



## Meet the Speakers

**Kelly English, PhD,** serves as the Chief Innovation Officer at the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, a division of Eliot Community Human Services. She is responsible for overseeing efforts to advance the agency's public policy, government affairs, and strategic communications agenda. She is the former Deputy Commissioner for Child, Youth, and Family Services at the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health, where she had responsibility for a budget of \$119 million of services and support for youth with serious behavioral health challenges and their families. She has more than 25 years of experience in the children's behavioral health field spanning both direct practice and policy roles. Kelly holds a MSW and PhD in social work from Boston College.

**Secretary Tutwiler:** As Massachusetts Secretary of Education, Patrick Tutwiler directs the Executive Office of Education, which oversees early education, K-12, and higher education. Secretary Tutwiler sits on each of the boards governing the Commonwealth's education agencies, as well as the University of Massachusetts system. He is Governor Maura Healey's top advisor on education and helps shape the Commonwealth's education agenda. Before being sworn in as Secretary, Dr. Tutwiler served as the senior program officer at the Boston-based Barr Foundation, a grantmaking organization focused on arts, climate and education. Prior to that, Secretary Tutwiler was superintendent of the Lynn Public Schools and headmaster at Boston Public Schools. As superintendent of Lynn Public Schools, he spearheaded a collaborative, equity-centered effort that translated into higher graduation rates and a more racially diverse staff while also overseeing the creation of the Commonwealth's second largest early college program.

**Secretary Walsh:** As Secretary of Health and Human Services, Kate Walsh leads the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS), which provides access to medical and behavioral health care, long-term services and supports, and key nutritional and financial benefits. She represents a team of more than 21,000 staff across 11 agencies and the MassHealth system, who work daily to provide services and programs for nearly 1 in every 3 Massachusetts residents. Secretary Walsh leads one of the strongest health and human services operations in the country – a safety net that sustains some of Massachusetts' most vulnerable children, adults, and older adults. Her goal as Secretary is to ensure that the safety net remains strong, flexible, and efficient for those who need it, and serves as a mechanism to elevate people whose lives have taken a difficult turn. Prior to her appointment to Governor Healey's cabinet, Secretary Walsh served as CEO of the Boston Medical Center (BMC) health system for 13 years. Before her time at BMC, Secretary Walsh served as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Brigham and Women's Hospital, Chief Operating Officer for Novartis Institutes for Biomedical Research, and at Massachusetts General Hospital in positions including Senior Vice President of Medical Services and the MGH Cancer Center. Prior to her tenure at Mass General, she held positions in a number of New York City hospitals. Secretary Walsh received her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Public Health degrees from Yale University. She has served as a member of the Board of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, the Boston Public Health Commission, the Massachusetts Hospital Association, the Association of American Medical Colleges, Pine Street Inn, and Yale University.

**Danna Mauch**, PhD, is President and CEO of the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health (MAMH). Dr. Mauch brings organizational leadership, operations management, evaluation research, and strategic consulting experience gained in private and public sector enterprises at state and national levels to inform her public policy, knowledge dissemination, and legislative advocacy work for MAMH. Throughout her career, her work has focused on employing data analysis to assess problems in meeting health care and human service needs and to devise solutions that are tested, scalable, and sustainable. Dr. Mauch was Chief Administrative Officer for Comprehensive NeuroScience, Founding President and Chief Executive Officer for Magellan Public Solutions, Founder and President of Integrated Health Strategies, Homelessness Policy Project Director at MAMH; and Executive Director of Cambridge Somerville Community Residences. Dr. Mauch has a lengthy career in public service. She presently serves as Court Monitor for the U.S. District Court of Western Washington, addressing forensic, health, and housing services reforms at the intersection of the health, disability, and criminal legal systems. Dr. Mauch's prior service includes Special Master for the U.S. District Court of the District of Columbia; Executive Director of the Rhode Island Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals; Assistant Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health, overseeing the Divisions of Mental Health, Drug Rehabilitation, and Forensic Medicine; and Policy Expert on Homelessness for NIMH and SAMHSA. Dr. Mauch is a published author of government and foundation reports, book chapters and journal articles on the organization, financing and delivery of healthcare and housing to vulnerable populations. She has served as a volunteer officer of several governing boards, including a regional healthcare conversion foundation, a national youth development and prevention organization, an urban elementary and middle school, and state and legislative commissions on health promotion and prevention, behavioral health and criminal justice, homelessness, health policy, and health care reform initiatives. She is a member of the CEO Alliance for Behavioral Health Reform. She is a founding member of The Policy Council. Dr. Mauch holds a PhD in Social Policy from the Heller School at Brandeis University.

**Sara Whitcomb**, PhD, is a licensed psychologist, Director of the School Psychology Program at UMass Amherst, and Co-Director of the BIRCh Project. Dr. Whitcomb is a community-engaged scholar with a focus on building workforce and organizational capacity to implement school-based behavioral health practices, particularly prevention practices, with sustainability in mind. She collaborates regularly with school districts, community partners, and state agencies and has published books, articles, and curricula focused on social, emotional, and behavioral assessment and interventions in schools.

**Sheila Dennery**, PhD, LICSW, is the Director of the Boston Children's Hospital Neighborhood Partnerships Program (BCHNP), a school-based behavioral health program in the Department of Psychiatry; Behavioral Sciences at Boston Children's Hospital. Dr. Dennery directs a comprehensive program in partnership with the Boston Public Schools. The program provides equitable and culturally responsive behavioral health services and supports to students and families in their educational home. The program also provides professional development and consultation locally and nationally to educators, school staff, behavioral health professionals and administrators focused on social and emotional wellness, and behavioral health. Dr. Dennery has spent her career working in the field of school-based behavioral health and teaching and consulting on behavioral health related topics in community settings. She partners with the Children's Mental Health Campaign to advocate for increased access to care and systemic change in behavioral healthcare for students across Massachusetts. Dennery is an adjunct faculty at Boston College and Simmons University and is an Instructor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School.

**Andria Amador**, Ed.D NCSP, is the Senior Director of Behavioral Health Services for the Boston Public Schools (BPS). Andria has dedicated her career to urban school psychology and began her career as a school psychologist before becoming an administrator. Andria, along with her staff and partners, developed the Comprehensive Behavioral Health Model (CBHM). CBHM is a multi-tiered system of supports designed to support the behavioral health needs of students across a continuum of prevention, early-intervention and intensive services. Implementation of CBHM requires BPS school psychologists to expand their scope of service delivery to include all NASP Domains of Practice. Andria had the pleasure of serving as the Past President of the Massachusetts School Psychology Association. She is the Delegate Representative for the Northeast for the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and is also the coordinator of the NASP Supervision Interest Group.

**Gina Dessources Benjamin**, LICSW, is a Clinical Social Worker, with over 15 years of experience as a direct care clinician. She is now serving as the Associate Director of Clinical and Community Services in the Center for Workforce Development at William James College. She is the Director of the Community Health Workers Training Program and Co-Director of the Haiti Service Learning and Immersion Experience in the Center for Multicultural and Global Mental Health. Ms. Benjamin received her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Social Worker at Simmons University in Boston. As a bicultural and bilingual immigrant leader, Ms. Benjamin is committed to the recruitment, training, and retention of a diverse behavioral health workforce to serve historically marginalized and underserved communities.

**Rocío Calvo**, Phd, is a Professor of Global Practice at the Boston College School of Social Work. She is the Founding Director of the Latinx Leadership Initiative (LLI). Using a community-centered approach in the design and implementation of interventions that address the needs identified by the community, Professor Calvo's research focuses on understanding how to improve access to social services for diverse Latinx populations (especially in health care and education). She has received research funding from the National Institutes of Health, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Russell Sage Foundation, the Boston Children's Collaboration Community Health, Massachusetts General Brigham, among other sources.

**Chris Pond** is a Behavioral and Mental Health Specialist at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. In her role, she coordinates several efforts regarding behavioral and mental health (BH/MH), social and emotional learning (SEL) and educational stability supports. She collaborates with vendors to support school districts to build integrated, multi-tiered, culturally responsive systems to meet the needs of their students' families and school staff and works with schools/districts to build strong partnerships with community-based mental health agencies and/or providers.

**Margot Tracy**, MPH manages the School Based Medicaid Program for MassHealth. Prior to this role, she worked in the MassHealth Office of Behavioral Health focusing on the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative and early childhood mental health. Margot holds a BA in Anthropology from the University of Virginia and an MPH from the Howard T. Chan Harvard School of Public Health.

**Michael Welch, Ed.M.**, brings 35+ years of experience as an educational leader in Massachusetts, focusing primarily on the district and secondary levels. He holds a Master's degree in Administration from Harvard University, and recently retired from a lengthy stint as Superintendent of the Dedham Public Schools. His administrative experiences include extended roles as High School Principal in Newton and Framingham, and also as a middle and high school Physics teacher. Mike is also a seasoned faculty member of the ACCEPT Educator Leadership Institute where he instructs and coaches teachers as they pursue administrative licensure. His areas of expertise include: organizational structures and teams, leadership coaching, union relationships and budgeting/finance.

**Kate Tetuan Parent**, LICSW is a mom, partner, and social worker who has collaborated with schools for over 16 years. Kate has a strong passion for building relationships and understanding how to build sustainable, equitable systems in schools. Throughout Kate's career, she has worked for partner organizations that work within the Boston Public Schools. Kate has provided individual therapy, clinical consultation, systems consultation and helped develop programming while evaluating the progress of the implementation. Kate currently works for Boston Children's Hospital Neighborhood Partnerships as the Associate Director of the School-Based Programming. Kate enjoys supervising the clinicians on the BCHNP team and being thought partners with the different partners we support.

**John Crocker**, M.Ed., has worked in public education for fifteen years, primarily as the administrator for the Methuen Public Schools Counseling Department. He has overseen the planning and implementation of the "Mental Health Initiative," which has focused on the establishment of a comprehensive school mental health system (CSMHS) in partnership with the National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH). John has worked with the NCSMH as a member of the National School Mental Health Task Force and as the Massachusetts team leader for the National Coalition for the State Advancement of School Mental Health (NCSA-SMH). In his role as the director of school mental health & behavioral services, he is charged with overseeing the district-wide implementation and evaluation of Methuen's CSMHS and positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS). His work has focused on developing a district-wide system of universal mental health screening, advancing the use of psychosocial data to inform school mental health staff's therapeutic practice, and the development and evaluation of the CSMHS in Methuen. He has worked to scale up evidence-based therapeutic services across Methuen through the provision of district-wide professional development and the design and implementation of group- and individual-therapy programs. Mr. Crocker founded the Massachusetts School Mental Health Consortium (MASMHC), a group of approximately 170 school districts across Massachusetts committed to advocating for and implementing quality and sustainable school mental health services and supports. Most recently, MASMHC co-led the Massachusetts Collaborative for Improvement and Innovation Network (COLIN) for Comprehensive School Mental Health, the School Mental Health Leadership Institute, and Thriving Minds, a professional development series focused on building comprehensive school mental health systems. He received the NCSMH's School Mental Health Champion Award in 2018 and was nominated the 2019 Massachusetts School Counselors Association (MASCA) Administrator of the Year, the 20-21 Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Counselor of the Year, and the 2021 Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) Michael J. Kane Wellness Award recipient.

**Jenna Parafinczuk**, MSW, LICSW, is the Director of Social Work for the Boston Public Schools. Jenna began her career in social work with the Boston Public Health Commission in 2006 before transitioning into various school based roles within the Boston Public Schools. Jenna has held various leadership positions as the Department of Social Work has been formed over the past 3 years. It is an honor for Jenna to lead the department with 18 central office staff/social workers and 218 school based social workers. A key component to Jenna's work is coordinating district wide crisis response for school and community based incidents. She has a particular interest in supporting schools as they look to create sustainable and equitable student support systems.

**Paul Hyry-Dermith**, Ed.D is Director of bryt, a program of the Brookline Center for Community Mental Health that helps schools develop intensive interventions for young people who have fallen behind academically in association with a mental health disruption. Paul is a former school principal and assistant superintendent, with additional experience in adult and family learning, public health, community organizing, and college instruction.

**Marisol Garcia, JD**, has dedicated her 25-year legal career to advocating for youth at every stage of the cradle to prison pipeline. Since 2016, Marisol has directed the work of the Commonwealth's largest child advocacy program – the Mental Health Advocacy Program for Kids (MHAP for Kids). As Deputy Director, Marisol continues as the leader of MHAP for Kids, acts as an HLA ambassador to cultivate partnerships with potential and existing financial and advocacy partners, develops, launches, and guides HLA advocacy efforts, advises existing HLA legal initiatives to help them grow, and works on administrative projects to advance HLA operations. Marisol achieved the mission of statewide expansion for MHAP for Kids, increasing capacity by over 500% and placing attorneys in Family Resource Centers (FRCs) across the state. Working with public interest groups, Marisol leads the legislative lobbying efforts – establishing a budget earmark and receiving over five million dollars in public funding. Within months of assuming her position as project director, Marisol collaborated with key stakeholders to redefine the strategic direction of the program to relocate this diversion program from the juvenile justice system to the FRCs based in the community. Marisol also coordinates ongoing data collection with the evaluation team from Boston University School of Public Health. Marisol oversees the work of the attorneys who advocate for children with unmet mental health needs to receive the care that they require to be successful at school, at home, and in the community. She has co-authored numerous articles for the American Bar Association's Children's Rights Committee and has presented on children's mental health issues at statewide and national trainings. In 2022, Marisol was selected as one of Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly's Top Women of Law. Marisol joined HLA in 2015 as a mental health advocate. From 2012 to 2014, Marisol litigated before the SSA, representing disabled adults and children. From 1999 to 2011, she maintained her own law office where she specialized in juvenile justice, representing children in civil and delinquency proceedings. During that time, Marisol was also an adjunct professor at University of Massachusetts in Lowell and William James College. Marisol was a Bart J. Gordon fellow and staff attorney at the Children's Law Center of Massachusetts from 1997 to 1999. She received her JD from Northeastern University School of Law in 1997 and a BA magna cum laude from Providence College 1994.

**Nadia L. Ward, M.Ed., Ph.D.** is a Professor of Practice, Hiatt Center for Urban Education & Adam Institute for Urban Teaching & School Practice, and Executive Director, Mosakowski Institute for Public Enterprise at Clark University. Dr. Ward's extensive work in the area of academic achievement for minority students has spanned more than 25 years. Dr. Ward's experience includes training and consultation to universities, public school systems and private organizations; curriculum development; program development; implementation; and community-engaged research and evaluation. She has worked extensively with high-risk as well as high achieving urban youth and their families in a variety of capacities. She has designed and evaluated social-emotional learning, substance abuse prevention programs, academic enrichment, and violence prevention programs in school and community Settings. Additionally, Dr. Ward is a leader in comprehensive urban school reform efforts where she engages schools and communities in the development, implementation and evaluation of systemic interventions designed to improve school climate, academic performance and educational trajectories of low-income and minority youth. Her scholarly activities have been supported by a diverse portfolio of local, state and federal funding. In her current role as Executive Director of the Mosakowski Institute for Public Enterprise, she is committed to developing and scaling digital health technologies to support the behavioral health needs of adolescents and young adults.

**Monica M. Pomare, M.Ed.**, is the Assistant Director for Succeed Boston @ The Counseling and Intervention Center in Boston Public Schools where she strives to support and educate students and their families to overcome barriers and challenges they may face as students continue their educational journeys. Monica is a board member for both the Parent Professional Advocacy League, Inc. (PPAL) Mujeres Unidas Avanzando, Inc. (MUA), serving as President for the latter, as well as a very active member of the NAMI Greater Boston Dorchester/Mattapan/Roxbury affiliate. She has been a parent, community activist and advocate for many years. She received her B.A. from Regis College and her M.Ed. from Cambridge College.

**Olga Lopez, M.Ed.**, serves as the Family Engagement Specialist at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). In this role, Olga has played a pivotal part in developing and executing the "Better Together: Strengthening Family School Partnership" Family Engagement Summit. This landmark event stands as the first statewide summit dedicated to fostering collaboration between families and schools. In close collaboration with community partners and the internal planning committee at DESE, Olga has been instrumental in conceiving and implementing initiatives that enhance the connection between families and educational institutions. Her dedication to promoting meaningful family-school partnerships has significantly contributed to the success of the summit, fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility within the educational community. Olga's commitment to advancing family engagement in education is not only reflected in her role at DESE but also in her broader impact on creating a supportive and inclusive educational environment for all. Her work continues to be a driving force in bringing together diverse stakeholders to work towards the common goal of empowering families and improving educational outcomes for students across Massachusetts.

**Ximena Sota, LICSW**, is the Assistant Director of the Latinx Leadership Initiative (LLI) at the Boston College School of Social Work. Prior to beginning this role in March 2019, she worked in the Field Education Department at the BCSSW for six years. In her current role, Ximena provides organizational leadership to establish a strong pipeline of Latinx leaders equipped to work with the Latinx community to solve complex problems sustainably. She provides advising and advocacy for students, and recruitment, training and support for community partners. She also oversees the implementation of community grants received by the LLI. Before returning to Boston College, she served in several roles, including as the Director of Community Contact at Connect Five (now called City Connects); Director of Social Services at the Suffolk University's Juvenile Justice Center, and a police station-based social worker with YSPN (now YouthConnect). Originally from Mexico, she attended high school in Texas. She received a BA from Clark University in Worcester, MA and an MSW from the Boston College School of Social Work.

**Courtney Chelo** has been with MSPCC since 2014. In her role, she coordinates the work of the Children's Mental Health Campaign. Prior to joining the MSPCC, she served as a Policy Coordinator at Health Care For All, where she worked to expand access to quality, affordable oral health care and coverage for vulnerable populations. She is a member of the Massachusetts Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning Youth, where she serves as the government relations committee chair. She is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire with a B.S. in environmental and resource economics.

**Representative Marjorie Decker** is currently serving her sixth term in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, representing the 25th Middlesex District. She is currently the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Public Health, and previously served as the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Mental Health and Substance Use and Recovery. Before joining the House, she served seven terms on the Cambridge City Council. Representative Decker has prioritized expanding and improving access to mental health services and support for everyone, and especially for youth, throughout her tenure in the House. Her policy agenda centers people and families who are often economically and socially vulnerable. She has been the lead House sponsor on a number of bills that aim to reduce poverty and increase cash assistance to families living in deep poverty. She works to both alleviate and mitigate challenges while also taking a systemic approach to tackling the root causes of poverty and racism. She continues to champion legislative and budget priorities that expand access and remove barriers to mental health and behavioral services. She authored in collaboration with the Children's Mental Health campaign and filed the school-based behavioral health and children's mental health legislation known as the THRIVES Act, which was largely adopted into Chapter 177 of the Acts of 2022. Representative Decker also continues to champion the unmet needs of maternal health, having co-chaired the Legislative Commission on Racial Inequity in Maternal Health.