



The Alliance for Excellent Education Presents
A Briefing on

Turnaround Schools: The Role of School Leaders

Thursday, July 15, 2010 ♦ 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
U.S. Capitol Visitor Center (SVC 209/208)
1st Street, NE, Washington, DC

Speaker Biographies

Jamie Fasteau

Senior Education Policy Advisor (Majority Staff)

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor

Jamie Fasteau is a senior education policy advisor for the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor where she coleads the committee's K–12 education policy team. She most recently served as vice president for federal advocacy at the Alliance for Excellent Education, where she led the organization's federal policy efforts on secondary school reform. While there, she also served as the director of policy, managing the Alliance's legislative agenda.

Ms. Fasteau's work experience also includes serving as a legislative assistant for U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) working on education, children and families issues, and civil rights. Prior to that, she worked on education and civil rights policy for the National Parent Teacher Association, the American Association of University Women, and the U.S. Student Association. Ms. Fasteau is a graduate of Claremont-McKenna College in Claremont, California.

Lindsay Hunsicker

Senior Education Policy Advisor (Minority Staff)

U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Lindsay Hunsicker is the senior education policy advisor for U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY) on the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP). Her portfolio for the HELP Committee includes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Head Start Act, early childhood education, and childcare. In addition, she is currently responsible for issues under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Prior to coming to the HELP Committee, Ms. Hunsicker served as a senior legislative assistant for U.S. Senator John Ensign (R-NV) for six years. In that position, Ms. Hunsicker's portfolio included education, labor, human services, and pension issues. She began her work on Capitol Hill with U.S. Senator Gordon Smith (R-OR). Ms. Hunsicker earned her bachelor of arts degree from the University of Washington.

Thomas P. O'Brien

Former Principal, Brentwood High School (Brentwood, NY)

Thomas O'Brien has worked in the education field for almost forty years and has spent his career serving minority communities in New York City and Long Island, New York. Mr. O'Brien served as the principal of Brentwood High School for the past fifteen years. He is most proud of the accomplishments of his staff, students, and parents as they together raised the performance of a 91 percent minority school from a "school planning for restructuring" to a "school in good standing." His leadership kept the professional staff focused on the goal and convinced all that special needs students and recently arrived immigrant students could perform at high levels.

For these accomplishments, Mr. O'Brien was named the NASSP High School Principal of the Year for New York State and his school was recognized as a Breakthrough School. Mr. O'Brien retired in June 2010 and is already exploring his next challenge.

Lavonne Smiley

Principal, Tefft Middle School (Streamwood, IL)

Lavonne Smiley is principal of Tefft Middle School. Ms. Smiley began her administrative career as dean of students/special education divisional at Elgin High School in Elgin, Illinois. Four years later, she was appointed as assistant principal at Tefft Middle School where she ultimately became the principal in 2001.

Ms. Smiley graduated from Western Illinois University in 1975 with a bachelor of science degree in special education. After working with secondary level special education students with behavior disorders/emotional disturbance handicaps as well as at-risk students, she earned a master's degree in educational administration from Northern Illinois University.

Gerald N. Tirozzi, PhD

Executive Director, National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)

Gerald N. Tirozzi is executive director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). Prior to joining NASSP in March 1999, Dr. Tirozzi held a variety of positions in the field of education. These included assistant secretary of elementary and secondary education at the U.S. Department of Education (1996–99), professor of educational leadership at the University of Connecticut (1993–95), president of Wheelock College (1991–93), commissioner of education in Connecticut (1983–1991), and superintendent of New Haven Public Schools (CT) (1977–1983). Early in his career, Dr. Tirozzi also served as a science teacher, assistant principal, and principal.

Dr. Tirozzi serves on a number of national educational advisory boards, task forces, and professional organizations and some of his writings can be found in the publication *Reflections on School Leadership*. Dr. Tirozzi holds a doctor of philosophy degree in educational administration and higher education from Michigan State University. He has a sixth year certificate in education administration from Fairfield University in Connecticut. He received a master of arts degree in guidance and counseling and a bachelor of science degree in elementary education from Southern Connecticut State University.

Bob Wise

President, Alliance for Excellent Education

Bob Wise is president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and former governor of West Virginia. He is author of the book *Raising the Grade: How High School Reform Can Save Our Youth and Our Nation* and chair of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Under Governor Wise's leadership, the Alliance continues to build its reputation as a respected authority on high school policy by advocating for reform in America's secondary education system and working to ensure that all students graduate from high school prepared for college, careers, and to be contributing members of society.

Since joining the Alliance in February 2005, Governor Wise has become a sought-after speaker and advisor on education issues. He has advised the U.S. Department of Education, White House Transition Team, and frequently testifies before the U.S. Congress. Governor Wise has appeared on national television and radio programs such as *Lou Dobbs Tonight* (CNN), the *Charlie Rose Show* (PBS), the *Diane Rehm Show* (NPR), and *Washington Journal* (C-SPAN), among others.

As governor of West Virginia from 2001 to 2005, he fought for and signed legislation to fund the PROMISE Scholarship program and created the Governor's Helpline for Safer Schools. During his administration, West Virginia saw a significant increase in the number of students completing high school and entering college. From 1983 to 2001, Governor Wise served in the U.S. House of Representatives representing the 2nd District of West Virginia, where he aggressively worked to preserve federal financial aid for students to attend college.

Governor Wise serves on the board of directors of the Public Education Network and C-Change; and is an advisory committee member for several organizations including, the Springboard Project, Campaign for Educational Equity, Editorial Projects in Education, the National High School Center, the Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools, and the Moffitt Cancer Center. Governor Wise earned a bachelor's degree from Duke University and a JD from Tulane University School of Law.