NATIONAL DROPOUT PREVENTION CENTER
TRAUMA-SKILLED SCHOOLS FACULTY and ADVISORS

Trauma-Skilled Schools Faculty and Advisors provide guidance and support in development and refinement of the Trauma-Skilled Schools Model, assist the National Dropout Prevention Center in delivery of Trauma-Skilled Schools training, and consult with schools and districts on model implementation.

Dr. Sandy Addis  
Director, National Dropout Prevention Center
Dr. Addis has 44 years of experience in public education in a variety of roles that include teacher, counselor, coach, principal, system-level administrator, and also director of a regional educational service agency.

Lynn Dunlap  
Assistant Director for Research & Communications, National Dropout Prevention Center
Mrs. Dunlap has taught both secondary and post-secondary communications classes for 10 years. She has extensive experience in marketing and public relations at a local not-for-profit and international healthcare organizations.

Ray McNulty  
President, Successful Practices Network & National Dropout Prevention Center
Mr. McNulty has served as president of the International Center for Leadership and Education and as a Senior Fellow at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. An educator since 1973, he has been a teacher, vice principal, principal, superintendent, and education commissioner.

Dr. Alicia Dunn  
Coordinator of School Counseling & Mentorship, Clayton County Public Schools
Dr. Dunn is currently responsible for the k-12 School Counseling Comprehensive Program in Clayton County Public Schools. In addition to the aforementioned, Dr. Dunn supervises the ChildTec Dropout Prevention Program.

Dr. Patrick O’Connor  
Associate Professor, Kent State University (Ret.)
Dr. O’Connor serves as a Research Fellow with the National Dropout Prevention Center. At Kent State, he coordinated teacher education programs in Career-Technical Education. His scholarship includes research, teaching, publishing, and consulting.

Dr. Sandy Bales  
Educational Consultant, Pioneer RESA
Dr. Bales serves as a National Dropout Prevention Research Fellow. She has a doctorate from Nova Southeastern in Education Leadership and has served as a teacher, administrator, and a consultant and school improvement specialist.

John Gailer  
Assistant Director for Outreach & Events, National Dropout Prevention Center
Mr. Gailer earned his Master's Degree in Education from the University of Georgia and has more than 25 years of experience in the field of youth development in the contexts of youth at risk and third-culture kids.

Tommy Stephens  
Project Director, National Dropout Prevention Center
Mr. Stephens has had a lengthy career of education service and is a former superintendent in both Georgia and New Hampshire, principal, assistant principal, teacher, and educational consultant. He now serves as a Project Director for the National Dropout Prevention Center.

Todd Daggett  
COO, Successful Practices Network
For the last 20 years Mr. Daggett has supported schools and districts seeking to ensure a rigorous and relevant education for all students. Prior to joining SPN in 2016, he served in senior leadership positions at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and Scholastic.

Dr. Kathie Greer  
Director of Alternative Programs, Greenville, SC
Dr. Greer is certified as a superintendent, secondary principal/supervisor, school psychologist, and school social worker. A licensed Master Social Worker and adolescent counselor, she also earned designation as a Principal Specialist, Principal Leader, and S.C. Education Fellow.

Dr. Pamela Davis  
Education Consultant, Jacksonville, FL
Dr. Davis holds a Bachelor’s and Master’s Degree in Math Education from Florida A&M University and a Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership from Nova Southeastern University. She is a Certified National Dropout Prevention Specialist.

Michael DeCenzo  
Program Consultant, Educational Service Center of Central Ohio
Mr. DeCenzo has served as Director of Special Education, teacher, and behavior consultant and as an agency consultant supporting alternative school development and leading low performing schools through the Ohio Improvement Process.
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Norman Burdette
7th Grade Science Teacher, Anderson 5, SC
A second career teacher, Mr. Burdette worked as a Textile Engineer for over 25 years. After starting manufacturing plants in the Middle East, he earned his Master’s from Clemson and began teaching middle school. He was the 2018 Teacher of the Year at Robert Anderson Middle School in Anderson, SC.

Dr. Susan Szachowicz
Senior Fellow and Board Member, SPN
Currently a Senior Fellow with SPN, Dr. Szachowicz works with schools and districts on leadership. Previously she was principal of Brockton High in Massachusetts and led this large urban school to national recognition for an academic turnaround earning the school state and national awards.

Dr. Merrianne Dyer
Professional Development, Scholastic
Dr. Dyer’s specialty is in leadership and school design to address barriers to learning. She is a Certified National Dropout Prevention Specialist and has served as a superintendent in Gainesville, Georgia, and as a project manager for the Alabama State Department of Education.

Dr. Dina Pacis
Associate Professor and Educational Administration Chair, National University
Dr. Pacis is a faculty member and Department Chair for Educational Administration School Counseling and Psychology at the Sanford College of Education at National University. She also serves as a Research Fellow for the National Dropout Prevention Center.

Tim McGowan
Executive Director, Networks of Support
Mr. McGowan has served as a teacher, counselor, and a principal. He is a nationally certified prevention trainer and designs programming for schools and state agencies addressing workplace culture.

Lori Heffer
Trauma Therapist, Turning Points Counseling
Mrs. Heffer is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who provides therapy to children and adults. She has worked for Chestatee Counseling and Stephens County Department of Family and Children’s Services in Georgia.

Nancy Nielsen
District At-Risk School Counselor, Suwannee, FL (Ret.)
Mrs. Nielsen is a Certified National Dropout Prevention Specialist. In her district she designed, implemented, and monitored individual graduation plans for district students who had dropped out or who were at risk for dropping out.

Hal Dunlap
Teacher & Coach, Oconee County School District, SC (Ret.)
Mr. Dunlap recently retired from Oconee County School District in SC where for over 30 years served as a teacher, basketball coach, and athletic director. He is a motivational speaker to business, professional, and school groups.

Jacinda Goodwin
Program Specialist, National Center for Homeless Education
Ms. Goodwin provides training, professional development and technical assistance nationwide to key stakeholders for the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program. She is also an adjutant professor in psychology and mental health.

Dr. Irving Jones
Independent Consultant, ICJ & Associates LTD & International Center for Leadership and Education
Dr. Jones has traveled extensively providing leadership coaching in New York City, East Cleveland, Ohio, Detroit, Michigan, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania.

Dr. Randy Nelson
Associate Professor, Bethune-Cookman University
Dr. Nelson currently serves as the Program Director for the Bethune-Cookman University Criminal Justice Administration Graduate Program. He is also a Research Fellow for the National Dropout Prevention Center.

Morgan Ford
Senior Manager, Scholastic
Ms. Ford currently conducts research and product development for family and community engagement for literacy initiatives. She previously served as systems manager for Learning Supports and Family Engagement Professional Development and consulting services for Scholastic Education.
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Dr. Jerome Hudson  
Asst. Superintendent Student Services, Anderson 5, SC
Dr. Hudson serves as an Assistant Superintendent of Student Services in Anderson, South Carolina, where he oversees attendance, discipline, nursing, special education, alternative school, and active shooter drills. He is also an adjunct college professor.

Dr. Paul Ezen  
Director of Graduate Programs, Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU)
Dr. Ezen currently develops and maintains graduate MEd and Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies programs. He has worked as the Deputy Commissioner of New Hampshire and now works with SPN in addition to teaching at SNHU.

Dr. Jay Smink  
Director, National Dropout Prevention Center (Ret.)
Dr. Smink served as the executive director of the National Dropout Prevention Center for 24 years. He now is a part of the Center’s Advisory Board. His work in dropout prevention led to the identification of the 15 Effective Strategies for Dropout Prevention in addition to numerous other tools and resources.

Debra Kidd  
Consultant, Kidd Educational Group, LLC
Mrs. Kidd recently retired after 15 years as a middle school counselor. Prior to counseling, she was a consultant with McGraw-Hill Publishing company where she was responsible for sales and inservice presentations to districts throughout the northeast.

Rep. Jerry Govan  
South Carolina House of Representatives, District 95
Representative Govan is a member of the National Dropout Prevention Center Advisory Board. He serves on the South Carolina Education and Public Works Committee and is the Orangeburg County Schools (SC) Attendance Supervisor.