

## **Bio**

### **Dr. Wilma Franco, Ed.D**

Dr. Wilma Franco serves as Executive Director of the Southeast Los Angeles (SELA) Collaborative and holds a doctorate degree in Education – Organizational Leadership from the University of La Verne. Dr. Franco has over ten years of experience in overseeing nonprofits and community-based programs and has a solid background in program development, evaluations, partnership development, finance, fundraising and development. Dr. Franco is an intentional servant leader passionate advocate for diverse, equitable, and inclusive approach to systems change. Dr. Franco began her career in the nonprofit sector creating, implementing, and managing youth service programming, including overseeing LA County Probation Department grants.

Prior to joining the SELA Collaborative, Dr. Franco spent close to a decade developing, evaluating, and managing programs at “I Have a Dream” Foundation – Los Angeles (IHADLA); a program that sponsored students in elementary school years and work with the cohort until they graduate high school, and transition to post-secondary education, by providing whole child services. In collaboration with USC, Dr. Franco launched the first mental health programming component at IHADLA that continues to serve students and families in Watts, Boyle Heights, and Inglewood. Additionally, Dr. Franco’s passion for collaboration led to IHADLA being recognized by CSULB as an internship placement partner of the year two consecutive years.

Dr. Franco completed her undergraduate work at the University of California- Los Angeles (UCLA) where she earned her B.A in Political Science and Chicana/o Studies with a minor in Public Policy. During her time at UCLA she worked closely with the NAID Center researching the Economic Impact of immigration post 1986 immigration reform. Dr. Franco went on to complete her Masters Degree in Public Policy at the University of Southern California (USC), where she also completed a certificate in Public Management and a capstone project focused on parent engagement in school districts for the RAND Corporation.

Dr. Franco has served as a part-time lecturer in the Human Development Department at California State University – Long Beach (CSULB). Dr. Franco is a proud alumnus of Education Pioneers, Magnolia Community Initiative Fellowship Program, USC SoCal Symposium, and a recent graduate of the Housing Policy Leadership Academy.