Andrea Haynes Johnson was born and raised in Detroit. Her parents met in college and both worked in Detroit Public Schools; her mother was a teacher and her father was a truant officer. She was educated in Detroit Public Schools and, like her parents, began her career there. Andrea has a BFA in Dance Performance from Marygrove College, an MAT in English Education from Wayne State University and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Leadership and Administration from National Louis University. She has spent her career working in high schools; teaching at Detroit’s Renaissance High School and at New Trier High School in Winnetka, Illinois; and serving as the Department Chair for Fine and Applied Arts at Deerfield High School in Deerfield and ending her public education career as the Director of Equity and Grants at Township High School District 113 in Highland Park, Illinois. Passionate about curriculum, she created a sequential four-year dance program and designed and implemented a course called Race Equity and Leadership, for high school students.

She is an Equity Transformation Specialist with Pacific Educational Group and the Executive Director for the Courageous Conversation Global Foundation. Additionally, she is a contributing author in the texts, More Courageous Conversations About Race and Courageous Conversations About Race, Second Edition, both by Glenn Singleton; Let’s Get Real: What People of Color Can’t Say and Whites Won’t Ask About Racism, by Lee Mun Wah and The Wealthy Teacher by Dr. Victoria Boyd.

What Calls Me to This Work?

Growing up in a city with a strong, Black community, I was surrounded by not only Black scholarship, but Black activism. As early as elementary school, I was taught that social responsibility required knowledge about “my people” and a commitment to do nation building as a way of healing the racial scars of our country. From volunteering alongside Dudley Randall and Haki Madhabuti at Broadside Press, to participating in sit-ins at my high school, I came of age in the aftermath of the 1967 Detroit uprisings with the urgency of a need for change. I bring a commitment to individual and collective action to interrupt systemic racism so we, as a people, can heal.