

Sara A. Sneed to become President and CEO of the NEA Foundation on March 1, 2019



Sara A. Sneed will become President and CEO of the NEA Foundation on March 1, 2019. She joins the Foundation after almost 20 years with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, one of the nation's largest community foundations, where she served as director of education investments promoting educational equity and excellence with partners at the local, state and national levels. While with the Hartford Foundation, Sara led the development of strategy and policy advocacy to close persistent opportunity gaps and improve student outcomes across some of Connecticut's highest need school districts. She is credited with developing dynamic new learning opportunities both for and with educators and students; successful advocacy for equity-focused fiscal practices among schools and school districts; and effective grants programs, policy advocacy, and cross sector collaboration supporting English Learners, whole child development and increased family, school and community partnership. Her efforts resulted in the development of new infrastructures for teaching and learning in Connecticut (e.g., new offices of family and community engagement across seven school districts), strengthened communities of practice, a growing cadre of regional leaders committed to educational and racial equity, and co-creation of several successful community schools alongside partners from the public, private and independent sectors.

Sara brought to the Hartford Foundation several years of distinguished visionary and strategic leadership and achievement in the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors. She previously served as senior program manager with the Foundation for the Mid-South, where she was responsible for the Families and Children, Public Policy, and Faculty Fellows (leadership development) programs. As director of maternal and child health with the Medical Foundation in Boston, her leadership resulted in significant expansion of public health partnerships and strategic initiatives throughout the surrounding region. Previously, she served as special projects manager with the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, leading program and systems innovations in several areas, including the Department's contributions to the education, health and human service components of Blueprint 2000, a comprehensive long-range and statewide strategic planning initiative. Sara began her career as director of the Southern New

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England Network for Black Families and Children, a tri-state advocacy initiative launched by the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts. Directly out of college, she was appointed area manager of the Roxbury, Massachusetts Office for Children, using mediations and the court system to obtain services for children while supporting parents' self-advocacy in pursuit of their children's entitlements.

Among her national leadership roles, she currently serves as Vice Chair of the Board of the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington D.C. and on the Grantmakers for Education Equity Impact Group. She is the former co-chair of the Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth (now CFLeads), representing more than 300 community foundations nationwide, and a former executive board member of Grantmakers for Children, Youth and Families. An ordained clergywoman, Sara is a former chair of the Board of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ. She is a graduate of Mount Holyoke College and holds an M.Div. from Yale Divinity School (Yale University) where she was named a William and Lucille Nickerson Scholar and winner of both the prestigious Walcott and Charles S. Mersick preaching prizes.

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