

Roundtable Session

**TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES
IN URBAN SCHOOLING**

Hawaii International Conference on Education
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(Please schedule our session for Jan 7, 8 or 9th. Thank you!)

Linda C. Tillman, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Wayne State University
Dept. of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
393 Education Building
Detroit, MI 48202
ltillman@wayne.edu
Phone: 313-577-5139
Fax: 313-577-1693

Sheila T. Gregory, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Clark Atlanta University
Dept. of Educational Leadership
223 James P. Brawley Dr., SW
201 Clement Hall
Atlanta, GA. 30314
drsgregory@aol.com
Phone: 404-880-6642
Fax: 404-880-8564

Abstract

Across the nation, urban schools are in a state of crisis. The day-to-day realities of educating poor students in urban school districts have become increasingly challenging. At this critical time, however, the National Association of Elementary School Principals estimates that more than 40 percent of principals will retire or leave their positions during the next 10 years. As the need for principals and teachers with strong leadership abilities increases, the pool of qualified candidates decreases, especially in urban districts. What are the leadership styles and behaviors of effective principals? How can principals empower teachers to become more resilient?

Presentations will be given that (1) examine the role of the principal in facilitating and implementing policies and structures that promote teacher effectiveness, teacher retention, and that facilitate the career and psychosocial development of novice teachers and (2) examine leadership styles, qualities, and behaviors of three effective principals in high poverty public elementary, middle, and high schools.

The objectives of the first presentation are to address the following questions: 1) What are the perspectives of first and second year African American urban teachers about the best, most needed, and most helpful mentoring practices?; 2) How does the culture of the urban school environment influence the African American urban teacher's satisfaction in teaching and how does this knowledge inform the work of teacher mentors?; 3) What is the role of the principal as leader in facilitating mentor-protégé relationships which support schools as open, critical, and mutually supportive communities of learners for both teachers and students?; 4) How can the implementation of a teacher mentoring model and the formation of mentor-protégé dyads be used as a strategy to recruit and retain beginning African American teachers in an urban school district?

The first part of the presentation is based on a case study of a first year teacher in a high school in a large urban city. Qualitative methods were used to gather data. The researcher conducted interviews with the teacher, her mentor, and the principal regarding the above stated objectives. Observations and journaling were also used to gather data on the participants' perspectives of the role of the principal in facilitating mentoring arrangements, teacher persistence, and teacher retention.

The objectives of the second presentation are to examine the leadership styles, qualities, and behaviors of three effective principals in a high-poverty public elementary, middle, and high schools. This study includes both quantitative and qualitative measures that view effective schools research as the conceptual model applying principal leadership and resilience frameworks. Specifically, this research will address the following questions: 1) What leadership styles and behaviors do effective principals possess?; 2) Is there an association between principal leadership behaviors and student academic success?; 3) What contributes to principal resiliency and their ability to empower others to become resilient?

Collectively, the presentations address issues that are critical to the discussion of school leadership in urban settings. Additionally, the presentations will add to the current discussions and existing literature that addresses questions about best teaching and leadership practices that facilitate student achievement in urban and high-poverty school districts.