

Teaching and Learning for Equity

Who participates in the conversation about what makes a whole child? How do we create inclusive, more equitable systems and policies to serve all children, in particular, traditionally marginalized students in this time of polarization? From curriculum to school climate to innovations, discuss how public policy supports – or does not support – teaching and learning for equity. Engaging panelists push you to consider and unpack how education policy serves Latinx, Black and Brown, and Opportunity youth and communities.

Speakers: **Shanita Burney**, District of Columbia Public Schools; **Cyrus Driver**, National Public Education Support Fund; **Jonathan Raymond**, National Association of School Superintendents; **Kwesi Rollins**, IEL (moderator)

Shanita Burney
Communications and Engagement Officer
District of Columbia Public Schools



Shanita Burney serves as the Communications and Engagement Officer for the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). The Office of Communications and Engagement supports parents and families in developing strong home/school relationships, fosters business and community partnerships, and spearheads stakeholder engagement efforts, including the facilitation of focus groups, community taskforces, and other public meetings to inform district-level policies and initiatives. Prior to this role, Burney was responsible for leading the Community Engagement division within the office and before that, led the afterschool programs across DCPS in the Office of Out-of-School Time Programs. For 12 years, Burney led out-of-school time programs in DC's nonprofit sector, most notably with the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation and Covenant House Washington. At these organizations, she worked to build and deliver an integrated and coordinated out-of-school time system that assured high-quality opportunities for DC students so that they would engage fully in their development and learning, and enter high school, college, and beyond. She received her B.A. in Psychology from Winthrop University, her M.A. in Counseling Psychology from Bowie State University, and an Executive Masters in Leadership from Georgetown University.

Cyrus Driver Sr.
Director for Strategy and Program
Partnership for the Future of Learning



Cyrus Driver joined the National Public Education Support Fund in April 2015 as Senior Director of Strategy and Program to lead their growing partnership strategies. Most recently, Cyrus was Vice-President for Strategy at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, launching their efforts to become a pro-active, visible leader on issues of regional inequality. Cyrus worked at the Ford Foundation from 1998-2011, principally as a key architect of education strategies. Trained as an Alinsky-style community organizer, he co-directed coalition-building and parent-organizing strategies at Designs for Change, which led the movement to decentralize Chicago's public schools during 1985-1991.

Cyrus holds a Ph.D. in the economics of education, and M.A. in economics, both from Stanford, an M.P.P. from UC Berkeley, and a B.A. from the University of Chicago. He has authored or co-authored published works on education and worked as a policy analyst for the Oakland and Berkeley, CA school districts.

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Resources

- npesf.org
- futureforlearning.org
- <https://communityschools.futureforlearning.org>

Jonathan Raymond
Executive Director
National Association of School Superintendents



Jonathan Raymond is author of the book *Wildflowers: A School Superintendent's Challenge to America*, drawing on his experience as Superintendent of Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD), one of the top 1% of largest school districts in the country and one of the most impoverished and ethnically diverse. An outsider to education by trade (formerly a labor law attorney and non-profit leader) but a passionate advocate for equity and system-wide change, Raymond implemented bold initiatives to transform the school district around a vision that focused on supporting the whole child. Highlights included transforming some of the district's poorest performing schools in the neediest neighborhoods to some of the highest performing, raising graduation rates, expanding early education, summer learning programs, dual-language programs, college and career pathways, and introducing salad bars and healthier meals, and social and emotional learning to the curriculum. His journey in Sacramento was about changing the culture in the neediest schools and throughout the school district to one of excellence and demonstrating, in a time of great financial stress, that we can do something dramatic and bold when kids' futures are at stake. Raymond previously served as President of the Stuart Foundation, a California-based private foundation focused on systemic and sustained change in public education, under the guiding principle of an education system

that values the Whole Child by strengthening the relationships between students, educators, families, and communities.

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Kwesi Rollins
Vice President for Leadership and Engagement
IEL



"A member of IEL's Senior Leadership Team, Kwesi Rollins guides IEL's portfolio of programs designed to develop and support leaders with a particular emphasis on Family and Community Engagement, Early Childhood Education and Community-based Leadership Development. Kwesi directs the District Leaders Network on Family and Community Engagement and Leaders for Today and Tomorrow, an initiative that designs and delivers professional learning and support opportunities for school and district leaders.

Kwesi has years of experience working with local communities and state agencies to improve cross-sector collaboration and service delivery systems supporting children, youth and families. Mr. Rollins provided technical assistance and training to a range of state and county agencies, school districts, local schools and community-based organizations in projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Working with young people is also a personal passion for Kwesi who has special expertise in resiliency and youth development. He has been recognized as the Big Brother of the Year in the District of Columbia and is an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the National Capitol Area. He holds an MSW degree from the University of Maryland at Baltimore School of Social Work where he was a Maternal and Child Health Leadership Training Fellow."

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