



## 2021 Annual Report to BESE | Board Members (2020-21)



**Katherine  
Craven  
Chair**

2019 - present;  
member,  
2014 - 2019

Katherine Craven currently serves as the Chief Administrative Officer of Babson College, one of the nation's leading business colleges. Craven began her career as a budget director and policy advisor to the Massachusetts House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means. Craven was named Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the newly created Massachusetts School Building Authority in 2004, where she won plaudits for her effective management and leadership. While leading the School Building Authority, Craven was also named First Deputy Treasurer of the Commonwealth. Craven left the School Building Authority and the Treasurer's Office in 2011 when she was appointed Executive Director of the UMass Building Authority and Assistant Vice President for Capital Finance for the University of Massachusetts. Craven received a Bachelor of Arts in History from Harvard University. She is a resident of Brookline, where she lives with her husband and four children. Craven fills the business seat on the Board.



**James O'S.  
Morton,  
Vice Chair**

2012 - present

James O'S. Morton is the 13<sup>th</sup> President and CEO of the YMCA of Greater Boston. James joined the Greater Boston Y in 2015 after serving at YMCAs in Hartford, CT and Springfield, MA YMCAs. Prior to joining the YMCA of Greater Boston, James served as President and CEO of the YMCA of Greater Hartford where the Y experienced double-digit growth in contributions; developed innovative programming; improved the membership engagement experience; and built many collaborative relationships. He led a successful \$15 million capital campaign and launched a new strategic plan to guide the work of the organization.

He also has a deep personal and professional connection to work force development and education having served as a leader to two work force development agencies and as an educator in the Springfield, MA public school system.

James earned a Bachelor of Arts in sociology from the University of Wisconsin and a Juris Doctorate from Northeastern University School of Law. He is a current member of the Massachusetts Bar Association, serves on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, and is a trustee of Springfield College. In addition, he has served on numerous YMCA of the USA committees and task forces around brand management, executive leadership and multiculturalism.

James has a compelling personal history that exemplifies the positive impact that the Y makes. With an African-American father and mother of Irish descent, James laughingly often introduces himself as "Black Irish," and his background and personality provide him with a unique ability to forge meaningful connections with everyone that he meets. James is a world class runner and continues to run competitively. In 2008, James was the national Master's champion and #2 in the world in the 800 meter, in his age bracket.



**Jasper Coughlin**  
October 20 -  
June 2021

Jasper Coughlin was elected as the student representative to the Board in October 2020 and served as the chair of the State Student Advisory Council. During this year he was a senior at Billerica Memorial High School and has been a part of student government since he was a freshman. Jasper has been the president of his class since his sophomore year and is a representative to the Billerica school committee. In his spare time, Jasper enjoys playing the violin. He has played for 13 years and plans to continue doing so in college.



**Amanda Fernandez**  
2017 - present

Amanda is the CEO and co-founder of Latinos for Education, the first Latino-founded and led social enterprise solely dedicated to creating leadership pathways for emerging Latino leaders in the education sector. She has over 25 years of work experience in the private and nonprofit sectors with focus on talent, leadership and Latino community engagement. She currently serves on the Roxbury Community College Board of Trustees, the RISE Colorado Advisory Board and CSC Consulting advisory board based in Chicago. She is a Fall 2015 Aspen Institute Pahlara Fellow and recently delivered the convocation speech at Boston University School of Education graduation. Amanda holds an M.S. in Education from Fordham University and a BA from Western Illinois University.



**Matt Hills**  
2019 - present

Matt Hills served on the Newton School Committee from 2010-2018, during which time he was Chair of the School Committee and Chair of the collective bargaining team. He is a Managing Director at LLM Capital Partners, a private equity firm. Matt's career has been in private equity, investment banking and strategy consulting. He has served on public and private corporate and non-profit Boards in the U.S., Canada and Israel. Matt has been active in Newton's community and public school affairs for many years. Matt and his wife Lisa have four children, all of whom were Newton Public Schools K-12 students. He holds a B.A. from Brandeis University and an M.B.A. from Harvard Business School.



**Darlene Lombos**  
2020 - present

Darlene Lombos is executive secretary-treasurer of the Greater Boston Labor Council (GBLC) and the first woman and person of color to be elected to this top leadership position. The GBLC represents over 100,000 union members and their families within 24 cities and towns and has as its primary mission to build power for workers and progressive allies to advance the movement for social, economic, and racial justice.

Ms. Lombos is the former executive director of Community Labor United (CLU), a partnership of unions and community organizations that has successfully moved strategic campaigns to protect and promote the interests of working class families and communities of color in Greater Boston. In 2008, CLU formed the Green Justice Coalition in order to build a broader base of support for a sustainable, equitable, and clean energy economy in Massachusetts. Ms. Lombos has been organizing around various community issues since 1996, including police accountability and home daycare justice at Direct Action for Rights and Equality in Providence, R.I. as well as transportation equity, gentrification and displacement, and education reform at Sisters in Action for Power in Portland, Ore. She brings nearly 20 years' experience in community and youth organizing, leadership development, and coalition-building to this work.



**Michael Moriarty**  
2015 - present

Michael Moriarty is a lifelong resident of Holyoke, where he served for 13 years on the school committee. He was instrumental in the formation of the Holyoke Early Literacy Initiative, a community wide collaborative focused on increasing the number of students that are proficient in reading by the end of third grade. He has also been a vocal advocate for arts education.

In 2013, Attorney Moriarty was named the executive director of a community development corporation based in Holyoke. Olde Holyoke Development Corporation is a mission driven non-profit that believes every resident of Holyoke should live in a dignified home and a safe, attractive neighborhood. Prior to joining the company, he was a practicing attorney focused on real estate and civil matters. In the 1980's, he was a teacher at William R. Peck Junior High School. He has also taught at Holyoke Community College, and retains an active educator's license.

He is a graduate of the Catholic University of America (BA '85) and Western New England University School of Law (JD '93). He is married to Attorney Susan Turcotte Moriarty. They are the parents of two children, who like Mike, are proud products of the Holyoke Public Schools.



**James Peyser**  
Secretary of Education

Jim Peyser was appointed Secretary of Education by Governor Charlie Baker in January 2015. He is the former Managing Director at NewSchools Venture Fund, a non-profit grant-making firm that seeks to transform public education in high-need urban communities by supporting innovative education entrepreneurs. From 1999 through 2006, Secretary Peyser served as Chairman of the Massachusetts Board of Education. Prior to joining NewSchools, Secretary Peyser was Education Advisor to Governors Bill Weld, Jane Swift and Mitt Romney, where he helped shape state policy regarding standards and assessments, school accountability, and charter schools. In 1995, he served as Under Secretary of Education and Special Assistant to Governor Weld for Charter Schools. He spent seven years as Executive Director of Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, where he helped to launch the Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center, which supported the development of the state's first charter schools. Prior to joining Pioneer, Jim held various positions at Teradyne, Inc. in Boston, an electronic test equipment manufacturer.

Jim holds a Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy from The Fletcher School (Tufts University) and a Bachelor of Arts from Colgate University.



**Jeffrey C. Riley**  
Commissioner

Jeffrey C. Riley was appointed Massachusetts' 24th commissioner of elementary and secondary education in early 2018 and began serving as commissioner on April 5, 2018. A Massachusetts native, Mr. Riley's experience spans urban and suburban districts and includes teaching in Baltimore, Md., being principal of Tyngsboro Middle School, and being principal of Boston's Edwards Middle School. In January 2012, Commissioner Riley was appointed superintendent/receiver of the Lawrence Public Schools. During his more than six years there, he led a team that brought major improvements by shifting more resources and autonomy to the school level, expanding the school day, increasing enrichment opportunities, and ensuring all schools had great leaders and teachers.

Commissioner Riley lives in Boston and holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Pomona College in California, a master's degree in counseling from Johns Hopkins University in Maryland and a master's degree in school administration, planning and social policy from Harvard University.



**Paymon Rouhanifard**  
2019 - present

Paymon Rouhanifard is the co-founder and CEO of Propel America, an organization that empowers students with the skills, experiences, credentials, and social networks necessary to transition from high school to an upwardly-mobile first job within one-year of high school graduation.

Previously, he served as the superintendent of Camden, New Jersey from 2013 to 2018 where he helped lead improvements in student outcomes, reductions in out-of-school suspensions, stronger family engagement, and critical capital investments in school facilities.

Rouhanifard started his career in New York City as a 6th grade teacher in West Harlem and went on to work in the central office of the New York City Department of Education. Prior to that, Rouhanifard worked as an investment banking analyst at Goldman Sachs and a private equity associate.

He holds a B.A. in Economics and Political Science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



**Mary Ann Stewart**  
2014 - present

Mary Ann Stewart was appointed Parent Representative to the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education by (then) Governor Patrick in August 2014. From 2010-2012, she served as President of the Massachusetts PTA and continues to serve on the state PTA Board as a Member-at-Large. She also serves as a member of the National Advisory Council for Media Literacy Now.

Mary Ann is a parent of three and resides in Lexington. She has been active in the schools and in town government, serving as an elected representative to Town Meeting since 2006 and on the School Committee from 2009-2014 where she led as Chair from 2011-2012.

Mary Ann has served in numerous leadership roles at the local, state, and national levels. She is a champion of children, youth, and families, and her experience in organizational development and passion for advocacy and creativity has leveraged engagement in professional and volunteer settings alike. Mary Ann received her Bachelor of Science from the University of Massachusetts for Music Education.



**Martin West**  
2017 - present

Martin West is associate professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, a faculty research fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research, and editor-in-chief of Education Next, a journal of opinion and research on education policy. He previously worked as senior advisor to the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, taught at Brown University, and was a research fellow at the Brookings Institution. West received a B.A. in History from Williams College, an M.Phil. in Economic and Social History from Oxford University, and a Ph.D. in Government and Social Policy from Harvard University. He lives in Newton with his wife and two sons who attend public schools.