | March 3-5, 2019

REACH HIGHER INITIATIVE

Michelle Obama
Former First Lady
Founder Reach Higher Initiative

The National Postsecondary Strategy Institute is proud to partner with Reach Higher.

Reach Higher is an initiative that is championed by Former First Lady Michelle Obama. NPSI brings together district level teams to advance her vision of increasing college enrollment and degree attainment across the country through:

- Exposing students to college and career opportunities.
- Understanding financial aid eligibility that can make college an affordable reality.
- Encouraging academic planning and summer learning opportunities.
- Supporting high school counselors who can help more kids get into college.



“School counseling is a necessity to ensure that all our young people get the education they need to succeed in today’s economy.”

— First Lady Michelle Obama – American School Counselor Association Annual Conference 2014

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NATIONAL POSTSECONDARY STRATEGY INSTITUTE BACKGROUND

Overview

NPSI helps school districts develop their internal capacity to support every student toward attaining a successful postsecondary pathway. NPSI has a holistic approach based on the integration of three critical components:

- **District postsecondary leadership**—School district leadership has a articulated framework for increasing student postsecondary outcomes that is tied to measurable data points.
- **A data strategy**—Connecting district student information with third-party datasets, analyzing data by subgroups, and using data to identify where strategies need to be developed.
- **Engagement of counselors as leaders**—District empowers counselors to lead the postsecondary access work within their schools, engaging partners in the process.

NPSI 1.0 Conference

The National Postsecondary Strategy Institute (NPSI) is designed to support districts that are focused on developing and implementing a districtwide postsecondary advising framework. The institute format is centered on engaging executive leadership district teams to learn the foundational strategies, structures, accountability and sustainability practices needed to advance college and career readiness outcomes for all students. NPSI highlights the Chicago Public Schools postsecondary framework and offers college and career readiness implementation strategies to expand, restructure and develop academic and student support services.

Convening Objectives

- **Increase understanding** of factors that contribute to a strong districtwide college and career readiness framework aligned to school-based accountability measures.
- **Provide examples** of how to use data, research, and community-based partnerships to increase student-level outcomes.
- **Participants will work toward a college and career readiness framework** for their district that can be utilized to:
 - Structure a collaborative college and career readiness framework across a district and within schools.
 - Develop strategies to start and sustain the work.
 - Identify accountability measures to assess results.

NPSI PARTNERS



Joyce V. Brown



Greg Darnieder



Kelly Sparks

NPSI SERVICES

NPSI consultants all have first-hand experience working in school districts. We provide coaching and strategy development support to schools districts and organizations that support school districts. Our expertise includes:

Postsecondary Strategic Planning and Goal Setting

- Data collection and analysis
- Needs assessments and gap analysis

Data Aligned Counselor Professional Development Planning

- Student-focused counseling strategies (Academic, Social, Emotional, Career)
- Grade 8–9 transition
- On track graduation monitoring
- High school graduation strategies
- College counseling strategies
- Counselor time analysis
- CTE counseling strategies

Postsecondary Matriculation, Persistence, and Completion Planning

- FAFSA completion and monitoring
- Postsecondary and workforce readiness strategies
- Principal/counselor leadership
- Counseling and data monitoring partnerships

Engaged Data Delivery Systems Development

- Developing user-friendly National Student Clearinghouse reports
- Developing district-wide postsecondary strategic plans
- Sub Group Data Analysis Strategies

Contact us:

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DAY 1 AGENDA

SUNDAY, MARCH 3, 2019

- 1:00** **Registration and Opening Reception**
- 2:00** **Stage Setting**
Greg Darnieder, NPSI & Patrick Milton, Chicago Public Schools
- 2:15** **The NPSI Core Model: Leadership, Data Strategy, and Counseling Leadership**
Greg Darnieder, NPSI
Kelly Sparks, NPSI
Joyce Brown, NPSI
- 3:00** **Problems of Practice**
Melissa Roderick, University of Chicago Social Service Administration
- 3:45** **Team Time**
- 5:00** **Adjourn**

DAY 2 AGENDA

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2019

- 7:30** **Breakfast**
- 8:30** **Stage Setting**
NPSI Team
- 8:45** **The NPSI/Reach Higher Partnership**
Don Yu, Reach Higher
- 9:00** **Building a District Data Strategy**
Kelly Sparks, NPSI
- 9:30** **Strategy Quick Chats**
- 9:45** **Spotlight on Chicago Public Schools**
Elizabeth Kirby, Chicago Public Schools
- 10:15** **Team Time**
- 12:00** **Lunch**
- 1:00** **Afternoon Plenary—School Counselor Leadership**
Pat Martin, National Education Consultant

- 1:30** **Counselor Leadership Strategies**
Joyce Brown, NPSI
- 2:00** **Overview of Strategy Chats**
NPSI Team
- 2:15** **Strategy Chat 1**
- 2:45** **Transition Between Strategy Chats**
- 3:00** **Strategy Chat 2**
- 3:30** **Team Time**
- 5:00** **Adjourn**

DAY 3 AGENDA

TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2019

- 7:30** **Breakfast**
- 8:30** **Stage Setting**
NPSI Team
- 8:45** **Leadership Strategies for Postsecondary Success**
Greg Darnieder, NPSI Partner
- 9:15** **Strategy Quick Chats**
- 9:30** **Mobilizing College & Career Strategies**
Lazaro Lopez, Illinois High School District 214
- 10:00** **Role Alike**
- 11:00** **Transition to Main Room**
- 11:15** **District Reflections and Planning**
- 12:00** **Lunch**
- 1:00** **Plenary**
Deb Delisle, Alliance for Excellent Education
- 1:45** **Cross-District Conversations**
- 3:00** **Adjourn**

SPEAKERS



Joyce V. Brown is a NPSI partner and President of the Joyce V. Brown Consulting, a group of expert practitioner counselor leaders who specialize in training and coaching counselors and non-profit organizations working on the front lines of schools. She has spent her entire career in

Chicago Public Schools as a student, teacher, counselor and district counseling manager.

With more than 100 combined years of educational experiences across all facets of the K-12 landscape, including national, district and school based leadership and leading national and state organizations, the Brown Consulting group is a one stop shop for strategic postsecondary planning services for schools and school counselors, especially in districts requiring college and career readiness strategies to address complex school populations (e.g., students from low-income families, students with social-emotional needs, and students from nontraditional families). The team uses a system approach to plan and implement actions that emphasize leadership and collaboration, focused on intentional strategies to address specific student outcomes, validated with metrics.

The consulting team has served as school counselors, classroom teachers, special education teachers, principals, district administrators, career and technical education coordinators, and assistant superintendents of schools. Additionally, team members have provided consultations and training with state departments of education, large urban school districts, rural districts and provided technical support to Michelle Obama's Reach Higher Initiative.

Brown earned a doctorate degree from Northern Illinois University in Educational Leadership. Her research interest centers on transition practices between grades 8 and 9, with a special focus on personalization and relationship building to support student achievement and decreased dropout rates. She has created a 12 Touch High School Transition Model[®] and was at the forefront of designing, leading and implementing *Freshman Connection*, a Chicago Public Schools four-week summer transition program for 31,500 eighth grade students. Her article, *Save The Freshmen*, appears in the November 2010 issue of the Association of Career and Technical Education (ACTE) Techniques Magazine.



Greg Darnieder is a NPSI Partner and began his career in education as a middle grades teacher in St. Louis and Riverdale MD. He has a BA in Sociology, a K-8 teaching certificate from St. Louis University and a MA in Christian Education from Wheaton College. He worked

for 15 years as the executive director of youth development and college access organizations in Chicago's Cabrini Green Housing Development. Beginning in 1993, he oversaw the Steans Family Foundation's community focused philanthropic efforts in Chicago's North Lawndale community including early childhood, education, organizational development and affordable housing. He has served in leadership roles for several foundations and served on over twenty non-profit organization boards.

In 2003 Greg established the Department of Postsecondary Education and Student Development (DPSESD) at Chicago Public Schools (CPS), designing and implementing an assortment of postsecondary, academic, financial, and social support programs and building university, corporate and civic partnerships to enhance college access. In 2008 he was named the director of the Department of College and Career Preparation (DCCP) for CPS, a newly formed department that consists of the DPSESD and the Department of Career and Technical Education. He was also recognized as Executive of the Year in the City of Chicago in 2008.

In 2009, Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, named Greg Senior Advisor to the Secretary on the College Access Initiative at the U.S. Department of Education, where he served as a leading voice on the President's 2020 Goal. He also represented the Department of ED on the First Lady's Reach Higher Initiative.

In 2016 he returned to Chicago where he serves as senior advisor at the Steans Family Foundation to its comprehensive community investment strategies in the North Lawndale community. In addition, he established College and Career Strategic Directions, LLC providing consulting services across the country to school districts, foundations, and non-profits focused on college and career strategies.

His youth work for fifteen years in the former Cabrini-Green Housing Development has been captured in 'You Can't Be

What You Can't See – the Extraordinary Power of Opportunity to Change Young Lives'. Milbrey McLaughlin, lead author recently commented, 'that unconditionally positive accounts such as CYCLE are extremely rare in social science.'



Deb Delisle, the president and chief executive office of Alliance for Excellent Education (All4Ed), brings more than 40 years of experience as a teacher, principal, curriculum coordinator, district superintendent, and state superintendent to All4Ed's mission of ensuring that every

student, especially those who are underserved, graduates from high school prepared for college, career, and life. Most recently, she served as executive director and CEO of ASCD and previously as U.S. assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education in the Obama Administration.

As assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education, Delisle served as the primary advisor to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan on all matters PreK through grade 12. During her three years at the U.S. Department of Education, Delisle oversaw more than 80 programs with a portfolio of almost \$25 billion.

Prior to coming to Washington, DC, Delisle was based in Ohio, serving as state superintendent of public instruction under former Gov. Ted Strickland. She also led the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, as associate superintendent for two years and superintendent for five years.

Throughout her career, Delisle has received many honors, including the Betsy Cowles Women in Leadership Award, the Buckeye Association of School Administrators Distinguished Service Award, the Ohio Education Association Vision Award, and the Ohio Secondary School Administrators Distinguished Service Award. She was also named as one of University Heights' most influential people. In August 2011, the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District honored Deb by dedicating a school as the Deborah S. Delisle Education Options Center to recognize her lifetime of service to students. Deb received her M.Ed in Special Education from Kent State University, her bachelor of science from Springfield College, and an honorary doctorate of humane letters from John Carroll University.



Elizabeth Kirby is currently the Chief of School Strategy and Planning for Chicago Public Schools. In this role she oversees the Office of Network Supports, the Principal Quality Initiative and the Office of Innovation and Incubation. Prior to this role, Liz was a Network Chief of four

years serving the Network 11 and the Southwest Side High School Network. Liz graduated from Harvard in 1994 and worked as a center director with the Higher Achievement Program in Washington, D.C. After moving to Chicago in the fall of 1995, she taught at Olive Harvey Middle College, an alternative school for students who dropped out or were expelled from Chicago Public Schools, as well as Triumphant Charter School. She was awarded a James Madison Fellowship in 1998 and studied constitutional history at Georgetown University. In 1999, she began her career at Kenwood Academy as a history teacher, winning a Golden Apple Award during her second year at Kenwood. A member of the second cohort of New Leaders for New Schools, Kirby worked as an assistant principal at Kenwood from 2003 to 2005 and became the principal in July of 2005. In 2008, she received an award from New Leaders for New Schools for service in leadership as the principal of Kenwood Academy and an award for service in education from the Southeast Chicago Commission in 2009. She holds a master's degree in arts and social science from the University of Chicago.



Matt Liberatore is the director of professional learning and student services for Township High School District 214, president-elect of the Illinois School Counselor Association, a board member at the Directors of Counseling and Student Services of Suburban Chicago. Over the last

decade, Matt has served as a school counselor, counseling department chair and assistant principal for student services. In this time, he has developed a passion for utilizing student achievement data to drive and leverage student service success. Matt has shared this expertise at regional and national conferences, where he presents on "dynamic student data" that focuses on a transformed approach to

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Multi-tiered Systems of Support. Additionally, Matt has presented on gender diversity and equity issues related to Title IX.

Matt holds a master's degree in School Counseling and a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor credential from Saint Xavier University. Matt has also earned a master's degree in Educational Leadership from Northeastern Illinois University and is currently completing his doctorate degree in Educational Leadership from Concordia University.



Lazaro Lopez serves as Chairman of the Illinois Community College Board and Secretary of the Board for the Partnership for College Completion. As the Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning at High School District 214 in Arlington Heights, IL, Lopez has

been featured in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Profiles of Change series. Lopez was recognized as the 2013 Illinois Principal of the Year for his tenure as Principal of Wheeling High School and speaks statewide and nationally as an advocate for relevancy in schools, business partnerships, and career pathways. The six comprehensive high schools in the district serve 12,000 students with each one recognized by U.S. News & World Report as one of "America's Best High Schools." High School District 214 has led the national Redefining Ready campaign acknowledging students are more than a score. As a result, students at District 214 have logged almost two million internship hours and earned more than 25,000 early college credits annually.

Lopez earned his Doctorate of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from Aurora University (2010), Master of Arts Degree in Educational Administration from Roosevelt University (2004), and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Communication and English from Illinois State University (1998). Prior to his leadership in education, Lopez served as a training non-commissioned officer in the U.S. Army.



Patricia J. Martin is a nationally recognized leader in the reform of school counseling and efforts to design training opportunities to help practicing counselors become an integral part of the primary mission for schools. Pat has 40+ years of experience as a public school educator,

having worked as a teacher, school counselor, district level supervisor of counselors, high school principal, chief educational administrator and assistant superintendent of schools in Prince George's County, Maryland. Pat has an extensive and productive history of involvement in national and state efforts working on issues related to large urban school districts, leadership, school counseling and academic equity for students for whom school systems have not served well in the past. She has been the developer and the manager of many institutional programs and system policies that directly impact the education and career options for these students in school districts. Pat is the developer of the National Initiative for Transforming School Counseling (1996) at the Education Trust, Inc. which served to change the trajectory of school counselor practice introducing for the first time seminal work that supported the concept of counselors as leaders, student advocates and systemic change agents. Pat's work at the College Board (2003-2013/The National Office for School Counselor Advocacy-NOSCA) created a national prominence for school counselors in education reform by helping school district leaders across the country align the work of school counselors with their districts' educational vision and goals for all students, including measureable metrics for accountability. This work solidly positioned the College Board as the national leader for advocacy, support, and training with tools and guiding materials for school counseling practitioners to become leaders in College and Career Readiness Counseling. Pat retired from College Board, December 2013 and continues to provide leadership nationally in the development and implementation of initiatives designed to promote access, equity, and excellence for all students through the work of school counselors.

SPEAKERS



Melissa Roderick Hermon Dunlap Smith Professor at the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago, and Senior Director, UChicago Consortium on School Research Melissa Roderick is the Hermon Dunlap Smith Professor at the School of Social Service

Administration at the University of Chicago and a senior director at the UChicago Consortium. Roderick is an expert in urban school reform, high school reform, high-stakes testing, minority adolescent development, and school transitions.



Kelly Sparks is a NPSI partner and the chief executive officer of Maple Grove Objective, which helps organizations strategically use data to improve outcomes for youth and communities. She has 20 years of experience in the education field and is a national expert and innovator in

data strategy. Previously, she held the position of principal researcher at American Institutes for Research (AIR) where she led the college- and career-readiness group and served as the director of the National Charter School Resource Center. As principal researcher, Sparks was responsible for all aspects of evaluation design and oversight of large-scale evaluation projects. Prior to her work at AIR, Sparks was the research director at CPS responsible for tracking the postsecondary outcomes of students and analyzing the data to increase understanding of the levers that impact postsecondary success. Her research and data team developed innovative approaches to connect school and central office administrators with actionable data to target their efforts and improve their outcomes.



Erin Torrisi is the Early College Program Supervisor for Township High School District 214. In her role at District 214, Erin manages relationships with the district's early college credit partners which currently includes seven 4-year universities and community college programs.

The district currently offers over 60 different early college credit courses to students. Erin's role includes ensuring all stakeholders are aware of the opportunities to earn early college credit while enrolled in a District 214 school—students, parents, teachers, counselors, etc. to help ensure all students have the opportunity leave our schools with college credit—saving them both time and money when they enter the next phase of their education.

Erin previously worked in the academic services department for two universities. Erin holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Rhetoric from the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign and a master's degree in Public Service Management – Higher Education Administration from DePaul University.



Dan Weidner is the Director of Academic Programs and Pathways for High School District 214. As Director, Dan has focused on the development of systems across the District to promote relevance of students' educational experience through equitable access to career pathways, workplace learning

experiences, and early college credit. In his role Dan works to continuously bring new opportunities for career pathway opportunities - both hands-on and in the classroom to the students of the district. Prior to taking on this administrative role, Mr. Weidner worked for six years developing cross-curricular opportunities between core and career and technical education as a physics and engineering instructor.

Dan has his undergraduate degree in Physics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, holds master degrees in Physics Education and Educational Leadership from the University of Virginia and Northeastern Illinois University, and is working to complete his Doctorate in Educational Leadership at National Louis University.

SPEAKERS



Eric Z. Williams is currently the Manager of the College/Career Specialist Team in the Office of College and Career Success-School Counseling and Post-Secondary Advising for the Chicago Public Schools. Prior to beginning his work in the Chicago Public School System in

2004, Eric worked as the Chief Executive Officer of the Trinity Higher Education Corporation (THEC) in Chicago, Illinois. Eric has also worked as an Associate Dean of Students for Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, where he also served as Director of the ABLE Center for Black Culture. He has also held positions at Knox in the offices of Admissions and Financial Aid.

Eric has a Master's Degree in Political Science and Public Administration from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. He also has a Bachelor's Degree from Knox College in Classics and Political Science and is a graduate from Morgan Park High School in Chicago.



Don Yu As Chief Operating Officer for Reach Higher, and the Senior Director for Equity and Access at the Common Application, Inc., Don works to inspire underserved students in the U.S. to take charge of their future by completing their education past high school, whether at a professional

training program, a community college, or a four-year college or university. Former First Lady Michelle Obama's Reach Higher initiative, seeks to celebrate education, change the national conversation, and reach students directly where they are and give them a space to create content while also navigating the college-going process. With partners in the business, philanthropic, media, and education realm, this campaign will stretch across the country to inspire students and give them the tools they need to reach higher for college. Prior to joining Reach Higher and the Common App, Don served as the Chief Transformation Officer for the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Education and as Special Advisor to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. He is a former teacher and school district attorney. Don received his B.A. and M.A. from Columbia University and a J.D. from Northwestern University.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Chicago has been a particularly useful testing ground and resource for other school districts because of a major strategy CPS launched in 2003 to increase college access and attainment for low-income students who would be the first in their families to attend college. In 2003, CPS consisted of 675 schools, including 122 high schools. There were 409,270 students in the school system; 45 percent African-American, 41 percent Latino, 9 percent white, 3.6 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.2 percent Native American. About 86 percent of students were from low-income families.

For years, many CPS students failed to enroll in college upon high school graduation, even when they met the requirements to attend. In 2003, CPS administrators established the Department of Postsecondary Education and charged this new institution with ensuring that all students in Chicago were provided with opportunities, courses, and other programs that would prepare them for postsecondary education or a career. A large part of this new initiative involved using data such as college participation rates of CPS high school graduates to track students and evaluate and improve programs designed to increase college-going rates. CPS used data from the National Student Clearinghouse, which verifies and tracks enrollment and degree data for postsecondary schools in the United States.

In conjunction with the CPS strategy, the Consortium on Chicago School Research (UChicago) mounted a substantial multiyear research project to track college enrollment and attendance for high school students in Chicago, and to ascertain what factors and programs were key determinants in helping students prepare for, enroll in, and attend postsecondary educational institutions.

Based on this framework, CPS has continued college and career readiness strategies to expand, restructure and develop academic and student support services. The result has been significant increases in postsecondary completion outcomes over a 14-year period, during which time the percent of 9th graders who are expected to earn a bachelor's degree within 10 years increased from 8% to 18% percent.

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