

# The Global STEM Education Center



## Global STEM Education: Catching Up or Leading the Way? Speaker Biographies

**Deborah Cunningham**, PhD, has served as the Senior Program Director at Primary Source, a Boston-area nonprofit that helps educators to globalize the K-12 curriculum, for the past ten years. In this capacity, she has overseen the creation of several hundred content-rich professional development courses, ten online courses, and multiple curricular initiatives. In 2013, she led an NEH summer institute in Turkey for 30 teachers from around the U.S. Prior to Primary Source, she worked in an educational nonprofit in England, taught high school social studies in Acton, MA, and lived and studied in China. She holds degrees from Yale College, the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and Oxford University. Her doctoral dissertation explored history teachers' perspectives and practice in the teaching of historical empathy. She can be reached at [deb@primarysource.org](mailto:deb@primarysource.org).

**Chris Dede** is the Timothy E. Wirth Professor in Learning Technologies at Harvard Graduate School of Education. His fields of scholarship include emerging technologies, policy, and leadership. His funded research includes five grants from NSF and the Gates Foundation to design and study immersive simulations, transformed social interactions, and online professional development. In 2007, he was honored by Harvard University as an outstanding teacher, and in 2011 he was named a Fellow of the American Educational Research Association. Chris has served as a member of the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Foundations of Educational and Psychological Assessment and a member of the 2010 National Educational Technology Plan Technical Working Group. His co-edited book, *Scaling Up Success: Lessons Learned from Technology-based Educational Improvement*, was published by Jossey-Bass in 2005. A second volume he edited, *Online Professional Development for Teachers: Emerging Models and Methods*, was published by the Harvard Education Press in 2006. His latest book, *Digital Teaching Platforms*, was published by Teachers College Press in 2012. He can be reached at [chris\\_dede@harvard.edu](mailto:chris_dede@harvard.edu).

**David Driscoll** served as the 22nd commissioner of education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts from 1998 to 2007. Dr. Driscoll has a 49-year career in public education and educational leadership. A former secondary school mathematics teacher, he was named Melrose, MA, assistant superintendent in 1972 and superintendent of schools in the same community in 1984. He served in that role until 1993, when he was appointed Massachusetts deputy commissioner of education, just days after the state's Education Reform Act was signed into law. He became interim commissioner of education on July 1, 1998, and was named commissioner on March 10, 1999. Dr. Driscoll is a former president of the Council of Chief State School Officers. He currently serves on a number of boards, including Teach Plus and the U.S. Education Delivery Institute, and chairs the Thomas B. Fordham Institute Board and the National Assessment Governing Board. He can be reached at [driscollconsulting@yahoo.com](mailto:driscollconsulting@yahoo.com).

**Brenda Finn** has worked in education for thirty-nine years, primarily in the public sector. She began her career as a high school teacher of English and English as a Second Language in Managua, Nicaragua, sparking her deep commitment to global education. Over the decades she has taught students in rural, urban, and suburban schools and served as a high school counselor. Dr. Finn has also served as associate principal of a multicultural high school in southern California, principal of a large urban high school in Wisconsin, vice president in the Wisconsin Technical College System, and superintendent of Gill-Montague Regional School District and Concord Public Schools/Concord-Carlisle Regional School District in Massachusetts. As founding principal of Massachusetts International Academy, Dr. Finn has collaborated with educators in China in establishing international partnerships and providing opportunities for students to study at the postsecondary level. She has been the recipient of fellowships from the Danforth Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities, a longtime member of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Professional Development Committee, and a contributing member of the Global Education/21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Committee. She has published numerous articles on multicultural education, with a particular focus on the acculturation of high school students who are immigrants or children of immigrants. Dr. Finn has two children, both of whom are Massachusetts public school educators. She can be reached at [brendaf@maiaedu.org](mailto:brendaf@maiaedu.org).

**Paul Reville** is the Francis Keppel Professor of Practice of Educational Policy and Administration at Harvard Graduate School of Education, after nearly five years of service as the secretary of education for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. As Governor Patrick's top education advisor, Reville established the Executive Office of Education and had oversight of higher education, K-12, and early education in the nation's leading student achievement state. Prior to joining the Patrick Administration, Reville chaired the Massachusetts State Board of Education, founded the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, cofounded the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education (MBAE), chaired the Massachusetts Reform Review Commission, and the Massachusetts Commission on Time and Learning, and served as executive director of the Pew Forum on Standards-Based Reform, a national think tank which convened the U.S.'s leading researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to set the national standards agenda. Reville's career, which combines research, policy, and practice, began with service as a VISTA volunteer/youth worker. He served as a teacher and principal of two urban, alternative high schools. He edited the book *A Decade of Urban School Reform: Persistence and Progress in the Boston Public Schools*. He holds five honorary doctorate degrees. Last and most importantly, he is the father of four children. He can be reached at [paul\\_reville@gse.harvard.edu](mailto:paul_reville@gse.harvard.edu).

**Simon Rodberg** is a master's student in the Technology, Innovation, and Education program at Harvard Graduate School of Education. This fall, he will begin service as the founding principal of the DC International School, a public charter school in Washington, DC. Previously, he was an assistant principal, teacher, and policymaker in DC public and charter schools. He can be reached at [simon\\_rodberg@mail.harvard.edu](mailto:simon_rodberg@mail.harvard.edu).

**Pasi Sahlberg** is a Finnish educator and scholar. He worked as teacher, teacher educator and policy advisor in Finland and has studied education systems and reforms around the world. His expertise includes international educational change, future of schooling, and innovation in teaching and learning. His best-seller book *Finnish Lessons: What can the world learn from educational change in Finland* (Teachers College Press, 2011) won the 2013 Grawemeyer Award. He is a former Director General of CIMO (Centre for International Mobility and Cooperation) in Helsinki and currently a visiting

Professor of Practice at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education in Cambridge, MA, USA. He can be reached at [pasi\\_sahlberg@gse.harvard.edu](mailto:pasi_sahlberg@gse.harvard.edu).

**Larisa K. Schelkin** is Executive Director and Founder, Global Technology and Engineering Consortium (GTEC); President & Co-Founding Director, DOME Foundation; and a VP of Triangle Coalition for STEM Education (Washington, DC). Prior to that, she held executive positions in academia (WPI, WIT, Tufts University) and at TYCO Electronics Global Corporation. Larisa is a Fellow and a Board member of Massachusetts Academy of Science. Larisa received a Catalyst Award and Distinguished Service Award from NE ASEE. She holds a BS and MS in Petroleum Engineering & an MS in Computer Science. She can be reached at [larisa.scheklin@gmail.com](mailto:larisa.scheklin@gmail.com).

**Jessica Zinger** holds a B.S in Mathematics and an MBA with a concentration in Business Analytics, both from Bentley University, and an M.S. in Operations / Logistics from Worcester Polytechnic Institute. She currently attends Bentley University and is pursuing a PhD in Business. Her research is focused on applications of Predictive Markets for Strategic Management. She current is employed by EMC, supporting Global Services on various Analytics and Pricing initiatives. She served on the board of directors for DOME since April 2011, most recently as Chair of the Board prior to the merge with GTEC. She can be reached at [jzinger@bentley.edu](mailto:jzinger@bentley.edu).

**Isa Kaftal Zimmerman** is the principal of IKZ Advisors, LLC, where she works as a resource for people in Massachusetts and throughout the world, who are interested in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education. She has been a Superintendent of Schools, a high school principal and assistant principal, a junior high school teacher, and Division Director of the Technology in Education Program and Associate Professor at Lesley University. She was senior fellow at the UMass Donahue Institute and the UMass President's Office. She served on Governor Patrick's Readiness Project and the Secretary's and the Commissioner of Education's 21st Century Skills Task Force. She is currently on the Governor's STEM Advisory Council in MA and Iowa. Her most recent publication is *The Complete Step-by-step Guide to Designing & Teaching Online Courses*, with Joan Thormann, available from Teachers College Press. She can be reached at [ikz1@verizon.net](mailto:ikz1@verizon.net).