

All In For Social Capital: The New Charlotte Currency

Kent Pekel, Ed.D. - President and CEO, Search Institute

Professional Overview

Kent Pekel is an educator who has worked at the school, district, state, federal, and university levels. Throughout his diverse career, he has sought to bridge the divides that too often exist between educational practice, research, and policy.

Kent is currently President and CEO of Search Institute, an internationally recognized research organization that studies and works to strengthen youth outcomes in schools, families, out-of-school time programs, and communities.

Prior to joining Search Institute in 2012, Kent served as the founding Executive Director of the University of Minnesota's College Readiness Consortium, where he led the creation of Ramp-Up to Readiness, an advisory program for middle and high school students that has been adopted by more than 200 schools in eight states, engaging more than 100,000 students each year. While at the University, Kent also led the launch and expansion of the Minnesota Principals Academy, a year-long executive development program that to date has engaged more than 400 Minnesota school leaders in the study and replication of high performing schools and systems.

From 2000-2005, Kent served as Executive Director of Research and Development in the Saint Paul Public Schools, where he led development and implementation of the urban school district's strategic plan and supervised the departments of research, technology, fund development, policy, high school reform, and transportation.

From 1995-2000 Kent held several senior staff-level positions in the Clinton Administration, including White House Fellow assigned to the Director of Central Intelligence, Special Advisor to the Deputy Secretary of State, and Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Education.

Kent began his career as a high school social studies teacher in his home state of Minnesota. He holds a B.A. in East Asian Studies from Yale University, a Master's in Education from Harvard University, and a Doctorate in Education from the University of Minnesota.

