





Innovative Schools Leadership Team

Deborah L. Doordan, Ed.D.

Dr. Deborah L. Doordan is Innovative Schools' Executive Director. Since joining the organization in February 2008, her leadership has provided direction through major restructuring; transforming and reframing the organization as the Center for School Innovation, and has poised it to play an intrinsic role in modernizing public education in Delaware.

Debbie professionally dedicated more than 20 years serving public education in the Christina School District. As a teacher, her work in special education helped to move students with disabilities out of isolated special schools and into their age-appropriate home schools. As an urban school principal in Wilmington, Debbie's team significantly raised the academic performance of students at-risk for failure and narrowed the achievement gap among disaggregate student groups. And as a district administrator, her experiences broadened to include extensive work in curriculum and instruction, professional development, and secondary education reform.

Among her many leadership abilities, Debbie's commitment to innovative school reform, dedication to cultivating effective partnerships, and capacity to foster collaborative teamwork have strengthened the organization's potential to promote outstanding student achievement in Delaware by developing excellent schools.

Debbie earned her B.S. in Special Education from Lynchburg College, and her M.Ed, and Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of Delaware.

Dawn Downes, Ed.D.

Dr. Dawn Downes is the Director of Teaching and Learning at Innovative Schools. In addition to earning a doctorate degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a literacy specialization, Dawn holds a Master's degree in administration and has extensive experience within the field of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development.

While working in public schools, Dawn held the position of middle and high school English Language Arts teacher, Coordinating Lead Teacher, and Literacy Instructional Coach. At the University of Delaware, Dawn supported the Delaware Reading and Writing Project as the Program Coordinator for secondary partnership schools and taught undergraduate and graduate courses. Dawn has presented at local, regional, and national conferences, served as an evaluator for the Struggling Readers federal grant and a reviewer for several professional books, and worked on numerous Delaware Department of Education committees, including assessment development and DCAS alignment studies. She has developed and aligned curriculum for several successful charter school applications as well as customized and implemented the Learning Focused Strategies (LFS) professional development model.

Don Liberati, B.S.

Don Liberati is the Director of Finance and Operations at Innovative Schools. Don spent nearly 20 years in the private sector in various roles, which focused on creating and executing strategic plans to operate and scale new initiatives and programs, as well as overseeing the day-to-day operations related to Finance, Human Resources, and Talent Management. Most recently, Don served as the Chief of Staff for AMC Theatres, focused on developing the infrastructure to operate a new business line and deploy the concept throughout the United States. He led the efforts of cross-functional working teams to develop standard operating procedures related to service delivery, financial reporting & systems, marketing, human resources, administration, and information technology. Don volunteers regularly at various organizations and is a member of the ReStore Advisory Committee for Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia. Don received a B.S. in Organizational Dynamics from Immaculata University and is currently pursuing the Master of Public Administration at the Fels Institute of Government at the University of Pennsylvania.

Charles W. Sheppard Jr., M.Ed.

Charles joined Innovative Schools in June of 2012 as a Program Director. He has over 17 years of experience in the education field. Charles' last 9 years have been spent as a Principal at two different Elementary Schools within the Appoquinimink School District. Prior to that, he was an Assistant Principal in the Christina School District. A former Teacher of the Year, he taught 5th and 6th grade at Stubbs Elementary School, also in the Christina School District.

Charles is a native of Delaware, but graduated high school at Hamilton High School East in New Jersey. He returned to Delaware to attend college where he has earned a Bachelor's from the University of Delaware and now holds a Masters and Administration Certification from Wilmington University.

Nicole Topkis Pickles, B.A.

Nicole Topkis Pickles is Innovative Schools' Director of Development. Prior to joining Innovative Schools, Nicole spent eleven years in the Financial Services Industry. Nicole most recently worked at a Financial Planning firm located in Wilmington, Delaware; and, among her various responsibilities she co-managed \$40 million dollars in assets, and created financial plans for clients. Nicole has deep experience and leadership in development for nonprofits and worked as a Development Director and an Executive Director for the American Cancer Society in Chicago, Illinois, and was Director of Development for The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago when the ballet moved from New York City to Chicago, Illinois. Nicole earned her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Emory University.

Deborah L. Doordan
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Summary of Duties and Experiences as Executive Director – Innovative Schools

Innovative Schools is a non-profit organization with a mission to empower educators and communities to adopt modern school models proven to inspire passionate teaching and learning.

Responsible for interpreting, advancing, and sustaining the mission of Innovative Schools through community outreach and engagement, program development, and sound fiscal management.

Leadership - Assure that the organization has a long range strategy to achieve its mission in a way that benefits the educational community it was established to serve. Provide leadership in developing and monitoring organizational, program, and financial goals. Communicate those goals and important factors influencing the condition of the organization to both the Board of Directors and staff. Carry out the plans and policies authorized by the Board by managing the day-to-day operations of the organization. Establish sound working relationships and cooperative arrangements with Innovative Schools' constituents, educational consultants, community groups and local organizations. Promote active and broad participation by volunteers in all areas of the organization's work.

Development - Continuously monitor Delaware's education and general business climate as well as national trends in education to explore new business opportunities and develop programs that are consistent with larger educational reform efforts. Support and promote the organization's marketing program by communicating Innovative Schools' activities, programs and goals to Delaware schools, other educational support agencies, the philanthropic community, and the general public.

Finance - Develop and maintain sound financial practices and ensure that adequate funds are available to meet operating requirements. Prepare an annual budget in coordination with staff, the Finance Committee, and the Board of Directors and ensure the organization operates within the budget guidelines. Maintain official records and documents, and ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.

Summary of Duties and Experiences as School Administrator – School and District Level

Leadership - Leadership experience that demonstrates skills in communication, human relations, curriculum implementation, staff development, management and organization. Experience as a building administrator in both urban (Reading First) and suburban schools and district office experience during a time of transition and reform.

Curriculum and Instruction – Implementation and oversight of Gifted and Talented Program, Instructional Coaches, Literacy Coaches, Differentiated Instruction, Inclusive Practices, Early Childhood, Curriculum Access, Special Education and Core Instructional Programs. Support for curriculum alignment across all content areas. Demonstrated ability to raise reading scores of low-income, special education and Hispanic students.

School Reform - Involved in school reform efforts including Advanced Placement Initiative, Small Learning Communities, Block Scheduling, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), High School Course Book Alignment, Secondary Literacy, Professional Learning

Communities, Distributed Leadership, Inclusive Practices, Charter School Application Review, Response to Intervention, Cultural Competency, School Improvement Plan Review and Support, School Restructuring, Strategic Planning, Non-Traditional High School and Distance Learning.

Training and Development –Development and implementation of district-wide professional development model to address the knowledge, skills and dispositions of new and tenured teachers, school leaders, district staff, aspiring leaders, school support staff and district succession planning. Set and monitored expectations for data-driven professional development planning aligned with school improvement initiatives at the building and district level. Responsible for development, monitoring and accountability of training and development at all levels of the organization. Provided oversight for the New Teacher Mentoring Program.

Program Management – Provide leadership and oversight for project charters (Accelerated, Advanced, Alternative Learning and Education Options) and web-based professional development management system. Planned and executed Education Expo to showcase school district. District liaison for partnership with Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League Achievement Matters!

Finance - Write and oversee state and federal grants and budgets. Responsible for general and special education unit funding and staffing allocations.

CERTIFICATION

State of Delaware:

- School Leader II
- School Leader I
- Teacher of Exceptional Children

EDUCATION

| | |
|----------|--|
| May 2008 | Ed. D., Educational Leadership - Curriculum and Instruction, University of Delaware |
| May 1995 | Administrative Certification, Wilmington University |
| May 1991 | Masters of Instruction, University of Delaware |
| May 1983 | Bachelor of Arts, Lynchburg College |

EMPLOYMENT

| | |
|----------------|---|
| 2008 – Present | Executive Director, Non-profit Education Support Organization Innovative Schools Development Corporation, Wilmington, DE |
| 2006 – 2008 | Supervisor, Professional Development, Talent Development Program Christina School District, Wilmington, DE |
| 2005 – 2006 | Supervisor, Special Education Services, Early Childhood Programs, Talent Development Program Christina School District, Wilmington, DE |
| 2004 – 2005 | Project Facilitator, Christina School District, Wilmington, DE <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Accelerated, Advanced & Alternative Learning Project Charter, Sarah Pyle Academy Non-Traditional High School, Small Learning Communities○ Expanding Education Options Project Charter |
| 1999 – 2004 | Principal, Thomas F. Bayard School Christina School District, Wilmington, DE |
| 1995 – 1999 | Assistant Principal, Henry M. Brader Elementary School Christina School District, Newark, DE |
| 1994 – 1995 | Administrative Intern, Casimir Pulaski Intermediate School Christina School District, Wilmington, DE |
| 1993 – 1997 | Teacher, Casimir Pulaski Intermediate School Christina School District, Wilmington, DE |
| 1988 – 1993 | Teacher, Downes Elementary School |

1983 – 1988 Christina School District, Newark, DE
Teacher, Douglass Special School
Christina School District, Wilmington, DE
1983 – 1984 Adult Education Instructor
Delaware Elwyn Institute, Wilmington, DE

DONALD E. LIBERATI

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SUMMARY Accomplished leader with an exemplary track record of achievement and success in driving organizational performance through building strong coalitions and collaborating with a diverse group of stakeholders. Highly credible individual with a demonstrated ability to influence and motivate partners at all levels of the organization to gain consensus and effect change. Energetic and thoughtful decision maker known for the ability to apply an understanding of business, economic, and cultural factors. Exceptional capacity to empower, motivate, and develop teams and employees who are successful in achieving the mission. Selected twice to fill newly created positions based on a track record of initiative, good judgment, flexibility, and the ability to assimilate quickly.

| | | | |
|---------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| SKILLS | STRATEGIC PLANNING | BUSINESS OPERATIONS | HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT |
| | FINANCIAL REPORTING | CROSS FUNCTIONAL TEAM MANAGEMENT | ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS |
| | TECHNOLOGY / IT | STAFF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT | CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGEMENT |
| | PROJECT MANAGEMENT | CAPACITY BUILDING | COMMUNICATION STRATEGY |

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

EDUCATION

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
FELS INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
GRADUATION : MAY 2014

B.S. ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS
IMMACULATA UNIVERSITY

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

BROAD STREET MINISTRY
BUSINESS VOLUNTEERS FOR THE ARTS
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
PA EMENTORING
UNITED WAY

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

ASSOCIATION FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING
(ASP)
NET IMPACT (NI)
SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT (SHRM)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Innovative Schools, Wilmington, DE

10/2012-Present

Director of Operations & Finance

Lead the financial and human resources initiatives for the organization. Oversee all aspects of financial reporting including the various administrative, business planning, accounting, and budgeting efforts of the organization. In regards to human resources, manage the performance management systems, benefits and compensation administration, as well as employee development and relations. Focus on the long-term financial and strategic planning for the organization.

AMC Entertainment, Inc., Kansas City, MO

11/1991-04/2011

2.5 billion dollar national movie theatre chain with over 18,000 associates.

Chief of Staff / Director, Dine-In Theatres (2/2010-4/2011)

As the Chief of Staff to the EVP and SVP of US Operations, had direct responsibility for 18 member team to ensure all objectives and deadlines were met. In addition, represented the executive team on high-profile projects and coordinated all communications from the team. Selected to provide operational oversight for a new business line with-in AMC. Concept involved building movie theatres with full service restaurants. Selected accomplishments included:

- As a member of the Dine-In Theatre Executive Steering Committee, created a three year strategic plan for the nationwide expansion of the concept.
- Led the efforts of the cross-functional working teams to develop standard operating procedures related to guest execution, financial reporting & systems, marketing, human resources, administration, and information technology.
- Oversaw the preparation and execution of the annual financial and operating plans as well as managed the quarterly review for the operating theatres that included reconciling the results vs. budget, and determining the deployment strategy for new initiatives.
- Worked with various stakeholders to change maintenance procedures that resulted in a \$2M annual savings while keeping the outcomes produced by the program intact.
- Voluntarily left position to return to hometown of Philadelphia.

Director of Operations (2/2006-1/2010)

As the youngest manager in AMC's company history to serve as Director of Operations, responsibilities included full accountability for portfolio of 33 geographically dispersed theatres, 32 direct reports, 1900 indirect reports, and \$250M in annual revenues. Primary responsibilities included Guest Service Results, Talent Management, and Profitability. Selected accomplishments included:

- Talent Management liaison for the West Division. Represented the Operations team on all talent management initiatives, including theatre structure and compensation models, payroll budgeting, performance evaluation updates, and HR market meetings.
- Developed and executed a capacity-building plan in preparation for the acquisition of a theatre chain that increased the size of the organization by 33%.
- Oversaw a wide variety of strategic-planning and project-management assignments, including many inter-departmental teams to accomplish the following objectives: develop protocols to handle guest issues, improve food & beverage sales tactics, and increase loyalty program membership.

Director, Operations Excellence (5/2005-1/2006)

Monitored, assessed, and analyzed guest feedback scores for each of the companies 220 theatres. Completed case studies on high-performing theatres to determine best practices. Selected accomplishments included:

- Collaborated with individual theatre General Managers to implement best practices to improve service delivery.
- Utilized guest feedback to measure the impact and effectiveness of policies and programs.

General Manager (2000-2005)

Full accountability for theatre results, including guest experience and fiscal responsibility. Additional responsibilities included monitoring and improving guest relations along with the hiring, training, and development of staff.

- Awarded the *Stanley H. Durwood General Manager of the Year* award in: 2003, 2004 and 2005.
- Served at the Market Recruiter in: 2003, 2004, 2005. Led the recruiting efforts for 100 management-level positions in the Phoenix and Los Angeles markets.

Senior Manager, Manager, Staff Supervisor (1991-2000)

Initially hired as Staff Supervisor; quickly produced outstanding results through drive and determination, which resulted in continued promotions and increased responsibility and visibility within the organization.

Dawn M. Downes

Wilmington, Delaware
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ddownes@innovativeschools.org

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION

Doctor of Education, Curriculum and Instruction in Literacy, December 2006
Designing Evaluation Tools for the Differentiated Instruction Staff Development Initiative
University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware

Master of Education, School Leadership, December 1999
Wilmington College, Wilmington, Delaware

Bachelor of Arts in English Education, *Cum Laude*, May 1993
University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware

Delaware Teacher of English Continuing License
Effective July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2013

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| March 2011- Present | <p>Director of Teaching and Learning <i>Innovative Schools, Wilmington, Delaware</i></p> <p>Research successful and replicable models of comprehensive school design to replicate in Delaware schools. Work with district and school leaders around planning and school redesign for model implementation in existing schools. Develop the academic and educational programs sections for new, renewal, and expansion charter applications. Creatively problem-solve how innovative instructional practices impact school operations. Interface with Delaware Department of Education around innovative elements of instruction in the models. Supervise the professional development, curriculum development and alignment team. Provide professional development to local charter schools.</p> |
| July 2010- March 2011 | <p>Instructional Support Specialist <i>Innovative Schools, Wilmington, Delaware</i></p> <p>Provided instructional coaching for charter schools around best practices of instruction, specializing in literacy. Contributed to the academic sections of charter applications and collaborated on curriculum development and alignment. Researched innovative school models with proven track records for success.</p> |

August 2008-
June 2010

Delaware Reading and Writing Project Program Coordinator

Delaware Center for Teacher Education, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware

Coordinated professional development literacy initiatives in secondary partnership schools across Delaware. Facilitated school data analysis, planning for instruction, and continued formative and summative assessments. Researched and presented workshops and conducted classroom coaching for reading, English, special education, and content area teachers. Developed special sessions on struggling readers and literacy in urban settings for Delaware's literacy coaches. Collaborated with faculty to provide coaching for University graduate students. Wrote grant applications.

August 2008-
June 2010

Curriculum Specialist

Innovative Schools Development Corporation, Wilmington, Delaware

Designed curriculum scope and sequences and instructional units for English Language Arts and social studies, grades 9-12, and for English Language Arts, math, music, and Spanish, grade 5, for charter school applications to Delaware Department of Education. Conducted standards alignment for all design areas. Provided literacy consulting services to new charter schools through their incubation period and existing charter schools wishing to provide better literacy instruction and interventions.

July 2000 -
Present

Teacher Consultant

Delaware Reading and Writing Project, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware

Design and present workshops for teachers of grades 4-12 in both public and private school settings on a variety of topics related to reading and writing in English classrooms and across the content areas. Receive consistently high scores on all areas of workshop evaluation.

May 2007-
April 2008

Professional Development Consultant

Penn-Delco School District, Aston, Pennsylvania

Collaborated with district supervisors and secondary school principals to develop a year-long staff development plan to sustain teachers' learning and implementation of differentiated instruction and literacy across the content areas. Customized opportunities to address teachers' learning needs through whole, small group, and individualized sessions.

September 1999-
June 2008

High School English Language Arts Instructional Coach

Christina School District, Newark, Delaware

Researched, designed, and executed staff development including presentations, study groups, demonstration lessons, and individual coaching sessions on a wide range of topics in literacy, differentiated instruction, inclusive practices, and assessment for K-12 administrators and teachers. Developed a remedial reading program for struggling secondary readers. Lead district teams in writing the high school English pacing guide, completing curriculum alignment, and creating common mid-term and final assessments for grades 9-12. Consulted with school leadership teams in data analysis and writing school improvement plans. Contributed to walkthrough protocols and trained district administrators.

- September 2000-
January 2009 **Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP)
Reading Assessment Development Committee**
Department of Education, Dover, Delaware
Identified passages and wrote test questions and rubrics for the 10th grade DSTP reading and writing statewide assessments. Assisted in the selection of passages and questions to be included on the 10th grade DSTP reading assessment. Attended benchmarking sessions to anchor rubrics to student work.
- February 2002-
December 2003 **Adjunct Literacy Professor**
University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware
Taught several sections each of Teaching Reading and Writing in the Middle Grades, Reading and Writing in the Content Areas, and Problems of Diagnosis of Struggling Readers.
- September 1996 -
June 2000 **Coordinating Lead Teacher**
Christina School District, Newark, Delaware
Facilitated discussion and decision making for a major grant initiative to develop standards-based school reform in a K-12 vertical alignment. Organized professional development for grant leadership. Composed the district annual report for the Pew Charitable Trusts.
- September 1996 -
June 1999 **Lead Teacher**
Glasgow High School, Christina School District, Newark, Delaware
Advocated systemic standards-based school reform in support of the district grant. Conducted teacher training. Facilitated peer visitations and coaching.
- November 1994 -
June 1999 **English Teacher**
Glasgow High School, Christina School District, Newark, Delaware
Planned and implemented a progressive and integrated language arts program for regular and special needs students in grades 9-11. Worked with colleagues on an innovative interdisciplinary team with a scientific focus.
- September 1993 -
June 1994 **English Teacher**
George Read Middle School, Christina School District, Newark, Delaware
Planned and implemented Writer's Workshop as part of a comprehensive writing program for 8th graders. Contributed to and supported cross curricular team projects.

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- October 2012 **Presenter at the Statewide Vision 2015 Conference on 21st Century
Teaching and Learning**
Newark, Delaware

August 2012 **Thomas A. Edison Charter School**
Renewal Charter Application, Lead Writer & Project Manager
Approved by the Delaware Board of Education

May 2012 **Academia Antonia Alonso**
New Charter School Application, Lead Writer, Curriculum Developer
Approved by the Delaware Board of Education

May 2012 **Early College High School**
New Charter School Application, Lead Writer, Curriculum Developer
Approved by the Delaware Board of Education

October 2011 **Academy of Dover**
Renewal Charter Application, Lead Writer, Curriculum Developer
Approved by the Delaware Board of Education

April 2010 **Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security**
New Charter School Application, Lead Writer, Curriculum Developer
Approved by the Delaware Board of Education

April 2010 **Odyssey Charter School**
Expansion Charter School Application, Lead Writer, Curriculum Developer
Approved by the Delaware Board of Education

November 2008 **Presenter at the National Writing Project's Fall Conference**
San Antonio, Texas

September 2007 -
May 2008 **Consultant Training in Professional Learning Communities**
Christina School District, Newark, Delaware

January 2005 -
May 2006 **Consultant Training in Differentiated Instruction**
Christina School District, Newark, Delaware
Delaware Department of Education, Dover, Delaware

March 2005 -
May 2005 **Co-Writer for the Success for Struggling Secondary Readers
Part II (IMPACT): Motivation Module**
Delaware Department of Education, Dover, Delaware

March 2005 **Consultant Training in LETRS – Modules 10, 11, 12 (Adolescent Literacy)**
Delaware Department of Education, Dover, Delaware

September 2004 **Consultant Training in Success for Struggling Secondary Readers**
Delaware Department of Education, Dover, Delaware

July 2004 **National Project CRISS Certification Training**
Kalispell, Montana

- July 2004 **Consultant Training in *Understanding by Design*** with Grant Wiggins
Delaware Department of Education, Dover, Delaware
- May 2002 **Induction into the Delaware Chapter of *Phi Delta Kappa International***
Dover, Delaware
- November 2001 **Presenter at the National Council of Teachers of English Fall
Conference**
Baltimore, Maryland
- August 2001 **Presenter at the Summer Conference on the Teaching of English**
Delaware Association of Teachers of English, Dover, Delaware
- May 2001 **Superstars in Education Winner for Program Development**
Wilmington, Delaware
- October 2000 **Presenter at the Diamond State Reading Association Conference**
Dover, Delaware
- March 2000 **Presenter at the Conference on the Teaching of Writing**
Delaware Writing Project, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware
- August 1998 **Executive Committee to Write High School Performance Indicators
for English Language Arts**
Delaware Department of Education, Dover, Delaware

Charles W. Sheppard Jr.

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Home Phone (302) 449-2263

OBJECTIVE: To obtain an educational leadership position at a district office level or similar.

QUALIFICATIONS

Positive experiences throughout my administrative career make me a strong candidate for a district level or similar educational leadership position.

EDUCATION

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 1998-1999 | Administrative Certificate, Wilmington College |
| 1993-1995 | Masters of Elementary Education, Wilmington College |
| 1987-1992 | Bachelor of Arts, University Of Delaware |

EMPLOYMENT

2012-Present Program Director, Human Capital Initiatives, Innovative Schools

- Lead the Delaware Leadership Project, a Principal preparation program and Delaware's only approved alternate route to certification program.
- Oversee Delaware Talent Management, a set of fundamental services that support effective school-level hiring practices and provide guidance on the management techniques that lead to better retention and student outcomes.

2004-2012 Principal, Appoquinimink School District

- Lead administrator for Brick Mill Elementary School and later Townsend Elementary School which included the Townsend Early Childhood Center. Students ranged in grade from Pre K to Grade 5.

2000-2004 Administrative Intern/Assistant Principal, Christina School District

- Assisted the Principal in the daily operation and instructional programs at Bayard Intermediate School. Bayard Intermediate housed students from Pre K to Grade 6.

1995-2000 Teacher/Lead Teacher, Christina School District

- 5th and 6th Grade Teacher Experiences (Inclusion Partner and General Ed)
- Lead Teacher for Afterschool and Summer School Programs that worked with students from ranging from Kindergarten through Grade 6.

RELATED

Former Teacher of the Year (Frederick Douglass Stubbs Elementary)
National Distinguished Principal Nominee
Past President of the Delaware Elementary School Principals' Association (DESPA)

REFERENCES

Available upon request

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

- Positions with Delaware Elementary School Principal Association (DESPA) include County Representative, Treasurer, President Elect, President, and Past President.
- As DESPA President, I worked with Delaware Association of Secondary School Principals (DASSP) to combine the two organizations. The new group now operates as the Delaware Association of School Principals (DASP)
- Board Member for Delaware Association of School Administrators (DASA)
- Met with Delaware Congressional Members on multiple occasions as part of the National Leaders Conference in Washington DC
- Criminal Justice Undergraduate Degree helps with understanding of School Legal Issues.
- Accounting background and prior work with an accountant help with budgeting and related financial matters.
- Helped facilitate Appoquinimink Administrative Retreat based on book "Whole New Mind" by Dan Pink.
- Led district wide implementation of NWEA's MAP test.
- Led bringing Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) to Elementary Schools
- Presenter for Inclusive Schools Conference at Rider College
- Have created numerous schedules incorporating different educational initiatives at both the building and district level.
- Worked with Shuhan Wang to build a foreign language program at Bayard using a FLAP Grant.
- Developed and implemented student recognition programs in all buildings.
- Member of the district mentoring program.
- Served on the Board for the Computers in Education Foundation.
- Attended numerous National Association of Elementary School Principal (NAESP) conventions to network with colleagues from around the world.
- District Level Committees/Teams:
 - Contract Negotiations
 - Parent Business Advisory Council
 - Diversity Committee
 - Skill Builder Classroom Team
 - Redistricting Committee
 - Original Vision 2015 Team
 - Co-Chair District Report Card Committee (Christina)
- Prior Teacher Level Committees/Teams:
 - Chaired School Improvement Team
 - Technology Chair
 - START Team
 - Afterschool Teacher
 - Social Studies Curriculum Development
- Strong technology skills that have served me well in the classroom and as an administrator.
- Continue to grow professional by attending off site and in house trainings. These include, but aren't limited to Learning Focused Strategies (LFS), Professional Learning Communities (PLC's), 6 Traits Writing, The Writing Academy, Assessment for Learning, and The Love and Logic Institute
- Exposure to deeper learning school models from Big Picture, New Tech, Expeditionary Learning, and Early College.
- Work with Charter School Management, specifically the writing of school charter applications.
- Trained in Facilitation and Coaching by New York City Leadership Academy

Nicole Topkis Pickles

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Wilmington, DE 19807
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QUALIFICATIONS

Accomplished senior executive with proven leadership skills, relationship management capabilities, and an extensive professional network in Delaware. Experience spans running a financial advisory firm, building its client base and managing/growing relationships to working in a start-up development position in the not-for-profit field.

BUSINESS

9/01 – 10/12

TOPKIS FINANCIAL ADVISORS LLC

Wilmington, DE

Partner. Co-managed \$40 million in assets for over 100 clients, created new investment portfolios to meet a variety of needs for clients that spanned the risk tolerance spectrum.

- Responsible for creating and presenting quarterly investment reviews for all clients utilizing tools such as Morningstar.
- Created and wrote comprehensive financial plans for prospective, new and existing clients.
- Held the position of Chief Compliance Officer responsible for meeting guidelines set by FINRA and Topkis Financial Advisors' Broker Dealer and successfully coordinated regular audits with Broker Dealer and The State of Delaware.
- Have passed 2 of 5 courses for the Chartered Financial Planner certification.

11/95 – 1/97

JOFFREY BALLET OF CHICAGO

Chicago, IL

Director of Development. Led the Joffrey's initial fundraising initiatives after it relocated the ballet company from New York to Chicago. Created the Director of Development position and hired staff to begin raising funds to support the Joffrey's local and global initiatives.

- Crafted a strategic plan to launch development activities to raise \$2 million in the first year.
- Researched and applied for grants in Chicago and New York City.
- Developed a large corporate sponsorship program that included Sara Lee Corporation, Goldman Sachs, First Chicago Bank, and other local corporations and law firms.
- Initiated a large black tie gala event that followed opening nights to raise funds and publicity.
- Launched a successful appeal campaign aimed at individuals and corporations.
- Started a Junior/Auxiliary Board of Chicago's hottest young and upcoming professionals and orchestrated its activities that included dances, ballet events, and social gatherings at important venues.
- Recruited and managed top full-time and volunteer talent.

6/93 – 4/95

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Evanston, IL

Executive Director – North Shore Office. Provided leadership and support for all fundraising and program initiatives in the North Shore communities: Evanston, Winnetka, Wilmette, Glencoe Kenilworth, Highland Park and Skokie.

- Developed a strategic plan to raise \$1.5 million in first year.
- Coordinated fundraising and program efforts with the Board of Directors of the North Shore including activities aimed at corporations such as Goelitz Confectionery (aka Jelly Belly), Abbott Laboratories and Lexus.
- Recruited new Board members from the community.
- Worked closely with the Women's Board of the North Shore and managed fundraising events and activities.
- Recruited several new highly talented staff members; managed five total employees.
- Promoted to be Executive Director of Downtown Chicago Office prior to resigning to care for my first child.

9/91 - 5/93

Director of Development – Chicago Loop Office. Responsible for all income sources for the downtown Chicago area.

Chicago, IL

- Developed a strategic plan to raise \$2 million annually from several large events and Annual Appeal.
- Created and led a Young Professionals group that promoted programs and fundraised.
- Worked with the Chicago Loop Women's Board on many events including the largest fashion show in Chicago: Bob Mackie Fashion Show.
- Oversaw several other events such as Bike-A-Thon, Daffodil Days, Relay for Life and Jail-N-Bail.
- Hired and managed seven staff members; recruited and retained strong group of volunteers.

5/89 - 8/91

Programs Manager. Responsible for public cancer education and awareness programs in the North Atlanta metropolitan area.

Atlanta, GA

8/87 - 4/89

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

Atlanta, GA

Case Worker. Responsible for matching Big Brothers and Big Sisters with children in the South Atlanta metropolitan area and participating in fundraising activities. Evaluated and screened all prospective volunteers prior to making matches.

EDUCATION

EMORY UNIVERSITY

Atlanta, GA

1987

Bachelor of Arts Degree

OTHER

Member of Board of the Directors for Cancer Support Community Delaware (2011-Present).

Committee Member of The Annual Fund for the Wilmington Friends School (2009-Present).



JOB TITLE: Senior Director, Schools

JOB CLASS: Full-time exempt

REPORTS TO: Executive Director

OVERVIEW: As a member of executive level management team, the Senior Director, Schools will be responsible for developing and implementing the strategy to operate and expand the CMO Services offered by Innovative Schools. The incumbent responsible for the management of the schools in the CMO portfolio, and ensuring each school remains compliant to the DE Charter School Performance Framework. This Senior Director, Schools will focus on Leadership, Team Development, and Academic Support to further the adoption of deeper learning models in Delaware.

AREAS OF MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

Leadership and Team Development

- Oversee school principals, CMO Operations Team, and CMO Project Managers;
- Serve as a thought partner to direct reports as they lead their respective teams; coach and support direct reports to address their key roles and responsibilities;
- Build a strong, cohesive team culture between the various CMO teams and boards;
- Supervise principals and CMO Project Managers in the hiring and management of school and academic team staff in partnership with the Innovative Schools HR Services Team;
- Plan and implement professional development for school principals;
- Supervise principals in the creation and implementation of effective professional development opportunities for their staff;

Educational Leadership & Academic Support

- Work with national subcontractors, Innovative Schools, Academic Services team, principals and academic team leaders to develop and implement long-term plans for curriculum, assessment, and school improvement;
- Ensure that the principals have a clear plan for improvement of instruction and school culture

- Oversee employee relations across the schools, ensuring cohesion and collaboration among school staff
- Manage long-term and annual school planning;
- Keep self and direct reports informed of current educational trends, practices, and proposed legislation impacting the schools;
- Monitor schools' fidelity of implementation against school design elements.

Relationship Management

- Uphold the organization's larger mission, to empower educators and communities to adopt modern school models proven to inspire passionate teaching and learning;
- Possess a deep knowledge of schools in the Portfolio of Model Schools;
- Work closely with the Delaware Charter Schools Network and other critical stakeholders;
- Build relationships with district partners to support the adoption of school models;
- Build relationships and communicate regularly with the Delaware Department of Education and the Charter to School Office ;
- Support the charter school boards and build their capacity to properly support the schools.

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS:

- Demonstrated commitment to social justice, closing the achievement gap and creating globally competitive graduates
- Master of Education, Doctorate degree preferred
- Evidence of past success as an instructional leader at the building level and or district level
- Experience in charter school leadership at the building level or charter management experience at the organizational level
- Demonstrated ability to develop leadership, coaching experience
- Extensive instructional knowledge and experience
- Excellent project management skills
- Ability to work and manage multiple priorities in a fast-paced environment
- Experience and ability to work closely with various stakeholders within the community

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JOB TITLE: Director of School Operations

JOB CLASS: Full-time exempt

REPORTS TO: Senior Director, Schools

OVERVIEW: As a member of schools team, the Director of School Operations will work closely with the School Leader and the School Leadership team to ensure that their designated CMO School is operated in an organized and effective manner. They will coordinate the Innovative Schools Central Support Services team to ensure the proper implementation of the School's academic program, operations, culture, school assessment and accountability, community relations and strategic planning.

AREAS OF MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Coordinate and manage all supports provided by Innovative Schools and its subcontractor/school design partner;
- Implement and enhance the school's systems and culture;
- Assist with student recruitment;
- Communicate effectively with students, families, and colleagues;
- Participate actively in faculty meetings, administrative team meetings and other meetings;
- Assist in grade-level and school-wide activities;
- Adhere to the policies, standards, and school-wide responsibilities described in the School's Charter School application;
- Create an accountability plan to ensure the successful delivery of all CMO related school wide initiatives;
- Collect and analyze school performance data;
- Build the school staff's capacity to manager the academic program and operations, as well as the institutional memory at the school site.

Qualifications:

- Willingness to do whatever it takes to create and maintain an orderly, effective school organization;
- Detail oriented, strong follow-through skills;

- Ability to take initiative, prioritize tasks, and work independently;
- Excellent computer skills including Microsoft Office; especially Outlook, Word and Excel;
- Strong time management skills; ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously and meet tight deadlines;
- Demonstrated flexibility, maturity and ability to accomplish competing priorities;
- Strong written and oral communication skills; demonstrates strong interpersonal skills with students, parents, colleagues and community members;
- Interest in performing a critical support role and the ability to excel in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial, results-oriented environment;
- Ability to maintain a calm, professional demeanor in the face of competing demands and external pressures;
- Prior experience working in schools and/or urban communities; relentless commitment to mission of educating urban students;
- Be detail-oriented and self-directed and able to work independently on short- and long-term projects;
- Act as an initiator, problem-solver, and creative thinker.
- Bachelor's degree required masters preferred; and
- Experience with project management preferred;

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JOB TITLE: CMO Project Manager
JOB CLASS: Full-time exempt
REPORTS TO: Senior Director, Schools

OVERVIEW: The CMO Project Manager, an employee of Innovative Schools, will work closely with the School Leader and the School Leadership team to ensure that the school is operated in an organized and effective manner. The CMO Project Manager will coordinate the Innovative Schools support team to ensure the proper implementation of the School's academic program, operations, culture, school assessment and accountability, community relations and strategic planning. The ideal candidate is energetic, fast-paced, an effective multi-tasker, who can prioritize their time effectively to meet and exceed tight deadlines.

AREAS OF MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Coordinate and manage all supports provided by Innovative Schools and its subcontractor/school design partner;
- Implement and enhance the school's systems and culture;
- Assist with student recruitment;
- Communicate effectively with students, families, and colleagues;
- Participate actively in faculty meetings, administrative team meetings and other meetings;
- Assist in grade-level and school-wide activities;
- Adhere to the policies, standards, and school-wide responsibilities described in the School's Charter School application;
- Create an accountability plan to ensure the successful delivery of all CMO related school wide initiatives ;
- Collect and analyze school performance data;
- Build the school staff's capacity to manage the academic program and operations, as well as the institutional memory at the school site.

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS:

- Detail oriented, strong follow-through skills;
- Ability to take initiative, prioritize tasks, and work independently;
- Excellent computer skills including Microsoft Office; especially Outlook, Word and Excel;
- Strong time management skills; ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously and meet tight deadlines;
- Demonstrated flexibility, maturity and ability to accomplish competing priorities;
- Strong written and oral communication skills; demonstrates strong interpersonal skills with students, parents, colleagues and community members;
- Interest in performing a critical support role and the ability to excel in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial, results-oriented environment;
- Ability to maintain a calm, professional demeanor in the face of competing demands and external pressures;
- Prior experience working in schools and/or urban communities; relentless commitment to mission of educating urban students;
- Be detail-oriented and self-directed and able to work independently on short- and long-term projects;
- Act as an initiator, problem-solver, and creative thinker.
- Bachelor's degree required masters preferred; and
- Teaching experience strongly preferred; 2-3 years of administrative experience working with an education agency preferred but not required.
- Experience with project management preferred;

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