



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF  
EDUCATION AND HUMAN ECOLOGY

# Equity and Diversity Educator Conference REPORT



## 2022

### Key Overall Data

- Conference theme: **“Rethinking Our ‘New Normal’: Centering Representation, Truth, and Access in Our Educational Spaces”**
- Participation number across all speaker events: 246 (number includes participants that showed for multiple days)
- 93% of those who took the survey found speaker events to be impactful
- Students from the 9 teacher education programs were in attendance

## Keynote Address

**Speaker:** Izetta Thomas



**Description:** The rainbow is known as a symbol of hope in most cultures and most popularly in the U.S. as a symbol of pride. Rainbows tend to appear after a thunderstorm or when the environment is seemingly at its darkest. Our education system is currently in one of the darkest phases its seen in decades. We need a light at the end of this tunnel, a rainbow after the storm. The three main ingredients in a rainbow are light, air, and water. Through her experiences as both student and educator, the speaker will seek to guide her listeners on a journey toward radical equity in education where representation is the light, truth is the air and water is access.

**Attendance:** 51

**Average rating:** 9.7



**Key comments from attendees:**

“Izetta Thomas was truly an amazing speaker and I feel like I could have listened to what she had to say even longer than I did.”

“The speaker modelled and gave compelling examples for every strength she mentioned. She is a spellbinding storyteller.”

“Izetta Thomas is one of the most enlightening speakers I have ever gotten to listen to. I feel as if I have learned so much from her within a short hour. Everything that she said was beyond impactful.”

“Amazing, thoughtful speaker. Incredible storytelling. Actually gave me goosebumps.”

## Tuesday Panel—Hidden Silencing in Curriculum

**Panelists:** John Sands, Maya Shabaan, and Stella Villalba

**Description:** This panel will discuss the multiple ways the silencing of marginalized peoples, cultures, and languages is woven into the curriculum and pedagogy of many schools and classrooms.

**Attendance:** 67

**Average rating:** 9.5



# Tuesday Panel—Hidden Silencing in Curriculum Continued

## Key comments from attendees:

“It was amazing to have the opportunity to hear from actual teachers to hear their stories and how they have handled teaching.”

“The panelists did a great job of re-centering what education really is. It can be so easy to get caught up in all of the expectations, but you have to remember that we do these things for the students. I really needed that message today.”

“The first hand accounts of those who fight against the hidden curriculum every day offered insight that i found both useful and genuine.”

“Loved the stories, questions answered, and compassion from the speakers”

“I have heard very inspiring and amazing stories about how to involve students of color in your classrooms and how to deal with racial difficulties whether it’s with yourself or your colleagues.”

# Wednesday Panel—Books as Beacons for Truth and Light

**Panelists:** Courtney Johnson, Tiffany Thomas, and Allison Volz

**Description:** This panel will address how to navigate and/or respond to policies, parents, and administrations that threaten to erase books and representation in our schools and communities.

**Attendance:** 58

**Average rating:** 9.5



## Key comments from attendees:

“Just having actual book recommendations and specific examples of ways you can not only implement diverse books but also just be there for your students in small ways really made such a big task feel more manageable for me.”

“It made me think not only about the literature used in the school I work in, but also what my own children are reading and how I can give them some diverse options.”

“Felt i could connect with the speakers, gave valuable resources and meaningful stories/ examples.”

“As a future Spanish teacher, it was helpful to hear about ways that I can implement diversity in my classroom.”

# Thursday Panel—Meaningful Representation in the STEM Classroom

**Panelists:** Allison McMannis, Schyvonne Ross, and Eric Valentine

**Description:** In this session, panelists will discuss multi-layered and sustained representation in STEM classrooms and beyond.

**Attendance:** 35

**Average rating:** 8.7



**Key comments from attendees:**

“I liked to be able to hear from educators and staff who have worked in the STEM area and offered ways to incorporate it into our classrooms. It is very encouraging.”

“Liked the community aspect that was brought it.”

“I loved hearing from different perspectives of how we can encourage STEM in our classrooms that will be beneficial to all students.”

# Friday Panel— Critical Social Justice Educators

**Panelists:** Robbie Harris, Ivory Kennedy, and Jania Phillips

**Description:** In this session, educators across multiple grade levels, experience levels, and content areas discuss how they have enacted pedagogies grounded in social justice.

**Attendance:** 35

**Average rating:** 9.6



**Key comments from attendees:**

“It is so nice to hear from educators who are doing the work of social justice and listening to the experiences that they have had to help me in my career.”

“The panelists were very engaging, spoke from the heart and gave clear cut advice I can easily take with me into my classroom.”

“Learned so much from the speakers.”

“I loved hearing everyone’s experience.”

## Conference Director



**Jenell Igeleke Penn, PhD**

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*Assistant Director of Teacher Education*

*Clinical, Department of Teaching and Learning*

## Conference Planning Team



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