

## Michael T. Hartney

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Department of Political Science  
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### Academic appointments and external affiliations

Boston College, Department of Political Science	
Associate Professor (with tenure)	2023 –
Assistant Professor	2017 – 2022
Hoover Institution	
Bruni Family Research Fellow	2024 –
Hoover Fellow	2022 – 202
W. Glenn Campbell & Rita Ricardo-Campbell National Fellow	2020 – 2021
Harvard University, Program on Education Policy and Governance	
Research Affiliate	2019 –
FSU Institute for Government and Civics	2025 –
Education Liberty Fellow	
Lake Forest College, Department of Politics	
Assistant Professor	2014 – 2016

### Education

University of Notre Dame	2014
Ph.D. in Political Science	
Vanderbilt University	2005
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Cum Laude	

### Books

*How Policies Make Interest Groups: Governments, Unions, and American Education*. 2022.  
The University of Chicago Press.

- Winner of the Best Book on Education Politics and Policy by the American Political Science Association's (APSA) Education Politics Section
- Reviewed by *Education Next*, *Interest Groups & Advocacy*, *Journal of School Choice*, and *Perspectives on Politics*

**Peer-reviewed journal articles**

\*Denotes graduate student co-author

- [13] "The Politics of Teachers' Union Endorsements," with Vladimir Kogan, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 69, No. 3 (July 2025) pp. 1163-79.
- [12] "State Labor Laws and Government Responsiveness to Public Opinion," with Daniel DiSalvo and Patrick Flavin, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 76, No. 3 (September 2023) pp. 1475-85.
- [11] "Teachers Unions and School Board Elections: A Reassessment," *Interest Groups and Advocacy*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (January 2022) pp. 237-262.
- [10] "Off-Cycle and Off-Center: Election Timing and Representation in Municipal Government," with Adam Dynes and Sam Hayes\*, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 115, No. 3 (August 2021) pp. 1097-1103.
- [9] "Politics, Markets, and Pandemics: Public Education's Response to Covid-19," with Leslie Finger, *Perspectives on Politics*, June 2021.
  - Winner of the Best Public Policy Paper Award from the American Political Science Association's (APSA) Public Policy Section
- [8] "Off-Cycle and Out of Sync: How Election Timing Influences Political Representation," with Sam Hayes\*, *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*, March 2021.
- [7] "Financial Solidarity: The Future of Labor Unions in the post-*Janus* Era," with Leslie Finger, *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (March 2021) pp. 19-35.
- [6] "Show *Who* the Money? Teacher Sorting Patterns and Performance Pay across U.S. School Districts," with Michael Jones, *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 77, No. (Nov. 2017) pp. 919-931.
- [5] "Racial Inequality in Democratic Accountability: Evidence from Retrospective Voting in Local Elections," with Patrick Flavin, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 61, No. 3 (July 2017) pp. 684-697.
- [4] "When Government Subsidizes Its Own: Collective Bargaining Laws as Agents of Political Mobilization," with Patrick Flavin, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 59, No. 4 (Oct. 2015) pp. 684-697.
- [3] "'Ideas about Interests': Explaining the Changing Partisan Politics of Education," with Christina Wolbrecht, *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Sept. 2014) pp. 1-28.

[2] "The Political Foundations of the Black-White Education Achievement Gap," with Patrick Flavin, *American Politics Research*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (Jan. 2014) pp. 3-33.

[1] "From the Schoolhouse to the Statehouse: Teacher Union Political Activism and U.S. State Education Reform Policy," with Patrick Flavin, *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* Vol. 11 No. 3 (Sept. 2011). pp. 251-268.

### **Research in progress**

*Partisans, Parents, and America's Schools*, book project

*When Affirmative Action was Black and White*, book project

"Timing, Turnout, and Voter Knowledge: Evidence from School Board Elections," with David Houston, working paper available upon request

"Bargaining Away Trust: Public Sector Unions and Political Trust," with Patrick Flavin and Daniel DiSalvo, working paper available upon request

"The Politics of School Choice: Evidence from Three Statewide Referenda," with Vladimir Kogan, in progress

"Public Sector Unions and Borrowing Costs," with Oliver Giesceke, in progress

"Labor Unions and Customer Satisfaction: Evidence from Starbucks Union Certification Elections," with Dinsha Mistree, in progress

"Do Off-Cycle Elections Advantage Organized Groups? Evidence from School Board Elections," with Adam Dynes, in progress

"Standing Room Only: Do school boards represent their constituents?" with David Houston, in progress

### **Awards and fellowships**

American Political Science Association's Best Book Award on Education Politics and Policy from the APSA Education Politics Section	2024
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American Political Science Association's Best Public Policy Paper Award from the APSA Public Policy Section	2022
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W. Glenn Campbell & Rita Ricardo-Campbell Hoover National Fellowship	2020
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American Political Science Association's Harold D. Laswell Award for the best doctoral dissertation in public policy	2015
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Eli J. and Helen Shaheen Award (Top Graduating Student), Highest Honor Awarded by the University of Notre Dame's Graduate School	2014
Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher Award (University of Notre Dame)	2014
National Academy of Education/Spencer Dissertation Fellowship	2014
American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Albert Shanker Research Fellowship	2012
Mellon Foundation ISLA Interdisciplinary Workshop Award	2011
Emerging Education Policy Scholar, Thomas B. Fordham Institute	2010
Finalist, National Council on Teacher Quality Research Competition	2009
Emerging Education Policy Scholar, Thomas B. Fordham Institute	2010
Finalist, National Council on Teacher Quality Research Competition	2009

### **Research grants**

Hoover Institution Center for Revitalizing American Institutions (RAI) Seed Grant.  
Project Title: "The Causes and Consequences of Declining Confidence in America's Public Schools." (\$13,000)

The Wallace Foundation (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute was subcontractor).  
Project Title: "Do School Boards Represent their Constituents?" (\$60,000)

Boston College ATB (GIS) Inaugural Cohort Working Group (\$2,500)

The Walton Family Foundation (The American Enterprise Institute was subcontractor).  
Project Title: "Education Reform from the Grassroots?" (Amount: \$6,000)

Carnegie Corporation/Doris & Donald Fisher Fund (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute was subcontractor). Project Title: "Does School Board Leadership Matter?" (\$50,000)

Rooney Center for the Study of American Democracy Research Grant (\$7,000)

National Council on Teacher Quality. Project Title: "The Politics of Teacher Policy."  
(Amount: \$5,000)

The Wallace Foundation. (National Governors Association was subcontractor). Project  
Title: "Gubernatorial Policies to Improve the K-12 Educator Workforce." (\$175,000)

### **Invited talks**

Harvard University, Kennedy School/PEPG program (2025)

Princeton University, Center for the Study of Democratic Politics (2025)

The Ohio State University, John Glenn College of Public Affairs (2025)

University of Florida, Hamilton Center for Classical and Civic Education (2025)  
Florida State University, Department of Political Science (2024)  
Hoover Institution, Stanford University (2024)  
Harvard University, Kennedy School/PEPG program (2023)  
Colin Powell School at the City College of New York–CUNY (2023)  
Princeton University, Covid policy conference (2023)  
Harvard University, Kennedy School/PEPG program (2022)  
American Enterprise Institute (2022)  
Progressive Policy Institution (2022)  
Hoover Institution, Stanford University (2021)  
University of Arkansas, Department of Education Reform (2021)  
University College of London, Centre on US Politics (2021)  
Harvard University, PEPG Annual Advisory Board Meeting (2020)  
Brigham Young University, Center for the Study of Elections (2020)  
Hoover Institution, Stanford University (2020)  
Harvard University, Radcliffe Institute (2019)  
Harvard University, Kennedy School PEPG Colloquium (2019)  
Stanford University, GSE Colloquium Series (2018)  
Lawrence University, Department of Government (2017)  
Brookings Institution, Governance Studies Program (2015)  
Purdue University, Department of Political Science (2015)  
Michigan State University, College of Education (2015)  
Northwestern University, School of Education and Social Policy (2015)  
University of Munich, Leibniz Institute for Economic Research (2015)  
Maine School Management Association, Keynote address (2014)  
Lawrence University, Department of Economics (2014)  
University of Virginia, Miller Center of Public Affairs (2013)  
University of Washington, CRPE (2012)

### **Conference presentations**

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting ('24 '23 '21, '19, '18, '15, '14, '12 '11 '10)  
American Education Research Association Annual Meeting (2019, 2013)  
Association for Policy Analysis & Management Annual Meeting (2022, 2012)  
Association for Education Finance and Policy Annual Meeting ('25, 2021, 2012)  
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting ('22, '17, '15, '12, '10)  
Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting (2025)  
State Politics and Policy Annual Conference (2025, 2009)

### **Other publications (non-refereed)**

""Support for Testing and Accountability Is Waning. Is Politics to Blame?," *The74*, July 21, 2025  
"Red States Have Seen Less Learning Loss," with Paul Peterson, *Education Next*, Feb. 13, 2025.

- "Voters Reject Vouchers – Again!," with Vladimir Kogan and Parker Baxter, *Education Next*, (Spring 2025).
- "Making Student Achievement the North Star of Our Education System," (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, November 2024).
- "The Myth of the 'Working Class' Voter," with Vladimir Kogan, *The Hill*, Nov. 4, 2024.
- "The Democrats' Emerging Race Problem," with Renu Mukherjee, *City Journal*, June 17, 2024.
- "Americans for Meritocracy," with Renu Mukherjee, (New York, NY: Manhattan Institute for Public Policy Research Report, May 2024).
- "School district budgets catch long COVID," with Vladimir Kogan, *The Hill*, April 16, 2024.
- "To Improve Literacy, Massachusetts Should Look to Mississippi," with David Wakelyn, *Boston Globe*, March 18, 2024.
- "School districts need to debunk teachers' unions misleading talking points," with Vladimir Kogan, *City Journal*, Feb. 16, 2024.
- "Lying About Learning Loss," with Matthew Malec, *City Journal*, Jan. 14, 2024.
- "From the One Best System to Student-Centered Systems: Lessons from a Half Century of K-12 Governance Reform," (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, January 2024).
- "Illinois Kills School Choice," with Matthew Malec, *City Journal*, Nov 17, 2023.
- "Salaries or Students: How Unions Choose School Board Candidates." (New York, NY: Manhattan Institute for Public Policy Research Report, November 2023).
- "Why Elite Universities Hate the New College Rankings," *New York Post*, Nov. 11, 2023.
- "The School Choice Conundrum," with Matthew Malec, *City Journal*, July 28, 2023.
- "Academic Weightlifting," *City Journal*, June 28, 2023.
- "Flunking the Equity Test," with Max Eden, *Wall Street Journal*, May 23, 2023.
- "How Remote Work Will Increase the Costs of Government," with Daniel DiSalvo, *Governing*, April 11, 2023.
- "Still the Ones to Beat: Teachers Unions and School Board Elections." (New York, NY: Manhattan Institute for Public Policy Research Report, October 2022).
- "The Asian Recall Election," with Renu Mukherjee, *City Journal*, June 20, 2022.
- "Closures and Consequences," with Renu Mukherjee, *City Journal*, December 8, 2021.
- "Revitalizing Local Democracy: The Case for On-Cycle Local Elections." (New York, NY: Manhattan Institute for Public Policy Research, October 2021).
- "What determined if schools reopened? How many Trump voters were in a district," (with Leslie Finger), *Washington Post*. November 10, 2020.

Review of Lesley Lavery, *A Collective Pursuit: Teachers' Unions and Education Reform* (Temple Press), *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (March 2021) pp. 19-35.

"School Reopening Decisions Are Linked to Trump 2016 Vote Share and Catholic School Presence," (with Leslie Finger), *Education Next*. October 29, 2020.

"Stop playing politics with school re-openings," *Newsweek*. October 16, 2020.

"Teachers Unions in a post-*Janus* World," with Dan DiSalvo, *Education Next*, (Fall 2020).

"Performance Pay Can Bring Stronger Teachers into the Classroom." Brookings Institution (Brown Center Chalkboard). January 30, 2018.

"Local Electoral Incentives Perpetuate the Racial Achievement Gap." Brookings Institution (Brown Center Chalkboard). May 16, 2017.

"Make Education Politics Great Again! Eliminate Off-Cycle School Board Elections." Brookings Institution (Brown Center Chalkboard). February 26, 2017.

"Would Curbing Unions Silence Teachers' Voices?" *Newsweek*. Oct. 9, 2015.

"Review of Daniel DiSalvo, *Government against Itself. Public Union Power and Its Consequences* (Oxford University. Press)," *The Forum: A Journal of Applied Research in Contemporary Politics*, Vol. 13 No. 2 (July 2015) pp. 347-54.

"Review of Sarah F. Anzia, *Timing and Turnout: How Off-Cycle Elections Benefit Organized Groups* (University of Chicago Press), *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 130 No. 1 (Spring 2015) pp. 152-53.

"Education Reform from the Grassroots: How and When Parents Can Shape Policy." (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, July 2014).

"Does School Board Leadership Matter?" with Arnold Shober, (Washington, DC: Thomas B. Fordham Institute, March 2014).

"Promoting Effective Education Governance." Washington, DC: National Governors Association. *Honoring Progress*, Vol. 1 No. 6 (January 2008).

"Implementing Graduation Counts: State Progress to Date," with Bridget Curran and Joseph Pika, (Washington, DC: National Governors Association, July 2008).

"Human Capital: Innovative Business and State Policy Strategies for K-12 Educators." Policy brief prepared for the 2007 NGA Meeting at the request of Rhode Island Governor Donald Carcieri, NGA Education Chair, (Traverse City, MI, July 20-23).

"Creating a Greater Supply of High-Quality High Schools." Washington, DC: National Governors Association. *Honoring Progress*, Vol. 1 No. 5 (Sept. 2007).

"Teacher Compensation Reform: Pay for Contribution." Washington, DC: National Governors Association. *Honoring Progress*, Vol 1. No. 4 (July 2007).

“How Governors Can Improve College and Work Readiness.” Washington, DC:  
National Governors Association. *Honoring Progress*, Vo. 1 No. 3 (April 2007).

### **Teaching and advising**

#### **Boston College**

Democracy and Our Schools (undergraduate seminar)  
Sub-national Politics (undergraduate and graduate seminar)  
Interest Groups in American Politics (undergraduate and graduate seminar)  
Environmental Politics and Policy (undergraduate lecture)  
Politics and Policy in the U.S. (undergraduate lecture)  
Introduction to American Politics (undergraduate lecture)  
State and Local Government (undergraduate lecture)  
The Politics of Self Rule (summer abroad course in Ireland and the UK)

#### **Lake Forest College**

Public Opinion (undergraduate lecture)  
The Presidency (graduate seminar)  
Public Policy Studies, (undergraduate lecture)  
Political Science Research Methods (undergraduate lecture)  
Introduction to American Politics (undergraduate lecture)  
The American Dream (undergraduate seminar)  
Campaigns, Elections, and Political Parties (undergraduate lecture)

#### **University of Notre Dame**

Introduction to U.S. Education Policy (undergraduate lecture)  
Public Policy Analysis (undergraduate lecture)  
Democracy and Our Schools (undergraduate seminar)

#### **Undergraduate honors theses supervised**

Cecilia Milano, Boston College*	Brendan Herrmann, Univ. Notre Dame
Lauren Bell, Lake Forest College*	Kaitlin Wegrzyn, Univ. Notre Dame
Alexis Yusim, Lake Forest College	Brittany Dunn-Pirio, Univ. Notre Dame
Christiana Goff, Boston College	Adam Martin, Boston College
Anne Marie Green, Boston College	Chris Siegert, Boston College
Ellie Kominiarek, Boston College	Tommy Roche, Boston College

\*Denotes project awarded department's top thesis prize

#### **Doctoral students**

Sam Hayes, Boston College (Placement: Simmons University)  
Renu Mukherjee, Boston College (expected 2025)  
Rory Womack, Boston College (expected 2025)  
Casey Puerzer, Boston College (expected 2026)

### **Academic and professional service**



**President-elect**, APSA Education Politics and Policy Section (2025 – )

**Director**, Boston College Department of Political Science Honors Program (2021 – present)

**Editorial board member**: *Journal of School Choice*

**Participant**, Hoover Institution' Working Group on Civics and American Citizenship

**Co-Coordinator**, Hoover Institution Education Program Research Seminar Series

**Professional conferences organized**:

*School Choice: Tradeoffs and Evidence-Based Policy Making*

Program on Education Policy and Governance (PEPG), Harvard Kennedy School,

Taubman Center for State and Local Government (Co-organized with Paul E. Peterson)

May 15 - 16, 2025

*A Modern Teaching Profession: Compensation, Preparation, Representation, Evaluation*

Program on Education Policy and Governance (PEPG), Harvard Kennedy School,

Taubman Center for State and Local Government (Co-organized with Paul E. Peterson)

May 2 - June 6, 2024

*Should School Boards Run Schools?*

Program on Education Policy and Governance (PEPG), Harvard Kennedy School,

Taubman Center for State and Local Government (Co-organized with Paul E. Peterson)

May 4 - June 15, 2023

**Journal reviewer**: *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, American Education Research Journal, American Journal of Political Science, American Political Science Review, American Politics Research, Education Next, Educational Researcher, Education Finance and Policy, Education Next Educational Policy, Educational Researcher, Health Affairs, Journal of Empirical Legal Studies, Journal of Politics, Journal of School Choice, Perspectives on Politics, Policy Studies Journal, Political Behavior, Political Science Quarterly, Political Research Quarterly, Social Forces, Social Science Quarterly, State Politics and Policy Quarterly*

**Book manuscript reviewer**: MIT Press

**Foundation grants reviewer**: The Spencer Foundation

**Award Committees**: American Political Science Association's (APSA) Jeffrey R. Henig Best Book Award in Education Politics and Policy

### **Media coverage**

*The Economist*. "The Pandemic hit pupils hardest in Democrat-leaning states." March 17, 2025.

*Baltimore Sun*. "Unions driven by self-interest when endorsing board incumbents." Nov. 2, 2024.

*CBS News*. "'Extraordinary' money spent in Chicago school board election." Oct 30, 2024.

*Chicago Tribune*. "Chicago's first school board elections." May 26, 2024.

*New York Times*. "How to Boost Voter Turnout With Just One Signature." Dec. 26, 2023.

*New York Times*. "The Most Dangerous Person in the World Is Randi Weingarten." April 28, 2023.

*New York Times*. "Meet the Republicans Who Are Facing Down the Hard Right." Jan. 11, 2023.

*Wall Street Journal*. "Candidates Who Pushed 'Parental Rights' See Mixed Results." Nov. 13, 2022.

*Fresno Bee*. "Unions and money tend to win school board races." Oct 28, 2022.  
*USA Today*. "Parents' rights advocates' running for local school board positions." Oct 24, 2022.  
*Washington Post*. "Education is the iceberg issue of the midterms." Oct 15, 2022.  
*Wall Street Journal*. "The Parental School-Board Revolt Continues." June 7, 2022.  
*San Francisco Chronicle*. "Lowell was key to S.F.'s school board recall." March 11, 2022.  
*Washington Post*. "Democrats' real problems aren't the ones you're hearing about." March 1, 2022.  
*Bloomberg*. "Chicago Schools Reopen as City's Dispute With Teachers Festers." Jan. 12, 2022.  
*Bloomberg*. "Biden Seeks Chicago Schools Opening as Democrats See Risk." Jan. 10, 2022.  
*Times of London*. "Americans simply want children at school." Jan. 7, 2022.  
*New York Post*. "Researchers: Parents Are Key to 2022 Midterms." Dec. 10, 2021.  
*Commonwealth Magazine*. "Are liberals 'addicted' to the pandemic?" May 5, 2021.  
*Seattle Times*. "Politics, race were key factors when schools reopened." April 19, 2021.  
*Wall Street Journal*. "School Isn't Closed for Lack of Money." March 9, 2021.  
*NBC News*. "GOP targets teachers unions in bid to retake suburbs." Feb. 14, 2021.  
*The Economist Radio*. "Checks and Balances Podcast." Feb. 11, 2021.  
*The Atlantic*. "Is America's Educational System Becoming More Pluralistic?" Feb. 8, 2021.  
*Detroit News*. "School closures create inequity, often don't match virus rates." Feb. 7, 2021.  
*Stateline*. "Pressure Grows to Reopen Schools, But Fears Persist." Feb. 3, 2021.  
*New York Times*. "Children Need to Be Back in School Tomorrow." Jan 28, 2021.  
*New York Magazine*. "I want to meet my teacher." Jan. 26, 2021.  
*The Economist*. "US children losing most by missing school may miss it longest." Jan 19, 2021.  
*The Atlantic*. "Why British Kids Went Back to School, and American Kids Did Not." Dec. 19, 2020.  
*Stateline*. "Pendulum Swings Toward Reopening Schools. Then Came the Surge." Nov. 13, 2020.  
*Commonwealth Magazine*. "For Catholic schools, class is in session." Oct. 27, 2020.  
*The74Million*. "Politics, Not Science, is Driving School Reopening Decisions." Oct. 20, 2020.  
*New York Times*. "District size and support for Trump, predict school reopenings." Oct 14, 2020.  
*Washington Post*. "Support for Trump predictor of whether schools reopened." Oct 15, 2020.  
*Education Week*. "Trump, Unions, and Politics in School Reopening." Oct. 13, 2020.  
*New York Magazine*. "Remote Learning Is a Catastrophe." Oct. 7, 2020.  
*Glamour*. "What's Next for America's Teacher Walkout Movement?" Aug. 27, 2018.  
*Christian Science Monitor*. "Racial Gaps in Education: Do Voters Care?" Oct. 5, 2017.  
*Boston Globe*. "School Boards for White Students." Jan. 6, 2017.  
*Wilson Quarterly*. "How Democrats and Republicans Flipped on Education." Dec. 18, 2014.  
*The Atlantic*. "Building an Effective School Board." March 26, 2014  
*U.S. News and World Report*. "Elections Could Influence Student Achievement." March 26, 2014.  
*Education Week*. "How Boards Contribute to 'Beat the Odds' Districts." March 26, 2014.  
*National Journal*. "Do Educators Make Good School Board Members?" March 31, 2014.  
*American Prospect*. "The Reality of Our Race-Based Achievement Gap." July 31, 2013.  
*Education Week*. "Reports Focus on Closing Achievement Gap." July 16, 2013.  
*Boston Globe*. "Surprising Insights from the Social Sciences." June 2, 2013.

### **Professional work experience**

Policy Analyst, National Governors Association, Washington, DC, 2006-2008