



March 4, 2025

Tenure Review Committee College
of Education
East Texas A&M University
2104 Commerce Drive Commerce,
TX 75429

Dear Members of the Review Committee,

I am writing to offer my highest recommendation for Dr. Sharon Ross in her application for tenure at East Texas A&M University. Over the course of my professional interactions with Dr. Ross, I have had the privilege of observing her exceptional leadership, teaching expertise, and scholarly contributions to the field of education. Her extensive experience, coupled with her passion for educational equity and excellence, makes her an invaluable member of our academic community, and I am confident that she will continue to contribute meaningfully to both the university and the broader field.

Dr. Ross has had a distinguished career in educational leadership, and her professional trajectory speaks volumes about her commitment to fostering student success at all levels. She has held a variety of significant positions, including serving as Superintendent of Schools in multiple districts such as Mexia ISD and Jefferson ISD. In these roles, Dr. Ross demonstrated exemplary leadership by implementing systemic changes that improved both the academic and fiscal health of the districts she served. Notably, she oversaw the development of professional learning communities, spearheaded initiatives to increase college readiness among students, and achieved significant fiscal stability for the districts, including passing multimillion-dollar bonds and securing additional savings through bond refunding.

Her academic achievements are equally impressive. Dr. Ross holds both a Doctor of Education and a Doctor of Divinity, and her dissertation focused on the important and often underrepresented topic of African American women principals in East Texas. Her scholarly work in educational leadership, curriculum development, and student services reflects her deep commitment to improving the educational experience for all students, particularly those from marginalized communities.

Dr. Ross's recent journal publications further demonstrate her dedication to advancing educational research and practice. Some of her notable publications include:



- Atchley, S., Ross, S. (2024). Caring by enhancing online principal preparation students' well-being through gamification. *Texas Educator Preparation*, 8(1), 34-41.
<https://doi.org/10.59719/txep.v8il.46>
- Taylor, J., Ross, S., Washington, K., & Brown, K. (2024). Igniting resilience during critical times: Reflections of women superintendents. *School Leadership Review*, 18(2-2).
<https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/slr/vol18/iss2/2>
- Washington, K., Ross, S., Taylor, J., & Brown, K. (2024). Exploring work satisfaction of women in educational leadership from a racial perspective during times of crisis. *Tapestry: Journal of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging in Education*, 2(1).
<https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/deie/vol2/iss1/5>
- Ross, S. (2023). Undercover prophet – Retrospective reflections of my spiritual-servant leadership becoming transformational leadership. *Vitae Scholasticae, The Journal of Educational Biography*, 40(1 & 2), 91-110.
- Washington, K., Brown, K., Taylor, J.L., & Ross, S. (2023). During critical times: The perceptions of women in educational leadership and work satisfaction. *Journal of Texas Women School Executives*, 8(1), 20-35. <https://issuu.com/tasanet/docs/jtwse23>
- Ross, S., Pruitt, S., Atchley, S. (2023). Matters of the Heart: Supporting from the Office to the Classroom. *TxEp: Texas Educator Preparation*, 7(1).
<https://txep.csotte.com/iphp/txep/article/view/17>
- Washington, K., Brown, K., Taylor, J.L., & Ross, S. (2022). Women superintendent's perspectives: Leading during challenging times. *Journal of Texas Women School Executives*, 7(1), 16-28. <https://issuu.com/tasanet/docs/jtcwse22/s/14701659>
- Ross, S. (2022). Changing Dynamics, Moving Forward: From Voices Heard & Lessons Learned. (Published). *National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. Krinon Journal*.
- Washington, K., Brown, K., Ross, S. (2020). Leading Through Crisis: Relationship and Trust Factors. *Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association, Vol. 33, NO. 4(Fall 2020), 11*. www.tepsa.org
- Ross, S., & Hardaway, W. (2021). Preservation of My Dignity: From Giving Grace to SEEing Beyond. *National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. Krinon Journal*.



•

- Ross, S. (2020). Experts Weigh in on Current Job Market Trends. *Zippia The Career Expert*. (February 21, 2021). <https://www.zippia.com/leadership-development-programmanager-jobs/trends/https://www.zippia.com/leadership-development-program-managerjobs/trends/#section-professor907840712373>

In addition to these journal articles, Dr. Ross has contributed significant book chapters to the field of educational leadership:

- Ross, S. (2025). The light that shineth in me. In L. Salazar-Montoya & Friends (Eds.), *Empire of radiance: Unity and legacy* (pp. 261-271). Urban Book Publishers.
- Atchley, S., & Ross, S. (2024). Redesigning Principal Preparation Programs: A continuous improvement culture using Bambrick-Santoyo's data meeting conceptual framework. In McKee, L. Editor, Read, S. Editor, & Rickey, D. Editor (Eds.), *Using data for continuous improvement in educator preparation* (pp. 150-161). Myers Education Press.
<https://myersedpress.presswarehouse.com/browse/book/9781975505905/UsingData-for-ContinuousImprovement-in-Educator-Preparation>

Dr. Ross's work has made significant contributions to the field, particularly in understanding the challenges faced by women in educational leadership roles, exploring innovative approaches to principal and superintendent preparation, and addressing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in education. Her scholarship not only informs academic discourse but also translates into practical strategies that support educational leaders and practitioners in real-world settings.

Additionally, Dr. Ross's work has garnered recognition from leading experts in the field. Dr. Virginia Goatley, PhD, Dean of the School of Education at University at Albany State University of New York, praised a recent publication focused on continuous improvement in educator preparation. Dr. Goatley noted:

“With a focus on continuous improvement, this book highlights innovative ways of using data to inform education preparation programs. The chapters show how privileging research within the accreditation process leads to programmatic changes based on student outcomes such as certification exams, program assessment, and dispositions. The authors also explore the critical roles of collaboration among faculty, administrators, students and/or key stakeholders within a Quality Assurance System.”



Dr. Ross's teaching and mentorship are equally notable. In the classroom, she is a dynamic educator who creates an environment that is both rigorous and supportive. Her ability to connect with students and inspire them to achieve their highest potential is one of the cornerstones of her approach to teaching. Additionally, her mentorship extends beyond the classroom, as she has played a pivotal role in guiding future educators through her work as a field supervisor and by serving as a trainer for school board members and administrators. Her commitment to the professional development of others is a testament to her belief in the power of collaboration and continuous improvement in education.

Dr. Ross's work is not limited to the walls of the classroom or the school district. She has contributed extensively to her professional community by speaking at conferences, engaging with local civic organizations, and advocating for educational policy reforms that benefit underserved communities. She has consistently demonstrated the qualities of a scholarpractitioner, applying her research and leadership expertise to real-world educational challenges.

In summary, Dr. Sharon Ross is an outstanding candidate for tenure at East Texas A&M University. Her service, scholarship, teaching, and commitment to the field of education make her a remarkable asset to the university. I fully support her application and believe that her continued tenure at your institution will serve to enrich our academic community and further elevate the quality of education we offer to our students.

Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dr. Stephanie Atchley
Assistant Professor
Department of Educational Leadership Tarleton
State University