

ILLINOIS PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION

**Diversity & Equity Committee
Progress Report**

ilprincipals.org





Addressing and advocating for marginalized communities

is crucial for educators. In 2024, considering personal convictions regarding equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging is essential. As leaders, it's our duty to have **tough conversations, reflecting on the past, present, and future**. We must **challenge and change our thinking** about past and current issues, **embracing "equity shifts" in mindsets and practices**. Being **vulnerable is key** to inspiring these shifts, impacting daily life through words and actions.



In 2024, it's imperative to do more than just "lean in" to conversations; we must **actively confront obstacles** and view schools through a changing equity lens. The momentum of this work must not cease. Four questions guide our actions: 1) Is what I'm doing **right and just** for all stakeholders? 2) Will my **actions leave a lasting impact** and legacy? 3) Will the **momentum created continue**, or will it dry up like a raisin in the sun? 4) Am I **ready to do what it takes**, here and now?

Ultimately, this work requires not only analyzing the brutal facts of schools, communities, policies, and social systems but also **teaching the skills to address their challenges**. James Baldwin's quote encapsulates the essence: "Not everything that is faced can be changed; but **nothing can be changed until it is faced**."

— **Denise M. Gamble, Chairperson**
IPA Diversity and Equity Committee



A quote that resonates with me is by Nellie Borrero where she stated that "**Diversity is a fact, but inclusion is a choice we make everyday**". As leaders, we have to put out the message that we **embrace, and not just tolerate, diversity**." This resonated with me because it demonstrates that we have to take active actions and not a passive mindset. The work of IPA in the area of diversity and equity is just that. An **active approach to significantly lead in this area** by doing the work for others to follow. I'm proud to be a part of that.



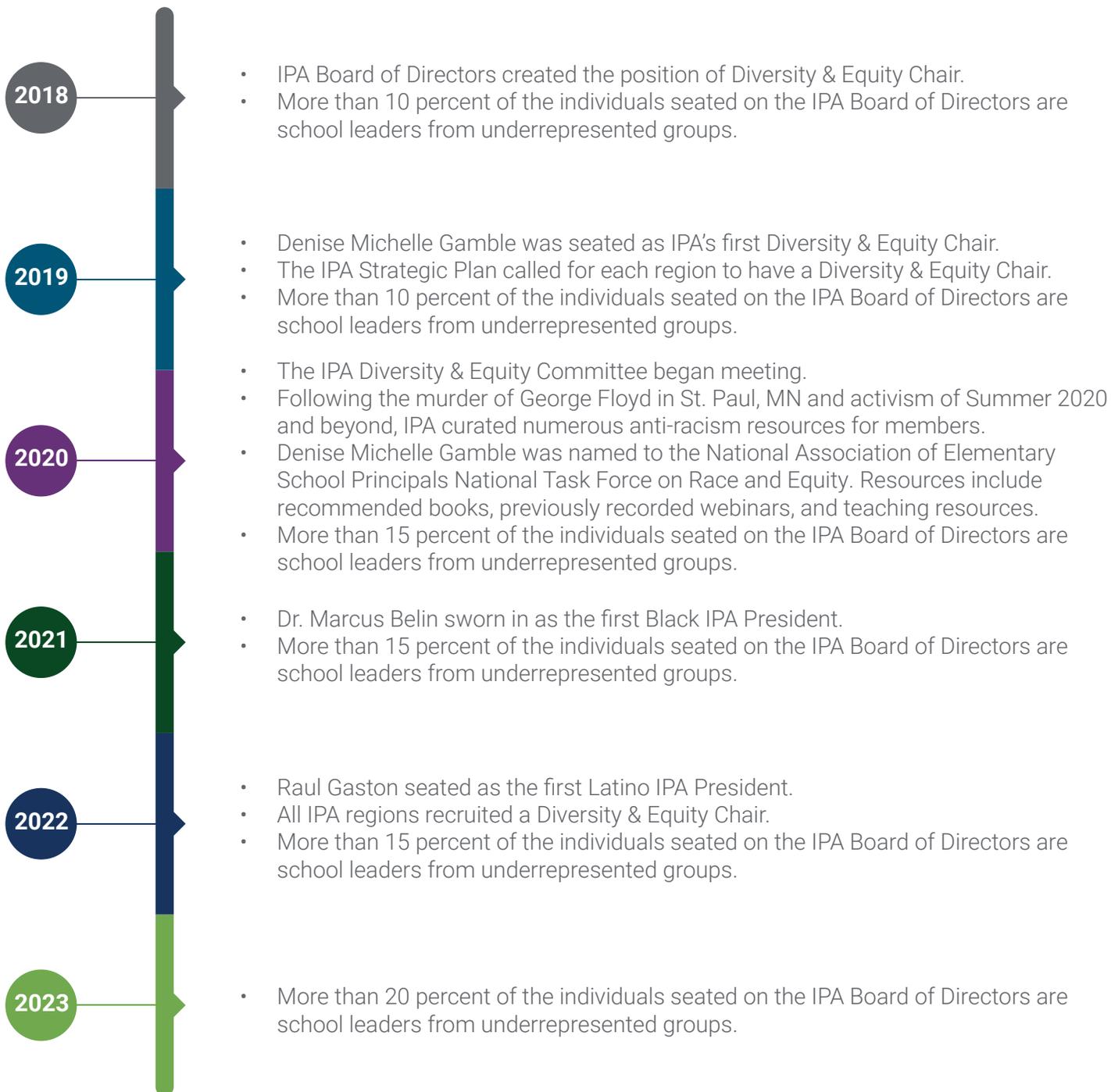
— **Raul Gaston**
IPA Past-President



HISTORY, goals and vision

The IPA values diversity, equity, and inclusion in our schools and in our Association. To this end, the IPA Board of Directors created the statewide Diversity & Equity Chair position in October 2018, later codifying the position in the IPA Constitution in the Fall of 2019. Denise Michelle Gamble, retired Chicago Public Schools principal, was seated as the IPA Board's first Diversity & Equity Chair in January 2019 and immediately began encouraging the IPA's 21 Regions to seat their own Diversity and Equity Chairs. Region Diversity & Equity Chairs began meeting as the IPA's Diversity and Equity Committee in 2020 with the expressed purposes of:

- Ensuring the IPA's leadership and membership were reflective of the profession.
- Providing critical input into the development of the IPA's professional learning program, Model Student Handbook procedures, and legislative positions.
- Supporting the IPA Region's with their diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.



OUTCOMES and strategies

Duties of Diversity and Equity Chairs

The IPA Region Diversity & Equity Chair is a volunteer position providing an educational leader the professional opportunity to serve fellow educational leaders and IPA Members in a specific location of the State of Illinois. During their term of service, Region Diversity & Equity Chairs advocate for and encourage diversity and equity among fellow educational leaders. Duties Include:

1. Attend all Region Board Meetings.
2. Attend all State Diversity & Equity Committee Meetings. Report association diversity and equity goals and initiatives to the Region Board.
3. Coordinate diversity and equity initiatives/events in their Region.
4. Within their Region, continue to encourage involvement and solicit support for their Region Board and the IPA by extending invitations to Black, Latinx, Asian, and other marginalized communities to meetings and opportunities to lead initiatives.
5. Lead efforts in their Region to grow the educator pipeline, especially among Black, Latinx, Asian, and other marginalized communities.
6. Provide input into the development of the IPA's professional learning program to ensure all members' needs are being met.
7. Provide input into the development of the IPA's legislative positions to ensure the Association views all policy issues through an equity lens.
8. Ensure a smooth transition of leadership when their term as Diversity & Equity Chair ends.

Resources

- Following the murder of George Floyd in St. Paul, MN and activism of Summer 2020 and beyond, the Diversity & Equity Committee curated numerous anti-racism resources for members. Resources include recommended books, previously recorded webinars, and teaching resources.
- IPA Talk — Alison Maley, Government/Public Relations Director, spoke with Ida Nelson, mother of Jett Hawkins, about the Jett Hawkins Law which prevents schools from prohibiting hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture.
- IPA Talk — Dr. Jason Leahy, Executive Director, hosted then IPA President Marcus Belin and discussed his story including the significance of being the IPA's first Black President.

Professional Development and Region Events

In addition to providing ongoing resources for personal and professional development, the IPA Diversity Committee has worked to encourage regions and committee members to create programming within regions to examine issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Professional development and regional event information follows.

Alignment with IPA Legislative and Membership Committees

The IPA Diversity and Equity Committee seeks to work closely with IPA Legislative and Membership Committees to ensure work in the committees is focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- The Diversity & Equity Committee will help review and provide guidance for positions on pending legislation.
- The Diversity & Equity Committee will work to ensure a welcoming environment for school leaders of diverse backgrounds to become involved in the association and seek out leadership opportunities.

DIVERSITY & EQUITY-FOCUSED professional development

Over the last several years, IPA has focused much of its professional development offerings on promoting diversity and equity. Following are Administrator Academies, Micro-Credentials, Webinars, and Ed Leaders Network (ELN) Courses that address aspects of working with diverse learners, addressing implicit biases, family engagement, exposing students to diverse literature, relationship-building, and more.

In addition, IPA has included a monthly equity challenge in the School Leader Calendar which serves as a resource for administrators to remember important dates and continue their professional and personal growth

through guided questions and prompts throughout the year. Challenges include reviewing data on diverse cultures that exist within the learning organization (students and staff), asking staff to help set one equity goal, exploring personal biases, and reviewing academic, attendance, discipline, and other relevant student data with a focus on any disparities based on race, socio-economic status, or other factors.

Administrator Academies

- Addressing Chronic Absenteeism Through Inclusive and Equitable Practices for All
- Building Bridges: Engaging Students Through the Power of Relationships
- Classroom Management Strategies: Supporting Restorative Practices
- Culture Counts: Constructive Leadership that Promotes Student Success
- ECE – Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Early Childhood Education
- Equity & Racial Literacy for School Leaders & Staff to Maximize Student Learning
- Family Engagement & Student Attendance: Meaningful, Ongoing Involvement in School
- Finding, Growing, and Sustaining Leaders (and Teachers) of Color
- Five Key Practices for Every Teacher that Works with English Learners
- From Words to Action – Anti-Racism in Schools: Extending the Conversation
- From Words to Action: Your Response to Racism in Schools
- High School MTSS: A Path to Equity in Action
- Journey to Anti-Racist Education
- Leading Equity Work in a Majority White School
- Leading for Equity: Cutting Through the Clutter of Differences
- Leading with Justice for All: Are You Prepared? LGBTQ Sensitivity, Bias, and Response
- Our Students Matter: Ensuring Your Equity Plan is Set for Success
- Restorative Practices: Next Steps
- The School Leader as Champion for Equity via Diverse Literature: Windows, Mirrors and More
- Three Levels of Support for ELL: Classroom, School, District
- Title IX: Responding to Discrimination on the Basis of Sex in K-12 School Systems
- Women in Leadership: Learning, Leading, Living!



More than 20 percent of our Administrator Academy presenters are leaders from underrepresented groups.

Micro-Credentials

Equity Micro-Credential Stack – Culture

- Leading an Equitable Learning Culture
- Exemplifying Equitable Behavior
- Constructing and Growing Equity

Global Mindedness Micro-Credential Stack – Culture

- Embedding a Global-Minded Culture
- Exemplifying a Global-Minded Culture

Ed Leaders Network Webinars/Courses

- Amplifying Equitable Behavior
- Anti-Bias Education
- Autism Professional Learning and Universal Supports Project (A+)
- Bias and Microaggressions in the Classroom
- Black Girl Blues
- Celebrating and Honoring Students of All Backgrounds in Difficult Times
- Creating an Inclusive and Diverse Space with Classroom Media Content
- Creating Inclusive Classrooms
- Cultivating an E-Team with Equity at the Center
- Developing and Cultivating an E Team with Equity at the Center
- Empathy, Equity, and Agency in K-12
- From Words to Action: Your Response to Racism in Schools
- Inclusion 101 and the Ability Inclusive Mindset
- Introduction to Cultural Competency
- Journey Toward Anti-Racist Education
- Modernizing Your ESL, Bilingual, Dual Program Design
- Navigating Difficult Conversations About Race, Implicit Bias, and Micro-aggressions
- Reaching Diverse Learners in the Math Classroom
- Restorative Justice in Schools
- Sustaining an Equitable Learning Culture
- The Emergence of Equity, Race & Cultural Diversity Initiatives Positions in District Level
- The Inclusion Solution
- What is CRT?

REGIONAL efforts

Blackhawk Region

- Have added a discussion item for every Region Meeting to provide time to discuss inclusionary practices and strategies for ESL students.

Corn Belt Region

- Listening Circle – Courtney Marks, Assistant Principal of Bloomington High School and Corn Belt Diversity and Equity Chair, hosted a Listening Circle event which incorporated the topic of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- Dr. Marcus Belin provided a 1-hour presentation to members of the Corn Belt and CIV regions. During his presentation, Dr. Belin shared his work of being a school leader and his goal of building an inclusive culture that supports and celebrates diverse voices.

DuPage Region

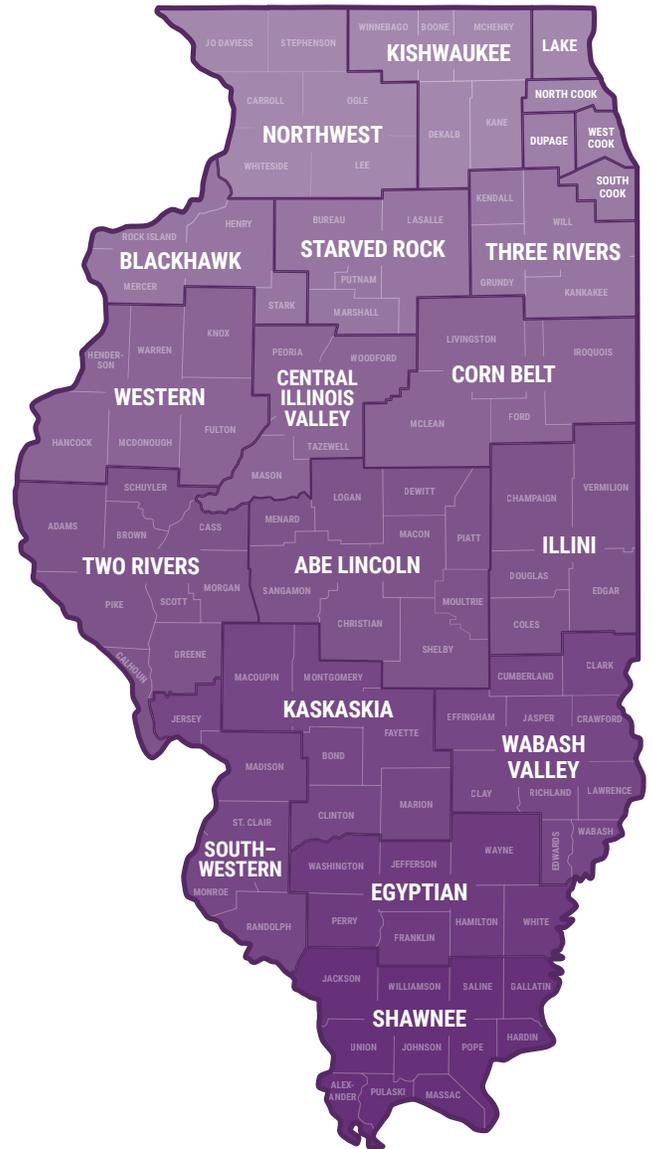
- Presentation on Equity; Equity Challenge
- Equity Lens in Hiring panel discussion

Kishwaukee Region

- Discussion on Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity (two sessions)
- Book Study – “I’m Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whites”

Lake Region

- Getting Started with Equity – Lindsey Rose is the Director of Languages at North Shore School District 112 and has more than 15 years of experience serving and leading in Dual Language Programs across the state. Lindsey shared with participants anecdotes on getting equity work started, the do’s and don’ts, and how to get to a level of systemic participation.
- Prioritizing Equity – Dr. LeViis Haney, is the Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at Stevenson High School District 125 and has more than 19 years of experience leading equity work at the elementary and high school levels. Dr. Haney will share how levers for equity were prioritized at Stevenson High School to support teams with having meaningful race conversations, building trust among students and families of color, curricular auditing for racial stereotypes and multiple perspectives, addressing disproportionality in disciplinary consequences, and faculty and staff equity, race and diversity training.
- Developing Strategies for EDI – Dr. Marcus Belin, principal at Huntley High School and President-Elect of the Illinois Principals Association shares his work of being a school leader. Dr. Belin’s goal has been to build an inclusive culture that supports and celebrates diverse voices. He has had many life experiences that he has carried with him that allows him to see school leadership as more than a job but an opportunity. It is an opportunity to be a positive influence for students and foster a culture where everyone knows that they matter and are valued. Their story and uniqueness is powerful beyond measure.
- Looking in and Reaching Out – Final meeting in a series of presentations that focused on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The goal for participants is to be able to assess where your equity needs are, and who to bring into the conversation and work. A particular focus and resource share regarding partnering with outside organizations and parents within your very own communities.
- Book Study – “Unconscious Bias in Schools”



North Cook Region

- Roundtable; Hiring with Equity in Mind

South Cook Region

- Collaborative Partnership with Governors State University presentation on equity

Two Rivers Region

- Presentation with Dr. Marcus Belin — Dr. Marcus Belin provided a 1-hour presentation to members of the Two Rivers Region. During his presentation, Dr. Belin shared his work of being a school leader and his goal of building an inclusive culture that supports and celebrates diverse voices.

Western Region

- Have made diversity and equity discussions a regular part of Region Meetings including a presentation of material from Dr. Krista Leh (“Leveraging Diversity to Promote Belonging and Equity”).

West Cook Region

- A Frank Conversation About Diversity and Equity from the Perspective of Illinois School Leaders.
- Book Study — “Unconscious Bias in Schools.”
- Panel discussion with Northern Illinois School District Diversity and Equity Directors.
- Presentation by Raymond Moland and Sonia Ruiz — Changing the Landscape of Your School Through Transparency and an Equity Lens.
- Networking Event for New and Aspiring Leaders, presented by Jeremy Christian, Dr. Steven Isoye, Sonia Ruiz, Erin Tatel Stein, Ed Murphy and Antwan Babakhani — “Leadership Matters”

Other Events

- Presentations to IPA Board and Region Director and Membership Committee Meetings — Denise M. Gamble
- Diversity & Equity Committee Survey
- Presentation at Education Conference — “The Way I See It May Not Be the Way It Is” (Ebony Baker, Courtney Marks, Denise M. Gamble, Sonia Ruiz & Dr. Markenya Williams).
- Diversity & Equity Presentation for IL EMPOWER Cohort — Denise Gamble, IPA Diversity & Equity Chair, provided the IL EMPOWER Coaching Cohort with a D & E presentation. Fifteen coaches were present that evening and an additional three watched the recorded video later.
- The Central Illinois Valley and Cornbelt Regions hosted a joint virtual presentation with Zoe Jenkins, a student leading change in education through empathy and equity.
- The Abe Lincoln and Illini Regions hosted a joint virtual presentation with Zoe Jenkins, a student leading change in education through empathy and equity.
- The Abe Lincoln, Central Illinois Valley, and Illini Regions hosted a joint virtual discussion with Regina Johnson to help school leaders promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

STATEWIDE efforts

I-Grow Summit for Educational Leaders and Teachers of Color

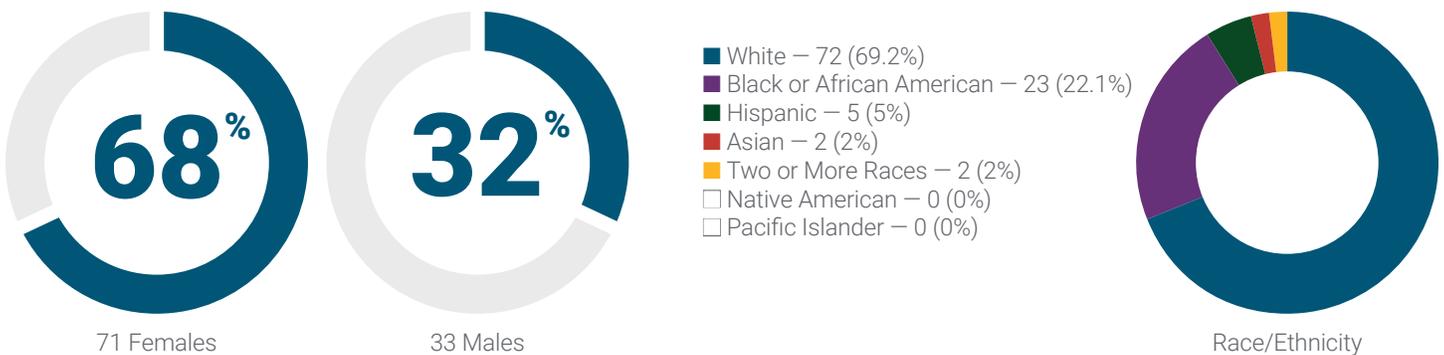
The 2nd annual I-Grow Summit for Educational Leaders and Teachers of Color was held in Bloomington and attended by 144 individuals, an increase of more than 70 percent. The event continues the specific goal of growing, retaining, and recruiting teachers and educational leaders of color and was supported by the Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Principals Association, Illinois Education Association, Illinois Association of School Administrators, the Illinois Association of School Boards, the Illinois Elementary School Association, the Illinois Federation of Teachers, and the Illinois Association of Latino Administrators and Supervisors. The event was further supported by Equitable Advisors, the Illinois Principals Association Foundation, and the Loyola School of Education.

WELL Summit

The 5th annual WELL Summit (Women in Education: Leading and Learning) was held in Bloomington to a sell-out crowd of 407 individuals, an increase of 58 percent. Supported by 18 statewide organizations, the mission of the event is to empower, connect, inspire, support, celebrate, and develop women in educational leadership. The event was further supported by Equitable Advisors, Rise & Shine Illinois, the Illinois Principals Association Foundation, PMA, Stifel, Cognia Learning, the Illinois Association of School Business Officials, DLA Architects, the Illinois Association of School Personnel Administrators, Cabbages & Kings Games, and the Illinois Elementary School Association.

Principal Mentoring Grant

Through its statewide capacity to reach principals, the Illinois Principals Association provided mentoring to 104 first-year principals during the 2022-2023 school year. The following charts demonstrate the Association’s ability to match mentees with mentors based on demographic and educational setting details. All specific requests by gender, race/ethnicity, or setting were honored.



School Context

	Number	Percentage
Urban	24	23.1%
Suburban	50	48.1%
Rural	30	28.8%
Public Charter	0	0%

Grade Setting

	Number	Percentage
Elementary	58	55.8%
Middle School	25	24%
High School	21	20.2%

Principal Recruitment Grant

The Illinois Principals Association supported principal preparation candidates through the ISBE Principal Recruitment grant during the 2022-2023 school year. The IPA received 275 applications for 101 available scholarships. The individuals selected represented a diverse range of participants from a variety of school settings which neared, equaled, or exceeded current Illinois administrator and student demographics, a goal of the project.

Participants were selected through a rigorous process and committed to:

- Becoming a school leader (principal, assistant principal, dean, etc.) upon completion of their preparation program.
- Gaining acceptance into a state approved principal preparation program.
- Completing all principal preparation program requirements.
- Mentoring by an experienced school leader.

Participants received the following benefits during the grant year:

- \$7,200 of tuition support.
- 20 hours of mentoring by an experienced school leader who received significant mentor training.
- \$500 to offset five days of subbing costs and/or professional development opportunities so the aspiring leader could engage in school-based or program-related leadership activities.
- Aspiring IPA Membership to connect to the largest professional learning network of school leaders in the state.

Gender Information

	Principal Recruitment Participants		State of Illinois (2022)*	
	Number	Percentage	Principals	Students
Female	77	76%	58.8%	48.6%
Male	24	24%	41.2%	51.4%

*<https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/state.aspx?source=profile&Stateid=IL>

Race/Ethnicity

	Principal Recruitment Participants		State of Illinois (2022)*	
	Number	Percentage	Principals	Students
White	51	50%	76.1%	46.4%
Black or African American	24	24%	14.3%	16.6%
Hispanic	23	23%	6.9%	27.2%
Asian	3	3%	.9%	5.4%
Native American	0	0%	.3%	.3%
Pacific Islander	0	0%	.1%	.1%
Two or More Races	0	0%	.8%	4.1%

*<https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/state.aspx?source=profile&Stateid=IL>

School Context

	Number	Percentage
Urban	28	28%
Suburban	40	40%
Rural	30	30%
Public Charter	3	3%

Grade Setting

	Number	Percentage
Elementary	27	26.7%
Middle School	32	31.7%
High School	42	41.6%

University Programs

- Aurora University – 2 (2%)
- Chicago State University – 5 (5%)
- Concordia University – 8 (7.9%)
- DePaul University – 1 (1%)
- Eastern Illinois University – 6 (5.9%)
- Governors State University – 15 (14.9%)
- Lewis University – 3 (3%)
- Loyola University-Chicago – 2 (2%)
- McKendree University – 16 (15.8%)
- National Louis University – 5 (5%)
- North Central College – 4 (4%)
- North Park University-Chicago – 2 (2%)
- Northeastern Illinois University – 8 (7.9%)
- Rockford University – 1 (1%)
- Roosevelt University – 2 (2%)
- Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville – 11 (10.9%)
- University of Illinois at Chicago – 2 (2%)
- University of Illinois at Springfield – 2 (2%)
- University of St. Francis – 4 (4%)
- Western Illinois University – 2 (2%)

Graduation and Placement

Of the ten participants who enrolled in, and graduated from, a one-year accelerated program, five have offered and accepted administrative positions for the 2023-2024 school year. The chart below provides a visual representation of their placements. Schools that are considered “hard to staff” have a free and reduced lunch rate above 30 percent.

Title	School Context	Grade Setting	Hard to Staff	Designation
Principal	Rural	Middle School	Yes	Commendable
Principal	Rural	High School	Yes	N/A*
Assistant Principal	Urban	High School	Yes	Commendable
Assistant Principal	Suburban	Middle School	Yes	Commendable
Assistant Principal	Rural	High School	Yes	Commendable

*This individual was employed as the principal for a regional safe high school, which does not carry its own designation.

NATIONAL efforts

NAESP

Because it values diversity in our culture and prioritizes achieving education equity, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) formed its National Task Force on Race and Equity. The task force advises NAESP on issues related to racial equity in school communities, reveal schools’ common challenges and solutions, and support a peer-to-peer network of support for school leaders. In conjunction and collaboration with NAESP staff, the task force hosts events for school leaders to share valuable best practices and produce recommendations to advance racial equity in the principal profession and in public schools.

NAESP firmly believes that principals, as a beacon of hope and inspiration for many community members, can play a central role in leading efforts to improve racial inequities. It is our sincere hope that this task force continues to elevate the dialogue around these issues and support principals in this work.

Guiding Priorities of the task force include:

- Strengthening principals as leaders of equity by enhancing skill sets such as personal reflection on race and implicit bias, listening skills, and courageous conversations.
- School assessment and action planning by curating resources for school leaders to perform equity audits, review curriculum and access, and provide schoolwide equity training.
- Equity-aligned policy and advocacy agenda through data collection and policy review.

Illinois is well represented on many NAESP committees and initiatives.

Denise Gamble, retired principal and IPA Diversity and Equity Chairperson:

- National Task Force on Race and Equity, Zone 5
- NAESP Committee to Vet Content and Resources regarding LGBTQ Inclusion
- NAESP Principals of Color Network

Sonia Ruiz, Principal of Jane Addams Middle School in Bolingbrook:

- National Task Force on Race and Equity
- Education Leadership Advisory Group
- NAESP Principals of Color Network

NASSP

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) is the leading professional organization for middle level and high school principals, assistant principals, and other school leaders across the United States and beyond.

Led by and geared toward school leaders, NASSP's Leadership Networks are collaborative spaces for school leaders to share similar lived experiences, passions, and interests so we can connect with each other on a personal and professional level.

Dr. Marcus Belin, Principal of Huntley High School and Dr. Tron Young, Principal of Joseph Arthur Middle School represent Illinois as facilitators of the School Leaders of Color Network to meet the unique needs of School Leaders of Color and providing a safe space for networking, while elevating the importance of diversity in education and in NASSP.