



Washington State University

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Will defend their dissertation on

Date: June 26, 2026

Time: 3:00 P.M.

Spokane Campus: CCRS, Room 222

Zoom: Link by request ceshs.gradstudies@wsu.edu

Title:

CO-CONSTRUCTED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: EXPLORING EQUITY-FOCUSED LEADERSHIP THROUGH A DESIGN-BASED RESEARCH CASE STUDY

Chair: Kristin Huggins

Abstract:

This study examined how equity-focused leadership practices are supported through intentionally designed principal professional learning. Using a qualitative case study informed by design-based research, the study explored the collaborative work of an assistant superintendent and two assistant principals who co-constructed and implemented job-embedded professional learning within a rural school district. Findings indicate that equity-focused leadership developed through intentional learning conditions rather than exposure to equity concepts alone. Co-construction, collective sensemaking, student voice, shared tools, and reflexive use of positional authority supported leadership growth. These conditions grounded decision-making in student experience, strengthened coherence, and redistributed leadership responsibility. The study highlights the role of district leaders as facilitators and co-constructors of professional learning and suggests that sustained, context-responsive learning environments are critical for developing equity-focused leadership.