



KEYNOTE SPEAKER MARIO ACOSTA



Mario Acosta, Ed.D., is an award-winning educator, author, speaker, and presenter. He spent 20 years of his career as a teacher, instructional coach, assistant principal, academic director, and principal. He was named the 2022 Principal of the Year in Texas while serving Westwood High School, a U.S. News & World Report top-50 campus and member of the High Reliability Schools (HRS) network.

Dr. Acosta has had success in leading schools of all sizes, with students and teachers from a variety of backgrounds. He's led "school turnaround" in high-poverty middle and high schools in Texas, which yielded immediate and significant growth in student achievement data. Furthermore, under his leadership, Westwood High School was recognized as a top 1% campus in the nation for their academic achievement and college/career readiness. Dr. Acosta is the author of *The Schools Our Students Deserve*. He is also the coauthor of several books including *Five Big Ideas for Leading a High Reliability School*; *Culture Champions*; *Culture Keepers*; and *Professional Learning Communities at Work®* and *High-Reliability Schools*.

In 2022, Dr. Acosta joined the Marzano Resources/Solution Tree team as an author and national presenter. He specializes in campus-level implementation of effective culture, the HRS framework, professional learning communities, instructional improvement, response to intervention, teaching strategies for English learners, and standards-referenced reporting. As an HRS certifier, he works with K–12 schools and districts across the United States. He also serves as an adjunct professor at the University of Texas at Austin.

Dr. Acosta earned his doctorate in educational administration from the University of Texas and holds a superintendent certification in the state of Texas. He earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from the University of Texas and a master's degree in educational leadership from Lamar University.

We are excited to hear him present his keynote talk on Tuesday morning, *Creating a Culture Where Students and Staff Thrive*. He'll also present a breakout session Tuesday afternoon at 3:05 pm in Frisco 2, *Shaping Exceptional School Culture and Climate*.

