

Penny Schwinn

Tennessee Commissioner of Education



Dr. Penny Schwinn was sworn in as Tennessee's education commissioner on February 1, 2019. As commissioner, Dr. Schwinn is committed to building on Tennessee's momentum over the last decade, and plans to continue to accelerate growth through excellence in achievement, empowerment of students and teachers, and engagement of all stakeholders.

Schwinn previously served as the chief deputy commissioner of education at the Texas Education Agency. In this role, she pursued a series of reforms including the transformation of a failing state assessment program. She also implemented the expansion of statewide externships and pathway development for improving students' career readiness upon graduation.

Additionally, Schwinn oversaw the development of open-source instructional materials to empower teachers with high-quality resources for teaching. Prior to serving in the Texas Education Agency, Schwinn was the chief accountability and performance officer for the Delaware Department of Education where she led efforts to conduct a testing audit, which led to nearly a 20 percent decrease in student testing time.

A former teacher, Schwinn taught with Teach for America (TFA) from 2004-2007 with work in Baltimore City Public Schools and Los Angeles.