

# Science for Our Children: Othermothering Leadership within an Elementary Science Network

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Key decisions concerning time, resources spent, professional development, and policies are often made by, or with, the principal. In this study, the authors present a case of one elementary principal who advocated for her students and community through science instruction.

## Guiding Literature



**Othermothering by educators** (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002)

An essential ideal of African American women educators is embracing familial-like relationships with students

**Radical care by othermothers** (Rivera-McCutchen, 2021)

- Strategically navigating the socio-political climate while critiquing social injustices
- Embracing a spirit of radical hope
- Cultivating authentic relationships with students, parents, and community members

## Research Questions

1. What is an othermother's vision for science education?
  - Who and what informs an othermother's vision for science education?
2. What is an othermother's perception of her role in science education?
3. How is an othermother inhibited as she strives to support science education?

## Methods



A case study exploring the experiences of Leticia Loper, a Black female principal at Leonhard Elementary and is from Great Lakes (all pseudonyms).



We include interviews and social network surveys with principals, the superintendent, and a paraprofessional to understand how Principal Loper's role as an instructional leader in general and specifically to science.

## Findings

Othermothers view science as a potential means to transform lives and fulfill the needs of the local community

Principal Loper's role as an othermother in science decision-making

Science policies (can) limit the potential of the vision of science an othermother has for the community

Othermothers draw on their network to guide equitable science instruction

**Implications:** Although educational leadership programs cannot teach administrators to be othermothers, we can focus on the the development of critical consciousness to advocate for science as a form of radical care rather than compliance with state and local policies.