

Richard Thomas Personal Ethics Statement

My core values center around what I believe is most important to my leadership: people. I have spent my Ed.D. program reflecting extensively on who I am and what my gifts are. I have a strong ability to form connections with others. This is how I lead every day, and it is at the core of who I am. I care for others and protect those who have no voice. That is how I live an ethical life through my work and personal life. My own personal ethical values are rooted in the lived experiences and connections I have formed throughout my life. These experiences shape me and drive my passion to be a leader who models high ethical standards. My core ethical values are:

- **Value the Person**

- Everyone has a story to share. When making decisions, I must always listen to all the stories to understand the shared truth
- Everyone has value. As a leader, I must choose to see the good in everyone's lives. If I fail to value individuals, I will fail to be a leader for all.
- We each have different boundaries. I must respect the boundaries that everyone establishes for themselves.

- **Affirm the Person**

- Everyone deserves love. As a leader, I must learn to affirm all of those around me. Building up and connecting to others makes me a stronger leader.
- Affirm through action. I must not only speak of affirming, but also demonstrate it through my actions.
- Embrace gratefulness. In respecting and affirming those around me, I must be grateful for the unique contributions that everyone brings to the world.

- **Protect the Person**

- Recognize my own power. I must acknowledge the power of my own words and actions and make a conscious effort to amplify the voices of those who are not heard.
- Remove barriers for others. Recognizing my privilege, I strive to remove the barriers that I and others have faced in order to get where we are.
- Lead with vulnerability. I must always work to help those around me recognize their own strengths and learn to face their insecurities together