

**Session Titles and Descriptions**  
**AASPA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summit**  
**April 20-21, 2023 – Sheraton Inner Harbor Hotel, Baltimore, MD**

**Building Capacity in the Successful Preparation Teachers of Color: Effective Retention Strategies**

**Standard: Strategy: Total Rewards**

*Presented by Jill Ardley, Associate Professor, Norfolk State University, Norfolk, VA*

Today's institutes of higher education are facing the critical problem of retaining students of color who desire to be teachers. This crisis is addressed in this session with research-based findings and first-hand applications and examples from teacher education programs who successfully promote retention through graduation of their teacher candidates.

**Changing the Narrative: African American and Latinx Educator Retention**

**Standard: Strategy**

*Presented by Dr. Erikca Brown, Equity & Education Consultant, Equity Continuum, Frederick, MD*

In this session we will examine how African American and Latinx educators have historically and contemporarily been woefully underrepresented in American public schools and how their presence and/or absence impacts the academic achievement of African American and Latinx students. Much research has indicated the benefits of African American and Latinx educators for both students of color and white students. By focusing on the oral tradition of storytelling, as a strategy for the retention and in a time of shortages, participants will be able to examine the stories of African American and Latinx educators teaching in primarily white institutions. This will provide courageous organizational leaders and thinkers with a strategy to inform, support, and understand, not only the experiences of, but the unique challenges they faced African American and Latinx educators.

For the purpose of this session the problem of a lack of teacher diversity will be examined in light of racial microaggressions as experienced by African American and Latinx teachers in K-12. Through thoughtful interactions and discussions this session seeks to establish a need for change; change in the way we examine the problem of a lack of teacher diversity, the narratives with which we hold to be true and representative, in order to dismantle the structures that disadvantage minority teachers, if we hope to serve as agents of change.

**Counteracting Unconscious Bias and Fostering a Culture of Belonging**

**Standard: Experience Management: Talent Development**

*Presented by Dr. Ami Shah, District Administrator, Jordan School District, West Jordan, UT*

Counteracting Unconscious Bias and fostering a culture of Belonging . In this session, we will dissect the concept of unconscious bias and belonging by understanding the meaning of privilege and its impact on our minds and our actions. We will explore tools to identify our unconscious biases and explore their effects. We will also understand related concepts including microaggressions and micro affirmations. Using the newfound awareness to identify evidence of unconscious bias, you will leave the session with skills to assess your schools/organizations through "bias lenses" and tools to mitigate thereby fostering a culture of belonging.

**Cultivating Synergy: Laying the Foundation for DEI Change Agency**

**Standard: Experience Management: Talent Development**

*Presented by Dr. Jada Waters, Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Middletown Public Schools, Middletown, CT*

This presentation is designed to help school districts and employers elevate unapologetic conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. Dr. Jada Waters Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Middletown Public Schools will share her experiences of laying the foundation for DEI Change Agency. The intended outcome for this presentation is to provide participants best practices on how to carry out DEI initiatives and provide strategies for place-making where everyone feels loved, respected, and has a sense of belonging.

**DEI Book Review**

**Standard: Experience Management: Total Rewards**

*Facilitated by Lenichtka Reed, Associate HR Director, Tigard-Tualatin School District, Tigard, OR*

The AASPA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee is excited to share the next book studies and invites all AASPA members to participate. Our first book study will be on the book "Cultures of Belonging: Building Inclusive Organizations that Last" by Alida Miranda-Wolff. We are excited to select this publication and we encourage you to join us.

## **DEI Recruitment and Retention of K-12 Teachers and It's Implications on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Year African American Male College Students Attending a 4 Year Public University**

### **Standard: Process Management: Talent Acquisition**

*Presented by Jeannine N. Williams, Doctoral Student - Director of Educational Services for the Southwest Region, Gwynedd Mercy University, North Richland Hills, TX*

The importance of hiring and recruiting top notch teachers and administrators to support the academic and social success of African American male students in K-12 and the implications of their success in postsecondary education. Research indicates there is a significant trend of African American male students unable to graduate once enrolled in the nation's public colleges and universities. Persistently low graduation rates of African American male students in their first and second year of college are connected to both cultural and institutional barriers. The purpose of this qualitative case study explored the perceptions, attitudes, and lived experiences of 20 African American male first and second year college students at a four year public university located in the Midwest regarding the cultural and institutional barriers impacting their degree completion. The participants in this study described how their pre-college experiences in K-12 could have better prepared and removed academic barriers they are experiencing now in postsecondary. This session will share the findings of the qualitative research study, provide K-12 school leaders and school board members with tips, strategies and on how to become champions on DEI with their teacher and staff recruitment and retention efforts while positively impacting their schools and district wide culture.

## **Equity-Centered Leadership: Building Cultures of Value, Inclusion, Opportunity, Fairness & Belonging**

### **Standard: Experience Management: Talent Development**

*Presented by Kevin E. Walton, Sr, Director of Equity & Inclusion, Area Cooperative Educational Services, North Haven, CT*

The purpose of the session is to explore ways to reduce the impact of workplace inequities by creating new frameworks of employee engagement which allows for deeper examination of our individual and organizational beliefs and actions while increasing awareness of workplace inequity. The goal of this session is to convince district leaders that creating opportunities to engage stakeholders in equity centered initiatives such as district and building based equity teams, affinity groups, engagement surveys, equity walks, stay interviews, professional learning and skill building opportunities is a key strategy in creating safe, equitable and inclusive workplaces. This session will be designed to create space for the participants to engage in activities that will challenge the status quo while compelling the participants to take the necessary actions to build safe, equitable and inclusive workplaces.

## **From Hiring to Retention: Indian Prairie School District's Journey to a More Diverse Staff**

### **Standard: Process Management: Talent Acquisition**

*Presented by Louis Lee, Assistant Superintendent for HR; Carey Beth Harry, Director of HR & Nader Najjar, Executive Director of Educational Equity, Indian Prairie School District #204, Aurora, IL*

Indian Prairie School District is the 4th largest school district in the State of Illinois with 34 schools. Each summer, we typically hire over 100 licensed staff. Each of the last two years, over 20% of our hires have been educators of color. We developed a hiring process with an equity lens to hire more diverse candidates. Attendees will learn about the steps we have taken to diversify our staff, and hear strategies for establishing and maintaining Affinity Groups.

## **Going Beyond Trainings: Infuse DEI into your Organization**

### **Standard: Experience Management: Talent Development**

*Presented by Emily Douglas-McNab, Co-Founder & Chief & Taylor Tamang, Strategic HR Partner, Experience Management Institute, Delaware, OH*

A growing body of research suggests that many DEI trainings are ineffective. In fact, most DEI initiatives fail because of a "check-the-box" mindset. By thoughtfully designing an organization, we can make smart changes that have big impacts. In this session, we will highlight research-based practices for auditing and designing strategies, structures and systems to infuse belonging into your organization's DNA.

## **It Begins With Us!**

### **Standard: Experience Management: Total Rewards**

*Presented by Dr. Cynthia Hudson, Assistant Superintendent, Hamilton County Education Service Center, Cincinnati, OH*

This interactive session will delve into creating a culture of belonging in a diverse environment fueled by purpose. It will examine belonging and how leaders intentionally examine their own "why" to ensure each stakeholder, students, teachers and families are validated, honored, accepted, appreciated and treated fairly.

## **Lessons Learned in Diversifying the Educator Pipeline**

### **Standard: Process Management: Talent Acquisition**

*Presented by Dr. Amerah Archer, Acting Executive Director of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion & Leon K. Fitzpatrick, Diversity and Inclusion Manager and Training Specialist, Toledo Public Schools, Toledo, OH*

Recruiting future and retaining current educators is vital to a district's student and ongoing success. Toledo Public Schools has developed comprehensive educator pipeline programs to lead for equity and ensure people have the support they need to be successful. In this session we will focus on lessons learned along our journey and tips for creating inclusive pipeline programs for support staff, paras, teachers, and building leaders.

## **Mama, I Want to TEACH!!**

### **Standard: Strategy: Total Rewards**

*Presented by Daphne Donaldson, HR Business Partner, Charter Schools USA-LA, Baton Rouge, LA*

Here is how the conversation goes... "Mama, I Want to Teach!!" Mama's response is "You Want to What? No you don't!" This is a common conversation that has systematically diminished our diverse teaching population of teachers of color throughout the country. This session will explore practical ways rural and urban schools and districts can attract Diverse Teachers into the profession. Many of the would be teachers were discouraged by well meaning family and community members to pursue careers that they are not passionate about. Let bring them to where their heart truly is, teaching.

## **Principles to Operationalizing Equity**

### **Standard: Strategy: Talent Development**

*Presented by Lenichtka Reed, Associate HR Director; Dr. Lisa McCall, Assistant Superintendent & Zinnia Un, Director of Equity and Inclusion, Tigard-Tualatin School District, Tigard, OR*

Tigard-Tualatin School District will share practices to operationalizing DEI work in your district that improve student outcomes. Come learn about the challenges and efforts in making and holding space for underinvested youth, community and staff.

## **Retaining and Attracting Black Educators**

### **Standard: Strategy: Talent Development**

*Presented by Rosalind Fleming, Consultant, Unlocking Destiny, Middle River, MD*

According to data, there are 18% of Black children in public school systems but only 11% of Black teachers and 9% of Black leaders. The benefits of having representation go further than comfort for Black students. It also provides advocacy, increased academic achievement, fewer discipline issues and higher parent engagement. All of these are possible due to the unique ways Black teachers facilitate learning and Black leaders lead schools. However, if more and more leave the profession, where does that leave our children? We must utilize strategic actions to attract and retain Black talent.

## **The Festering Environment: Legally Addressing Bias Concerns Before They Make Your Workplace "Hostile"**

### **Standard: Risk Management: Talent Development**

*Presented by Jackie Gharapour Wernz, Attorney & Ashley White, Attorney, Thompson & Horton, Dallas, TX*

School employees are increasingly reporting bias based on race, color, national origin and other protected statuses before a legally "hostile environment" has been created. Without a sufficiently hostile environment, school personnel administrators may feel their hands are tied on how to respond. But there are many legal and effective strategies districts can use in these situations to keep a "festering environment" from turning into an illegal "hostile environment." Join two attorneys who work with schools, colleges and universities across the country on these issues to learn what best practices are available in these increasingly common situations.

## **The Power of Affinity Groups for Educators of Color in Your School and District**

### **Standard: Experience Management: Talent Development**

*Presented by Anthony C. Stevenson, Director of HR, Tredyffrin/Easttown School District, Wayne, PA; Christina S. Carter, Director of Learning & Assessment, School District of Haverford Township, Haverford Township, DE & Melissa Figueroa-Douglas, Director of Equity, Colonial School District, Drexel Hill, PA*

This workshop will give an overview of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Educators of Color Network (SPECN) program for Educators of Color that support the efforts to provide a space for them to come together based on their shared identity as people of color, provide support, community, and a safe space to discuss issues related to race and ethnicity in education. These affinity group meet ups also work to promote diversity, equity and within their education system, and to advocate for the needs and perspectives of educators of color. Additionally, these affinity group meet ups provide professional development and networking opportunities for members to share ideas, resources and offer ongoing support for each other in their educational spaces.

## **We are Hiring! Why is it so Hard to Achieve Diversity?**

### **Standard: Strategy: Talent Acquisition**

*Presented by Chakesha Scott, CEO/Founder, Impact Charter Schools, Baker, LA*

Participants will gain insight on "how" and "why" current and traditional hiring practices often affect school diversity efforts nationwide. We also will explore effective recruitment and retention strategies that will support schools and districts in achieving their diversity goals in a manner that will transform student learning experiences, increase student achievement levels, and create a pipeline of teachers of color for years to come.

## **What's Your DEI Call to Action?**

### **Standard: Strategy: Talent Acquisition**

*Presented by Dr. Monica Green, Director of Equity and Diversity, Omaha Public Schools, Omaha, NE & Bess Sullivan Scott, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership, Doane University, Roca, NE*

What's your DEI Call to Action? Learn the WHY, WHAT and How to inspire educators to identify and enact a personal call to action that fuels your district's efforts to meet the needs of each and every student and adult. Explore your WHY. Assess yourself and the environment to identify a leverage point to make a difference. Name your WHAT. Articulate your HOW. Then, do it! Change your environment for the better: one relationship, one action at a time.

## **You Hired a Teacher of Color-Now What?: Sustaining Educators of Color through a Contemporary and Historical Lens**

### **Standard: Experience Management: Total Rewards**

*Presented by Tanya Dallas Lewis, DEI Coordinator, Jefferson County Schools, Charles Town, WV & Dr. Veronique Walker, Equity and Family Empowerment Coordinator, Winchester Public Schools, Winchester, VA*

Educators of Color have a deep legacy of serving in the public educational system, which positively impacts all staff and students. The US, however, lost tens of thousands of highly qualified Black educators/administrators following Brown vs. Board of Education and continues to do so. This session will explore the historical and contemporary assets of educators of color; how recruiting and retention efforts benefit from all employees expanding their emotional intelligence and cultural intelligence; and the importance of establishing affinity groups that allow educators of color to feel seen, heard and valued.