

BETH HESS

Managing Director,
Policy

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Groundwork
OHIO

In her role as the Managing Director, Policy, Beth advances Groundwork's mission by working collaboratively with diverse stakeholders to drive forward bold policy change that strengthens children, families, and communities. Beth's work is focused on removing barriers to accessing quality early learning opportunities, improving child outcomes, and strengthening relationships between state and local agencies implementing early learning investments.

Beth brings passion and experience to Groundwork Ohio after nearly seven years serving children, educators, and families at the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). Most recently, Beth oversaw the immense growth of the state's literacy policy and program portfolio as the Assistant Director for Literacy. Under Beth's leadership, the state was awarded over \$70 million in competitive federal literacy funds and developed Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement, a comprehensive plan supporting children birth through high school. Prior to serving as Assistant Director, Beth was an Early Literacy Specialist and Third Grade Reading Guarantee Administrator.

Before overseeing the state's literacy programming, Beth resided in Dayton where she developed the foundation for her approach to equity. During this time, she worked

as a fellow at the Legal Aid of Western Ohio and upon passing the Ohio bar, as an attorney at the Dayton Family Law Center and as a Guardian ad Litem for Montgomery County. Beth's legal practice was dedicated to individuals living in poverty seeking equitable solutions to their often-inequitable circumstances. Beth left the practice of law to impact outcomes for children more directly by becoming an elementary school teacher. She taught English language arts and social studies in Dayton Public Schools.

Beth holds a law degree from the Ohio State University (OSU) Moritz College of Law, a master's in public policy and management from OSU's John Glenn College of Public Affairs, as well as a bachelor's of arts in social and behavioral science from OSU. Beth lives in central Ohio with her husband and two young children. When not advocating for Ohio's youngest learners, Beth enjoys traveling with her family and walking her dog on the Olentangy Trail.

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