

DOLLARS & SENSE

TENNESSEE SCHOOL FINANCE LEARNING SERIES

Session 3 Speakers



Joey Hassell assumed the role of superintendent for Haywood County Schools on July 1, 2017. In his role, Hassell facilitates a vision for all adults to work together to foster students' knowledge and desire for opportunities after graduation. Prior to his return to the superintendent's role, Joey was the Assistant Commissioner for the Tennessee Department of Education from January 2, 2013 – June 30, 2016. Within the department, Hassell led the division of Special Populations and Student Support. Hassell has been a special education teacher, middle school assistant principal, high school principal, and superintendent, and he has served students in these roles in Lake and Lauderdale Counties in Tennessee.



Chris Henson serves as the Chief Operating Officer for the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) where he oversees the Finance, Operations, and Facilities divisions, including development and management of the district's \$933 million operating budget as well as the capital improvement budget. Under his leadership, MNPS was the first school district in Tennessee to be awarded the Meritorious Budget Award for Excellence by the Association of School Business Officials International. MNPS was also the first district in the state to adopt and implement a weighted student funding formula as part of student-based budgeting to provide a more equitable distribution of resources to schools. Twice he has been appointed by the Board of Education to serve the school district as the Interim Director of Schools, first in 2008 and again in 2015. Prior to his work with MNPS, he served as the Associate Director of Schools for Finance and Administration for the Franklin Special School District and as the Budget and Finance Director/Interim Director of Schools for Sumner County Schools. He began his career with Deloitte.



Ivy Smith Morgan is the associate director of P-12 analytics, Ivy Morgan designs and conducts data and policy analyses that contribute to The Education Trust’s work to ensure that students living in poverty and students of color get their fair share of resources — including funding and equitable access to effective educators, school counselors, advanced coursework, and high-quality preschool. Prior to joining Ed Trust, Ivy worked as an education research analyst in the Policy and Program Studies Service at the U.S. Department of Education. At the Department, Ivy primarily managed medium-term projects and conducted short-term data analyses on a range of P-12 topics including teacher equity, fiscal equity, and socioeconomic diversity. A native of New Haven, Connecticut, Ivy holds a master’s degree in public administration from the George Washington University and a bachelor’s degree in urban studies and planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



Mandy Pellegrin joined The Sycamore Institute in 2016 as the Policy Director. She has the lead responsibility for developing the organization’s research plan and conducting and curating research and analysis. Mandy holds a master’s degree in public policy with a health policy concentration from Georgetown University and a bachelor’s degree from Lipscomb University. Mandy brings with her over a decade of experience in health policy – including as a Presidential Management Fellow at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services advising senior HHS leadership under both President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama on budget policy issues and as the Health Policy Adviser to U.S. Representative Bill Pascrell (D-NJ), who served on the Ways and Means Committee during the drafting, consideration, and passage of the Affordable Care Act. She began her career in policy as an intern and then bill clerk in the Tennessee General Assembly.



Reetchel Presume is a data and policy analyst on the P-12 team at Ed Trust. She recently graduated with her Master’s in Public Administration from George Washington University, concentrating in education policy and program evaluation. As a graduate student, she was elected as MPA Chair for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, which allowed her to work with faculty, students, and alumni to encourage a more inclusive and equitable graduate community. While in graduate school, she also interned at The College Board, the Data Quality Campaign, and with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education in Washington, D.C. Prior to moving to D.C., Reetchel spent four years working in New York City public schools, first as an AmeriCorps teaching fellow with Citizen Schools and then as a special projects coordinator with Uncommon Schools. She received her bachelor’s degree in sociology with minors in French and inequality studies from Cornell University, where she developed her passion for public service.



Dr. T. Nakia Towns is the deputy superintendent at the Hamilton County Department of Education in Chattanooga, Tennessee. In her current role, Dr. Towns provides leadership and support to the Superintendent's executive cabinet to ensure that the district's strategic goals and objectives are met. She oversees communications, external relations, accountability, strategic planning, and federal programs. She coordinates across all departments in the district towards continuously improving academic achievement and postsecondary opportunities for students.