

**Dietra Y. Trent, Ph.D.**  
**Biographical Sketch**

**Dietra Y. Trent** was appointed Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth of Virginia by Governor Terry McAuliffe on July 26, 2016. Previously, she served as Deputy Secretary of Education, a position she also held during the Administration of then-Governor Tim Kaine. She joined the Administration of Governor Terry McAuliffe in January 2014.

As Secretary of Education, Dr. Trent's primary responsibility is to promote the Governor's agenda to eradicate the Achievement Gap, promote great teaching and learning, and help strengthen educational pathways to the new Virginia Economy. The Education Secretariat provides guidance to the [Virginia Department of Education](#) (VDOE), the [Virginia Community College System](#) (VCCS) and [The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia](#) (SCHEV), as well as Virginia's 16 public colleges and universities, 23 community colleges and five higher education and research centers. They also provide support to seven state-funded arts/cultural institutions.

Prior to joining the McAuliffe Administration, Dr. Trent served as Deputy State Director for Senator Mark Warner. Having served in former Governor's Tim Kaine and Mark Warner's offices, as well as the Office of Congressman Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, she has a wealth of federal, state and higher education experience.

During her time in Governor Warner's office, Dr. Trent's proudest moment was establishing and obtaining state funding for the Minority Political Leadership Institute (MPLI), housed at Virginia Commonwealth University. MPLI is a six-week intensive program designed to promote leadership for aspiring individuals interested in running for elected office or assuming leadership roles in minority communities. She currently serves on the MPLI advisory board.

Dr. Trent is perhaps best known for her political acumen. In 2012, she served as Senior Consultant to President Obama's reelection campaign. In 2008, she also served as Senior Consultant to the Dwight Jones for Mayor Campaign, in Richmond, Virginia. Mayor Jones was elected in a four-way race with nearly 40% of the vote. Additionally, Dr. Trent served as Deputy Campaign Director for the *Warner for Governor* and Political Director for the *Kaine for Governor* campaigns.

A native of Halifax County, Virginia, Dr. Trent earned a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Criminal Justice from Hampton University, and completed her master's and doctoral degrees in Public Administration and Policy from Virginia Commonwealth University.