



# Leadership in Turbulent Times

Cultivating Diversity and Inclusion  
in the P-12 Education Workplace

**EDITORS:**

Henry Tran  
Gaëtane Jean-Marie

**Studies in  
Educational  
Administration**

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# **Leadership in Turbulent Times**

The world's space in which we find ourselves today sometimes looks like what some of us familiar with the episodes of *Stranger Things* have seen in the Upside Down. In that discernible space, we see those who wish to hold or maintain power, spewing monstrous and persuasive provocations of unfair advantages, partisan rivalries, exclusive competence, and antagonistic relationships with disregard for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Often we wait on that someone to lead us to a Right-side Up portal, one that is a stable, bright, maintained, and sustained – one in which we can contemplate fair advantages, respectful rivalries, comprehensive excellence, and positive relationships with high regard for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Indeed, Editors Henry Tran and Gaëtane Jean-Marie have captured the turbulent Upside Down within the pages of their latest book. They, and the authors, represent that collective someone who points scholars and practitioners in the education workplace toward the contemplation of the Right-side Up portal.

Beverly J. Irby, EdD  
Regents Professor  
Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs  
Marilyn Kent Byrne Endowed Chair for Student Success  
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College of Education and Human Development  
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This is an exciting text that brings the marginalized experiences to the center where it pivots the conversation and scholarship to become the reality in the field that we need to be teaching and talking about.

Judy A. Alston, PhD  
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Doctoral Program in Leadership Studies  
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Ashland University

*Leadership in Turbulent Times* is a refreshing volume on P-12 school leadership. Tran and Jean-Marie are keenly aware of the missing voices, understudied experiences, and enduring problems of diversity and inclusion in P-12 leadership studies. Every chapter is enlightening and exemplifies a critical multicultural leadership approach to leading in today's education workplaces.

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*Leadership in Turbulent Times: Cultivating Diversity and Inclusion in the Higher Education Workplace*

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# **Leadership in Turbulent Times: Cultivating Diversity and Inclusion in the P-12 Education Workplace**

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## About the Editors

**Henry Tran** is an Associate Professor at the University of South Carolina's Department of Educational Leadership and Policies who studies issues related to education human resources (HR) and finance. He has published numerous articles on the topics, holds two national HR certifications, and served on the Board of Advisors and Board of Trustees for the National Education Finance Academy. He is also the editor of the *Journal of Education Human Resources* and the Director of the Talent-Centered Education Leadership Initiative.

Prior to his professorship, Tran served as an HR practitioner in both the private sector and in public education. He draws from both experiences in his research and teaching.

**Gaëtane Jean-Marie**, PhD, is Dean of the College of Education and Professor of Educational Leadership at Rowan University. Prior to that, she was Dean of the College of Education and Richard O. Jacobson Endowed Chair of Leadership in Education at the University of Northern Iowa. Jean-Marie's research focuses on educational equity and social justice in P-12 schools, women and leadership in the P-20 system, and leadership development and preparation in a global context. She has over 90 publications and procured over \$4 million in grants and contracts. She is the editor of *Studies in Educational Administration Series* (Emerald Publishing) and serves on numerous boards such as chair-elect of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate board, member on the Council of Academic Deans from Research Education Institutions (CADREI) and Teacher Education Council of State Colleges and Universities (TECSCU), and former at-large member of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE).

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## About the Contributors

**Richard “Lennon” Audrain** is a PhD candidate in Educational Policy and Evaluation in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. Prior to pursuing his doctorate, Lennon taught Latin, Spanish, and English in Arizona and Massachusetts. Lennon’s research explores teacher recruitment and teacher preparation. In particular, he looks at high school–based grow-your-own teacher programs, more commonly known as Teacher Academies, and community college teacher education programs. He investigates their program designs, credentials received after program completion, and articulation to other programs. In his writing, Lennon employs frameworks and theories from public policy, human resource management, and teacher education. Lennon earned his first Master’s Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Arizona State University and his second Master’s Degree in Technology, Innovation, and Education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

**Carole G. Basile** is the Dean of the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University (ASU). Prior to joining ASU, Basile was Dean and Professor in the College of Education at the University of Missouri St. Louis (UMSL). As Dean at ASU, her work has centered on redesigning the education workforce and changing practices in teacher and leadership preparation. She is currently working with education organizations nationally and internationally to design new systems for educators and their students and enable organizational change in this area. She is recognized for her work in math and science education, teacher education, and environmental education and has published numerous articles, books, book chapters, and technical papers. Her prior work includes *A Good Little School* and *Intellectual Capital: The Intangible Assets of Professional Development Schools*.

Her community work is extensive as she has actively partnered with many schools and school districts, community and youth serving organizations, and businesses to create access and opportunity for all children and youth. She serves on the board of Education Reimagined, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, and Teach for America Phoenix. She also has prior experience in the areas of sales, management, corporate training, and human capital development.

**Sheryl J. Croft** is an Associate Professor of Educational Leadership in Bagwell College of Education of Kennesaw State University, Program Chair of the Doctorate Educational Leadership, and Director of Teaching in the Urban South (TITUS), a multistate affiliation of scholars dedicated to providing and ensuring

educational opportunities for marginalized students throughout the Southeast. As a veteran practitioner with over 45 years in education, she has served in every level of leadership from principal to assistant school superintendent. Her work embodies practice and research that seeks to improve educational opportunities for students marginalized by systemic inequities.

Her research focus in practice and scholarship explores the ramifications of national and state educational reform within school settings, authentic collaborations between K-12 and higher education, and the ways in which school leaders using historical paradigms can provide educational opportunities for all students. Her recent works including her coedited work *Living the Legacy of African American Education: A Model for University and School Engagement* exemplify how contemporary educators may use historic educational paradigms and models to mitigate and inform contemporary leadership practices. She is also recipient of several school leadership and a lifetime educational achievement award. She is a member of Divisions A, G of AERA. Croft earned her PhD in 2013 from Emory University's Division of Educational Studies with a focus on the intersectionality between educational reform policy and its implementation in an African American school district.

**Dessynie Edwards**, PhD, is a scholar-practitioner who shares her more than 25 years of P-12 district and school leadership experience to inform her scholarship, cultivate P-20 scholar-practitioners, and bridge P-12 and higher education. During her years in public education, she served as an assistant superintendent in Dallas ISD and Austin ISD, Executive Director in Judson ISD, and principal in various San Antonio schools. Additionally, Dr Edwards' tenure in higher education included faculty appointments at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and Texas State University. Her research agenda includes the school district superintendency, race and gender intersectionality, mentoring and educational leadership development.

**Tina Garcia**, PhD candidate, is the principal at Jose Cardenas Center. Her career at Edgewood ISD started 23 years ago as a classroom teacher at Alonso Perales Elementary. She was given the opportunity to advance as an Instructional Facilitator, Instructional Officer, Assistant Principal, and then Elementary Principal. Most recently she served as an assistant principal at Memorial High School. Tina brings to Cardenas Center experience at both the elementary and secondary levels. She has worked with students from early childhood years through graduation from high school. As a lifelong learner, Tina enjoys learning about everything from how to landscape a yard, to how to play the guitar, and to how to nurture plants. She has valued the opportunities to learn about other cultures through her time spent in Asia and the Middle East. She is proud to continue her learning as she works to complete her PhD at the University of Texas at San Antonio. She advocates for the well-being of both the students and their families. Through research and best practices, she works to improve the bridge between schools and families in the neighborhoods of Edgewood.

**Ain A. Grooms**, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis Department at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She studies educational equity, with a specific focus on Black students and other students of color in K-12 contexts. She uses the intersection of race and place to examine the impact of historical and contemporary educational policies – including school desegregation, school choice, student attendance/absenteeism, and the retention of educators of color – on student achievement.

**Zach Jenkins** is a doctoral student in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policies at the University of South Carolina, whose research concentrates on (1) demystifying how internships socialize students into hegemonic norms and (2) the role that racial identity plays in these experiences.

**Eboneé T. Johnson**, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in Counselor Education at The University of Iowa. Utilizing culturally adapted biopsychosocial and socio-ecological frameworks, her work broadly focuses on improving health outcomes for vulnerable, marginalized, and stigmatized groups. Specifically, her work focuses on African Americans living with or at risk of developing chronic illness or disability. Her work is centered in community-based participatory research and implementation science to improve intervention development and delivery.

**Jae Young Kim** is currently a doctoral student in the University of Iowa Counseling Psychology Program. She holds a Master's Degree in Mental Health Counseling and International Affairs. Her research interests include vocational psychology, social justice, grief and loss, and positive psychology. Previously, she worked in the financial industry and also in HR for a nonprofit organization that managed 3 international schools.

**Francemise S. Kingsberry**, EdD, received her Doctorate of Education in Educational Administration and Supervision from North Carolina State University. She also earned an Education Specialist certification (superintendent's licensure). Her research centers on race and equity, women in educational leadership in the K-12 system and higher education, and urban school educational reform. Dr Kingsberry has served as an elementary and middle school teacher and also as an assistant principal of elementary students. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree with a double major in Sociology and Management and Society as well as a Master of Arts degree in School Administration from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Raymond A. Lauk** is an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) where he teaches the school superintendency, principalship, and district leadership courses. Lauk's research focus is on school district leadership and policymaking and examining the lives of LGBTQ+ superintendents. Lauk is also studying the radicalization of American school boards and Brazilian education. Lauk retired from Illinois public education in 2019, where he spent most of his career as a school district superintendent, business manager, principal, and elementary school teacher in highly diverse communities. Lauk then joined the faculty at EKU in 2020. He was also the

superintendent overseas at the American School of Brasilia, Brazil. Prior to his retirement from Illinois public education, Lauk was an Adjunct Professor of School Finance at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Concordia University Chicago, and in the international master's degree program at The College of New Jersey in Mallorca, Spain, and Bangkok, Thailand.

Lauk holds three graduate degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign: PhD in Educational Administration, MBA, and a Master's in Education. His Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education is from the University of Colorado at Boulder. A graduate of Chicago's Second City Theater's Beginning Improv program, Lauk has been an Improv and stand-up comic in Chicago, Rio de Janeiro, and across the United States. A professional speaker and storyteller, Lauk is the founder and curator of the monthly storytelling show at Eastern Kentucky University called "Talking Out of School: Stories that celebrate teaching, learning, and growing." Lauk is also an entrepreneur and the owner of Dr Ray's Toffee. In October 2022, Lauk will be running his 10th Chicago Marathon in the past 14 years.

**Duhita Mahatmya**, PhD, received her BS in Psychology from Drake University and her MS and PhD in Human Development and Family Studies from Iowa State University. She is currently an Associate Research Scientist in the College of Education at the University of Iowa. As a research methodologist, Dr Mahatmya provides conceptual and analytical support to projects that examine equity issues in K–12 and higher education. Her own research interests focus on examining how family, school, and community environments shape the attainment of developmental milestones from early childhood to young adulthood.

**DorisAnn McGinnis** received her BS in Psychology with honors from the University of Iowa. She is currently a third-year doctoral student in the Counseling Psychology program at the University of Iowa. Her research areas of interest include but are not limited to factors that influence marginalized groups especially related to their vocational success.

**Monica M. Muñoz**, PhD candidate, currently serves as the Head of School at Las Palmas Leadership School for Girls in Edgewood ISD, San Antonio, Texas. She is entering her 26th year as a public school educator, where she has served as an elementary and middle school teacher, academic coordinator, and elementary principal. She holds a BA from St. Mary's University, her MEd from Our Lady of the Lake University, and is currently in her fourth year as a PhD candidate at the University of Texas at San Antonio. She is an equity-focused leader that establishes and maintains positive and productive relationships with students, parents, staff, and community. She is an advocate for all students and works to build systems that foster equity in our schools. It is her purpose and mission to create a learning space for young girls to thrive and be empowered to build a better and more just world.

**Juan Manuel Niño**, PhD, is an Associate Professor at the University of Texas at San Antonio in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies.

Currently, he serves as the Graduate Advisor of Record and co-coordinator of the Urban School Leaders Collaborative programs. As a first-gen, Juan received his PhD in School Improvement from Texas State University. Before joining academia, Juan Manuel served as a teacher and administrator in several urban school districts across Texas. His experiences as a scholar-practitioner are closely supported by a philosophy of preparing aspiring school leaders for social justice. Dr Niño's research takes a critical perspective on the practice of education and leadership in multiple contexts, addresses issues of access, equity, and excellence in education for diverse communities, and the Latin@ experiences that influence identity and advocacy. Some of his recent work has been published in the *Journal of Educational Administration*, *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, *Beijing International Review of Education*, and *The SoJo Journal: Educational Foundations and Social Justice Education*. Additionally, Dr Niño is an editor, *University Council of Educational Administration Review* and section editor for the international journal, *Research on Educational Administration and Leadership*.

**Sarah Margaret Odell** is a feminist scholar, researcher, and educator who has extensive experience working with influential women and creating gender-focused programming. Sarah currently serves as the inaugural Director of Learning and Innovation Research at the Hewitt School, a K-12 girls' school in New York City. Sarah's award-winning dissertation on how gender identity of K-12 educational leaders impacts their career trajectories was advised by feminist psychologist Carol Gilligan. Sarah teaches leadership courses, focused on gender identity and listening at the Klingenstein Center for Independent School Leadership at Teacher's College, Columbia University, and at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education. A 2022 David L. Clark Scholar, Sarah has presented at the American Educational Research Association conference and the University Council on Educational Administration conference. Sarah is currently part of a grant at the University of Pennsylvania to study Justice Oriented Reflective Practice in teacher education. She previously taught high school English, coached varsity squash, and served as a dorm parent. Sarah has a BA in Creative Writing from Wellesley College, a MSeD in school leadership from the University of Pennsylvania, and just completed her PhD in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is currently working on a book about how the feminized nature of K-12 teaching in the United States mimics the ways women are structurally marginalized in the United States, based in part on her dissertation research.

**Teresa Silva**, PhD candidate, is the Director of Teaching and Learning in Edgewood ISD. Previous appointments include teacher, assistant principal, and principal in Edgewood. Teresa is a third-generation Mexican American raised on the Southside and Westside of San Antonio, Texas, in predominantly Hispanic communities where she attended public schools K-12. She has taught and led in schools for over 24 years in a predominantly Hispanic school district rich in history and culture. Serving the same feeder pattern her entire career has allowed her to serve the second generation of students with the community. Teresa strives to design a school model through a social justice lens. She is a doctoral candidate

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**Nancy J. Smith**, PhD, is faculty emeritus at Millersville University of PA. She taught English at the high school level in Florida and at the middle school level in Georgia. She taught at the University of Georgia while completing her doctorate in Reading Education and served as assistant to the Department Head. At Kansas State University, she taught and was Associate Department Head. She moved to Millersville University as the university's first woman academic dean, serving as Dean of the School of Education. She joined the faculty after filing a sexual harassment claim due to the creation of a hostile environment by the provost. She taught Leadership Theory and Organizational Behavior, Psychological Foundations of Teaching, Research Methods in Education, Introduction to Women's Studies, Senior Seminar in Women's Studies, and Introduction to Queer Studies. She chaired the faculty committee that developed a new Leadership for Teaching and Learning masters' degree and principal certification program. She served as first coordinator of the Leadership Program. Her publications appear in *The Reading Teacher*, *Women's Studies in Communication*, *Journal of Educational Studies*, *Educational Considerations*, *Pennsylvania Administrator*, *Journal of Reading*, *School Science and Mathematics*, *Cultural Exchanges*, *KASCD RECORD*, and a chapter in proceedings of various educational organizations.

**Noa Tal-Alon**, PhD, is a researcher in the Education Department, in the Faculty of Humanities and Social sciences of Ono Academic College, Israel. Dr Tal-Alon is a specialist in inclusive education and disability studies. Her research focuses primarily on the experiences of students and teachers with disabilities in the Israeli education system. Her professional experience as a school counselor as well as her personal experience as a woman with a chronic illness has contributed to her research and allowed her a better understanding of the issues. She also works as a coordinator in the forum for qualitative research at Bar Ilan University and assists PhD students using qualitative methods. In addition, as a faculty member of Ono Academic College, she coordinates an internship program in the field of disability and accessibility for female students from the ultra-orthodox society in Israel. She also teaches several courses such as: Disability and the Life Cycle, Invisible Disabilities, and Inclusion and Integration seminar. Dr Tal-Alon's goal is to bring the concept of disability studies into the Israeli education system and to promote more inclusive education, both for students with disabilities and for teachers with disabilities. She recently finished her postdoctorate at the Hebrew University, which overviewed six decades of inclusion of children with physical disabilities in schools in Israel. Noa enjoys collaborating with colleagues from other countries. She presented her research at international conferences in Netherlands, Denmark, the United States, and Israel. Noa, lives in Nes-Ziona, Israel, is married to David, and is mother to her two daughters, Leah and Tamar.

**Tiffany Wright**, EdD, a Professor in the Educational Foundations Department at Millersville University for 11 years, has served as an educator and school leader in various settings for 25 years. She is the founder and former Co-Director of the EdD Program in Educational Leadership jointly offered between Millersville and Shippensburg Universities. In addition, she co-coordinates the Graduate Program in Leadership for Teaching and Learning which leads to principals' certification, which also has included developing partnerships with urban schools through grant money from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Dr Wright currently chairs the Graduate Course and Program Review Committee, where she facilitates a group of strong and experienced faculty in reviewing policies and curriculum at the graduate level. She conducts research on the workplace climate for LGBT educators, equity in leadership preparation, and principals' evaluations of teachers, and she has given countless professional development sessions to educators and service professionals on LGBT issues in schools.

## **Epilogue**

**Lorri J. Santamaría**, PhD, is the Inaugural Director of Faculty Development and Inclusive Excellence at California Lutheran University. Previously, she was the Director and Principal Investigator for two State and County funded Indigenous led and Indigenous serving projects at the Mixteco Indígena Community Organizing Project (MICOP). A former Professor of Multicultural Multilingual Education and Educational Leadership in California and New Zealand, Dr Santamaría's scholarship and publications feature co-decolonization, culturally responsive/sustainable educational leadership, applied critical leadership, Spiritual activism, Black feminism, and antiracist research/pedagogies.

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# Prologue

The macrosocietal movements and events that many have orchestrated against social injustice in recent years have brought increasing attention to the problems of inequality in our society. Specifically, social movements and events such as *the Black Lives Matter* and *Stop Asian Hate*, the Supreme Court's ruling against the legality of employment discrimination against the LGBTQ population, the revelation of how deeply entrenched in inequity we are as a society during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the ever growing diversity of the workforce serve as impetus for more diverse and engaging work contexts. Within the field of education, racial diversity issues such as the paucity of educators of color in the field, workload disparity across teachers and educational leaders' demographics, the handling of student discipline, and employment discrimination have been frequently noted as warranting attention (Brown, 2014; D'amico et al., 2017; Krull & Robicheau, 2020; Metze, 2012) if the goal is to truly create more diverse and inclusive work spaces. Other marginalized backgrounds also warrant attention. As Shapiro and Gross (2013) contend, educational leaders not only face moral and ethical decisions regarding their classrooms, schools, districts, and education institutions in their handling of these sensitive issues, but they also must consider the complexities and threats that impact their communities.

Educational organizations and scholars across the field have embraced the challenge to interrogate these critical issues more broadly. For example, in the recent 2021 AERA Presidential session on workplace inclusion titled, "Creating More Inclusive Education Work Spaces through Talent-Centered Education Leadership," the lead coeditor of this book, Henry Tran, convened a panel of scholars and practitioners that included: Michelle Young, Vincent, Gregory, Wardell Hunter, Bridget T. Kelly, Michele Dow, Mario Suarez, Tiffany Wright and Douglas Smith, as well as presenters that included Kathleen Cunningham, Simone Gause, Suzie Hardie, and Spencer Platt, as they dialogue about how education employers across the P-20 continuum can create more inclusive work spaces, particularly salient given the theme of "Educational Responsibility" for the 2021 AERA conference that year. Please scan the following QR-code for more information about the session.



In addition, both coeditors of the current book collaborated to provide a space and outlet for education diversity and inclusion scholarship, specifically on the intersection of gender and race in the education workplace in two special issues of *the Journal of Education Human Resources* entitled: *Gender and Race in the P-12 and Higher Education Workplace* Volume 40(1) and Volume 40(3). The culmination of the AERA presidential conference and special issues have led to a deeper exploration of the workplace diversity and inclusion across a spectrum of related topics ranging from exploring the history of education workplace discrimination experienced by marginalized groups (e.g., people of color, with disabilities, who identify as LGBTQ, gender, and intersectionalities of the aforementioned identities), the present challenges they face, to recommendations for P-20 employers concerning how to cultivate an environment of workplace inclusion.

In response to turbulent times in society and schools (i.e., social unrest, inequitable access to healthcare, police brutality), employers are challenged to meet the evolving and growing needs of an increasingly diverse society. This edited book provides an in-depth exploration of education workplace diversity and inclusion in response to those needs. The chapters in the edited book draw upon cutting-edge theories and evidence-based strategies and integrate autoethnography and autobiographical of lived experiences. Particular emphasis will be placed on how education leaders can employ inclusive approaches to make positive changes to their work environments that foster a sense of belonging for people of all backgrounds in the P-12 setting. We follow this discourse with a second volume of this book, *Leadership in Turbulent Times: Cultivating Diversity and Inclusion in the Higher Education Workplace* that addresses the higher education context.

In Chapter 1, *LGBT Educators' Perceptions of School Climate Across a Decade and Implications for School and District Leaders*, Wright and Smith argue that

LGBT educators have historically experienced various challenges in their schools, while school leaders have needed to balance the rights and needs of LGBT educators with sometimes unwelcoming community norms. In their chapter, they examine three iterations of a previous study that spanned across a decade aimed to gain an understanding of the ongoing climate for LGBT educators so that administrators utilize best practices related to policy enactment, advocacy, and enforcement – and in the case of this chapter, relating specifically to creating an LGBT-inclusive climate in schools. Overall, the school climate for many LGBT educators continues to vary. In some respects, it has not changed dramatically from 2007 to 2017. Many participants over the three studies readily described positive and negative consequences of being “out.” Additionally, LGBT educators working with younger students consistently feel the most unsafe being out to students to any degree, and they have experienced an intense dichotomy of more policy and administrative support all the while facing vehement opposition to being “out” as teachers. While there are still places for principals and other administrators to demonstrate stronger support for LGBT educators, these results show that their level of support is moving in the right direction.

In Chapter 2, *Did You Feel You Needed to Tell Us? Looking for Leadership in All the Queer Places*, Lauk asserts that the increasing numbers of educational leaders who identify as LGBTQ+ are assuming the school superintendency. The chapter shares the findings from interviews with eight current or retired school superintendents who identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community and addresses issues of how these superintendents identify themselves professionally. The chapter explores the issues of lifestyle accommodations, their professional coming out process, work life implications, discrimination they experienced, and how their sexual orientation impacts their leadership capacity. While some superintendents identify themselves as “gay superintendents,” others perceive themselves as superintendents who happen to be gay. Regardless of their perspective, they all attribute some of their success as a superintendent to their experiences as a member of the LGBTQ+ community. Drawing on Queer Theory and Identity Theory, Lauk explores the intersection of sexual identity and leadership in a relatively understudied area.

In Chapter 3, *The Way I See It: Segregation, Pre-Brown and Desegregation, Post-Brown in an Atlanta*, Croft traces the intersectional experiences of one Black woman through pre-*Brown* schooling, becoming a teacher under a post-*Brown* court order, hiring teachers as a school leader in a large metropolitan, southern city, to her current position as a leader-educator at a state university. Informed and contextualized by social, political, and historical events associated with the pre-*Brown* segregation, desegregation, and post-*Brown* eras, this chapter uses narrative autoethnographic reflectivity and storytelling to understand and analyze the nuances of educational hiring practices through the prism of one Black woman’s educational journey. As asserted by Croft, the story is significant because it not only provides evidence of the subtleties and nuances of racism, but it also describes the changes in teaching, leadership, and hiring practices in southern public education over the last 60 years.

In Chapter 4, *A Psychology of Working Perspective on Women of Color K-12 Educational Leaders' Work Experiences*, McGinnis and colleagues contend that diversifying the educator pipeline is a well-documented strategy to improve educational outcomes for all students, specifically students of color, and to achieve greater equity and inclusion in public education. However, the retention and promotion of educators of color remains a critical and complex issue. They raise the need to examine the intersection of race and gender in the education workplace and highlight in their experiences and expertise of women K-12 educators of color to identify best practices for career development. Applying Psychology of Working Theory (PWT) and utilizing modified meta-synthesis methodology, the chapter highlights the experiences of Black, Latinx, AAPI, and Indigenous women K-12 principals and superintendents to (1) thematize and conceptualize how women of color define their work in education spaces through a PWT lens and (2) understand how PWT themes can illuminate ways to build more diverse and inclusive career pathways for women of color leaders.

In Chapter 5, *Feminist@ Leaders: Testimonios of Aspiring Superintendents in Texas*, Edwards and colleagues, in their synthesis of the literature, conclude that the average woman educator spends more time in the classroom than their male counterpart before ascending to an administrator position. However, when they do reach this position, women superintendents lead in a different manner than men. They tend to focus on the well-being of children and families. They bring a strong interest in educating the child as a whole and place those at high risk a priority (Grogan, 2005). Women are finding way(s) to bring women's way(s) of knowing and expertise into this position. Women tend to keep instruction at the forefront and develop relationships with school and wider community members that can help foster the academic and social growth of the student (Grogan, 2005; Robinson, Shakeshaft, Grogan, & Newcomb, 2017; Wilmore, 2008).

Therefore, Feminist@ leaders surface from their feminist and cultural knowledge as a form of traditional resistance. As such, this chapter highlights the voices of four valiant women of color leaders on the path toward the superintendency whose personal and professional pathways intersect to create a Feminist@ leadership identity.

In Chapter 6, *Mending Fractured Pieces: Overcoming Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention of Black Women Superintendents*, Kingsberry and Jean-Marie provide an analysis of the plight of African American women leaders as they journey to the superintendency.

Although the number of women superintendents has increased over the years, the superintendency remains a male-dominated field and African American women remain in the minority and largely underrepresented. Consequently, African American female superintendents must overcome many obstacles such as racial and gender stereotypes, caustic work environments, and restricted access to opportunities. Critical to dismantling the underrepresentation of women superintendents is the role of mentorship and hiring practices on the recruitment and retention of Black Women Superintendents. Mentorship is an essential strategy in weathering these barriers. African American women also deserve a voice in the hiring practices of school districts. Further, when marginalized groups, such as

Black women, are placed at the center of hiring discourses, hidden paradigms and vestiges of discrimination will be unearthed to unify efforts to provide increased opportunity and positive workplace environments. These efforts have implications for research and practice in the area of mentorship and hiring to amplify the voices of African American women superintendents and presence in the superintendency.

Next in Chapter 7, *Keeping Patriarchy in Place: Mentoring to Keep the Pipeline Status Quo*, Odell pushes the boundaries of past research to advance our understanding of how identity impacts aspiring leaders in their careers. Using Carol Gilligan's (2015) Listening Guide Method, this study of 18 aspiring school leaders of different gender identities, sexual identities, and races focuses on how gender identity and gender performance impact school leaders' career trajectories. A key finding of this study is that women, regardless of race or sexual identity, have difficulty finding mentors while men, regardless of race or sexual identity, are tapped by school leaders and offered mentoring opportunities. This chapter posits a new framework for mentoring that will lead to more liberatory pipeline structures.

In Chapter 8, *Transforming the Education Workplace for Diversity and Inclusion Through Teaming*, Audrain and Basile examine the fundamental structures and systems of classrooms that limit, obstruct, and hinder the ability to create workplaces that are equitable and conducive to real inclusivity. In this chapter, the authors narrate how the Next Education Workforce (NEW) initiative at Arizona State University is cultivating diversity and inclusion in the education workplace by rethinking and redesigning the workplace for educators, especially those from marginalized groups. In partnership with multiple districts across Arizona, NEW is rethinking educator roles and responsibilities in the workplace and their accompanying entry, induction, specialization, and advancement practices and pathways. To mitigate these challenges of the current workplace – where a single educator is responsible for an entire classroom of students – and to work toward a more equitable one, the future workplace must be redesigned so educators operate in teams. By creating teams of educators who work in real time, recognizing educators' unique expertise, and focusing on deepening and personalizing learning – whether content, pedagogical, or lived experiences – we can redesign the workplace, learning environments, and the teaching profession.

In Chapter 9, *Toward a More Inclusive Generation: The Employment of Teachers With Physical Disabilities*, author Tal-Alon examines an often understudied population, the professional, interpersonal, and functional experiences of teachers with physical disabilities and their employers. To obtain different perspectives on these issues, the author conducted 67 in-depth interviews with teachers with disabilities (motor disabilities, sensory disabilities, and chronic health conditions), their colleagues, principals, disability researchers, and two individuals who hold positions of leadership in the educational system. In addition, the authors analyzed 10 YouTube videos featuring teachers with disabilities. The findings reveal the organizational and personal barriers teachers with disabilities face. Tackling these barriers is important since teachers with disabilities have unique opportunities to contribute both personally and socially.

Finally, in this concluding Chapter (10), entitled *Cultivating Humanized and Inclusive Workplaces with Talent-centered Education Leadership*, Tran and Jenkins discuss and review the emerging education workforce management approach known as Talent-centered education leadership (TCEL). The approach takes inspiration from progressive and cutting-edge talent management thinking and practices that emphasize employers' intentional focus on humanizing and authentically engaging with their workforce. Pertinent to the theme of the book, the discussion then segues to the importance of diversity and inclusion as a precursor for these efforts and demonstrates how equity and organizational excellence are mutually compatible in the workplace. Relatedly, consideration is given to how traditional perceptions of "professionalism" can exacerbate inequity in the workplace. The chapter concludes by highlighting the seven core principles of TCEL to prepare school employers to embrace the future of education work.

In sum, this edited book is particularly relevant given the turbulent times in society and schools (i.e., social unrest, inequitable access to healthcare, police brutality), where education employers are challenged to meet the evolving and growing needs of an increasingly diverse society. The chapters in the edited book draw upon cutting-edge theories and evidence-based strategies by integrating conceptual and empirical work; with particular emphasis placed on how education leaders can employ inclusive approaches to make positive changes to their work environments.

Given the evidence-based benefits of having a more diverse workforce (Lindsay & Hart, 2017), as well as societal expectations from workers to have more diverse colleagues, creating diverse and inclusive work environments have become salient for many education employers and leaders. Readers interested in this topic will find our book to be a valuable resource to explore this topic in depth. They will also have the opportunity to read about the experiences of different marginalized groups in the education workplace and how to best develop and foster a work environment that engages and includes its workforce. We hope the book sparks the inspiration that will allow readers to apply what they learn from the book in practice to make real change.

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## Chapter 1

# LGBT Educators' Perceptions of School Climate Across a Decade and Implications for School and District Leaders

*Tiffany Wright and Nancy Smith*

### Abstract

LGBT educators have historically experienced various challenges in their schools, while school leaders have needed to balance the rights and needs of LGBT educators with sometimes unwelcoming community norms. The three iterations of this study that spanned across a decade aimed to gain an understanding of the ongoing climate for LGBT educators so that administrators utilize best practices related to policy enactment, advocacy, and enforcement – and in this chapter, relating specifically to creating an LGBT-inclusive climate in schools. Overall, the school climate for many LGBT educators continues to vary. In some respects, it has not changed dramatically from 2007 to 2017. Many participants over the three studies easily described positive and negative consequences of being out. Additionally, LGBT educators working with younger students consistently feel most unsafe being out to students to any degree, and they are experiencing an intense dichotomy of more policy and administrative support with more vehement opposition to being out as teachers. While there are still places for principals and other administrators to demonstrate stronger support for LGBT educators, these results show that their level of support is moving in the right direction.

*Keywords:* LGBT educators; school leaders; administrative support; equity-minded leadership; outness; educational policy

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) educators have historically experienced various challenges in the workplace environment, while school leaders have needed to balance the rights and needs of LGBT educators with

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unwelcoming community norms when working with a school and its community. Blount (1996, 2000, 2005) and Harbeck (1997) contributed to the literature on the history of LGBT educators by examining how LGBT educators' professional experiences have been influenced by cultural shifts in the larger society. Although the earliest educators were men, women were considered more nurturing with young children (Maranto, Carroll, Cheng, & Teodoro, 2018). Also, single females were soon employed as educators because lower pay for women was considered smart money management.

In spite of the poor salary, women employed in education earned enough to live independently of men or with each other, and this profession and lifestyle attracted a number of women, including those whom by today's standards would be defined as lesbians (Blount, 1996) or gay women. The latter group peacefully and quietly advanced into educational leadership positions until the 1920s. At this point, two major phenomena in school leadership began to affect women employed in schools. One major factor occurred as "progressives sought to professionalize educational leadership with larger, bureaucratic schools led by credentialed principals and superintendents (Callahan, 1962; Lucas, 1999; Tyack, 1974). At a time when professional meant male, this bureaucratization and professionalization of schools meant replacing female principals and superintendents with men." (Maranto et al., 2018). "For example, the percentage of elementary school principal posts held by women fell from 55% in 1928 to 20% in 1973" (Maranto et al., 2018). The second major factor is that when issues of sexuality were more publicized and had increasing attention, it resulted in more intense scrutiny of teachers' personal lives (Blount, 2000). This scrutiny promoted gender role polarization, homophobia, and heteronormativity (Blount, 2000; Melillo, 2003; Sumara & Davis, 1999).

Court cases, cultural shifts and backlashes, and the public perception of the morality of sexual orientation and gender expression impacted the professional experiences of LGBT educators as school leaders were increasingly expected to begin enforcing these norms. School leaders enforced these norms by sometimes firing teachers suspected of being in same-sex relationships, penalizing them by not awarding equitable compensation, or making hostile placement assignments.

While there is no federal law that expressly prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, a June 2020 Supreme Court ruling prohibits sexual orientation and gender identity based discrimination in employment. However, LGBT workers across the United States have called upon [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) which prohibits workplace discrimination on the basis of "sex," to take their employers to court. Cases taken to court have had mixed outcomes, and there is currently no fixed precedent to protect LGBT educational professionals at the federal level. In addition, Title VII does not cover all establishments. Even if the Supreme Court did resolve the split in the circuit courts and find in favor of LGBT plaintiffs, Title VII only applies to businesses with 15 or more employees and religious organizations are exempt. In the absence of federal employment discrimination legislation that includes sexual orientation and gender identity, 21 states and the District of Columbia have passed laws explicitly prohibiting workplace

discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, according to Movement Advancement Project. This means that teachers in 26 states can still possibly lose their jobs for their sexual orientation and/or gender identity (Movement Advancement Project: Non-Discrimination Laws, 2022) with the exception of some local ordinances in those states, despite changes in the federal marriage equality law in 2015 to allow same-sex marriages in all 50 states to be recognized. Forty-eight percent of LGBT people in the United States live in states with no state-level employment protections, according to the Movement Advancement Project. How do teachers perceive their workplace climate in this uneven and unsettling state of legal protections?

## Literature Review

This chapter will compare selected quantitative and qualitative analyses of three studies conducted in 2007, 2011, and 2017 related to the workplace climate for LGBT educators. These studies serve to inform educational leaders' actions in supporting these teachers. We selected the particular analyses based on the comparability across time. The three studies extended previous research in general by investigating how the rates of perceived support and safety, as well as experienced homophobia and/or transphobia, have changed over an 11-year span and three iterations of the study. Research questions for all three studies included:

- (1) What are LGBT educators' perceptions of homophobia and transphobia in their school setting, and how do they impact their willingness to be open about their gender identity and/or sexual orientation (*outness*)?
- (2) What are LGBT educators' perceptions of safety and support in their school setting and how do they impact *outness*?
- (3) What, if any, interventions and policies are in place in the school (building, district and state level) if an individual experiences homophobia or transphobia in the school setting?
- (4) How do LGBT educators respond when encountering homophobia or transphobia?
- (5) What is the overall school climate for LGBT educators?

These questions served to guide the entire set of three studies, conducted in 2007, 2010, and 2017 (Smith, Esposito, Wright, & Reilly, 2006; Wright, 2010; Wright & Smith, 2013; Wright & Smith, 2019); however, in this chapter, the main results presented address research question 2, which considers participants' fears in being fired if out to students and/or administrators over the past decade. Additionally, the qualitative results from open-ended survey questions will support the quantitative findings in the participants' voices, sharing positive and negative consequences of being out.

Overall, this series of studies sought to examine how different factors have changed school climates for LGBT educators across a decade. Over the three studies that span across a decade, assessments were obtained from areas that

included teachers' perceived support from school administrators and students. Support was also gauged by existing civil rights' protection and union's roles in protecting LGBT educators. At local levels, support looks like the following: presence of LGBT-inclusive curriculum, professional development about LGBT students and/or professionals and domestic partner benefits, levels of comfort talking to supervisors about LGBT issues and showing support for LGBT students, and whether or not the LGBT teacher was out, meaning open and honest about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity (Smith et al., 2006; Wright, 2010; Wright & Smith, 2013).

The most recent iteration of this study (conducted in 2017) was our latest investigation of the school climate for LGBT educators in the United States. The prior studies, which were conducted in 2007 and 2011, serve as points of comparison for this more recent iteration. These surveys had three primary areas of interest, LGBT educators' perceptions of (1) homophobia, (2) safety, (3) and support in their education work environments and how all of these factors may impact an LGBT educator's willingness to be "out" in their settings. To provide richness to these areas of interest, those participants who indicated that they were out (in all three studies) had an opportunity to describe incidents to highlight the positive and negative consequences of being "out" in their work settings. This chapter will highlight these qualitative data, in addition to descriptive and inferential statistics around other survey items related to certain demographic factors, like region, type of school, level of school, years of experience, etc. Finally, this chapter will highlight patterns in responses around participants' reported school levels using inferential statistics.

The importance of educators having safe and supportive work environments for the sake of their own health and well-being is self-evident, and it is vital for students to work with educators who feel supported; teachers who feel safe are more efficacious (Leithwood & McAdie, 2007). Students who witness discrimination of their LGBT teachers also suffer distress due to witnessing this type of treatment of their teachers, especially students who identify as LGBT (Eckes & McCarthy, 2008). While evidence-based techniques (implementing pro-LGBT policies, addressing homophobia and transphobia with education, etc.) exist that improve the school climate for teachers and students (i.e., Rottman, 2006), it is obvious from Wright's (2010) and Wright and Smith's (2013) research that these techniques are not being highly utilized in schools. It is the researchers' hope that the dissemination of the multifaceted, longitudinal results will bring to light challenges that many LGBT educators face in their work environments and encourage administrative incorporation of evidence-based techniques that support LGBT teachers and their students. Additionally, these researchers have and will continue to utilize the results to collaborate with organizational stakeholders in school districts and universities to provide professional development and preparation for principals around how to support LGBT educators. This will include engaging with university preparation programs to demonstrate areas for inclusivity of LGBT issues in preparing leaders for social justice.

## Method

In 2006, an instrument was piloted to collect LGBT educators' perceptions of the climate of their workplace, and in 2007 (Smith et al., 2006), the survey was taken by a nationwide sample size of 541 participants. The sample included a participant from every state in the United States. In 2010 and early 2011, instrument revision was achieved collaboratively by the researchers in seven steps: (1) using feedback from participants from the original study, (2) reviewing the 2007 objectives, (3) revising items, (4) conducting a new pilot study, (5) revising items based on an item analysis as described by Patten (1990), and finally, (6) content validating the revised survey instrument with three educational professionals and was taken by 351 participants.

The seven-step process was again used to revise the survey an additional time in 2017. As per participants' feedback and concerns about missing data from earlier iterations, the researchers condensed items and made the survey more concise. The third iteration of the survey, with 41 items, was piloted with care, taken to allow self-identification for the demographic items and to discern differences between issues and items related to sexuality and gender identity. Items were developed to ascertain LGBT teachers' perceptions of the existence of homophobia and gender bias in their workplace and how they are affected by it. Items also determined who or what contributed to homophobia and gender bias in their workplace, as well as what was done about it. Minor revisions were made to the survey based on the pilot study.

The *National Survey of Educators' Perceptions of School Climate 2017* was posted on Survey Monkey between April 1, 2017, and October 31, 2017. Participants were recruited through various national educational organizations, liberal faith organizations, academic organizations and conferences, national LGBT organizations, and links on multiple Facebook pages and Twitter accounts. Researchers (Dixon, Bouma, & Atkinson, 1987; Kerlinger, 1986; Morse, 1991; Patton, 1990) described this method as purposive and snowball sampling. Responses to all surveys were anonymous, guaranteeing confidentiality in all three studies.

The sample size in the 2017 iteration of the study was 245. These results need to be examined with caution due to the smaller sample size than the other iterations of the survey. Perhaps LGBT educators in 2017, like other educators responding to mandates from the government about the achievement, felt they did not have the time to participate in the survey.

### *Selected Demographic Data From Three Studies*

Two demographic categories served as most interesting for comparison over the three iterations of the study due to the consistency across samples. Table 1 shows the school level as reported by participants. In each iteration of the survey, those who reported working in high schools outnumbered those who reported working in elementary schools. The second demographic category that consistently demonstrated similar patterns over the three iterations of the survey

Table 1. School Level of Respondents.

	2017		2011		2007	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Elementary school	44	18.1	38	17.0	51	15
K-8 school	20	8.2	15	6.7	19	5.6
K-12 school	17	7.0	12	5.4	31	9.1
Middle school	60	24.7	49	22.0	70	20.5
Junior high school	2	0.8	4	1.8	4	1.2
High school	86	35.4	92	41.3	117	34.3
Other	14	5.8	13	5.8	49	14.4
Total	243	100.0	223	100.0	341	100.0

Table 2. Race/Ethnicity of Participants.

	2017		2011		2007	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
White or Euro-American	228	93.1	195	89.0	229	85.4
African American or Black	3	1.2	10	4.6	9	3.4
Hispanic or Latino/a	14	5.7	3	1.4	6	2.2
Asian or Pacific Islander	5	2.0	1	0.5	5	1.9
Middle Eastern	0	0	1	0.5	1	0.4
Native American	3	1.2	2	0.9	6	2.2
Multiracial	6	2.4	7	3.2	12	4.5
Other	1	0.4	N/A		N/A	
Total	260	106 <sup>a</sup>	219	100.0	268	100

<sup>a</sup>Note this percentage is higher than 100 due to the survey instruction to select “all races/ethnicities that applied.”

was race/ethnicity (see [Table 2](#)). Overwhelmingly, a vast majority of participants identified themselves as white. Those who reported being of Hispanic/Latino/a descent increased in 2017 over the two prior iterations.

## Results

These results across the three studies serve to disseminate descriptive data and explore differences and/or patterns among data related to the 2017 survey items in comparison to the 2007 and 2011 survey results. Researchers examined

relationships among certain variables to better understand how to provide school and district leaders and university faculty members in preparation programs with guidance for creating safe and inclusive environments that support all teachers and students.

### ***Quantitative Findings***

The researchers aimed to utilize descriptive data analysis in addition to exploring patterns of statistically significant differences across school levels as reported by LGBT educators in 2007, 2011, and 2017. First, descriptive data were analyzed across survey items that remained the same across all three iterations of the study. Finally, the researchers conducted inferential ANOVA analyses through SPSS comparing variables such as respondents' school level (i.e., elementary, middle, and high), as that category specifically has shown significant differences over the 10+ years of research (Smith et al., 2006; Wright, 2010; Wright & Smith, 2013) as the most consistent pattern of results, demonstrating that those teachers of elementary students specifically experienced more challenges in school climate than those teachers of other levels.

### **Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive data are reported across the three iterations of the study in [Table 3](#). Despite the passage of time, the following items demonstrated little change over the three iterations of the survey: specifically hearing homophobic comments, fearing job loss if “out” to students, and lack of LGBT-inclusive curriculum and of professional development about LGBT students. Larger differences were seen in the following items: greater intervention and provision of domestic partner benefits in 2017 as opposed to 2010 and 2007. The 2017 iteration of the survey showed a drop to 2007 levels of the percentage of participants feeling safe being “out” to students at their schools despite its rise in 2010.

### **Inferential Statistics**

In the 2007 and 2011 iterations of the research, most of the data related to factors of safety for LGBT educators according to school level demonstrated significant differences. Therefore, completing analyses using this demographic was reasonable for this chapter that also includes results from the 2017 iteration of the study. Refer back to [Table 1](#) for the number of respondents in each category for each administration of the survey.

In considering the differences in fear of job loss if out to an administrator, defined as part of the factor “job safety” among those teaching at different levels, the researchers ran one-way ANOVAs utilizing SPSS software for data gathered in 2007, 2011, and 2017. [Table 4](#) notes the means and standard deviations across categories of school level as reported by respondents regarding their fear of job loss if they were “out” to their administrators across the three iterations. In this case, respondents noted a “yes” answer to fearing the loss of their jobs (which we

Table 3. Percentage of Respondents With Yes Answers to Survey Items.

Item	2017		2011		2007	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Heard homophobic comments	215	88	373	90	534	86
No teacher intervention observed	31	13	331	19	443	19
Admin rarely or never intervened	63	27	120	54	362	60
Policies prohibiting homophobic language	141	58	268	88	342	52
Fear of job loss if out to admin	54	23	280	34	396	36
Fear of job loss if out to students	128	54	283	61	395	53
Surrounding community unsafe	79	33	254	78	342	41
Harassment over the past school year	64	27	293	21	395	27
Domestic partner benefits available	196	85	268	31	342	31
Demonstrated support to out or questioning students <sup>a</sup>	217	88	252	68	252	87
Lack of LGBT-inclusive curriculum	172	71	263	71	342	72
No professional development about lesbian, gay, and bisexual students (included transgender in 2007 and 2010)	149	61	263	66	342	66

<sup>a</sup>This survey item was slightly revised in 2017 to be on a Likert scale. These data represent all respondents who stated they felt mostly or somewhat comfortable supporting LGBTQ students.

Table 4. Fear of Job Loss If Out to Admin According to School Level.

School Level	2017		2011		2007	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Elementary school* <sup>a</sup>	1.86	0.351	1.31	0.463	1.34	0.49
K-8 school	1.80	0.410	1.40	0.507	1.88	0.33
K-12 school	1.88	0.342	1.42	0.515	1.62	0.49
Middle school	1.71	0.459	1.38	0.491	1.56	0.50
Junior high school	2.00	0.000	1.33	0.577	1.67	0.58
High school	1.76	0.427	1.30	0.462	1.70	0.46
Other	1.62	0.506	1.46	0.476	N/A	N/A
Total	1.77	0.420	1.34	0.476	1.63	0.48

<sup>a</sup>For Tables 4 and 6, 2007 and 2011 demographic data categories “K-4,” “K-5,” and “K-6” were combined in the “Elementary School” category that was used in the 2017 iteration.