



2024

RTC/RTA Institute on Teaching and Learning Informed by Cultural Knowledge

***ON OUR OWN, Accessing Wisdom, Sovereignty, and Right Relationship***

Educators and families engage with renowned scholars, teacher educators, and teacher leaders who present opportunities to evaluate curriculum and practices foundational prerequisites for building *new* institutions and culturally grounded education systems, schools, and classrooms. This RTC Institute supports educators and families in knowledge acquisition needed for knowing and teaching children of African heritage. Interrupting the traditional, scripted, master narrative and instructional approaches, affords educators and families opportunities to relocate their thinking for productive and predictable positive student outcomes. How teachers as professionals, leaders, and learners conceptualize and practice the understandings that can support instructional effectiveness and community building are presented in collaborative presentations with reflective commentaries.

**Opening Session**

**Monday, May 6**

5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

**The Little Theatre**

***“Teachers as Professionals, The State of Public Education in Urban America”***



**Dr. Walter Farrell**

Education Research and Litigation Consultant  
National Ed. Policy Center Chapel Hill, NC



**Dr. Adam Urbanski**

President, Rochester Teachers  
Association

Respondents

Dr. Joyce King, Dr. Cirecie Olatunji, Dr. Noma LeMoine

K-12 educators are invited to engage with presenters, Dr. Walter Farrell and Dr. Adam Urbanski, about the state of support for urban schools across the US. The role and opportunities professionals have in affecting positive outcomes for urban education hinges on the methodologies and professional assets educators employ. Building background knowledge on this topic is an essential area of focus. Accessing and partnering experience with research is a powerful contributor to educator agency and self-determination. Considering how educators and others can respond to the hurdles public school educators and schools consistently face is key to succeeding in ensuring that public schools endure.

**Tuesday, May 7**

5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

**RTA Dinner Seminar at Temple B'rith Kodesh**

***Linguistically Responsive Instruction: Powerful Pedagogy for Advancing Learning in African American and other Standard English Learners***



**Dr. Noma LeMoine**

LeMoine & Associates, LA, California

This professional learning experience connects to educator and family priorities that include a pedagogically and culturally informed staff that knows and understands the dynamics and particularities that support teaching and learning for students of color. Dr. Noma LeMoine, a nationally recognized expert on literacy and language acquisition for African American and other standard English learners, will provide specific examples and content that allows them to rethink and direct language instruction specific to student needs. Effective teaching and learning depend upon “knowing students” in this cultural context. Teachers across disciplines will understand why typical frameworks for teaching reading and writing have been generally ineffective for students whose first language is other than academic or Standard English. A transformative language learning approach supports teachers in affecting significant improvement in student outcomes.

**Wednesday, May 8**

5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

**Little Theatre**

***Supporting De-Centered Children in the Classroom, School, and Community:  
Spotlight on Black Fatherhood***



**Mr. David Shakes**

Performer, Director, North Star Players



**Dr. Cirecie West Olatunji**

Director, Center for Traumatic Stress Research  
Xavier University

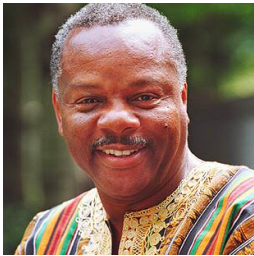
**Respondents**

Dr. Joyce King, Dr. Noma LeMoine, Dr. Walter Farrell

K-12 teachers, social workers, and psychologists are invited to participate in a professional learning session with Mr. David Shakes (North Star Players) and Dr. Cirecie Olatunji (Xavier University) focused on culturally informed social and emotional learning. The ability to recognize students as centered or in need of centering impacts their interactions and relationships. Supporting students' ability to engage and participate in learning and community venues as a methodology is key to this presentation. Through a brief theatrical performance of "The Past is the Past," Dr. Olatunji, joined by David Shakes, former RCSD social worker, will share her research and recommendations for supporting student self-awareness and well-being through case study and reflection. RTC Critical Friends will provide historical and cultural context for current realities of families of color.

**Thursday, May 9**  
5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
**The Little Theatre**

**Scholars Panel: *The Authentic, Culturally Grounded School***



**Dr. Molefi Asante**  
Dept. of Africology



**Dr. Joyce King**  
Benjamin E. Mays Chair



**Dr. Cirecie Olatunji**  
Center for Traumatic Stress Research



**Dr. Noma LeMoine**  
LeMoine & Associates

K-12 educators are invited to engage with a panel of internationally known Black scholars who will present and discuss solutions for significantly improving the learning outcomes and life chances of students of African ancestry. Their comprehensive presentations speak to typically omitted research and understandings about Diasporan education regarding curriculum, professional learning, student deportment, and family engagement. What knowledge, skills, and ways of being do educators possess that are effective with students of color? What practices and insights must replace unsuccessful, typical, and unchanging system approaches to education design in urban schools? What is the relationship between effective teaching and practitioner professionalism and agency? Participants will engage with these and other questions through a multidisciplinary and multimedia approach.

**Saturday, May 11**  
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
**NYSUT Conference Center**  
**30 North Union Street**

***Centering Children: Supporting Balance and Assuredness in Young People  
Responding to Distress***



**Dr. Cirecie Olatunji**

Director, Center for Traumatic Stress Research, Xavier University

K-12 teachers, social workers, and psychologists are invited to participate in a professional learning session with Dr. Cirecie Olatunji focused on culturally informed social and emotional learning. The ability to recognize students as centered or in need of centering impacts their interactions and relationships. Supporting students' ability to engage and participate in learning and community venues as a methodology is key to this presentation. Dr. Olatunji will share her research and recommendations for supporting student self-awareness and well-being through case study and reflection.

***Community Engagement—Community Learning***



**Dr. Joyce E. King**

Benjamin E. Mays Chair of Urban Education, Georgia State University

Dr. King describes and presents community engagement structured as intergenerational community learning events and programs. Preserving, supporting, and retaining *HERITAGE KNOWLEDGE* in Diasporan communities is an imperative goal and responsibility.

**Respondents**

Dr. Susan Goodwin, Dr. Gaya Shakes

Teachers should register on TrueNorth Logic. Parent and community members can register by sending an email to [ymontalvo@rochesterteachers.com](mailto:ymontalvo@rochesterteachers.com) or by phone ([262-8080](tel:262-8080)).