

DOUG MESECAR

*Assistant Deputy Secretary for Innovation and Improvement
U.S. Department of Education*

Secretary Margaret Spellings named Doug Mesecar assistant deputy secretary for innovation and improvement on March 2, 2008. In his post, he leads the Department's efforts to support innovations in education, make strategic investments in promising educational practices, and implement the public school choice and supplemental educational services provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). He oversees the administration of 28 grant programs related to education improvement, school choice, teacher quality and technology, including the Public Charter School Program. His office also disseminates information about parental rights and options under NCLB.

From March to October of 2007, Mesecar served as the acting assistant secretary for the Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development (OPEPD), coordinating with the Office of Management and Budget, the House and Senate education committees and state education associations. OPEPD is home to ED's Budget Service, Performance Information Management Service, Policy and Program Studies Service and the Office of Educational Technology. Prior to his current post, he was detailed to the Office of the Deputy Secretary to work on revising and strengthening NCLB's Title I regulations and developing the Differentiated Accountability pilot.

Born and raised in Grand Rapids, Mich., Mesecar earned his bachelor's degree in political science Phi Beta Kappa from Hope College in Holland, Mich., where he also played four years on the college's basketball team. In 1996, he pursued graduate studies in education at the University of Denver, where he also earned a teaching certificate, and then taught fifth grade at Witt Elementary School in the Jefferson County, Colo., School District.

After gaining experience as a teacher, Mesecar returned to Washington, D.C., to work on federal education policy in the U.S. House of Representatives. In 2001, he joined the professional staff of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce to work for then-Chairman John A. Boehner (R-Ohio) as the panel wrote the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002.

Mesecar first joined the Department as the chief of staff in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) in 2003, helping to implement NCLB. From 2004 to 2005, he was deputy chief of staff in the Office of the Secretary. After two years with the New York-based Edison Schools Inc. as director of state and local affairs, he was asked to return to the Department in 2007. Mesecar, his wife, Shannon, and their two children, Rohwan and Ellarie, live in Lovettsville, Va.