

## Angela Minnici

Director, Education Policy Center at AIR



Angela Minnici is director of the Education Policy Center at AIR. As a principal researcher at AIR, Dr. Minnici coordinates, supports and leads project teams in the development and implementation of tools and processes designed to improve educator effectiveness, particularly those focused on educator evaluation. Dr. Minnici is trained in both qualitative and quantitative research methods and specializes in case study research. She began her career as a public school teacher and has worked with diverse education stakeholders, such as federal and state policymakers, teachers, administrators, parents and other education groups. Prior to joining AIR, Dr. Minnici was a senior researcher at the Center on Education Policy and the associate director of educational issues at the American Federation of Teachers. She is also the director of the federally funded Center on Great Teachers and Leaders at AIR, where she oversees the center's operations and ensures the quality of products and technical assistance to states and regional centers.



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# Competency-Based Education: A Higher Return on Investment?

Thursday, June 11, 2015 | U.S. Capitol Building, Room H-137, Washington DC

## Schedule

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

### • Welcome

**Angela Minnici**  
Director, Education Policy Center at AIR

**John Yarmuth**  
U.S. Representative, Kentucky

### • Presentations

**Thomas Weko**  
Managing Researcher, AIR

**Deb Bushway**  
Higher Education Consultant

### • Discussion

**Mark Schneider**  
Vice President and Institute Fellow, AIR (moderator)

**William J. Ryan**  
Executive Director of Learn on Demand, Kentucky Community & Technical College System

### • Q&A

## BIOGRAPHIES

### Mark Schneider

Vice President and Institute Fellow, AIR



Mark Schneider is a vice president and an Institute Fellow at AIR. Prior to joining AIR, Dr. Schneider served as Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics from 2005-2008. In 2013, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* selected him as one of the 10 people who had the most impact on higher education policy that year.

He is the author of numerous articles and books on education policy. His most recent book, *Getting to Graduation*, edited with Andrew Kelly, was published in 2012 by Johns Hopkins University Press. *Higher Education Accountability*, edited with Kevin Carey, was published by Palgrave in December of 2010. *Charter Schools: Hope or Hype?*, written with Jack Buckley, was published by Princeton University Press in 2007. His 2000 book, *Choosing Schools*, also published by Princeton University Press, won the Policy Study Organization's Aaron Wildavsky Best Book Award.

Dr. Schneider is also a visiting scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and Distinguished Professor Emeritus of political science at the State University of New York, Stony Brook.



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Dr. Schneider has been working on increasing accountability by making data on college productivity more publicly available. To that end, he is one of the creators of [www.collegemeasures.org](http://www.collegemeasures.org), where he serves as president.

### John Yarmuth

U.S. Representative, Kentucky



U.S. Representative John Yarmuth represents Kentucky's 3rd Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. In his fourth term, Congressman Yarmuth was appointed to the Committee on

Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Budget. He served as President of the freshman class, as Senior Whip, and was named Legislator of the Year by the Kentucky Reading Association; "Outstanding New Member of Congress" by the Committee for Education Funding, which is the largest nonpartisan education organization in the nation; and "Best of Congress" by *Working Mother Magazine* and *Corporate Voices for Working Families* during each term in Congress.

Though best known for his work in the media, Yarmuth's diverse career prior to entering the political arena gave him a solid background in policy, business, higher education and health care.

Yarmuth previously worked on Capitol Hill as legislative aide for Kentucky Senator Marlow Cook from 1971 to 1974, when he moved back to his hometown of Louisville to publish *Louisville Today Magazine*. He went on to work as associate vice president of university relations at the University of Louisville and vice president of a local health care firm.

In 1990, Yarmuth founded *LEO Weekly*, a free publication with more than 150,000 monthly readers. With Yarmuth as editor, *LEO* won nearly 100 Metro Louisville Journalism Awards, 16 of which were awarded to Yarmuth for his editorial and column

writing. He owned the paper from 1990 to 2003 and continued writing columns through 2005.

On television he debated local and national politics as co-host and commentator on WAVE 3's Yarmuth & Ziegler in 2003 and Hot Button in 2004 and 2005.

Born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky, Congressman Yarmuth graduated from Atherton High School, where he served as student government president. He went on to earn a degree in American studies from Yale University. He and his wife, Cathy, have one son, Aaron, who graduated from Indiana University in 2006 and obtained a master's degree from American University in 2010.

### Thomas Weko

Managing Researcher, Education Program, AIR



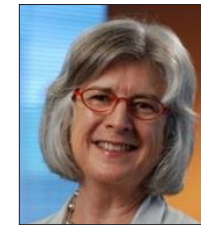
Thomas Weko is a managing researcher in the Education Program at AIR, focused on postsecondary education. His interests in postsecondary education include questions of productivity and quality, student financing (including student aid policy and programs), student outcomes and the analysis of institutional performance. More generally, his work focuses on the connection between data and policy, and ensuring the suitability and accessibility of data to inform policy and practice. He was a Brookings Institution Research Fellow.

Dr. Weko has worked in higher education at the institutional, state, federal and international level. He served as senior policy associate for the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board, senior policy analyst for the U.S. Government Accountability Office, and analyst at the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. He was a UK Atlantic Fellow, and worked with the Oxford-based Higher Education Policy Institute and UK House of Commons. He most recently served

in the U.S. Department of Education, where he was Associate Commissioner for Postsecondary, Adult, and Career Education at the National Center for Education Statistics, and Director of the Policy and Program Studies Service in the Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development.

### Deb Bushway

Higher Education Consultant



Deb Bushway currently serves as an independent consultant in higher education as well as the interim associate dean at the University of Wisconsin - Extension. Previously, she served as the chief academic officer and vice president of academic innovation at Capella University. She has long been interested in innovations in higher education designed to improve student success. Most recently, she pioneered the development and implementation of Capella's new competency based, direct assessment program, FlexPath. This delivery model strives to improve transparency of learning outcomes while reducing costs and improving completion rates for adults working to earn postsecondary degrees.

Dr. Bushway has more than 20 years of experience in higher education, including 17 years with Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, Minnesota, where she held a variety of faculty and leadership roles. She earned both her master of science in psychology and a Ph.D. in psychology from Iowa State University. She has written numerous articles, book chapters and conference presentations throughout her career. In addition to ongoing professional interests regarding adult learners in higher education, Bushway is currently focused on methods of innovation in established institutions, the application of action analytics to higher education and the power of competency based education to support our nation's educational goals.

### William J. Ryan

Executive Director, Learn on Demand Program, Kentucky Community & Technical College System



William J. Ryan, PhD, is the executive director of the Learn on Demand program at the Kentucky Community & Technical College System (KCTCS), a unique online education program designed in a modular format allowing credit for prior learning to be assessed, is competency-based, and features support options designed for student success. Prior to joining KCTCS, Dr. Ryan was the vice president of education for a regional home health company and was the National Leader for Curriculum and Technology Solutions with Humana Inc., serving a global learning community focused on performance improvement. He has been a VP for Technology/CIO at Lakeland Community College and worked for Westinghouse and IBM in learning technology roles. Dr. Ryan holds a M.S. from Ithaca College focused on Instructional Design, and a Ph.D. in Computing Technology in Education from Nova Southeastern University. He can be reached at [william.ryan@kctcs.edu](mailto:william.ryan@kctcs.edu) or via Twitter (@WmJRyan).