



Equity Work Plan 2020-2021

AHISD Curriculum and Instruction Department

We are dedicated to the goal of providing a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all AHISD students. We believe all students deserve rigorous curriculum and engaging instruction. Our goal is to provide the leadership, resources, support and professional development necessary to lead all students to high achievement.

AHISD Administration

Dr. Dana Bashara, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Frank Alfaro, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services

Dr. Jimmie Walker, Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Mr. Mike Hagar, Assistant Superintendent of Business & Finance

Mrs. Melissa Benavidez, Director of Special Education

Campus Administrators

High School

Cory Smith, Principal

Charlotte Dolat, Academic Dean

Vanessa Castillo, Assistant Principal

Joseph Holzmann, Assistant Principal

Sean Reno, Assistant Principal

Junior School

Laura Ancira, Principal

Dr. Yadira Palacios, Academic Dean

René Gomez, Assistant Principal

Liz Aguirre, Assistant Principal

Cambridge Elementary School

Jana Needham, Principal

Heather Smith, Assistant Principal

Woodridge Elementary School

Gerrie Spellmann, Principal

Lisandra Black, Assistant Principal

Howard Early Childhood Center

Susan Peery, Principal

Liz Acevedo, Assistant Principal

Amy Lagueux, Elementary Academic Dean

Alamo Heights ISD

7101 Broadway

San Antonio, TX 78209

210-824-2483

AHISD Equity Council Members

(to be updated end of October)

Name

Role

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Introduction

Shared Words, Shared Worlds

--by Naomi Shihab Nye, May 03, 2013

After learning my flight was detained 4 hours,

I heard the announcement:

If anyone in the vicinity of gate 4-A understands any Arabic,
Please come to the gate immediately.

Well—one pauses these days. Gate 4-A was my own gate. I went there.
An older woman in full traditional Palestinian dress,
Just like my grandma wore, was crumpled to the floor, wailing loudly.
Help, said the flight service person. Talk to her. What is her
Problem? we told her the flight was going to be four hours late and she
Did this.

I put my arm around her and spoke to her haltingly.
Shu dow-a, shu- biduck habibti, stani stani schway, min fadlick,
Sho bit se-wee?

The minute she heard any words she knew—however poorly used—
She stopped crying.

She thought our flight had been canceled entirely.
She needed to be in El Paso for some major medical treatment the
Following day. I said no, no, we're fine, you'll get there, just late,

Who is picking you up? Let's call him and tell him.
We called her son and I spoke with him in English.
I told him I would stay with his mother till we got on the plane and
Would ride next to her—Southwest.

She talked to him. Then we called her other sons just for the fun of it.

Then we called my dad and he and she spoke for a while in Arabic and
Found out of course they had ten shared friends.

Then I thought just for the heck of it why not call some Palestinian
Poets I know and let them chat with her. This all took up about 2 hours.

She was laughing a lot by then. Telling about her life. Answering
Questions.

She had pulled a sack of homemade mamool cookies—little powdered
Sugar crumbly mounds stuffed with dates and nuts—out of her bag—
And was offering them to all the women at the gate.

To my amazement, not a single woman declined one. It was like a
Sacrament. The traveler from Argentina, the traveler from California,
The lovely woman from Laredo—we were all covered with the same
Powdered sugar. And smiling. There are no better cookies.

And then the airline broke out the free beverages from huge coolers—
Non-alcoholic—and the two little girls for our flight, one African
American, one Mexican American—ran around serving us all apple juice
And lemonade and they were covered with powdered sugar too.

And I noticed my new best friend—by now we were holding hands—
Had a potted plant poking out of her bag, some medicinal thing,

With green furry leaves. Such an old country traveling tradition. Always
Carry a plant. Always stay rooted to somewhere.

And I looked around that gate of late and weary ones and thought,
This is the world I want to live in. The shared world.

Not a single person in this gate—once the crying of confusion stopped
—has seemed apprehensive about any other person.

They took the cookies. I wanted to hug all those other women too.
This can still happen anywhere.

Not everything is lost.

Willing to Be Disturbed

Excerpt from *Turning to One Another: Simple Conversations to Restore Hope to the Future*

By Margaret J. Wheatley, 2002

As we work together to restore hope to the future, we need to include a new and strange ally—our willingness to be disturbed. Our willingness to have our beliefs and ideas challenged by what others think. No one person or perspective can give us the answers we need to the problems of today. Paradoxically, we can only find those answers by admitting we don't know. We have to be willing to let go of our certainty and expect ourselves to be confused for a time.

We weren't trained to admit we don't know. Most of us were taught to sound certain and confident, to state our opinion as if it were true. We haven't been rewarded for being confused. Or for asking more questions rather than giving quick answers. We've also spent many years listening to others mainly to determine whether we agree with them or not. We don't have time or interest to sit and listen to those who think differently than we do.

But the world now is quite perplexing. We no longer live in those sweet, slow days when life felt predictable, when we actually knew what to do next. We live in a complex world, we often don't know what's going on, and we won't be able to understand its complexity unless we spend more time in not knowing.

It is very difficult to give up our certainties—our positions, our beliefs, our explanations. These help define us; they lie at the heart of our personal identity. Yet I believe we will succeed in changing this world only if we can think and work together in new ways. Curiosity is what we need. We don't have to let go of what we believe, but we do need to be curious about what someone else believes. We do need to acknowledge that their way of interpreting the world might be essential to our survival.

As the world grows more strange and puzzling and difficult, I don't believe most of us want to keep struggling through it alone, I can't know what to do from my own narrow perspective. I know I need a better understanding of what's going on. I want to sit down with you and talk about all the frightening and hopeful things I observe and listen to what frightens you and gives you hope. I need new ideas and solutions for the problems I care about. I know I need to talk to you to discover those. I need to learn to value your perspective, and I want you to value mine. I expect to be disturbed by what I hear from you. I know we don't have to agree with each other in order to think well together. There is no need for us to be joined at the head. We are joined by our human hearts.

How Equity Work Connects to Strategic Action Work and our Profile of a Learner

Profile of a Learner

Seek Knowledge and Understanding and Engage Socially and Globally

- *Do we have equitable outcomes and treatment for all student groups in AHISD?*

Develop a Healthy Sense of Self

- *What identities do our students have to give up or hide to be successful in AHISD?*

Strategic Action Goal #2: In Alamo Heights ISD we are committed to a culture of belonging.

A strong sense of belonging generates feelings of trust, connection, pride, and motivation. No one feels alone.

Alamo Heights is a community where we know everyone's name, a piece of their personal history, and seek to bridge our differences. Although we are a community with a one-hundred-ten-year history, we value and welcome new members. We are a community that proactively removes financial barriers to promote participation and fosters a sense of belonging in activities, organizations, and special events.

A sense of belonging makes us feel like there is a community behind us. Individuals are willing to contribute their unique talents with the assurance that their contributions are valued by their community. As people join together for a common cause, it encourages a bond with one another.

There is an increased need for our community and leaders to stand in solidarity around our students and staff members of color to ensure a culture that embraces racial equity practices and an environment free from discrimination and prejudice in our classrooms and on our campuses.

Board Resolution 7/2020

WHEREAS on July 20, the AHISD Superintendent recommended the development of a district equity council for the purpose of: *establishing a framework to identify, measure and eliminate any bias, prejudice, or unlawful discrimination in our school system that may affect student achievement and learning experiences and to promote learning and working environments that welcome, respect, and value racial equity, diversity, and inclusion*

Community Based Accountability System

All goals from Equity work will be embedded with annual CBAS goals and reporting to support accountability, communication, and transparency. Each Equity goal directly links to a CBAS pillar.

Goals of the Equity Work

Picture of Success

AHISD provides the climate, process, and learning opportunities which enable all students and staff to perform at their highest level and to value diversity as a strength. AHISD ensures successful academic outcomes by providing equitable resources and appropriate instructional experiences for each student. Patterns of interaction at AHISD are accepting, valuing, supportive, safe for all students and staff.

Goal 1 Comparably High Academic Achievement and Other Student Outcomes

Disaggregated data on academic achievement should show high comparable performance for all identifiable groups of learners, and achievement gaps should be virtually non-existent. (*CBAS Pillar 1 Student Readiness*)

Goal 2 Equitable Access and Inclusion

Records of student participation should show unobstructed entrance, involvement, and full participation of all identifiable groups of learners in courses, programs, and activities. (*CBAS Pillar 5 Students Opportunities and Support*)

Goal 3 Equitable Treatment of People

Student and staff perceptions and observed patterns of interactions between individuals should be accepting, valuing, supporting, and safe so that all students feel challenged and engaged. School systems ensure equitable treatment of all people. (*CBAS Pillar 3 Wellbeing*)

Goals 4 Opportunity to Learn about Equity, Cultural Awareness and Action

Student and staff perceptions and agendas from recent professional development and character education lessons (advisory and class meeting) should demonstrate opportunities for students and staff to learn about, discuss, and confront issues of equity, race, ethnicity, and culture. (*CBAS Pillar 4 Professional Learning and CBAS Pillar 5 Students Opportunities and Support*)

Goal 5 Resources (Money, Time, Staffing, Facilities, and Materials)

Financial allocations should demonstrate that resources are distributed in a way that ensures that all students achieve high academic standards and experience high levels of engagement in the overall experience in AHISD schools. The diversity of the staff is representative of our students. (*CBAS Pillar 7 Fiscal Operations and Systems*)

Who Does the Equity Work?

District Equity Council

On July 20, the AHISD Superintendent recommended the development of a district equity council for the purpose of: *establishing a framework to identify, measure and eliminate any bias, prejudice, or unlawful discrimination in our school system that may affect student achievement and learning experiences and to promote learning and working environments that welcome, respect, and value racial equity, diversity, and inclusion*

District Equity Council members will have a background and interest and commitment in addressing equity, as well as promoting belonging within our schools and our local community. Members will be deeply invested in the equitable outcomes and treatment of all our Alamo Heights students and committed to ensuring all students graduate with opportunities and choices. The Equity Council will represent a diverse group of parents, as well as school administration, staff, and student. Equity Council work and meetings are guided and facilitated by Dr. Jimmie Walker and Equity Program Management consultants from One World Consulting Services. The demographics of the committee will thoughtfully reflect the overall demographics in our AHISD schools and spotlight the perspectives of underrepresented groups so all voices can be heard and valued in making recommendations.

5 Parents

5 Students (2 JS and 3 HS)

5 Teachers (1 from each campus)

5 Administrators

5 At-large members not from the above groups (other staff members, counselors, coaches, community members, professors, etc.)

There will be a call for nominations from students, parents, teachers, and admin. All nominees will be invited to apply to be on Equity Council. Selection of Equity Council members will be “blind” without applicant names.

- Role in AHISD Community
- Ethnicity/ other way you identify that you would like to share
- Please share your interest in this committee
- Please share why you would be a good representative for your community or campus?
- Are you available to attend all meetings?
 - Is there specific support you need to be able to attend all meetings? (i.e., childcare, translation, class coverage)

Campus Engagement

The campus representatives of the **District Equity Council** will work with campus-specific teams (students, teachers, and admin) to guide campus staff and students to understand the district equity goals and communicate equity audit results and solicit feedback.

Community Engagement

The District Equity Council will plan community engagement opportunities and activities. This can also serve as a forum for communication and feedback on the equity audit.

Equity Council Meetings

Conversations about equity can get uncomfortable and emotional, and that's okay. The ultimate goal for these conversations is to lead to change in experience and outcomes for students—especially for our students who have been historically underserved in our schools.

To promote the comfort level of all members and support open and honest dialogue, the Equity Council will observe specific group protocols and norms. Some of the meeting routines are crafted in advance of the meetings, and others will be collaboratively developed by the Equity Council members. All members will also be asked to take responsibility for themselves and reflect on what they can do during the meetings to help them feel safe, comfortable, and open. Special consideration will be given to ensure the comfort of the student members of the Equity Council.

Before the First Meeting

All members will be sent an advanced survey so the meetings can be designed around the unique “Who” of the group.

- What comes up for you when thinking about exploring issues of equity?
- What hopes and fears do you have about this work?
- What do you need to help you engage deeply in this conversation?

In the First Meeting

Significant time will be spent in the first meeting to establish a community of trust. Who you are matters a great deal in these conversations and in equity work. There will be initial reflections and group discussions on privileges, history, and identity. The group will also establish its own group norms for all meetings and interactions.

Structure of all Meetings

The agenda and any pre-meeting reading or tasks will be sent out a week in advance. This is to be respectful of the individual schedules of participants and supportive of the necessary time to gather personal thoughts on upcoming topics.

If meeting in-person, the room will be arranged to promote both large and small group discussion. The meetings will not be recorded or open to the public.

Each meeting will follow a similar structure

1. Community building time
2. Group learning opportunity
3. Presentation of new information
4. Discussion of new information
5. Summary of action items and next steps
6. Closure

The Purpose of an Equity Audit

Uncovering equity gaps is the first step in developing a framework to address them.

The goal of an equity audit is to identify institutional practices that produce discriminatory trends in data that affect students. Below are examples of guiding questions related to each of the goal areas of equity. The Equity Council will guide the creation of the final audit questions to help school leaders find areas of concern that may require further investigation.

Goal 1 Comparably High Academic Achievement and Other Student Outcomes

- Are there achievement gaps among population groups based on standardized exams at each grade level?
 - STAAR 3/5/8 Math and Reading and PSAT in 11th Grade
- Are some population groups are graduating at lower rates than others?
- Are some population groups disproportionately retained in school?

Goal 2 Equitable Access and Inclusion

- Are any population groups overrepresented or underrepresentation in Advanced Placement or honors classes?
- Are any population groups overrepresented or underrepresentation in special education, RtI, or dyslexia classes?
- Are any population groups overrepresented or underrepresentation in school or extracurricular activities like athletics, fine arts, and career tech education programs?

Goal 3 Equitable Treatment of People

- Are any population groups disciplined more often and more severely than other groups?
- Do all population groups express a similar perception of belonging, high expectation, and relationships?
 - Survey data from staff and students

Goals 4 Opportunity to Learn about Equity, Cultural Awareness and Action

- Are all teachers provided with adequate professional development for teaching all students?
- Do students and staff feel they have a reasonable opportunity to learn about and discuss issues of equity, cultural awareness and actions?
 - Survey data from staff and students

Goal 5 Resources (Money, Time, Staffing, Facilities, and Materials)

- Are the most experienced teachers disproportionately teaching the students with the greatest needs?
- Is there alignment between the demographics of our students and our teaching staff?
- Do financial allocations equitably distribute funding across programs, campuses, and academic areas?
- Are other resource allocations equitably distributed across programs, campuses, and academic areas?

Data Collection and Review

An equity audit requires input from stakeholders across a school district. Schools collect data in many forms to provide them with a wide range of influences that contribute to student achievement.

Phase One- Exploratory Research

Conducted in order to determine the nature of the problem, exploratory research is not intended to provide solutions or specific insights but helps to have a better understanding of the overall challenges and patterns. This is where a district has an idea or has observed something and seeks to understand more about it. Exploratory research is an attempt to lay the groundwork that will lead to future discussions and questions to determine relationships between issues, root causes, and central challenges.

- Surveys (see on next page)
- Student graduation, attrition and retention reports
- State report cards and assessment data
- Reviews of school discipline policies and code of conduct
- Information, communication, policies, and program guidelines provided on the campus or district website

Phase Two- Explanatory and Descriptive Research

The primary purpose of explanatory research is to explain why phenomena occur and to predict future occurrences. The information derived from exploratory will be more deeply explored through qualitative analysis of focus groups and campus observations.

- Classroom and campus observations with AHISD campus administrators
- Focus group interviews with teachers, students and parents facilitated by One World Consultants

Staff Survey Topics

BELONGING — TEACHER AND STAFF

How much faculty and staff feel that they are valued members of the school community.

Example Question: How connected do you feel to other adults at your school?

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND ACTION (STUDENT FOCUS) — TEACHER

How well a school supports students in learning about, discussing, and confronting issues of race, ethnicity, and culture.

Example Question: How often are students given opportunities to learn about people from different races, ethnicities, or cultures?

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND ACTION (ADULT FOCUS) — TEACHER AND STAFF

How well a school supports faculty and staff in learning about, discussing, and confronting issues of race, ethnicity, and culture.

Example Question: How comfortable are you discussing race-related topics with your colleagues?

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ABOUT EQUITY — TEACHER AND STAFF

Perceptions of the quantity and quality of equity-focused professional learning opportunities available to faculty and staff.

Example Question: At your school, how valuable are the equity-focused professional development opportunities?

EDUCATING ALL STUDENTS — TEACHER

Perceptions of teacher readiness to address issues of diversity.

Example Question: How comfortable would you be incorporating new material about people from different backgrounds into your curriculum?

Student Survey Topics

SENSE OF BELONGING

How much students feel that they are valued members of the school community.

Example Question: How connected do you feel to the adults at your school?

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

How diverse, integrated, and fair school is for students from different races, ethnicities, or cultures. (Only for students in grades 6-12.)

Example Question: How often do you spend time at school with students from different races, ethnicities, or cultures?

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND ACTION

How often students learn about, discuss, and confront issues of race, ethnicity, and culture in school. (Only for students in grades 6-12.)

Example Question: How often do teachers encourage you to learn about people from different races, ethnicities, or cultures?

RIGOROUS EXPECTATIONS

How much students feel that their teachers hold them to high expectations around effort, understanding, persistence, and performance in class.

Example Question: How often do your teachers take time to make sure you understand the material?

TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

How strong the social connection is between teachers and students within and beyond the school.

Example Question: How many of your teachers are respectful towards you?

Timeline

October

October 12 –16 Equity Work Launch and Community Introduction

October 12 Columbus Day PD Day Staff Launch- (through email and video from JW)

- Overview of Process
- Request/ Nomination for Equity Council Participants

October 14 Overview of process with Trustee

October 15 School Messenger parents and students with request for nominations

October 16 Learning time with District Design Team

October 19 – 23 Forming the Council and Community Communication

October 20 Equity Council Meeting #1 (Tuesday 4:30- 6:30)

- Introductions, overview, and set priorities for Exploratory Phase

October 22 School Board Meeting Presentation

October 26 – 30 Equity Audit Exploratory Data Phase

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Surveys to staff and students

Analyze 2018-2019 & 2019-2020 Discipline, graduation, retention, and standardized test score data

Analyze 2019-2020 special education, dyslexia, intervention, GT student group participation

Analyze school activity participation data

November

November 9- 20 Equity Audit Explanatory Data Phase

November 10 Equity Council Meeting #2 (Tuesday 4:30- 6:30)

- Update on Exploratory phase and set priorities for Explanatory Phase

Campus Student Focus groups

Campus Walkthroughs / Observations

November 11 Update to Trustees in G&P meeting

November 20 Update in Principals and Directors Meeting

December

December 7- 18 Equity Audit Results

December 8 Equity Council Meeting #3 (Tuesday 4:30- 6:30)

- Debrief Results of Equity Audit with Equity Council

December 17 Update to Trustees in Board Meeting

December 17 Update in Principals and Directors Meeting

January

January 4- 8 Setting Goals and Priorities

January 8 Equity Council Workday Meeting #4 (Friday 9:00- 3:00) Full day at Botanical Gardens Work Room

- Equity Council sets 3-year goals and priorities
 - Year 1- Focus on research and development of systems and skills
 - Year 2- Focus on pilot implementation
 - Year 3- Full implementation

January 11- 22 Communication with Community (1-way)

January 13 Update to Trustees in G&P meeting

January 14 Update in Curriculum Leadership Team

January 15 Update in Principals and Directors Meeting

January 15 Update to Faculty and Staff via email or video

January 18 Update to Community School Messenger or video

January 18-22 Advisory and class meeting update to students (video?)

January 25- 29 Communication with Community (2-way)

January 25-29 Faculty Meetings to discuss Equity Work

January 25-29 Community Round Table Discussion to discuss Equity Work

In-Person Equity Council attends community round table events (include tables for specific language discussion)

February 9 Equity Council Meeting #5 (Tuesday 4:30- 6:30)

March 16 Equity Council Meeting #6 (Tuesday 4:30- 6:30)

April 6 Equity Council Meeting #7 (Tuesday 4:30- 6:30)

Scope of Work- One World Consulting Services

Objective

The objective of One World Consulting (OWC) is to enhance Alamo Heights ISD (AH) understanding of the current inequity trends in the district based on quantitative and qualitative data, as well as process what reforms can be implemented to move to a more equitable context for students, staff and the community. Equity Audits are tools that allow districts to make guided reforms, which are based on data. Therefore, identifying the most common causes of inequities that exist in the district. We are conducting a participatory equity audit because there will be active involvement and decision making with Alamo Heights stakeholders throughout the process.

The participatory equity audit report will represent data collected from stakeholders, including administrators, staff, parents, and students among other groups. The participatory equity audit will revolve around 5 major areas, including:

1. Comparably high academic achievement and other student outcomes,
2. Equitable access and inclusion,
3. Equitable treatment of students, staff, and community,
4. Opportunity to learn about equity, cultural awareness and action
5. Resources (money, time, staff, facilities, and materials),

Goals

The goal of the participatory equity audit for Alamo Heights ISD will be to:

1. Understand the factors that contribute to social, emotional and academic inequities
2. Identify areas of significant differences or disconnect (e.g, race, socioeconomic status, gender, etc.). This includes identifying home, school, classroom, and individual-level barriers to social, emotional, and academic performance.
3. Assist the district in identifying policies and professional development to reduce gaps and enhance school success for all students.

Deliverables

The following is a list of deliverables that Alamo Heights can expect from One World Consulting based on the above project outline. The deliverables are divided into three phases.

Phase One Deliverables

- Training with Trustees
- Training with the Equity Council
 - Supporting the development of an Equity Mindset
- Data mining with an Equity Lens Blueprint
 - Training to understand the data mining with an equity lens process

- **Phase Two**

- Equity focused learning walks with Alamo Heights administrators
- Capacity building training for equity focused learning walks
- Conduct focus groups with teachers, students, and parents
- Participatory equity assessment report with recommendations based on data from surveys, student data, document review, learning walks and focus groups

Virtual check-in can be scheduled throughout the process to support AH in their work to build, support, and maintain the equity council.

Lead Facilitators Biographies

DR. KELLY BROWN

Dr. Kelly Brown is an assistant professor of Educational Leadership in the Center for Doctoral Studies at Lamar University. Having previously served as an educator and administrator in K12 schools, she uses her experiences to fuel her passion and dedication to create systemic changes that support underserved students. Dr. Brown's research is focused on examining policies, practices, and professional development that will positively effect issues of equity in education.

Dr. Brown has been written numerous articles and is currently working on a book with her research colleague, *The Reform Revolution*, about their ADDEquity™ framework supporting racial equity through systemic changes for schools and/or districts. She has also presented at local, state and national conferences over the last decade.

Dr. Brown is a certified teacher and administrator. She received her Ed.D from Texas Southern University in Educational Administration and Supervision. She is on the Board for the International Council of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) and a member of the Advisory Board for HCDE Educator Preparation Program. She is also an active member of organizations such as, American Education Research Association (AERA), Association for Supervisors and Curriculum Directors (ASCD), Texas Council of Professors of Educational Administration (TCPEA), and Texas Council for Women and School Executives (TCWSE).



DR. DEIRDRE WILLIAMS

Dr. Deirdre Williams is credited for her leadership in turnaround schools in the eighth largest district in the United States, where she attributes her success to a commitment and focus on creating school systems that ensured equity and excellence for all students. Her vision to establish a culture of trust, embedded in action translated to a positive school community culture of high expectations and a belief that all students could and would learn at high cognitive levels. As a middle school principal, she transformed her campus from a twenty-year failing school to a competitive community school of promise offering every child seven courses for high school credit. Williams was awarded the only non-charter Texas STEM designated academy in the Houston Independent School District after receiving accountability designations in mathematics and recognition for student growth. Building on her successful experiences and results, Deirdre now provides leadership development locally and nationally on topics related to systems thinking for equity, community empowerment, and racial justice. She has been invited to several conferences to speak and present about her school transformation story, "From Fixing the Kids to Transforming the Adults", which will be featured in the National Charter Schools Conference Charter Talk session.

Williams is the Leadership Advancement Officer for Professional Certification at the Harris County Department of Education. She brought innovation and rigor to the Harris County Department of Education Principal Certification Academy to focus specifically on leading for educational equity and diversity. She also developed the LEAD Institute for Aspiring Superintendents (leading for equity and diversity) and wrote the proposal for Texas Education Agency approval to offer superintendent

certification. Dr. Williams launched two leadership development initiatives for urban school transformation, Leadership Matters, and Promising Practices for Priority Schools.

Deirdre is a member of clinical faculty in the College of Education at Texas Southern University, where her work focuses on education and the urban dilemma of achieving racial equity in schools. Dr. Williams has capitalized on her background in public health research and evaluation to advance the knowledge of practices that improve learning outcomes for students of color and from poverty. She is the founder of the REID Institute, a non-profit network based in Houston, TX, with a mission of increasing access and involvement of marginalized groups in the educational process through research and the ADDEquity™ professional development project. Williams currently serves on the board of directors for the School Reform Initiative, a community of educators who in engage in professional dialogue and learning focused on educational equity and excellence. She is an active member of the West Houston P-16 Council, which focuses on student development and successful matriculation from early childhood through college.



DR JIMMIE WALKER

Dr. Jimmie Walker was a classroom teacher for 16 years working with students ages 5-14. Her experience includes working with public schools in Texas and a private international school in Caracas, Venezuela. In 2011, she was honored as the HEB Excellence in Education Teacher of the Year.

Dr. Walker's educational background includes a B.A. in history and a M.Ed. in educational leadership. In May 2016, Dr. Walker completed her doctorate work at Johns Hopkins University. Her dissertation research took her to Gurgaon, India to complete a case study identifying core factors that contributed to the integration of research from the learning sciences into an early childhood school system. In 2017, Dr. Walker's research was recognized by the Carnegie Project as the National Dissertation of the Year. Dr. Walker was the first scholar at Johns Hopkins University to be recognized with this high honor.

Prior to becoming the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Walker served as the Academic Dean for Elementary Instruction. She was a core leader in the development of Response to Intervention, Summer School, and Dyslexia programs. Dr. Walker's work also led to the creation of aligned curriculum documents to support both English and Spanish instruction in grades K-5.

Dr. Walker has three children currently attending Alamo Heights schools.

