

SYMPOSIUM SPEAKERS



Dr. Rod Paige, former U.S. Secretary of Education

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Paige began working with students early in his career as a teacher and a coach and then served for a decade as dean of the College of Education at Texas Southern University (TSU). In 1994, Dr. Paige left TSU to become superintendent of Houston Independent School District (HISD), the nation's seventh largest school district. In 2001, he was named National Superintendent of the Year by the American Association of School Administrators. Dr. Paige also served as an officer of the Board of Education of HISD from 1990 to 1994.

On January 21, 2001, the United States Senate confirmed Dr. Paige as the seventh U.S. Secretary of Education. During his tenure, Dr. Paige was a fierce and innovative champion of education reform who led the way in setting new standards of achievement for all students in our education system. He spearheaded the implementation of the historic No Child Left Behind Act, with its goal of reinvigorating America's education system.

Dr. Paige currently resides in Houston and recently published *The Black-White Achievement Gap: Why Closing it is the Greatest Civil Rights Issue of Our Time*. Learn more at www.rodpaige.com/books.



Marcus Robinson, CEO of EdPower and former Principal of Charles A. Tindley Accelerated Academy (IN)

Panelist

As a product of both inner-city and suburban schools, Mr. Robinson has a deep sense of the wide chasm of educational opportunity that separates students in at-risk communities. His professional experiences include several years in college admissions, teaching at the middle and high school levels, curriculum development, and piloting innovative instructional programs. Under Mr. Robinson's leadership, the Tindley School won the 2008 Effective Practices Incentive Community (EPIC) award sponsored by the United States Department of Education for the demonstrated growth of its students.

Mr. Robinson now leads EdPower, an organization that is working to expand the Accelerated Schools model. EdPower was selected by the Indiana Board of Education to turnaround a failing traditional high school in Indianapolis.

Mr. Robinson is a native of St. Louis, Missouri. He holds degrees from both DePauw University and Butler University. He is currently working toward his doctoral degree at Columbia University.



Dr. Eugene Sanders, CEO of American Consulting Services, LLC and former Superintendent, Cleveland Public Schools (OH)

Panelist

Dr. Eugene T. W. Sanders is an inspirational speaker who has more than three decades of leadership experience serving children and communities as a teacher, high school administrator, professor and Director of the Doctoral Program in Leadership, and CEO of two large urban school districts.

Dr. Sanders served as the CEO of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and the Toledo Public Schools. In Cleveland and Toledo, Dr. Sanders led both districts to the highest academic and graduation rates in the history of both school organizations.

Dr. Sanders received his undergraduate degree, two masters degrees, and a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Organizational Behavior at Bowling Green State University. His visionary leadership has been featured on MSN *Morning Roundup* and NBC's *The Today Show*.



Dr. Ivory A. Toldson, Associate Professor of Educational Psychology, Howard University School of Education

Panel Moderator

Dr. Toldson has more than 40 publications and research presentations in 29 US states, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Scotland, South Africa, and Paris. He has been featured on C-SPAN2 Books, NPR News, The Al Sharpton Show on XM Satellite Radio, and WKYS 93.9. Dr. Toldson's research has been featured on The Root, Essence.com, BET.com and The Griot. He also gave expert commentary in three documentaries on black male achievement: *Beyond the Bricks*, *Hoodwinked*, and the *Promise Tracker*.

In 2005, Dr. Toldson won EboNetwork's Changing Faces award for outstanding literary achievement for his novel, *Black Sheep: When the American Dream Becomes a Black Man's Nightmare*. Dr. Toldson is also the author of *The Breaking Barriers Series*, that analyzes academic success indicators from national surveys that together give voice to more than 10,000 black male pupils from schools across the country. Through his consulting firm, CREATE, LLC, he routinely works with schools to increase their capacity to promote academic success among black males.



Antwan Wilson, Assistant Superintendent of Post-Secondary Readiness, Denver Public Schools (CO)

Panelist

Mr. Wilson is currently working as a member of the Superintendents Cabinet as the Assistant Superintendent of Post-Secondary Readiness at Denver Public Schools. His charge is to lead all middle and high schools as they focus on student achievement and to increase the performance of high school students on state assessments, meeting high school graduation requirements, meeting college admission requirements, and to ensure our students are being prepared for success in college and career.

Mr. Wilson graduated college from Nebraska Wesleyan University and received his Masters degree in School Leadership from Friends University in Wichita, Kansas. He has been a classroom teacher as well as principal at two middle schools. In 2008 Mr. Wilson joined the central administration team of Denver Public Schools as an Instructional Superintendent.