

PARTICIPANTS

Kim Connor is the mother of three daughters, the eldest of whom is developmentally disabled. She began her career as a budget analyst at the California Department of Finance. She later worked on education program and policy issues for the California Legislature's Senate Office of Research and as a budget consultant to K–12 schools for the senate budget committee. She retired in 2014, after more than 37 years with the state government. She continues to volunteer for disability rights issues. She holds a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of California, Berkeley.

Deborah Gonzalez is director of government affairs at PPIC. She and her staff work to connect PPIC research with policymakers and community leaders. A longtime Capitol staffer, she served as policy and fiscal director for six legislative leaders and worked on a wide variety of issues—including the state budget, education reform, infrastructure funding, and public safety. She holds a law degree from the McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific, and a BA from Claremont McKenna College, where she majored in international relations.

Laura Hill is a senior fellow at PPIC. Her areas of expertise are K–12 education and immigration. She is currently researching English Learners in California schools, the implementation of the Local Control Funding Formula, and undocumented immigrants and health insurance. Prior to joining PPIC, she was a research associate at the SPHERE Institute and a National Institute of Aging postdoctoral fellow. She holds a PhD in demography and an MA in economics from the University of California, Berkeley.

Michael Kirst is president of the California State Board of Education. He previously served on the state's Board of Education from 1975 to 1982 and was president from 1977 to 1981. He is also professor emeritus of education and business administration at Stanford University. Before he joined the Stanford faculty in 1969, he held several positions in the federal government, including director of program planning for elementary and secondary education in the US Office of Education. He is author of *Political Dynamics of American Education* and coauthor of *From High School to College*. He holds a PhD in political economy and government from Harvard University.

Patrick Murphy is director of research and a senior fellow at PPIC, where he holds the Thomas C. Sutton Chair in Policy Research. As research director, he coordinates and directs the policy work of more than 25 researchers. His own research focuses on financing and management in both K–12 and higher education. He is an adjunct professor of politics at the University of San Francisco, where he served as the director of the McCarthy Center for Public Service. Previously, he worked for RAND and at the Office of Management and Budget in Washington, DC. He holds a PhD from the University of Wisconsin–Madison and a master's of public affairs from the University of Texas–Austin.

Mary Samples is assistant superintendent of the Ventura County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), which serves over 17,000 students with disabilities. She served as chair of the finance subcommittee of the Statewide Special Education Task Force and has been co-chair of the SELPA finance committee for nine years. She is also an adjunct professor at California Lutheran University and California State University, Channel Islands. Previously, she has been a classroom teacher, middle school assistant principal, elementary school principal, as well as district director and associate superintendent. She holds a BA from California State University, Fullerton, and an MA from Azusa Pacific University.

Paul Warren is a research associate at PPIC, where he focuses on K–12 education finance and accountability. Before he joined PPIC, he worked in the California Legislative Analyst's Office for more than 20 years as a policy analyst and director. He primarily analyzed education policy, but he also addressed welfare and tax issues. Prior to that, he was chief consultant to the state assembly's committee on education. He also served as deputy director for the California Department of Education, helping to implement testing and accountability programs. He holds a master's degree in public policy from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.