

IPPSR Public Policy Forum Series Fall 2020 – October 21

K-12 Education During Pandemic



Katharine Strunk, Ph.D., is the Faculty Director of the Michigan State University Education Policy Innovation Collaborative and a Professor of Education Policy.

Dr. Strunk is also the Clifford E. Erickson Distinguished Chair in Education. She is president-elect of the Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP). Her current research through EPIC is focused on working with local and state education agencies on studies to help them inform policy and practice. Rooted in the fields of economics and public policy, Strunk's work centers on structures that

are central to district operations and policy and the ways these structures affect policymakers' decisions and outcomes. Her research focuses on three areas under the broad umbrella of K-12 education governance: teachers' unions and the collective bargaining agreements they negotiate with school districts, teacher labor markets and accountability policies. Strunk's most recent work includes studying teacher labor market responses to policy reforms in Michigan, teacher, school and district accountability and support policies in the Los Angeles Unified School District and throughout Michigan, and portfolio management reforms in Los Angeles, Denver and New Orleans.



Nikolai Vitti, Ph.D., is Superintendent of Detroit Public School Community District.

Dr. Vitti was appointed Superintendent of the state's largest school district in 2017. During his first year, he worked closely with the Detroit Board of Education to implement a 100-day plan to develop a new Strategic Plan focusing on raising student achievement, transforming the district's culture, improving staffing, developing the whole child, and ensuring financial responsibility.

Before arriving in Detroit, Dr. Vitti led Duval County Public Schools (DCPS), the 20th largest school district in the nation with approximately 130,000 enrolled

students in 200 schools, and a fiscal budget of \$1.7 billion. Dr. Vitti was previously chief academic officer of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, assistant superintendent for the Miami-Dade district and deputy chancellor at the Florida Department of Education. He also served children as a principal, dean of students, and teacher. He received a bachelor's degree in history and a master's degree in education from Wake Forest University. He holds a master's degree and a doctorate in education from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education.



Keith Smith, Ph.D., Superintendent of Kingsley Area Schools. Dr. Smith has served the Kingsley community as superintendent of Kingsley Area Schools for the past 10 years. He started his career as a high school chemistry teacher before transitioning to a new role as principal, spending 10 years serving schools in two Michigan communities –Memphis and Clio. He earned all four of his degrees from Michigan State University. During his undergraduate years, he had the good fortune to pole vault for the university. He says that learning to handle the ups and downs on the track helped prepare him for a career in school administration.

Sponsor Leadership – Institute for Public Policy and Social Research (IPPSR), College of Social Science, Michigan State University



Matt Grossmann, Director, Institute for Public Policy and Social Research (IPPSR), Associate Professor of Political Science

A nationally known political scientist, Dr. Matt Grossmann is an expert on American politics and government whose research spans national and state policymaking, election campaigns, interest groups, and political parties. Dr. Grossmann has authored numerous journal articles on policy change, political party networks, the legislative process and public opinion. His latest book, *Red State Blues* was recently made available through Cambridge University Press. He is also editor of the volume *New Directions in Interest Group Politics*, from Routledge.



Arnold Weinfeld, Associate Director, Institute for Public Policy and Social Research (IPPSR), Associate Professor of Political Science

Arnold Weinfeld is Associate Director of the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research (IPPSR) at Michigan State University as well as Director for Workforce and Economic Development Partnerships for the Office of Public Engagement and Scholarship within University Outreach and Engagement. Prior to joining MSU, Weinfeld served as CEO of the Prima Civitas Foundation, a community and economic development non-profit organization. He also has worked for the Michigan Municipal League where he served in a number of roles and co-founded the Michigan Sense of Place Council. Arnold began his career with the Michigan House of Representatives where he worked as a legislative aide, policy analyst and policy director. He has served his own community as an elected member of the Waverly Community Schools Board of Education and is currently on his local planning commission. He is also on the boards of local and statewide organizations such as the Michigan Sense of Place Council, Rural Partners of Michigan, Capital Area College Access Network. He is a graduate of Michigan State University's College of Social Science Multi-Disciplinary Program.

Presentations and additional resources are posted at www.ippsr.msu.edu.