**Short bio**

Decoteau J. Irby’s life work focuses on creating and sustaining organizations that contribute to Black people’s self-determined well-being, development, and positive life outcomes. He is an Associate Professor at University of Illinois at Chicago in the Department of Educational Policy Studies. His is the author *Stuck Improving: Racial Equity and School Leadership* (Harvard Education Press) and the picture book *Magical Black Tears: A Protest Story* (Derute Consulting Cooperative).

**Long bio**

Decoteau J. Irby is an associate professor of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago and founding member of Derute Consulting Cooperative. His life’s work focuses on questions of how to create and sustain organizations that ensure Black people’s self-determined well-being, development, and positive life outcomes. His academic research examines how equity-focused leadership improves Black children and youth’s educational experiences and outcomes. He is the author of several books, including:

* *Stuck Improving: Racial Equity and School Leadership* (2021) published by Harvard Education Press
* *Magical Black Tears: A Protest Story* (2021) published by Derute Consulting Cooperative
* *Dignity-affirming Education: Cultivating the Somebodiness of Students and Educators* (2022) with co-editors Charity Anderson and Charles Payne, published by Teachers College Press, and
* Black Participatory Research (2016) co-edited with Elizabeth Drame, published by Springer / Palgrage McMillan

Dr. Irby uses design thinking and continuous improvement methods to help leaders and teams design and create organizations that affirm Black people. He volunteers in his neighborhood community garden, is treasurer for his local park advisory council, and spends as much time as possible outdoors with his children and partner. Finally, he is the lead songwriter-guitarist and performer for the band Decoteau Black. Follow him on twitter at @decoteauirby or @stuckimproving. Learn more about his research at [www.leadforequity.com](http://www.leadforequity.com)