



FIRST RING LEADERSHIP ACADEMY & STUDENT LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE 2021-2022 YEARBOOK



TABLE of CONTENTS

Section I: Introduction 3

Section II: 2021-2022 District Research Projects7

Section III: Student Leadership Institute Sessions23

Section IV: First Ring Leadership Academy Reading List28

Section V: 2021-22 First Ring Leadership Academy Cohort Biographies.....29

Section VI: First Ring Leadership Academy & Student Leadership Institute Staff Bios 33

Words from our 2021-2022 FRLA District Leaders.....35

Words from our 2021-2022 FRSLI Student Leaders.....38

FLRA-FRSLI by the Numbers39

SECTION I

ADVANCING PUBLIC EDUCATION TOGETHER



The First Ring Schools Collaborative (FRSC) is an association of 17 school districts within and surrounding the city of Cleveland, Ohio. The Collaborative was established in 2000 with the goal of helping school districts address the common challenges related to poverty, mobility, diversity, and the achievement gap.

The Collaborative started with the superintendents of each member district. Over time, as the Collaborative sought to develop comprehensive solutions to the challenges their districts faced, other administrators with subject matter expertise were included. Presently, over 100 administrators from FRSC members meet monthly via designated workgroups to problem solve and advance specific strategies related to leadership development and collaboration opportunities between districts for both teachers and students; early childhood and career readiness programs; and pupil services, curriculum, safety, school finance, and school communications.

The collaborative serves more than 100,000 students in the following member districts:

- Bedford City Schools
- Berea City Schools
- Brooklyn City Schools
- Cleveland Heights-University Heights City Schools
- Cleveland Metropolitan School District
- Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools
- East Cleveland City Schools
- Euclid City Schools
- Fairview Park City Schools
- Garfield Heights City Schools
- Lakewood City Schools
- Maple Heights City Schools
- Parma City Schools
- Richmond Heights Local Schools
- Shaker Heights City Schools
- South Euclid Lyndhurst City Schools
- Warrensville Heights City Schools

First Ring Leadership Academy

A Professional Development Program for District Leaders



The First Ring Leadership Academy (FRLA) is a year-long professional development and leadership training program for new and emerging leaders in the 16 districts contiguous to the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. Participants are nominated by their superintendents each spring to become part of the cohort the following school year. The FRLA provides participants with an expanded knowledge base and skill set foundation to prepare them to assume additional leadership roles within their districts and continue improving district and individual outcomes to serve all levels of students within Cuyahoga County.

The Academy meets for nine sessions throughout the academic year with a focus on building leadership skills and district capacity to address the unique challenges of equity, poverty, student mobility, diversity, closing the achievement gap, as well as important evidence-based strategies, especially for at-risk populations, such as Positive Behavior Support, Trauma-Informed Practices, Culture and Climate. Participants engage in a variety of learning activities including leadership trait analyses, case studies, readings and reflections, and coordinating and mentoring a team of high school student leaders within their district. Sessions are held at either the ESC of Northeast Ohio or Cleveland State University, and even includes a trip to Columbus to work with their partner program, the Ohio State University Student Leadership Research Collaborative. The FRLA is a key “build from within” system of teaching excellence and leadership development that supports and benefits the entire First Ring regional area.

What District Leaders have to say about the program



Hearing from well renowned keynote speakers has been very impactful.



I loved the book studies and case studies! The collaboration and discussions with other leaders was beneficial.



The most valuable lesson to me has been learning how to empower my students and guide them.

First Ring Student Leadership Institute

Empowering Students



The First Ring Student Leadership Institute (FRSLI) is a multi-year program that empowers high school students to lead change in their schools and communities. FRSLI is built on a social justice framework called Youth Participatory Action

Research (YPAR) that recognizes students as experts in their own experiences and emphasizes student-adult collaboration in effecting change. FRSLI participants build leadership skills, broaden their awareness of community issues, and develop a sense of agency while engaging in student-driven activities and student-centered experiences.

Returning from a hiatus during the 2020-21 school year, this year the Institute brought together 75 high school sophomores from across the First Ring Districts. Participants attended six working sessions held remotely and on university campuses. Students in each district worked as a team to complete a YPAR project over the course of the year guided by experts from Cleveland State University’s Center for Urban Education and with the help of an adult collaborator who represented their district in the First Ring Leadership Academy. The teams began by identifying a pressing issue in their school or community and then conducted original research on their issue to better understand its nature and potential solutions. Each team analyzed their data for key themes and findings and collaborated with peers from other districts to identify possible solutions. Finally, teams shared their findings and pitched their recommendations to First Ring superintendents and high school principals at an end-of-year meeting and celebration.

At the sessions, students heard from guest speakers on the topic of leadership, learned about and worked on their YPAR projects, and interacted with students from other First Ring districts. This year, students also had the opportunity to collaborate with students from our sister program, the Ohio State University Student Leadership Research Collaborative (OSUSLRC). Serving students in the Columbus area, OSUSLRC is similarly focused on youth empowerment and teaching leadership skills through engagement in the YPAR process. This year FRSLI and OSUSLRC held two joint sessions virtually and a third was held on the campus of Columbus State Community College.

Having completed their first year, students attending the 2021-22 Institute will be invited to return next year to continue their leadership training. As “Year 2” students they will focus on putting their recommendations into action, acting as peer mentors to the incoming cohort of students and assisting in the decision-making and operation of the program.

What this year’s participants have to say about the program:



I learned that anyone can make a difference!



It helped me learn how to be a leader and get out of my comfort zone.



I can make a change and I have a voice!

OUR PARTNERS



MARTHA HOLDEN
JENNINGS FOUNDATION



The First Ring Schools Collaborative (FRSC), its networks and programs would like to thank the following partners and funders:

- Center for Educational Leadership, Cleveland State University
- Center for Urban Education, Cleveland State University
- College of Education and Human Services, Cleveland State University
- Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio
- Martha Holden Jennings Foundation
- Ohio State University Student Leadership Research Collaborative



SECTION II DISTRICT RESEARCH PROJECTS 2021-2022

Bedford City Schools

“How Does School Atmosphere Affect Mental Health and Academic Performance?”

The Bedford City School District Student Leaders decided to focus on the effect that school atmosphere has on mental health and academic performance. As academics have shifted from virtual learning to in-person instruction, students have found that a greater emphasis has been placed on school culture. Based on this focus, student leaders crafted a student survey and a series of interview questions to gain a better understanding of student and teacher viewpoints regarding this matter. Our student leaders are eager to share the process they completed to develop their data collection tools as well as the importance of their research focus. In the near future, they hope to complete their surveys and interviews to make recommendations to community stakeholders for the 2022-2023 school year based on quantitative data derived from surveying peers, teachers, administrators, and parents.



Bedford High School Student Leaders:

Kayla Butler
LaTia Grimes
Leah Hammock
William Handrich
Rayhanah Niase

District Leader:

Karla Eberhardt

SECTION II

Berea City Schools

“Improving School Spirit”

The Berea-Midpark Student Leaders focused their attention and research on the level of school spirit within our high school. Coming off the era of the Covid-19 pandemic and major shifts in our traditional school lives, our First Ring Leadership team truly felt as if our school spirit had taken a hit and was at an all-time low. The leadership group devised a survey and sought input from our administration. They then shared the survey with the student body to gauge their opinion on our school spirit. The survey was able to capture over 500 student responses. With this information, the First Ring Leadership group has worked to come up with recommendations to present to our school administrators, faculty, and staff in regards to improving the overall school spirit. The student leaders have brainstormed future school events to promote Titan pride and spirit. They are excited to present their findings to school officials and begin work toward improving school spirit. They believe that they can be fun, creative, and spirited throughout their school days, while always remembering to be a Titan at heart!



Berea-Midpark High School Student Leaders:

Maiya Agnew
Aden Ewing
Sundus Husein
Taliyah Kent
Sean Taylor

District Leader:

Kitty Pinter



DISTRICT RESEARCH PROJECTS 2021-2022

Brooklyn City Schools

“How to Make ICE Block More Beneficial”



Brooklyn High School Student Leaders:

Mayhem Crowley
Jackson Diller
Tyler Morgan
Santana Sammons
Idajia Simpson

District Leader:

Julie McGarey



SECTION II

Cleveland Heights-University Heights City Schools

“Providing School Transportation to Reduce Student Tardiness”

The Heights High YPAR Team identified the number of school tardies as problematic; particularly to first period classes. The team theorized that the number of tardies would be reduced if the district was able to provide busing to the high school. They then researched how students currently got to school, how students and parents felt about the available transportation options (car, RTA, biking, walking, etc.) and district and state policy on school-provided transportation. Parents, students, and district officials were reached out to through surveys and interviews. Findings showed that parents were in favor of busing for high school students while follow-ups with the transportation department gave insight into budgeting and legal considerations. In the end, the students were able to recommend a course of action that weighed several factors from the various stakeholders.



Cleveland Heights High School

Student Leaders:

Tahmir Bell
Aaron Mallamad
Egypt Sa'ad
Ruby Tugeau

District Leader:

Nicole Gardner



DISTRICT RESEARCH PROJECTS 2021-2022

Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools

“Would a Tutoring Program Benefit Our School?”

The Student Leaders at Cuyahoga Heights are feeling the impact of COVID-19 and the academic stressors that are impacting them as a result. They have identified that while they had access to the curriculum, some opportunities for questions, enrichment, and overall support were reduced during remote and hybrid instruction during the pandemic. The Student Leaders conducted a survey of staff and students which demonstrated that across the grades 6-12, the majority of students and staff are feeling the impact as well. To support this, the Student Leaders of Cuyahoga Heights are looking to create a tutoring program that will be all-inclusive to support the needs of all of our students.



Cuyahoga Heights High School

Student Leaders:

Henry Clay
Ava Galek
Charles Lakus
Braylan McClardy
Maecy Voytek

District Leader:

Mike Janatovich



SECTION II

East Cleveland City Schools

“Improving the Media Center”

The First Ring Student Leaders at Shaw High School identified the current space used for the Media Center as a “cavity” in the building. The Student Leaders conducted two different online surveys (one to staff and one to students), asking specific questions about how each group currently utilizes the Media Center, and how they would like to see the Media Center used if it were remodeled to better fit the needs of staff/students. Their data showed the Media Center is highly underused by both staff and students, as well as lacks comfort, student/staff support, and functionality. The Student Leaders then took the results of the survey to develop a plan of what they can do to convert the Media Center into a location that would benefit all stakeholders. Once the plan was developed, the Student Leaders met with District Leaders who agreed to their proposal and stated they had grant money available to put the plan in motion. The Student Leaders shared visual slides to the District Leaders of what they wanted, as well as did a walk-through of the current location to show the District Leaders where they would like specific seating and computers, and where they wanted isolated study rooms, for example. The District Leaders plan to continue to meet with the Student Leaders for the remaining 2021-22 school year, as well as next year to ensure the plan is carried out.



Shaw High School Student Leaders:

Amara Benberry
Taneaija Jackson
Victor Jackson
Emmanuela Quartey-Papafio
Chanti Scruggs

District Leader:

Amanda Stanoszek



DISTRICT RESEARCH PROJECTS 2021-2022

Euclid City Schools

“Does Increasing Student Input Improve School Culture?”

Early in the school year, students attempted to adapt spirit week to their own liking and were prohibited. This served as a catalyst for our research. We did a school-wide survey, and our three key findings were: a need for better staff/student relationships, an increase in student involvement in decision-making and enhancing student engagement opportunities. This project highlighted the disparity between the number of students who are involved in decision-making and those that would like to be involved. Our team believes that by tackling these issues, we can positively impact the school experience for our classmates.



Euclid High School Student Leaders:

Alexander Abernathy
Nandi Grant
Toni Kincaid
Tatiana Maddox
Mikiah Webb

District Leaders:

Katie Gonakis
Sara Mattinson



SECTION II

Fairview Park City Schools

“Student Engagement”



Fairview High School Student Leaders:

Mallory Allen
Kylie Bass
Gabby Davenport
Marty Hoskin
Brooklyn Reed

District Leader:

Grant Graves



DISTRICT RESEARCH PROJECTS 2021-2022

Garfield Heights City Schools

“Substance Abuse Prevention”

The Student Leaders from Garfield Heights identified mental health and substance abuse as critical issues within their school community that impacts student achievement and success. The Student Leaders developed two surveys, one for teachers and one for students that asked questions regarding their thoughts on substance abuse and mental health services within the building. The surveys received responses from over 40 teachers and 100 students. The Student Leaders gained insight on what students felt contributed to their stress and asked the student body and teachers for feedback to find a solution to this problem. Teachers also gave insight and suggestions on this topic. The findings from the survey showed that 92% of teachers and students felt that there were not enough services in place to support students’ mental health. 87% of students could not identify an adult that they felt comfortable talking to in school, and 83% of teachers reported that student substance abuse was an issue happening on school premises. The Student Leaders then proposed the following recommendations based off of the study findings:

- Hire a mental health/substance abuse counselor and resources need to be made available at the high school.
- Staff and students need to be made aware of different services that are in place to help them by advertising in various ways.
- Train guidance counselors and teachers so that they are equipped with strategies that help build positive relationships with students



Garfield Heights High School

Student Leaders:

Dionardo Askew
Essence Jackson
Chyna Martemus
Gianna Williams

District Leader:

Khiara Kimbrough



SECTION II

Lakewood City Schools

“Supporting Lakewood Students with Mental Health Resources”

According to the World Health Survey in 2018, 33% of high school students have experienced some form of mental health issue. At Lakewood High School, only 13% of our students know what mental health services we have at our school. Our goal is to inform students about the mental health services and how they can easily be accessed. After sending out a survey to the student body, we met with school counselors to learn more about our current services and express our concerns. We then developed a plan to work with the school administration and add information to our school announcements, posters in the hallways, and Google Classroom. We plan to meet monthly and survey our student body to evaluate the effectiveness of our efforts.



Lakewood High School Student Leaders:

Haley Benjamin
Delaney Garcia
Safa Jabarkhil
Anthony Severino
Alex Symons

District Leaders:

Eric Fortuna
Meredith Wotjkun



DISTRICT RESEARCH PROJECTS 2021-2022

Maple Heights City Schools

“Does Not Knowing About Your Career Path Early Affect It Later on in Life?”

The First Ring Student Leaders from Maple Heights High School were passionately driven to find out why so many of their peers are challenged with not being able to identify a career pathway for themselves. They believe that too many students leave Maple Heights High School not fully prepared for life outside of the classroom walls. In addition to this, Maple Heights High School First Ring Student Leaders believe that students need to enter high school having a plan in place for them to experience a career path that is unique to their goals and talents. The plan would give students multiple opportunities to explore their careers in a systematic yearly approach that guides and leads students in learning about their career through research, partaking in field experiences of their careers, along with attaining guidance in choosing schools, filling out a job application and more to help them solidify their chosen career path for life after Maple Heights High School.



Maple Heights High School Student Leaders:

Akiya Barnes
Myia Gordon
Jasia Jones
Lamarcus Moon

District Leaders:

Maria Rodgers
Mike Hollins



SECTION II

Parma City Schools

“Mental Health”

Our Student Leaders from Normandy High School focused on mental health awareness and resources available to the students. There are multiple resources and professionals at our school who can help these students. However, the initial Google survey sent to the student body revealed that 83% of students did not know about them. Further surveys conducted also showed that the most issues students face include anxiety and depression. Interviews with mental health professionals currently working at Normandy showed the leaders that more awareness is needed, as few in the school really know about many of the services they may be eligible to receive. Students plan on having awareness campaigns, as well as introducing a mental health resource assembly for the entire school. The long-term goal is to hire a mental health therapist that anyone can go to. Our student leaders will continue to work hard in year two and look forward to solving this issue.



Normandy High School Student Leaders:

Trey Brosemer
Lynden Bryant
Francesca Bubnick
Carleigh Greene
Morgan Tomblin

District Leaders:

Lynn Monaco
Bill Forney



DISTRICT RESEARCH PROJECTS 2021-2022

Richmond Heights Local Schools

“Student/Staff Relationships & Communication”

First Ring Student Leaders from Richmond Heights Local Schools were filled with ideas on how to improve their district. The Student Leaders worked together to find common themes within their ideas and noticed that many of them were focused on school spirit, communication, activities, and the like. They worked together to coin a term that encompassed all of their points of view and decided that exploring school culture was the best fit. Within that exploration, they uncovered how other students felt about school culture, including their relationships with staff, all the way to feelings of belonging in the building. Their work is inspired by their personal observations, experiences, and the input of their peers. These students are striving to improve the school culture in our high school and make students feel a part of Spartan Nation.



Richmond Heights Secondary School Student Leaders:

Kyla Bowling
Tae Boze
Tasean Gross
Alexandria Jackson
Taelynn Lassiter

District Leader:

Alicia Trescott



SECTION II

Shaker Heights City Schools

“Improving Our Current ‘Crew’ Program to Foster Better Teacher to Student Relationships and Mental Health”

The First Ring Student Leaders at Shaker Heights High School focused on recreating a program that allowed students to build meaningful relationships with adults in the building that would sustain them throughout their high school experience. The program is titled “Crew.” The “Crew” program was originally created to help each high school student in the building have a peer group that worked with one adult throughout their four years. Students met with their Crew leader on a biweekly basis, to gain support, guidance and tips for navigating through high school. Our First Ring Student Leaders felt the program should be reorganized to incorporate student choice, mental health, student perspectives, and allow for better planning of activities that truly benefited students in a more meaningful way. As a result of the research process, our Student Leaders were able to understand how students currently feel about their “Crew” program, as well as understand what kinds of changes need to occur for more students and teachers to be engaged in valuable, applicable “Crew” experiences. First Ring Student Leaders were able to work collaboratively with Crew leaders to help create various changes in the Crew curriculum. Research data showed that students wanted to have a role in planning, as well as have activities that encouraged them to get to know each other, learn about specific life skills, and understand ways they can address mental health concerns. Data also showed that there was a need for crew teachers to be provided with materials that they could actually use to support their crew experiences while allowing them to feel comfortable with when leading crew classes. Overall, First Ring Student Leaders are impacting their high school culture in a positive and equitable way, that allows students to be engaged on multiple levels of the Crew curriculum, and have a voice for creating change that will support all students as they navigate through the high school experience.



Shaker Heights High School Student Leaders:

- Amari Chandler
- Jace Griffin
- Sophie Marblestone
- Aniyah White

District Leader:

Nicole Patterson



DISTRICT RESEARCH PROJECTS 2021-2022

South Euclid Lyndhurst Schools

“How Does the Amount of Work Teachers Assign Affect the Mental Health of Students?”

The First Ring Student Leaders at Brush High School identified that at times they themselves, and their peers, can be very overwhelmed with the amount of work that is on their plates. Student Leaders then wanted to dive a bit deeper into this issue, and asked the research question: How Does Schools’ Workload Affect Students’ Mental Health? Student Leaders then conducted a survey with qualitative research methods to really find out how students are being affected by their workload. Student Leaders used a sample size of 50 diverse students who attend Brush, and found that 82 percent of students surveyed reported that they experienced some sort of “anxiety” from their workload throughout the week. Student Leaders also asked questions on the survey about students utilizing time such as study halls to study and complete homework for a balanced approach to the survey. Student Leaders then also found that a handful of students in the Brush community are not using their study hall time wisely. First Ring Leaders at Brush then came up with a recommendation in which both Student Leaders and adult leaders could work together in the implementation of a peer tutoring/school work group program during study halls. This program could potentially increase study hall usage and in turn decrease negative mental health effects on students due to their workload.



Charles F. Brush High School Student Leaders:

- Brandon Berry
- Olivia Jackson
- Trey Okaroh
- Gabrielle Peoples
- Gregory Rhine

District Leader:

Raymond Smith-Watkins



SECTION II

DISTRICT RESEARCH PROJECTS 2021-2022

Warrensville Heights City Schools

“Preparing Students for Adulthood”

Our project is focused on the development of an adult skills class in the district for students. The class will focus on topics such as filing taxes, how credit works, creating and keeping a budget and other time management skills that will all translate to helping students live on their own. We surveyed the entire student body population and found that 80% of the students in the school would want to take the class. We have a family and consumer science class already, and our adult skills class could be offered for juniors and seniors by the same teacher who teaches family and consumer science.



Warrensville Heights High School Student Leaders:

Kamari Boyd
Terrell Davis
TaMya Ellis
Samaira Smith

District Leader:

James Ranc



SECTION III

STUDENT LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE SESSIONS



Session 1

The opening session of the 2020-21 Institute was held on October 29 at Cleveland State University's (CSU) Wolstein Center. The day began with introductions and an icebreaker followed by a segment on leadership featuring guest speaker Jim Clemons, former NBA player and coach. Mr. Clemons spoke to students and district leaders about the persistence needed to achieve excellence and the leadership skills required to lead a high-performing team. Students were then introduced to Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR). CSU professor Adam Voight gave an overview of the social justice framework and the steps to completing a YPAR project. Afterward, a team of experienced student leaders from Westerville High School joined the session by Zoom to share their experiences completing a YPAR initiative last year and to answer students' questions. The team is part of the Ohio State University Student Research Collaborative (OSUSLRC).

While students worked in their district teams brainstorming different needs and issues they saw in their schools, district leaders had a breakout session. After district leaders rejoined their groups and learned about the issues students identified, teams identified their three top issues. Students and district leaders provided feedback on the session and one district leader noted, "I liked being able to watch my students work together and interact with other students. It helped me to understand their team dynamic."



Session 2

The second session was held at CSU's Wolstein Center on November 17. The team from Maple Heights started the day getting everyone out of their seats with an icebreaker called "This or That." By the time dynamic guest speaker Harvey Alston was introduced, everyone was wide awake and ready to hear his message on Developing Leadership & Being the Best. Students commented on Mr. Alston's high energy level and the strength of his message. As one student reflected, "I loved the guest speaker, Harvey Alston, and the messages he portrayed. It was truly inspiring, and I will forever remember the speech!"

Beginning a series of breakout activities designed to help them formulate a research question, students gathered in their teams for a series of mini-debates in which they defended the issues they identified at the last session and challenged those of other teams. Armed with this feedback, the students met with their teammates to reach consensus on a single topic, formulate a research question and then complete a "How-Why Train" activity to unpack their issue and delve into its root causes. *Meanwhile, district leaders attended an FRLA breakout. One district leader stated, "I really liked the ideas shared in the group discussion and plan to take that back to my district."* Once teams were reunited with their district leaders they began preparing for a Gallery Walk. Each team made a poster about their research issue and posted it on the walls of the reception area. Then students circulated around the room, asking other teams questions about their research topics and answering questions about their own. Teams then had a short time to regroup and refine their research questions. The day ended with an introduction to research methods by CSU post-doc Alex Golden.



Session 3

Session 3 took place on December 9 and was once again held at CSU's Wolstein Center. The Richmond Heights team kicked off the day with an icebreaker activity followed by guest speaker Jordan Davis, Executive Director of Smart Columbus. Ms. Davis presented on the topic, "Women in Leadership" and encouraged everyone in the room to realize that they are all leaders and have what it takes to be successful. As one student commented, "I really enjoyed the guest speaker, she was incredibly empowering."

Following a question and answer session with Ms. Davis, district leaders left for their Breakout. Meanwhile, students were treated to a virtual panel discussion with several Year 2 students from OSUSLRC who discussed the research methods they used in completing their YPAR projects last year and answered students' questions. Afterward, students had a short time to draft survey and interview questions they might use for their projects and then teams were paired up to challenge and give feedback on each other's questions. When district leaders rejoined their teams, they had a few minutes to refine their questions and then everyone bundled up for a chilly walking tour of the CSU campus. Everyone enjoyed the tour but noted it was a chilly walk! On their return, teams worked further on refining their research tools and finalizing a research plan. Before dismissal teams were assigned their homework: to finalize their research tools if necessary, administer their surveys and/or interviews, and bring their data to the January meeting.



Session 4

The fourth FRSLI session and first joint session with OSUSLRC was held virtually on January 27. The meeting was opened and the day's activities introduced by three Year 2 students from OSUSLRC. Because the two groups were at different stages of the YPAR process, the FRSLI teams used a separate breakout space to learn about data analysis from Alex Golden. The groups rejoined the main room later in the morning to hear about leadership from guest speaker Clark Kellogg, former professional basketball player and lead college basketball analyst for CBS Sports. His overall message to the group focused on personal growth and the three things he thinks are necessary for it: Grace, Truth, and Time. Kellogg said, "personal growth is foundational to who we are and who we can be as leaders."

Following a Q&A time with Mr. Kellogg and a structured leadership activity, FRSLI students and district leaders went to their team breakout rooms to begin analyzing their data. After lunch, FRSLI teams met briefly with Dr. Golden and then worked in teams to identify key findings from their data analysis before pairing with another team to give feedback on each other's findings. Work time concluded with teams having a brief period to refine their findings. The day ended in the main room with students from FRSLI and OSUSLRC sharing their insights from the day. Before dismissal, FRSLI teams received their homework assignment: to finish analyzing their data.

Session 5

FRSLI's fifth session, and the second joint session with OSUSLRC, was held virtually on February 16. Three Year 2 students from OSUSLRC once again gave the opening and welcome address for the session. The guest speaker, Olympic Gold Medalist Butch Reynolds, shared his insights on leadership and leading under scrutiny. After a Q&A time with the "World's Fastest Man," the two groups went into separate breakout rooms to work on their projects.

FRSLI teams met with Adam Voight for an introduction to creating research presentations. Then teams were treated to a second guest speaker, Chanelle Walker. An inspirational speaker and teacher wellness guru, Mrs. Walker spoke on how to develop a hook to grab your audience's attention. Providing students with a template, she had each team create a hook for their end of year presentation. Bringing the students back together, she had them review their hooks with their peers and provided feedback. Mrs. Walker encouraged students to think about their end goal when delivering their presentations instead of feeling nervous and ended with an uplifting poem. "I loved Chanelle Walker! She was very engaging and helpful," one student commented. District leaders appreciated having a template and targeted activity for developing a hook. After lunch, teams had time to work on their presentations. The day ended in the main room with students from FRSLI and OSUSLRC reflecting on the day. The homework assignment for FRSLI: to draft a presentation for the next session.

Session 6

On March 9, the fifth and final FRSLI work session of the 2021-22 year began at the ESC of Northeast Ohio where students and district leaders received FRSLI and FRLA tee shirts and boarded motor coaches bound for Columbus. On arriving at the campus of Columbus State Community College, the teams entered the Center for Workforce Development and joined their counterparts from OSUSLRC in person for the first time. The day began with a warm welcome and the introduction of special guests

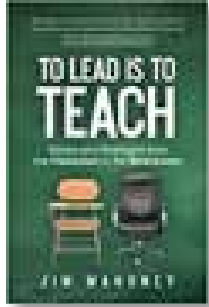
The keynote speaker for the day was Warren Moon, the only Black quarterback in the NFL Hall of Fame and the only player in league history to be named to both the National Football League (NFL) and Canadian Football League (CFL) Halls of Fame. Mr. Moon, who shared his insights on how to become an effective leader, was accompanied by members of the Ohio State University football team, and former NFL players and coaches.

After a structured leadership activity groups entered their separate breakout rooms. FRSLI teams met with Alex Golden, learning how to use a structured rubric to rate YPAR presentations and then breaking into mixed-team groups to practice using the rubric to score a recorded presentation. After processing the activity and sharing their insights, FRSLI students and district leaders joined OSUSLRC teams in learning how to formulate successful recommendations. FRSLI teams had time to draft their recommendations before meeting with a team from OSUSLRC to brainstorm possible solutions to the issues they are researching and to challenge each other on how to connect their data and recommendations. FRSLI students and district leaders said they enjoyed having this time with students from Columbus and that their feedback was very helpful. Teams then regrouped briefly to refine their recommendations before the session wrap-up. The final homework assignment for FRSLI teams: to finalize their presentations, practice their delivery, and create a research poster for the end of year meeting.



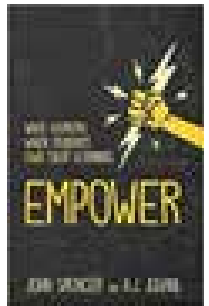
SECTION IV

FIRST RING LEADERSHIP READING LIST



To Lead is to Teach: Stories and Strategies from the Classroom to the Boardroom

Mahoney, Jim. (2021).
Hanover, OH: Proving Press.



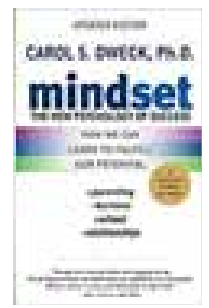
Empower: What Happens When Students Own Their Learning.

Spencer, John & Juliani, A.J. (2017).
Columbia, SC: IMpress, Dave Burgess Consulting, Inc.



Learning Transformed: 8 Keys to Designing Tomorrow's Schools, Today.

Shenger, Eric C. & Murray, Thomas C. (2017).
Alexandria, VA: ASCD.



Mindset: The New Psychology of Success.

Dweck, Carol S. (2007).
New York, NY: Ballantine Books.

SECTION V

FIRST RING LEADERSHIP ACADEMY COHORT BIOGRAPHIES

Bedford City Schools - Karla Eberhardt

Location: Heskett Middle School

Role: English Language Arts, grade 6

Supplemental Duties: Member of Building Leadership Team and District Leadership Team, 2020-21 Teacher of the Year for the district

Master's Degree - John Carroll University

Bachelor's Degree - Cleveland State University

Years in the District: 9

Years in Education: 20

Berea City Schools - Kitti Pinter

Location: Berea-Midpark High School

Role: Spanish Teacher, 9-12 grades, AVID teacher for the Class of 2024

Supplemental Duties: National Honor Society Co-Advisor, International Travel Coordinator for school trips abroad

Master's Degree - John Carroll University

Bachelor's Degree - Miami University with study abroad experience with Middlebury College

Years in the District: 25

Years in Education: 26

Brooklyn City Schools - Julie McGarey

Location: Brooklyn High School

Role: Intervention Specialist, grades 8-12

Supplemental Duties: Member of Building Leadership Team, Portrait of a Graduate committee member, District Strategic Planning committee member, Special Olympics Coach

Master's Degree: Xavier University

Bachelor's Degree: Xavier University

Other credentials: PK-12 Principal License, Baldwin Wallace University

Years in the District: 4

Years in Education: 20

Cleveland Heights-University Heights City Schools - Nicole Gardner

Location: Cleveland Heights High School

Role: Intervention Specialist 9th-12th Grade

PhD Candidate: Cleveland State University

Master's Degree: Cleveland State University

Bachelor's Degree: Hofstra University

Other credentials: Administrators License

Years in the District: 10

Years in Education: 15

Cuyahoga Heights City Schools - Mike Janatovich

Location: Cuyahoga Heights High School & Middle School

Role: Middle School & High School Principal

Master's Degree: Curriculum and Instruction - Indiana Wesleyan University

Principal's Licensure - Baldwin-Wallace University

Bachelor's Degree - Middle Level Education - Baldwin-Wallace University

Years in the District: 11

Years in Education: 18

East Cleveland City Schools - Amanda Stanosek

Location: Shaw High School

Role: Intervention Specialist, ELA/Math 10-11th Grade

Supplemental Duties: Home Instruction, Summer School, Credit Recovery, Transition Coordinator

Master's Degree: Notre Dame College, Cleveland State University

Bachelor's Degree: Mount Union University

Years in the District: 12

Years in Education: 15

Euclid City Schools - Sarah Mattinson

Location: Euclid High School

Role: School Counselor, Class of 2025

Master's Degree: Malone University

Bachelor's Degree: Baldwin Wallace University

Years in the District: 4

Years in Education: 22

Euclid City Schools - Katie Gonakis

Location: Euclid High School

Role: School Counselor, 9-12

Supplemental Duties: Guidance Department Chair, CTE Coordinator

Master's Degree: Cleveland State University

Bachelor's Degree: University of Dayton

Years in the District: 18

Years in Education: 20

Fairview Park City Schools - Grant Graves

Location: Fairview High School

Role: Teacher, 10th and 11th grade

Supplemental Duties: Coach at Lakewood HS

Master's Degree: Baldwin Wallace University

Bachelor's Degree: Ohio University

Years in the District: 6

Years in Education: 7

Garfield Heights City Schools - Khiara Kimbrough

Location: William Foster Elementary

Role: Second Grade Teacher

Master's Degree: Concordia University - Portland, Concordia University - Chicago (2023)

Bachelor's Degree: Capital University

Years in the District: 3

Years in Education: 9

Lakewood City Schools - Eric Fortuna

Location: Hayes Elementary

Role: Principal

Master's Degree: Ursuline College

Bachelor's Degree: Ohio University

Other credentials: Master in Early Literacy

Years in the District: 3

Years in Education: 16

Lakewood City Schools - Meredith Mojtun

Location: Lakewood High School

Role: House II Principal

Master's Degree: Keene State University

Bachelor's Degree: Wittenberg University

Other credentials: General Education Teacher 1 - 8; Special Education Teacher, K - 12; Elementary and Middle School Principal

Years in the District: 30

Years in Education: 35

Maple Heights City Schools - Maria Rodgers

Location: District wide

Role: K-12 Curriculum Coordinator

Supplemental Duties: Member of District Leadership Team, Facilitator of District Math Assessment Committee, member of ODE "Diversifying the Educator Workforce" workgroup

Master's Degree: University of Akron

Bachelor's Degree: University of Akron

Years in the District: 16

Years in Education: 19

Maple Heights City Schools - Michael Hollins

Location: Maple Heights High School

Role: Linkage Coordinator

Bachelor's Degree: John Carroll University

Years in the District: 5

Years in Education: 5

Parma City Schools - Bill Forney

Location: Normandy High School

Role: Teacher, 8th Grade Math & Algebra 1 Honors

Supplemental Duties: 8th Grade Team Leader, Washington, D.C. Trip Director

Master's Degree: Cleveland State University

Bachelor's Degree: Mount Vernon Nazarene University

Other credentials: Inspired Leaders Principal Licensure Program - Cleveland State University

Years in the District: 28

Years in Education: 30

Parma City Schools - Lynn Monaco

Location: Normandy High School

Role: Spanish Teacher / 8th - 11th

Supplemental Duties: Building Leadership Team, PBIS Tiers 1 & 2, MIND Peer Mentoring Advisor & Sophomore Class Advisor

Master's Degree: University of Akron

Bachelor's Degree: University of Akron

Years in the District: 20

Years in Education: 22

Richmond Heights City Schools - Alisha Trescott

Location: Richmond Heights High School
Role: 21st Century Program Director
Master's Degree: Case Western Reserve University
Bachelor's Degree: Thiel College
Years in the District: 5
Years in Education: 5

South Euclid Lyndhurst City Schools - Raymond Smith-Watkins

Location: District wide
Role: Youth Development Specialist/ K-12
Bachelor's Degree: University of Toledo
Years in the District: 1
Years in Education: 7

Shaker Heights City Schools - Nicole Patterson

Location: Shaker Heights High School
Role: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Learning Specialist
Supplemental Duties: Minority Achievement Committee, Scholars District Advisor
Doctorate: Miami University of Ohio.
Master's Degree: M.Ed. in Curriculum and Teacher Leadership in 2001 from Miami University of Ohio.
Bachelor's Degree: Miami University of Ohio.
Other credentials: Administrative License, 2010
Years in the District: 10
Years in Education: 21

Warrensville Heights City Schools - James Ranc

Location: Warrensville Heights High School
Role: Social Studies Teacher
Master's Degree: Ohio University
Bachelor's Degree: Cleveland State University
Years in the District: 4
Years in Education: 4

SECTION VI

FIRST RING LEADERSHIP ACADEMY & STUDENT LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE STAFF BIOS



Jennifer Dodd is the Assistant Superintendent of the Educational Service Center (ESC) of Northeast Ohio and Co-Director of the First Ring Schools Collaborative (FRSC). Jennifer coordinates the FRSC's activities across its many networks and programs, including the development and operations of the First Ring Leadership Academy and First Ring Student Leadership Institute. She currently holds an Early Intervention license, a K-9 Principal's license and a Superintendent's license. Jennifer completed her Ph.D. in Urban Education at Cleveland State University.



Bill Wagner is Co-Director of the First Ring Schools Collaborative (FRSC). Bill coordinates the FRSC's activities across its many networks and programs and manages the operations of the First Ring Leadership Academy. He is a retired teacher and administrator of 33 years, last serving as the Superintendent of the Fairview Park City Schools from 2014-2021. Bill earned his Doctoral degree in Educational Leadership from Ashland University.



Wendy Jovan is a Program Manager at the Educational Service Center (ESC) of Northeast Ohio where she coordinates grant-funded projects. She developed and manages the operations of the First Ring Student Leadership Institute. Previously, Wendy managed the Virtual Intervention Project and worked as a Special Education Supervisor and School Psychologist. Wendy has undergraduate degrees in business and psychology and completed her Psy.S.in School Psychology at Cleveland State University.



Keith Bell, Sr. is a Director of Leadership Services at the Educational Service Center (ESC) of Northeast Ohio. Currently, he is assisting with initiatives for the college and transition for underrepresented students to graduate school at Ohio State University. Prior to joining the ESC, Dr. Bell served as Superintendent of the Euclid City School District. He earned his Ed.D. in Educational Administration from Ohio State University.

WORDS FROM OUR 2021-22 FRLA DISTRICT LEADERS



Alexandra Golden is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Center for Urban Education at Cleveland State University. Alex's research focuses on factors (e.g., peer support, school contextual factors, etc.) that directly and indirectly contribute to the positive adjustment of youth experience contexts of risk. Additionally, she has a strong interest in prevention science and identifying ways to bridge the gap between research and practice for under-resourced populations. Dr. Golden completed her doctorate in Clinical-Community Psychology at the University of South Carolina.



Xiaona Jin is a research assistant at the Center for Urban Education at Cleveland State University. She earned her Master of Arts in Linguistics and Applied Linguistics at Yangzhou University in China and is a third-year student in Cleveland State's Urban Education doctoral program. Ms. Jin's research interests include school climate, Chinese language teaching and learning, and online teaching and learning. She has worked in the education field in both China and the U.S. as a college Chinese instructor, international culture exchange program manager, and pre-K Chinese teacher.



Adam Voight is Director of the Center for Urban Education at Cleveland State University where he partners with urban schools, communities, and youth to create environments conducive to the learning and well-being of young people, particularly those affected by poverty and racism. Adam's community-engaged research and action has been supported by organizations such as the U.S. Department of Education and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Adam has a Ph.D. in Community Psychology from Peabody College of Education and Human Development at Vanderbilt University.

SPECIAL THANKS to guest speakers Jim Clemons, Harvey Alston, Jordan Davis, Clark Kellogg, Butch Reynolds, Chanelle Walker and Warren Moon; to Dr. Deborah Morin and Staff, Center for Educational Leadership, Cleveland State University; to the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio; The Ohio State University College of Education and Human Ecology; and to Kristine Kozlowski, Program Assistant at the Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio



The First Ring Leadership Academy has been an inspiring experience for me. I have watched my group of young participants grow individually in their leadership skills, as well as develop a nice rapport amongst them as a group. They gave quite a bit of thought to identifying an existing issue at our school. Then they used their creative energies to gather data to help them further investigate the issue and come up with a solution. I have loved watching my team of students work collaboratively amongst themselves and with the other First Ring schools, developing their ideas and their confidence in the hopes of making a difference for their school community.

- Berea City Schools - Kitti Pinter

It has been an honor working alongside our student leaders that are driven and passionate about a cause that means a lot to them. I am so impressed with the growth they have made this year that has ultimately led them to become change makers within our school community. I have also enjoyed working with educators from other First Ring districts. I believe it is always beneficial to gain the perspectives of others. I'm very appreciative that I was given the opportunity to work collaboratively with my fellow First Ring District Leaders.

- Brooklyn City Schools - Julie McGarey



The YPAR project was a great opportunity for students to learn through doing. It was rewarding seeing them actively participating, taking ownership of their research, and coming together as a team. It was a great reminder of how much our students are capable of when provided with the supports, guidance, and room to learn and succeed on their own. The program has inspired me to create more student-lead project based learning in the classroom.

- Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School - Nicole Gardner

The First Ring Leadership Program is an essential program for all schools in the Greater Cleveland area, that allow students and staff alike to work collaboratively together to identify problems and find solutions within education and/or the districts in which they represent. As a teacher leader, I personally loved the "book studies" with the other teacher leaders, and Dr. Bill Wagner, the FRSC team leader. The information discussed benefitted me as an educator, and future leader. I was able to return to my District with valuable knowledge that I shared with school leaders which led to in-depth conversations on how we can improve our school systems.

My absolute favorite part of the program was seeing the students collaborate with other students outside our district. This actually inspired me to begin working on an initiative within our district that will allow students to work with other students in a different district on projects collaboratively via Zoom Technology that our district received post-Covid.

- East Cleveland City Schools - Amanda Stanosek

WORDS FROM OUR 2021-22 FRLA DISTRICT LEADERS



It has been an honor to walk alongside some of our outstanding student leaders as they have identified and addressed some of their concerns in their school community. It has also been a privilege to work alongside leaders in other districts to identify and tackle issues in our greater community.

Euclid City Schools - Sarah Mattinson

First Ring Leadership Academy has created such a wonderful network of professionals and what I consider to be friends who are passionate and dedicated educators. My favorite part of First Ring is working on complex problems with individuals who care deeply about their school communities and students. The main highlight for me this year was collaborating and trying to solve the issues we care so deeply about with energetic leaders from all over NEO. I am proud to have learned so much from the First Ring Leadership Academy.

- Fairview Park City Schools - Grant Graves



The First Ring Leadership Academy was a great experience. Not only did I have the opportunity to support and learn from the high school students in my district about issues that impact them, but I had the opportunity to network and collaborate with other great teacher leaders in the First Ring Collaborative. I gained leadership knowledge and skills and feel that this program helped me grow as I look to pursue a future in educational leadership.

- Garfield Heights City Schools - Khiara Kimbrough

First Ring has allowed our students the opportunity to grow as leaders while cultivating new relationships within Lakewood and the partnering districts. They learned how to collaboratively identify an area in our school that they believed to be a problem. They collected data through surveys and interviews, and then developed solutions to better their school community.

- Lakewood City Schools - Meredith Wojtkun & Eric Fortuna



I was truly honored and blessed to be given the opportunity to work with four of Maple Heights High School's finest. They exceeded my expectations with their passion to push the envelope in thinking of a problem that held value to them and their peers. They truly thought outside of the box when coming up with solutions and finding ways to capture their data during a pandemic. I also loved the opportunity in meeting other educators within the program, learning and building collegial conversations around the current educational topics that most affect our students that we serve.

I believe this program is important because it allows students to take ownership of their issues around the school. Not only are they able to take ownership but they're able to generate innovative ideas that would create solutions.

- Maple Heights City Schools - Maria Rodgers and Michael Hollins

WORDS FROM OUR 2021-22 FRLA DISTRICT LEADERS



The opportunity to be a part of the First Ring Leadership Academy has been an enriching experience. It has been a true joy to work with students and colleagues who are passionate about improving their schools and communities.

I am honored to have had the opportunity to work with such a group of talented, motivated and passionate students to be able to guide them in order to make a positive change to their school environment now and in the future."

Parma City Schools - Bill Forney and Lynn Monaco

Being involved in the First Ring Leadership Academy has helped me broaden my views on leadership and education. As a young leader, I appreciate the foundation that First Ring Leadership Academy has helped me to build throughout this year's process."

- Richmond Heights City Schools - Alisha Trescott



First Ring Leadership Academy has been a great overall learning experience for both the youth leaders and me. Students and I got the chance to grow in the areas of unselfishness, joy, peace, patience, temperance, meekness, and gentleness. Any experience in which these areas can be grown in and imputed to both adults and youth can be extremely beneficial to the community.

- South Euclid Lyndhurst City Schools - Raymond Smith-Watkins

"This program was a wonderful experience for me as a leader because I was able to collaborate with other district leaders across that city, and understand various ways we can move our equity work forward. It is nice to see my students grow into even stronger student leaders as they presented their work to their peers and various district leaders. My students have truly developed their own leadership, data collection skills, and presentation styles into such a professional manner. This program allowed them to make a change in their school while gaining new skills to support the change process. It's been extremely rewarding!"

- Shaker Heights City Schools - Nicole Patterson



WORDS FROM OUR 2021-2022 FRSLI STUDENT LEADERS ON THEIR EXPERIENCES THIS YEAR:



I loved this experience!

I can't wait for what my team can accomplish in the future

I feel more empowered and prepared to make change

I feel more confident and ready to make change in my school

It has made me want to be more engaged in changing and fixing things in my school

It makes me feel like anyone can be a leader and anybody can make a change

I loved Mr. Warren Moon's speech...it was very inspirational. I also loved hearing from other schools outside of NEO.



FRLA/FRSLI BY THE NUMBERS . . .





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