



VIRTUAL EQUITY

SUMMIT • 2021
DEVELOPING SYSTEMS OF EQUITY FOR A NEW GENERATION

Monday, October 25, 2021 • 10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

Reading School District



Waldo Alvarado is the director of equity and diversity at the Reading School District in Berks County. He holds PA certifications as K-12 principal and as secondary school counselor. He is a former Fulbright scholar at the University of Pennsylvania and was a faculty member in the Department of Psychology & Education at the University of Central América. He also has extensive experience in private counseling work. Alvarado is a practitioner consultant certified by Corwin's Deep Equity Program, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and the Education Trust's National Center for Transforming School Counseling. He coordinates the Reading School District's nationally recognized journey towards equity, inclusion and excellence.



Amber Marshall is the lead of the Equity Action Team at Reading School District Central Middle School. Marshall has been teaching for 20 years and has run multiple programs within the school and for Penn State University. She has been trained in the Deep Equity Program and has presented multiple professional development sessions. In addition, Marshall has been helping coordinate the YES (Youth Equity Stewardship) Program for several years and has created an after-school program as an extension. She also is the recipient of the 2020-21 McDonalds Hacer Award for her work with students. Marshall holds a degree from Lock Haven University and a PA certification as 7-12 secondary mathematics teacher.

Upper Dublin School District



Dr. Steven Yann is the superintendent of the Upper Dublin School District in Montgomery County. A teacher at heart, Yann believes that all students deserve a high-quality education to realize success in school and beyond. He believes that school leaders must ensure that systems and practices in school must be predicated on equity. Under his leadership, the district has been recognized for excellence by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the United States Department of Education.





Dr. Dan Ortiz is the principal of Sandy Run Middle School in Upper Dublin School District. Prior to entering that position, he spent five years as an assistant principal at several local high schools in Bucks and Montgomery counties after a nine-year career as a high school social studies teacher. Throughout his career, Ortiz has been committed to achieving educational equity for all students, focusing much of his work on first-generation college students and ethnic and racial minorities, and most recently, defending a dissertation centered on principals' practices as advocates for students with special needs.



Jennifer Iannitti became a school director for the Upper Dublin School District in 2019. Her volunteer work includes advocating for the needs of socioeconomically disadvantaged students at her children's school and collaborating with the Upper Dublin School District's Equity and Empowerment Committee to spearhead a guest reader program to elevate diverse voices. Iannitti has worked closely with local leaders of the special education community to advocate for the inclusion of students with disabilities in the school district and the community. She has four school-aged children. She previously taught in the Philadelphia and Central Bucks school districts.



Dr. Rita Perez is the director of student services in the Upper Dublin School District. With over 20 years of experience, she has served students and communities in the Allentown and Coatesville Area school districts. In addition, Perez had the privilege to contribute to educational reform and improvement during her tenure at the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Perez holds degrees from Cedar Crest College, Lehigh University and Immaculata University.

Phoenixville Area School District



Dr. Jessica Kilmetz is a dedicated educator with more than 20 years of experience ranging from classroom teaching to administrative positions held over the past decade. For the last five years, she has served in various roles in the Phoenixville Area School District in Chester County and is currently the executive director of curriculum and specialized programs. She is deeply committed to supporting educators in creating a responsive learning environment tailored to diverse student need. Kilmetz holds degrees from Rutgers, University of Missouri and University of Delaware as well as a principal certification from Temple University.

Lower Merion School District



Shawn Mooring is the program director for The Lenfest Institute for Journalism. In this role, he provides leadership to the institute's grantmaking, programs and initiatives that support journalists and news organizations striving to build sustainable and equitable models of local news that meet the needs of Philadelphia communities. He also leads the institute's learning and impact efforts. He serves as a school director for the Lower Merion School District, where he chairs the Ad-Hoc Committee on Equity and Anti-Racism. Mooring holds degrees from Hampton University and University of Delaware.



The School District of Lancaster



Howard Hanson is an assistant principal at McCaskey High School in the School District of Lancaster. Prior to his current position, he taught Spanish at the middle and high school levels for 16 years. At the request of the superintendent, he has served on the district's Equity Design and the Equity Steering committees for the last four years. He has provided staff professional development on equity and is the co-chair of the Equity Policy Design Team. In the summer of 2020, he was part of the Curriculum Re-Design Team that reimagined two electives – Black Literature and Ethnic Studies – through an equity lens. These classes were approved by the school board and have full enrollment for the second year in a row.



With more than 35 years of experience in public education, **Dr. Damaris Rau** is a seasoned veteran when it comes to setting the standard for student achievement. Known for her passion in urban education and commitment to equity for all students, Rau has a proven track record of reducing the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates, expanding early childhood programs, implementing programs to reduce bullying behaviors and successfully turning around low-performing schools. Rau began her career as a classroom teacher in Bronx, NY, and held a number of education-related positions in Connecticut before being named superintendent of the School District of Lancaster in July 2015. Rau holds degrees from St. John's University; Hunter College; and Teachers College, Columbia University; as well as a superintendent certification from the University of Connecticut and an administrative certificate from the College of New Rochelle.

Pennsbury S D



Dr. Cherrissa Gibson is the director of equity, diversity and education at the Pennsbury School District in Bucks County. In her current role, she is responsible for assessing current practices and supporting changes related to the implementation of equitable educational programs and services that respond to the needs of a diverse school community. Gibson holds degrees from Elizabethtown College, Gwynedd Mercy University, Edinboro University and The Pennsylvania State University.

South Fayette Township S D



Dr. Chuck Herring is the director of diversity, equity and inclusion for the South Fayette Township School District. He has worked in the field of education for over 25 years. In October 2019, Herring and two South Fayette High School seniors started a student-led organization called SHOUT (Social Handprints Overcoming Unjust Treatment). SHOUT uses the Handprints Heal Footprints® framework to help school districts create and maintain culturally responsive, safe spaces for all students, faculty and staff. Assisted by Herring's leadership, SHOUT has rapidly grown to over a dozen chapters in school districts in seven PA counties. In August 2021, Herring was named one of the State of Black Education's Educators of the Year.



Radnor Township School District



Dr. Anthony Stevenson has dedicated his life to education, with over 25 years of experience in public education and community service. He is the principal of Radnor Elementary School in the Radnor Township School District, Delaware County. Stevenson is also an adjunct professor of education leadership at Villanova University, where he is the founding director of the Delaware Valley Region Coalition for Educators of Color. Aside from his role as an educator, Stevenson serves on the Lower Merion Township Board of Commissioners.

Allentown School District



Dr. Lucretia Brown is the deputy superintendent of equity, accountability and school improvement in the Allentown School District. Brown played a pivotal role in the development and adoption of the district's Equitable Resource Allocation policy, strategic framework, and the development of an equitable funding and resource allocation formula for all buildings and programs. Through Brown's leadership, the district recently became the first district in the commonwealth to partner with the National Educational Equity Lab, and the second district to partner with T-Mobile's Project 10Million, aimed at reducing the digital divide. Brown also serves as the district's pandemic coordinator.



Melissa Smith is the executive director of school improvement and accountability for the Allentown School District. Since joining Allentown, Smith has focused on changing instructional practices to accelerate student achievement. Her office is committed to supporting the monitoring and evaluation of continuous improvement efforts at each district school. Through this work, the district aims to empower administrators to become effective instructional leaders focused on differentiated professional development, reducing the achievement gap, continuous data analysis, and measuring the impact of evidence-based strategies to support high academic achievement for all students.

Abington School District



Dr. Kristopher Brown is the district equity officer for the Abington School District. Previously, he served principal of Strath Haven High School in the Wallingford-Swarthmore School District after spending four years there as assistant principal, where he was recognized by the PA Principals Association as the 2018 Robert E. Lavelly Assistant Principal of the Year. He began his educational career as a social studies teacher. Brown holds degrees from Villanova University, Delaware Valley University and Saint Joseph's University, where he also serves as an adjunct professor of educational leadership.

