



**SAFER SCHOOLS AND CAMPUSES  
BEST PRACTICES  
CLEARINGHOUSE**

## **Lessons from the Field - Strategies for Preventing Substance Use Within Multi-Tiered System of Supports During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

*Wednesday, October 27, 2021 | 3:00 – 4:00 PM ET*

### *SPEAKER BIOS*

#### **Ruth Ryder**

Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education

Ms. Ruth Ryder is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Policy and Programs – Formula Grants in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) at the U.S. Department of Education. OESE implements programs to support disadvantaged students under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act. In this role, Ms. Ryder oversees a broad range of management, policy, and program functions related to formula and discretionary grant programs under the ESEA. During her time in OESE, Ms. Ryder has sought to improve coordination across ESEA programs, increase communication with State customers and partners, and streamline internal processes. In addition, Ms. Ryder is leading an effort to improve alignment of technical assistance both within OESE, as well as across the Department. These efforts have resulted in improved ability to meet grantee needs, reduced duplication of effort, and increased return on investment. Ms. Ryder was previously the deputy director of the Office of Special Education Programs in the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, which she joined in 1988. Prior to joining the Department, Ms. Ryder was a program administrator in a Washington state school district. Additionally, Ms. Ryder has been a special education consulting teacher and a general education classroom teacher. Ms. Ryder has a bachelor's degree in psychology and elementary education and a master's degree in special education.

#### **Marci Hertz**

Senior Behavioral Scientist, Division of Adolescent and School Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Ms. Hertz has worked for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) since 2003 in the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC) and in the Division of Adolescent

and School Health (DASH). Her work focuses on researching, implementing, and evaluating systems to prevent violence and injuries. She is currently a Senior Health Scientist in DASH, leading their efforts to promote mental health and prevent substance abuse. Most recently, she was the Evaluation and Integration team (EIT) lead in NCIPC, where she provided leadership for the Medication Assisted Treatment study, and several evaluation projects, including the evaluation of the SAMHSA Naloxone Distribution and Education program, two CDC prescription drug overdose prevention state program efforts, the Core State Violence and Injury Prevention Program, and the Injury Control Research Centers. Prior to her work at CDC, Ms. Hertz was the Associate Director of Violence Prevention Programs at the Harvard School Public Health. Ms. Hertz received her B.A. in Psychology from Emory University and a Master's Degree in Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania.

## Robert Vincent

Associate Administrator for Alcohol Prevention and Treatment Policy, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Mr. Robert Vincent serves as the Associate Administrator for Alcohol Prevention and Treatment Policy for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Division of Systems Development.

Prior to coming to SAMHSA Rob served as the Administrator for True North-Student Assistance & Treatment Services at the Educational Service District 113's Department of Educational Support in Olympia, Washington. He was responsible for the development, implementation, and management of a (45) forty-five school district consortium addressing School Safety and Substance Abuse Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment programs within the five-county region.

Mr. Vincent has worked in the area of substance abuse prevention, intervention, and Treatment for more than 34 years, as a nationally certified clinician, and has served as the Director for Counseling and Assistance Programs for the U.S. Navy during Desert Storm. Mr. Vincent served as the principal investigator of the Olympia Effective Adolescent Grant, and as a consultant specializing in the implementation of schools-based prevention and treatment programs for several states. He received his Master of Science in Education Degree from Southern Illinois University.

## Renee Bradley

Education Program Specialist, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education

Dr. Renee Bradley, Ph.D., has over thirty-five years of experience in special education. She began her career as a teacher of students with emotional and behavioral disabilities. During those eight years she worked in a variety of settings from self-contained to an inclusion program to providing homebound services working with children preschool through high school. After working in a teacher training master's program for non-traditional students, Renee joined the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Research to Practice Division in 1997. Among her accomplishments she has served as the project officer for the National Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions, coordinated the OSEP Attract,

Prepare and Retain Personnel Initiative, the Learning Disabilities Initiative, and the Partnership Project. Dr. Bradley has written and contributed to numerous publications and is a frequent presenter on special education and behavior issues. Dr. Bradley has a bachelors and master's in special education from the College of Charleston and her Ph.D. in Leadership and Policy from the University of South Carolina.

## **Erin Wick**

Senior Director, Capital Region ESD113 (WA)

Mr. Erin Wick has dedicated her career to increasing systems of care. Ms. Wick and her team have been successful in:

- Securing federal grants and contracts
- Fostering long term community partnerships
- Implementing innovative projects in ESD 113 and state-wide

Among these projects is the first adolescent recovery-oriented System of Care program in Washington.

Ms. Wick partners with school leaders, government/public agencies, and communities across the region and state. She secures funding to implement and maintain services with programmatic and regulatory requirements. Ms. Wick leads with a combination of delegation and personal involvement to develop unified program vision.

## **Elizabeth Suddath**

Executive Director of Prevention Services, Oklahoma State Department of Education

Ms. Elizabeth Suddath, MPH, is the Executive Director of Prevention Services & School Climate Transformation at the Oklahoma State Department of Education, where she oversees programs that aim to build comprehensive, multi-level prevention programs in Oklahoma schools. Ms. Suddath is also the Project Director of the U.S. Department of Education's School Climate Transformation grant. The School Climate Transformation Grant has a team of School Climate Specialists across the state who provide schools training on the implementation of multi-tiered systems of support, trauma-informed school systems and social and emotional learning. Previously, in other positions, Ms. Suddath worked directly with youth and non-profits providing health promotion and violence prevention programs.

## **Matthew Wicks**

Supervisor of Athletics, P.E., Health & Drivers Ed. Office for Leading and Learning, Pasco County Schools (FL)

Mr. Matthew Wicks has been in the Supervisor position in Pasco County Schools for the past 6 years. Mr. Wicks supervises and develops professional learning opportunities for over 90 Elementary PE teachers, 100 Secondary PE teachers and 30 Health teachers. Previously, he served as a Health and PE teacher for 15 years in Pennsylvania and Florida. He is also the Principal Investigator of the CDC 1807 Grant, which is currently in its fourth year. Mr. Wicks has an M.Ed. in Health Education and an M.Ed. in Education Leadership.