

**MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
TASK FORCE ON ACHIEVING ACADEMIC EQUITY AND
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Dr. Vermelle D. Greene (Chair) has been an educator for more than 44 years (teaching at the elementary through college levels). Her experience extends to the corporate world where she was a Customer Education Representative with the Xerox Corporation. She holds degrees from Dickinson College (B.S. in Biology), George Washington University (M.A. in Education), and International Seminary (Ph.D. in Christian Education).

Dr. Greene currently is an educational consultant, new teacher mentor, and conference speaker. She has conducted professional development and training workshops as well as online classes for thousands of teachers and administrators from coast to coast. Her focus areas include closing the gender achievement gap, educating for character, and managing classrooms effectively.

During her tenure with Prince George's County Public Schools, she served as an administrator at Buck Lodge Middle School. She piloted the school's award-winning character education program which was featured in area newspapers and on-air media. After her retirement from Prince George's County Public Schools, Dr. Greene founded S.A.C.R.E.D. Life Academy for Boys in Capitol Heights. The school's innovative curriculum focused on building character and accommodating the academic, social, developmental, and physical needs of young boys in kindergarten through 8th grade. In recognition of her achievements as Principal, she was honored by the Greater Prince George's Business Roundtable (a non-profit, nonpartisan business alliance of Chief Executives) and presented with their *Outstanding CEO Award*.

Dr. Greene and her husband Vernon live in Charles County. They have two married children and six amazingly beautiful grandchildren.



Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy, D.A., CCC-SLP (Co-Chair) brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the Maryland State Board of Education. She currently serves as the Executive Director at [The Summit School](#) in Edgewater, MD, an independent school serving bright children with dyslexia and other learning differences. She is a nationally recognized speech-language pathologist with expertise in theoretical models and practical application of the link between oral language and reading, service delivery models in school settings, and teacher training.

Prior to her current position, Dr. Mele-McCarthy served as Senior Policy Advisor and Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) in the U.S. Department of Education. She has a national perspective on general education and special education as a result of her policy work on the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004). Her philosophy of education holds as a priority, high expectations for all children in a way that meets their learning needs. In addition to her federal policy role, Dr. Mele-McCarthy has worked in public schools,

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universities, and private practice. As part of her clinical work she served children with communication disorders, reading difficulties, and executive function challenges, which she brings to her work with children in classrooms. She believes in partnerships between families and schools, and continues to be a strong and effective advocate for that partnership.

Dr. Mele-McCarthy's scholarly work includes presentation of peer reviewed research-to-practice papers, seminars, and workshops locally and nationally. Her publications include articles and book chapters related to policy for NCLB, IDEA, students with disabilities, and English learners with disabilities.

Dr. Mele-McCarthy lives in Calvert County with her husband, Kevin, where they raised two children, who are now adults residing with their families in the greater Washington DC and Southern Maryland regions.



Gail Bates (Co-Chair) was appointed to the Maryland State Board of Education in 2019. As a member of the Maryland General Assembly, serving in both the Maryland Senate and Maryland House of Delegates, Ms. Bates served on the Appropriations Committee, the Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, and the Special Joint Committee on Pensions.

Mrs. Bates previously taught mathematics and home economics in Anne Arundel County. She was also a tax supervisor and manager for the Records and Tax Department of the Maryland Farm Bureau, and since 1984, has been a sole proprietor as a Certified Public Accountant. Ms. Bates was also an assistant to the Howard County Executive.

Mrs. Bates has been an active member of different organizations to include the Howard County Republican Club, the Maryland Federation of Republican Women, the Howard County Republican Central Committee (previously serving as Treasurer), the Howard County Chamber of Commerce, the Maryland Association of Certified Public Accountants, and the Howard County Republican Women (serving as president since 2001).

Ms. Bates has been a board member of the Howard County Chapter of the [American Red Cross](#). She has served with the Christian Jail Ministry since 1997 and the Howard County Farm Bureau since 1998. Ms. Bates has been the Treasurer of the Howard County Tourism Council since 2004. She is also a member of the Therapeutic Horsemanship Association and received the Life Achievement Award from the Howard County Republican Central Committee in 1990.

Ms. Bates graduate from the University of Maryland with a B.S. in Education.

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Dr. Karen B. Salmon has served as State Superintendent of Schools and Secretary-Treasurer of the State Board since 2016. She joined the State Department of Education last year, first as Assistant State Superintendent for College and Career Readiness and soon thereafter as Interim State Superintendent for School Effectiveness.

Immediately prior to joining MSDE, Dr. Salmon served as Superintendent of Schools on the Bay Shore Union Free School District in Bay Shore, NY.

Dr. Salmon spent more than 30 years as an educator on Maryland's Eastern Shore, beginning her career as a special education teacher in the Caroline County Public Schools. She later became a vocational coordinator and an assistant principal in the Caroline schools before moving to Talbot County as Coordinator of Services for Exceptional Children. Dr. Salmon became Assistant Superintendent of the Talbot County schools in 1997 and Superintendent in 2003.

Named the Maryland Superintendent of the Year in 2012, Dr. Salmon is the recipient of numerous awards and honors throughout her educational career. Dr. Salmon holds a Ph.D. in Special Education/Administration from the University of Maryland College Park, as well as a Masters in Special Education from the same institution. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communication from the University of Delaware.

A native of Harford County and the daughter of an educator, Dr. Salmon and her husband John reside in Bozman, MD. They are the parents of two grown daughters: Lauren, an oncologist living in Virginia, and Rachael is a special education teacher in Caroline County. Both children graduated from Talbot County public schools.



Inez Claggett is a newly appointed member to the Calvert County Board of Education. Ms. Claggett brings with her extensive knowledge in public service, auditing, budgeting, internal controls, and policy development. She has been a public servant for over ten (10) years and currently serves as a Senior Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst for a local county government.

Ms. Claggett holds certifications in public sector auditing, internal controls, and risk management, and earned her master's degree in Accounting and Financial Management from the University of Maryland University College (College Park, MD). Prior to, she earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Delaware (Newark, DE).

As a first year Board of Education Member Ms. Claggett championed policy changes to restrict the use of restraint and seclusion within Calvert County Public Schools with a vision toward abolishing the use of restraint within schools. This leadership fortitude led her to be voted as the Vice President of the Calvert County Board of Education for the current calendar year. In this

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capacity she provides leadership and direction to carry out and effectuate the goals and objectives of the collective Board.

Ms. Claggett is a servant leader who has volunteered within the Calvert County community in many various capacities. Her current and former community service includes membership, as well as leadership roles in the Calvert County Commission for Women, the Calvert County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Concerned Black Women of Calvert County, League of Women Voters of Calvert County, the Calvert County Minority Business Alliance, and several local youth sports organizations. She also participated as a member of the Board of Education's Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) for five years prior to becoming a Board Member. It was in this capacity that Inez became interested in becoming a catalyst for change within the School System.

Ms. Claggett resides in Owings along with her husband and son. She enjoys exercising, riding motorcycles, reading, and watching her scholar athlete play lacrosse.



Hampton E. Conway, III has been an educator for over 20 years. He has taught at all grade school levels from elementary, middle, and high school. He served as assistant principal and principal of Propel Charter School, a K-8 charter school in Pittsburgh. Propel was awarded several grants for innovative projects and received the E.P.I.C. Award for three successive years as one of the top performing charter schools in the country.

Mr. Conway is the father of four sons and has always been particularly passionate about "leveling the playing field" for black students, especially black boys. He strives to serve children in impoverished communities, focusing on closing the achievement, exposure, and opportunity gaps that exist. He has volunteered as a mentor and served in juvenile detention centers and prisons. Mr. Conway is currently an Instructional Technology Specialist for the ESSA & Title I Department of Prince George's County Public Schools.



Tracey Cottman is a licensed clinical social worker who obtained her Bachelors of Social Work from Salisbury University and Masters of Social Work from the University of Maryland at Baltimore. Mrs. Cottman has been working in the child welfare and educational field for 25 years. Currently, she is the Supervisor of Student Services for Somerset County Public Schools. In this role she oversees numerous staff including School Counselors, Learning Support Specialists, Behavior Intervention Specialists, Community Liaisons, Student Service Coordinators, and a Mental Health Coordinator. Some of the programming within Student Services includes the McKinney Vento Homeless program, School Based Mental Health, Social/Emotional programming; Equity; Training and Professional Development; Truancy; College & Career

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Readiness; Wraparound Services for children and families; Juvenile Services Liaison; Social Services Liaison, etc. Mrs. Cottman is a community advocate and activist, most notably being elected as the first African American woman to the City Council of Pocomoke City, where she served three consecutive terms. She coordinates the Pocomoke City Drug Free Coalition.

Ms. Cottman is married to a retired military officer, and they have two daughters, one of whom is a lawyer and the other a chemist. Mrs. Cottman's passion is to provide support and encouragement to others to help them achieve their dreams.



Dr. Julius Davis is the University System of Maryland Wilson H. Elkins Associate Professor of Mathematics Education, Founding Director of the Center for Research and Mentoring of Black Male Students and Teachers, and Coordinator of the Master of Arts in Teaching Program at Bowie State University. His research focuses on Black male students in K-12 urban areas and higher education settings, Black male pre-service, and in-service teachers. He has or currently works with Black males in mentoring and manhood training programs in schools, universities, job corps, community, and juvenile offender programs. Dr. Davis also conducts professional development for teachers and leaders focused on Black

males, culturally responsive practices, and STEM education.

Dr. Davis is the co-editor of the book, *Critical Race Theory in Mathematics Education* (Routledge). He has authored publications focused on Black male students and teachers.



Nicole N. Fisher serves as the Supervisor of Alternate Programs and is completing her 20th year with Caroline County Public Schools (CCPS). Her educational and administrative background includes: eight years as a school counselor, nine years as an assistant principal, and three years in her current supervisory position, providing oversight for the alternative education program, service learning, virtual learning and the CCPS equity initiative.

Ms. Fisher delivers professional development and training in restorative practice, ACE's, Youth Mental Health First Aid, and cultural/equity competency development. The leadership she currently provides requires that she blends her school counseling skills with her understanding of building level administration. Ms. Fisher's primary role is to support administrators, school-based leadership teams, teachers and Board members, as they work together to learn more about the students they serve and analyze the data to make informed decisions about current and future programs, interventions, supports, and closing the achievement gap.

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Ms. Fisher’s career goal is to guide the work of making CCPS a more culturally proficient and academically excellent school system for ALL students. The mission of this task force is in line with the equity goals she has drafted for CCPS. Ms. Fisher is eager to connect with an extended network of colleagues to delve into the research and planning that is critical to address this troubling disparity and be of service to improve the educational outcomes for black males and ALL students in the great State of Maryland.

Ms. Fisher earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of Delaware and her Master of Education in Elementary and Secondary School Counseling and Administrative Certification from Wilmington University.



Dr. Ramon Goings is an assistant professor in the Language, Literacy, and Culture interdisciplinary doctoral program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Dr. Goings’ research interests are centered on exploring the academic and social experiences of gifted/high-achieving Black males PK-PhD, diversifying the teacher and school leader workforce, and investigating the contributions of historically Black colleges and universities.

Dr. Goings is the author of over 50 scholarly publications including four books. His scholarship has been featured in leading academic and popular press outlets including: Teachers College Record, Adult Education Quarterly, Gifted Child Quarterly, Inside Higher Ed, Education Week, and Diverse: Issues in Higher Education. His most recent research on Black male adult learners won the 2019 Imogene Oaks Award from the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education which honors a scholar whose research contributes significantly to the advancement of adult and continuing education. Along with his scholarship Dr. Goings served as the Editor-In-Chief of the Journal of African American Males in Education from 2017-2020, was named a 2017 Emerging Scholar by Diverse: Issues in Higher Education, and received the 2016 College Board Professional Fellowship.

Prior to working in higher education, Goings was a music education and special education teacher in several urban school districts including Baltimore City Public Schools and was a foster care and youth probation counselor/advocate in New Haven, Connecticut. In 2013 he served as a fellow with the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans.

Dr. Goings earned his Doctor of Education degree in urban educational leadership from Morgan State University, Master of Science in human services from Post University, and Bachelor of Arts in music education from Lynchburg College (now University of Lynchburg). More information is available on Dr. Goings’ website: <http://ramongoings.com/>

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Dr. Theo Holt is a military veteran who has over ten years of experience teaching, mentoring, and advocating in academic institutions and has taught elementary school to college levels students. He holds degrees from Southern University (B.S. and M.S. in Therapeutic Recreation) and the University of West Georgia (Ph.D. in Psychology: Consciousness in Society).

Dr. Holt is currently a co-teacher and case manager in special education for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). While at Southern University, he studied the influence of parental involvement on student success. As an educator in Louisiana, he created a black male mentoring program for middle school boys. As an educational advocate for children placed in foster care, he collaborated with the students' major stakeholders to help maximize their opportunities for academic success. At the University of West Georgia, he volunteered with the African American Male Initiative (AAMI) mentoring both undergraduate and graduate students on campus, presented on rites of passages program for Black males and has conducted research focused on student success (Dissertation: Black Undergraduate Students' Experiences of Thriving at a Predominately White Institution: A Photovoice Study). He also advocated for the racial diversity of the Psychology faculty and graduate student population.

As an educator in MCPS, he serves on the study circle committee and is an active member of the Building Our Networks of Diversity (BOND) Initiative. Dr. Holt's focus areas are racial and educational equity, student thriving, and community-based participatory research.



Dr. Daryl Howard is an equity instructional specialist in Montgomery County Public Schools (MD). His work and research interests include race and cultural proficiency, social emotional learning, and the triumphs and challenges of African American male students. He is instrumental in the work of the Building Our Network of Diversity (BOND) Project where he leads initiatives focused on the recruitment, development, and retention of male educators of color.

Dr. Howard is the author of *Complex People: Insights at the Intersection of Black Culture and American Social Life*. He shares his life with his wife and three children.

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Dr. John E. Howard has been in education for 25 years. He holds degrees from North Carolina Central University (B.A. in English/Media Journalism), Bowie State University (M.A. in Literature), and Johns Hopkins University (Ed.D. in Educational Leadership).

Dr. Howard is currently an International Baccalaureate Coordinator in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). He is a former Consulting Teacher, and English department chair at John F. Kennedy High School in Silver Spring, Maryland. Dr. Howard also taught previously in Prince George's County Public Schools in Maryland, and Durham County Public Schools in North Carolina.

Dr. Howard serves on the Curriculum Advisory Committee for MCPS, and the advisory committee for the Hip Hop History and Culture class created for MCPS. He is a member of the leadership team for the Building Our Network of Diversity (BOND) Project, which is committed to advancing efforts to recruit, develop, support, and retain male educators of color at all grade levels within Montgomery County Public Schools. Dr. Howard is also a lead teacher for Project Enrich, a program in Prince George's County, Maryland, sponsored by the Gamma Pi chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., which provides African-American high school student's college preparatory opportunities. Dr. Howard's academic interests include analyzing the value of teacher credentials in the screening and selection of teacher candidates.



Philip Johnson has been an educator for 23 years and a cross country/track & field coach for 20 years. He taught in Baltimore City at Southwestern High School for 5 years, then at Montgomery Blair High School in Montgomery County for 6 years. For the past 12 years, he has been a biology and AP biology teacher at Glenelg High School in Howard County. He serves as the advisor for the Alpha Achievers and the Black Student Union.

Mr. Johnson has been fortunate to have taught in many socioeconomically different situations that have shaped him as an educator. His experience as a teacher in Baltimore showed him that not all children have access to the same resources. Students had many obstacles, yet when given the same opportunities as their peers, were just as successful. Blair High School (Montgomery County) is probably one of the most diverse places anyone could hope to teach, and Howard County is also a diverse county. Mr. Johnson learned much about how exposure to others' cultures can benefit the educational experiences of students by breaking down many of the misconceptions they have about each other. He believes that all students should have the opportunity to be taught by teachers of many different backgrounds, and believes our state can do better by using the collective experiences of many different professionals to uplift young black males.

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Mr. Johnson is a proud graduate of Coppin State University, an Historically Black College, where he was allowed to grow as an individual and experience many wonderful things about Baltimore City in an educational setting.



Dwayne Jones retired on August 1, 2019 after 31 years in the Prince George’s County Public School System. Prior to his retirement, he was the principal of Laurel High School for 14 years, the school from which he had graduated as a member of the Class of 1981.

Mr. Jones started his educational career in Prince George’s County as an Adaptive/General Physical Education Teacher. As an itinerant teacher, he taught at five different schools. The following school year he joined the staff of Laurel High School as a Social Studies/Physical Education Teacher. He coached several sports (football, basketball, tennis, track and field) and served as a sponsor for several classes. He became an assistant principal at Laurel and in 2005, was appointed principal. Throughout his administrative career, he served in national, state, and local professional organizations. He held various positions including National Vice President for the American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA), President Elect and Executive Board Member of the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP), and Secretary, Vice President and President of the Association of Supervisory and Administrative School Personnel (ASASP).

Mr. Jones names the highlights of his educational career as visiting the White House and meeting President Obama, traveling to China as an educational ambassador in 2018, and being awarded the Key to the City of Laurel at his retirement celebration.

He has been married to Debbi Jones for 32 years and they have two children, Summer and Noah. All three graduated from Bowie High School in Prince George’s County in 1981, 2013, and 2019, respectively.

Mr. Jones attended Howard University on a football scholarship and graduated in 1986 with a Bachelor of Science degree. He attended Bowie State University and earned a Masters of Education degree in School Administration and Supervision.

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Dr. Andrea Kane was appointed Superintendent for Queen Anne’s County Public Schools in Maryland in July 2017. With over 25 years of education experience, including ten years at the central office level, Dr. Kane has earned the characterization as a visionary leader. In collaboration with district, business, and community partners, Dr. Kane has been effective in leading large suburban, urban, and small rural districts during times of change and challenges associated with academics, state mandates, and leadership; and in building trust,

transparency, and stability during transitions and keeping the focus on that which benefits students.

Dr. Kane dedicated 22 years of service to Anne Arundel County Public Schools, where she held a multitude of instructional and leadership roles. Dr. Kane’s proven experience as an education leader led to her appointment as Superintendent of Schools in Queen Anne’s County in July 2017. The establishment of the district’s first Superintendent’s student, parent, and staff advisory councils provided a forum for regular face-to-face interaction and shared decision-making. As the district’s first African American Superintendent, Dr. Kane set professional and personal goals focused on implementing equitable practices across all areas of the organization.

Dr. Kane holds a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from Northcentral University, Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction and Administration/Supervision certification from Loyola University in Maryland, and Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Sweet Briar College.



Alysia Lee is the education program supervisor for Fine Arts education for the Maryland State Department of Education, where she shares her vision of statewide equity and excellence across five arts disciplines: music, dance, visual arts, theatre, and media arts. She is a proud member of the State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education (SEADAE) and a 2019-2020 Kennedy Center Citizen Artist Fellow. Ms. Lee’s full circle role as an artist, arts educator, teaching artist and arts advocate, gives her a broad perspective of the arts ecosystem.

Alysia received national recognition for advancing access, equity, visibility, representation, and power-sharing between artists, organizations, and communities. Key to her methods are empowerment, partnership construction, and intersectional approaches to community exchange while centering anti-racism, creativity, and social justice.

She is the Founder and Artistic Director of Sister Cities Girlchoir (SCG), the El Sistema-inspired, girl empowerment, choral academy in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New Jersey. SCG has performed for various audiences and recent recognitions include awards from The Kennedy Center, The Knight Foundation, National Association of University Women, Stockton Bartol Foundation, and Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. Recent speaking/facilitation engagements

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include the U.S. Department of Education, The Kennedy Center, Americans for the Arts, Arts Education Partnership, Chorus America, Maryland Citizens for the Arts, Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University, TEDX, and Temple University.

A Baltimore native, Ms. Lee is an alumna of Maryland public schools. She earned her graduate degree from Peabody Conservatory. In 2011, Ms. Lee was selected from an international pool of applicants to the third cohort of the Sistema Fellowship at New England Conservatory in partnership with TED. She also completed Executive Education programs at Harvard University and La Salle University.



Jocelyn Potts is a third-grade teacher within Anne Arundel County Public Schools. She is entering her tenth year as an educator. In addition to being a classroom teacher, Mrs. Potts is also the Equity Liaison for her building and offers support and professional development surrounding equitable practices to her colleagues. Mrs. Potts supports the faculty within her school as the Data Liaison and serves on the leadership team.

Prior to teaching, Mrs. Potts and her husband served young males of Washington, D.C. as house parents in a residential group home for six years. Over the course of their tenure, they cared for over 80 youth. They were honored with the 2007 Child Welfare and Advocacy Award by the D.C. Consortium of Child Welfare.

She is a member and a volunteer of M.O.B.B. United for Social Change (Moms of Black Boys United). Mrs. Potts is also a member of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa Incorporated which is a professional organization of women in the field of education.

Mrs. Potts attended and graduated from Notre Dame of Maryland University with an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education and a Master of Science degree in Gifted and Talented Education. Mrs. Potts is currently enrolled in Goucher College pursuing her Administrator I Certification.

Mrs. Potts has worked closely with Black Quilted Narratives which is a program through The National Visionary Leadership Project. During her time with Black Quilted Narratives, Mrs. Potts contributed to curriculum writing which would provide teachers with culturally responsive lessons and online resources for educators.

Mrs. Potts most honorable role to date is that of a being a mom to an awesome 12- year- old boy.

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Diane Roberts Ms. Diane Roberts was named principal at Westlake High School in 2018. As principal, Ms. Roberts plans to partner with the Westlake High School community to provide valuable leadership and educational opportunities to the next generation of global leaders. Ms. Roberts began her career with Charles County Public Schools in 2003 as a teacher at Thomas Stone High School where she served for three years. She also taught at North Point High School for six years and served as the high school resource teacher for one year. She spent the last four years as a vice principal at Thomas Stone High School. Ms. Roberts began her teaching career with Chicago Public Schools in 1996.

Ms. Roberts is a graduate of Chicago State University and McDaniel College where she received her Bachelor of Science in Business Education and Master of Science in curriculum and instruction, respectively.



Dr. Marcia Sprankle (Co-Chair) currently serves as the Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Curriculum, Instructional Improvement, and Professional Learning at the Maryland State Department of Education.

Dr. Sprankle attended Virginia Beach's elementary, intermediate, and secondary schools and began her career in education teaching in Virginia Beach Public Schools, where she taught for eight years. Shortly after relocating to Easton, Maryland, and continuing to teach for two years in Talbot County Public Schools, Dr. Sprankle was sought out to move into school administration. She served as an Assistant Principal for a year at a middle/high school setting. After serving as an Assistant Principal for one year, she was appointed Principal of a primary building for five years. Dr. Sprankle was then asked to serve as Principal at a middle school for several years and later went on to serve as Principal of an elementary school. She then went on to serve as a Supervisor at the central office for Talbot County Public Schools. After twenty years of service in Talbot County Public Schools, Dr. Sprankle was afforded the opportunity to transition to the Maryland State Department of Education as the Title I Executive Director. She humbly embraced the opportunity to serve in this role. Dr. Sprankle has held numerous titles, received many awards, merits, and Governor's Citations during her 32-year career.

She Dr. Sprankle earned her master's degree from Regent University and a bachelor's degree from Norfolk State University.

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Desmond Williams is an educator, former principal, and author. He is driven to help all children live their dreams. He has spent his entire professional career working with youth serving as a special educator, classroom teacher, assistant principal, and principal. Mr. Williams’ educational philosophy is simply that education should be used for the process of building and maintaining a nation.

Mr. Williams received his bachelor’s degree in English Literature from Howard University and his master’s degree in Education from George Washington University. He started his teaching career in District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) as a special educator. He subsequently moved through the ranks and became a special education coordinator because of his business acumen and understanding of children with special needs. Afterwards, Mr. Williams ventured into the world of school-based administration. His expertise includes, student engagement, restorative justice, relationship building with students, and family engagement.

In 2015, Mr. Williams launched the #SOBTC Twitter chat that united teachers from across the country to discuss issues related to educating boys of color. Desmond served six years at an all-boys school in Washington DC, teaching four years and serving as an administrator and principal for two more years. In his first year as an administrator, reading scores soared to 64% proficient. In his second year, The Bishop Walker School (BWS) boasted reading scores of 83% proficiency! After leaving BWS, Mr. Williams launched Nylinka School Solutions. One of his big goals was to help other educators increase the level of engagement and investment of boys of color. The goal of Nylinka School Solutions is to help children achieve their dreams one solution at a time.

Mr. Williams’ greatest satisfaction is seeing kids maintain their enthusiasm for leaving their mark on the world. He has recently ventured into the world of writing. His first book, *The Burning House: Educating Black Boys in Modern America* was released in February of 2020 and debuted as a #1 New Release. In the fall of 2020, Desmond will return to Howard University to pursue his PhD in Educational Psychology.



Juan Wilder is Senior Pastor of Impact One Church in Capitol Heights, Maryland and one of today’s most dynamic leaders. Pastor Juan promotes unity, transformative change, and “love in action”— a foregoing message and motto that has empowered the DC-MD-VA community. He is known as the “Community Pastor” because of the care he renders in the community to fight world hunger, social injustice, and systemic inequities.

By way of credentials, Juan Wilder attended and graduated from the Minnesota Graduate School of Theology at the top of his class maintaining a 4.0 GPA with a B.A. in Biblical Studies and Theology, Summa Cum Laude. Additionally, he completed all requirements to obtain his

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credentials (License to Preach; nationally) with the Assemblies of God. Currently, Pastor Juan leads one church in multiple countries and his evangelistic efforts have impacted lives all over the world.

Pastor Juan is a decorated veteran of the armed forces. After his tenure in the United States Air Force, he began teaching Math and Science at the Christian Fellowship Academy in Warner Robins, Georgia while also mentoring black male students with Godly counsel for righteous living.

Juan Wilder is married to the wife of his youth, Melanie Wilder and they share in the delight and joy of three beautiful boys - Juan Jr., Jacob, and Jordan.