Jorge S. Allen

Jorge S. Allen was born in Panama City, Panama, and he is the PreK-12 Coordinator for English Learner Education & World Language Programs at Andover Public Schools (APS). He completed his undergraduate studies in Monterrey, Mexico, where he earned a B.A. in Pedagogy. Jorge later came to the United States as part of a teacher exchange program. He has taught Spanish classes and was the Advisor to Black and Latino students at Phillips Academy Andover. Jorge was an Assistant Professor of Spanish at Southwest Minnesota State University, where he was a supervising professor for the university's high school-college concurrent enrollment program. He is the past President of the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association (MaFLA) and its 2017 Conference Chair. Jorge currently serves as the Presidential Appointee for the Urban District Engagement and Advocacy Committee for MaFLA. Jorge is also a member of the Task Force on Racial Justice for the Massachusetts Association of Teachers of Speakers of Other Languages. He co-created Andover's District Global Pathways program and its district-wide Cultural Climate Committee, whose mission is to focus on antiracism, diversity, and inclusion initiatives. Jorge lives in Andover with his Yasmine (from Washington, D.C.), and their three sons, Jorge Alexander, David, and Andres.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
At this moment in our country's history, I am passionate about examining our state education policy to ensure that it reflects its goal of fostering historical and social justice.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I am excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet because of the opportunity to learn from great Massachusetts educators while examining current and new education policy initiatives.

Nina Alley

I have always loved to learn and knew from an early age that I wanted to teach others to love to learn as well. I grew up in Fitchburg, MA and graduated from Fitchburg Public High School in 2012 with plans to change the world one classroom at a time. In 2016 I graduated from the University of Massachusetts Amherst with a degree in Community Education and Engagement and began working in comprehensive foster care. During my time working in foster care I was able to experience education through a new lens working as an advocate for students with wide ranging disabilities, instability, and transitional needs. This experience opened my eyes to the need for differentiated instruction and educational equity and led me to pursue a M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction from Pennsylvania State University. After obtaining my degree in 2019, I began working at a small behavioral outplacement school in Western Massachusetts as the Educational Specialist. In this position I have had the opportunity to create a high interest, high engagement curriculum for all core subject areas in addition to providing ongoing training and support for the educational team, assisting the educational administrator, and a variety of other tasks and responsibilities.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
I believe that every student has a fundamental right to a rich, engaging, and representative curriculum that not only teaches them how to function in the classroom but prepares them to function in the everyday world as participatory citizens. By collaborating with other educators and working to change educational policy we are able to ensure that all students have access to this meaty and meaningful education.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I believe that the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet has the potential to make meaningful and lasting change that will impact student's experiences throughout the Commonwealth. I am excited for my voice to be amongst those working to make that change.
**Damian Aufiero**  
BOSTON | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET

One of eleven children, Damian studied and lived history at Tulane University in New Orleans, evacuating from Hurricane Katrina and graduating in 2007. After working in government relations he received his MAT from Northeastern University and taught in Malden from 2011 to 2018. He has taught at the Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers in Boston since 2018, and has teaching experience in core History classes and a variety of social studies electives.

**Why are you passionate about education and policy?**
I started my career as an educator after spending time working with lobbyists on Beacon Hill. I saw how laws and regulations were made, and learned that a relationship is just as important as an argument. To responsibly make and implement policy I believe you should understand its impact on a human level. In my estimation there is no single greater impactful sector in our world than education. What can do more to equalize our communities, ensure justice, and build positive relationships with each other? Getting students to discover their power and learn about their place in the world drives how I teach. My passions in the classroom include guiding students through action civics, teaching history within a global context, and connecting students’ personal experiences to the systems and institutions around them.

**Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?**
In such a pivotal year, during a prolonged moment of crisis, I am excited and honored to join such a talented team and work to find solutions to complex, systemic problems.

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**Maritza Ciliberto**  
BOSTON | PRINCIPAL ADVISORY CABINET

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**Earl Orlando Darlington**  
STONEHAM | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET

Earl Orlando Darlington, Ed.D., studied Spanish and Linguistics at Gordon College. He received a M.A. in Linguistics (Spanish concentration) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He then completed an M.A. in Theological Studies at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He earned his Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership at Oral Roberts University. While a student at Gordon College, Dr. Darlington completed a summer study abroad program at the University of Madrid, Spain and a summer student intern program in Mexico City.

Dr. Darlington has taught Spanish at the middle school, high school, and college levels. For 14 years he served as a teacher to grades 7-12, and principal of Agape Christian Academy (the former private school of International Family Church). The past 12 years he has been teaching Spanish in public schools at the middle and high school levels, with some adjunct teaching at Gordon College. He also serves as an adjunct professor of Education for Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary – Boston.

Dr. Darlington has done extensive short-term humanitarian work in Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Liberia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, and Trinidad. He has a passion for helping students become life-long learners.

**Why are you passionate about education and policy?**
A good education provides an open door to a world of opportunities and helps individuals reach their potential and fulfill their purpose in life. Many individuals never accomplish these dreams especially People of Color.

**Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?**
I believe I can be a catalyst for change and an advocate for the disenfranchised.
Kate Dormeus
EXCEL ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL | PRINCIPAL ADVISORY CABINET

Kate Dormeus has been in education for 11 years. She spent five years teaching in a sub-separate setting in Brooklyn, New York before returning to Boston in 2014 to be the Dean of Students at a high performing Boston charter school.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
I'm passionate about the experiences and opportunities that an education can provide students beyond textbooks and formative assessments. The educational experience we are able to afford students in our communities can truly expand their knowledge and capacity, inform the adults they will become, and the impacts they'll be able to have on their communities. Thoughtful, relevant, and bold policy drives that work.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I'm excited to learn from and understand the experiences of educators across the Commonwealth and to share my experiences and expertise as we work together to support educator growth and development.

Katy Field
TANTASQUA | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET

2020-2021 will be Katy Field's 16th year as a high school history teacher. She has taught at both public schools in New Hampshire and Massachusetts and a private K-12 school in North Carolina. In 2013, Katy took four years off from the classroom to earn her Ph.D. in educational psychology from the University of Connecticut. While there, she studied motivation and engagement in thinking tasks among 9th graders. As of 2017, Katy moved back to her hometown and is now teaching at Tantasqua Regional High School.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
Education helps students become more thoughtful, capable citizens. The health of our democracy and the civic glue that binds communities together is rooted in public schools. Children learn how to respect and interact with people and ideas through education. Their curiosity is cultivated and empowered through education. Their ability to effectively overcome challenges and recognize opportunities is developed through education. The future of our society rests on good teachers looking students in the eye and saying, "I see you, how can I help you grow?" Policy can help and hinder teachers to begin those conversations, so we should be as thoughtful as we can to design it to support these goals.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of the Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet because I believe that the quality of our educational policies and practices will improve the more we can communicate across silos of expertise. I wish there was more dialogue between researchers in higher academia, teachers on the ground working with K-12 kids, and policymakers. We are at a particularly unique juncture because a pandemic has challenged us as educators to embrace technology in unprecedented ways. I hope we can continue to discuss and rethink how industrial-era educational systems and resources may need to evolve to meet educational needs in a digital age.
Yahaira-Maria Frier  
**LAWRENCE | PRINCIPAL ADVISORY CABINET**

Upon graduating UMass Lowell and completing a year of service with City Year Boston, I returned to my hometown of Lawrence, MA where I spent five years teaching ESL. During that time, I earned my master’s degree in English from Simmons College, coached new teachers with Match Education, and served as a fellow for InSPIRED and Latinos for Education. Currently, I am the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction (Assistant Principal) where I coach science, math, and special educators. I am excited to start another year with the best team!

**Why are you passionate about education and policy?**
Education is the tool by which students are able to pursue their dreams, achieve their goals, and change the world. Policy is responsible for setting the conditions for this to happen equitably regardless of socioeconomic background, race/ethnicity, gender, etc. I am passionate about committing my career to driving that work forward in communities like my hometown of Lawrence, MA.

**Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?**
I am excited to serve on the 20-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet because I am committed to our students and creating lasting change that enhances their learning experiences. I’m excited to connect with other educators from across the state to redefine policies and to continue to grow and learn together.

Melissa Goldman  
**HINGHAM | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET**

I have wanted to be a teacher since I was seven years old and I still wake up every day excited to work with my students. Upon graduating from UMass Amherst with a degree in English and secondary education, I began my career teaching sixth grade ELA and reading in Columbia, SC. After staying at home with our children for a number of years, I returned to education first as a paraeducator and later as a Title I building coordinator and reading tutor at Foster Elementary School in Hingham. During that time, I completed my master’s degree in special education at Bay Path College and licensure as a reading specialist from The Reading Institute. I am entering my eighth year as the reading specialist at Hingham Middle School. This fall I will complete my CAGS from Boston University in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. In addition to my teaching duties, I serve on district committees for equity and inclusion, professional development, and multi-tiered systems of support. In my spare time, I enjoy cooking, travel, and curling up with a good book.

**Why are you passionate about education and policy?**
I believe that good educational policy can positively change lives for generations. When we come together, listen to real-world practitioners, and formulate goals and strategies that address our ever-changing world, we can help all students and schools succeed. I am passionate about closing achievement gaps, promoting equity and inclusion in our schools, and supporting teachers and students in gaining the skills they need to develop a well-educated, productive citizenry.

**Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?**
I am excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet because I have a deep and abiding commitment to equity and excellence in our schools. I look forward to doing a deep dive into our policies and exploring how we can improve education in Massachusetts.
Stephen Guerriero has taught 6th grade Social Studies at High Rock Middle School in Needham, Massachusetts for over 15 years. Stephen is a vocal advocate for the rights and inclusion of LGBTQ students and staff in all aspects of educational policy. He is a Vice President of the Needham Education Association, the local affiliate of the Massachusetts Teachers Association. Stephen is a member of the Educator Advisory Board of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and has been the head coach of the middle school cross country and track and field teams. He has also been selected as a TeachPlus Fellow to leverage his experience and leadership skills in the area of educational policy. He is the Resident Scholar of the Examined Life program, a nonprofit educational organization that promotes the teaching of ancient Greek history in our schools and in children's literature. He's been awarded the Jane C. Waldbaum Archaeological Field School Scholarship from the Archaeological Institute of America for participation on an archaeological dig in Rome, and has participated in excavations elsewhere in Italy and in Greece. Stephen earned a B.A. in International Relations and Italian Studies from Boston University, an M.Ed. from Boston College, and an M.A. in Ancient Greek and Roman Studies from Brandeis University.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
My teaching skills make me methodical and analytical, allowing me to consolidate comprehensive information into strategic and analytical plans easily. I love being able to leverage my classroom experience and knowledge of middle school learners into sound policy advocacy on behalf of my students and colleagues. My experience in education indicates that I excel at simplifying complex material to tackle some of society’s toughest challenges. I have exceptional problem-solving and analytical skills, I’m detail-oriented, yet able to keep a strategic focus. I am able to objectively evaluate information and make sound judgements. Honesty and integrity are the foundation of who I am. I have a drive and commitment to make a difference in the communities I serve. At no other place in our society do we have as great an opportunity to make systemic change as in our schools.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I'm excited to serve on the Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet this year because while we face challenges that seem overwhelming with the pandemic, renewed emphasis on racial justice, and mental health needs of students and staff at all-time-high levels, we also face opportunities. I'm looking forward to working with teachers and administrators from all over the Commonwealth to hear perspectives, exchange ideas, and continue my advocacy work on behalf of all of our students.

Amy Heffernan

I started my professional life, in 1998, as a community health educator. During this time, I facilitated a teen peer education program at an AIDS service organization, participated in a street outreach health education program, and volunteered with a needle exchange program. All of these experiences helped me to better understand people’s relationship to their own health, including the changes that can occur over time and through circumstance. I also became intimately and belatedly aware that issues of racism, sexism, classism, ableism, homophobia and heterosexism (among other injustices) are inextricably linked to people’s health and well-being. In 2005, I transitioned to secondary school health education, with a focus on making potentially uncomfortable topics fun to talk about in school, including how to stand up for one’s own health and well-being, intimacy and identity. I grew up in the Catskill Mountains in New York state, learned most of what I know about myself and the world while living in Providence for 14 years, and live now in Plymouth, MA, but spend most of my time in Scituate, MA, where my husband and I both teach, and my daughter attends school.
Why are you passionate about education and policy?
Working in education is an opportunity to support students as they work to maintain a curious mind, a creative spirit and a wise heart. Education policy has an impact on what students across Massachusetts have access to in the spaces where they spend the bulk of each weekday, and for this reason I believe education policy and practice is of utmost importance.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I have been learning with the Teacher Collaborative over the course of the last year, and the leaders at that organization believe that members of the Cabinet can make a positive difference in the lives of educators, students and families in Massachusetts. It is my intention to bring what I am learning every day from my community to the work of the Cabinet.

Jennifer Hedrington
MALDEN | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET

Reuben Howard
BOSTON | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET

Reuben Howard is an English educator of color, a writer, and an equity facilitator. They have taught English specifically because they love having deep discussions about literature and life with students while also lifting students up as writers and strong communicators, identities we all need to combat inequities. Throughout their teaching practice and personal life, Reuben works to promote equity and anti-racism by working alongside other BIPOC like their students, centering most of their curriculum and work in issues of race, gender, class, sexuality, etc., and continually identifying and challenging aspects of white supremacy culture throughout their life and work.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
Initially, my passion for education arose from personal benefits I received from it: comfort, intellectual enrichment, and built-in community. Over time, my passion for education has become more about the systemic issues that negatively affect me and my students and using education as a means to combat these systemic inequities. I know that in the fight for social justice, there's nothing better for me to do than to work in the classroom and at the policy level to hopefully affect equity-based change.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I'm thrilled to have the chance to collaborate with so many equity-minded educators from so many different backgrounds. I'm excited to have the chance to give input based on my personal and professional experience that will hopefully combine with the contributions of the other cabinet members to result in concrete and just change.

Frederick A. Hurst, Jr.
SPRINGFIELD | PRINCIPAL ADVISORY CABINET

I am a Springfield native and a proud graduate of Springfield Central High School. After acquiring a bachelors degree in Accounting from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, I spent eight years working for an international CPA firm. While I enjoyed expanding my horizons beyond Springfield to the rest of the world, my upbringing virtually guaranteed that one day I would eventually come home to contribute to my community. Once I saw the impact that I could have as an educator of students who reminded me so much of myself and my friends at their age, I knew my purpose. I believe that to prepare students for an ever-changing world it is critical that we help them develop the skills to reason, persevere in problem solving, make arguments and critique the arguments of others. Once equipped with these abilities they will be able to shape their own futures.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
My friends deserved better than the system that convinced them that college was beyond their reach. I'm not saying college is the end all/be all but no child should have limits placed upon them and every child should have the ability to choose their own adventure.
Gabrielle Jackson

SPRINGFIELD | PRINCIPAL ADVISORY CABINET

Gabrielle is excited to join the DESE Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet and looks forward to working alongside educators across the state on policies and practices that can lead to transformational change, rooted in equity, for all students in Massachusetts! As a current school administrator and community leader, Gabrielle is dedicated to being a mentor to youth in the community. As an educator, she encourages students to aspire to great things such as public service in their community and to “pay back” to those communities with their energy, enthusiasm and special gifts. Most of her students are at-risk, and teaching them to reach their dreams, instilling confidence in themselves and their ability to make “good trouble” and achieve great things has been a cornerstone of her work in education. She truly believes in our students, encouraging them to think beyond themselves; to see themselves as valued contributors to their academic and personal goals.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
I am passionate about educational policy for many reasons. In order to shift school culture and have "equity" in individual classrooms, the policy and policy leaders must have the best interest of students at heart. Teachers and administrators must have a seat at the table and have an active voice in the decision-crafting and planning that goes on regarding our schools, especially during times of crisis.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I am excited to help draft policy focused on education that will impact schools like mine. It is important to have leaders who do this work everyday at the table and sharing their ideas to co-create policies and procedures that will ultimately be rolled out at our school.

Phelipe Johnson

LIBERTAS ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET

Phelipe is a career changer and entering his 5th year of teaching. He is originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and moved to Western Massachusetts in 2012. Phelipe is a graduate of Kenyon College (’08) and Western New England University School of Law (’15). He’s taught 2nd and 3rd grade in Springfield and currently serves as the 7th grade ELA teacher at Libertas Academy Charter School. In his spare time he enjoys reading, cooking, and supporting Pittsburgh sports teams.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
I’m passionate about education and policy because they are a gateway to creating change in our communities and providing a better future for those that are underserved and disenfranchised. Additionally, there is never a dull day in the classroom and never a day where I can’t find something to smile about.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I am excited to serve on the Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet because it’s an opportunity to create REAL change with a diverse group of mission driven educators and administrators.

Jessica Johnson

SPRINGFIELD | PRINCIPAL ADVISORY CABINET
Tasha Jones

SPRINGFIELD | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET

Tasha Jones is an educator, writer, leader, creator, scholar, artist, poet, and mother who inherently arrives in any arena as her full self, assiduous, nuanced, and genius. Her thought process, the way she marries distant unlikelies in a perfect union, speaks to her natural ability to communicate and inquire of those she elicits an answer. As an educator, Jones exudes the same concentration to language and growth. She teaches with energy that both demand attention and engagement. Her ability to transform the learning environment for both parents and students with the data to support has escalated her to the class's front. Tasha Jones is intrinsically invested in seeking, speaking, and teaching the truth with an authentic commitment to a diverse curriculum that nullifies existing stereotypes while providing a culturally homogeneous educational system.

Tasha Jones | Racialized Black | She/Her/Hers
TED Fellow: Talk ~ Poetically Remixing Classic Literature
Harvard Certified ~ Culturally Responsive/Diversity Equity & Inclusion
Chief Equity Influencer Springfield Public Schools
Harvard Principal's Network Member (HGSE)
DESE's Principal and Teacher Cabinet Fellow
John F. Kennedy Ambassador
Teach Plus Fellow
InSPIRED Fellow

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
When I think of this question, I am reminded of a Mari Evans quote, “Education is the Jewel casting brilliance into the future.” This encapsulates my passion.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I can answer this question with one word, VOICE. Having a voice at the table is necessary.

Tashi Jones

SPRINGFIELD | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET

Tashi Jones is an educator who is dedicated to serving the youth of her native town in Springfield, Massachusetts. She holds a bachelors degree in Elementary Education from Delaware State University and a master's degree in Middle School Education from American International College. As an English Language Arts teacher, Tashi’s mission is to become a life-long educator and learner, and she strives to instill a similar desire in all of the students with whom she works. Tashi also contributes to the betterment of her school where she serves on the Teacher Leader Team.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
I am passionate about education because as an educator I am driven to make sure any child put in front of me are given the tools to make the most successful life. These children represent our future. I am equally passionate about policy, because I want to ensure that the plans that are put in place for these children allow them to receive the most equitable and beneficial education, that they rightfully deserve.
Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I am excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet because this is an opportunity to collaborate with like-minded individuals who are determined to provide an equitable education for our youth.

Priyadarshini Kumar

Priyadarshini Kumar is a Massachusetts licensed teacher in Special Education, ESL, English, Middle School Humanities and Early Childhood. She is currently working as a 7th & 8th grade Special Education and ESL Resource Room teacher at the Mission Hill K-8 School in Jamaica Plain for Boston Public Schools.

Priya completed all her formal education in Canada, including her Bachelor’s of Education and J.D. She recently earned her Master’s of Education in Moderate Disabilities from American International College. Priya has worked as an educator in Canada, Middle East (Dubai) and the United States.

In February 2019, Priya was awarded the Project Bread & Blue Cross Blue Shield Teacher Champion Award in recognition of her efforts to alleviate childhood hunger in her school. Fighting for underprivileged children and working to ensure they have equal opportunities similar to children from more affluent communities is something she is deeply committed to.

Priya is also a planning team member for the BPS ALANA (African, Latinx, Asian and Native American) Educators Program whose mission is to celebrate diversity and provide educators with a safe space to build community while learning from one another by sharing their expertise and experiences.

Priya is a proud dual Canadian/American citizen. She lives in Somerville with her husband Jaideep and daughter Sabrina. In her free time she loves to travel with her family, discover new and unique restaurants and be active in local community events.

Steve Martin

My name is Steve Martin and I am the Assistant Principal for grade 9 at Woburn Memorial High School. I was born and raised in Dolton, IL, which is a suburb 20 minutes south of Chicago. Both of my parents were educators in the Chicago Public Schools. My mother taught Head Start and my father was a science teacher, as well as Department Head. I attended Mt. Carmel High School in Chicago where I was a two-sport athlete. I was awarded a full scholarship for football from Boston College in 1997. While at BC, I majored in English and minored in Secondary Education. After I graduated from BC in 2001, I immediately took a position teaching English at Woburn Memorial High School. While in the classroom, I also coached baseball, track, and football and was the Assistant Head football coach from 2014-2018. I received my master’s degree from Salem State in 2008, and leadership certification in 2017 form Fitchburg State. In 2018 I took a position in leadership at Woburn Memorial High School and this will be my third year in this role.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
I am passionate about education because it provides opportunity. Education allows people, especially people of color, to provide a better life for themselves, and their families. Obtaining a high school diploma, and hopefully either a college degree or trade certification, enables people to rise up and prosper, and potentially break socioeconomic cycles. A person gains knowledge through education, and knowledge is power. In regard to policy, policy should be objective. Policy should not see color, religion, ethnicity or race. I feel that policies should be put in place that are equal, fair and consistent across
the board. I am passionate about having the opportunity to potentially create policies that do not cater to one group of people and not the other, or policies that only benefit one group and not the other. Equality within policy making is something I feel very strongly about.

**Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?**
I am excited to serve in the Cabinet because it will provide me the opportunity to interact with a diverse group of educators from various parts of the state, and subsequently learn and grow. I am very excited to hear about what has been successful, as well as what has been challenging to start the school year. With that being said, I am also excited to discuss the growing pains that the district of Woburn has been going through as well. I believe collaboration, creativity and innovation are going to play vital roles in getting through this school year and I am excited to hear about what others are doing to bring excitement and hope into their school districts.

**Tamy-Fee Meneide**

**NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE CHARTER SCHOOL | PRINCIPAL ADVISORY CABINET**

Tamy-Fee empowers her scholars through sharing the importance of understanding the educational climate and how they can still authentically show up to maneuver through the systems and infrastructures. Her life mission is to be a good ancestor and help others around her be good ancestors as well!

**Why are you passionate about education and policy?**
Education and policy are the bedrock of this field. The policy enables the implementation of education for all scholars. I am passionate about education and policy because its impact is far reaching and incredibly impactful.

**Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?**
I am excited to further my learnings and engage in productive discourse that pushes me to grow as a leader. I am investing in myself!

**Johanna Merlos**

**WORCESTER | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET**

I was born and raised in New York City to immigrant parents from the beautiful countries of the Dominican Republic and El Salvador. I was fortunate to grow up within diverse public schools where everyone looked like me. I came to Massachusetts to pursue my undergraduate and graduate career at Clark University, where I received my Bachelor’s in Political Science and my Master’s in Teaching for history. Clark provided me with a challenging and unique educational experience, where I was not only pushed academically, but also had the opportunity to visit the Supreme Court for oral arguments. Upon graduating, I went on to work at Burncoat Middle School in Worcester where I am currently employed. I taught history for a year before being offered to teach as part of the new dual-language program in the district. As a bilingual Latina working in a diverse community, I jumped on the opportunity to share my own heritage with students who could be empowered by their parents’ native tongue and to create a curriculum that was not only diverse, but inclusive of these narratives.

**Why are you passionate about education and policy?**
It is vital for me, as an educator, to create spaces that are reflective of our youth and that push them to be critical of the society they live in. Education for me has always been crucial because it signified access that my parents did not have. It was made clear to me from a very young age that I could do anything I possibly imagined for myself by being an educated woman. Pursuing my career as a teacher, I am conscious that our BIPOC youth need to be educated well, but it also has to come from a place of love and empathy. I show up everyday for students to see someone that looks like them, that challenges them to grow, and most importantly, advocates for them whenever possible.
Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I am excited to be part of the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet because I get to be part of meaningful conversations with other teachers and principals to share openly about creating standards that allow teachers to be most effective and authentic for their students to thrive.

Melvin Murry
SPRINGFIELD | PRINCIPAL ADVISORY CABINET

I’m just a Black man teaching middle school in the community that raised me.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
I want to drive the future toward greatness. I want to fight for those who have been marginalized, excluded and cast aside. I want to leave the world better than I found it.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I love the idea of reaching out to those on the frontlines of education and seeking their advice and guidance to fix what is broken and identify what can be better.

Camille Napier Bernstein
NATICK | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET

Camille Napier Bernstein is a classroom teacher with over 20 years’ experience teaching high school English, creative writing, and communications. She is particularly interested in mindful practice and pedagogy, interdisciplinary curriculum development, and poetry of all forms. A mother of two (and wife of one), she enjoys traveling, reading, gardening, and cooking.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
Learning is a life-long endeavor, but the seeds for that growth are nurtured in the classroom. I am an eager learner myself and want always to develop my craft and share my expertise with others.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I'd like to help Massachusetts become a leader in anti-racist, trauma-informed, and progressive education that respects and celebrates a diversity of students.

Simbrit Paskins
HOLYOKE | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET

Sarah Quessa
BOSTON | PRINCIPAL ADVISORY CABINET

Sarah Quessa, Ed.D., currently serves as an Instructional Coach for Boston Public Schools. A Boston Public School graduate, Dr. Quessa has served nearly 20 years in the education field, ranging from middle school humanities teacher, educational consultant to a university, and clinical supervisor.

Dr. Quessa received her bachelor’s degree at Hampshire College and completed her master’s degree at Tufts University. Dr. Quessa completed her doctoral degree in Educational Leadership at Northeastern University.
Monique Rodríguez DeBarros

Monique DeBarros is a Boston native. She attended a blend of schooling and is a proud graduate of John D. O’Bryant High School. After graduating from Boston University, Monique joined a nonprofit youth leadership program called Summer Search and for nine years partnered with high schools in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia to provide promising youth with mentorship and unique summer experiences. Moved by the work in the classroom, Monique transitioned to become a teacher in 2010 and pursued a Master’s in Educational Leadership at Simmons College. Monique has held an array of roles in education including instruction, leadership, and targeted intervention. Monique’s areas of interest as an educator include: inclusion practices, culturally responsive curriculum development, evaluation and assessment, school leadership, and addressing the needs of underrepresented populations. Currently, Monique serves as the Director of Support Services at Boston Prep in Hyde Park, MA.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
I am passionate about education and policy because I fundamentally believe every child has a right to a good and promising education. I believe that effective policy is a necessary vehicle to promote and protect the learning of all.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
The unprecedented realities we are all facing in 2020 are not only forcing us to think creatively but also reflectively on what has worked or not worked in the past. The 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet is a wonderful platform to approach these topics and address 21st century education, racial equity, and social emotional learning.

Kristen Smidy

Kristen is the Principal at Hampshire Regional High School in Westhampton, MA where she has worked for ten years. Before she was an administrator at Hampshire Regional, Kristen worked in the Springfield Public School system as a history teacher. She graduated from UMass Amherst with her Master’s in Secondary Education and completed her CAGS in Educational Leadership from Boston University. She loves her school community and is excited for her oldest son to be entering kindergarten in the district she works this year.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
I believe that education is truly the vehicle for students to learn skills so they can contribute to their communities in meaningful ways. Students learn to think critically, work together, and apply skills to create the world around us. It’s important for education and policy to work hand in hand to facilitate equitable opportunities for students to access the tools and resources they need to accomplish these goals. I’m passionate about facilitating and examining policy so all students and their families have a clear, solid commitment that education won’t be different based on zip code or school leader. All students in every community deserve the opportunity to learn and grow just as much as their peers.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
This will be an amazing opportunity to provide feedback and insight to ensure that equity, policy, and student rights are considered at the highest level of administration for our state. I bring my perspective from Western Massachusetts and for regional schools, which I sometimes feel is overlooked. I am also really excited to grow as a professional by participating in these conversations with other strong educators across the Commonwealth.
Gavin Smith
BOSTON | PRINCIPAL ADVISORY CABINET

Gavin Smith is an educator and assistant principal in Boston Public Schools. He is the former runner-up for Teacher of the Year in Massachusetts where he taught biology for 7 years. Gavin is of Jamaican origin and spent the majority of his childhood between Jamaica, West Indies, and Long Island, New York. He has worked at a variety of schools in Boston including alternative high schools, charter high schools, and exam schools. Gavin believes in education as a means for social change and advocates for children as a member of the mentoring group Minds Matter Boston. He is the co-founder of YMOC, a group designed to create safe space for intergenerational conversation and community building amongst men of color in the Boston area. Gavin holds degrees from Northeastern University, Simmons University, and Boston College. He is an avid runner, Knicks fan, and lover of all things Black.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
Historically communities that I’ve been a part of have been shut out of these conversations and our insights less valued. I believe change in education policy can strengthen our system and bring forth a change like never seen before.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I have an opportunity to make and impact change in Massachusetts while learning from other professionals who have the same passions and skillsets.

Yeon-Jeong Son
BOSTON | PRINCIPAL ADVISORY CABINET

Dr. Yeon-Jeong Son is the Director of Instruction of Teaching and Learning for English Learners at Charlestown. She has over 25 years of experience in the field of English language instruction, serving 8 years as a classroom ESL teacher and 15 years as an Instructional Coach and Program Director of ESL in the Office of English Learners in Boston Public Schools. She received her doctorate from the Harvard Graduate School of Education in Human Development and Psychology focusing on the intersection of achievement and immigration.

Why are you passionate about education and policy?
I am dedicated to ensuring that English learners have equitable access to educational programs and that the policies that govern schooling in MA are fair to students and families whose first language is not English.

Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?
I have a desire to learn about and provide feedback on the new educational initiatives from DESE and am also excited to work with and learn from colleagues from different school districts.

Alicia Thomas

Alicia is the Manager of Teacher Development for the Teach Western Mass Residency Program. She was born and raised in Western Mass. and is passionate about improving the educational experiences of students through equitable and culturally celebratory practices. After earning a B.A. from Westfield State University in both Ethnic Studies and Political Science, she continued her education at the University of California, Los Angeles. At UCLA, Alicia obtained an M.A. in Comparative Education with a specialization in Race and Ethnic Studies. Alicia came back to Massachusetts to begin a teaching residency program at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. There, she acquired an M.Ed. in Secondary Education with a concentration in History/Social Studies. Alicia has worked as an elementary and high school teacher in Boston.
Public Schools, Holyoke Public Schools, and most recently Springfield Public Schools. In her free time she enjoys reading, visiting family, working on home renovation projects, and traveling.

**Why are you passionate about education and policy?**
I recognize our current system of education was not created to equitably serve our students from marginalized populations. I care deeply about improving the educational experiences of students who historically have not had open access to academic success.

**Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?**
I am excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet because this is an opportunity to collaborate with others to make transformative decisions that will improve education statewide.

**Charmayne Wright**

**SPRINGFIELD | TEACHER ADVISORY CABINET**

Charmayne Wright was born and raised in New York City, where she has overcome many obstacles that life has given her—growing up in the projects where the environment was discouraging at times. Charmayne knew that she wanted more out of life; she knew that education was the key to rise above your circumstances from an early age. For her, it was easier said than done because the public school system in New York City was not equitable. It was not until her high school years where Charmayne met her government teacher Anne Lipson who went above and beyond to show her the way and assure her that substantial education is obtainable. Until that point, that was the first devoted educator that Charmayne encountered throughout her early educational years. It was not about a paycheck for Anne as it was for many other educators Charmayne met. Charmayne is currently a seventh-grade math/science teacher in Springfield, MA, where she teaches today's youth, leads the seventh grade team, and coaches fellow educators. She strives to go above and beyond for students and their families, so they feel the same sense of importance, knowing that their future matters. "Experience is the gateway to success."

**Why are you passionate about education and policy?**
My passion comes from wanting to make a difference in the education system. With being a parent myself and an educator, the policies we have in place sometimes seem to be one-sided and not from the view of the people who are directly affected by them. Being able to input ideas on the policies allows the perception to pivot to a different more hands-on angle.

**Why are you excited to serve on the 2020-21 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet?**
Being on this Cabinet will allow for great collaboration with many people whose ideas can improve today's education. To get the individuals' perspective directly affected by the policies put in place is a vital component when considering policies. It is essential to invest in today's youth's success, for they are tomorrow's future.