



# THE RICHMOND EDUCATION PANEL SERIES

Featuring panel discussions by leading experts on innovations in education



## October 14, 2009: THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

**RECENT RESULTS FROM THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS** reveal that, although math and reading scores for young minority students have increased, the gap between white and minority students remains almost as wide as it was in the 1980s. McKinsey & Company has described this educational "achievement gap" as "the economic equivalent of a permanent national recession." Given the remarkable persistence of the achievement gap, even in the face of policies like "No Child Left Behind," what needs to be done to close it?

### ABOUT THE PANELISTS



**Frederick M. Hess**, the [American Enterprise Institute \(AEI\)](#) Director of Education Policy Studies, is an educator, political scientist, and author. At AEI, Mr. Hess studies a range of K-12 and higher education issues. He has authored influential books such as *Common Sense School Reform*, *Revolution at the Margins*, and *Spinning Wheels*. A former public high school social studies teacher, he has also taught education and policy at universities including Georgetown University, Harvard University, Rice University, the University of Virginia, and the University of Pennsylvania. He is executive editor of *Education Next* and a faculty associate with Harvard's Program on Education Policy and Governance. He also serves on the board of directors for the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and on the review board for the Broad Prize in Urban Education.



**Andrew J. Rotherham** is co-founder and Publisher of [Education Sector](#), a national education policy think tank. He writes a regular column for *U.S. News & World Report*, and the blog [Eduwonk.com](#), which an *Education Week* study cited as among the most influential information sources in education today. Mr. Rotherham previously served at the White House as Special Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy during the Clinton Administration and is a former member of the Virginia Board of Education. Mr. Rotherham is a Senior Fellow at the Democratic Leadership Council and serves on advisory boards and committees for a variety of organizations including the Broad Foundation, Harvard University, and the National Governors Association. He is also a member of the board of directors for the Indianapolis Mind Trust, the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia, and Democrats for Education Reform.



**Carmita Vaughan** is the Chief Strategy Officer at [America's Promise Alliance](#). As Chief Strategy Officer, Vaughan leads Alliance efforts to improve the lives of disadvantaged youth. She oversees the Alliance's Dropout Prevention Summits and the "Grad Nation" initiative, to help communities increase high school graduation rates and ensure that all students graduate high school-, college- and work-ready. Ms. Vaughan is the former Chief of Staff of Chicago Public Schools Office of High Schools and High School Programs. While at Chicago Public Schools (CPS), Vaughan worked closely with Arne Duncan, currently U.S. Secretary of Education, to develop a comprehensive strategy to increase Chicago's graduation rate to 70 percent by 2010. Vaughan worked toward developing and implementing a systematic approach to address at-risk students, as well as those who already dropped out of school. Vaughan began her tenure with the Chicago Public Schools through the Broad Residency in Urban Education, a two-year national program that builds leadership in urban public school districts. Prior to joining CPS, Vaughan served in global marketing, strategic planning, and engineering/operations management roles in several Fortune 500 companies, including Procter and Gamble and Danaher Corporation. Vaughan holds a Master's in Business Administration from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, and received her undergraduate degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Michigan.



**John L. Winn** is the Chief Program Officer at the [National Math and Science Initiative](#). An educator for 35 years, Mr. Winn began his career as an elementary and middle school teacher. He joined the Florida Department of Education in 1984 and was appointed Commissioner of Education in August 2004. During his tenure as Commissioner, student achievement in Reading and Mathematics reached an all-time high. In February 2007 he retired as Commissioner of Education and joined the National Math and Science Initiative in March of the same year as the Chief Program Officer of Advanced Placement Training and Incentive Program and the UTeach program. Throughout his career, Mr. Winn has built a solid reputation as an authority in statewide implementation of innovative education improvements, and on policy issues facing public education at every level.



## October 28, 2009: MEASURING SUCCESS

**IN SPITE OF THE FOCUS** on standardized measurement, including "No Child Left Behind," it is still difficult for states, school districts, and schools to collect and present data that truly measures student progress and success. In fact, in a recent report, the [Center for American Progress](#) and the [American Enterprise Institute](#) pointed to a lack of clear, standardized metrics as one of the major roadblocks preventing our country from establishing a "performance culture" in our schools. The questions remain: What measures really indicate student engagement and achievement? How can states, districts, and schools collaborate to ensure the right data is collected, and used, to help students and school systems improve?

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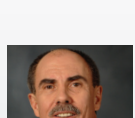
**Jane Norwood Kusiak** is the Executive Director of the [Council on Virginia's Future](#). The Council was established to develop a roadmap for Virginia's future and to assess the state's progress toward long-term goals. One of the Council's signature initiatives is Virginia Performs, a performance leadership and accountability system within state government. From 1998 through 2003, she served in several roles in the Warner Administration, including Deputy Director of Transition and Director of Policy and Legislation in the Office of the Governor. From September 1984 until July 1998, Ms. Kusiak provided staff support to the Virginia General Assembly. In 1992, the Richmond Metropolitan Area YWCA named Ms. Kusiak 'Outstanding Woman in Government'. Ms. Kusiak holds a Bachelor of Science degree in hospital administration from Ithaca College and a Master of Arts degree from St. Louis University.



**Shane J. Lopez**, Ph.D., Senior Scientist in Residence at Gallup, is an architect of the [Gallup Student Poll](#). A measure of hope, engagement, and well-being, the Gallup Student Poll taps into the hearts and minds of American students to determine what drives achievement. Dr. Lopez is the director of the annual Gallup Well-Being Forum, which convenes scholars, leaders, and decision makers to discuss healthcare and global well-being. He also serves as the Research Director for the Clifton Strengths School. Dr. Lopez is the past associate editor of the *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, an editorial board member of the *Journal of Positive Psychology*, and an ad-hoc reviewer for many psychology journals. He is a licensed psychologist, a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, and educational advisor for Discovery Television.



**Arthur J. Rothkopf**, Senior Vice President and Counselor to the President of the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#), leads the Chamber's Education and Workforce initiative, including the nonprofit Institute for a Competitive Workforce. He is responsible for supervising the National Chamber Foundation, a nonprofit public policy think tank, and the Business Civic Leadership Center, which is dedicated to improving business and society relations. Prior to joining the Chamber in July 2005, Rothkopf served for 12 years as president of Lafayette College, a highly selective undergraduate liberal arts and engineering college in Pennsylvania. Before then, Rothkopf was appointed Deputy Secretary of the Department of Transportation by President George H.W. Bush and confirmed by the Senate. He served as general counsel of the department, also a Senate-confirmed position. Rothkopf, who earned his B.A. from Lafayette College and his law degree from Harvard University, is a trustee of American University and a director of the Educational Testing Service. He served as a member of the Commission on the Future of Higher Education, established by former Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings.



**Governor Bob Wise**, author of the book *Raising the Grade: How High School Reform Can Save Our Youth and Our Nation*, became President of the [Alliance for Excellent Education](#) in February 2005. Under his leadership, the Alliance continues to build its reputation as a respected authority on high school policy, advocating for reform in America's secondary education system. As governor of West Virginia (2001-2005), he fought for and signed legislation to fund the PROMISE Scholarship Program, helping thousands of West Virginia students go to college. He signed legislation creating a nationally recognized pre-K program to cover all the state's four-year-old children. Governor Wise also established a state-wide character education curriculum, created the Governor's Helpline for Safer Schools, and dramatically increased the number of students completing high school and entering college. In 2001, Governor Wise proposed salary bonuses for teachers who achieve National Board certification, tripling the rate of certified teachers in the state. Additionally, *Education Week's* Quality Counts 2004 report gave West Virginia its highest cumulative grade out of all fifty states. As governor, he was also the first West Virginian to chair the Southern Governors' Association. From 1983 to 2001, Governor Wise served in the U.S. House of Representatives representing the 2nd District of West Virginia.



## November 11, 2009: BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

**PREPARING KIDS FOR WORK AND LIFE ISN'T EASY**—and takes the efforts of more than just parents and teachers. All children deserve nurturing environments, safe places to focus on learning, and experiences that inspire them to become successful, productive citizens. Against modern society's complicated backdrop of family, school, and social structures, what can communities do to connect children with the right supports, and connect the people supporting kids—both inside and outside the classroom?

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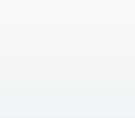
**Kitty Boitnott** is an elementary school library information specialist with 33 years of classroom experience, most recently at Chamberlayne Elementary School in Henrico County, Virginia. Since August 1, 2008, she has served as the president of the 60,000-member [Virginia Education Association](#), the largest and oldest professional organization serving public schools and public school educators in the Commonwealth. Boitnott came to Henrico County in 2002. Prior to that she was a library information specialist and English teacher in the Roanoke County and Franklin County public schools. In 2003, she earned national certification in early childhood through young adult/library media from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. In addition, she has earned her bachelor's degree from Longwood University, her M.A.L.S. from Hollins College, her Ed.S. from the University of Virginia, and her Ph.D. from Virginia Commonwealth University. Ms. Boitnott is particularly interested in helping the Virginia Education Association members connect the dots between political action, education policy, and professional empowerment.



**Sherrie Brach** is Chief Executive Officer of [United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg](#). With over \$20 million generated annually, Ms. Brach has led the development and implementation of: the regional Smart Beginnings Initiative to ensure school readiness for young children; Homeward, a regional coordinating entity focused on eliminating homelessness; and the Virginia 211 system, providing information and referral sources to the region. She has served as Chief Operating Officer, Vice President of Resource Development, and Campaign Director at this United Way and has over 20 years of experience in the United Way system including seven years in Tacoma, Washington as Campaign Manager and Vice President of Marketing and Resource Development. Ms. Brach currently serves on the Boards of Central Virginia Better Business Bureau Board, Homeward, and Leadership Metro Richmond, among other committees. She was also selected as a Fellow for the Urban Health Initiative, supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a 2007 YWCA Outstanding Women's Awards recipient, and a graduate of Leadership Metro Richmond. Ms. Brach holds a Bachelor's degree in Public Relations from West Virginia University.



**Karen Pittman** is President, CEO, and co-founder of the [Forum for Youth Investment](#). A sociologist and recognized leader in youth development, Ms. Pittman has had a distinguished career leading and creating innovative and effective programs at the Urban Institute and the Children's Defense Fund. At the Academy for Educational Development she served as vice president, founder, and director of the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research and its spin-off, the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work. She is the 2002 recipient of the National Commission for African American Education Augustus F. Hawkins Visionary Award, the 2003 American Youth Policy Forum Decade of Service Award for Sustained Visionary Leadership in Advancing Youth Policy, and the recipient of Corporate Voices for Working Families' prestigious Non-Profit of the Year Award, recognizing the Forum's commitment to partnering with corporate partners and its excellence in ensuring that all children are "Ready by 21." She was named to the 2009 *Non-Profit Times* Power and Influence Top 50 list. Ms. Pittman earned a M.A. in sociology from the University of Chicago and a B.A. degree in sociology from Oberlin College.



**Ellen Winn** currently serves as Director of the [Education Equality Project](#). As Director, Ms. Winn works to build a national education advocacy organization whose sole focus is closing the achievement gap. Prior to this post, Ms. Winn served as the Director of the Office of Strategic Partnerships at the New York City Department of Education. Her earlier career has included positions in the private education, nonprofit research, and philanthropic sectors. She holds a B.A. from Haverford College in urban studies and a M.A. in Public Policy from the University of California, Berkeley.