

UPDATE: LEADERSHIP CHANGES

New Secretary for the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

On May 29, 2018, Governor Bevin appointed **Derrick Ramsey** as Secretary of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. Ramsey began his career as a Community Relations Officer at the University of Kentucky before becoming Athletic Director at Kentucky State University. Ramsey also served for seven years as the Director of Athletics for Coppin State University in Baltimore. Most recently, Ramsey served as the Secretary of the Labor Cabinet under Gov. Bevin. Ramsey also served as Deputy Secretary of Commerce under former Gov. Ernie Fletcher. Ramsey is also an accomplished athlete and was the first African-American starting quarterback for the University of Kentucky football team. His athletic abilities vaulted him to a nine-year career in the NFL, which included a Super Bowl championship in 1981. Ramsey resides with his wife in Lexington, Kentucky.

Don Parkinson, Acting Secretary of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, will return full-time to his position as Secretary of the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet.

Departures from the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

Legislative Liaison **Mardi Montgomery**, Staff Attorney **Kevin Osborne**, and Communications Director **Jessica Fletcher** have all departed the cabinet for other opportunities.

Secretary Ramsey's Leadership Team

On July 19, 2018, Secretary Ramsey announced the following regarding his cabinet leadership team:

Josh Benton has joined our cabinet as Deputy Secretary for Workforce. In this capacity, Deputy Secretary Benton will oversee and work to develop the cabinet's workforce development agencies, policies and strategies and serve as the liaison to other state agencies to coordinate and elevate the state's workforce training efforts.

Deputy Secretary Benton has more than 14 years of public service focused on strengthening Kentucky's workforce and building the state's economy. Prior to moving to our cabinet, Deputy Secretary Benton served as Executive Director of Workforce Development for the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development where he led community development and research efforts, and worked with our cabinet's Work Ready Communities program. He also previously

served as a project manager for the Bluegrass State Skills Corporation and for the Office of Business Development, and worked in the Kentucky Office of Career and Technical Education.

Deputy Secretary Brad Montell will continue to provide leadership with a focus on the education side of our cabinet. Working in close coordination with the leadership of the Kentucky Department of Education, Deputy Secretary Montell will work to strengthen the partnership between education and the workforce so that life-long learning and career enhancement go hand in hand. He will bring his diverse experience in public service to the role as Legislative Liaison for the cabinet, and he will act as the primary liaison to the Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives and administratively attached agencies whose purposes are predominantly educational. Deputy Secretary Montell will also continue on as Chair of the Unemployment Insurance Commission.

Brooken Smith has joined the cabinet as the Chief of Staff. In this position, Mr. Smith will provide executive leadership for the Office of the Secretary and advise me on the development, management and implementation of cabinet programs and initiatives. Prior to joining our cabinet, he served in a similar capacity as the Chief of Staff for the Kentucky Labor Cabinet. Mr. Smith is also no stranger to the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet's initiatives, having served on the Work Ready Skills Advisory Committee. Mr. Smith's current tenure in public service is complemented by experience in the private practice of law and his service as a legislative aide in the United States Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives.

Tiffany Yeast is the new Executive Director of the Office of Budget Administration. While Ms. Yeast is new to the cabinet, she is a 14-year veteran of state government and brings a wide variety of experiences as an executive professional. She most recently served as the Executive Director of the Office of Administration Service for the Labor Cabinet. In her new position, Ms. Yeast will provide leadership for the cabinet's budget, procurement, accounting, facilities and human resources services.

Alex Englen has joined our cabinet as the Executive Advisor for Communications. Prior to joining our cabinet, Ms. Englen served as the Deputy Director of Communication for the Labor Cabinet. Ms. Englen will develop strategies for effective communication to inform and involve the community in cabinet initiatives by conveying external and internal messages through her role as the cabinet's media contact.

Finally, **Ellen Kessler** joined the cabinet as Executive Secretary. In a career in state and local government that has spanned more than three decades, Ms. Kessler has served the leadership of various educational institutions and cabinet secretaries, including most recently the secretary of the Labor Cabinet. Ms. Kessler will bring her wealth of experience to the cabinet and will serve as the primary point of contact for, and facilitate the steady administration of, the Office of the Secretary. I am also pleased that **Elizabeth Hack** will continue her exceptional service to the cabinet as the Executive Assistant for Department of Workforce Investment Commissioner Ray Leathers.

Though there are several new additions to the leadership team, some familiar names will provide continuity in leadership. In particular, **Bridget Papalia** will continue to serve as General Counsel and oversee the legal services that support the cabinet, and **Andy Hightower** will serve as a senior policy advisor.