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Sandra L. Dika was born in Spirit River, Alberta, Canada, on December 6, 1970. Ms. Dika obtained her Bachelor of Education in Elementary Education with Distinction at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada in 1993. Immediately following, she obtained her Master of Science degree in Family Life Education from the University of Alberta in 1996, where she was also a graduate research assistant and graduate student. Ms. Dika obtained professional experience in consulting related to family and educational issues in Edmonton and Toronto (Canada) during the period from May 1996 to May 1999.

Ms. Dika enrolled in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) in June of 1999 to pursue a doctoral degree in Educational Research and Evaluation. During her studies, she participated in several research and consulting projects and presented papers at national and international educational research conferences. In the last year of her studies, from August 2002 to May 2003, she worked as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Educational Research and Evaluation at Virginia Tech.