

Leading District-wide Change to Advance and Sustain Equity – Presenters’ Background
Learning Forward 2023 Annual Conference – Session 2226

Dr. George S. Perry, Jr. advises education leaders on system change strategies to initiate, advance and sustain their equity agenda using lessons learned from three decades working with partner school districts across the United States. Author of *Equity Warriors: Creating Schools That Students Deserve* (Corwin, 2022). From October 2018 to December 2021, George served in the New York City Department of Education and the Chancellor’s Office as the director of school leadership and organizational alignment. In this role, George supported the assessment, alignment, and implementation of citywide equity and values-centered leadership development for teacher, school, and district leaders.

Before joining the New York City Department of Education, George was executive director of Perry and Associates, Inc., a national consulting firm, founded in 2001, that acts on its commitment to social justice and equity by assisting district and school leaders to improve the academic achievement of *all* students. George has 40 years of experience in education at the national, state, and local levels. George directed experienced, highly successful consultant teams in building instructional leadership capacity at the district and school levels in over 30 districts across the country. He and his colleagues assisted school boards, superintendents, and district and school leaders to transform central offices to support schools; strengthen instructional leadership capacity by fostering vertical coherence from the classroom to the boardroom; redesign districtwide systems of support for students with disabilities and family engagement; strengthen principal instructional leadership; accelerate middle and high school level academic achievement; and develop prototype curricula. Partner school districts include: Atlanta, Boston, Baltimore County (Md.), Chicago, Corpus Christi (Texas), East Baton Rouge (La.), Elgin (Ill.), Flint (Mich.), Hartford (Conn.), Jefferson County (Louisville, Ky.), Los Angeles, Long Beach (Calif.), Marin City (Calif.), Metropolitan Nashville, Milwaukee, Montgomery County (Md.), Newark (N.J.), New Jersey districts, New York City, Norfolk (Va.), Oakland (Calif.), Portland (Ore.), Prince George’s County (Md.), Roanoke City (Va.), San Diego, Santa Fe and rural northern New Mexico districts, and Stamford (Conn.).

George and his colleagues guided over 100 schools in Corpus Christi, Flint, Long Beach, Los Angeles, and San Diego to raise and sustain student achievement by improving instruction and shared leadership, building on school strengths, and using data and research-based strategies. The district and school partnerships have been successful in raising student achievement, closing achievement gaps, and preparing students for college and careers.

Beginning in 1994, George was a senior consultant with the Panasonic Foundation, working on district-level, systemic improvement and assisting school boards, superintendents, and district and association/union leaders to “break the links” between race, poverty, and achievement for all students: All Means All. In this role, George assisted district leaders on their journey toward advancing equity as a “critical friend” and coach. With his support, leaders built their capacity to think and plan strategically and systemically, identify barriers to improvement, and address significant challenges through creating conditions for systemwide change and enhancing leadership skills and actions.

George holds a doctorate in public policy analysis from the University of Illinois at Chicago, a master of education degree from Harvard University, a master of business administration degree from Babson College, and a bachelor of science with honors in secondary education from Northeastern University. Additional information is available at www.equity-warriors.com

Tiffany Shockley Jackson is a teacher and department chair in the San Diego Unified School District. Tiffany has been an educator for over 20 years. Her passion is in working with students to think critically about the many sources of information they receive from the world. By doing this, she aspires to address inequities in society through teaching because student learning is one of the ways that we can start to address systemic racism. Tiffany has been listening to and empowering students as a teacher, coach of teachers, site administrator, district professional development leader, and consultant.

She is proud to be a fellow of the National Writing Project, having facilitated Summer Institutes and presented at conferences throughout California. As a consultant, she has worked in many districts from San Diego to the San Francisco Bay area supporting teachers and school administrators in teaching critical thinking. She has also worked with districts to develop instructional coaches to improve instruction. The schools and districts she's worked with have shown increased student performance and sustained changes in instruction.

When not teaching or working with students, Tiffany studies the decision-making of principals as social justice leaders when faced with technical and adaptive challenges. She is working toward her EdD at University of California, San Diego and plans to use her research to support principals in the future.

Dr. Marion Wilson has been in education for over 23 years and has worked for the NYC Department of Education for the past 16 years. She believes in excellence and educational equity. She is committed to ensuring that all students can achieve their full potential in order to succeed beyond the K-12 system. In her current role as Superintendent for District 31 in Staten Island, New York since March 1, 2021, she supports the 74 district principals and school teams with her expertise in instructional leadership, strategic data analysis, adult learning theories, professional development, evaluative feedback, equity initiatives, and organizational and systems thinking.

Prior to her current role, Dr. Wilson started as Gifted & Talented teacher in East Orange, NJ in 1999, then Literacy Coach at the Harlem Children's Zone, and the longest serving Principal of the Jackie Robinson School in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, NY for eight wonderful years. She is an Adjunct Assistant Professor for the City University of New York and has authored publications.

During her tenure as principal, the Jackie Robinson (Brooklyn, NY) school received several accolades including a N.Y.S. Proclamation from former State Senator Eric Adams acknowledging the school's removal from the persistently failing state designation to a school in good standing with dramatically increased test scores and an A+ rating. Her success story was highlighted in two books written by Alan Blankstein entitled, *Failure is Not an Option* [Second edition] and *The Answer is in the Room*.

Dr. Wilson received her Doctorate in Education in Educational and Organizational Leadership from the University of Pennsylvania (UPENN); a Masters of Science from Mercy College, NY; a Masters of Science from Pace University, NY; and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Hofstra University, NY.