

## Renee Fuller, Grade Level Leader- Participant of PTC Curriculum 2019



“We were too old friends sitting in one of London's trendiest restaurants last October, sharing life stories. That evening had ranged from global politics to Swiss divorce laws and now we were discussing my future and educational leadership, but what do you mean? I asked. He was all too happy to indulge. Well, he said, whenever you talk about leadership, you just, you change. Your whole demeanor changes, your body language, your tone of voice. You even get this weird little furry within your brow, which in all fairness I'm probably doing right now, you lose your softness. You lose what makes you special. It was in that moment my close friend who's not even in the world of education, had hit such a strong nerve.

Was I coming across as something that I don't even believe in, something that I truly despise. I pride myself on compassion in the workplace and harnessing the power of vulnerability. In fact, I spent countless hours over the past two years reading, writing, and researching these concepts. So then why was my face deceiving me? How could my body get it so wrong? Was it my own preconceived notions about what an effective leader looks like, how she should stand, how she should sound, how she should behave for my assumptions, limiting me in unconscious ways? I may never figure out the latter part of that question, but what I can do is become more aware of the dispositional skills that should serve today's leaders or role that I believe should be rooted in reflection and humility, not puffed out chests and educational jargon. And so my Pearl for you this morning is this. Flexing is for bodybuilders. Three displays of strength and dominance. They belong in the gym, not professional organizations. A true leader models vulnerability by celebrating their weaknesses and their mistakes as opportunities for growth. A muscle that I'm sure we can all stand to train just a bit more. Thank you.”