



Contact
Elle Mackenzie
Marketing & Communications Manager
(215) 676-7550 ext.116
amackenzie@felskids.org

For Immediate Release

Federation Early Learning Services Announces Taka Agawa as President and Chief Executive Officer

110-year-old nonprofit leader in early care & education looks to the future with new leadership

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 10, 2022 — On March 9, 2022, Federation Early Learning Services (FELS), a nonprofit leader in early care and education serving the Greater Philadelphia area, announced that former board member and current Interim President Taka Agawa had been promoted to President & CEO effective immediately. FELS welcomed Agawa as the Interim President & CEO in June 2021.

Board of Directors Chair Evan Segal has worked closely with Agawa to ensure a strong bond between the organization, its families, and its Board of Directors. “Taka [Agawa] has done an incredible job as Interim President & CEO of FELS over the past seven months, especially in the face of the unique challenges for our industry set forth by the COVID-19 pandemic,” Segal said. “I speak for the organization when I say that we are extremely pleased to remove the word ‘interim’ and formally name Taka as our new President & CEO. We are confident that FELS has a bright future ahead of us under his guidance and leadership.”

Prior to taking on the Interim President & CEO role last June, Agawa served as a member of the FELS Board of Directors for three years and chaired the Strategic Planning Committee, which has established an organization-wide strategic plan to move the needle forward for FELS. “Over the past seven months, we at FELS have made significant strides to strengthen our mission while navigating through the challenges posed by COVID-19,” Agawa said. “From implementing a teaching career pathway and improving staff compensation to standardizing the tools used to ensure quality care and education, we have started the evolution of FELS.”

“I couldn’t be more excited with the appointment of Taka as the next President & CEO,” said former FELS President & CEO Maddy Malis, who served with the organization for fifty years and continues to advocate for the early care and education industry. “When Taka joined the FELS Board in 2018, his presence was felt on many levels. He quickly offered his opinions and comfortably raised questions that brought new perspectives to consider. His passion for high-quality early childhood education was evident, and his connection to FELS’ mission was instantaneous.”

Agawa will continue to head the organization and expresses his excitement for the future of FELS. “I joined FELS three years ago because of my passionate belief in the importance of early childhood care and education,” Agawa said. “I proudly served the FELS community as a board member and am looking forward to continuing my service in this profound capacity.”



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Agawa is a proud father of four children and a graduate of Carnegie Mellon's Tepper School of Business. Previously, Agawa worked as a management consultant where he provided advisory services to banks in New York and held leadership positions in various early-stage startups.

About FELS: Federation Early Learning Services (FELS) is a leading early care and education nonprofit organization serving children and families from diverse backgrounds across the Greater Philadelphia area.

FELS Media Contact: Elle Mackenzie, Marketing & Communications Manager –
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