

Iris Dominguez

Assistant Principal, North-Grand High School

2018 Surge Fellow

“Ni de Aqui, Ni De Alla” (not from here, nor from there), is the best way to describe Iris Dominguez, a Mexican immigrant that came to the United States with her family at the age of three. Since 2013, Iris has served as Assistant Principal in Chicago Public Neighborhood High Schools. She has focused her efforts in improving the culture, climate, instructional quality and post-secondary programs of predominantly Latino and Black community schools. She is a firm believer of building the capacity of other teachers of color in order to continue to transform our schools into mirrors for our students.



Growing up in the North-West side of Chicago, Iris learned to navigate two cultures. One was the culture of being the youngest daughter of working class immigrant parents, who consistently promoted education to help her avoid, “trabajar como un burra.” The other was the American culture of living in neighborhoods and attending schools that did not mirror her home life. This experience led her to pursue a career in secondary education. She knew that an education was not just a way to avoid working like a “burra” but also would help her overcome many societal obstacles.

Iris decided to become a teacher to help students that had a similar background as her. For nine years, Iris taught history and English as a second language. It is during this time in the classroom with newly emigrated students that she realized what was missing from her own educational journey. She understood the importance of having schools that mirror students of color at every level of the organization. This realization is what encouraged Iris to continue to grow professionally and take up the position of a school leader.

Iris holds an Master of Education from the University of Illinois at Chicago along with an administrator endorsement from DePaul University. She was a STELL Project Scholarship recipient in 2008 from the University of Illinois at Chicago.