



The Alliance for Excellent Education Presents
A Briefing on

Economic Imperative: Turning Around the Nation's Lowest-Performing High Schools

Friday, September 25, 2009 ♦ 9:30 – 11:30 am
Hyatt Regency Hotel
Washington, DC

Speaker Biographies

Alice Johnson Cain

Senior Education Policy Advisor to Chairman George Miller, U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor

Alice Johnson Cain is Chairman George Miller's chief advisor for K-12 education. Her expertise includes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and she leads the team of House committee staffers working on the re-write of No Child Left Behind. In addition to advising Chairman Miller, Ms. Cain serves as a resource on education policy to the 28 Democratic Members of Congress who serve on the Education and Labor Committee and their staff members.

Ms. Cain has 20 years of experience in education policy. Prior to joining the committee, she worked at the Children's Defense Fund advocating on behalf of federal and state policies to help poor, minority, and disabled children. She spent six years in the Clinton Administration where she directed the policy office at the National Institute for Literacy and was detailed for a year to assist Vice President Al Gore with workforce education and training policy. She spent 5 years on the US Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions staff of Senator Paul Simon, where she assisted with the 1994 Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization. More recently, she spent a year in New Zealand researching education policy and practice on a fellowship administered by Fulbright New Zealand.

Alice has served on the boards of several national and local literacy organizations, and spent many years teaching GED and ESOL classes for low-income and homeless adults and youth and volunteering in Washington DC's public schools.

Jamie Fasteau

Vice President of Federal Advocacy, Alliance for Excellent Education

Jamie Fasteau joined the Alliance for Excellent Education in January 2007. Prior to this, she served as a legislative assistant for Senator Patty Murray (WA) on education and issues affecting children

and families. Before working for Senator Murray, Ms. Fasteau was the senior lobbyist at the National PTA, working on implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act, school vouchers, education funding, and parental involvement in schools. She previously worked as the government relations manager for the American Association of University Women working on education, civil rights, reproductive rights, and women's issues. Ms. Fasteau started her career in Washington as the legislative director of the United States Student Association, representing millions of college students on access to higher education, student financial aid, and civil rights issues.

Bethany Little

Chief Education Counsel, U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Bethany Little is chief education counsel to the majority staff of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP). In this role, Ms. Little works on legislation governing early childhood programs, elementary and secondary education, higher education, and workforce training. Prior to joining the Senate HELP Committee, Ms. Little was vice president for policy and federal advocacy at the Alliance for Excellent Education (Alliance), where she was responsible for guiding the Alliance's policy work on high school reform issues, including accountability and school improvement, adolescent literacy, and college preparation.

Ms. Little came to the Alliance from the Children's Defense Fund, where, as director of government relations, she managed advocacy efforts and provided policy direction. From 2001–2003, she worked in the office of U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) as a legislative assistant focused on issues of education, welfare, and children and families. Prior to that, she was associate director for the White House Domestic Policy Council serving as an education policy advisor to President Clinton and Vice President Gore. She has also held positions at the U.S. Department of Education, Council for Excellence in Government, the Presidential Inaugural Committee, and Clinton/Gore '96. Ms. Little is a graduate of Georgetown University with a BS in foreign service.

Carmel Martin

Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, U.S. Department of Education

Carmel Martin was confirmed as assistant secretary for planning, evaluation, and policy development at the Department of Education by the U.S. Senate on May 1, 2009. In this position, she serves as a senior adviser to Secretary Arne Duncan on K-12 and postsecondary education policy and oversees the Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development (OPEPD), which coordinates policy and budget activities with the Department's principal offices as well as with the Office of Management and Budget, the House and Senate education committees, and state education agencies. OPEPD is home to the Department's Budget Service, the Performance Information Management Service, the Policy and Program Studies Service, the Office of Educational Technology and the Family Policy Compliance Office, which works to protect student privacy.

Prior to coming to the Department, Martin served as general counsel and chief education adviser to Senator Edward Kennedy for his work on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. She previously worked at the Center for American Progress as the associate director for domestic policy, and in the Senate as chief counsel and senior policy advisor to Senator Jeff Bingaman and

special counsel to Senator Tom Daschle. Through her years in Congress, she worked on legislation related to education, welfare, and other issues important to children and families.

Early in Martin's career, she worked as a trial attorney for the Civil Rights Division of the Educational Opportunities Section at the Department of Justice as well as in the private sector as a member of Hogan & Hartson's education practice. There she counseled and represented school districts and institutions of higher education across the country. She graduated with a J.D. from the University of Texas School Of Law and a master's in Public Affairs from the LBJ School of Public Affairs. After graduate school, Martin was a law clerk to the Hon. Thomas Reavley, judge in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Lyndsay Pinkus

Director of Strategic Initiatives, Alliance for Excellent Education

Lyndsay M. Pinkus is director of strategic initiatives at the Alliance for Excellent Education. Since joining the Alliance in January 2002, she has served in a variety of research, coordination, and advocacy roles, where her work has included managing policy and grant work on a range of issues including graduation rates, data, secondary school accountability, and secondary school improvement, and authoring a number of publications for the Alliance. Prior to rejoining the staff in January 2006, Ms. Pinkus served as a legislative associate at Washington Partners, LLC, providing government relations and policy research and analysis for a variety of clients, including the Alliance. She is a graduate of the School of Public Affairs at American University as a presidential scholar; the Public Affairs and Advocacy Institute at the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies; and the Institute for Educational Leadership's Education Policy Fellowship program.

Celia Hartman Sims

Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Senator Richard Burr

Ms. Sims currently serves as senior policy advisor for Senator Richard Burr on issues related to education (preschool through higher education), financial services, and housing. Ms. Sims came to Senator Burr's office after serving four years in the Bush Administration at the U.S. Department of Education. At the Department of Education, Ms. Sims worked primarily on the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act with a focus on state standards, assessments, and accountability systems.

Ms. Sims is a native of Winston-Salem, North Carolina and received her BA in classical languages and U.S. History from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Ms. Sims earned her MA in Latin from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and was working on a PhD in educational administration and policy prior to going to work for the U.S. Department of Education.

Bob Wise

President, Alliance for Excellent Education

Bob Wise, author of *Raising the Grade: How High School Reform Can Save Our Youth and Our Nation*, became president of the Alliance for Excellent Education in February 2005. Under his leadership, the Alliance has continued to build its reputation as a respected authority on high school policy and to advocate for reform in America's secondary education system, working to ensure that all students graduate from high school prepared for success. Since joining the Alliance, Governor Wise has become a sought-after speaker and advisor on education issues. He has advised the U.S. Department of Education and frequently testifies before the U.S. Congress.

As governor of West Virginia from 2001 to 2005, he fought for and signed legislation to fund the PROMISE Scholarship Program—which has helped thousands of West Virginia students remain in the Mountain State for college—and created the Governor's Helpline for Safer Schools. During his administration, West Virginia saw a significant increase in the number of students completing high school and entering college. Governor Wise earned a BA from Duke University and a JD from Tulane University College of Law.

Peter Zamora

Senior Education Counsel, U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman

Peter Zamora is Senior Education Counsel for Senator Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico. He was previously the Washington, D.C. Regional Counsel for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, a Hispanic civil rights legal organization. He has also served as a bilingual-credentialed English teacher in a California public high school, an education lawyer in private practice, and a consultant to the D.C. Public Schools. He holds a BA from the University of California, Berkeley, a teaching credential from the University of San Francisco, and a JD from Georgetown Law.