

## **WALTER S. GILLIAM, PH.D.**

Walter S. Gilliam began serving as the executive director of the Buffett Early Childhood Institute in 2023, succeeding Founding Executive Director Samuel J. Meisels. Gilliam, who holds the Richard D. Holland Presidential Chair in Early Childhood Development, also holds a primary academic appointment at the Munroe-Meyer Institute at the University of Nebraska Medical Center at a rank of tenured professor.

Gilliam came to the Institute from Yale University, where he was Elizabeth Mears & House Jameson Professor of Child Psychiatry and Psychology at the Yale Child Study Center and director of Yale's Edward Zigler Center in Child Development and Social Policy.

He is board president of ZERO TO THREE, a past president of Child Care Aware of America, board treasurer for the Irving Harris Foundation, and a director for First Children's Finance, All Our Kin, and the National Workforce Registry Alliance, and a former senior advisor to the National Association for the Education of Young Children. In 2023, he was named a senior fellow working with the Bipartisan Policy Center's Early Childhood Initiative. Gilliam is co-recipient of the prestigious 2008 Grawemeyer Award in Education for the coauthored book, *A Vision for Universal Preschool Education*. His research involves early childhood education and intervention policy analysis (specifically how policies translate into effective services), ways to improve the quality of PreKindergarten and child care services, the impact of early childhood education programs on children's school readiness, and effective methods for reducing classroom behavior problems and preschool expulsion, as well as issues of COVID-19 transmission, vaccination, and health and safety promotion in early childhood settings. His scholarly writing addresses early childhood care and education programs, school readiness, and developmental assessment of young children.

Gilliam has led national analyses of state-funded PreKindergarten policies and mandates, how PreKindergarten programs are being implemented across the range of policy contexts, and the effectiveness of these programs at improving school readiness and educational achievement, as well as experimental and quasi-experimental studies on methods to improve early education quality. His work frequently has been covered in major national and international news outlets for print (e.g., New York Times, Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Chicago Tribune, LA Times), radio (e.g., NPR), and television (e.g., CNN Headline News, NBC TODAY Show, CBS Early Show, ABC Good Morning America, ABC World News Tonight, FOX News). Gilliam has actively provided consultation to state and federal decision-makers in the United States and other countries (such as the People's Republic of China and the United Arab Emirates) and frequently provides testimony and briefings before Congress on issues related to early care and education.

Gilliam is a graduate of the University of Kentucky, where he earned a master's degree in educational psychology and a Ph.D. in school psychology. He grew up in Pikeville, Kentucky.