



Tabitha Jones-McKnight, DO, MPH, FACOP, FAAP

Dr. Tabitha Jones-McKnight is Assistant Medical Director at the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) where she provides clinical and public health leadership and guidance to various programs and community health initiatives. Before joining ODH, she cared for children living in underserved communities as a National Health Service Corps Scholar and primary care pediatrician for 12 years. A graduate of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (B.S. Biology), The Ohio State University (MPH), and Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.), Dr. Jones-McKnight trained as an intern with the U.S. Public Health Service and completed an internship and pediatrics residency at Nationwide Children’s Hospital and Doctors Hospital West in Columbus, OH. She is also a graduate of the Columbus Medical Association’s Physicians Leadership Academy. Dr. Jones-McKnight is actively involved in community-based initiatives aimed at improving health outcomes for children and families, reducing health disparities, and promoting health equity. On behalf of the Director of Health, she serves on the Ohio Commission on Minority Health. Dr. Jones-McKnight is a Fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and a member of the Gold Humanism Honor Society. She is an Assistant Clinical Professor of Primary Care at Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine, where she serves as Discipline Director of Pediatrics.



Melissa Weber-Mayrer, PhD

Melissa Weber-Mayrer is the Chief of Literacy at the Ohio Department of Education. Dr. Weber-Mayrer oversees the literacy policy and implementation work for the state. This includes Ohio’s literacy legislation (Third Grade Reading Guarantee and Dyslexia Supports Laws) and the statewide implementation of evidence-based language and literacy teaching and learning. Dr. Weber-Mayrer is the federal project director for \$78.2 million in literacy grants focused on raising literacy achievement birth through grade 12, including learners with reading difficulties. She co-leads the State Systemic

Improvement Plan literacy activities and leads the team that authored and updates Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement. Dr. Weber-Mayrer has experience teaching in large urban school districts in Ohio, New Jersey, and Illinois. She serves as adjunct faculty for university required reading courses. Dr. Weber-Mayrer is dedicated to improving the literacy knowledge and skills of pre-service and in-service educators to ensure preparation for effective teaching of essential literacy skills at all grade levels. She earned her B.S., M.A., and Ph.D. from The Ohio State University. Her professional interests are grounded in education systems change to ensure all students become proficient readers. Dr. Weber-Mayrer's research interests focus on reading and literacy for early/middle childhood grounded in reading science, adult learning and teacher knowledge, educator preparation and strong MTSS for literacy achievement. Dr. Weber-Mayrer presents locally, nationally, and internationally.



Catherine Sulecki

Catherine Sulecki currently serves as the communications and marketing director for the statewide program Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio. She works closely with the national program— Dolly Parton's Imagination Library— to ensure alignment on messaging, manages social media, creates marketing materials, and builds partnerships with various other statewide organizations.

Prior to joining Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio, Sulecki worked for Ohio Governor Mike DeWine.

Sulecki earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, as well as a Master in Public Administration from the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio.



Gregory Szumlas, MD, FAAP

Greg Szumlas, MD, is an attending physician at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, where he works in the Pediatric Primary Care Center. He serves as medical director of the hospital’s Reach Out and Read program, the Greater Cincinnati Reach Out and Read Coalition, and the Hamilton County Affiliate of the Ohio Governor’s Imagination Library. He also serves as Assistant Professor of Clinical Pediatrics at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center.

His areas of special interest are early childhood literacy and kindergarten readiness. He participates in research and quality improvement projects to increase reading at home and improve kindergarten readiness.

Dr. Szumlas has been part of Cincinnati Children’s for over 25 years. Before moving to Cincinnati, he completed his pediatric residency training at Vanderbilt University and attended medical school at the University of Iowa.



Kristy High, MEd

Kristy High, MEd, is a literacy coordinator at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital who oversees the Ohio Imagination Library and Reach Out and Read programs. She is also a children’s book author with a focus on health topics for kids.