

U. S. Department of Education, James Kvaal, Under Secretary – Biography

James Kvaal was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the Under Secretary of Education on September 14, 2021. Kvaal leads the Department's work on higher education, student financial aid, and career and adult education. He works to build an inclusive higher education system that helps all students graduate and go on to a better life. His work has led to millions of borrowers receiving student loan forgiveness, more affordable repayment plans for future students, and stronger safeguards against future unaffordable loans.

Earlier in his career, Kvaal served in the White House under President Clinton and President Obama, including more than three years as deputy domestic policy adviser to President Obama. He was the policy director on President Obama's 2012 campaign, a co-chair of the Biden-Harris campaign's education advisory committee, and the deputy lead of President Biden's Department of Education transition team.

Kvaal has also served as Deputy Under Secretary at the Department of Education and as a professional staff member in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. Immediately prior to joining the Biden Administration, Kvaal was president of The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS), a research and advocacy nonprofit dedicated to affordability and equity in higher education.

Kvaal taught at the University of Michigan's Ford School of Public Policy, and he graduated with honors from Stanford University and Harvard Law School.