

Archived Information

Presenter Bios

Second Meeting, December 8-9, 2005

The Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education

Session 4 "Accessibility"

Michael Cohen

Michael Cohen became president of Achieve in January 2003. At a time when states face new and continuing challenges in raising academic standards and improving schools, Mike is responsible for overseeing and enhancing Achieve's efforts to ensure that the quality of standards-based reforms states undertake remains high. Prior to joining Achieve, Mike was a senior fellow at the Aspen Institute. His work there focused on high school reform, in particular on identifying state and local strategies for transforming urban high schools.

Mike has been a leading figure in the national push to boost academic performance by leveraging higher standards since it began. He was director of education policy at the National Governors Association from 1986 to 1990, where he helped the governors and President Bush set national education goals and call for national standards and assessments. From 1990 to 1993, he was director of the National Alliance for Restructuring Education, a network of leading states and urban school systems committed to standards-based reform. He also helped launch the New Standards Project, an initiative of states, school districts and philanthropic groups to develop world-class standards and assessments.

From 1993 to 2001, Mike served in several senior education policy positions in the Clinton administration, both at the White House and as assistant secretary of education for elementary and secondary education, helping to make the federal government a supportive partner in state education reforms. As senior adviser to Secretary of Education Richard Riley, Mike was the point person for developing, enacting and implementing the administration's initiatives on standards, testing and accountability. Mike worked in the White House from 1996 to 1999 as special assistant to the President for education policy.

Mike earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from the State University of New York at Binghamton and has done graduate work at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and at Johns Hopkins University. He lives in Maryland with his wife and two children.

Ann Coles

Ann Coles is Senior Vice President for College Access at TERI (The Education Resources Institute), a national non-profit organization focused on facilitating access to educational opportunities for people from all backgrounds. Dr. Coles provides leadership and overall direction for programs targeting low-income and underrepresented minority groups in the Boston area and Massachusetts where TERI is located and the Pathways to College Network, which is an alliance of 40 national organizations and funders working collaboratively to improve college access and success for underserved students. Before joining TERI, Coles managed programs for disadvantaged students at a Massachusetts community college and held administrative positions with the National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students and the Institute for Services to Education. Dr. Coles is a board member of the Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools and serves on regional and national groups, including the advisory boards of Scholarship America, College Goal Sunday, and the Center for State Scholars. She previously served as vice-chair of the College Board trustees and was a

founding board member of and ACCESS, Inc., a financial aid advising and last dollar scholarship program for Boston public school students and the Council for Opportunity in Education. She holds a doctorate from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.