It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to Omaha for the 2019 Annual Conference of the National Association of State Boards of Education. In my home state of Nebraska, we are excited to be hosting this year’s events, and we hope you enjoy the local attractions, including NASBE’s opening reception at the Henry Doorly Zoo and State Night at Omaha’s Durham Museum.

With the shift in federal legislation placing greater responsibility and authority on the states, the role of state boards of education in shaping education policy is greater today than it has been for the past 20 years. State boards are responsible for crafting a coherent set of state policies, developing strong accountability systems that look at equity and achievement gaps in each school, and building strategies to improve the outcomes for all students. As the importance of state leadership and authority increases, NASBE’s role in building our capacity to shape education policy becomes ever more critical.

The 2019 NASBE conference planning committee, representing NASBE members from across the country, has designed every session to inspire a sense of the possibilities each board has to make a difference. The goal of the conference is to provide information and insights you will need as you return to your state to make critical policy decisions for children. So we’ve allowed plenty of time for you to ask questions of your colleagues from around the country and the experts in attendance.

I hope you will take advantage of the additional time scheduled this year for conversations with colleagues from other state boards. You will find these are an essential part of your professional learning as leaders—and enormously rewarding personally!

Our Annual Conference also gives member boards an opportunity to identify key NASBE policy priorities, learn about changes in education policy at the national level, and select the 2020 NASBE Board of Directors.

I hope you will take advantage of the meeting’s special events and the many attractions here in Omaha. As always, please don’t hesitate to contact NASBE staff if you have any questions or concerns throughout the meeting.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank the NASBE conference planning committee and NASBE staff for the countless hours spent preparing for this convening. I would also like to commend the NASBE staff for their continuing efforts every day on behalf of state boards of education. Whether at the NASBE office or back in our home states, we all share the goal of ensuring that every student gets a world-class education.

Thank you for your service to your state and our nation and for allowing me to serve as your president. Welcome to this outstanding and enriching conference!

Respectfully,

Rachel Wise
2019 NASBE Board Chair
Greetings and welcome to Omaha for NASBE’s 2019 Annual Conference! This is my first annual conference as your president and CEO, and I am grateful for the opportunity to meet and work with you in this capacity. I know that without a doubt I will learn from each of you as we interact over the next few days together—be it in sessions, during meals, or in passing conversations at social events.

In addition, I hope you will also connect with the leaders sitting beside you: state board members from across the nation. State board members do important work, and we at NASBE are always ready to help you in these critical efforts. I hope you will leave this conference with new ideas, new relationships with other board members, and a renewed commitment to the vital work you do in your state.

On behalf of NASBE’s Board of Directors, I offer sincere thanks to the dedicated state board members who have served on the Conference Planning Committee this year. Thanks to the hard work and diligent efforts of your colleagues in gathering and considering your feedback, the conference program is chockablock with great sessions and renowned speakers, all geared to meeting needs and desires that you have expressed. This truly is a conference designed by state board members for state board members.

NASBE staff and conference planners are available to assist you with all your needs during the conference. Please don’t hesitate to reach out for assistance as you have need.

Now, sit back, relax, and let the learning begin!

Robert Hull
NASBE President and CEO
Wednesday, October 16

Preconference Activities
7:30 am–5:30 pm
Registration Blackstone Foyer

8:30 am–2:00 pm
NASBE Board of Directors Meeting
St. Nicholas A

11:30 am–2:00 pm
Meeting of the Government Affairs Committee
Hill

11:30 am–2:00 pm
Meeting of the Public Education Positions Committee
Hill

2:30 pm–4:30 pm
Preconference Session Henry Doorly Zoo
Bus departs at 2:00 pm.

6:00 pm–10:00 pm
Welcome Reception Henry Doorly Zoo

Presenters: Rachel Wise, NASBE Chair; Robert Hull, NASBE President/CEO; Representative from Henry Doorly Zoo
Buses depart at 5:45 pm.

Hosted by the NASBE Board of Directors.

Thursday, October 17

7:00 am–5:30 pm
Registration Blackstone Foyer

7:30 am–8:30 am
Networking Breakfast Blackstone Ballroom

8:45 am–10:30 am
Opening Plenary and Keynote Address

Blackstone Ballroom

Presenters: Rachel Wise, NASBE Chair; Matthew Blomstedt, Nebraska Commissioner; Robert Hull, NASBE President/CEO; Jenni Benson, Nebraska State Education Association

Color Guard: Senior Master Sergeant Guy Hale and the Bellevue West Air Force JROTC Color Guard

National Anthem performed by the Omaha South High School Chamber Choir under the direction of Mr. Tyler Gruttemeyer.

Leading with Love: The Turnaround of Richmond Juvenile Detention Center

Keynote Speaker: Rodney Robinson, 2019 National Teacher of the Year

2019 National Teacher of the Year Rodney Robinson shares how he uses a whole-child approach to help students at Virgie Binford Education Center, a school inside the Richmond Juvenile Detention Center, and how he provides a civic-centered education to promote his students’ social-emotional growth.

Award Presentation

Policy Leader of the Year: Randy Liepa, Wayne RESA, Michigan

Presenter: Lupe Ramos-Montigny, Michigan State Board of Education

10:30 am–10:45 am
Transition Break Blackstone Foyer

10:45 am–12:00 pm
Concurrent Sessions

A. Educating Incarcerated Youth
St. Nicholas A

Presenters: Hailly Korman, Bellwether Education Partners; Antonio Parés, Donnell-Kay Foundation; Rodney Robinson, 2019 National Teacher of the Year; Nina Salomon, Council of State Governments Justice Center

Who ensures that the needs of incarcerated youth are met? In most states, the lines of authority are blurred or nonexistent. Learn
how state boards can boldly lead to create better systems of support in the juvenile justice system.

B. Amplifying Teacher Voice in Policymaking St. Nicholas B

**Presenters:** Jordan Koch, Papillion La Vista Community Schools, Nebraska; Sydney Morris, Educators for Excellence; Maureen Nickels, Nebraska State Board of Education; Panelists examine a national survey of teachers for insight into their views on a variety of issues and examine what state boards can do to assure teachers that their voices are heard.

12:00 pm–12:45 pm
**Networking Lunch Blackstone Ballroom**
*Thanks to the Walton Family Foundation for their sponsorship.*

1:00 pm–2:30 pm
**Afternoon Plenary Blackstone Ballroom**
**Keynote Speaker:** Dan Goldhaber, CALDER, American Institutes for Research

**Discussants:** Angelika Schroeder, Colorado State Board of Education; Ruth Wattenberg, DC State Board of Education

Issue number one on state board agendas is teachers—from preparation to recruitment and retention. Top researcher Dan Goldhaber dives into the national data and policymaking opportunities that will help state boards deliver on the promise of excellence and equity for all students.

Awards Presentation

**Distinguished Service Awards:** Jay Barth, Arkansas; Connie Fletcher, Washington; Molly O’Holleran, Nebraska

**Presenters:** Rachel Wise, NASBE Board Chair; John Kelly, NASBE Past-Chair

2:30 pm–2:45 pm
**Transition Break Blackstone Foyer**

2:45 pm–5:30 pm
**NCSBEE Business Meeting and Sessions Washington City**

**C. Board Chairs Roundtable:**

A Colleague-to-Colleague Discussion St. Nicholas A

**Presenters:** Brooke Axiotis, NASBE Chair-Elect; Linda Darling-Hammond, California State Board of Education; Robert Hull, NASBE President/CEO; Rachel Wise, NASBE Chair

In a rare opportunity for state board chairs and vice chairs to gather for a closed-door conversation on how state boards can leverage their collective voice to lead the national dialogue on education, Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond, esteemed researcher and now a board chair herself, shares her perceptions of the national landscape and the meaningful leadership opportunities before state boards.

D. Boardsmanship Development

Being an effective state board member requires leadership skills and knowledge in many areas. To help build these skills, participants can choose two out of four topics during this quickfire round of sessions.

1. **Student Voice Murray**

**Presenter:** Martha Harris, Maine State Board of Education

State boards increasingly recognize the importance of incorporating student voice in policymaking, and some boards choose to formalize a process for students to serve on the board or on advisory councils.

2. **Defending State Board Authority Paxton**

**Presenters:** Stephanie Bell, Alabama State Board of Education; Vic Lenz, Missouri State Board of Education

Legislatures, governors, and others sometimes attempt to restrict a board’s authority, change its makeup, or eliminate it altogether. Presenters discuss how to effectively defend the board’s authority as the stable center of education policymaking and the citizen’s voice in education.
3. Strategic Planning Merchants

Presenters: Olivia Holmes Oxendine, North Carolina State Board of Education; Peter Maier, Washington State Board of Education; Deanna Townsend-Smith, North Carolina State Board of Education

State boards understand the importance of establishing a long-term vision for education in their state but may not know how best to go about it. Presenters discuss how to make sustained growth and improvement over time by committing to collaborative strategic planning.

4. Stakeholder Engagement Cozzens

Presenters: Byron Ernest, Indiana State Board of Education; Jim McNiece, Kansas State Board of Education

To be the citizens' voice in education, state boards must actively, meaningfully engage diverse stakeholders in policymaking. Learn how your state can bring all voices to the table on important policy issues.

3:45 pm–4:00 pm
Transition Break Blackstone Foyer

4:00 pm–5:30 pm
NASBE Area Meetings

Central Area Murray
Facilitators: Lupe Ramos-Montigny, Michigan State Board of Education; Vic Lenz, Missouri State Board of Education

Northeastern Area Paxton
Facilitators: John Kelly, NASBE Past-Chair; Rachel Wise, NASBE Chair

Southern Area Merchants
Facilitators: Stephanie Bell, Alabama State Board of Education; Kevin Boyd, Georgia State Board of Education

Western Area Cozzens
Facilitators: Janet Cannon, Utah State Board of Education; Angelika Schroeder, Colorado State Board of Education

6:00 pm–10:00 pm
Nebraska State Night The Durham Museum

Speakers: Secretary of State Robert Evnen, Nebraska; John Witzel, Nebraska State Board of Education; Durham Museum Staff

Buses depart at 6:00 pm.

Performance by the Lincoln High School World Music Drumming Ensemble, directed by Jill Oetken; program facilitated by Brett Noser, Lincoln Public Schools.

Thanks to the Durham Museum for hosting this event.

Friday, October 18
7:00 am–5:30 pm
Registration Blackstone Foyer

7:30 am–12:00 pm
NCSBEE Votes and Sessions
Washington City

7:30 am–8:30 am
Networking Breakfast Blackstone Ballroom

8:30 am–10:30 am
Morning Plenary Blackstone Ballroom

Presenter: Robert Hull, NASBE President and CEO

Unlocking the Potential: Science of Learning & Education Policy

Presenters: Amy Nicholson, Turnaround for Children; Jennifer DePaoli, Learning Policy Institute

Awards Presentation

Civic Engagement Champion Awards: Don Jenkins, Washington; Jane Leyderman, Illinois; Michael Neagle, Massachusetts; Michelle St. Pierre, Maryland

Presenter: Karen Blaak, Frank Islam Institute for 21st Century Citizenship

10:30 am–10:45 am
Transition Break Blackstone Foyer

10:45 am–12:00 pm
Concurrent Sessions
E. Assessment Innovation: Is Your State Ready? St. Nicholas A
Presenter: Chris Minnich, NWEA

What policy and political conditions are necessary for assessment innovation and effective collaboration? Leading experts discuss what’s on the frontier for assessment, including ideas on how to create an assessment system that is integrated with classroom instruction and is valid, reliable, and relevant to teachers, parents, and students.

F. Put Early Learning on Your State Board’s Agenda St. Nicholas B
Presenters: Kenneth Mason, Georgia State Board of Education; Samuel Meisels, Buffett Early Childhood Institute

The NASBE Early Childhood Education Workgroup presents policy recommendations that it will release in its final report. Dr. Samuel Meisels discusses how Nebraska has engaged a spectrum of stakeholders to support better planning and policies for Nebraska’s children, including some lessons and best practices for other states, and strengthen connections between state policies and local implementation.

12:00 pm–1:15 pm Networking and Awards Lunch
Blackstone Ballroom
Sponsored by the Nebraska Council of School Administrators (NCSA).

Awards Presentation
Policy Leader of the Year: Senator Gray Tollison, Mississippi

Presenter: John Kelly, NASBE Past Chair

Friend of Education: Nebraska Loves Public Schools, Sally Nelson Barrett

Presenter: Rachel Wise, NASBE Chair; Nebraska Council of School Administrators (NCSA) Ambassador

Nebraska Delegation in Support of Nebraska Loves Public Schools:
Mr. Kyle McGowan, NCSA Ambassador
Dr. Keith Rohwer, NCSA Ambassador
Dr. Cinde Wendell, NCSA Ambassador
Mr. Tyler Dahlgren, NCSA Communications Specialist
Dr. Michael Dulaney, NCSA Executive Director

1:30 pm–2:45 pm Concurrent Sessions

G. Transforming Civics Education in an Era of Polarized Politics St. Nicholas A
Presenters: Jay Barth, former Chair, Arkansas State Board of Education; Adam Morfeld, Nebraska Senator and Executive Director, Civics Nebraska; Darren Reisberg, Illinois State Board of Education; Fez Zafar, Student Member, Iowa State Board of Education

As bastions of civil dialogue and governance, state boards should not only model but also advocate for building broader, deeper civic knowledge and skills across K-12. Panelists explore the importance of state policy engagement, as well as avenues and obstacles to championing civic-ready students.

H. Aligning Career and Technical Education with State Workforce Needs St. Nicholas B
Presenter: Georgia Heyward, University of Wisconsin

Workforce development dominated the governors’ state of the state addresses in 2019. Experts present data on CTE programs and student outcomes and discuss how K-12 programs can align with state workforce development goals.

2:45 pm–3:15 pm Networking Break Blackstone Foyer

3:15 pm–5:00 pm Afternoon Plenary: A Look at the National Landscape of Education
Blackstone Ballroom
Presenter: Valerie Calderon, Gallup
Gallup, the world’s leader in public opinion polling and stakeholder research, presents the latest data and insights on the attitudes and behaviors of U.S. students, teachers, and the general public. Tabletop discussions connect state board members with partners to investigate state intersections with the national data.

**Leadership Is a Team Sport**  
**Presenters:** Jason Dean, Mississippi State Board of Education; John Kelly, Mississippi State Board of Education; Gray Tollison, Mississippi Senator; Carey Wright, Mississippi State Superintendent

*Education Week’s* 2018 Quality Counts report recognized Mississippi as one of the five most improved states in the nation. Mississippi’s education governance leaders discuss how they leverage collaborative methods of leadership to focus on comprehensive improvement and share how a strong vision, strategic policy initiatives, and collective leadership can make systemic improvement possible.

**7:00 pm**  
**NASBE Movie Night:**  
*The Peanut Butter Falcon*  
Blackstone Ballroom

Remarks by Congressman Don Bacon, Nebraska

*Special thanks to Armory Films, Roadside Attractions, and Lionsgate for making this screening possible.*

**Saturday, October 19**

7:00 am–12:30 pm  
**Registration** Blackstone Foyer

7:30 am–8:30 am  
**Networking Breakfast** Blackstone A

9:00 am–11:00 am  
**Plenary Session:** Building Capacity for Educating the Whole Child  
Blackstone A  
**Presenters:** Megan Blanco, NASBE; Abigail Potts, NASBE; Joseph Hedger, NASBE; Renée Rybak Lang, NASBE

NASBE staff present resources and data on educating the whole child.

8:45 am–10:45 am  
**Delegate Assembly** Blackstone B

11:15 am–12:30 pm  
**Board of Directors Meeting** Blackstone B

► **Thanks to College Board for providing the cellphone charging station.**

When students have access to school breakfast with Breakfast After the Bell, data demonstrates improvements in academics, attendance, behavior, and budget. Join Share Our Strength’s No Kid Hungry campaign’s focus group on Friday at 7:30 am to learn more about expanding school breakfast access in your state with Breakfast After the Bell and to provide insights about how state boards of education can support initiatives to engage education stakeholder in Breakfast After the Bell implementation.
NCOSEA conference agenda

All sessions held in NCOSEA meeting room, Hill, unless otherwise noted.

Wednesday, October 16

5:00 pm
NCOSEA Informal Social Gathering and Welcome

6:00 pm–10:00 pm
NASBE Welcome Reception
Henry Doorly Zoo

Thursday, October 17

7:30 am–8:30 am
NASBE Networking Breakfast
Blackstone Ballroom

8:30 am–8:45 am
Welcome and Introductions from Each NCOSEA Member
Presenter: Todd Allen, NCOSEA Chair

8:45 am–9:45 am
Supreme Court Update
Presenter: Sarah Forster, Assistant Attorney General, Maine

This session will highlight the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2018–19 term, with an emphasis on updating attendees about significant decisions related to government, public policy, and education law.

9:45 am–10:00 am
Break

10:00 am–11:00 am
School Choice: Charter School Trends
Presenter: Joseph Peters, Assistant Attorney General, Colorado

Most states in the U.S. have a charter school system, with individual schools authorized at the state or local level. This session will discuss current trends around the country and how federal commitment to school choice is changing K-12 public education nationally.

11:00 am–12:00 pm
State Roundtable Discussion (Round 1)

Each member is given an opportunity to identify a legal issue of concern in his or her state for group discussion. Identification of issues to the group may lead to discussions with members throughout the remainder of the conference, with follow-up during State Roundtable Discussion (Round 2).

12:00 pm–12:45 pm
NASBE Networking Lunch
Blackstone Ballroom

1:15 pm–2:15 pm
Special Education Update
Presenter: Thomas Mayes, Assistant Attorney General, Iowa

Lawyers think of special education in terms of the on-the-ground work of developing IEPs and litigating the provision of FAPE, but SEAs have a unique role in overseeing IDEA compliance. This session is designed to speak specifically to aspects of special education law that impact the work of SEAs and their counsel.

2:15 pm–3:15 pm
Employment Law Update
Presenter: Stephanie Caldwell, Assistant Attorney General, Nebraska

SEA attorneys are often called up to advise their client agencies on employment law matters, including those unique to public sector employers. This session is intended to provide SEA lawyers the latest information regarding hot topics in public sector employment law.
3:15 pm–3:30 pm  
**Break**

3:30 pm–4:30 pm  
**Revisions to the OCR Case Processing Manual**  
**Presenter:** Todd Allen, Deputy General Counsel, Kentucky Department of Education  
How will recent changes to the manual impact processing, investigation, and complaint resolution? This session will focus on recent changes the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights has made to its case processing manual and how those changes might impact SEAs and LEAs.

6:00 pm–10:00 pm  
**NASBE Nebraska State Night**  
*The Durham Museum*  
Or NCOSEA Social Outing (TBD)

**Friday, October 18**

7:30 am–8:30 am  
**NCOSEA Breakfast**

8:30 am–9:30 am  
**Transportation and Education Policy Issues for Students in Foster Care or Other Out-of-Home Placement**  
**Presenter:** Karen Haase, KSB School Law, Nebraska  
Federal law provides a framework for SEAs and LEAs to meet the educational needs of students in out-of-home placement. This session will provide an overview on how those obligations have evolved in recent years.

9:30 am–10:45 am  
**Federal Policy Update**  
**Presenter:** Reg Leichty, Foresight Law + Policy  
What’s happening at the U.S. Department of Education and in Congress that will impact SEAs and public education? This session will provide an update about developments on the federal level that may impact the work of NCOSEA members and their SEAs.

10:45 am–11:00 am  
**Break**

11:00 am–12:00 pm  
**Data Privacy Issues for SEAs**  
**Presenter:** Reg Leichty, Foresight Law + Policy  
SEAs possess big data, and everyone wants it. When may an SEA disclose personally identifiable information to other agencies, researchers, or institutions? This session will talk about redisclosure under the FERPA audit and studies exceptions, among other things.

12:15 pm–1:15 pm  
**NCOSEA Business Meeting and Lunch**

1:30 pm–2:45 pm  
**State Roundtable Discussion (Round 2)**  
Each member is given an opportunity to identify a legal issue of concern in his or her state for group discussion, including follow-up from State Roundtable Discussion (Round 1).

2:45 pm–3:45 pm  
**Ethics: Duties of a Public Attorney**  
**Presenter:** Julie C. Tolleson, First Assistant Attorney General, Colorado  
Public attorneys have certain heightened ethical obligations. For lawyers who answer to elected or appointed boards in addition to advising executive leadership in an agency, the analysis of ethical questions may become even more complicated. This session is intended to speak to some of the ethical challenges that are unique to SEA lawyers and their peers.

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**Total Content:**  
11.5 hours based on a 60-minute hour.  
13.8 hours based on a 50-minute hour.
Congratulations to our 2019 award winners!

Policy Leader of the Year

**Randy Liepa** became superintendent of Wayne Regional Educational Service Agency in Wayne, Michigan, in 2015, after serving as superintendent of Livonia Public Schools for 12 years. He also was an assistant superintendent and an adjunct professor at Wayne State University. Liepa focused on using federal dollars to help the lowest achieving schools in Wayne County, including the Detroit Public Schools Community District, for which he supported debt relief and its rebirth as a locally controlled district. He was the Region 9 Superintendent of the Year in Michigan and the Administrator of the Year for the Michigan Parent Teacher Student Association.

**Gray Tollison** has been a Mississippi state senator since 1996, serving as chairman of the Senate Education Committee since 2012. In 2019, he was elected Senate president pro tempore. He also serves on committees for public health and welfare, finance, and universities and colleges. Senator Tollison has been recognized for his leadership in college and career readiness, improved accountability, literacy, early learning, and juvenile justice, among other areas. During his tenure, Mississippi has achieved unprecedented academic success, with *Education Week’s* Quality Counts report naming it one of the top five most improved in the nation in 2018.

Distinguished Service Awards

**Jay Barth** is M.E. and Ima Graves Peace Professor of Politics and director of the Arkansas Policy Program at Hendrix College and has received numerous awards for his research and teaching, which focuses on the politics of the south, state government and politics, LGBT politics, political communication, and the achievement gap in Arkansas. Barth was a member of the Arkansas State Board of Education for seven years and its chair for two years. He led Arkansas’s effort to adopt next-generation science standards and championed reform of discipline practices, which culminated in state legislation to promote restorative practices. Barth headed NASBE’s board of directors in 2017.
**Distinguished Service Awards**

**Connie Fletcher** was a member of the Washington State Board of Education from 2009 to 2019. Previously, she was an elected Washington State School Directors Association representative and spent 16 years serving her local schools and students as an Issaquah School District board member. Fletcher served two terms as western area director on NASBE’s board of directors and chaired the Government Affairs Committee. Fletcher has consulted for nonprofit organizations, municipalities, and school districts in governance, planning, and major gifts fundraising. She also worked for the City of Seattle and for two United Way organizations.

**Molly O’Holleran** was elected to the Nebraska State Board of Education in 2010 and served for eight years. She served twice on NASBE’s nominations committee, and for six years on its Government Affairs Committee, which she chaired in 2015. As chair of the Nebraska state board’s AQuESTT committee, the statewide school accountability system, O’Holleran promoted community partnerships, relationships, and successes, and she focused the committee’s efforts on student transitions and expanding educational opportunities and access for all Nebraskans. A former teacher, O’Holleran served on the North Platte Public Schools Board of Education and is a current member of the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation’s Board of Directors.

**Friend of Education Award**

**Nebraska Loves Public Schools** launched in 2011 to change the persistent, negative narrative about public schools through visual storytelling. The statewide initiative documents stories of schools across Nebraska to build awareness, empathy, and support for public education. With more than 100 short films and documentaries, television and radio spots, a vibrant social media following, a PBS-affiliated television series, countless awards and civic recognition, and a strong rallying cry heralded with ubiquitous I Love Public Schools T-shirts, the campaign has promoted positive dialogue and pride in Nebraska’s public schools and ignited a nationwide conversation.
Speaker Bios

**Brooke Axiotis** is president of the Iowa State Board of Education and president-elect of NASBE’s Board of Directors. She is also Drake Law School’s director of academic success programs and a member of the Iowa State Bar. She serves on the boards of Goodwill of Central Iowa, the Urban Ag Academy, and Links Inc. Axiotis also chairs NASBE’s Public Education Positions Committee.

**Stephanie Bell** is the longest serving member of the Alabama State Board of Education and was appointed by two governors to serve as a commissioner on the Education Commission of the States. Bell created and then served as executive director on the Statewide Committee on Reforming Education. In 1995, Bell successfully pushed for increasing dual enrollment opportunities for Alabama students. She also exposed and fought corruption in the state’s two-year college system, resulting in numerous convictions. As a reporter for the *Montgomery Advertiser/Alabama Journal*, Bell received the CASE II Media Award. She is a southern area director on NASBE’s Board of Directors.

**Karen Blaak** is an award-winning secondary English teacher and head of department in Ontario, Canada. She thrives on creating opportunities for students to engage with audiences for purposes beyond the classroom and has created courses that fuse science, technology, engineering, and math with the English curriculum.

**Matthew Blomstedt** has served as commissioner of the Nebraska Department of Education since 2014. He has applied 20 years of experience to improving educational finance and organization, assessment and accountability, and professional development and developing systems to enhance blended and distance learning opportunities across the state. Together with the Nebraska State Board of Education, he designed and implemented AQuESTT, Nebraska’s new statewide school accountability system; implemented a 10-year strategic plan shared by the state board and the Nebraska Department of Education; and designed and implemented the statewide, multiple-measure Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System.

**Kevin Boyd** is a member of the Georgia State Board of Education, where he represents the 9th Congressional District and serves as vice chair of appeals, vice chair of state schools, and is a member of the Charter and District Flexibility Committee. Boyd is president and second-generation owner of Boyd’s Cleaning Service. He sits on the Court Appointed Special Advocate Board, serving Hall and Dawson counties, and is a member of the Gainesville Kiwanis Board. He is also a southern area director on NASBE’s Board of Directors.
Valerie J. Calderon is a consultant and researcher at Gallup, where she provides strategic guidance to Gallup and Gallup clients regarding the design and execution of research projects. Calderon also directs the Gallup Student Poll, which measures hope and engagement among students in grades five through 12. She has published numerous articles, reports, and case studies and is vice president of the Bennington Public Schools Board of Education and board vice president of the Bennington Public Schools chapter of TeamMates Mentoring.

Janet Cannon is serving a fifth term on the Utah State Board of Education, where she served seven years as vice chair, and she served four years on the Utah State Board of Regents. She was the governor’s appointee to the Utah College of Applied Technology Board and was a liaison between the Utah State Board and the State Charter School Board. For many years she also chaired the School and Instructional Trustlands Nominating Committee. She is a western area director on NASBE’s Board of Directors, a position she also held from 2003 to 2005, and she served on the Government Affairs Committee. She received a NASBE distinguished service award in 2006.

Linda Darling-Hammond is president of the California State Board of Education, the Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education Emeritus at Stanford University, and founding president of the Learning Policy Institute. She is past president of the American Educational Research Association and a current member of the American Association of Arts and Sciences and of the National Academy of Education. Darling-Hammond previously served as executive director of the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, director of RAND Corporation’s education program, and co-founded both a preschool and public high school. She was named one of the nation’s 10 most influential people affecting educational policy in 2006 and later was leader of President Barack Obama’s education policy transition team.

Jason Dean is chairman of the Mississippi State Board of Education. He is the vice president of Tenax Aerospace, an aerospace company based in Madison. Previously, he was vice president of the Mississippi Economic Council and a policy adviser to Governor Haley Barbour. He also was a White House Fellow and member of faculty and staff at the University of Mississippi. Dean serves as a new member representative on NASBE’s Board of Directors.

Byron Ernest is director of educator development and partnerships for Noble Education Initiative. Previously, he was principal at Emmerich Manual High School in Indianapolis after Indiana took it over for receiving seven consecutive failing annual performance grades. Under Dr. Ernest’s leadership, Manual became the only takeover school in Indiana to be removed from the failing category. He was department head for
agriculture and Future Farmers of America at Lebanon Community School Corporation, head of schools for Hoosier Academies, Indiana Teacher of the Year in 2010, and serves as secretary to the Indiana State Board of Education and secretary-treasurer to NASBE’s Board of Directors.

**Dan Goldhaber** is director of the Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research (CALDER) at the American Institutes for Research and director of the Center for Education Data & Research at the University of Washington. Goldhaber’s work focuses on issues of educational productivity and reform at the K-12 level; the broad array of human capital policies that influence the teacher workforce; and connections between students’ K-12 experiences and postsecondary outcomes. Previously, Goldhaber was president of the Association for Education Finance and Policy, elected member of the Alexandria City School Board, and co-editor of *Education Finance and Policy*.

**Martha Harris** is a member of the Maine State Board of Education, where she previously served as chair. She also served over 20 years as a board member of RSU 22/SAD 22. Harris has been in the general practice of law in Bangor since 1977 and brings the perspective of living in a small town and being involved in the local school board.

**Robert Hull**, NASBE’s president and CEO, came to NASBE as the inaugural director of the Center for College, Career and Civic Readiness after a 40-year career as an elementary teacher, principal, and assistant superintendent. Previously, Hull was NASBE’s executive vice president, assistant superintendent of schools in the division of teaching and learning and associate state superintendent at the West Virginia Department of Education.

**John Kelly** is immediate past chair of NASBE’s Board of Director and a member of Mississippi’s State Board of Education, having served a two-year term as its chair. He has been Gulfport’s chief administrative officer since 2007. Kelly was regional director for community and family support with Navy Region Southeast in Jacksonville, Florida, and managed his own consulting firm, Resources Management Inc. Kelly was an adjunct professor at the University of Southern Mississippi–Gulf Park Campus, chairman of the National Board of Directors for the American Cancer Society, and president and chief volunteer officer for South Mississippi’s United Way.

**Jordan Koch** teaches sixth grade at Papillion La Vista Community Schools. In 2015, she was a policy intern for NASBE’s Center for College, Career, and Civic Readiness. Koch has been active in state education policy through the Nebraska State Education Association.

**Hailly Korman** is a senior associate partner of policy and evaluation at Bellwether Education Partners, focusing on correctional education, justice-involved youth, and school discipline. Previously, Korman was director of special projects at the
Speaker Bios

Center for Educational Excellence in Alternative Settings and an attorney at Morrison & Foerster LLP, where she served as pro bono counsel in *Reed v. State of California*, representing student plaintiffs at underperforming Los Angeles public schools challenging the constitutionality of strict reverse-seniority layoffs. In 2010, she received both Public Counsel’s Impact Litigation Award and the American Civil Liberties Union’s Social Justice Award for her work on that case.

**O. Victor Lenz Jr.** joined the Missouri State Board of Education in 2013. He worked in the Lindbergh School District in St. Louis, Missouri, as a teacher and administrator, ending his career there as assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction. For 10 years, he served on the Lindbergh Schools Board of Education and was president of the Missouri School Boards Association from 2011 to 2012. He is a central area director on NASBE’s Board of Directors.

**Kenneth Mason** is director of Urban Initiatives for the Southern Regional Education Board and a member of the Georgia State Board of Education. He is a founding board member and advisory council chair for KIPP Strive Academy and teaches high school students on a civil rights emergent experience called Sojourn to the Past. Mason has also been a community liaison and robotic engineering consultant for Berkeley National Laboratory and served as a corps member adviser for Teach For America.

**Jim McNiece** represents District 10 on the Kansas State Board of Education, where he served as board chair from 2015 to 2017. He has almost 40 years of experience as a teacher, coach, and principal in Kansas, serving both public and private schools, and he has participated in numerous state committees as well as professional and community boards. McNiece is a former principal of the year and received the Excellence in Public Service award. He led NASBE’s Board of Directors in 2016.

**Samuel J. Meisels** is the founding executive director of the Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska, where he is also a professor of child, youth, and family studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. A former preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade teacher, he was senior advisor in early childhood development for the Developmental Evaluation Clinic of Boston Children’s Hospital, a professor in the Department of Child Study at Tufts University, and director of the Eliot-Pearson Children’s School. Meisels spent 21 years on the faculty at the University of Michigan and became the president of Erikson Institute in 2002.

**Chris Minnich** became CEO of NWEA in 2018. Previously, he was executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers. Minnich also held multiple positions at Harcourt, all of which focused on the advancement and
improvement of assessments, and he was director of test design and implementation at the Oregon Department of Education. He is co-chair on the Oregon Business and Industry Education Committee and a member on the University of Oregon President’s Diversity Committee.

**Adam Morfeld** is a Nebraska state senator representing northeast Lincoln, and he is founder and executive director of Civic Nebraska, a nonprofit that works to instill civic leadership in young Nebraskans and ensure that democracy is accessible to working Nebraskans, families, and seniors. Sen. Morfeld serves on the Education and Judiciary Committees and also teaches American government and public administration as an adjunct faculty member at Doane University’s Lincoln campus.

**Sydney Morris** is co-founder and co-CEO of Educators for Excellence. Previously, Morris taught second and third graders in the Bronx and designed and led her school’s first-ever afterschool ballet program. In addition to regularly contributing to media outlets on education issues and speaking at conferences, including Forbes Women’s Summit and SXSWedu, Morris has been recognized on City & State’s 40 Under 40 Rising Political Stars list, Forbes’ 30 Under 30 Education list, and as a finalist for the Teach For America Peter Jennings Award for Civic Leadership.

**Amy Nicholson** joined Turnaround for Children in 2014 as a program director, implementing their school improvement model in four schools in Washington, DC. In 2017, she became director of integrated program strategy. Previously, Nicholson was director of school performance for the UNO Charter School Network in Chicago. She also worked as an education pioneer fellow and later as a special projects manager for the Chicago Public Schools.

**Maureen Nickels** is vice president of the Nebraska State Board of Education. She taught in upper elementary grades for the Grand Island Public Schools for 26 years. Nickels is a past president of the University of Nebraska at Kearney Alumni Association, served on the Hall County Clean Community System’s Board of Directors, and is a member of the Alpha Phi Delta Xi Alumni Chapter.

**Antonio Parés** is a partner at the Donnell-Kay Foundation. Previously, he was education policy director for the Mayor’s Office of Children’s Affairs in Denver. Parés consulted with multiple national nonprofits focused on educational equity, worked on political campaigns in Texas and Colorado, and supported two school turnaround efforts within Denver Public Schools. He started as a secondary social studies teacher with IDEA Public Schools in Texas along the U.S. and Mexico border. Parés serves on the boards of Conservation Colorado, Latino Community Foundation of Colorado, and the Colorado Charter School Institute.
Lupe Ramos-Montigny was elected to the Michigan State Board of Education in 2012. She worked in Michigan public schools for 36 years. Most of her professional career was dedicated to the Grand Rapids Public Schools. She has served on the Committee to Honor Cesar E. Chavez, The Cesar E. Chavez Unity Committee, Student Advancement Foundation Board, and the Kent County Citizens Friend of the Court Advisory Board. Ramos-Montigny has also served on the Michigan Democratic Hispanic/Latino Caucus, Kent County Democratic Party, and Michigan Democratic Party. She is a central area director on NASBE’s Board of Directors.

Darren Reisberg is chairman of the Illinois State Board of Education and vice president of programs and strategy at the Joyce Foundation. Previously, he was vice president for strategic initiatives and deputy provost at the University of Chicago and as the first executive director of the university’s Institute of Politics. From 2005 to 2012, Reisberg was general counsel and deputy superintendent of the Illinois board. He began his career in Chicago as an employment and labor attorney at Sidley Austin, LLP, after serving as a judicial law clerk for U.S. District Court Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer.

Rodney Robinson is a 19-year teaching veteran and the 2019 National Teacher of the Year. In 2015, Robinson started teaching at Virgie Binford Education Center, a school inside the Richmond Juvenile Detention Center, in an effort to better understand the school-to-prison pipeline. Robinson uses a whole-child approach to help the students who are most vulnerable. He has been published three times by Yale University and has received numerous awards, including the R.E.B. Award for Teaching Excellence. He is a member of Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney’s Education Compact Team and has also worked with Pulitzer Award–winning author James Foreman on developing curriculum units on race, class, and punishment as a part of the Yale Teacher’s Institute.

Nina Salomon, deputy program director of corrections and reentry at the Council of State Governments Justice Center, oversees the Improving Outcomes for Youth Statewide Juvenile Justice Initiative, was a lead author of the School Discipline Consensus Report, and leads the organization’s efforts to improve educational outcomes for youth involved with the juvenile justice system. Previously, she was a policy advisor at EducationCounsel LLC and an investment associate at The Chicago Public Education Fund.

Angelika Schroeder is a former tax certified public accountant, college professor of accounting, and a member of the Colorado State Board of Education. She served on the Boulder Valley School Board as treasurer and vice president and on the Teacher and Special Services Professional Standards Board. Schroeder also served
on boards and executive committees of the Colorado Association of School Boards and the Alliance for Quality Teaching, and she participated in the National School Boards Association’s Federal Relations Network. She is on the Teacher Quality Commission and liaison to the Colorado Association of School Boards. She is a western area director on NASBE’s Board of Directors.

Rachel Wise, elected to the Nebraska State Board of Education in 2013, chairs NASBE’s Board of Directors. Dr. Wise has been involved in education for over 30 years, beginning her career as a teacher in Tekamah, Nebraska. Wise also taught at Winnebago Public Schools, Logan View Public Schools, and Wayne State College. She has held positions in administrative and management at Martin Luther Home in York, Nebraska; Educational Service Unit #7 in Columbus, Nebraska; and Omaha Public Schools and Building Bright Futures in Omaha, Nebraska.

Carey M. Wright, EdD, is the state superintendent of education for Mississippi. Previously, Dr. Wright was chief academic officer and the deputy chief for the Office of Teaching and Learning at the District of Columbia Public Schools and a consultant to the Harvard Business School Public Education Leadership Project. She also was associate superintendent for the Office of Special Education and Student Services at Montgomery County Public Schools and was a teacher, principal, and director of special education and student services at Howard County Public Schools. Dr. Wright is past president of the Board of Directors of the Council of Chief State School Officers and is a member of the Broad Academy and Chiefs for Change.

Fez Zafar is a student member on the Iowa State Board of Education. He attends Roosevelt High School in Des Moines. Zafar is founder of Rider Films and is an international inclusion and diversity ambassador at his school. He also founded the nonprofit, Site for Smiles and Smarts, to raise awareness and funds for the education and well-being of children in Central Iowa and around the world. He is an avid national award-winning filmmaker and was recently recognized at the White House for his nonprofit work.
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