



GEORGE W. BUSH
PRESIDENTIAL CENTER
★ ★ ★

The George W. Bush Institute (GWBI) believes that, together, we can enhance student performance with meaningful education reforms. The key to successful reform is to stay focused on our goal: Preparing our students for future success with college or career.

GWBI – led by **Dr. Kerri Briggs**, Director of Education Reform at GWBI and **Eric Smith**, a GWBI Fellow and former Florida Education Commissioner – has developed the Advancing Accountability Initiative based on **10 principles of an effective accountability system** to help measure, track and evaluate our schools' progress.

Our vision is grounded in the belief that each state must have a strong accountability system that measures student achievement and holds schools accountable for ensuring that students are prepared for college-level work or a good job. The Advancing Accountability Initiative will:

- 1) Promote transparency and understanding – GWBI will analyze each state's accountability plan based on our 10 principles and post the results here. It is important to GWBI that the results are clear and concise for parents, educators and business leaders who need to understand how their local educational system is working.
- 2) Explore and create solutions – States and school districts face many challenges when it comes to accountability. GWBI plans to play a role in finding solutions by bringing education reformers together from around the country. The Institute will host small group meetings to address such issues as how to transition to new accountability standards and school turnaround models.

Our first meeting resulted in a paper highlighting the **10 principles of an effective accountability system**. These 10 principles will anchor our future discussions.

- 3) Disseminate information – It is important to GWBI that the results of our research are available and written for parents, educators and business leaders who are best equipped to work with their local school districts to implement reforms. Armed with the latest information on education reform, local leaders can make better decisions for the future of our children.

To follow GWBI's programs and progress on education reform, please visit our blog at www.bushcenter.com/blog.



Kerri L. Briggs
Director for Education Reform
George W. Bush Institute

Kerri Briggs joined the George W. Bush Institute in October 2010 as the Director for Education Reform. As the Director, Briggs' initial focus is the implementation



GEORGE W. BUSH
PRESIDENTIAL CENTER

★ ★ ★

of The Bush Institute's recently announced Alliance to Reform Education Leadership, the largest initiative in history to enhance the achievement of America's children by improving the performance of America's school principals. Additionally, Briggs oversees the Institute's efforts in middle school reform and education productivity.

Briggs most recently served as state superintendent of education for Washington, D.C., during which Briggs worked closely with widely respected education reformer chancellor Michelle Rhee and highly respected charter school leaders. As a member of the team that won a federal Race to the Top grant for the city, Briggs was instrumental in one of the nation's most visible education reform efforts. She led the District of Columbia into a Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) to develop a new, state-of-the-art assessment system, stabilized the organization to focus on eliminating Washington, D.C.'s federal status as a high-risk grantee, developed a policy structure to craft critical state policies, including those focused on students with disabilities, and constructed new processes to improve and consolidate data access and collections.

Briggs previously served as Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, a position she was nominated for by President George W. Bush in 2007. As Assistant Secretary, Briggs played a pivotal role in policy and management issues affecting elementary and secondary education. She directed, coordinated and recommended policy for programs designed to assist state and local education agencies with: improving the achievement of elementary and secondary school students; helping ensure equal access to services leading to such improvement for all children, particularly children who are economically disadvantaged; fostering educational improvement at the state and local levels; and providing financial assistance to local education agencies whose local revenues are affected by federal activities.

Briggs also served as Acting Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development from September 2006 through January 2007. Prior to, Briggs served for one year as senior policy adviser in the Office of the Deputy Secretary, where she worked on K-12 policy and regulations pertaining to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Briggs joined the Department of Education in 2001 as a senior policy adviser in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, working for four years on the review and approval of state accountability plans for NCLB. She also helped write the original regulations and non-regulatory guidance for implementation of the law's accountability, assessment, flexibility and teacher quality provisions.

The author of many articles on reading, charter schools and school-based management, Briggs was the co-editor of *Reading in the Classroom: Systems for Observation of Teaching and Learning*, published in 2003.



GEORGE W. BUSH
PRESIDENTIAL CENTER
★ ★ ★

Briggs is a former chair of the Junior League of Washington: Literacy Partnerships committee and is a board member for the Aged Women's Home of Georgetown.

A native of Texas, Briggs grew up with her family in small towns near Houston where she attended public schools. Briggs earned a Bachelor of Arts in political science from Stephen F. Austin State University in 1989. She did her postgraduate work at the University of Southern California, where she earned a Master of Arts and, later, a Ph.D. in education policy and organizational studies.

Back to top>>>



Eric J. Smith

*Fellow in Education Policy
George W. Bush Institute*

Eric Smith began his education career in Florida as a classroom teacher more than 30 years ago. After earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Science and Education from Colorado State University, Commissioner Smith was eager to share his love of science with students of all ages. He accepted a position at Union Park Junior High School in Orange County, Fla., where he remained for seven years teaching mathematics and science, eventually serving as the science department chair. Commissioner Smith moved to Oak Ridge High School in 1979 to serve as Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction and became principal of Winter Park High School in 1982. During his tenure, he implemented the International Baccalaureate program, and the school was recognized by the National Education Association as one of the top eight schools in the nation. In 1986, he continued his career in Volusia County as a Regional Assistant Superintendent and in 1988 became the district's Chief Officer for Management Planning. He earned a Doctorate in Education in curriculum and instruction from the University of Florida in 1984.

Eric's unwavering commitment to affecting positive change in the field of education led him to Virginia, North Carolina and Maryland where he served as a district superintendent for the next 16 years, and eventually to the national stage with the College Board in 2006 as Senior Vice President for College Readiness. He was responsible for leading the EXCEerator project, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which aims to prepare all students for college.

The project is now implemented in five school districts across the country, including Duval and Hillsborough in Florida, inspiring nearly 45,000 students.

Central to his work, beginning at Winter Park High School in 1982, and continuing in each district thereafter, has been the expansion of Advanced Placement and International



GEORGE W. BUSH
PRESIDENTIAL CENTER

★ ★ ★

Baccalaureate programs. His leadership in each school district led to significant gains in academic achievement, increased enrollment in rigorous coursework and advanced studies, improved reading and math scores among elementary students, and meaningful progress toward lessening the achievement gap among minority student populations. He also created meaningful working relationships with members of the diverse communities he served, the business community, the faith community, and the district's elected officials to cultivate a shared commitment to education of the highest quality.

Throughout his career, Commissioner Smith's goals have remained constant: to increase the academic achievement of all students and to reduce the disparity in achievement among student subgroups. His success in consistently meeting these goals in Florida and other states, as well as at the national level, bears testimony to his own passion to change students' lives, the urgency he brings to the challenges involved, and the leadership he demonstrates in ensuring the involvement of all stakeholders.

Eric has previously served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for The College Board, and was a member on the Board of Directors for the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program. He was the Chair of the National Assessment of Title 1 Independent Review Panel in 2003 and was named Florida's Commissioner of Education in 2007.

Back to top>>>

10 principles of an effective accountability system

- 1) Concrete goals that require schools to prepare an increasing number of students for college level work and reduce the achievement disparity between groups of students.
- 2) Rigorous content standards that ensure our students graduate from high school ready to do college level work.
- 3) Performance standards for student achievement that reflect both a basic level as well as an advanced level (representing being on path to postsecondary readiness) of knowledge and skill expected by grade level content standards.
- 4) Assessments that measure whether students are learning the skills represented by those high standards in:
 - a) English Language Arts and math, every year from 3rd– 8th grade, and at the end of key courses in high school; and



GEORGE W. BUSH
PRESIDENTIAL CENTER
★ ★ ★

- b) Science at least once within each grade span and at the end of key high school courses.
- 5) These assessments should show whether students are reaching a basic level of achievement as well as whether students' learning is on, or growing adequately to be on, path to postsecondary readiness upon graduation. The measurements must:
- a) Be valid, reliable, objective and applicable to all students across the state but also must be multiple to reflect the broad range of expectations the standards set for the students.
 - b) Be constructed in a fair and technically sound manner to play a significant role in assessing teacher effectiveness in advancing student learning to state goals.
- 6) Hold schools accountable for how well they are educating all students by having them publicly report their student performance data, disaggregated by subgroup. Accountability decisions for schools must be based on the imperatives of increasing the number of students prepared for college level work and reducing the achievement disparity between subgroups, including English Language Learners (ELL) and students with disabilities. No school should be rated as a high performing school if it does not show gains in the number of on grade level performers and gains in the performance of all subgroups.
- 7) Parents must have access to this performance data in a way that is transparent and easy-to-understand. These data should show parents how well their child is performing in relation to the high standards as well as how other students in the school are performing.
- 8) Require proven and effective interventions and appropriate consequences for schools that are not making adequate progress to student success as defined by the performance standards. States should have flexibility to target interventions and consequences as they deem appropriate, but consistent with the following principles:
- a) Interventions vary in intensity and type and depending on school performance, with the most intensive interventions occurring in schools that fail to help students reach grade level standards.
 - b) Schools should strive to increase regularly the number of students in key subgroups who are on path to postsecondary readiness or growing sufficiently to that goal each year that they will reach it. Success in doing so ought to earn schools higher ratings, honor, and other awards or recognition.



GEORGE W. BUSH
PRESIDENTIAL CENTER

★ ★ ★

- c) Interventions and consequences are applied consistently across all similarly performing schools.
- 9) Provide real alternatives and choices for those families whose children are trapped in the lowest performing schools (for example, high-performing traditional public schools, charter schools, online schools, vouchers, and after school tutoring).
- 10) Detailed plans for continuing to hold schools accountable for advancing student learning each school year and throughout implementation of changes in state assessment and accountability systems, including ESEA waivers, transition to Common Core State Standards and assessments, ESEA reauthorization requirements. States must consider:
- a) The content standards, performance standards, assessments, and performance goals against which schools will be measured each year;
 - b) The interventions and consequences the state will employ each year, which schools will receive such interventions and consequences, and how the state will treat schools currently subject to improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under ESEA; and
 - c) The choices the state will offer each year to families whose children are trapped in the lowest performing schools.

Back to top>>