

2016

2017

# SUPERINTENDENTS ROUNDTABLE

PRESENTS

## DR. SONYA L. WHITAKER

### “SIX CORE CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES”

MORE PRESSURE HAS BEEN PUT ON EDUCATORS TO PRODUCE RESULTS THAN EVER BEFORE IN THE HISTORY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION. AT THE SAME TIME SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAVE EXPERIENCED DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS AS IT RELATES TO THE DIVERSE CULTURAL AND ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS OF THE STUDENTS SERVED. THE DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFT IS NOT THE PROBLEM. THE PROBLEM IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE LIMITED AMOUNT OF TIME LEADERS HAVE TO LEARN ABOUT HOW TO EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO THE SHIFTS.

THROUGHOUT HER KEYNOTE PRESENTATION, DR. SONYA WHITAKER INTRODUCES WHAT SHE REFERS TO AS THE SIX CORE COMPETENCIES DEEPLY ENGRAINED IN CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE SCHOOL AND DISTRICT LEADERS. DR. WHITAKER CONTENDS THAT WHEN THE COMPETENCIES ARE FULLY DEVELOPED AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES ARE IMPLEMENTED WITH FIDELITY, LEADERS ARE PROVIDED WITH THE HIGH LEVERAGE STRATEGIES NEEDED TO IMPROVE THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS OF ALL STUDENTS BUT MORE SPECIFICALLY STUDENTS OF COLOR AND STUDENTS BORN INTO A LIFE OF POVERTY.

# FRIDAY • APRIL 21 • 2017

11:30AM • HARRY CARAY'S AT THE WESTIN HOTEL • 70 YORKTOWN SHOPPING CTR • LOMBARD IL



#### DR. SONYA L. WHITAKER • BIOGRAPHY

DR. SONYA L. WHITAKER IS THE NEWLY APPOINTED SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS FOR HARVEY SCHOOL DISTRICT. MOST RECENTLY, HER COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION LED TO HER PURSUING AND SUCCESSFULLY OBTAINING THE NATIONAL SUPERINTENDENT'S CERTIFICATION, SPONSORED BY THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT'S ASSOCIATION (AASA). SHE IS A SEVENTH YEAR SUPERINTENDENT AND PRIOR TO HER APPOINTMENT IN HARVEY SHE SERVED AS SUPERINTENDENT IN LOCKPORT, ILLINOIS. THROUGHOUT HER PROGRESSIVE CAREER SHE HAS ALSO SERVED AS A CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE LARGEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS (SCHAUMBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT 54). AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL, SHE HELD THE TITLES OF DIRECTOR FOR ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT AND DIRECTOR OF LITERACY. IN THOSE POSITIONS SHE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATING CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, ASSESSMENT AND IMPLEMENTING RESEARCH-BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR LITERACY COACHES, READING SPECIALISTS, PRINCIPALS AND CLASSROOM TEACHERS. HER RESPONSIBILITIES ALSO INCLUDED MONITORING, ANALYZING AND INTERPRETING STATE AND DISTRICT DATA FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN THE AREA OF LITERACY. SHE HAS ALSO HAD EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCES AS A PRINCIPAL, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, AND CLASSROOM TEACHER.

SHE HAS PUBLISHED A BOOK ENTITLED: IS THERE ANYBODY THAT CAN TEACH ME HOW TO READ? SHE IS CURRENTLY IN THE PROCESS OF WRITING HER SECOND BOOK IN WHICH SHE INTRODUCES WHAT SHE IDENTIFIES AS THE SIX CORE COMPETENCIES DEEPLY ENGRAINED IN CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LEADERS. SHE REFERS TO THESE COMPETENCIES AS: GAME CHANGERS. IN APRIL OF 2010, HEINEMANN EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING COMPANY RELEASED DR. WHITAKER'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DVD ENTITLED: THE CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHER: HOW UNDERSTANDING CULTURE POSITIVELY IMPACTS INSTRUCTION AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT. DR. WHITAKER HAS ALSO SERVED AS ADJUNCT PROFESSOR FOR NATIONAL-LOUIS UNIVERSITY. AT THE STATE LEVEL, SHE HAS SERVED AS AN APPOINTED MEMBER OF THE ENSURING SUCCESS IN SCHOOLS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION ILLINOIS STATE LEVEL TASK FORCES. HER CAREER HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE SERVING AS A MODERATOR FOR THE NATIONAL BULLYING CONFERENCE HOSTED AT COLUMBIA COLLEGE IN NEW YORK, NEW YORK (EVENT CAPTURE VIA THE CNN NETWORK) AS WELL AS DELIVERING KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS DURING THE NORFOLK PUBLIC SCHOOLS TIDEWATER REGIONAL CONFERENCE AND TO SUPERINTENDENT'S FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY AT THE NATIONAL SUPERINTENDENT'S LEADERSHIP SUMMIT HOSTED BY NABSE (NABSE) IN BALTIMORE, MARYLAND.

