As we begin with an end in mind, we must "lean in" and reflect on our individual and collective "why" — we will need to be open to our own biases and vulnerabilities as we address the elephants inside and outside the room!! We must prepare for uncomfortable conversations since we will be in different places along this journey. Our values and experiences will frame where we start and how we will approach the work ahead of us. It will be an opportunity and challenge for all of us to engage, learn, listen and lead with compassion and empathy as we promote and shape diversity, equity and inclusion within IPA.

Throughout the journey we must be intentional and strategic and also have hope and faith that together we will be able to do extraordinary work within our respective Regions in order to ensure that all IPA members feel that they belong to a phenomenal professional organization. It’s a time for a disruption of the old normal and an opportunity to be on the right and just side of what happens in our professional educational organizations and our school communities.

— 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 President
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.

### 2018
- IPA Board of Directors created the position of Diversity & Equity Chair.
- More than 10 percent of the individuals seated on the IPA Board of Directors are school leaders from underrepresented groups.

### 2019
- Denise Michelle Gamble was seated as IPA’s first Diversity & Equity Chair.
- The IPA Strategic Plan called for each region to have a Diversity & Equity Chair.
- More than 10 percent of the individuals seated on the IPA Board of Directors are school leaders from underrepresented groups.

### 2020
- The IPA Diversity & Equity Committee began meeting.
- Following the murder of George Floyd in St. Paul, MN and activism of Summer 2020 and beyond, IPA curated numerous anti-racism resources for members.
- Denise Michelle Gamble was named to the National Association of Elementary School Principals National Task Force on Race and Equity. Resources include recommended books, previously recorded webinars, and teaching resources.
- More than 15 percent of the individuals seated on the IPA Board of Directors are school leaders from underrepresented groups.

### 2021
- Dr. Marcus Belin sworn in as the first Black IPA President.
- More than 15 percent of the individuals seated on the IPA Board of Directors are school leaders from underrepresented groups.

### 2022
- Raul Gaston seated as the first Latino IPA President.
- All IPA regions recruited a Diversity & Equity Chair.
- More than 15 percent of the individuals seated on the IPA Board of Directors are school leaders from underrepresented groups.
**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. Listed below 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 popular School Leader’s Calendar. The calendar 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
- 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
- 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!

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

**Ed Leaders Network Webinars/Courses**
- Anti-Bias Education
- Bias and Microaggressions in the Classroom
- Black Girl Blues
- 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
- Reaching Diverse Learners in the Math Classroom
- Restorative Justice in Schools
- The Emergence of Equity, Race & Cultural Diversity Initiatives Positions in District Level
- The Inclusion Solution
- What is CRT?
REGONAL efforts

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.
West Cook
- 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.

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.

STATEWIDE gatherings

I-Grow Summit for Educational Leaders and Teachers of Color
The inaugural I-Grow Summit for Educational Leaders and Teachers of Color was held in Bloomington and attended by more than 80 individuals. The event had 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 Federation of Teachers, Illinois Elementary School Association, Illinois Association of Latino Administrators and Supervisors, Illinois Association of School Administrators, and Equitable Advisors. (June 10, 2022)

WELL Summit
The 4th annual WELL Summit (Women in Education: Leading and Learning) was held in Bloomington and attended by more than 250 individuals. Supported by 17 statewide organizations, the mission of the event is to empower, connect, inspire, support, celebrate, and develop women in educational leadership. (March 16/17, 2022)

NATIONAL efforts

NAESP National Task Force on Race and Equity
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. Denise Gamble, retired principal and IPA Diversity and Equity Chairperson, serves among the 12 members of the task force, representing 10 states.

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.