



LETTER OF SUPPORT

Rationale and cost details of 2020 Power Trip: Well-Being and Leadership Summit

What Powers the Power Trip?

Women superintendents now comprise (roughly) 24 percent of superintendent positions nationwide—an increase of only 10 percent over the past two decades. In one-on-one conversations with district administrators, listening to conference panelists, and in formal and informal gatherings at industry events, anecdotal evidence inevitably surfaces of the unique challenges women face in ascending to a superintendent’s position—and once there, managing some form of work-life balance. Simultaneously, concepts of mindful leadership and emotional intelligence have gained a stronger presence in our educational and national vocabularies.

In conversations with members of the Power Trip’s founding advisory board, state administrator and technology organizations, and a range of diverse stakeholders, we got serious about this issue. What kind of gathering could we create to address the unique challenges of women superintendents to achieve personal and professional balance? How would they achieve it while effectively driving curriculum and culture change district wide? What setting would set a peaceful stage for sharing these challenges with peers and where they could actively embrace life balance? What lasting impact would the experience have on district change going forward?

A Closer Look

In October 2018, Big Deal Media conducted a survey of some 947 K–12 district-level female administrators. These actively engaged administrators had attended conferences of organizations such as ERDI, DALI, CoSN, ALAS, Council of Chief State School Officers, and Council of Great City Schools. While shedding more light on previous, but limited, research and anecdotal findings citing work-life balance as one of the top challenges facing female administrators today, the survey sought to uncover the level of interest of these administrators in taking advantage of a unique professional development leadership retreat and summit. The retreat would address relevant topics while promoting what work-life balance “looks like” in practice.

What Leaders Shared with Us

Some 60 percent of respondents said they had never attended a leadership event or retreat designed specifically for women. Ninety percent of respondents said they would be interested in learning more about such a retreat.

Respondents Expressed Their Need to:

- Network among themselves to discuss the special challenges of their unique leadership roles, including how to achieve work-life balance, manage stress, and perfect communication styles—all while driving innovative curriculum and change in their districts.
- Develop their physical and spiritual well-being while working to address daily challenges such as transforming their modern learning environments, managing interoperability of technology, and addressing the social-emotional needs of teachers and students to improve student outcomes.

A Successful Inaugural Power Trip in 2019

The result of this research culminated in an inaugural summit in July 2019. In a post-Power Trip survey, 100 percent of attendees said they would recommend the summit to a colleague and 93 percent rated the experience as “exceptional.” Following is a sampling of attendee comments:

“While at Lake Austin I rested, I had time for me to reflect and try something new. I was able to reorganize and confirm my priorities both personally and professionally. With the learnings and reflection time in Austin I gained the confidence to change our priorities as a district for our children. I knew it needed to be done but needed the time to process the impact and the risk. I was so bogged in the quagmire of the daily grind I was unable to move forward.

We now have as our number one district priority that all students will feel connected to our schools, will feel safe at our schools, and will be able to read at grade level. I am convinced taking care of the person (students and staff) will improve our system. We are now leading our staff and families in the work of making connections and building the SEL of our children first and their academics second. With our new focus, in three months’ time we have had a 50 percent reduction in discipline and no expulsions. First quarter climate surveys of teachers, parents, and students have shown significant improvement not only in connection to school but positive feelings of the work the staff is doing.”

“This experience was life changing. I was counting the years to retirement in 3 years at 55. I was simply burned out. I now can see serving as a superintendent easily for another 10 years plus. You made that possible.”

“I loved the Power Trip. I am in a better mind space to begin the school year. It has improved my outlook and my leadership. I was able to immediately implement what I learned or realized. I am more reflective and less reactive as a result. Thank you so much for seeing a need then meeting it.”

“Thank you so much for your vision and generosity in creating this opportunity and space for growth for women leaders. It’s a rare experience to be among such brilliant passionate people who have their heads and hearts in the right places when it comes to transforming the future.

“...one of the best PD experiences that I’ve attended!”

“I just wanted to take a minute to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to attend the Power Trip. While I have attended many conferences in my career, I have never attended a seminar where I felt so supported, energized, and relaxed. It was such an inspiring, fulfilling, and powerful conference and I am just so grateful I had the opportunity to attend, network, and reenergize.”

A Summit Created by Leaders for Leaders

Power Trip 2020 Advisory Board

Kathy Hurley, Lead Senior Advisor

- 45-year veteran of the education industry
- Executive positions with both publishing and technology companies, including Pearson and IBM
- Fellow of the Advanced Leadership Initiative (ALI) at Harvard University
- Cofounded a global nonprofit organization, Girls Thinking Global
- National and international speaker on topics of leadership, workplace diversity, and gender equity
- Coeditor of *Real Women, Real Leaders: Surviving and Succeeding in the Business World* (Wiley)
- Serves on the Board of Directors for the Center for Teaching Quality, the Concord Consortium, and JASON Learning, as well as the Advisory Board for the New York Academy of Sciences
- Senior industry advisor to several superintendent groups

Dr. Jennifer Ferrari, President, Education Research and Development Institute

- Served as vice president and Chief Schools Officer of Distinctive Schools (Chicago and Detroit)
- Led Distinctive Schools five-year strategic planning process, supported principal leadership development, and oversaw the comprehensive academic model
- Former middle school teacher, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent and interim superintendent of North Shore School District 112 (IL)
- Led and scaled comprehensive Dual Language and Personalized Learning initiatives
- Skilled in leadership coaching, curriculum and instruction, and strategic planning
- Facilitates local, state, and national workshops
- Founded the ERDI Women's Fellowship Network
- Facilitates rich national dialog among top education leaders about current problems of practice in the preK–12 education space

Dr. Jill Gildea, Superintendent, Park City School District (UT)

- Former superintendent of Greenwich Public Schools (CT)
- Former superintendent of Fremont School District (IL)
- Held positions as superintendent, assistant superintendent, educational programs director, curriculum director, high school division administrator, elementary principal, and has taught in middle and high schools
- Recognized as an exemplary educational leader for her work in communications and fiscal management
- Finalist for the National Association of School Superintendents (NASS) Superintendent of the Year award
- National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) 2013 Golden Achievement Award in Communications
- Illinois Association of School Business Officials' (IASBO) Meritorious Budget Award in Financial Budgeting for six consecutive years

Dr. Kim Wallace, Superintendent, Fremont Unified School District (CA)

- Leads an international community of 35,000 students in 42 schools with residents from countries across the globe in the Silicon Valley
- More than two decades of diverse public education experience as a high school teacher, instructional coach, university instructor, and site and district administrator
- Demonstrated history of working in education management and executive leadership development
- Expertise in educational technology, curriculum design, public speaking, professional development, and strategic planning
- Strong operations professional with an EdD focused on educational leadership from the University of California, Davis
- Developer of innovative process for new initiative implementations for long-term success
- Named Administrator of the Year, Curriculum and Instruction (ACSA Region 6) and Excellence in Education Administrator of the Year award from the Yolo County School Boards Association

Dr. Ann Levett, Superintendent, Savannah-Chatham Public Schools (GA)

- Former deputy superintendent and chief academic officer at Savannah-Chatham, GA, and Dayton, OH
- Former Acting Superintendent, Dayton, OH
- Held higher education positions at Antioch University, Middle Georgia State University, and the Child Study Center at Yale University School of Medicine
- Named 2019 Georgia Department of Education's STEM/STEAM Advocate of the Year, 2019 Georgia Outstanding Woman in Leadership, and 2019 National Champion for Montessori in the Public Sector
- Coordinated school/university partnerships across the United States and its territories
- Led school reform efforts and community development projects in several European cities
- Appointed to the Board of Education for New Haven (CT) Public Schools (2007)
- Served as a board member for two New Haven charter schools
- Served in several key positions at the state level and maintained positions in a range of national and international organizations
- A published author, nationally known speaker, and consultant on international projects

Lisa Schmucki, Founder and CEO, edWeb.net

- K–12 education industry veteran with more than three decades of experience
- Founder of edWeb.net, a best-in-class online platform that hosts more than 300 live presentations in discrete professional learning communities each year
- Created Super-Connected community, which provides a collaborative forum for district leaders to understand and share the many challenges of leading schools and driving school improvement
- Held senior marketing positions with Films Media Group, Achieve3000, MKTG Services, Peterson's Guides, Macmillan Book Clubs, and Time-Life Books
- Board member of the Education Tech Industry Network of the Software and Information Industry Association (SIIA)
- Three-time recipient of the SIIA CODiE Award for edWeb.net for Best Professional Learning Solution for Faculty and Staff

Host: Big Deal Media

For more than two decades, Big Deal Media has been synonymous with identifying top-quality, groundbreaking content to enrich leading, learning, and teaching. Education professionals have pointed to the trust they have in its rich collection of free content and funding solutions and conveyed their confidence in sharing them with colleagues. It continues to grow through outreach to an ever-greater number of users, partners, and sponsors; refinements to an ebullient social media presence; and targeted development of one-of-a-kind educator events. The team at Big Deal Media is passionate about the need to address the nexus between personal well-being and effective leadership among our nation's female superintendents. Big Deal Media is an industry partner of CoSN, SIIA, and ISTE.

Marilyn Schutz, President, Publisher, and Founder of Big Deal Media

- Decades-long track record as an editor, publisher, and entrepreneur
- Held executive positions with *Instructor* magazine
- Worked with hundreds of companies in the education sector, including technology companies, textbook publishers, supplemental materials publishers, equipment manufacturers, and service providers
- Created semiannual *Big Deal Book of Technology* and biweekly *K-12 Technology* newsletter for tech directors, coordinators, integrationists, media specialists, curriculum directors, and tech-savvy educators
- Created the award-winning GetEdFunding.com website, which includes more than 5,100 sources of grant and other funding opportunities and has more than 60,000 K–12 and higher education users
- Created and hosts the annual Well-Being and Leadership Power Trip™ for Women Superintendents and District Leaders

The Power Trip Agenda

The 2020 Power Trip summit is being built and guided by input from district leaders. It will provide strategies to build powerful teams, drive and sustain district change, create trusted environments, understand curriculum needs to prepare students for the future, and look deeply at the accelerators that will drive innovation in the next several years. In a well-crafted agenda, superintendents and district leaders will take away enhanced understandings to build more powerful teams. They'll participate in interactive panels and workshops to gain insight to—and perfect—their personal communication styles to more effectively engage other district leaders, their teaching staffs, communities, parents, school boards, and other stakeholders.

Attendees will hear from leading educational professionals about specific leadership strategies for driving and sustaining change, bringing all stakeholders together in the pursuit of a common vision, organizing the essential elements of the change process, and surrounding themselves with staff whose skill sets are critical to support change.

This summit is being offered to attendees for a nominal registration fee of \$495 (early bird cost is \$395) plus the cost of airfare.

The fair market value of this unique experience is presented as follows:

- Accommodations for three nights and four days
- Nine meals beginning Monday evening July 13 and ending with lunch on Thursday, July 16
- All activity fees offered by the venue, which include wellness and well-being experiences
- Participation in 15 hours of professional development sessions
- Workshop materials
- Round-trip transportation to/from airport on scheduled complementary shuttles

Total value of the Well-Being and Leadership Summit: \$2,712