

Emily Kalejs Qazilbash, Ed.D.

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Education

Harvard University Graduate School of Education

Ed.D. in Administration, Planning and Social Policy 2009

Qualifying Paper passed with distinction (2007)

Dissertation Proposal designated a model proposal (2008)

Ed.M. in Administration, Planning and Social Policy 1997

University of Virginia

B.A.: Political and Social Thought, Honors Program 1993

Professional Experience - Higher Education

Brown University

Director, Urban Education Policy Masters Program 2025-present

Interim Director, Urban Education Policy Masters Program 2024-2025

Professor of the Practice, Education Department 2019-present

Faculty Affiliate, Annenberg Institute at Brown 2019-present

University of Massachusetts-Boston

2001-2002

Adjunct instructor

Professional Experience - K-12 and practice-based work

Teach Upbeat

2022-present

Leadership Coach

- Coach a subset of principals in Providence Public Schools (RI) and other districts across the US to use data on teacher satisfaction to improve teacher retention (2024-present)
- Presented national webinar on district HR policies that support teacher retention (March 2024)
- Support school district superintendents and their leadership teams to improve teacher retention rates (2022-present)

Urban Schools Human Capital Academy

2022-present

Consultant

- Authored eight briefs on research on teacher retention (2024)
- For Spring Independent School District (2023-2024) advised on strategically re-organizing their Office of Human Resource Services

- For Anne Arundel Public Schools, Maryland part of a team of 3 that created and advised on negotiating and implementing a new legislatively-mandated teacher career ladder and compensation structure (2022-2023)

Boston Public Schools, Office of Human Capital

Chief Human Capital Officer/Assistant Superintendent

2015-2019

Executive Director

2014-2015

Implementation Specialist

2011-2014

- Created new office, led talent strategy and oversaw all human capital functions - recruitment, preparation, diversity programs, hiring, evaluation, retention, human resources (payroll, employee info services) - for 11,000+ Boston Public Schools employees across 124 schools.
- Served as co-principal negotiator for main table negotiations with Boston Teachers Union, which represents 4600 teachers, 1700 paraprofessionals and 600 substitutes.
- Directly oversaw an office-wide budget of \$7.1 million and 55 FTEs and, as part of a team, secured an additional \$4 million through external fundraising for human capital strategy.
- Positioned BPS as a national leader by launching large-scale innovative reforms including the *early mutual consent hiring initiative* that empowers principals with hiring autonomy and increases the rate of early hiring; and the *BPS Teaching Fellowship*, the first entirely district-run teacher diversity pipeline program in the state of Massachusetts and one of the first of its kind in the nation.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Consultant (2010-2012). Conducted research and analysis for reform of educator evaluation regulations. Developed key components of the “model” evaluation system for teachers and administrators in Massachusetts and advised on roll-out of new evaluation regulations.

Teach Plus

Instructor (2011). Piloted a collaboration between Teach Plus and Teach for America alumni called “Teach Plus Policy Innovators.” Instructed Policy Fellows to become effective advocates to advance policy change while remaining classroom teachers.

National Council on Teacher Quality

Consultant (2009-2010)

Center for Leadership Development, Boston Public Schools

Assistant Director (2001 – 2004); Program Director (1998-2001). Managed new teacher support programs and professional development programs for experienced teachers in BPS

Boston Renaissance Charter School, Massachusetts

Third Grade Teacher (1997-1998) in a special education inclusion classroom.

Baltimore City Public Schools, Maryland

Second and Third Grade Teacher (1993-1996) while a Teach for America corps member. Elementary Literacy Consultant at TFA Summer Institute, 1998.

Funded Research

Collaboration between teachers unions and US school districts. Annenberg SEED / Accelerator Grant (2025-26). Conducting interview study in multiple US schools districts to

explore how labor partners, school district Human Resource Office leaders and school district Academics Office leaders work together to identify shared interests around working for stronger student outcomes. This study focuses on the structures and accountability systems that sustain this collaboration – beyond goodwill or individual relationships – so that it remains durable through leadership changes.

Understanding the career trajectories of high-impact teachers (phase 2). Barr Foundation (2024-2026). Co-principal investigator. This phase focuses on developing a comprehensive research plan, securing district partnerships, and analyzing pilot data to inform a large-scale study on what contributes to teachers' sustained effectiveness. The study will use a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative metrics and qualitative insights to explore the pathways and experiences of highly effective educators. The findings aim to inform policies and practices that support teacher recruitment, development, and retention, with a focus on equity and impact across U.S. schools.

Career decisions of teachers post-pandemic in Providence Public School District and Central Falls School District. (2025). This study aims to understand the factors influencing teacher retention and attrition in Providence Public Schools and Central Falls post-pandemic. Through interviews with at least 50 teachers who have left and 20 who remain, the research will explore individual, school-level, policy, and economic factors shaping career decisions. The study aims to provide actionable insights for improving teacher retention, particularly for highly effective educators, and to inform policy efforts to stabilize the workforce. Findings will be shared in internal briefings and a final public-facing report to guide district and state-level strategies for addressing teacher turnover.

Understanding the career trajectories of high-impact teachers (phase 1). Barr Foundation, 1 (2023-24). This phase produced a primer on teacher effectiveness measurement, a literature review on what makes teachers highly impactful, and a set of criteria to guide the next phase of the study. The research synthesized existing knowledge on teacher effectiveness, explored multiple measures beyond value-added models, and identified key design considerations for district selection and study implementation. These efforts aimed to establish a rigorous empirical basis for Phase 2, ultimately informing policies and practices that support teacher recruitment, development, and retention.

Awards and Honors

Spencer Research Apprenticeship (2006-2007)
Herald Hunt Fellowship (2005, 2006, 2007, 2008)
James Bryant Conant Fellowship (2003 and 2004)
Trustee of the Class of 1993, University of Virginia

Educator Licensure

Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent: Massachusetts, K-12 (2019)
Principal: Massachusetts, grades K-6 (1997).
Teacher: Massachusetts, grades 1-6 (2002). Maryland, grades 1-6 (1995).

Selected Reports and Publications

Papay, J.P., Qazilbash, E.K., Claiborne, C. (2025). From Candidate to Classroom: Research-based Practices for Recruiting and Hiring Highly-Effective Teachers. EdResearch for Action.

Qazilbash, E.K., Kraft, M., Smith, M., & Simon, N. (2023). Principal Retention in Public Schools: A Review of the Research. New York, New York: Teach Upbeat.

Papay, J.P. & Qazilbash, E.K. (2021). What do we know about teacher hiring? Using early, open and intensive processes to build the teacher workforce. Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute for Education Reform Center for the Study of Educators.

Johnson, S.M., Papay, J., Fiarman, S., Munger, M.S., Qazilbash, E.K. (2010). Teacher to Teacher: Realizing the Potential of Peer Review. Washington, D.C.: Center for American Progress.

Qazilbash, E.K. “‘All for One, One for All?’” Early-career teachers’ views of their teachers’ union.” Qualifying Paper, Harvard Graduate School of Education, passed with distinction, May, 2007. Paper presented at the 2007 meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.

Selected Presentations and Speaking Engagements

Urban Schools Human Capital Academy: One District’s Journey with Equity in Human Capital (2018); Strategies for Increasing Diversity: A Snapshot of Promising Practices from the Boston Public Schools (2015).

Council of Great City Schools (2014-2018), including “Educator Evaluation as a Driver of Human Capital in BPS” (2014); “Building pipelines to keep home-grown, diverse talent in Boston Public Schools” (2016); “Ensuring a Richly Diverse Workforce in the Boston Public Schools” (2018).

Harvard Graduate School of Education, Askwith Forum, Panelist (2016), “Where are All the Teachers of Color?”

The Boston Foundation, Panelist (2018), “In their Own Words: What School Leaders Say They Need to Succeed.”

Education Pioneers, Honored Guest, “Agent of Change” Dinner (2017).

Teaching

Courses taught:

EDUC2367: Strategic Leadership of School Organizations (graduate)

EDUC2380: Urban Education Policy Internship Seminar (graduate)

EDUC1320: Turning Hope Into Results: The Policy Ecosystem of PPSD (Community Based Learning and Research course)

EDUC0750: Data and Evidence in Education (required core undergraduate course)

EDUC1225: The American Teacher

Advising

Advise and supervise all UEP masters students (approx. 20 per year) in year-long internships (2020-present)
Education concentrator advising, about 4-6 students per year (2020-present)
Honors thesis advisor: Understanding Teacher Retention: The Impact of a Social Justice Commitment on Attrition. Meg Henning (2024-2025)
Independent Study. How teachers unions impact students. Kristine Carrillo (Spring 2025)
First year advising (2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2024-2025)
Second year advising (2022-2023, 2023-2024, 2024-2025)
UTRA: Student-centered course design for EDUC 0750. Raul Leshan Shui and Kristine Carrillo (Fall 2024)
Supervision of two Community-Based Learning and Research Fellows: EDUC 1320, Turning Hope Into Results. Jada Wooten and Julie Hajducky (2023-2024)
UTRA: Student-centered course design for EDUC 0750. Jada Wooten (Spring 2023)
Independent Study. The Right to Read: Closing Proficiency Gaps across Rhode Island Using the Science of Reading. Carly Noble (Fall 2023)
Honors thesis advisor. How Clinicians Learn to Express Emotion: A Study of Competency-Based Education and Socioemotional Training in The Warren Alpert Medical School. Samantha Nash (2021-2022)
Supervision of Community-Based Learning and Research Fellow (CBLR): EDUC 1320, Turning Hope Into Results. Celenah Watson (Fall 2022)
Independent Study: Teachers unions and student unions: Why Students Should Unionize. Joseph Acevedo (Spring 2022)
Independent Study: Providence Public Schools Policy Landscape study. Erica Kim (Spring 2022)
UTRA: Course Development for EDUC1225 The American Teacher. Erica Kim (Summer 2021)
Independent Study. Competency-Based Education and Socioemotional Training. Samantha Nash (Fall 2021)
UTRA/Sprint: FLIP Tutoring Providence. Charles Wang and Sophia Ahn (2020)

Service

To the University

Faculty Affiliate, Swearer Center for Public Service, 2024-present
Member, Advisory Board, Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning, 2022-present
Provost's Faculty Teaching Fellow, 2022-2025
Co-facilitator of START (Seminar for Anti-racist Teaching), 2023, 2024, 2025
Facilitator at Launch New Faculty Orientation, 2022, 2023, 2024
Panelist, Roundtable on Teaching and the US Supreme Court Decision on affirmative action, Sheridan Center (2023)

To the Department

Interim Director, Urban Education Policy Program AM at Brown University, 2024-2025
Member, Executive Committee of the Education Department, 2023-2025
Urban Education Policy Admissions Committee, 2020-2025
Graduate affairs committee, 2022-2023 and 2024-2025

Faculty search committees, 2022 and 2024

Chair of search committee, 2024

Chair, DEI measurement ad hoc committee, 2023-2024

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Officer, 2020-2024

Chair, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Chair (also called Committee on Racial Justice), 2020-2024

Presenter, inclusive teaching workshops, 2021-2022

Partnership committee, 2021-2022