



For Immediate Release

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National Groups Announce Expert Peer Panel to Review School Districts Plans for the Fall

Reviewers will highlight promising practice and innovative solutions

Washington, D.C. – Today, the Collaborative for Student Success (CSS) and the Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) announced the names of experts from around the country who will review school district reopening plans in an effort to highlight promising practices in meeting the challenges presented by COVID-19.

Following the release of a [planning tool](#) and the launch of a [national call](#) for peer reviewers to analyze school district response plans to COVID-19, we received applications from 26 states and the District of Columbia. We have selected 12 distinguished individuals from diverse backgrounds to offer their expert analysis on the strengths of district plans.

Our panel of peer reviewers consists of education expertise at both the state and district levels, representing both rural and urban settings. Additionally, we would not envision a “peer” review of reopening plans without teacher voice at the forefront, so we are pleased to involve classroom educators and a national expert on teacher effectiveness policy.

“The strength of an independent peer review process is the bringing together of voices from differing perspectives and backgrounds to offer sound guidance and analysis.” Amanda McAdams, Arizona’s 2011 Teacher of the Year, now a district superintendent, continues, “Those of us in the field are confronted with unprecedented challenges right now, and my hope is that districts can learn from one another as this panel identifies the best practices emerging across the country.”

To complement the breadth and depth of the education experience this panel of experts offers and recognizing the unique challenges of this unprecedented disruption to our public-school system, we also sought expertise from outside traditional education policy circles. To that end, we welcome a public health expert from George Washington University’s Milken Institute, as well as an expert in emergency planning from the American Planning Association (APA).

“I do believe strongly that this pandemic implicates some very serious social equity issues that must be addressed both in remote learning and in any reopening plan. My background in hazard mitigation and disaster recovery will offer a unique perspective in addressing this challenge,” said James Schwab, Chair of the Hazard Mitigation and Disaster Recovery Planning Division of APA.

In acknowledging that parents and students are at the heart of school plans’ impact, the panel includes expertise in parent and community advocacy as well as the unique issues faced by students with special needs. We round the panel out with an expert in school finance, as school reopening discussions are likely to be burdened by budgetary limitations.

Our panel of peer reviewers includes:

- *Tequilla Brownie, Executive Vice President, TNTP*
- *John Fischer, Former Deputy Secretary, Vermont Agency of Education*
- *Steven Hodas, Senior Strategic Lead, citiesRise/Former Executive Director NYCDOE Office of Innovation*
- *Lindsay Jones, President/CEO, National Center for Learning Disabilities*
- *Amanda McAdams, Assistant Superintendent, Lincoln County School District #2/2011 Arizona Teacher of the Year*
- *David Rosenberg, Partner, Education Resource Strategies*
- *Paymon Rouhanifard, Former Superintendent, Camden City School District*
- *Nisha Sachdev, Adjunct Professor, Center for Health & Health Care In Schools at GWU Milken Institute of Public Health*

- *James Schwab, Chair, Hazard Mitigation and Disaster Recovery Planning Division, American Planning Association*
- *Rebecca Shah, Fellow, Chiefs for Change/Former Chief of Staff, Tennessee Department of Education*
- *Matt Shaver, Teacher, Minneapolis Public Schools and Advocacy Fellow, Educators for Excellence*
- *Lakisha Young, Co-Founder & Executive Director, The Oakland REACH*

These experts will immediately begin their district plan reviews with recommendations due out in August. To learn more, visit the project site [here](#).

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More About the Collaborative for Student Success:

The Collaborative for Student Success is a non-profit advocacy organization that works to defend high standards, high-quality assessments, and strong systems of accountability, to ensure that all kids are prepared for college or career. Through capacity-building efforts with in-state organizations and collaboration with national partners, we promote fact-based public discourse and fight to advance policies that promote best practices and ensure equitable outcomes for all students. Learn more at <https://forstudentsuccess.org>.

More About the Center on Reinventing Public Education:

The Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) is one of the nation's leading sources for transformative, evidence-based ideas to improve education. To ensure all students are prepared for a rapidly changing future, we put forward rigorous research and policy analysis to help educators, policymakers, civic and community leaders, parents, and students themselves reimagine education systems and structures. Learn more at <https://www.crpe.org/>.