

ETHAN AKE-LITTLE

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Education Policy & Analysis, School Finance & Economics, Teacher Compensation & Retention, School Law & Organized Labor, Educational Leadership & School Improvement, Quantitative Research Methods

EDUCATION

Temple University
J.D., *Beasley School of Law* 2028
Certificate in Business Law (*Program Concentration*)

Ph.D., *College of Education & Human Development* 2019
Urban Education (*Major*), Educational Administration (*Minor*)

Dissertation: To Leave or Not to Leave: A Population Study Investigating How Compensation & Auxiliary Spending Influence Teacher Retention in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Population study examining teacher retention across Pennsylvania's urban, suburban, and rural school districts from 2012 to 2017. Using multiple Cox Proportional Hazards survival models, the research determined how monetary investments influenced the likelihood of teacher turnover.

Committee Members: Will Jordan, Ph.D. (*Urban Education, Chair*); Christopher McGinley, Ed.D., (*Educational Leadership*); Joshua Klugman, Ph.D., (*Sociology*); Douglas Webber, Ph.D., (*Economics*)

Chestnut Hill College, School of Graduate Studies
M.Ed., Secondary Science Education 2013

Drexel University, College of Arts & Sciences
B.A., History & Political Science (*Major*), Biological Sciences (*Minor*) 2011

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Ake-Little, E., von der Embse, N., Dawson D. (2020). Does Class Size Matter in the University Setting? Examining the Effects of Student Demographics on Student Achievement. *Educational Researcher*, 49(8), 595-605

von der Embse, N., Kligus, S., Ake, E., Ecklund, K., Levi-Neilsen, S. (2018) Training Teachers to Facilitate Early ID of Mental and Behavioral Health Risk. *School Psychology Review*, 47(4).

Public Scholarship & Media Engagement

Ake-Little, E. (2019, February 15). In Defense of Standardized Testing in College Admissions. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Print).

Ake-Little, E. (2019, January 25). Fixing a Liberal Arts Education Requires Standardization. *James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal Magazine* (Online).

Ake-Little, E. (2018, September 19). Closing the Loop Between K-12 and Higher Education Teaching & Learning. *Education Week* (Online).

Ake-Little, E. (2018, September 10). Why Graduate Student Unionization Matters Even More in the Age of Janus. *New Politics Magazine* (Online).

Ake-Little, E. (2018, July 12). Why Asian-Americans in Teaching are Needed. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Print).

Ake, E. (2017, January 27). School Choice and American Society in the Age of Trump. *Berkeley Review of Education* (Online).

Ake, E. Letters to the Editor. (Print).

(2019, December 3). Idea Laundering Portends the Future Thought Police. *The Wall Street Journal*.

(2013, September 18). Teacher Questions Governor's Fiscal Plans for Philadelphia. *Education Week*.

(2013, August 16). The Debate Over School Standards. *The New York Times*.

(2013, June 20). Making the Grade on Teacher Pay. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

(2013, May 2). Doomsday Impact on Learning. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

(2013, February 23). Social Mobility in America. *The Economist*.

Evans, R. (2021, April 22). The IR Guru Interview: Ethan Ake-Little, Executive Director of AFT Pennsylvania. IR Guru Newsletter. (Online).

Flaherty, C. (2020, June 18). Much Ado About Class Size. Inside HigherEd (Online).

EXPERIENCE

Research

Research Assistant, *Temple University Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies (Philadelphia, PA)* **Aug 2016–May 2019**
Researcher for the General Education Program, which oversees academic programming for 30,000+ undergraduates. Identified institutional trends via statistical modeling and data visualization, produced research reports on the effects of class size and grade inflation to support professional development opportunities for program faculty. Collaborated on the evaluation of the program in preparation for the Middle States Council on Higher Education 2019 accreditation process.

Teaching

Instructor, EDAD 5302: Context for School Reform **Summer 2025**
Instructor, URBE 5401: Policy & Practice in Urban Education **Summer 2023**
Instructor, EDAD 8635: Education Policy Analysis **Fall 2022**
Instructor, EDUC 5325: Introduction to Statistics and Research **Fall 2019**
Temple University College of Education & Human Development (Philadelphia, PA)
Courses surveyed the constitutional and statutory landscape of school reform, critical socio-political contexts of urban education, and contemporary federal and state policy initiatives including school finance and teacher evaluation systems. Additionally, provides foundational training in empirical research design, encompassing sampling theory and descriptive/inferential statistical analysis

Professional

Senior Employee & Labor Relations Analyst, *City of Philadelphia (Philadelphia, PA)* **Mar 2026–Present**
Provided centralized labor-management oversight and strategic counsel within the Department of Labor for 16 municipal unions, collectively representing 25,000 employees. Conducted research into collective bargaining history and assisted the City's negotiating team during interest arbitration and contract proceedings. Additionally, facilitated city-wide training on labor contract administration and best practices.

Director of Human Resources, *Southern Lehigh SD (Center Valley, PA)* **Aug 2023–Aug 2025**
Directed comprehensive human resources and labor relations functions for a 425-employee public-sector organization. Leveraged quantitative modeling to design a Position Control Database, integrating multi-system data to refine fiscal forecasting and govern a personnel budget comprising 70% of the district's \$74MM annual expenditures. Developed data-driven fiscal strategies for collective bargaining and authored differentiated compensation plans for administrative and support units. Chaired the Board's Policy Committee to modernize organizational governance and served as the primary compliance officer for Title IX and Open Records.

Director of Human Resources, *Wallingford-Swarthmore SD (Wallingford, PA)* **Jan 2022–Dec 2022**
Oversaw all personnel operations and workforce governance for a 525-employee educational organization. Engineered a strategic reorganization plan to align central office resources with instructional growth and school-level performance. Managed fiscal risk as a Management Trustee for a county-wide healthcare consortium and authored a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to stabilize labor costs. Implemented a zero-based personnel budgeting model governing 70% of a \$92MM annual budget while presiding over the Board's Policy Committee and Title IX compliance.

Executive Director, *American Federation of Teachers PA (Plymouth Meeting)* **Jan 2020–Dec 2021**
Led a statewide labor organization representing 36,000 members across 60 affiliates, providing guidance on labor law and contract enforcement. Restructured a \$2.5MM operating budget to generate \$400K in annual savings for affiliate support and optimized organizational efficiency by creating specialized data and organizing roles. Designed a Power BI Affiliate Dashboard to translate membership and financial data into executive decision-support tools. Developed and delivered a 40-hour Labor Leadership curriculum focused on labor economics, school finance, and governance.

Assistant Director of STEM Academies, *SD of Philadelphia (Philadelphia, PA)* **Jul 2019–Sept 2019**
Engineered a district-wide blueprint for interdisciplinary STEM curriculum and instruction across 12 pilot schools. Collaborated with the Philadelphia Education Fund to secure a \$10MM philanthropic grant from GlaxoSmithKline to fund advanced computer science programming and science innovation initiatives. Served as the STEM liaison for IU26, ensuring program compliance and adherence to PDE reporting standards.

Biology Teacher, *The Agnes Irwin School (Bryn Mawr, PA)* **Jan 2014–Jun 2016**
Directed Honors and AP Biology instruction within a high-achieving independent school setting. Utilized data-informed instructional methods to overhaul the AP Biology curriculum, resulting in a 20-percentage-point increase in mean exam performance between the 2013 and 2016 cohorts.

Biology Teacher, *Charter High School for Architecture & Design (Philadelphia, PA)* **Apr 2011–Dec 2013**
Implemented data-driven instruction and positive behavior interventions within a Title I urban setting serving a significant population of special education and ESL students. Redesigned the biology curriculum to align with state standards, leading to a 16-percentage-point increase in proficiency on the Keystone Biology exam.

PRESENTATIONS

Academic Conferences

Ake-Little, E. (2022, March). *Understanding School Improvement Through STEM Colored Glasses*. Keynote Address at the 2022 PA Department of Education Data Summit. Harrisburg, PA.

Ake-Little, E. (2022, February). *Show Me the Money: A Deep Dive into Pay Transparency Across Generations*. Presentation to the Society for Human Resource Management Philadelphia Chapter: 2022 Quarterly Series. (Online Webinar).

Ake-Little, E. (2021, May). *Issues of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the (Science) Classroom*. Presentation for the Pennsylvania Science Teachers Association Focus on Diversity Series. (Virtual Series).

Ake-Little, E. (2021, April). *Labor Monopsony in Rural Pennsylvania and Its Implications for Teacher Turnover*. Presentation at the 11th National Education Finance Conference. (National Education Finance Academy Virtual Conference).

Ake-Little, E. (2020, November). *Labor Monopsony in Rural Pennsylvania and Its Implications for Teacher Turnover*. Presentation at the 112th National Forum to Advance Rural Education (National Rural Education Association Virtual Conference).

Ake-Little, E. (2020, April). *Labor Monopsony in Rural Pennsylvania and Its Implications for Teacher Turnover*. Paper Presentation and Panel Discussion at AERA Annual Meeting Rural Education SIG. San Francisco, CA. (Conference Cancelled; Proceedings Available via AERA Open Gallery).

Ake-Little, E. (2019, May). *Exploring the Relationship between Professional Development, Instructional Leadership, and Student Achievement Using District-wide Survey Data*. Presentation at the School District of Philadelphia Research, Policy, and Practice Conference. Philadelphia, PA.

Ake-Little, E. (2019, January). *Do Pedagogical Techniques Influence Students' Perceptions of Their Courses?* Presentation at the Lilly Conference on Evidence-Based Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Austin, TX.

Ake-Little, E. (2019, January). *Demystifying STEM Education: The Link Between Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment*. DKG Media: Education Admin Web Advisor. (Online Webinar).

Ake-Little, E., Dawson, D. (2019, January). *Connecting Teaching & Learning: Measuring the Effects of Pedagogy on Course Evaluations*. Poster Presentation at the Temple University 17th Annual Center for the Advancement for Teaching Annual Faculty Conference on Teaching Excellence. Philadelphia, PA.

Ake-Little, E., Dawson, D. (2018, September). *Connecting Teaching & Learning: Measuring the Effects of Pedagogy on Course Evaluations*. Presentation at the Drexel University Fifth Annual Conference on Teaching and Learning Assessment. Philadelphia, PA.

Ake-Little, E. (2018, April). *Engaging the Academy: The New Labor Landscape & Higher Education*. Presentation at the 20th Annual AFT Pennsylvania/ PSEA Higher Education Conference. Plymouth Meeting, PA.

Ake-Little, E., Dawson, D. (2018, February). *Does Class Size Matter in the University Setting?* Presentation at the American Association of Colleges & Universities General Education Conference. Philadelphia, PA.

Ake-Little, E., Dawson, D. (2017, September). *Does Class Size Matter in the University Setting?* Poster Presentation at the Drexel University Fourth Annual Conference on Teaching and Learning Assessment. Philadelphia, PA.

Talks & Workshops

Ake-Little, E. (2023, April). *Collective Bargaining Simulation & Feedback for Higher Education Labor Leaders*. AFT-Cornell Institute of Labor Relations Collective Bargaining Institute. Philadelphia, PA.

Ake-Little, E. (2023, February). *Who Are We & Where Are We Going?* Strategic Planning Workshop for New Leaders Council Philadelphia Chapter. (Philadelphia, PA).

Ake-Little, E. (2021, February). *AFT Organizing Increases Due to COVID-19 Related Concerns*. BMA Media Group: America's Workforce Union Podcast. (Podcast Interview).

Ake-Little, E., Dawson, D. (2020, September). *Using Data to Support Teaching & Learning: The Case of the Temple University General Education Program*. Pre-Conference Workshop at the Seventh Annual Drexel University Assessment Conference. Philadelphia, PA.

Ake-Little, E. (2019, December). *Full STEAM Ahead with Innovation in the Classroom*. North American Youth Technology & Education Association. (Podcast Interview).

Ake-Little, E. (2022, September). *Top District Priorities and Shifts in PK-12 Education*. Panel to Discuss Insights from the 2022 Education Focus Report: PowerSchool. (Virtual Discussion).

Panelist Discussions

Ake-Little, E. (2022, August). *Where are the Teachers? Navigating Shallow Seas in Turbulent Times*. Take Five: District Impact Stories Panel Presentation & Roundtable Discussion: PowerSchool Council of Education Innovation 2022 Summit. San Diego, CA.

Ake-Little, E. (2021, July). *The New Deal for Higher Education: Taking Control of the Future of Campus Employment*. Panel to Discuss Federal & State Level Higher Education Policy: 2021 AAUP Summer Institute Online. (Virtual Discussion).

Ake-Little, E. (2020, September). *Racial Equity Solutions Tour*. Panelist to Discuss Educational Inequalities: Office of Pennsylvania State Senator Art Haywood. (Virtual Discussion).

Ake-Little, E. (2018, June). *Building a Union of Contingent Workers*. Panel to Discuss Organizing in Higher Education: AFT Contingent Faculty Symposium. Philadelphia, PA.

Ake-Little, E. (2017, September). *Testimony on Behalf of PSEA Regarding Graduate Student Unionization*. Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board Hearings: Coalition of Graduate Employees v. The Pennsylvania State University. State College, PA

SERVICE

University

President, *Temple University Graduate Students Association (AFT Local #6290)* Jun 2016–May 2018
 Represented over 800 graduate teaching and research employees; served as Lead Negotiator of the 2018-2022 Contract Negotiation Team, implementing a data-driven collective bargaining process grounded in research of the university's fiscal operations. Restructured affiliate finances, successfully restoring IRS non-profit status, and reformed all membership communication channels to improve access and engagement.

Academic Journals

Reviewer, *Teachers College Record (Columbia University, Teachers College)* 2019–2022
 Reviewer, *Journal of College Science Teaching (National Science Teaching Association)* 2014–2019

Discipline

At-Large State Representative, *Pennsylvania Science Teachers Association* 2021–2023
 Member of the Executive Board and the Horizons Committee, the organization's steering committee.

STEM Teacher Diversity Mentor, *Smithsonian Science Education Center* 2020–2021
 Advised the Pennsylvania Department of Education in addressing the causes of a statewide STEM teacher of color shortage and created a multi-year K-12/HE action plan.

Consultancies

Consultant, *Gerson Lehrman Group* 2020–Present
 Consultant, *Third Bridge Associates* 2020–Present
 Currently advise client firms regarding public sector finance and operations, including education technology, school finance regulations, insurance models, and pension/ retirement plans.

Consultant, *Council on Education Innovation (PowerSchool Holdings, Inc.)* 2022–2023
 Served on the Council on Education Innovation, an advisory board that supports PowerSchool's senior product development team and beta tests features before market release.

DISTINCTIONS

Academic Awards

Outstanding Dissertation Finalist Award, *AERA Politics of Education Association* 2020

Maitland P. Simmons Memorial Award for New Teachers (\$1,000.00) 2014
National Science Teaching Association

William A. Salamone Award for History (\$2,000.00) 2005
Drexel University College of Arts & Sciences

Advanced Placement Scholar with Distinction Award, *The College Board* 2003

National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist, *The College Board* 2003

Scholarships

Russell Conwell Scholarship (75% Tuition Award), *Temple University Beasley School of Law* 2024–2028

Opportunity Scholarship (\$15,000.00), *GlaxoSmithKline* 2016–2019

Margaret Wang Scholarship (\$2,000.00), *Temple Univ. College of Educ. & Human Development* 2016

Biology Educator Leadership Scholarship (\$5,000.00), *National Association of Biology Teachers*. 2015

Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation STEM Teacher Scholarship (\$5,000.00) 2015
AFCEA Educational Foundation

Highly Qualified Regular & Special Education Teachers Scholarship (100% Tuition Award) 2011–2013
Pennsylvania Department of Education

Anthony J. Drexel Scholarship (66% Tuition Award), 2003–2006
Drexel University College of Arts & Sciences

Fellowships	<p>Urban Superintendents Academy, AASA-Howard University 2022–2023 Fellowship for senior school administrators to address the unique challenges of leading large, diverse urban school districts through intensive training in equity, governance, and strategic leadership.</p> <p>Collective Bargaining Certificate Program, 2017-2019 AFT-Cornell University, School of Industrial & Labor Relations Certificate program for labor leaders with advanced, practical training in collective bargaining, contract negotiations, and labor relations theory from leading experts in the field.</p> <p>Klingenstein Center for Independent Schools Summer Institute, 2015 Columbia University, Teachers College Summer institute for independent school educators focusing on developing leadership skills, innovative pedagogy, and a deeper understanding of the social and curricular dynamics of independent education.</p> <p>STEM Institute Fellow, Discovery Education-Siemens Foundation 2014 Fellowship to equip STEM educators with instructional strategies and digital tools to foster inquiry-based learning and student engagement in science, technology, engineering, and math.</p> <p>New Science Teacher Academy Fellow, 2013-2014 National Science Teaching Association-DOW Chemical Company Fellowship offering comprehensive professional development, mentorship, and resources to support early-career science teachers in enhancing their instructional practices and promoting long-term success.</p>
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PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American/ Pennsylvania/ Philadelphia Bar Association	2024-Present
American/ Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators	2017–Present
American Educational Research Association	2017–Present
American/ Delaware Valley MENSA	2016–Present

CERTIFICATIONS & SKILLS

Certifications

Human Resources Certification Institute
Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR)

Technical Skills

Statistical Analysis
Regression (*Linear, Logistic*); **Multilevel Modeling**;
Structural Equation Modeling; Time Dependent (*Longitudinal, Survival*)

Data Visualization
Tableau, Tableau Prep; MS Power BI

Computer Programming
C++/Visual Basic (*Intermediate*); R/ RStudio (*Intermediate*); Mplus (*Beginner*)

World Languages

Spanish, Castilian Dialect
Reading (*Superior*), Writing (*Advanced*), Speaking (*Advanced*)

Hindi, Khariboli Dialect
Speaking (*Intermediate*)

REFERENCES

Will Jordan, Ph.D.
Research Officer, Educational Leadership; *The Wallace Foundation* (New York City, NY)
Email Add: wjordan@wallacefoundation.org

Christopher McGinley, Ed.D.
Department Chair & Professor of Practice, Educational Leadership; *Temple University College of Education & Human Development* (Philadelphia, PA)
Email Add: cwmcginley@temple.edu

Emily Gehman
(Former) President, Board of School Directors; *Southern Lehigh School District* (Center Valley, PA)
Email Add: gehmane@slsd.org
