

“Leading With Heart highlights the efforts of transformative school leaders who facilitate academic excellence by empowering staff and students, reforming punitive and exclusionary policies and practices, and increasing opportunities for personal connection. It is a powerful story that only AES’s high-quality documentary format could capture so vividly.”

Meagan O’Malley, Ph.D.
WestEd



THE TURNAROUND PRINCIPALS

Gloria Ervin, *Equity and Student Achievement Director at San Juan Unified School District, CA*

Gloria has more than 20 years of experience in public education and was the Principal at San Juan High School (SJHS) in the San Juan (CA) Unified School District from 2012 to 2015. In her four years at SJHS, she and her staff partnered with students to shift the school’s culture and developed multiple student empowerment programs which helped change the cultural landscape of the school, decreasing suspensions by 48 percent and increasing the school’s School Climate Index by 88 points. In the 2012/13 school year, SJHS boasted the highest Academic Performance Index (API) growth of all comprehensive high schools in Sacramento County. Gloria is now the Equity and Student Achievement Director at San Juan Unified where she is responsible for overseeing the development of a district wide strategy to improve academic achievement, reduce suspensions and engage the families of students of color and other marginalized students.

Roxanne Mitchell, *Director of the Office of Student Learning Assistance (OSLA), San Juan Unified School District, CA*

Roxanne was been a junior high school principal in three urban schools in the Grant/Twin Rivers School District, and has worked collaboratively with the teachers’ union to re-design schools. She was honored by ACSA Region 3 as Middle School Principal of the year in 2012. In 2013, she was recognized in the Sacramento Bee as a “Turn-Around Principal” for her work at Foothill Ranch Middle School, where she partnered with teachers and the teachers union to create a culture and climate of collaboration, consensus building, and shared leadership to reduce disciplinary issues and increase student engagement and academic performance. She also worked as

a school psychologist and program specialist for Special Education in the East Bay, and in the Court and Community Schools with Sonoma County Office of Education. Currently, she is the Director of the Office of Student Learning Assistance (OSLA) at San Juan Unified where she oversees all Title 1 programs.

Ali King, *Ethnic Studies Teacher and Pipeline through College Coordinator, San Juan High School.*

Ali has B.A. in both sociology and history, and a teaching credential from California State University Chico. While a student at CSU she worked with AES as a college mentor and facilitator for the Pipeline through College program, which works to support vulnerable high school students in their pursuit of a college education or post-secondary training. After graduating with her credential in December of 2014, she began teaching at San Juan High School where is currently teaching one of the only Ethnic Studies class in Sacramento and coordinating their Pipeline program.

Moderator, Bill Dendle, *Associate Director, Alliance for Education Solutions.*

A committed education reformer with over 40 years’ experience in the school system as a vice-principal, teacher, support specialist and advocate, Bill has been an advocate for educational reform for his entire career, and has been particularly focused on the creation and maintenance of positive learning environments at all levels of education. He has taught from kindergarten through adult education, and served as an administrator in both private and public schools. He has participated in community-based organizations, non-profit foundations, and consulted with schools and districts on arts education, as well as research-based general educational reform.