State Longitudinal Data Systems
Driving Educational and Workforce Decision Making

Speaker Biographies

Ajit Golpalakrishman, Chief Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation
Connecticut Department of Education

Ajit Gopalakrishnan is a Bureau Chief in the Performance Office of the Connecticut State Department of Education. He oversees the state's efforts around data collection, longitudinal data system, research, evaluation, and district/school accountability. Prior to assuming this role two years ago, he worked for over 15 years in the field of adult education and literacy where he managed initiatives focused around content standards, assessment, data collection, reporting, and accountability. Ajit has also authored publications on technology, accountability, and learner retention.

Paige Kowalski, Director of State Policy and Advocacy
Data Quality Campaign

Paige Kowalski, is the director of state policy and advocacy at the Data Quality Campaign (DQC). She manages DQC's efforts to support state policymakers in understanding their roles and responsibilities in supporting effective data use at all levels. In her current role she leads a team to develop DQC's Data for Action state survey, provides direct policy assistance to states, identifies emerging issues, and connects data use to current policies and practices.

Prior to leading DQC's state policy efforts, Kowalski worked to inform state and national teacher effectiveness policies and supported state efforts to effectively implement data-related provisions of the 2009 federal stimulus act. She came to the DQC after tenures at the University of California, the City and County of San Francisco, and Chicago Public Schools.

Bill Hurwitch**, Director, Statewide Longitudinal Data System
Maine Department of Education

Bill Hurwitch serves as the director of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System for the Maine Department of Education. He has been at the Department for eleven years managing the implementation of multiple data systems including the Maine Education Data Management System (MEDMS), the MEDMS Financial System, the Adult Education Management System and the Educator Credentialing System and has served as the project director for the 2007 SLDS and 2009 ARRA SLDS grants. Bill is a member

of the Data Management Team and represents the Department of Education on the State Education and Employment Outcomes Task Force established by the Legislature in 2014.

Jonathan Keller, Associate Commissioner for Research, Planning and Information Systems
Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

Jonathan Keller is Senior Associate Commissioner for Research, Planning and Information Systems with the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (DHE). He oversees data analysis and reporting activities, with special emphasis on performance measurement and accountability. In his capacity as Senior Associate Commissioner, Keller has expanded and enhanced the research resources and analytic capabilities of the Department. He was a key player in the development of data-sharing agreements among higher education and other agencies and was part of the original School-to-College Database Leadership Team, which won the 2007 Commonwealth Citation for Outstanding Performance. Jonathan also leads the effort to develop and refine metrics and analyses for the Vision Project for public higher education in Massachusetts and has served on a variety of advisory committees for the National Center for Education Statistics.

Irene Koffink, Longitudinal Data System Manager
Bureau of Data Management, New Hampshire Department of Education

Irene Koffink joined the New Hampshire Department of Education in 2007 and is currently an Administrator and the Project Manager for the Statewide Longitudinal Data System. In this capacity she facilitates communication between the Department, other state agencies and stakeholders; evaluates the program operations for effectiveness and allocation of agency staff and federal funds; manages internal staff working on the SLDS project; engages and manages NHDOE vendors; and is the NH DOE Data Governance Manager. Koffink is a member of New England Secondary School Consortium.

Ms. Koffink has over 25 years experience in Information Technology and previously served as the IT Director for the NH Department of Revenue and IT Manager for the NH Department of Information Technology.

Patrick Lane, Project Manager, Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange
WICHE

Patrick Lane currently serves as the project manager for Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education's (WICHE) Gates Foundation-funded Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange. He also coordinated the Adult College Completion Network and WICHE's College Access Challenge Grant Network. Patrick has worked extensively on WICHE's *Non-traditional No More: Policy Solutions for Adult Learners* project. He came to WICHE having spent several years working in education policy in the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Hans Peter L'Orange, Vice President for Research and Information Resources
State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

Hans Peter L'Orange is the vice president for research and information resources at the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO). He directs the data team whose work currently focuses on state longitudinal data systems, state financing for higher education, the Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) initiative, several NCES data-related projects, and other national data initiatives including Complete College America and the Data Quality Campaign. Mr. L'Orange's primary areas of responsibility are developing effective state postsecondary data systems and strategies for data management; the relationships between data, information, and knowledge; and using knowledge resources effectively to impact public postsecondary education policy.

Brain Prescott, Director of Policy Research
WICHE

Brian T. Prescott is the director of policy research at WICHE. He co-manages WICHE's Policy Analysis and Research unit, with primary responsibility for obtaining and analyzing education and workforce data with public policy relevance. Prescott directs WICHE's Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange project, which is building a resource for states to better understand human capital development and mobility through linking states' longitudinal data on education and employment. He also authored the two most recent editions of *Knocking at the College Door*, WICHE's widely-used projections of high school graduates by state and race/ethnicity, and consults with states on issues related to demographics, college access and success, and financial aid and affordability.

Peg Votta, SLDS Project Manager, Data and Analysis Office
Rhode Island Department of Education

Peg Votta is a Research Specialist at the RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and has managed the statewide longitudinal data system project for RI since 2009. Votta brings a variety of experiences to this work. She has taught at the college and high school levels, has worked with special needs, severely autistic and court adjudicated youth and served as an educational advocate for single parents navigating the public education system. Living and working in the Southside of Providence, Peg led community-organizing efforts and was the executive director of Alien Ministries Enriching Neighborhoods (AMEN), Rhode Island's first faith-based housing development corporation. She also worked as a Senior Research Specialist at the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University where she focused on issues of school equity and opportunity.