

Presenter Bios

Cheree Davis

Cheree Davis graduated from Kent State University in 1995 with a Bachelor's Degree in Social Studies. She spent several years as a long-term substitute and student support teacher in a therapeutic treatment center for emotionally disturbed girls. She began her teaching career in 1999 as an uncertified special education teacher in the Baltimore City Public School System. She was awarded the Christa McAuliffe Teacher Award, which led to a Master's Degree in Special Education from Towson University. After one year of teaching, she was invited to join the school improvement team to develop effective instructional strategies to improve test scores for special needs students. In 2004, she became a founding teacher of The Baltimore Talent Development High School. During her 13 years as a social studies teacher, she founded an afterschool program called Youth4Change, which was the result of her nomination as an Oprah Winfrey Ambassador Teacher. Davis and her students earned the Maryland Pride Awards for their international work in India. In her position as a senior facilitator of professional development at The Center for the Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University she develops and implements job-embedded professional development for the teachers and staff of The Baltimore Talent Development High School in Baltimore.

Sara Heyburn

Sara Heyburn joined the State of Tennessee as a K-12 policy advisor in July 2010 and works primarily on issues of teacher effectiveness related to the state's Race to the Top grant. Dr. Heyburn began her work in education as a high school English teacher and cross-country coach in Nashville, TN. She also taught English and served as literacy lead at a large public high school in Louisville, KY. In 2007, she earned her National Board Certification in Adolescent English Language Arts. Dr. Heyburn has also worked as a curriculum writer, directed Vanderbilt's participation in the TEDS-M study of international teacher preparation, and consulted with several private foundations to facilitate public school partnerships. Before moving to the State, she worked for two years as a policy analyst alongside Dr. Matthew Springer at The National Center on Performance Incentives at Vanderbilt University. Her research and policy work focuses on teacher evaluation, compensation reform, and the use of research and data to drive instruction and reform in K-12 education. In May 2010 she earned an Ed.D. from Vanderbilt University's Peabody College. Dr. Heyburn also has a BA in English and a MAT, both from the University of Virginia.

David Steele

David J. Steele, Ph.D. is the Chief Information and Technology Officer and Project Director for Empowering Effective Teachers for Hillsborough County Schools. Dr. Steele earned a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Florida, Master of Education at Harvard, and Ph.D. at the University of South Florida. He previously served the district as a teacher, assistant principal, International Baccalaureate coordinator, high school principal, and General Director for Secondary Education.

Cheryl Vedoe

Cheryl Vedoe is president and CEO of Apex Learning. As a software engineer, marketer, and executive for computer companies including Digital Equipment, Apollo Computer, and Sun Microsystems, Vedoe experienced the impact of innovative technologies across industries. It was at Apple in 1992, as the head of the K-12 education division, that she first became involved with technology in education. Vedoe then joined the founding team and served as CEO of Tenth Planet, a leading developer of multimedia content for elementary math and literacy instruction. Following a stint as CEO of Post Communications, she returned to Apple as vice president of education products and marketing, heading up marketing efforts for K-12 and higher education. She also served as president of PowerSchool, a leader in web-based K-12 student information systems, and in September 2002 Vedoe joined Apex Learning® as president and CEO. Apex Learning is the leading provider of digital curriculum for secondary education. Drawing on her experience in both technology and education businesses, Vedoe leads Apex Learning's efforts to help schools make learning more accessible, relevant, and effective for today's students. Vedoe holds a BA in Mathematics from Wheaton College, in Norton, Massachusetts, and an MBA from Northeastern University, in Boston, Massachusetts. She serves as a trustee of Wheaton College and is on the board of directors of the Washington Technology Alliance.

Randi Weingarten

Randi Weingarten is president of the 1.4-million-member American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. She was elected in July 2008, following 11 years of service as an AFT vice president. In September 2008, Weingarten led the development of the AFT Innovation Fund, an initiative to support sustainable, innovative and collaborative reform

Presenter Bios *(continued)*

projects developed by members and their local unions to strengthen public schools. Weingarten served for 12 years as president of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), AFT Local 2, representing approximately 200,000 nonsupervisory educators in the New York City public school system, as well as home child care providers and other workers in health, law and education. For 10 years, Weingarten chaired New York City's Municipal Labor Committee (MLC) where she coordinated labor negotiations and bargaining for benefits. She has been a member of the AFT executive council since 1997, served on the AFT executive committee and its democracy committee, and headed the professional compensation committee. She has acted as an emissary for the national AFT in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. From 1986 to 1998, Weingarten served as counsel to UFT President Sandra Feldman. She also taught high school history in Brooklyn from 1991 to 1997. Weingarten holds degrees from Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations and the Cardozo School of Law. She worked as a lawyer for the Wall Street firm of Stroock & Stroock & Lavan from 1983 to 1986.