



## Frances Marie Gipson

Clinical Associate Professor of Education  
Director, Urban Leadership Program



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#### DEGREES

PhD, Education, Claremont Graduate University

#### RESEARCH INTERESTS

Urban schooling; distributed leadership; social-emotional learning; culturally relevant and linguistically responsive education; systems theory; learning and achievement; talent and leadership development; P-20 school policy

Frances Marie Gipson is a clinical associate professor of education in the School of Educational Studies at Claremont Graduate University, and also serves as director of the Urban Leadership program.

Most recently, Gipson served as the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) for the second largest school district in the nation, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). As a leader of leaders, she oversaw the instructional plan and capacity building for over 600,000 students in preschool through adult school programs – across over 20 departments.

Prior to her role as CAO, she was the LAUSD Local District East Superintendent serving over 100+ schools across the northeast and southeast Los Angeles regional communities. Her experience as a proud principal and teacher has shaped a mission of success with an “all means all” strategy. As the principal of the first complete family of International Baccalaureate Schools in LAUSD, Gipson transformed her campus from a Program Improvement school to a Los Angeles County of Education (LACOE) Promising Practice QEIA School, Title One Achieving School, and California Department of Education (CDE) Gold Ribbon Distinguished School. The Active Transformation Model resulted in a personalized campus that includes the first LAUSD district middle school dual language Mandarin Academy, Spanish Dual Language Academy, Environmental Science Academy, and two magnet schools offering highly-gifted and STEM programs. Believing in the power of preschool-16 partnerships, the school tripled the size of an award-winning MESA program and developed university partnerships. As a result, all students receive college scholarship opportunities, and the partnerships ensure that all students have access to highly personalized success pathways for A-G college and career readiness.

Gipson has also served learners as the administrator of instruction in LAUSD Local District 5 (LD5), and also as former director of Professional Development & Partnerships at UCLA’s Center X. Core to the work at UCLA was the design of transformative coaching models and notably recognized partnerships with the subject matter projects. In LD5, she supported leading for learning in 150+ schools in east, southeast, and south Los Angeles. During Gipson’s tenure at LD5, the district was recognized for student achievement growth models, English learner reclassification, highest district attendance rates, lowest suspension rates, greatest numbers of National Board Certification participants, and even organized the first East LA Arts Festival.

A highly regarded educator, she has published and designed quality curriculum at the district, state, national, and international levels. With this passion for active learning, she has taught educational leadership at CSULA, UCLA’s Teacher Education Program, and the Principals Leadership Institute. Gipson’s leadership has been formally recognized with the regional Administrator of the Year Award from ACSA; the Tae Han Kim award for humanitarian and cultural accomplishments; the CSULA Day of the Educator award for excellence in fieldwork supervision; the Excellence in Urban Leadership Award from Claremont Graduate University; Top 30 trailblazers, technologists, and transformers by the Center for Digital Education; the AALA Presidents Award; and most recently the Distinguished Alumni Award from CGU.

Gipson believes that “living in the system” and “disturbing the system” are both critical to agency and advocacy for youth, and ensure that our communities are at the center of all decisions. She is inspired to coach, mentor, and support the next generation of urban leaders who will promote flourishing urban school systems.

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