

Thomas V. Sannicandro

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Professional Profile

- PhD in Social Policy with 11 years' experience as State Representative in the Massachusetts Legislature, five years as Chair of the Joint Committee on Higher Education.
- Oversees all legislation that effects public, private, and for-profit universities and colleges in Massachusetts.
- Strategic influence over Massachusetts public higher education budgeting and funding process.
- Authored major research initiative providing access to 200 million dollars of research money to public and private universities in Massachusetts.
- Created state-wide task force on student debt.
- Created and chaired state-wide task force on inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in higher education.
- Advised and delivered legal expertise to key business divisions to minimize liability exposure, minimize legal expenditures and reduce risk.
- Managed budget and the education of 2,400 students including hiring of new superintendent and the building of a new high school.
- Strong relationships with local, legislative and executive leaders.
- Elected official skilled at handling difficult public relations issues.
- Coalition builder with different constituencies.
- Committed to student success and social justice.

Education

- Ph.D. Social Policy, Brandeis University, Heller School of Social Policy, Waltham, MA, May 2016. Doctoral Dissertation Entitled: *The Effect of Postsecondary Education on Employment and Income for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities* (Susan Parish (Chair) Stephen Fournier, Monika Mitra, Maria Paiewonsky)
- M.A. Social Policy, Brandeis University, Heller School of Social Policy, Waltham, MA, February 2015.
- M.P.A. Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, Cambridge, MA, May 2011
- J.D. Suffolk University Law School, Boston, MA, May 1982
- B.A. College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA, May 1978

Experience

Higher Education Administration

Massachusetts House of Representatives - Chair, Joint Committee on Higher Education (2011-present)

- Influence budgets for all Massachusetts public colleges and universities.
- Authored major research initiative giving access to 200 million dollars of research money to public and private universities in Massachusetts.
- Established state-wide task force on student debt.
- Created and chaired state-wide task force on inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in higher education.
- Oversees all legislation that effects public, private, and for-profit universities and colleges in Massachusetts.

Elected Official

State Representative, Massachusetts House of Representatives (2005-present)

- Represent approximately 40,000 people in Massachusetts House of Representatives. Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities (2009-2011).
- Responsible for legislation affecting lives of all children and people with disabilities in the Commonwealth.
- Oversight of a number of Departments under the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. Member, Ways and Means Committee.
- Author of a number of laws and budgetary programs relating to people with intellectual disabilities.
- Founder and Chair of the Harm Reduction and Drug Law Reform Caucus (2014-present) advocating for changes in our criminal justice system, with more than 80 House and Senate members.

Town of Ashland School Committee, Ashland MA (2000-2005) (Chair 2004-2005)

- Elected position as a member of a five-member board that oversaw budget and the education of 2,400 students.
- Oversaw hiring of new superintendent and the building of a new high school. Responsible for budget and policy.

Legal

Law Offices of Thomas Sannicandro - Principle Attorney (1983-present), Corporate Practice (1984-2006)

- Providing in-house business legal counsel to clients.
- Advised and delivered legal expertise to key business divisions to minimize liability exposure, minimize legal expenditures and reduce risk.
- Negotiated and drafted sales contracts and licensing agreements.
- Directed product recalls, advised human resources staff and provided general business

counsel.

Education Legal Practice (2000-present)

Focused on education issues and the legal needs of people with intellectual disabilities and their families, from special education, legal competency and estate planning. Lecturer in continuing education for lawyers in the area of special education.

Reported Cases:

In Re: Marlborough Public Schools and Dearborn Academy, BSEA No. 09-2610, establish requirement for school districts to provide services beyond high school.

In Re: Halima & Lincoln-Sudbury Public Schools, BSEA#03-3557, established requirement for transitions services for students receiving special education.

In Re: Framingham Public Schools, BSEA #01-0772, required a school district to provide an integrated pre-school setting for a student receiving special education services.

Academic

Research

Lurie Institute for Disability Policy, The Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University, Research Assistant, (May 2012 – Present)
(Mentor: Susan L. Parish, PhD)

Teaching

Teaching Assistant, The Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University, (January – May 2015). Policy, Advocacy and Community Organizations. Graduate course in overview of the processes to shape social policy.

Bentley University, Instructor, Legal Environment of Business (September 1987-May 1988) Undergraduate survey course on law.

Framingham State University, Instructor, Business Law. (September 1986-May 1987). Undergraduate survey course on business law.

Institute for Paralegal Studies, Instructor, Real Estate Law. (September 1985-September 1986). Technical course on all aspects of real estate transactions.

Institute for Paralegal Studies, Instructor, (September 1984-September 1985). Legal Research. Technical course on the mechanics of conducting legal research.

Publications

Sannicandro, Thomas, Parish, Susan, Son, Esther, Powell, Robyn. (2016) Health Care Changes for Children with Special Health Care Needs, 2005-2011 *Maternal and Child Health Journal*. DOI: 10.1007/s10995-016-2136-4

Sannicandro, Thomas, Parish, Susan, Fournier, Stephen, Mitra, Monika, Paiewonsky,

Maria. (2016) Employment, Income and SSI Effects of Postsecondary Education for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, *American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*. (Submitted)

Sannicandro, Thomas, Lieber, Scott. (2016) College and Opportunity for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (2016) *Exceptional Parent*. (Submitted)

Keynote Addresses

- 2014 Making Things Possible, Transitions Conference, Cotting School, Lexington, MA
- 2014 Transition Matters Conference, Marlborough, MA
- 2013 Transition Conference, Lesley University, Cambridge, MA
- 2012 State of the Art Conference on Postsecondary Education and Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities. George Mason University's Fairfax, VA
- 2010 Side Address, United Nations Conference, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, New York, NY

Honors

- Mass Advocates Standing Strong, Legislator of the Year 2014
- Metrowest Independent Living Center, Legislator of the Year 2014
- Massachusetts Federation for Children with Special Needs, Martha H. Ziegler Founders Award. 2013
- Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress, Leadership Award 2013
- Massachusetts Community Colleges Council, Legislator of the Year 2013
- The Association of Developmental Disabilities Providers, Legislator of the Year
- Massachusetts Advocates for Children, Legislator of the Year Award 2011
- Jewish Community Relations Council, Massachusetts Association of Jewish Federations, Legislative Achievement Award 2011
- ArcMass and The Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council, Legislator of the Year 2010
- Advocates, Inc., Heart of Gold Award 2009

Membership

New England Board of Higher Education (2011-present), Legislative Advisory Committee (2013-present). Engaged in sharing innovative methods for higher education policymaking in New England.

Complete College America, Massachusetts Team Member (2011-present). Applying research to practice in Massachusetts Higher Education Policy to find excellence and efficiencies in higher education.

Massachusetts Bar, (1982-present) Admitted to practice in all State and Federal Courts in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress, Honorary Board Member, (2012-present) State wide advocacy organization for people with Down syndrome.