

ReOpen - ReConnect - ReClaim

Ensuring Equitable Learning Environments for All Students



July 29, 2021

9:30 am – 10:50 am

Opening Plenary Session



Director's Welcome

Dr. Paula Johnson

Director, IDRA EAC-South
IDRA

Welcome to the ReOpen – ReConnect – ReClaim – Ensuring Equitable Learning Environments for All Students – Virtual Convening. Dr. Johnson will provide an overview of the event.



Ditching Deficit Views and Other Equity Detours, Embracing Structural Views and Other Important Equity Principles, Part 1

Dr. Paul Gorski

Founder/Lead Equity Specialist
Equity Literacy Institute

In my experience, the biggest equity barriers in schools often are not the rabid racists or loud heterosexists, but rather the “diversity”-minded educators who embrace “good intention” intercultural or multicultural efforts that recreate the inequity we ought to be eliminating. In these sessions I will describe several efforts, what I call “equity detours.” These include the deficit ideology detour and pacing for privilege detour.

I will move us beyond good intentions by talking about a series of basic equity principles that can help us avoid the detours and maximize the transformative potential of our equity commitments.

Our series of basic equity principles include the fix injustice, not kids principle and the prioritization principle. These principles make up the core of the equity literacy framework.



Equitable Learning for All Students

Ms. Norma V. Cantu, J.D.

Chair, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
and Visiting Professor of Law and Education, University of Texas at Austin

Ms. Cantu will share her vision for educational civil rights in this new era and insights informed by her vast and varied experiences as a law professor, former MALDEF regional counsel, Assistant Secretary of Education, member of the Biden transition team, and current chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

11:00 am – 11:50 am

Equity Power Break-out Sessions



Strand 1: Authentic Family & Community Engagement & Advocacy

Digital Equity and Inclusion - A Modern-Day Civil Right

Mr. Thomas Marshall III

Education Policy Fellow
IDRA



Ms. Christina Quintanilla-Muñoz

Education Policy Fellow
IDRA



Ms. Michelle Vega

Chief Technology Strategist
IDRA

One in four people in this country do not have access to the Internet in their homes. Among those who are unable to access online networks, 12 million people live in rural areas while another 50 million live in urban areas. Access to technology and broadband Internet can have profound implications on an individual's educational and economic success. During this session, we will explore digital equity and why it is considered by many to be a civil rights issue. We will discuss the homework gap, student engagement during COVID-19, broadband plans in your state, and how digital equity audits can assist in determining your districts digital readiness.



Strand 2: Leading with Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Our Journey to Becoming an Antiracist School Division

Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr.

Superintendent
Alexandria City Public Schools



Ms. Kennetra Wood

Executive Director of Equity & Alternative Programs
Alexandria City Public Schools

Alexandria City Public Schools, guided by our Strategic Plan 2025: Equity for All, has worked to move through the equity continuum by focusing on cultural competence and culturally responsive teaching, racial equity and anti-racism work. We are on a journey to becoming an anti-racist school division focused on educating and equipping our division leaders and staff through training, resources and the tools to create equitable learning environments for each of our students.



Strand 3: Reopening with Welcoming & Inclusive Schools - Response to COVID-19

Resilience Above Trauma During COVID-19

Dr. Da'Mond T Holt

National Trauma Expert
Metropolitan State University of Denver Western Educational Equity Assistance Center (WEEAC)

This presentation will address the issues of trauma, secondary trauma, and the importance of self-care management among students and staff in the education system. We will discuss the importance of having a trauma-informed and trauma-responsive framework, learning the different types of trauma, trauma's impact on the brain, nervous system, memory, genes and body. We will conclude with understanding best practices to create healing and loving spaces in the classroom to help improve academics and behavior among students and mental wellness among staff.



Strand 4: Ethnic & Cultural Studies

Building a SET Curriculum for Ethnic Studies: Incorporating Scholarship, Experiential Learning and Travel

Dr. Theodora Regina Berry

Vice Provost for Student Learning and Academic Success and Dean
University of Central Florida

This session will begin with an introduction to notions of curriculum to include definitions and perspectives and definitions and understandings of ethnic studies. Using Herbert Spencer's (1884) questions regarding curriculum, the Dr. Berry will offer guidelines toward building a K-12 ethnic studies curriculum that incorporates the most current and comprehensive interdisciplinary knowledge and research (scholarship) on ethnic studies, service-learning and career-oriented activities with ethnic studies (experiential learning), and the ways in which travel opportunities can be integrated into a curriculum for ethnic studies.



Strand 5: Increasing Student Engagement

Demystifying Critical Pedagogies: Where Practice Meets Theory

Dr. Stacy C. Johnson

Lecturer, Instructional Coach
An Eagle's Wing Academic Support Services
University of Texas at San Antonio

Critical pedagogies continue to gain popularity across the landscape of U.S. education. Conceptually, educators often find the rationale and utility of critical pedagogies to be enlightening as they strive to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of their students. The complexity of theories around curricular and pedagogical equity and inclusiveness can be overwhelming but, even more daunting is the transition from theory to practice. This session will provide educators with strategies to employ critical pedagogies successfully within their instructional practice. We will focus specifically on culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive pedagogy while we clarify the definition of critical pedagogy, examine typical areas of mis-applications in practice, and example the types of instructional adjustments that successfully satisfy all three.

Noon – 1:20 pm

Gallery Walk: IDRA Services for Educators



Education CAFEs Q&A

Mr. Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.

IDRA Family Engagement Coordinator



Mr. Terrence Wilson, J.D.

IDRA Regional Policy and Community Engagement Director

IDRA staff will be available to answer questions about IDRA's unique approach to family leadership, the Education CAFE, which is an innovation for school-family-community collaboration.

Emergent Bilingual Supports

Mr. Hector Bojorquez

IDRA Director of Operations and Educational Practice



IDRA provides assistance to schools to develop, assess and implement emergent bilingual pedagogy, practices and policies. Get information about the range of emergent bilingual services IDRA offers.

Equity Audits Technical Assistance

Dr. Paula Johnson

Director, IDRA EAC-South



Get info on the purpose, measures and outcomes of an equity audit. See examples of how the information from an audit can help you address education inequities and build more equity-focused, culturally-sustaining school environments.

Data Walks & Dashboards

Dr. Bricio Vasquez

IDRA Education Data Scientist



IDRA can support you in making sense of all your student data. We offer a range of services like data analysis, data visualization and metric tracking. Our research team has decades of experience conducting original education research and can assist you with your data and research needs.

Principal Leadership

Dr. Nilka Avilés

IDRA Senior Education Associate



See how IDRA's professional development, coaching and mentoring can help strengthen leadership skills of your principals and leadership teams to begin a new era of change marked by systemic, structural and instructional transformations.

1:30 pm – 2:20 pm

Equity Power Break-out Sessions



Strand 1: Authentic Family & Community Engagement & Advocacy

Broadening Pathways to STEM

Dr. Stephanie Garcia

STEM and Gender Equity Education Specialist
IDRA



Mr. Hector Bojorquez

Director of Operations and Educational Practice
IDRA

Efforts to broaden participation in STEM too often concentrate only on students of color who are already interested in STEM. This session will show examples of how educators can reach all students of color regardless of prior achievement or STEM interest.



Strand 2: Leading with Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

College Readiness for All in the Pandemic Era

Dr. Daniel King

Owner & CEO, Learning Innovation, Transformation, LLC
PossAble Dream Foundation

College readiness and success is important for all students and should not fall by the wayside because of concerns over learning losses. This session will highlight proven practices from a district in South Texas that was transformed into a national success story.



Strand 3: Reopening with Welcoming & Inclusive Schools - Response to COVID-19

Establishing and Maintaining Equitable, Restorative Communities

Ms. Paige Duggins-Clay, J.D.

Attorney
Husch Blackwell LLP

In this interactive session, attendees will learn the basic laws and policies underlying school and educator responsibilities to ensure equity in education, including Title IX, Title VI, and the ADA/Section 504. We will discuss how to move beyond mere compliance and build welcoming, equitable communities, including how to incorporate and center restorative justice practices into responses to misconduct



Strand 4: Ethnic & Cultural Studies

Developing Racial Literacy for Teaching Ethnic Studies

Dr. Altheria Caldera

Education Policy Fellow
IDRA

This session is designed for teachers and teacher leaders of ethnic studies courses who want to develop pedagogical expertise in teaching these courses. In order to teach courses that center race/ethnicity, teachers need to develop their racial literacy, defined as the ability to examine the existence and effects of race and racism. Participants will learn pitfalls to avoid and best practices to employ

when facilitating discussion about race/ethnicity in ethnic studies courses. The session will also include time for participants to ask questions and solicit feedback regarding issues they've face and concerns they have about teaching ethnic studies.



Strand 5: Increasing Student Engagement

Reimagining Student Engagement: Revamping School Policy and Practice and Fostering Student Advocacy

Mr. Thomas Marshall
Education Policy Fellow
IDRA



Ms. Christina Quintanilla-Muñoz
Education Policy Fellow
IDRA



Ms. Melivia Mujica
Executive Intern – Educational Practice
IDRA

The U.S. public school system lost more than 1.4 million students in the 2020-21 school year. The COVID-19 pandemic caused schools to make significant adjustments to the ways they facilitated learning and engaged with students and their families. During this session, we will explore how schools can reimagine their student and family engagements students return this fall to rebuild and foster authentic relationships between campus leadership, teachers, students and families while helping to reinforce trust and positive family attitudes about students' education and school-family engagement.

2:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Closing Session & Presentation



Culturally Responsive School Leadership

Dr. Muhammad Khalifa
Professor of Educational Administration & Executive; Director of Urban and Rural Initiatives
Ohio State University

In this lecture, Dr. Khalifa explores three basic premises: first, that a full-fledged and nuanced understanding of “cultural responsiveness” is essential to successful school leadership; second, that cultural responsiveness will not flourish and succeed in schools without sustained efforts by school leaders to define and promote it; and finally, that culturally responsive school leadership comprises a number of crucial leadership behaviors, which include critical self-reflection; the development of culturally responsive teachers; the promotion of inclusive, anti-oppressive school environments; and engagement with students’ indigenous community contexts.

In this lecture, Dr. Khalifa goes into depth on the portion of the book that focuses on Critical Self-Reflection. Based on ethnographic research of a culturally responsive school principal who exemplifies the practices and behaviors of culturally responsive school leadership, the lecture provides educators with pedagogy and strategies for immediate implementation. The lecture ends by

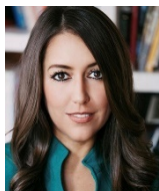
highlighting a central theme of community and how community-based knowledge should be positioned in all aspects of schooling. We anchor the lecture with several activities that get leaders to begin thinking about Culturally Responsive School Leadership.

Up to 24 hours of continuing professional development credit is available for participation in the IDRA EAC-*South* convening. To receive your credit...

1. You must participate through your own log-in; and
2. You must complete the final event evaluation that will be sent to all participants.

July 30, 2021

9:30 am – 10:50 am **Opening Session and Keynote**



President's Welcome

Ms. Celina Moreno, J.D.

President & CEO
IDRA

Welcome back to the ReOpen – ReConnect – ReClaim – Ensuring Equitable Learning Environments for All Students – Virtual Convening.



Ditching Deficit Views and Other Equity Detours, Embracing Structural Views and Other Important Equity Principles, Part 2

Dr. Paul Gorski

Founder/Lead Equity Specialist
Equity Literacy Institute



Resilience Above Trauma During COVID-19

Dr. Da'Mond T Holt

National Trauma Expert
Metropolitan State University of Denver Western Educational Equity Assistance Center (WEEAC)

11:00 am – 11:50 am **Equity Power Break-out Sessions**



Strand 1: Authentic Family & Community Engagement & Advocacy

A Model for Family Engagement & Advocacy

Ms. Araceli García

Education Policy Fellow
IDRA

This session will give participants an understanding of the Family Advocates for Young English Learners (FAYEL) program developed by IDRA to provide families of emergent bilingual students with the tools necessary to impact state level education policies. FAYEL program participants were able to support the passage of four laws that advance educational opportunities for emergent bilingual students in Texas by advocating directly with the Texas State Legislature. The knowledge and skills acquired by FAYEL families are easily transferable to local advocacy settings, and we believe they serve as a strong model for family engagement and advocacy.



Strand 2: Leading with Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Queer Students and Schools: Building Spaces of Belonging

Ms. Irene Gómez, Ed.M.
 Research Engagement Strategist
 IDRA

On the heels of Pride Month, this session will support educators and school leaders in creating and sustaining initiatives that can help queer students thrive year-round. Together, we will explore several foundational frameworks, such as queer theory, intersectionality and healing-centered engagement, to analyze K-12 policies and practices that affect the well-being of LGBTQ students. This session will provide participants with nuanced building blocks that extend beyond pronouns in order to co-construct safe and welcoming schools with queer students.



Strand 3: Reopening with Welcoming & Inclusive Schools - Response to COVID-19

Salvation vs. Community

Dr. Vonnetta L. West
 Principal Owner
 Go West Consulting LLC

We are One. Often, people position their help as an opportunity to save. What if we gave and served with an understanding that those we serve and give to are a part of us? This session shifts mentality from “save the poor people” to “we are all ours.” Important session for preparing people to serve in communities that they are placed in for short periods or terms of service. Excellent for community service organizations and those who coordinate service initiatives for companies and organizations.



Strand 4: Ethnic & Cultural Studies

Approaches to Building Culturally Sustaining Educational Environments through Ethnic Studies

Mr. Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.
 Family Engagement Coordinator
 IDRA



Mr. Terrence Wilson, J.D.
 Regional Policy and Community Engagement Director
 IDRA

Ethnic studies courses have many benefits, such as social-emotional learning and college, career and community readiness, especially when co-constructed with families and community organizations. This session will have a facilitated conversation about how to establish cultural and ethnic studies courses and programming in your school district including teaching of content-specific courses as well as tools educators can use to incorporate cultural sustainability into any curriculum.



Strand 5: Increasing Student Engagement

Centering Students' Voices in Justice-Centered Computing Education

Dr. Jean J. Ryoo

Director of Research

UCLA Computer Science Equity Project

This session explores the topic of justice-centered computing education from the perspective of high school computer science students coming from communities historically underrepresented in the field. Through the students' voices, we will learn about how computing education can connect to students' sense of identity and agency, and why that matters. Key considerations for how this research can inform pedagogical practice will be shared.

Noon – 1:20 pm

Gallery Walk: IDRA Services for Educators

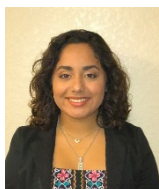


LGBTQ Resources

Dr. Bricio Vasquez

IDRA Education Data Scientist

LGBTQ students and parents increasingly face challenges from schools, peers, and the broader community. This gallery walk will review critical resources for LGBTQ students and parents.



Student Advocacy

Ms. Melivia Mujica

IDRA Executive Intern – Educational Practice



Michelle Nguyen

IDRA Executive Intern – Educational Practice

Students are the heart of advocacy. Come chat with two student activists about the importance of including young voices in the conversation and how educational equity can be advanced through empowering those who are actually in the classroom.



Equity Audits and Technical Assistance

Dr. Paula Johnson

Director, IDRA EAC-South

Get info on the purpose, measures and outcomes of an equity audit. See examples of how the information from an audit can help you address education inequities and build more equity-focused, culturally-sustaining school environments.



Digital Equity

Ms. Michelle Vega

IDRA Chief Technology Strategist

Access to technology and broadband Internet can have profound implications on an individual's educational and economic success. Learn more about digital equity, digital equity audits and the statistical data for each of the IDRA EAC-South states.



IDRA Valued Youth Partnership

Dr. Nilka Avilés

IDRA Senior Education Associate

The IDRA Valued Youth Partnership has demonstrated tremendous success helping students focus on their education while helping schools focus on students with the highest need of support. Get an overview of the program, its strong research base and steps to bring the program to your school.

1:30 pm – 2:20 pm

Equity Power Break-out Sessions



Strand 1: Authentic Family & Community Engagement & Advocacy

Authentic Family Leadership in Post-Pandemic Recovery

Mr. Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.

Family Engagement Coordinator
IDRA



Mr. Terrence Wilson, J.D.

Regional Policy and Community Engagement Director
IDRA

This session will discuss authentic family leadership in education and the key elements of IDRA's family leadership in education program, the IDRA Education CAFE, which is an innovation for school-family-community collaboration. Education CAFEs are based in a community organization rather than in a single school, and their sole purpose is to collaborate with schools to improve the success of students in the community.



Strand 2: Leading with Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Building Equitable Learning Environments for Emergent Bilinguals

Mr. José A. Velázquez, M.Ed.

Director, Academic Instruction & School Support
Texas Education Service Center – Region 19

Asset-based approaches to teaching emergent bilingual students includes creating a school culture that welcomes the linguistic and cultural resources within multilingual learners. We will discuss how to build an inclusive equitable learning environment highlighting opportunities emergent bilinguals bring.



Strand 3: Reopening with Welcoming & Inclusive Schools - Response to COVID-19

Creating Cultures of Honor

Dr. Vonnetta L. West

Principal Owner
Go West Consulting LLC

We can cultivate spaces and paradigms of engagement in which honor is pervasive and not dependent on hierarchy. This session focuses on how to make those spaces and paradigms realities and on the tangible, measurable and relational outcomes of doing so.



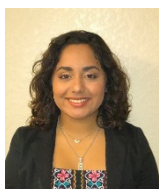
Strand 4: Ethnic & Cultural Studies

Mexican American Studies – Recentering Student Identities and Well-being

Dr. Lilliana Patricia Saldaña

Associate Professor of Mexican American Studies
University of Texas at San Antonio

This session will focus on Mexican American Studies as a humanizing practice for teachers, students and the communities they both serve. The session will start with an overview its history, principles and practices and the ways that educators can recenter their students in the classroom through a curriculum that honors and dignifies their history, realities and cultural wealth.



Strand 5: Increasing Student Engagement

The Power of Student Advocacy

Ms. Melivia Mujica

Executive Intern – Educational Practice
IDRA



Michelle Nguyen

Executive Intern – Educational Practice
IDRA

We will focus on the power of student advocacy and what it can provide. We will discuss how to create a space for students to bring in input to create a safe space in an educational space. See how to increase student engagement and student voice from the experience of former students who pushed for mental health supports from IDRA's work with student advocates.

2:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Closing Session & Presentation

Ditching Deficit Views and Other Equity Detours, Embracing Structural Views and Other Important Equity Principles, Part 3

Dr. Paul Gorski

Founder/Lead Equity Specialist
Equity Literacy Institute



IDRA EAC-South

Helping school districts protect students' civil rights in public schools

Race
Equity

Sex &
Gender
Equity

National
Origin
Equity

Religion
Equity

www.idraeacsouth.org



Speaker Profiles

Dr. Nilka Avilés

Nilka Avilés, Ed.D., is an IDRA senior education associate focusing on teacher professional development in college readiness and science, particularly, in serving emergent bilingual (English learner) students. She also focuses on principal leadership to improve preparation and effectiveness of principals and other school leaders to support high-poverty, low-performing schools to improve achievement of high need students.

Dr. Avilés directs the IDRA Reenergizing Leadership to Achieve Greater Student Success (RLSS) project, funded by the U.S. Department of Education. This project prepares university graduate master teachers to become instructional transformational school leaders. She coaches current principals and school leadership teams to foster and leverage instruction schoolwide using promising asset-based practices to strengthen student learning and build school-community collaboration.

Dr. Avilés directed IDRA's School TurnAround and Reenergizing for Success (STAARS) Leaders project, funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The project enhanced and implemented a leadership pipeline that selected, prepared, placed, supported, and retained school leaders and transformation teams for schools that were eligible to receive a school improvement grant.

Dr. Avilés is an adjunct professor for the College of Education and Human Development Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department at the University of Texas at San Antonio and is a leadership coach for the Trinity Tomorrow's Leaders Program for the College of Education Educational Leadership Department at Trinity University.
<https://www.idra.org/staff/nilka-aviles-ed-d>

Dr. Theodora Regina Berry

Dr. Theodora Regina Berry serves as the University of Central Florida's Vice Provost for Student Learning and Academic Success and Dean of the College of Undergraduate Studies. She spearheads efforts to offer students in her college robust programs while supporting university-wide initiatives to advance undergraduate education, take learning beyond the classroom, and promote greater student academic success. Additionally, Dr. Berry leads DirectConnect to UCF, a nationally recognized transfer program that guarantees admission to students who have earned an associate degree or articulated degree from one of six partner state colleges.

Dr. Berry joins the University of Central Florida after serving as Professor and Chair, Department of African American Studies in the College of Social Sciences at San Jose State University. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Berry served as Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Director, Graduate Recruitment and Engagement in The Graduate School at The University of Texas at San Antonio. Prior to her appointment to the Graduate School, Dr. Berry served as Director of the African American Studies Program (2014-2016) and the Graduate Advisor of Record for the PhD in

Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching program (2014-2016).

Upon completion of her degree, Theodora Berry completed a three-year postdoctoral research fellowship at the University of Illinois at Chicago awarded by the American Educational Research Association (AERA). Dr. Berry's scholarship is centered in curriculum studies/curriculum theory, critical race feminism, and qualitative research methodology (auto-ethnography, ethnography, historical/archival, and narrative).

Mr. Hector Bojorquez

Mr. Bojorquez is IDRA director of operations and educational practice. He recently served as co-director of the IDRA EAC-South, which builds bridges among administrators, teachers, parents, students and community members so that all stakeholders can find that common higher ground where all students will benefit regardless of race, sex or national origin. He is co-director of IDRA's Re-energizing Leadership to Achieve Greater Student Success project that is transforming instruction schoolwide using promising practices to strengthen student learning and build school-community collaboration.

In 2017, Mr. Bojorquez directed IDRA's Ready Texas project, funded by the Greater Texas Foundation to develop a study of the implementation of HB5 in Texas to provide education stakeholders critical and timely information about the implications of recent curriculum changes in the state on the college and career readiness of graduates.

He wrote IDRA's report, *College Bound and Determined*, profiling what happens when a school district raises expectations for students instead of lowering them. He examined data and conducted interviews with Pharr-San Juan Alamo ISD superintendent Dr. King, school principals, teachers, counselors and students to explore how PSJA has achieved the kind of success that it has.

Mr. Bojorquez has his bachelor's degree in English literature from the University of Texas at Austin and his certification in elementary education: pre-kindergarten through sixth grade, bilingual education and English as a second language.
<https://www.idra.org/staff/hector-bojorquez>

Dr. Altheria Caldera

Dr. Altheria Caldera is a teacher educator and scholar activist who advances educational equity in linguistic justice, Black girls and school discipline, and anti-racist pedagogies. She will join Howard University as Assistant Professor of Reading and Language Arts this fall.

The Alabama native began her professional career as a middle school English teacher. As an IDRA Education Policy Fellow, Altheria is identifying and pursuing advocacy opportunities to expand access to and ensure success in postsecondary education spaces, particularly for students of color.

As a teacher educator for the last four years, she aims to equip her students with the knowledge necessary to effectively teach students of color in P-12 schools. Through her research and scholarship, she aims to promote access and equity for all minoritized students in academic institutions that span the P-16 spectrum. Altheria earned her Ph.D. in education studies from Texas Christian University in Fort Worth and is looking forward to learning how to apply her classroom knowledge to state-level advocacy work.
<https://www.idra.org/idra-fellows>

Ms. Norma V. Cantú, J.D.

Norma Cantú, J.D., brings exceptional practical and policymaking experience to her new joint appointment in the Education and Law Schools at the University of Texas. For eight years, she served as the Assistant Secretary of Education for Civil Rights in the Clinton Administration, where she oversaw a staff of approximately 850 in implementing governmental policy for civil rights in U.S. education. Within the first two years, her office increased the number of illegal discrimination complaints resolved by 20%. More than a third of the cases were disposed of without adversarial proceedings based on voluntary corrective action. By her final year in office, the number of cases resolved each year had risen almost another 20%.

Prior to her service as the nation's chief civil rights enforcer in the educational arena, Professor Cantú worked for 14 years as regional counsel and education director of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). In that capacity, she litigated scores of important cases affecting educational funding, disability rights, student disciplinary policies, access to special services for English-language learners, and racially hostile environments.

Professor Cantú graduated summa cum laude from the University of Texas-Pan American at the age of 19, taught high school English, and then enrolled at Harvard Law School, where she graduated at the age of 22.
<https://law.utexas.edu/faculty/norma-v-cantu>

Ms. Paige Duggins-Clay, J.D.

As an education law attorney, Ms. Paige combines her passion for education with her desire to shape laws and challenge unjust ones that impact students of all ages. Her practice includes litigation, investigations, training and compliance with state and federal laws, with a focus on equity issues and organizational response to misconduct. Recognizing the complicated ways misconduct impacts individuals and communities, she has trained as a restorative-justice practitioner. In addition, Paige helps educational institutions fulfill their missions by providing guidance on day-to-day operations, including student affairs, accreditation and labor and employment issues.

Prior to joining Husch Blackwell, Ms. Paige worked as a legislative aide and policy analyst to Texas State Senator Judith Zaffirini, where she advised on a variety of issues, including school finance and school-to-prison pipeline issues. Paige also served fellowships for

prominent civil rights organizations, including the Texas Civil Rights Project and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). Her work as a law clerk for Justice Jeff Boyd on the Texas Supreme Court and as an intern for Judge Lee Yeakel in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas further honed her legal, research and writing skills. Paige was recently named an “Up and Coming Lawyer” by the Austin Black Business Journal.

<https://www.huschblackwell.com/professionals/paige-duggins-clay>

Ms. Araceli García

Araceli Garcia is an IDRA Education Policy Fellow. She is identifying and pursuing advocacy opportunities that ensure equitable and excellent schools for emergent bilingual and immigrant students. She grew up on the South Side of San Antonio and is the daughter and granddaughter of Mexican immigrants. As the culmination of her hard work and the sacrifices of her family, Araceli graduated from Stanford with a bachelor's degree in Chicana/Latinx studies and a minor in education. Araceli is the first person in her family to attend college, and she has held several leadership positions within the Stanford University Latinx community, where she found a home away from home. In addition to her studies, Araceli has worked alongside detained immigrants fighting for their right to seek asylum. She plans to pursue a law degree.

<https://www.idra.org/idra-fellows>

Dr. Stephanie Garcia

Stephanie Garcia, Ph.D., is IDRA's STEM and gender equity education specialist with more than 10 years of experience in STEM education as a middle school science teacher, university instructor and graduate research assistant in engineering education. She provides professional development and technical assistance to schools across the nation on effective STEM education for all students. She designs and delivers interactive training that provides teachers tools for increasing student achievement in STEM areas. She directs IDRA's Texas Chief Science Officer program and IDRA's VisionCoders™ project.

Dr. Garcia earned her doctor of philosophy in interdisciplinary learning and teaching with a concentration in curriculum and instruction from the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). She also earned a master of arts in education and bachelor of arts in interdisciplinary studies with a concentration in grades 4-8 math and science from UTSA. She holds a teaching certification for grades 4-8 in math and science, as well as a generalist certification for grades EC-6. Dr. Garcia serves as the lead of the Alamo STEM Ecosystem, a county-wide community of practice with a commitment to provide STEM/STEAM experiences for all students with a focus on students traditionally underrepresented in STEM/STEAM.

Her areas of research have included equity frameworks in STEM education, specifically those centered on inquiry and inclusivity; critical race theory and LatCrit approaches in STEM education; critical and engaged pedagogy in STEM curriculum and instruction; STEM curriculum development and teacher education; and youth leadership through family and community engagement. Dr. Garcia has served

as a public school science teacher, department chair and mentor for new teachers in the San Antonio Independent School District. Leveraging her teaching experiences and master's degree, she began as a lecturer for graduate and undergraduate courses at UTSA. It is within this role, she trained in-service and pre-service teachers to implement equitable teaching and learning practices within STEM curriculum and instruction.

<https://www.idra.org/staff/stephanie-garcia-ph-d>

Irene Gómez, Ed.M.

Irene Gómez, Ed.M., is an IDRA research engagement strategist. At the University of Texas, she collaborated closely with immigrant, refugee and asylee communities; Title I schools; and first-in-family college students as a bilingual writing coach and volunteer coordinator. These relationships, and her own experience as a child of immigrants, drove her motivation to impact education policy and research. As a research assistant for three university-affiliated centers, Ms. Gómez contributed to and conducted mixed method studies on ethnic and racial equity measures in education.

After graduating from the University of Texas with a bachelor's in sociology, Ms. Gómez's time as a congressional fellow and education professional deepened her commitment to supporting critically conscious and culturally-sustaining classrooms. Some of her major projects included designing and evaluating a federal assessment of Every Student Succeeds Act state report cards, co-authoring the Children's Defense Fund-Texas' 2019 civic engagement report, and revamping research-informed curriculum for the youth organization, Vocal Justice.

Ms. Gómez first joined the IDRA team as a research fellow while completing her master's degree at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. During her fellowship and graduate studies, she worked to center Black communities in K-12 Mexican American and Latino Studies and across curricula. As a full-time staff member, Ms. Gómez is excited to continue supporting young people through student-led and -centered research to foster the collective futures they dream of.

<https://www.idra.org/staff/irene-gomez-ed-m>

Dr. Paul Gorski

Dr. Paul Gorski is an educator, facilitator and trainer helping community organizations and schools transcend “celebrating diversity” and commit to building equitable and just learning, working, and living environments.

Dr. Gorski is the founder of the Equity Literacy Institute and EdChange. He has more than 20 years of experience helping educators, nonprofit workers, and others strengthen their equity efforts. He has worked with educators in 48 states and a dozen countries.

Paul has published more than 70 articles and has written, co-written, or co-edited twelve books on various aspects of educational equity, including *Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty: Strategies for Erasing the Opportunity Gap* and *Case Studies on Diversity and Social Justice Education* (with Seema Pothini). He is the author of the Multicultural Pavilion, an online

compendium of free resources for educators. Paul earned a PhD in educational evaluation at the University of Virginia. He was a teacher educator at several universities for 15 years. <https://www.paulgorski.org/about-paul-gorski>

Dr. Da'Mond T. Holt

Dr. Da'Mond Holt trains schools on trauma-informed care, trauma responsive practices, and trauma sensitive schools for school districts, departments of education and law enforcement agencies to promote racial equity, culturally responsive awareness and social emotional support to students who struggle with aggressive behavior and with academic deficiency.

He is a certified traumatologist and national trauma expert for the Metropolitan State University of Denver WEEAC. He also is a certified mental health, trauma crisis and bullying prevention specialist through the American School Counselor's Association, certified trauma practitioner through PESI and licensed restorative practice trainer through IIPR. My work and research are focused on how chronic stress, complex trauma, and PTSD can have long-term neurological effects and can impair brain development and negatively impact cognitive capacities on children and adolescents. He holds additional certifications in early intervention traumatology, depression counseling, mindfulness, cognitive behavioral therapy, addictions counseling, grief and bereavement, and psychotherapy. <http://www.higherground.me/damond-bio>

Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr.

Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr. is a Class of '95 graduate of T.C. Williams High School. He attended Patrick Henry and James K. Polk Elementary Schools, Mount Vernon Community School, and William Ramsay Elementary School during his elementary years, followed by Francis C. Hammond Middle School.

As a student, he was a member of the high school track and field team, the Future Business Leaders of America Club and was senior class first vice president at T.C. Williams High School, and Prom King!

Prior to becoming a superintendent, Dr. Hutchings was a director of pre-K-12 initiatives and director of middle school programs with ACPS, where he launched the candidacy phase of the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, which has since been implemented at Jefferson-Houston School, and implemented the new middle school curricula in ACPS. Between 2013 and 2018, he was Superintendent of Schools of Shaker Heights Schools, located in a suburb of Cleveland, Ohio. He returned to ACPS as superintendent in July 2018.

Dr. Hutchings holds a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies from Old Dominion University, a master's in educational leadership from George Mason University and a doctorate in educational policy, planning and leadership from the College of William and Mary. He and his wife Cheryl have two children. <https://www.acps.k12.va.us/domain/43>

Dr. Paula Johnson

Dr. Paula Johnson directs the IDRA EAC-South, spearheading its work in assisting states

and school districts protect students' civil rights. She leads the center's technical assistance and professional development pertaining to diversity, cultural competency and disproportional disciplinary actions against students of color.

She is an education associate at IDRA with more than 20 years of experience developing educational programs and integrating the use of instructional technology into classrooms. She earned her doctorate in the Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching program at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Her research foci include: (1) curriculum and instruction related to females and minorities in math and science, (2) equity in education, and (3) learner identity.

She has served public schools systems in two of Texas' largest school districts as a classroom teacher, department chair, academic coach and district curriculum specialist for mathematics. She has designed and developed several technology-infused math intervention programs for students struggling to master competencies required to meet expectations on state assessments. Similarly, she continues to create and deliver professional training on mathematics instruction, assessment and curriculum standards, fostering positive student-teacher relationships, technology, student engagement, and differentiated instruction. <https://www.idra.org/staff/paula-johnson>

Dr. Stacy C. Johnson

Stacy Johnson is a retired K-12 classroom teacher who now works with pre-service and in-service teachers as a lecturer and an instructional coach at the University of Texas San Antonio. Dr. Johnson is also a member of the Pitt Alumni Association (PAA) Equity and Diversity Task Force. She holds a master's of art in teaching from the University of Pittsburgh and a Ph.D. in interdisciplinary learning and teaching with a cognate in curriculum and instruction from the University of Texas San Antonio. Her research focuses on decolonizing U.S. education in support of democratic schooling and social justice in education. She served as an instructional coach under a research grant with The University of Texas San Antonio and has presented at the annual conferences for the American Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies, Curriculum & Pedagogy Group, the American Educational Studies Association and Advancing Improvement in Education. Her published works include U.S. education and the persistence of slavery, Accidentally relevant, Afrocentricity – Student Voices on African American Identity in Multicultural Education Reform, Teachers as emancipators and Why Racism Endures. <http://www.eagleswingacademic.com/>

Dr. Muhammad Khalifa

Dr. Muhammad Khalifa is a professor of Educational Administration at The Ohio State University. His research examines how urban school leaders enact culturally responsive leadership and anti-oppressive schooling practices. He has written extensively on minoritized student identities in school, how schools can become liberatory spaces for youth, and how schools can begin to recognize and value the ancestral knowledges in and

around schools. In addition to his previous work as an urban educator in Detroit, he has worked with education ministers in Africa and Asia and has helped them craft educational goals and reforms.

He is the author of the top-selling book, *Culturally Responsive School Leadership* (Harvard Education Press, 2018) and has also recently published in the highest-ranked education journals, including *Review of Educational Research*, *Teachers College Record*, *QSE*, *Urban Review*, *Educational Administration Quarterly*, and *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, to name a few.

Dr. Khalifa has developed an advanced online "equity audit" tool for use in U.S. schools – a researched-based way to reduce achievement and discipline disparities in school (ajusted.org). And through the Culturally Responsive School Leadership Institute, he and colleagues have developed academies and learning modules that will help schools and leaders to become culturally responsive (crsl.org).

Dr. Daniel P. King

Dr. Daniel P. King is the owner & CEO of Learning Innovation, Transformation, LLC, and the PossAble Dream Foundation. A long-time public school superintendent, Dr. King was named state Superintendent of the Year in 2006 by the Texas Association of School Boards.

In 2019, Dr. King retired as Superintendent of the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District (PSJA). Under his leadership, PSJA made tremendous progress on some of the most significant challenges that face Texas and our nation. A border school district serving almost 32,000 students (99% Hispanic and 89% economically disadvantaged), Dr. King reduced the number of annual dropouts and increased the four-year graduation rate and overall high school completion rates to surpass state averages by significant margins. Under his leadership, PSJA became a state and national model for dropout prevention and recovery, inspiring state legislation (SB 975) and replication of its innovative initiatives across Texas and the nation.

Dr. King earned his Ph.D. from The University of Texas. His undergraduate and master's level work was completed at The University of Texas-Pan American.

Mr. Thomas Marshall III

Mr. Marshall is a native of Columbia, South Carolina, and currently resides in Houston. He is an IDRA Educational Policy Fellow, where he executed a strong digital communications and community engagement advocacy program for the Texas legislative session. He attended Clemson University for his undergraduate studies, where he received a bachelor's in English with a minor in youth development studies. As an undergraduate, he mentored and holistically developed men of color, ranging from first-year students to seniors in high school, led Black student equity initiatives, and served as a Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Intern in Washington, D.C. He is currently a master's student in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, studying higher education at the University of Houston. <https://www.idra.org/idra-fellows>

Celina Moreno, J.D.

Celina Moreno, J.D., is the president and CEO of the Intercultural Development Research Association, a national non-profit organization dedicated to equity and excellence in education. IDRA strengthens and transforms public education by providing dynamic training; useful research, evaluation, and frameworks for action; timely policy analyses; and innovative materials and student and parent leadership programs.

Ms. Moreno is an invited member of the Texas 2036 Advisory Committee on Maximizing Education Resources for Texas 2036's Education Resource Project. She previously served as the Interim Southwest Regional Counsel for MALDEF (the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund), the nation's leading Latino legal civil rights organization. At MALDEF, she successfully represented DREAMers to defend DACA and against a separate lawsuit that would have invalidated the Texas DREAM Act. Ms. Moreno also served as trial and appellate co-counsel in the challenge against the inequity and inadequacy of the Texas school finance system.

Before joining MALDEF, Ms. Moreno directed Texas RioGrande Legal Aid's School-to-Prison Pipeline Project. Ms. Moreno is the recipient of the Center for Public Policy Priorities' 2017 Future of Texas Award and received one of twelve 2017 Women of Distinction awards from the Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce. She is also a 2018 German Marshall Fellow.

She received a master's degree in public policy from the Harvard Kennedy School (focusing on education), a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Texas at Austin, and a law degree from the University of Houston. In her hometown of San Antonio, she was appointed to the Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women and the board of the Martinez Street Women's Center, a non-profit seeking to empower women and girls. She currently serves on the advisory council of the Hispanic Scholarship Fund and on the board of the San Antonio Public Library Foundation. <https://www.idra.org/staff/celina-moreno-jd>

Mr. Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.

Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed., is IDRA's Family Engagement Coordinator. Currently serving as the professional development team leader for IDRA, he brings extensive experience in working with school personnel, parents and students. His career in education spans four decades and has included teaching at the high school, middle school and elementary school levels.

Mr. Montemayor received a bachelor's degree in English and philosophy from St. Edwards University Austin and a master's degree in bilingual education from Antioch Graduate School of Education in Ohio.

Mr. Montemayor believes in the power of community engagement for leadership development and effective education. He was the lead developer of IDRA's Family Leadership in Education model. One sustained effort of the leadership process is with ARISE, a south Texas community organization, where a new Education CAFE (formerly called Community

PTA) was organized that epitomizes the IDRA family leadership process. The Education CAFE movement is spreading to other organizations with IDRA's guidance and support.

Mr. Montemayor was instrumental in co-designing and implementing IDRA's federally-funded parent information and resource center: Texas IDRA PIRC. The center brought together parents, schools, universities, community organizations and businesses to support underserved student populations. As its director for 12 years, he led in the formalization of its innovative and results-oriented approach to strengthening partnerships between parents and school personnel in serving children, the working relationship between home and school, and enhancing the developmental progress of the children assisted in this program.

Mr. Montemayor has served on several national boards, including the National PTA, Parents for Public Schools (PPS) and the National Association for Bilingual Education.
<https://www.idra.org/staff/aurelio-m-montemayor-m-ed>

Ms. Melivia Mujica

Melivia Mujica is a queer first-generation Chicana from the south side of San Antonio and a junior at Texas A&M Kingsville where she is pursuing her double major in law and environmental science. Since her sophomore year in high school, she has been a student advocate at her Title I high school, at which time she was able to push her school toward greater structural equity through her leadership as a student organizer. She currently is an IDRA executive intern in the educational practice team.

Ms. Michelle Nguyen

Michelle Nguyen is an IDRA executive intern with the educational practice team. She earned a bachelor's degree in youth advocacy and educational studies with a minor in comparative race and ethnic studies from Texas Christian University. She then taught English in Salatiga, Indonesia for eight months through a Fulbright grant. After this summer internship with IDRA, Ms. Nguyen will start her first year of law school at the University of Texas at Austin.
<https://www.idra.org/idra-interns>

Ms. Christina Quintanilla-Muñoz

Christina Quintanilla-Muñoz is originally from San Juan, Texas, and grew up in San Antonio. She received her bachelor's in psychology from the University of Texas at San Antonio and her M.Ed. in educational psychology with a specialization in quantitative methods from the University of Texas at Austin. As an IDRA Education Policy Fellow, she helped identify and pursue advocacy opportunities that address both the new and the existing systemic needs that schools, students and families have due to COVID-19.

She believes that voices from students and other advocates of color are grossly under-represented in the policymaking space. Through her fellowship experience, she is learning how to be a stronger advocate for families, students, and educators in local communities, using advocacy and community-focused data collection strategies to identify their needs. Christina will be returning to UTSA

this fall to pursue a doctoral degree in Applied Demography. <https://www.idra.org/idra-fellows>

Dr. Jean J. Ryoo

Dr. Ryoo is an educational researcher based at the University of California in Los Angeles. Her research focuses on issues of equity in STEM and computer science education. Using a sociocultural lens to examine learning and teaching practice, her research focuses on three strands of work: (1) describing complex learning experiences while understanding how they relate to student identity and agency; (2) illuminating which effective pedagogical strategies can inspire academic engagement for youth who have historically been denied access to quality education in STEM and computer science; and (3) advancing the creation of learning environments that build on students' wealth of personal knowledge and experience to become critical and creative participants in our local communities. She works in research-practice partnerships with educators to create more meaningful knowledge and better solution to improving youth's educational experiences.
<https://jeanryoo.com>

José A. Velázquez, M.Ed.

José A. Velázquez, M.Ed., is the Director of Academic Instruction & School Support (AISS) at Education Service Center – Region 19 in El Paso, Texas. José has over 30 years of experience as a PK-12 bilingual/ESL classroom teacher, high school principal and consultant. As Director of AISS, he leads a team of Literacy, Math, Science, Social Studies and ESL consultants that support schools in the El Paso borderland area with professional development and technical assistance. With vast experience and expertise in the implementation of best practices for Bilingual Education/ESL and family engagement, José has delivered professional guidance and technical assistance to schools across the nation in rural and urban contexts. As a former equity specialist for IDRA EAC-South, Mr. Velázquez utilized his experiences as a high school principal to coach and mentor leadership development to strengthen campus leadership teams to improve academic performance for all students with a special focus on EL students at their campuses.

Mr. Velázquez received a bachelor of arts in anthropology and a master's in education at the University of Texas at El Paso. He also completed coursework in educational administration leading to mid-management certificate at Sam Houston State University and is completing a doctoral dissertation at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Mr. Velázquez began his career in education as a middle school social studies teacher where he found his calling to become a bilingual/ESL teacher. This catapulted him into the world of advocacy for immigrant youth and families within the universe of public education. As a bilingual/ESL teacher, Mr. Velázquez has taught second language learners at all grade levels. Over the years, this classroom experience became the foundation for later success in promoting effective strategies for engaging minority youth and parents in achieving academic goals and community involvement. Driven by his passion for the subject, he considers himself to be a life-long learner inspired by lived experiences as a

former EL student, teacher, parent and principal.

Dr. Bricio Vasquez

Bricio Vasquez, Ph.D., is IDRA's education data scientist. Using a variety of methods, such as data mining, statistical analyses, and data visualization, he takes data and turns it into insight. He has worked in education and applied data analysis for the past 10 years and earned his doctorate in applied demography from the University of Texas at San Antonio. He received a bachelor's degree in psychology from Texas Tech University and a master's degree in sociology from Texas State University. In 2017-18 he was named an American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHE) Multidisciplinary Graduate Fellow.

Dr. Vasquez began his career as an academic advisor at Texas State University where he worked closely with students to help them achieve their academic goals. Later he became the data director for the P16Plus Council of Greater Bexar County where he worked to build the organizations' capacity for data driven decision making and continuous improvement.

He is a passionate educator and has served as visiting lecturer in the sociology department at St. Mary's University. In this role, he taught demography and statistics courses as well as mentoring and advising undergraduate students. Dr. Vasquez has also served as lecturer at Texas State University and as adjunct faculty at Lone Star College in Houston. Dr. Vasquez conducts quantitative, population research on the postsecondary trajectories of Latinx youth in the United States. Specifically, he is interested in the opportunity structures and labor market conditions channeling students into the workforce or postsecondary education as well as studying adolescent health, the education/mortality gradient, and spatial demography. <https://www.idra.org/staff/bricio-vasquez-ph-d>

Ms. Michelle Vega

Michelle Martínez Vega is IDRA's chief technology strategist with more than 18 years of experience in designing, developing and administering professional development for educators at the state, regional and district levels. Her focus is driven by the desire to improve academic achievement through the use of technology. She strives to develop technology solutions that create equitable and sustainable learning environments for all students and educators.

Ms. Vega created and delivers professional technology support with the hope of helping others build their technology confidence and capacity. Ms. Vega has a bachelor of science in applied science degree and performance improvement from the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, with a concentration in human performance and development improvement in the workplace, project management, web design, and digital and business communications. She also has an associate's degree in digital media, including web and graphic design, interactive media design and instructional design, from the Alamo Colleges, Northwest Vista. She was a showcased designer at Northwest Vista College for excellence in multimedia design for iPad general user interface (GUI).

<https://www.idra.org/staff/michelle-martinez-vega>

Dr. Vonneta L. West

Dr. Vonneta L. West is the principal owner of Go West Consulting LLC, which facilitates experiences and produces content, inclusive of social media, podcast, website, training, and speech content, purposed to connect, transform and engage people for good. Dr. West leads Go West Consulting in providing training on Eradicating Racism, The Bias Challenge, Leadership That Grows, Salvation vs. Community, The Language of the Beloved Community, Your Justice Footprint: Evidence of Love In Action, and other sessions aimed at building and sustaining community, including in professional spaces.

She is the host of the Let Your Life Be Your Sermon podcast, pastor of Our Neighbor's House, and Senior Nonviolence Instructor for The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change (The King Center). Dr. West is also a leader with The National Center for Civil and Human Rights' Interfaith Response to White Supremacy. She is an educator who helped found a computer and professionalism school in Liberia, West Africa, where she resided for two years. Under Dr. West's leadership, Our Neighbor's House is building an Educational Center in Liberia. www.vonnetaLwest.com

Mr. Terrence Wilson, J.D.

Terrence Wilson, J.D., is IDRA's Regional Policy and Community Engagement Director where he is working across the U.S. South to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline and ensure equitable access to education for every student. He brings experience from a number of civil rights law and policy organizations that place equity and justice at the forefront of their work. He directs IDRA's Southern Education Equity Network (SEEN) in Texas and Georgia.

He has worked across the country in organizations, such as the Advancement Project in Washington, D.C., the Brennan Center for Justice in New York, the American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina, the Barton Child Law and Policy Center at Emory School of Law and the Georgia Appleseed Center for Law and Justice in Atlanta, Georgia. In addition to analyzing data and performing policy research, he has been actively engaged in several state legislatures, lobbying and testifying on behalf of legislation aimed at closing the school-to-prison pipeline. He also brings organizing and community engagement experience to IDRA from his work on political campaigns and with local elected officials.

Terrence was born and raised in Richmond, Virginia, and attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as a Morehead-Cain Scholar. He then attended the University of Georgia where he received his juris doctor and a master's degree in public administration. <https://www.idra.org/staff/terrence-wilson-j-d>

Ms. Kennetra Wood

Ms. Kennetra Wood has enjoyed a successful career in public education for the past 20 years. She has served students and communities in Virginia and Maryland school systems through education, social emotional support and mentorship. She has always been dedicated to student achievement and academic success through a rigorous academic curriculum, strong teacher education and overall student support socially, emotionally, and academically.

Kennetra has held a variety of roles in public education. She has been a middle and high school teacher, professional school counselor, dean of students and Lead Administrator, encouraging and fostering academic excellence in her students. Kennetra currently serves Alexandria City Public Schools in the role of executive director of equity and alternative programs where she advocates for and supports the division's anti-racist journey through her collaboration to create the ACPS Strategic Plan 2025:Equity for All, leading the ACPS Equity Audit of School Board Policies. She also leads the collaborative planning and implementation of anti-racism training and facilitates division wide equity trainings to ensure an equitable education and access for each student. Kennetra earned her bachelor's in English education from South Carolina State and her master's in counseling and development from George Mason University and a master's in educational leadership from Trinity University.