

Aaliyah A. Samuel, EdD

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Summary of Related Experience

Dr. Aaliyah Samuel is a bilingual executive leader with expertise at the local, state and national level. Her experience includes leading large and small teams within nonprofit and state government, program evaluation and evidence-based programs, data collection and disaggregation, policy development and implementation. Dr. Samuel has informed state and local policy agendas, assisted with developing cross systems approaches to develop policy solutions to support leading systems-level change. In her current role as Executive Vice President of Government Affairs and Partnerships, at NWEA she oversees all intergovernmental affairs at the local, state and federal level. Prior to her role at NWEA she was the Director of Education at the National Governors Association (NGA). While at NGA, Aaliyah had oversight of the Education division which included business development, strategic planning, cross divisional projects and supporting high ranking state officials on the development of policies that impacted education, health and the workforce. Dr. Samuel has expertise in policy development, project management, fundraising, long range strategic planning, continuous quality improvement models and research. Aaliyah has worked with diverse constituents including sovereign nations, speaks nationally and internationally on a variety of education topics and serves on numerous national/local committees and boards. Aaliyah is recognized as a visionary, powerful strategic thinker and problem solver with exceptional business acumen and interpersonal skills. Dr. Samuel also serves as the first woman of color to be appointed as a Senior Fellow to the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University.

National and Local Board Membership – Parents As Teachers, Child Care Aware of America, National Equity Project, Sub Committee Chair – Fairfax County Equity Committee, George Mason University Education Policy Team

Professional Experience

NWEA

December 2018 - Present

Executive Vice President, Government Affairs & Partnerships – Provide strategic direction to the CEO, president, board and executive leadership to develop and drive a public policy and advocacy agenda to help improve educational outcomes for all students and position the organization as a thought leader in the field. NWEA is a global organization with over 850 employees and serves over 4600 school districts across the United States, 146 countries and Department of Defense schools.

- Develop partnership plan associated with policy and advocacy agenda for the state and federal level, proactively initiate and manage senior level relationships in support of the agenda internal and external to NWEA, and in coordination with other partnership efforts of the organization including philanthropy – coordination at the national level includes membership organizations (CCSSO) Council of Chief State School Officers, (NGA) National Governors Association, (NASBE) National Association State Boards of Education, (ECS) Education Commission of the States, (NCSL) National Conference of State Legislators, Chiefs for Change etc., state level policy makers (including Governors offices, legislators, statewide membership organizations for Superintendents, Principals and educators) and finally partnering at the local level in over 4,600 school districts
- Provide legislative scans and trend reports to guide business strategy and development
- Work collaboratively with key leadership to establish and maintain relationships with Administration officials, members of Congress, Congressional staff and state and federal government officials including House and Senate leadership
- Working with the Research team, ensure the development and implementation of a research strategy for advancing our policy agenda and elevating the importance of the triad of research, policy and practice.
- Formulate and manage the preparation of policy papers for the use of policymakers, stakeholders, media and the public. Most recently published a recommendations document to the 117th Congress.
- Establish a communication and marketing plan, in tandem with the Communications team, for diverse internal and external stakeholders at all levels of policy and educational decision making.

- Manage annual operating plan schedules, budgets of over \$5 million, key performance indicators (KPI's) for the team, organizational efficiency and effectiveness of overall projects within the organization to ensure requirements and program deliverables are clearly communicated and executed

Harvard University

February 2019 - Present

Senior Fellow - Center on the Developing Child

- Advise Harvard Leadership, National Scientist and Pediatricians and designated Community leaders on community engagement strategies which includes policy leaders at the state, federal and local levels
- Providing support on how to ingrate scientific knowledge into practice and policy
- Provide support on incorporating equity and anti-racism strategies across the center

Carnegie Mellon University

October 2018 – May 2019

Adjunct Professor - College of Public Policy & Management (Graduate Students)

- Advise graduate students on education policy content as well as process on specified projects
- Connect graduate students to relevant experts in the field to serve as the subject matter expert or advisory board members
- Provide feedback and coaching to graduate students – both individually as well as a team

National Governors Association

October 2015 – December 2018

Director, Education – Assists Governors, Chiefs of Staff, Policy Directors and Education/Health/Human Services Advisors to advance policies aimed at increasing access to a high-quality education, health and workforce programs that deliver education services, aligning policies across systems related to issues such as learning standards, assessment, instructor evaluation, funding, increased opportunity and equity

- Conduct state policy analysis and provide high-ranking policymakers in state government with the information about best practices, trends in state policy making and current research
- Provide ongoing, individualized and collective technical assistance to governors' and their leadership
- Strategic planning for the division and broader NGA, manage multiple projects, including budgets, consultants and sub-contracts with states and external partners
- Organize, participate in and conduct workshops, meetings, conferences and seminars for Governors offices and their key leadership. Develop presentations and facilitate panel discussions, state strategy sessions and other relevant policy related convenings for Governors and their key staff.
- Fundraising and business development for all division projects and initiatives to include managing a budget of over \$5 million
- Write reports, articles, issue briefs and memos about state policy issues and best practices for national media outlets and policy makers at the federal, state and local level.
- Serve as the public figure for the education division representing NGA at conferences, media events and other public related events

First Things First – (Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board)

April 2011 – October 2015

Senior Director, Family Support and Literacy - Works independently and in agreement with the Chief Program Officer and Chief Executive Officer to recommend, develop, implement and monitor exemplary statewide family support and literacy programs including policy recommendations and initiatives to achieve the goals of the agency.

- Director of 129 family support state contracts and state budget of \$38 million in state funding
- Responsible for establishing a presence for the organization on a regional, statewide and national level
- Direct oversight over 29 – 12-member regional councils – provide strategic planning support to identify, determine and fund family support programs for the region (including federally recognized tribal regions)

- Presentations to State Board on issues related to the agency's role in developing an early childhood system
- Program development, implementation and evaluation focusing on evidenced based/evidence informed practices
- Directed the development of short/long term programmatic indicators, benchmarks and data collection
- Systems building to develop a coordinated statewide education, health and early learning system
- Facilitation of grant process including scope of work development, reviewing and awarding grant contracts, grantee performance evaluation and management
- Authored and implemented statewide family support frameworks, strategic planning, and program development
- Assisted with developing statewide Quality Assurance, Cultural Competency Model, Family Support and Early Literacy programs
- Identified/planned organizational professional development modules for early childhood providers, internal and external stakeholders
- Perform competitive analysis supporting strategic planning, major pursuits, funding plan development, project management to identify key organizations of interest, develop detailed workgroups, solicitation of customer support, and support program planning activities, community networking

TUCSON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

August 2009 – October 2010

Principal - Led instructional and support personnel to strive for superior performance to provide the best opportunities for student growth and development addressing the needs of the whole child.

- Restructured school to meet federal re-authorization requirements and completed school transition to Title I
- Restructured instructional teams by grade level to routinely examine and disaggregate student achievement data
- Awarded \$100,000 Lowes grant, \$50,000 HP grant and secured annual business partnerships
- Managed recruitment and hiring of staff, performance evaluations including pre/post evaluation conferences
- Developed and effectively executed employee recruitment plan, conducting new-hire process, interpreted and applied regulations, policies, and procedures to personnel matters. Responsible for investigations, EEOC complaints, provided consultation, counseling to both employees and management team on policy matters

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

August 2000 – July 2009

Assistant Principal/Teacher - Led instructional and support personnel to strive for superior performance to provide the best opportunities for student growth and development addressing the needs of the whole child.

- Worked with students, specialists, parents and administrators to develop individual education plans, independent study programs and academic remediation processes; maintained complete and accurate student academic and disciplinary records, maintained safe and orderly classroom, maintained and improved my professional knowledge and skills, set an example of intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, self-motivation and self-discipline for students, modeling competence and honesty.
- Instructor – Dual Language Learners, Emotionally Handicapped, Specific Learning Disabled

Education

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN

Doctorate Organizational Leadership
Educational Specialist

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

Masters Arts and Teaching;
English Speakers of Other Languages

TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY

Bachelor of Arts

Recent Publications/Core Skills

[Research, policy, and practice: Dr. Aaliyah Samuel on early childhood development, equity in schools, and listening to educators' voices](#)

[New Report Offers Clearest Picture Yet Of Pandemic Impact On Student Learning](#)

[New "Testing America's Freedom" Podcast from NWEA Examines Equity in Education](#)

[Listen up: New podcast tackles systemic racism in schools](#)

[10 ways assessment reform can help guide a new era in education](#)

[Policymakers Must Prioritize Home Visiting to Help Our Most Vulnerable Children](#)

[10 ways policymakers can seize the moment and reimagine education](#)

[THE CHILD CARE CRISIS AND THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC](#)

[Underlying Conditions: How the COVID-19 crisis has put the inequities of American education in plain sight](#)

Interpersonal Communication: Writes clearly and concisely; listens attentively; openly expresses ideas, negotiates/resolves differences; provides and asks for feedback; offers well-thought-out solutions; cooperates and works well with others

Planning/Organization: Forecasts/predicts; identifies and gathers appropriate resources; thoroughly researches background information; develops strategies; thinks critically to solve problems; manage details; coordinates and completes tasks; manages projects effectively; meets deadlines; plans and arranges activities; multitasks; creates plans

Management/Leadership: Leads and directs others; teaches/trains/instructs; counsels/coaches; manages conflict; helps team members set and achieve goals; delegates effectively; makes and implements decisions; enforces policies

Social Media: Assists with social media campaigns; engages with industry influencers; creates and executes content strategies; drives engagement and leads; enhances brand image through social presence