

# **Public Sector Consortium Board of Directors**

## **Patty Guard**

Patty Guard spent her entire career in education, first as a speech pathologist in a school, then as a district administrator in Indiana prior to coming to Washington where she spent most of her twenty-seven year career as the Deputy Director of the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the United States Department of Education. OSEP administers the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which authorizes formula grants to states and discretionary grants to institutions of higher education and other non-profit organizations to support research, technology, personnel preparation, technical assistance and parent training -- all focused on improving results for students with disabilities. As Deputy Director, Patty was responsible for providing policy guidance, managerial direction and supervision of OSEP's programs. In 2010, OSEP had 120 staff and a budget of \$12 billion. Throughout her tenure, Patty worked with numerous presidential administrations, and consistently and thoughtfully led the effort to improve federal programs benefiting children and youth with disabilities. In 1997, she was selected to lead OSEP's participation in a five-year pilot project with the Office of Personnel Management designed to apply the techniques and tools of a learning organization in federal agencies. As a result of this experience, OSEP moved from a top-down organization to a team-based organization focused on its customers. Staff used the tools and concepts to redesign OSEP's systems for monitoring and providing technical assistance to states. As a result of this work, staff felt more engaged, State officials were seen as partners, and outcomes for children with disabilities improved. The tools and concepts provided the framework for OSEP's future strategic planning and continuous improvement efforts. Patty has a deep understanding of how schools operate and the challenges schools and families face based on her experience at the local level and her decades of work with state education agencies.

During her tenure at OSEP, Patty served as Acting Director through eight changes in political Directors. The leadership of the career SES staff is critical to ensuring that the high performance of the organization is sustained as political appointees come and go at all levels of the agency. Patty is recognized for her extensive expertise in the competencies and skills needed to be successful during these transitions. Her experiences contributed to the development of The Public Sector Consortium's Leadership Transitions Project.

Patty has received numerous awards including Distinguished Alumnus from Purdue University, Outstanding Public Service Award from the Council for Exceptional Children, Outstanding Leader Award from the Council for Administrators in Special Education, and a Policy Fellowship from the Institute for Educational Leadership. She also serves on the advisory board for the National Down Syndrome Society.