Lessons from the Field -

Protecting Students by Preventing Aiding and Abetting Adult Sexual Misconduct

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 | 3:00 – 4:15 PM ET

SPEAKER BIOS

Ruth Ryder
Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Policy and Programs, 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. In this role, Ms. Ryder oversees a broad range of management, policy, and program functions related to formula and discretionary grant programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESEA). 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. There she had responsibility for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title I and Title II programs, state-remediation, gifted education, outcome-based education, and state- and district-wide testing programs. Ms. Ryder has a bachelor’s degree in Psychology and Elementary Education and a master’s degree in Special Education.
Leslie Anderson
Senior Managing Director, Policy Studies Associates

Ms. Leslie Anderson, PSA Senior Managing Director, directed the Study of State Policies to Prohibit Aiding and Abetting Sexual Misconduct in Schools. Ms. Anderson has more than 30 years of experience directing numerous studies for the U.S. Department of Education that include evaluations of national programs serving vulnerable populations, all employing state-of-the-art methods for data collection and for statistical and qualitative analyses. The programs she has studied range from services for migratory children to services for American Indian/Alaska Native children, for children who are experiencing homelessness, as well as out-of-school-time programming, comprehensive school reform, and state and local administration of all programs in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. In addition, she directs PSA’s portfolio of national service and civic engagement initiatives, including studies of AmeriCorps alumni outcomes for City Year, Reading Partners, and NYC Service as well as studies of AmeriCorps program impacts on student and school performance. She holds an M.P.P. from the Harris School of Public Policy, University of Chicago.

Stephanie Wilkerson
President, Magnolia Consulting

Dr. Stephanie Baird Wilkerson, President of Magnolia Consulting LLC, has over twenty-five years of experience working on a broad range of research and evaluation studies at national, state, and local levels. She is co-author of the Study of State Policies to Prohibit Aiding and Abetting Sexual Misconduct in Schools, funded by the U.S. Department of Education. This study examined states’ development and implementation of laws and policies that address the provisions of section 8546 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). She also served as co-principal investigator for a Title IX implementation study of preventative and responsive practices related to school employee sexual misconduct funded by the U.S. Department of Justice. The mixed-method study included an in-depth examination of the perceptions, experiences, and actions of school employees and county officials directly and indirectly involved with incidents of school employee sexual misconduct in five districts across the U.S. The study also included a review of publicly-reported characteristics of educator sex offenders and their victims and a document review of state policy response to ESEA’s section 8546 requirements as of 2016. Study results have been published in peer reviewed journals including the Journal of Child Sexual Abuse and Educational Administrative Quarterly. In
addition, Dr. Wilkerson has vast experience providing technical support and consultation to education policymakers and practitioners in using research and data to cultivate learning and positive change for educators and students. She has expertise in leading collaborative partnerships with school districts and state departments of education, developing comprehensive measurement tools, conducting large-scale research and evaluation studies, and creating infographics for effective communication and reporting.

Bronwyn Roberts
Strategic Director for the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center (REMS TA Center) and Project Director for the Title IV, Part A Technical Assistance Center (T4PA Center)

Ms. Bronwyn Roberts serves as Project Director for the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center (REMS TA Center) and the Title IV, Part A Technical Assistance Center (T4PA Center). Overseeing both national centers on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education, Ms. Roberts ensures seamless administration of services to client constituencies, including local education agencies, schools, institutions of higher education, state education agencies, community partners, and the larger education community. Since 2004, Ms. Roberts has been working in the fields of education and public health policy, facilitating training, product development, and systems improvement across a breadth of subject matter, including emergency management for schools, health and mental health service provision, school safety and violence prevention (including threat assessment), alcohol and drug use prevention, well-rounded educational services, effective uses of technology, and the provision of mentoring and other youth-development strategies for populations ranging in age from birth to adult. She leads the development of a wide portfolio of technical assistance tools and resources, including virtual and live training programs, desktop and mobile applications, comprehensive websites, resource libraries, and written publications. Ms. Roberts facilitates the integration of subject matter expertise with practical application that promotes collaboration among state, local, and federal practitioners and the development of critical resources for the field. Ms. Roberts has written and produced numerous training manuals, publications, issue briefs, toolkits, and guidance documents for use nationwide on all aspects of school preparedness, alcohol and drug prevention, technology, community strategic planning, and more.
Michael Arakawa  
Chief Compliance Investigator, Office of Educator Development, Licensure, and Family Engagement, State Department of Education, NV

Mr. Mike Arakawa is the Chief Compliance Investigator for the Nevada Department of Education, where he has worked since 2014. During 2017 and 2018, Mr. Arakawa facilitated the work of Nevada’s statutorily constituted Educator Ethics Advisory Group, which led to the adoption of the Model Code of Educator Ethics by the state’s Commission on Professional Standards in Education in September of 2018. During the 2019 and 2021 Legislative Sessions he drafted bill language on behalf of the Department proposing a number of important changes to Nevada’s educator conduct and discipline statutes, many of which were adopted into law by the State Legislature. Before entering the education realm Mr. Arakawa worked for the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles in various capacities, and prior to that served in the law enforcement and emergency medical fields.

Nancy Pugliese  
Chief, Bureau of Investigations and Professional Practice, Connecticut State Department of Education, CT

Ms. Nancy L. Pugliese serves as the Chief of the Bureau of Investigations and Professional Practices in the Division of Legal and Governmental Affairs. This bureau was created to actively investigate educator misconduct and take appropriate actions against such misconduct. She also presents within the state on educator ethics for all Connecticut educators. She previously served for 13 years as the Chief of the Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification in which she oversaw the accreditation of 22 higher education/alternate routes to teacher preparation programs, the TEAM beginning educator mentorship/induction program, the certification of over 100,000 certified educators in the state, the review and update of proposed educator certification regulations, and actively monitoring applicant background checks and resulting investigations. She also served for 14 years as the Title IV, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Coordinator.

Ms. Pugliese is an active member of the National Association of State Departments of Teacher Education and Certification for which she has served as president and other national positions. She also served on the National Council for the Advancement of Educator Ethics since its inception and has been involved in the initial development and recent revision of the Model Code of Educator Ethics, the first national code
of professional ethics for the educators. Ms. Pugliese holds a Doctorate in Jurisprudence and a Master’s in Business Administration.

**Catherine Slagle**  
Director, Office of Professional Practices, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, WA

Ms. Catherine Slagle has served as the Director of the Office of Professional Practices (OPP) with the Washington state Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) since March 2010. Currently, her duties there include overseeing all investigations into allegations of violations of the code of professional conduct or lack of good moral character and personal fitness against individuals holding a Washington education certificate issued by OSPI. She also manages the fingerprint/background check unit, where approximately 62,000 fingerprint background check results for anyone having regularly scheduled unsupervised access with students in the k-12 system are processed yearly. Ms. Slagle also serves as the agencies Ethics Advisor.

Prior to working with OSPI, Ms. Slagle served as the Associate Dean for Education with Grays Harbor College from 2002-2010. She started her professional career with the Department of Corrections in Washington State in 1990, serving in a number of positions including Correctional Counselor, Community Corrections Officer, Trainer, Training Manager, Court Liaison and Risk Management Specialist.

Ms. Slagle earned her BA in Sociology, Psychology and Communications from Eastern Washington University and her MA in Organizational Leadership as well as a Certificate in Human Resources from Chapman University in Orange, California.