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From Insight to Action: Leading for Inclusion: A Transformational Convening

This May, IPTN members AESD, ASWR, WASA, and the UW Haring Center were honored to bring over 50 educators and district teams together for a full-day professional learning experience designed to strengthen school leaders' capacity to advance inclusive education, particularly for Black students with disabilities and students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The day began with grounding in our IPTN aim statements, networking, a welcome, and a powerful keynote from [Kala Omeiza](#) that grounded participants in belonging, disability justice, and inclusive leadership. A panel discussion followed, elevating lived experiences and illuminating persistent systemic barriers to inclusion. [Dr. Bettina Love](#) delivered a keynote that centered storytelling, public memory, and collective action as essential drivers for transforming school communities. Leaders spent the afternoon in continued learning and reflection through self-selected sessions including; small group dialogue, workshops on scaling and problem solving inclusive practices, and individualized consultancy sessions. Day 1 concluded with dedicated action planning and a closing session where participants committed to next steps and ongoing collaboration, reinforcing a shared focus on translating insight into concrete actions that expand belonging, access, and outcomes for historically underserved students. We are grateful for the community of educational leaders who showed up with openness and commitment to this transformative leadership experience. Dr. Love's keynote, *"All We Have Left Is Hard Work,"* offered both a grounding message and a call to action. It challenged participants, especially white leaders, to consider who benefits most from existing systems and to take responsibility for changing them. By telling the truth about our nation's history and honoring the contributions, successes, and resilience of Black and Brown communities, we can build more inclusive, affirming, and opportunity-rich environments for all students.

Educational leaders will return on August 11 for the second day of the convening. We are excited for leaders and leadership teams to use this time to create a strong, actionable launch to the 2026–27 school year by centering inclusion, culturally responsive teaching, and the intersection of race and disability.

