

Jesús Jara is a proven leader with a lifelong passion for creating better opportunities for children through education. That passion has roots in his own childhood, having moved from Venezuela to Miami. As an English Language Learner, Jara faced many obstacles and challenges as he acclimated to the United States; however, his teachers were compassionate, inclusive and set high expectations for all students. They were a critical factor in his success.

Jara is the deputy superintendent for Orange County Public Schools. As deputy superintendent, he serves as the superintendent's designee and oversees five area superintendents and the division of Teaching and Learning including all programs from early childhood to adult education. Under his leadership, Orlando's achievement gap is narrowing faster than 90% of major cities across the United States, according to Education Quality Index. He also was the former superintendent and chief operations officer in Monroe County Public Schools, during his tenure, the team increased participation and performance in Advanced Placement and Algebra I and led the district to a ranking of 8th in the state of Florida, its highest ever.

As executive director of the College Board's Florida Partnership based in Tallahassee, Jara was responsible for coordinating College Board services to provide equity and access to minority and underrepresented students across the State of Florida. Jara also served as a liaison between the College Board, the governor's office, state department, district and schools.

After college, he joined Miami-Dade County Public Schools, he was a bilingual biology teacher and coach, before moving to Springfield, MA where he served as assistant principal and principal. As principal of the High School of Science and Technology, the school improved AP course offerings and improved graduation rate. In 2005, the high school was a semifinalist for a College Board Inspiration Award.

Jara has been a successful executive in the private sector as well as a school administrator and district leader in two states.