



Digital Promise Appoints Jean-Claude Brizard as New President and Chief Executive Officer

Former Chief Executive of Chicago Public Schools, Superintendent of Schools for Rochester City School District Will Succeed Karen Cator

January 25, 2021 | Washington, D.C. – Digital Promise’s board of directors has appointed Jean-Claude Brizard as its new president and chief executive officer (CEO), effective March 1. Brizard succeeds Karen Cator in the role and will assume day-to-day leadership of Digital Promise while also joining its board of directors. He brings more than 35 years of experience as a teacher, administrator, superintendent, chief executive, and education advocate to Digital Promise’s mission of accelerating innovation in education.

Brizard will join Digital Promise after serving as a senior advisor and deputy director for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, where he led a nationwide Community Investment Team aimed at championing learners from the PreK to adult learning levels, as well as strategic efforts to support school districts, schools, and education initiatives in Washington State. Previously, he served as chief executive of Chicago Public Schools and superintendent of schools for the Rochester City School District in New York.

“The board and I believe Jean-Claude is the right person to lead Digital Promise into the future,” said Linda Roberts, chair of Digital Promise’s board of directors. “We were impressed by his deep experience, in the classroom and across all levels of learning, and his longstanding commitment to equity for all learners at all levels of the education system. We are excited to work with Jean-Claude as he builds on the foundation of learner-focused initiatives and partnerships that Karen helped to create.”

“I am honored to follow Karen Cator in leading Digital Promise as its newest president and CEO,” said Brizard. “There is no question that education in the United States is currently at an inflection point. I look forward to working closely with the entire Digital Promise team to leverage this moment to make a greater impact and deliver on the promise of success to learners everywhere.”

Previously, Brizard was a partner and vice president at FourPoint Education Partners (formerly Cross & Jofus, LLC) and president of UpSpring Education Group. His experience

also includes a 21-year career as an educator and administrator with the New York City Department of Education. There, he was a regional superintendent, supervising more than 100 schools in the borough of Brooklyn, and he also served as the system's executive director for secondary schools, leading its portfolio of 400 high schools.

Brizard is a fellow of the Broad Center, a fellow of the Pahlara-Aspen Institute Education Fellowship, and a member of the Aspen Institute Global Leadership Network.

"Jean-Claude brings tremendous insight and knowledge of leveraging research, technology, and a strategic vision to bring powerful learning opportunities to all learners," said Karen Cator, a member of Digital Promise's board of directors and the organization's former president and CEO. "I can't wait to see how he will adapt and expand Digital Promise's work in the future to meet new challenges, and am committed to supporting his success."

Press Contact:

Erica Lawton Weinschenk
Digital Promise
erica@digitalpromise.org

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About Digital Promise

Digital Promise is a nonprofit organization that builds powerful networks and takes on grand challenges by working at the intersection of researchers, entrepreneurs, and educators. Our vision is that all people, at every stage of their lives, have access to learning experiences that help them acquire the knowledge and skills they need to thrive and continuously learn in an ever-changing world. For more information, visit the [Digital Promise website](#) and follow [@digitalpromise](#) for updates.