



Aligning Resources, Structures and Supports for Actualizing College and Career Readiness

June 26, 2012 Webinar

Presenter Biographies

Jennifer Brown Lerner

Senior Director, American Youth Policy Forum

Jennifer Brown Lerner identifies and researches issues, policies, and programs for AYPF's learning events (Capitol Hill forums, site visits, roundtable policy meetings) and publications. Currently, she is organizing a series of forums on role of career and technical education in high school reform. She has also co-authored a compendium on best practices in secondary-post secondary learning options entitled *The College Ladder: Linking Secondary and Postsecondary Education for Success for All*.

Prior to joining AYPF, Jennifer earned a master in arts from Teacher's College, Columbia University in educational administration with a concentration in leadership, policy, and politics. Her graduate work included a policy brief entitled "Measuring and Defining Social Capital" for the National Center for Schools and Communities at Fordham University.

Jennifer has also worked as a classroom teacher and development officer for a number of independent schools in the Boston area. Her diverse responsibilities included substitute teaching, writing and designing school publications, and training fundraising volunteers. Additionally, she was active in the creation of a Summer Bridge (now Breakthrough Collaborative) site in Atlanta, Georgia. The Breakthrough Collaborative is a national program that engages middle school students in year-round academic enrichment with high school and college students serving as teachers and mentors.

Jennifer received her B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and her M.A. from Teachers College, Columbia University. She also participated in the Education Policy Fellow Program at the Institute for Educational Leadership in 2005-06.

Lynne Gilli

Program Manager, CTE Instructional Branch, Maryland State Department of Education

Lynne Gilli currently serves as the Program Manager for the Career and Technology Education (CTE) Instructional Branch at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), where she has held progressively responsible positions since 1982. Dr. Gilli is a frequent presenter at state and national conferences and has had several journal articles published. Her responsibilities at MSDE include providing leadership to implement high quality CTE programs for secondary and postsecondary learners. She also coordinates the work of two career cluster teams: Health and Biosciences and Manufacturing Engineering and Technology. Dr. Gilli is currently leading efforts to implement Maryland's State Curriculum in Personal Financial Literacy Education. Her



many years of experience with the Maryland State Department of Education provide her with a broad knowledge and understanding of public policy issues impacting education, particularly in preparing students for success in both college and careers. She holds a doctorate in curriculum and instruction from the State University of New York at Buffalo, and her master's and bachelor's degrees are in vocational-technical education from the State University of New York at Utica/Rome.

Joseph R. Harris

Director, National High School Center at the American Institutes for Research

Dr. Joseph R. Harris, Managing Researcher at the American Institutes for Research, has an extensive background in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) reform as both a practitioner and researcher/evaluator, and more than two decades of experience as an administrator and high school teacher in an urban public school environment. Since October 2006 he has served as the Director of the National High School Center, a national research and technical assistance center funded by the U.S. Department of Education to help regions and states address both regular and special education high school issues related to implementing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provisions.

For the previous 12 years, Dr. Harris served as the Project Manager for a major technical assistance contract, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) in support of the Systemic Initiatives, a multi-year NSF effort designed to promote improved mathematics, science, and technology education in 100+ state, rural, and urban school districts and regional consortia. Dr. Harris also has lead several K-12 projects, ranging from the Math Science Program Evaluation Advisory Board to a differentiated compensation project for Springfield (MA) public schools. Dr. Harris has served as project leader on numerous consulting projects in areas such as program evaluation, student assessment, strategic planning, education policy, program equity, minority student achievement, and public/private partnerships that have focused on improved program operations and outcomes.

Prior to joining The McKenzie Group and AIR, Dr. Harris served as an administrator and teacher in the District of Columbia Public Schools. For more than a decade, he coordinated the development, implementation, and operation of an automated instructional management system and played a major role in the development and implementation of the district's five-year computer literacy plan.

Dr. Harris holds a B.A. in Mathematical Statistics from the University of Florida, an M.A. in Secondary Education from the Catholic University of America, and a Ph.D. in Education Policy from the University of Maryland, College Park.



Melissa Jagers

Associate Executive Director, Alignment Nashville

Melissa Jagers, Associate Executive Director of Alignment Nashville, works with community partners and Metro Nashville Public Schools to align resources and supports for children and youth in Nashville. Ms. Jagers came to Alignment Nashville after serving as Director of Grant Development at Nashville State Community College for six years, where she worked to secure several federally funded grants from the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Department of Education, and other sources. She also served as Nashville State's Director of Development, raising private funds for the institution and working with the Nashville State Foundation. Previously, she was Director of Marketing at the Renaissance Center in Dickson, Tennessee, and Account Manager at Fletcher & Rowley Political Consulting.