

No Confidence Whatsoever: The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Leadership of a Superintendent in a Large Suburban School District

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journals.sagepub.com/home/jelShawn Joseph¹ 

Abstract

This case study involves a new school superintendent, unions, parent groups, and a school board. The case demonstrates how the emergence of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) epidemic impacted the relationships between a school board, teacher and administrator unions, parent organizations, and the school superintendent. It is the story of educational leadership under unprecedented pressure.

Keywords

superintendency, COVID-19, suburban school district, school stakeholder relationships, teacher unions, parent organizations

This case study involves a school superintendent, unions, parent groups, and a seven-member school board. The case demonstrates how the emergence of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) epidemic impacted the relationships between a school board, teacher and administrator unions, parent organizations, and the school superintendent. It is the story of educational leadership under unprecedented pressure.

Background

Davis County Public Schools (a pseudonym, as are all names in this article) is the largest school district in its state. The racial diversity of the school district is as follows:

¹Howard University Graduate School, Washington, DC, USA

Corresponding Author:

Shawn Joseph, Howard University Graduate School, 2441 4th Street, Washington, DC 20059-0001, USA.

Email: Shawn.Joseph@Howard.edu

48% White, 28% Black, 12% Latinx, 10% Asian, and 2% multiracial. The school district comprised 225 schools in urban, suburban, and rural settings. Half of district students receive free or reduced-price meals, and 12% of the student population has been identified as needing special education services. The district is culturally diverse, with over 180 languages being spoken within it and 18% of the student population receiving English as a Second Language services. Davis County Public Schools maintained a stellar reputation as one of the highest performing, large school districts within the state and the country. Progress within the district has been well-documented, and it is one of the few school districts in the country that narrowed achievement and opportunity gaps by race, with Black students performing well above national averages for White and Asian students. With a U.S.\$4 billion budget, the district is well-resourced and well-supported by the community. The school system models shared governance and accountability with a teachers' union, a principals' union, a noncertificated employees' union, and a district-level parent–teacher organization being actively involved in day-to-day activities and decision-making throughout the system. The citizens of Davis County expect schools to continue to perform at levels that exceed national averages.

National Racial and Political Unrest Leading up to Dr Fleming's Appointment

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, was murdered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, by Derek Chauvin, a 44-year-old White police officer (McGreal et al., 2021). Chauvin and three other officers arrested Floyd on suspicion of using a counterfeit U.S.\$20 bill, and, to subdue Floyd, Chauvin knelt on Floyd's neck for over 9 minutes while Floyd was handcuffed and lying face down in a street ("George Floyd: What Happened in the Final Moments of His Life," 2020). Two autopsies and one autopsy review found Floyd's death to be a homicide ("Hennepin County Medical Examiner Declares George Floyd Death Homicide," 2020). Floyd's murder, and the murder of Breonna Taylor just a few months prior, on March 13, 2020, ignited worldwide protests ("Protests Across the Globe After George Floyd's Death," 2020) in over 2,000 cities and towns around the world in support of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement (Burch et al., 2020). BLM protests in the United States focused on police brutality and systemic racism in U.S. institutions, including, but not limited to, the police force. Polls conducted in the summer of 2020 estimated that between 15 and 26 million people had participated at some point in the demonstrations in the United States, making the protests the largest in U.S. history (Buchanan et al., 2020). Protests continued throughout 2020 into 2022 in some cities (Oursler & DalCortivo, 2022).

The BLM protests, which peaked in 2020, and the resultant national conversation about race and institutionalized and historical racism, coincided with one of the peaks of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns, including the mass closure of schools throughout the country. By June 2021, the United States passed the grim mark of 600,000 COVID-19 deaths (Har & Kunzelman, 2021). By June 2021, most lockdowns,

or stay-at-home orders, were lifted, but many districts remained closed to students and teachers, requiring virtual instruction.

The first three cases of COVID-19 in the state where this case study takes place were reported in Davis County in March 2020. The state superintendent of schools announced that all public schools would be closed for 2 weeks beginning the middle of March. The estimate of a 2-week break was optimistic; schools in the county did not begin a phased-in reopening until March 2021.

In Davis County, protests related to the racial unrest were intense. There was multiracial support for equity initiatives, and the county had a history of being liberal and progressive. Board of Education members noted the importance of hiring an experienced community member as the interim superintendent during such a time. Against this backdrop of extreme racial tension roiling the nation, and indeed, the world, and a global pandemic that forced closure of schools and other public places, Davis County's first female and second Black superintendent, Dr Fleming, was confirmed as interim superintendent effective July 1, 2021, following the retirement of the previous superintendent. The rest of this article focuses on the events that transpired during her tenure as interim superintendent.

Interim Superintendent Dr Fleming

Dr Fleming was the first woman and second Black person to serve in the role of superintendent in Davis County. Prior to her appointment as interim superintendent, she had served 2 years as Davis County's deputy superintendent. Dr Fleming spent her entire career in Davis County Public Schools, with the exception of 2 years served in a neighboring district as deputy superintendent of instruction. A 27-year veteran in education, Dr Fleming served as an English teacher, department chair, assistant principal, an award-winning principal, and as a principal supervisor within Davis County prior to leaving and returning to Davis County Public Schools as deputy superintendent. Dr Fleming shared, "Davis County Public Schools is my home. Nothing has made me prouder than to be our county's interim superintendent, and without question, I plan to apply to be our permanent superintendent."

Trouble Brews Early With Stakeholder Groups

At the beginning of Fleming's tenure as interim superintendent in July 2021, she decided to restructure the administration of the Davis County Public Schools. Since Dr Fleming worked in the school district for years, she felt that she could quickly reassign personnel and reorganize key functions of the school district to better focus on equity issues she saw within the school district. Dr Fleming felt she could better navigate the political landscape of Davis County with key additions to her cabinet. One such change was the hiring a former school board member in the role of her special assistant. Mr England had been a board member in one of the most affluent, political strongholds of the district, and he was well-liked and politically savvy. In July 2021, Dr Fleming

announced additional significant changes to the central office, eliminating some positions, changing some people's titles, and moving others under new management.

Parent Coalition. The parent organization, the Parent Coalition of Davis County, states as its mission, "improving performance and responsiveness of Davis County Public Schools," performing as a sort of watchdog group. The parent organization hosts a Listserv that posts announcements regarding the district. Soon after Fleming was announced as the interim superintendent, the Listserv published a link to her doctoral dissertation. Only one person commented on the link, saying, "The dissertation, which was produced at our flagship state university, has numerous punctuation, syntax, and grammar errors. I guess it must be easy to earn an Ed.D. nowadays." In addition, the parent group was critical of the initial administrative changes. In particular, the group noted that Mr England was not officially listed on the district website as an employee, prompting accusations of secrecy. In August 2021, the Parent Coalition Listserv reported, "It looks like Dr Fleming is doing business as usual. She is unilaterally hiring her friends and playing politics with the appointment of Mr England. This stinks of nepotism. Citizens of Davis County, beware!"

Parent-Teacher Organization. In addition, stakeholders were concerned about the pandemic crisis and how to return students to school. The White, liberal leader of the district parent-teacher organization was skeptical of plans to keep students safe as the district worked on returning students back to schools. In December 2021, she was cited as stating:

Parents are essential to Davis County Public Schools' success. Our children have been out of school dealing with remote learning for over one year and a half. Our voices have not been heard in key decisions. Our children are not guinea pigs. We are not following what Science is telling us. Our kids are not safe in school, and we should not rush to return them without a guarantee by the school system that they will be safe.

Black and Indigenous People of Color Parent Coalition. Conversely, the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and an organization called the Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) Parent Coalition were adamant that a plan to return students to school was essential for BIPOC students' success. The president of the local NAACP chapter and the president of the BIPOC Parent Coalition, Black and Latinx advocates, respectively, jointly released a press statement in December communicating the following:

The preponderance of research is clear: Black and Brown children have suffered the most during this pandemic. Over the course of the past year and a half, we have seen a deterioration in the quality and care for Black and Brown children. It is critical that Davis County Public Schools return students and staff back to school no later than January 1, 2022. We cannot wait any longer. Dr. Fleming has been in her role for the last 6 months. We need a plan to return students to school. If the district is serious about equity, it will work with deliberate speed to give students, particularly our most marginalized students, in-person instruction.

Teachers' Union. While the parents' group might have had some concerns about Fleming's initial appointments and the timeline for reopening schools, the liberal, White vice president and president-elect of the county teachers' union, Mrs Bowen, said she was looking forward to a "fresh start" with Fleming. This narrative ended quickly as Dr Fleming discussed the need to return students and staff back to in-person learning. The teachers' union had a rocky relationship with administration under the former superintendent, struggling to finance a new contract. Teachers' union leadership often criticized the former superintendent of lacking communication and transparency. As the system began discussing plans to reopen schools, the teachers' union expressed a desire for accountability. Mrs Bowen commented:

Our implementation plans, quite frankly, have been nonexistent to disastrous. It is unfathomable to me that the district is considering reopening schools. We have not seen any plans to ensure the safety of teachers and students. We continue to beg to be at the table with senior administration and the board as key decisions, which affect our 14,000 employees, are decided. We adamantly oppose any plan that does not ensure that our members will be safe. Teachers are more stressed than ever, and if we do not get this right, we will not only have a mass exodus from our classrooms, we will worsen our ability to recruit new teachers to our district.

Davis County Association of Administrators and Principals. Similar to the teachers' union, the Davis County Association of Administrators and Principals (DCAAPs) also communicated initial optimism in Dr Fleming's tenure. Dr Blackwell, a 12-year former high school principal and DCAAP president, publicly commented:

As a former Davis County principal, we are optimistic about supporting one of our own. The last administration, led by someone who did not understand Davis County's culture of collaboration, severely strained relationships with DCAAP. We hope Dr. Fleming brings us back to our roots of respect, communication, and collaboration.

Behind the scenes, though, Dr Blackwell began communicating directly with the Board of Education about concerns she had with Dr Fleming's initial hires in her administrative reorganization of the system. Dr Blackwell reported "unqualified" and inexperienced leaders were selected by Dr Fleming in key roles at the detriment of the school system. Furthermore, Dr Fleming appointed her direct reports without consulting with DCAAP or the teachers' union leadership. In an email sent to the Board of Education president, Dr Blackwell explained:

It was a slap in the face to the hardworking, more experienced leaders within our district, once again, not have the opportunity to apply for senior executive positions through a collaborative process. If we are going to be a truly great district, we must have experienced, stellar leadership in every administrative position, especially in senior leadership. Dr. Fleming has already failed her first test with her unilateral appointment of "her" people. We demand that the positions be re-advertised and appropriate people be placed in roles to stabilize the school district and work in a true collaborative fashion.

Vote of No Confidence

By January 2022, both the teachers' and administrator's unions voted "no confidence" in Dr Fleming's role as interim superintendent. Over 90% of the teachers' union's more than 14,000 members voted no confidence as well as nearly 90% of the 500 administrators. This vote came at a critical time because the Board of Education was about to formally launch the national search to select the next permanent superintendent of Davis County Public Schools. The resolution of "no confidence" stated,

The members of Davis County Public Schools declare that we have no confidence in the ability of current members of the Davis County Board of Education or interim superintendent Dr. Fleming to effectively address the current crisis in our schools caused by the effects of COVID-19. Davis County leadership has consistently shown a dereliction of duty and a lack of competence. We demand immediate action to address our concerns.

The resolution also stated that union members have the right to a safe, healthy working and learning environment, yet the school system "has been unable to provide a coherent plan to address the many issues that have resulted from the most recent COVID-19 surge."

In a joint statement, and with the endorsement of the Davis County Parent-Teacher Association, union leadership communicated that decision by the school system's executive leadership "have enhanced the current challenges that Davis County has faced, including educator retention, closing achievement and opportunity gaps, connecting with Black and Brown communities, and effectively providing services to special education students." According to the administrator and teacher unions, the school district failed to provide clear metrics and a reliable and timely testing program for students and staff. According to the resolution, the school system also failed to address student absences and staff shortages. Furthermore, the lack of transparency and communication that was a problem during the previous superintendent's tenure has remained. The statement concluded,

As a result, the current steps the administration has taken have been poorly communicated, poorly thought through, and poorly implemented. This not only effects teaching and learning, but it has caused mistrust and alienated aspects of our community which have been devastated by the pandemic.

A teacher and a member of the board of the teachers' union said, "We're just in denial. I feel like the system is in denial. We do not have the staff we need to really make it work well in person, at least not without more creative thinking and solutions." The board member said teachers were not satisfied with the district's plans to handle distance learning if students were out of school with COVID-19. "We would like to be real partners in the decision-making process because we have to implement these plans," she added. She stated that in-person learning, at the moment, was not the best solution: "It just might not be reasonable for every kid to be here in person all the time, right now." In response, Dr Fleming released the following statement:

Davis County Public Schools is committed to working with all stakeholders to ensure a safe school experience in our schools. We will convene an emergency meeting of our District Culture and Climate Committee to bring all stakeholders to the table to collectively agree upon best steps to move forward. You have my commitment to collaboration, but more importantly, getting things right for our children.

This was the first vote of no confidence in the lengthy history of the school system. What happened in Fleming's 6-month tenure to change the tone of her relationship with the unions from hopeful and optimistic to an overwhelming vote of "no confidence"? A number of issues emerged as Dr Fleming and her administration transitioned at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Concerns With New Leadership

The Reorganization. The district reorganization Dr Fleming implemented immediately upon becoming interim superintendent caused concerns because stakeholders did not all agree that her appointees were qualified for the positions. The hiring of the former school board member was thought to be some form of nepotism or political favoritism. Parent watchdog groups immediately began speculating about the nature of this hire and the fact that the board member, with only a bachelor's degree, earned a salary equivalent to a first-year principal. In addition, one third of Dr Fleming's new hires served as middle school principals, a position Dr Fleming once held within the system. There was a belief that she was hiring her "friends" and not hiring the most competent people for the positions. At the top of everyone's concern was Ms White, Dr Fleming's pick for chief operating officer, and Dr Black, the new chief of schools. Ms White had served as a principal and was in charge of procurement for 2 years prior to assuming the chief operating officer role. She did not have a financial background. Dr Black served as a middle school and high school principal in highly diverse communities, but she had not served in central office in primary leadership roles beyond serving as an executive director in the Office of the Deputy Superintendent under Dr Fleming.

Additional concerns were about Dr Fleming's lack of visibility and connectivity with principals and principal supervisors. In her first 6 months on the job, Dr Fleming missed half of the principal professional learning community meetings established at the elementary, middle, and high school levels due to other priorities that emerged in the height of managing COVID-19 issues. In addition, principal supervisor positions showed a lack of diversity, with 80% of supervisors being White women in a district that was 52% White administrators, 48% BIPOC administrators, and 60% male administrators. The majority of principal supervisors had experience in middle school as well.

Furthermore, Dr Fleming decided to eliminate her old position of deputy superintendent, and instead had 14 chief-level members reporting directly to her. In hindsight, Dr Fleming shared, "I should not have eliminated the deputy superintendent role. It was extremely difficult for me to effectively supervise and manage 14 chiefs and address the politics of Davis County." At the time, Dr Fleming did not conduct extensive searches to fill these roles. The COVID-19 pandemic had caused schools to close

in March 2020, and she wanted her team in place and ready to respond to challenges as soon as possible. As a result, she directly appointed most of her senior leadership positions without broadly advertising or formally interviewing candidates with wide stakeholder input. She felt the urgency of the moment and her authority as interim superintendent allowed her to make these critical decisions to best support her leadership and the school system.

Pandemic Management. The COVID-19 pandemic presented significant challenges to the school district. Dr Fleming's main challenge as interim superintendent during the COVID-19 pandemic was the same challenge played out around the country and indeed the world: Should schools close or remain open? The decision to phase students back into the school buildings occurred in March 2021, prior to Dr Fleming's appointment as interim superintendent. Under the previous superintendent's plan to reopen schools, a plan approved by the Board of Education, some students returned 4 days a week and others returned 4 days every other week. Younger students and children from schools hit harder by poverty were expected to get more in-person instruction. At the time, there was not an option for students to continue virtually full-time. Dr Fleming assumed the interim superintendent role, taking over responsibility for the execution of the return-to-school implementation plan. There was tremendous concern from many educators about their safety returning to school for in-person teaching. Yet for equity reasons, Dr Fleming disagreed and was committed to keeping schools open and returning to a 5-day, in-person school day as soon as feasibly possible.

Davis County grappled with managing staff and student absences due to COVID-19. Protocols were put in place to determine when a school would need to close due to an uptick of COVID-19 cases within a community, and teachers and principals experienced tremendous strain as they managed the day-to-day operations of schools, being prepared to close immediately in the event of local spikes in COVID-19 cases.

Within her first 5 months as interim superintendent, Fleming's leadership team created an elaborate, three-tiered, color-coded plan that outlined the exact COVID-19 positivity thresholds under which a particular school would switch from in-person to virtual learning. The formula called for shifting schools to virtual learning if 5% of students and staff at a particular school were to test positive for COVID-19. In January 2021, after a single week in which nearly a dozen schools temporarily shifted to virtual learning because of this policy and an additional 120 out of the system's 220 schools met the criteria for virtual learning, the school system, in conjunction with the county health department, announced it was abandoning the formula. Instead, the county said it would determine which schools should transition to virtual learning on a case-by-case basis. This change in policy, without instant communication, infuriated numerous stakeholders, including leaders of parent organizations and teacher and administrator unions.

In a letter to parents and other stakeholders, Fleming and the acting health officer said state officials had advised against using an automatic trigger or threshold to determine a shift to virtual learning. The letter said the school-by-school approach brought the county into closer alignment with how large school systems across the country are

keeping schools safe amid similar pandemic-related challenges. The threshold system originally devised by the school district relied on parents reporting positive COVID-19 test results, and there was some concern that parents would underreport test results in an attempt to keep schools open to in-person learning.

Mrs Bowen, who by January 2021 was president of the teachers' union, expressed frustration with the lack of planning to keep county schools safely operating, from her perspective. She called the school-by-school plan that replaced the threshold plan vague and confusing. "We need better communication. We need more transparency. And we're asking to be a part of collaboration to look for solutions," Bowen said. "We need a plan now."

The broader context of Fleming's school-by-school closure plan was highlighted by the parents' advocacy group, which posted on their Listserv that Fleming had shut down the school district's COVID-19 dashboard and, amid a state COVID-19 positivity rate of over 42%, was still planning on keeping schools open. A parent blogger on the Davis County Parent Coalition Listserv shared:

Meanwhile in Davis County, somehow Davis County Public School administrators know that there are ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks in their school communities and they are targeting individual schools for virtual learning for the next 5–10 days. How do Davis County administrators know what is going on in their schools with regard to COVID-19 while [our] county administrators appear clueless?

This post continued the theme of parents' distrust of Fleming and her administration, especially in the context of her handling of COVID-19 school closures.

Davis County Public Schools Hires Dr Fleming as Superintendent

Weathering criticism about her hiring plans, school closure procedures, and a 90% teachers' union vote of no confidence in her leadership, Dr Fleming became superintendent. The Davis County school board voted unanimously to confirm Fleming to be the superintendent for the 2022 to 2023 school year. The board president commented:

This is a historic appointment as we have hired our first female superintendent and only our second African American superintendent for Davis County Public Schools. Dr. Fleming has worked tirelessly to promote equity and inclusion in our schools. She is a talented leader, and we believe she is the stabilizing force that we need at this moment to get us through the pandemic and beyond so we can continue to provide a world-class education to students.

Dr Fleming faced the daunting challenge of collaborating with groups, such as the teacher and administrator unions, both of which voted no confidence, and parental groups, which tended to question her motives and even her qualifications.

Unlike some of her predecessors, Fleming did not start in her new role as permanent superintendent with a blank slate. When asked if that helped or hurt her moving forward, she said, “I spent the last 22 years serving this system, so people know me. That helps. It doesn’t help that we’re all still managing something that is very new to us.” Dr Fleming shared that rebuilding trust among all stakeholders was of paramount importance, and said,

For those who question me and my ability to be able to address the needs of this district, I would ask, “What do we have to compare to this?” In the history of schooling, no one has had to make these types of polarizing decisions.

Further battles loomed for Fleming. In March 2022, the Davis County school system joined neighboring states and counties in making face masks optional for students and teachers. Prior to the vote, Fleming said that the change reflected improved COVID-19 metrics in the county, and that the school system would continue monitoring metrics “as we’ve always done” in case they worsened again. “If we’ve learned nothing else from COVID-19, we know that we can’t always predict the future,” she said. Not all stakeholders were pleased with the result of the vote; one board member said that shifting to a mask-optional policy seemed like a big step to a lot of people. However, in an early win for Fleming’s relationship with the teachers’ union, the union backed the resolution of lifting the mask mandate, although it did pose questions about how the school system planned to handle the emergence of a new COVID variant or another case surge.

In addition, in early May 2022, Fleming announced several new administrative positions, an echo of the significant and controversial restructuring of the central office that she implemented at the beginning of her tenure. News of the new positions met with criticism from some community members who felt the money would be better spent on teachers or other supports for students struggling to rebound from pandemic restrictions.

The news is not all bleak, and the battle not all uphill for Dr Fleming and the school district. The 4-year graduation rate for Davis County Public Schools students rose to 92%, according to data released by the state Department of Education. The graduation rate rose 2 percentage points compared with the prior year and was higher than the state average of 88%.

Teaching Notes

Fleming’s positionality as a Black woman superintendent, and the early controversies she spawned, such as the restructuring of the district administrative offices and her decisions about COVID-19 school closures, are key to understanding her tenure as interim superintendent of the Davis County School District. Decisions made about COVID-19 school closures around the country were highly controversial—whether schools were closed or opened, a superintendent risked alienating half of their stakeholders when they made school closure decisions. District superintendents nationwide faced criticism during the pandemic due to policy changes, confusion, and frightened

and stressed stakeholders (Toppo, 2023). Fleming's experience of controversy around school closures was not unique in any way to Davis County School District.

What is unique to Fleming's case is that she was given a vote of no confidence by the teacher and administrator unions less than a month before she was unanimously confirmed as the permanent superintendent. Was this a political ploy to destroy her chances at securing the superintendent role? Did it have anything to do with the fact that she was the first woman superintendent in the district's history, or would a man in the same situation have been treated with the same level of public discontent? In this post-George Floyd world, and in a liberal, Democratic city, did race play into her maintaining the job?

Dr Fleming faced an uphill battle as superintendent to revive alliances with the unions and parent groups. When she began her role as interim superintendent, the teachers' union president was optimistic about forging a positive relationship with Dr Fleming. Now, Dr Fleming's task is to renew that optimism and work productively with the unions. Collaboration can be seen differently between administrators and unions. Fleming might have perceived the crisis of the pandemic to mean she should act quickly and without consensus. However, a common criticism of her administration was a lack of communication and transparency. Stakeholders felt left out of the decision-making, a concern exacerbated quick, decisive decision-making at the height of the pandemic. Dr Fleming could have improved trust and cooperation with stakeholder groups through two-way communication, which creates a community of practice, in which stakeholders collaborate. During a crisis, such as a pandemic, clear and continual communication is vital to maintain trust and safety in a school or district (Coombs, 2014; Elbedour et al., 2020). Even when meeting an unprecedented challenge with potentially changing policies, district leaders can maintain teacher morale through transparency and clear communication with teachers' unions (Hemphill & Marianno, 2021). The position of superintendent is deeply political and requires effective communication with board members, principals, parents, teachers, and the community media (Melton et al., 2019). The Fleming administration and union leadership will need to determine what the appropriate level of collaboration will be moving forward, and more importantly, all groups will need a clear understanding of what collaboration means within their contexts.

Discussion Questions

This case study covers from July 1, 2021, when Dr Fleming was first appointed interim superintendent of the Davis County School District, to July 1, 2022, right before her official term as superintendent of schools was to begin. It covers her challenges with parent groups and unions and asks the reader to consider the political and social context that her case occurred in. As the first Black woman superintendent of Davis County, Fleming served as interim superintendent during the difficult second year of the COVID-19 pandemic and needed to make crucial decisions regarding closing high-risk schools. Please use the following discussion questions as a guide for your discussions.

1. Was it wise for Dr Fleming to reorganize the school district as the interim superintendent? What were the benefits and challenges associated with that decision?
2. In your opinion, when is a vote of no confidence warranted by a union? What steps should an administration put in place to work to avoid such drastic actions?
3. How important do you think continuity of leadership was for the Davis County Public Schools Board of Education? Based upon the case, would you have retained Dr Fleming as superintendent?
4. Explain Fleming's decision to change her mind about how to handle school closures during COVID-19? Do you think her change in plans hurt her political future or helped it?
5. What is your hypothesis about why Fleming's administrative decisions regarding hiring were so harshly criticized?
6. How do you think the parents' Listserv affected Fleming's tenure? Do you think she engaged enough with parent groups?
7. If you could make one decision differently than the decision Fleming made, what would it be?
8. What is the appropriate level of collaboration between a school system, parent leaders, and union leadership? What are effective structures to foster collaboration within the organization?
9. What would be possible reasons Dr. Fleming resisted engaging stakeholders with more intentionality during this crisis? Do you believe it was the right decision? If so why. If not, what structure would you put in place to better engage stakeholders?

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ORCID iD

Shawn Joseph  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6431-3108>

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Author Biography

Shawn Joseph is an Assistant Professor and Codirector of the Urban Superintendent Academy at Howard University. He his research interests include Black superintendents, governance, and how BIPOC leaders lead for equity, particularly in STEM.