



The Washington State Board of Education

An education system where students are engaged in personalized education pathways that prepare them for civic engagement, careers, postsecondary education, and lifelong learning.

DR. MARION SMITH JR. BIOGRAPHY

Prepared for the March 2020 Board meeting

Dr. Marion Smith Jr. is a Black man, first.

As a critical race theory scholar practitioner, adaptive leadership specialist and career-long, certificated PK-12 urban education teacher and leader, Marion is bold, unflinching and unapologetically committed to racial equity, student voice and adult professional learning. He has honed his career in diverse ethnic, linguistic, cultural and socioeconomic settings in Las Vegas, Nevada; North Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Seattle, Washington, where he has served and supported school districts and educational communities with enrollment ranging from 50 – 420,000 students.

Marion has 20 years of scholar-practitioner experiences leading and managing complex organizational change to strengthen student educational outcomes. His professional experiences include chief operating & education officer of EdTech company TechSmart (national headquarters Seattle, WA); executive director of learning improvement in Kent School District (Kent, WA); regional director of K-12 leadership and school improvement with Puget Sound Educational Service District (Renton, WA); superintendent of schools intern in Tukwila School District (Tukwila, WA); principal and assistant principal in Seattle Public Schools (Seattle, WA); P-8 turnaround charter school founding director with Scholar Academies (North Philadelphia, PA); and middle school dean of students in the Clark County School District (Las Vegas, NV)- the fifth largest school district in the nation.

Prior to becoming an administrator, Marion was a middle school and high school English teacher and AVID curriculum specialist in the Clark County School District and taught Pre-K in a community center multilingual early childhood education program.

Marion's professional and community affiliations include service on a variety of non-profit boards advancing public education and supporting families and children. Currently he serves on the Board of Directors of the Black Education Strategy Roundtable (BESR) and is an elected official on the Puget Sound Educational Service District Board of Directors. He is Board Director, District 2 (representing Bainbridge Island School District, Seattle Public Schools and Vashon Island School District). Prior service includes Professional Education Advisory Board at Seattle University, Child Care Resources Board of Directors, Equity and Race Advisory Committee to the Superintendent of Seattle Public Schools, and appointment by the Washington State Supreme Court to the Access to Justice Board.

A former K-12 public school student and performing arts high school graduate, Marion's scholarship includes a bachelor's degree in Secondary English Education from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), a master's degree in Education Administration & Supervision with K-12 Principal Certification from the University of Phoenix-Las Vegas campus, and a doctorate degree in Educational Leadership & Change from Fielding Graduate University in Santa Barbara, CA. He pursued post-doctoral studies in Executive Leadership at Seattle University (Seattle U) and earned Washington State Superintendent

Certification. In 2016, Marion attended the Harvard Institute for Superintendents and District Leaders, and was an inaugural graduate of The School Superintendents Association (AASA) Urban Superintendents Academy at the University of Southern California (USC)– a cross-institutional partnership that offers a dynamic approach to urban superintendent preparation and certification to bolster the effectiveness of school district leadership in our nation’s urban areas.

Content for this biography is courtesy of [Educate to Liberate Consulting](#).