

Charter School Standing Committee Members



Mashea Ashton

Mrs. Ashton is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Digital Pioneers Academy (DPA), a computer science focused charter middle and high school which she launched in Washington, DC in 2018. Serving the district's most vulnerable communities, DPA's mission is to develop the next generation of innovators.

Prior to founding DPA, Mrs. Ashton served as the CEO of the Newark Charter School Fund where she oversaw a \$48 million initiative to support the quality growth of charter schools. She has also previously held senior roles within New Leaders for New Schools, the New York City Department of Education, and the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP).

Mrs. Ashton has a Master's in Special Education and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Elementary Education from William and Mary. She currently serves on the board of the William and Mary Foundation. Mrs. Ashton, her husband, and their twin school-aged children live in Northern Virginia.



Antione M. Green

Antione Green is the Founder, Former CEO, and Current Chairman of the Patrick Henry School of the Science and Arts, Virginia's 1st Elementary Charter School in Richmond, VA. He received his B.S. from Virginia Commonwealth University. During the McDonnell administrations he was appointed as Commissioner of Education Commission of the States (ECS), an interstate agency committed to tracking policy, interpreting research, and advising on interstate policy collaboration.

In 2016 Green served as the President for the Urban League of Greater Richmond Young Professionals (Richmond YP) for two years. Currently Green is a 2024 Mcleod Society Fellow with the American Federation for Children (AFC) in Washington DC. Along with his work with the Black Minds Matter movement with AFC, Green serves as the Chair of the Governance Committee at the Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color stationed in Boston, MA.



Nina Rees

Nina Rees has over 30 years of experience shaping education policy in the public and private sectors. Most recently, she served as President and CEO of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools where she led the organization's efforts to boost the number of high-quality charter schools around the country.

Prior to the National Alliance, Rees served as Senior Vice President for Strategic Initiatives at Knowledge Universe, a leading global education company with investments in early childhood education, before and after school programs, and online instruction.

Rees also served as the first Deputy Under Secretary for Innovation and Improvement at the U.S. Department of Education and as a Deputy Assistant for Domestic Policy to the Vice President of the United States.

A native of Iran who immigrated to America at the age of 14, Rees earned her undergraduate degree at Virginia Tech and a master's degree at George Mason University. Rees is a member of the Aspen Global Leadership Network.



Christian N. Braunlich

Chris Braunlich is former president and CEO of the Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy and continues to serve as a Senior Advisor. He is a former President of the Virginia State Board of Education, where he served on the Board for four years, during the McDonnell and early part of the McAuliffe Administrations. Before his tenure on the Virginia State Board of Education, he was the Executive Director for the Northern Virginia Republican Business Forum for seven years. In addition to his candidacy for the State Senate in 2003 and his role as Executive Vice President for The Center for Education Reform, he was also elected to and served on the Fairfax County School Board, from 1996-2003.



Ebony Lee

Ms. Lee serves as the Chief External Affairs Officer of the Charter School Growth Fund.

She leverages her philanthropic and government experience to oversee our work in policy, communications, advocacy, and investor relations. Previously, she led policy and programs at the U.S. Department of Education.

Prior to joining CSGF, Ebony served as the deputy chief of staff for policy at the U.S. Department of Education where she oversaw all aspects of K-12 education including the Charter Schools Program. She worked for nearly a decade at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation leading the charter portfolio and teacher effectiveness work. She previously served as chief of staff in the Department's Office of Innovation and Improvement, and as an associate director in the Office of Intergovernmental and Public Liaison at the U.S. Department of Justice. Early in her career, Ebony spent time at various non-profit organizations focusing on policies to improve and expand early-childhood, choice, and charters. She studied public policy at both Brown University and Regent University and is a Pahara-Aspen Fellow.