

Turning the Page: Refocusing Massachusetts for Reading Success

Strategies for improving children's language and literacy development,
birth to age 9.

By Nonie Lesaux, Ph.D.

Marie and Max Kargman Associate Professor in
Human Development and Urban Education Advancement
Harvard Graduate School of Education

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Boston Public Library
Rabb Lecture Hall
700 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts

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Mara Aspinall, *SFC Board member and On-Q-ity* - Mara Aspinall is president and CEO of On-Q-ity, Inc., an innovative diagnostics company dedicated to improving the treatment of individual cancer patients through real time, non-invasive monitoring to better target therapy and lower costs. Ms. Aspinall co-chairs SFC's signature Early Education for All Campaign. Previously, Ms. Aspinall was president of Genzyme Genetics, a leading provider of testing services in the oncology and reproductive markets. She is also a board member of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. Ms. Aspinall is also a lecturer in health care policy at Harvard Medical School and teaches a seminar on medicine and business. She earned her M.B.A. from Harvard Business School and her undergraduate degree in international relations from Tufts University.

Richard Weissbourd, *SFC Board member and Harvard Graduate School of Education* - Richard Weissbourd is a lecturer in education at HGSE and at the Kennedy School of Government. His work focuses on vulnerability and resilience in childhood, the achievement gap, moral development, and effective schools and services for children. For several years he worked as a psychologist in community mental health centers, as well as on the Annie E. Casey Foundation's New Futures Project, an effort to prevent children from dropping out of school. He is a founder of several interventions for at-risk children, including ReadBoston and WriteBoston. With Robert Selman, he founded Project ASPIRE, a social and ethical development intervention in three Boston schools. He is also a founder of a new pilot school, the Lee Academy that begins with children at 3 years old. He holds a doctorate from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Nonie Lesaux, *Harvard Graduate School of Education* - Nonie Lesaux is Marie and Max Kargman Associate Professor in Human Development and Urban Education Advancement at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She leads a research program that focuses on increasing opportunities to learn for students from diverse linguistic, cultural, and economic backgrounds. Her research on reading and vocabulary development, and instructional strategies to prevent reading difficulties has implications for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers. In 2009, Dr. Lesaux received the Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers, the highest honor given by the United States government to young professionals beginning their independent research careers. A native of Canada, she holds a doctorate in educational psychology and special education from the University of British Columbia.

Margaret Blood, *Strategies for Children, Inc.* - Margaret Blood is president and founder of Strategies for Children, Inc. Under her leadership, SFC and its signature Early Education for All Campaign led successful efforts to create the nation's first consolidated Department of Early Education and Care, create the Universal Pre-Kindergarten and Early Childhood Educators Scholarship programs, expand access to full-day kindergarten, and formally establish universal pre-kindergarten in state law. Ms. Blood previously led the United Way of Massachusetts Bay's award-winning Success By 6 campaign, directed community programs for the pediatrics department at Boston City Hospital, and was founding executive director of the Massachusetts Legislative Children's Caucus. In 2007, she founded Mil Milagros, Inc. to help address the health, nutrition and education needs of children in the Guatemalan Highlands. Ms. Blood holds a Master in Public Administration degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and a B.A. in Spanish and business from Skidmore College.

Commissioner Sherri Killins, *Department of Early Education and Care* - Dr. Killins has worked as an advocate for children and families for more than 20 years. From 2006 to 2009, Dr. Killins held several roles with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, including her final position as vice president for human development and operations. She was also the founding president and CEO of the New Haven Empowerment Zone and was a mayoral candidate in New Haven. She has led operations and programs for both the Empowerment Zone Corporation and the Family Preservation Initiative of Baltimore. Dr. Killins holds a nursing degree from the University of Pittsburgh, a Master of Administrative Science from Johns Hopkins University, and a doctorate in counseling psychology from the University of Sarasota.

Dr. Robert Sege, *Boston Medical Center* - Robert Sege is the chief of ambulatory pediatrics at Boston Medical Center, a professor of pediatrics at Boston University School of Medicine, and medical director of the Boston Medical Center Child Protection Team. His research involves the development of a health care response to violence involving children and adolescents, ranging from child abuse to youth violence. He directed the federally-funded development of the American Academy of Pediatrics' violence prevention program, Connected Kids: Safe, Strong, Secure. He was co-principal investigator of the recently completed landmark PROS Study: Child Abuse Recognition and Evaluation Study (CARES), which analyzed how primary care providers diagnosed and managed suspected physical abuse. Dr. Sege holds an M.D. from Harvard Medical School and a Ph.D. in biology from MIT.

Commissioner Mitchell Chester, *Department of Elementary and Secondary Education* - Mitchell Chester has led the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education since May 2008. From 2001 through 2008, he served as senior associate superintendent for policy and accountability for the Ohio Department of Education. Dr. Chester was executive director for accountability and assessment for Philadelphia's public schools from 1997-2001. Dr. Chester was also chief of the Bureau of Curriculum and Instructional Programs of the Connecticut State Department of Education and has worked as a teacher, assistant principal, and curriculum coordinator in three school districts. He holds a doctorate in education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Reverend Samuel Acevedo, *Congregación Leon de Judá* - Samuel Acevedo is an associate pastor at Congregación León de Judá, a Latino church in Roxbury. Since December 2007, Rev. Acevedo has served as director of COPAHNI, the Fellowship of Hispanic Pastors of New England, an organization representing more than 70 Latino churches throughout the region. Rev. Acevedo also serves as the founding executive director of the church-based Boston Higher Education Resource Center (HERC), which helps

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Welcome - Mara Aspinall, *Strategies for Children, Inc., Board member and President & CEO, On-Q-ity*

Introduction of Study - Richard Weissbourd, *Strategies for Children, Inc., Board member and Lecturer, Harvard Graduate School of Education*

Presentation of the findings and recommendations - Nonie Lesaux, *Marie and Max Kargman Associate Professor in Human Development and Urban Education Advancement, Harvard Graduate School of Education*

Response to the recommendations

Moderated by **Margaret Blood**, *Founder and President, Strategies for Children, Inc.*

- **Commissioner Sherri Killins**, *Department of Early Education and Care*
- **Dr. Robert Sege**, *Boston Medical Center*
- **Commissioner Mitchell Chester**, *Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*
- **Reverend Samuel Acevedo**, *Congregación Leon de Judá*
- **The Honorable Martha Walz**, *Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Education*
- **Donna Cupelo**, *Region President, Verizon*

Closing remarks – Secretary Paul Reville, *Executive Office of Education*

Next steps – Margaret Blood

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The mission of Strategies for Children, Inc., is to ensure that all children have access to high-quality early education and are all proficient readers by the end of third grade.

Visit us at strategiesforchildren.org and read our new blog, EyeOnEarlyEducation.org.

inner-city young people go to college. Rev. Acevedo attended Stetson University in DeLand, Florida, and Boston College Law School. Rev. Acevedo also serves on the board of the Ten Point Coalition, Boston Trinity Academy, the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary's Center for Urban Ministry and Education, and Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation.

The Honorable Martha Walz, Massachusetts House of Representatives - Representative Martha Walz serves as co-chair of the Legislature's Joint Committee on Education. She is in her third term in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Representative Walz is also an attorney in private practice. Before being elected to the Legislature, she was the vice president of development for Jumpstart for Young Children. Representative Walz has served in leadership roles with the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay and the Women's Lunch Place. She also serves on the board of NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts. She holds an M.P.A. from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, where she was a Kennedy Fellow and a Lucius N. Littaur Fellow. She also holds a J.D. from New York University School of Law and a B.A. from Colgate University, from which she graduated magna cum laude and as a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

Donna Cupelo, Verizon - Donna Cupelo is regional president of Verizon and the newly elected chair of the Massachusetts Business Roundtable. Ms. Cupelo is responsible for Verizon's service delivery, capital investment and public policy in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Ms. Cupelo began her career with New England Telephone in 1978 and has held various leadership positions within the sales and marketing organizations. In addition to serving as chair of the Massachusetts Business Roundtable, Ms. Cupelo sits on the boards of the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, Providence College's President's Council, Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, Boston Private Industry Council, and Jobs for Massachusetts. She received a B.S. degree from Providence College, and an M.B.A. from Babson College.

Secretary Paul Reville, Executive Office of Education - Secretary Paul Reville oversees the Departments of Early Education and Care; Elementary and Secondary Education; and Higher Education. Secretary Reville previously served as the chairman of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Until his current appointment, he was the president of the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy. Secretary Reville is a former director of the Education Policy and Management Program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a lecturer at HGSE on educational policy and politics. He was the founding executive director of the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education.

The following Advisory Committee members played an influential role in shaping the study design and recommendations:

Barbara Beatty
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Wellesley College

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Executive Office of Education

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