Social Justice
in K-12 Education

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXPLORE MORE OF THIS FREEBOOK'S HIGHLIGHTED TITLES ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EDUCATION

IMPLICIT BIAS IN SCHOOLS
A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE
GINA LAURA GULLO, KELLY CAPATOSTO, AND CHERYL STAATS

An Eye On Education Book

REACHING THE WOUNDED STUDENT
Joe Hendershott

Teaching Practices from America's Best Urban Schools
A Guide for School and Classroom Leaders
An Eye on Education Book

JOSEPH F. JOHNSON, JR.
LYNNE G. PEREZ
CYNTHIA L. ULINE

K–12

MARTHA CALDWELL & OMAN FRAME
LET'S GET REAL
Exploring Race, Class, and Gender Identities in the Classroom

An Eye On Education Book

MINDFUL PRACTICE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE
A Guide for Educators and Professional Learning Communities
RAQUEL RÍOS

Authentic Presence

Freedom

Emergence

An Eye On Education Book

JAMILA LYISCOTT
BLACK APPETITE. WHITE FOOD.
Issues of Race, Voice, and Justice Within and Beyond the Classroom

An Eye On Education Book

Introduction

Welcome to *Social Justice in K-12 Education.* This FreeBook includes six chapters from applied, practitioner-focused Routledge Eye On Education books discussing issues of race, class, and gender in education today, and how you as an educator can address these issues within your classroom and within yourself.

The first chapter included in this FreeBook is "Implicit What?" excerpted from *Implicit Bias in Schools: A Practitioner's Guide* by Gina Laura Gullo, Kelly Capatosto, Cheryl Staats. This book for education practitioners dives deep into understanding what implicit bias is, why it's an issue, and how to address it in your school. This chapter begins the conversation: how does our unconscious mind shape our actions and effect the outcomes in an educational setting?

Chapter two is "Addressing the Wounded Student: Programs that Promote Success for All Students" from *Reaching the Wounded Student.* This bestselling book from Joe Hendershott provides approaches and ideas for educators working with students who suffer from hopelessness, empowering teachers and leaders to understand, teach, and motivate these students. In this chapter you will learn how to address the wounded student directly, with practical strategies you can implement in your school immediately to make a difference, from grading to staff management.

Chapter 3 is "Making Students Feel Valued and Capable" from Teaching Practices from *America's Best Urban Schools: A Guide for School and Classroom Leaders.* In this research-based book, authors Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., Cynthia L. Uline, and Lynne G. Perez explore the teaching practices that makes the biggest difference in student performance by examining detailed examples from instructional practices from award-winning urban schools. In this chapter, you'll explore a variety of factors that contribute to students' perceptions that teachers care, and examples of what to do (and what not to do) to show students you care.

Chapter 4 is "Inquiry into Race: Lesson Plans and Handouts" from *Let's Get Real: Exploring Race, Class , and Gender Identities in the Classroom* by Martha Caldwell and Oman Frame. *Let's Get Real* provides teaching strategies designed to encourage student conversation and personal reflection, enabling creative, rather than stereotypical, thinking about difference. The chapter included offers selected lesson plans, activities, and handouts to create an identity-safe classroom and get students engaged with thinking about racial identity, racial inequality, and racial injustice in a productive and enriching way for all.

Chapter 5 is "Emergence: Transpersonal Awareness and Agency" from

Introduction

Mindful Practice for Social Justice: A Guide for Educators and Professional Learning Communities. This book by Raquel Ríos helps educators bring mindfulness and social justice to the forefront of their classrooms through instructional practices and tools designed to make real changes toward equity. The excerpt from this chapter includes introductory strategies for the mindful inquiry approach, reflecting on and examining your experiences as an educator in a way that leads to growth and transformation.

The final chapter is "If You Think You're Giving Students of Color a Voice, Get Over Yourself!" from renowned speaker and author Jamila Lyiscott's book, *Black Appetite. White Food.* This newly published title invites educators to explore the nuanced manifestations of white privilege as it exists within and beyond the classroom, with tools that educators can use to inspire awareness and action around racial injustice an inequity. This chapter discusses issues of inequity stemming from well-meaning educators without intentional frameworks of self-reflection.

As you read through this FreeBook, you will notice that some excerpts reference previous chapters, please note that these are references to the original text and not the FreeBook.

Some references from the original chapters have not been included in this text. For a fully-referenced version of each chapter, including footnotes, bibliographies, and endnotes, please see the published title. Links to purchase each specific title can be found on the first page of each chapter.
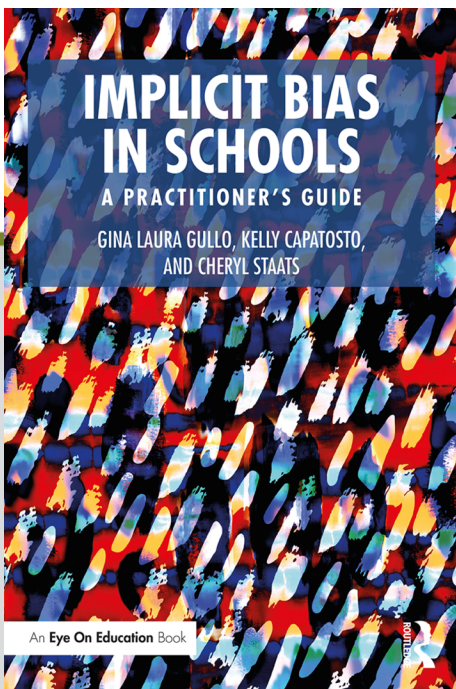
IMPLICIT WHAT?

This chapter is excerpted from

Implicit Bias in Schools: A Practitioner's Guide

by Gina Laura Gullo, Kelly Capatosto, Cheryl Staats

Learn more

IMPLICIT WHAT?

Knowing Isn't Everything

Have you ever made coffee in the morning on "autopilot" or drove to school without trying to remember how to get there? What about choosing what to have for lunch: how often do you really think about all of the options available? You don't need to know what you are doing to get things done. You can tie your shoes without making bunny ears and read a book without sounding out each word. All of these thought processes are implicit, or unconscious. How did you decide to read this book (and if you have to read it for class or professional development, then why right now)? Perhaps you chose it from a list of books on implicit bias or saw a review you liked. Maybe you were assigned this book and realized that you had to read it now or you wouldn't get the reading done in time. These kinds of thoughts are more explicit, or conscious. Implicit thoughts are those we don't really think about and just do, while explicit ones are those where we consider options and often reason our way to conclusions.

This book is dedicated to the part of our cognition that is activated involuntarily and outside of our intentional control. By definition, implicit bias refers to stereotypes and attitudes that occur unconsciously and may or may not reflect our actual attitudes. Although unconscious, implicit biases can affect our perceptions, actions, and our decisions across realms ranging from the relatively trivial (e.g., recognizing that "green means go" on a stoplight) to those quite significant (e.g., in a school discipline situation, which student is perceived to be more or less culpable than another). This chapter begins the conversation to understand how – regardless of our explicit intentions – the unconscious part of our cognition can shape our actions and ultimately the outcomes that occur in educational environments.

Good Intentions Gone Wrong

On Halloween, Muslim students were allowed to "opt out" of the Halloween parade and festivities if they felt it would violate their Islamic beliefs. This turned into a huge disaster! Muslim students were sent to an "exclusion room," where I was supposed to supervise. The room was not set up for us, and there were not enough supplies for all the children. Even worse, other teachers began to see the Muslim **student room as a "punishment room"**

IMPLICIT WHAT?

and began sending misbehaving students there from every grade. Eventually there were over 60 students in the room, with no space for them to even sit. The Muslim students were left alone and appeared miserable. Stuck for hours in the "punishment room," the students were unable to complete any activities and surrounded by disgruntled older students sent to the room by teachers who saw the Muslim activities as a punishment rather than an accommodation. I told my grade-team lead, who reported the incident to administration. Even though I received an apology, the students still have not.

– Anna Danylyuk

Education For All

The desire for our education system to support every student along the pathway to success is embodied by the United States Department of Education's mission to "promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access" (U.S. Department of Education, 2011, p. 1). Schools need to equip all students – regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or ability status – with the opportunities and skills necessary to reach their full potential. Despite these good intentions, achieving these aims is challenged by issues rooted in the educational system such as overworked teachers, extensive standardized testing, and paperwork that seems to never end. In addition to these pressures, person-to-person issues such as language barriers, children who have experienced trauma, and differences in cultural backgrounds may impede educators' progress in developing relationships with their students. Outside of schools, even more factors can contribute to students' success – family support,

Don't Sound the Alarms Yet!

While bias typically holds a negative connotation, bias is in actuality a neutral term. You might have a bias for summery weather or delicious food as opposed to an ice storm or sour milk. Not all biases are harmful and in some cases they can be quite helpful. Next time you avoid stepping on a wad of chewing gum, know your bias for clean ground is there to assist you.

IMPLICIT WHAT?

economic advantages, neighborhood dynamics – this list can go on and on. Taken together, schools are facing an uphill battle in the pursuit of equitable academic excellence access.

If we want to make schools a place that benefits all students, we must explore why our intention to provide educational opportunities falls short of producing equitable outcomes. A critical piece of this puzzle is the immense need to highlight the importance of students' identities as a factor that can support or inhibit their academic and social-emotional development. A growing body of research on implicit bias (also called unconscious bias) demonstrates that aspects of an individual's identity such as race, gender, or ability status are associated with a variety of stereotypes that can influence how others perceive or interact with that individual.

Biased perceptions can unintentionally influence decision-making and actions outside of conscious awareness in ways that do not mirror our explicit commitment to equality (Greenwald et al., 2002; Kawakami & Miura, 2014). Often, these biases reflect stereotypes and patterns of marginalization in society rather than what we actually believe or feel. In acknowledging that implicit biases often run counter to the values that we – as educational leaders – hold, we begin to understand the nuances of how inequities can persist in the absence of overt discrimination. By revealing the nature and operation of implicit bias, the authors of this book hope to move readers toward becoming better practitioners, leaders, and people.

What is at Stake?

Our nation's students depend on schools to uphold their commitment to educational excellence and equal access. When we fail to uphold this commitment to all students we encounter issues like the achievement gap between White and racial minority students – particularly Black and Latino students as compared with White students. While the achievement gap as a whole has narrowed in the past 50 years, notable progress has stalled. According to National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data, the progress made to begin closing the achievement gap in the 1970s and 1980s reached a plateau by the early 1990s, since when it has remained relatively stable (Barton & Coley, 2010). Figure 1.1 shows the achievement gap since the early 1990s. Beyond the

IMPLICIT WHAT?

The **achievement gap** refers to differences in the academic results (test scores, higher education, job attainment) between different groups of students – typically between students who are Black and students who are White. Similar terms include the opportunity gap, which refers to differences in resources and educational quality, the learning gap referring to differences between what students actually learn and what they are expected to learn, and the discipline gap referring to differences in how often students of different groups are suspended and expelled from schools. In all of these gaps, low socioeconomic status students and students of Color typically experience more detrimental outcomes (lower test scores, more suspensions) than White students.

academic outcomes, racial disparities occur along the pathway to achievement including different levels of advanced course access for Black and Latino students as compared with White and Asian students (who have far greater access) – especially for math and science (Office for Civil Rights, 2016).

Academic achievement is only one, albeit large, piece of this puzzle. Punitive discipline use can limit students' educational opportunities and even push students toward justice-system involvement – otherwise known as the school-to-prison pipeline, as illustrated in Figure 1.2. As Senator Dick Durbin (2012) described in an address to Congress on the school- to-prison pipeline, "For many young people, our schools are increasingly a gateway to the criminal justice system. What is especially concerning about this phenomenon is that it deprives our children of their fundamental right to an education" (p. 1). By calling attention to the culture of punitive discipline prevalent in public schools, Senator Durbin urged the committee representatives to consider the implications of school discipline practices and the role of race in disciplinary outcomes.

Researchers often explore links between the achievement gap and the discipline gap, considering that these gaps might be "two sides of the same coin" (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). Just as expected, disparities in school discipline are just as pronounced and pervasive as academic disparities (American Civil Liberties Union, 2008; Losen, Hodson, Keith, Morrison, & Belway, 2015; Office for Civil Rights, 2016). For example, the Office of Civil Rights' analysis of 2013–2014 discipline data found Black students were 3.8 times more likely to receive an out-of-school suspension than White students (Office for Civil Rights, 2016). The data also revealed American Natives, Latinx, Pacific Islanders, and multiracial boys

IMPLICIT WHAT?

Excerpted from *Implocit Bias in Schools*
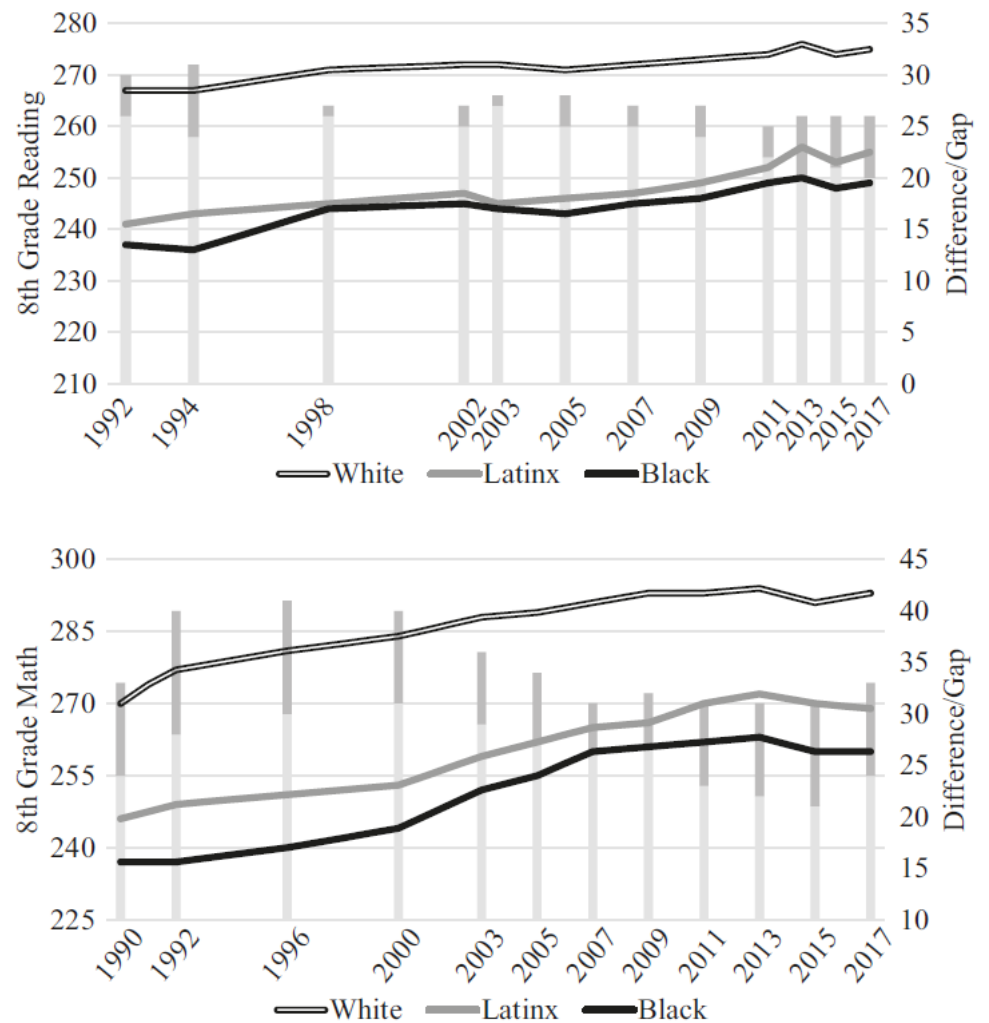
Figure 1.1 Reading (top) and math (bottom) scores in grade eight by race/ ethnicity are shown as lines with the Black– White gap shown as the dark gray bars set behind the smaller Latinx– White gap shown with the light gray bar. Only years with available data are shown (NAEP, 2018).

were disproportionately suspended, but to a lesser extent than Black boys. Other studies show drastic differences in days suspended by race for students with special needs, with Black students with disabilities receiving three times as many days of lost instruction as White students with disabilities (Losen, 2018). These examples are just small pieces of part of a large body of evidence showing disparities in school discipline that span across racial, gender, and ability identities. Together, these disparities in academic and discipline outcomes contribute to

IMPLICIT WHAT?

persistent racial differences in high school completion rates (Barton & Coley, 2010; Reeves, Rodrigue, & Kneebone, 2016).
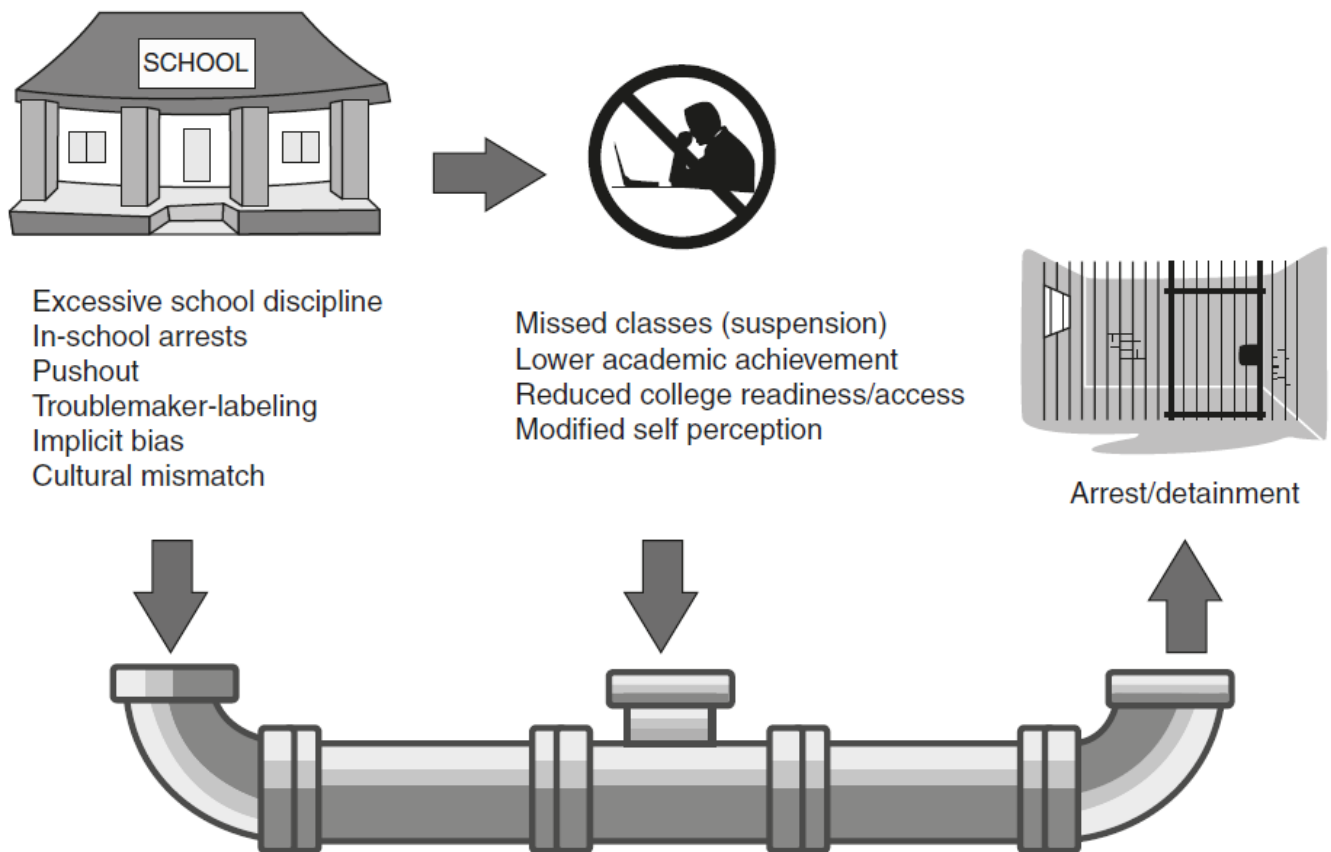
Figure 1.2 The school- to- prison- pipeline represented graphically here is how many think about the contribution of school practices to future involvement in the criminal justice system

As these disparities show, we still need to address the inequity in our education system. Before we provide you with the knowledge and tools you need to begin this process through implicit bias remediation, we must begin by considering the influence of our collective past. By examining the education system's policies, practices, and historic barriers to achieving racial equity, we can

IMPLICIT WHAT?

better understand how implicit biases emerge and learn from previous successes and failures to improve educational trajectories for students of Color. Like other national institutions, the education system is part of a legacy of legally endorsed discrimination. Though a full retelling of this history is outside of the scope of this book, it is worth considering key points in our history that made a lasting imprint on the course of public education. Let's begin our story with a brief history of relevant research, practices, and policies that best represent the interplay between racial equity, social science, and K-12 education.

ADDRESSING THE WOUNDED STUDENT

PROGRAMS THAT PROMOTE SUCCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

This chapter is excerpted from

Reaching the Wounded Student

by Joe Hendershott

Learn more

ADDRESSING THE WOUNDED STUDENT

Excerpted from *Reaching the Wounded Student*

"Example teaches better than precept. It is the best modeler of the character of men and women. To set a lofty example is the richest bequest a man can leave behind him"

~ S. Mills, American Writer

The number one way to address the wounded student is to change the culture in our schools regarding how we view and administer discipline. There are many ways in which to view your school's discipline policy. Most policy views are set by social and school norms that have been in place for 30 years. They can be punitive and nontherapeutic in nature. Some might say it is not our job to be a therapist. This may be correct, but it is our job to be a teacher. William Glasser (2006) said it best, "Effective teaching may be the hardest job there is." We knew going in that the profession would be very difficult, but we also knew it would be rewarding. It is filled with no absolutes because we are working with the human condition. Walk into your neighborhoods, your churches, and your places of business and you will not only see, but perhaps accept, diversity and the human condition. Traditionally, our schools have not embraced differences in student behaviors and what may cause them. We say student discipline guidelines must be enforced with no exceptions so that we do not play favorites and so that students learn that punishment is swift and consistent for all behavior issues.

When I was introduced to the teachers during the first staff meeting of my first principal position, I asked them what they expect from a new principal. They had chosen a spokesman for the group as if they had been anticipating the question all along. He was a veteran coach. He stood up, saying "We expect the students to fear you and fear the office. Basically, get in their faces. These students need to understand who is in charge of this building." My first thought was, *don't we have an antibullying policy?* Instead, I said, "In that case, your school board and superintendent has just hired the wrong principal. I do not operate from a position of ego and control, but from a position of teaching and learning. When a student ends up in my office, he or she needs to learn and I am to teach or he will be back again and again. Consequences rarely ever result in changed behavior."

During the first situation at the school, the math teacher sent down a 17-year-old young man. While I was working, the young man walked into my office and admitted, "I just got sent down by Mr. Jones for calling him a name. What are you going to do to me?" Saying nothing, I ignored him as he continued to ask me the same question until finally, I broke into teaching, not punishing, mode.

ADDRESSING THE WOUNDED STUDENT

"Young man, have you been taught the difference between right and wrong?"

"Yes."

"Was what you did right or wrong?"

"Wrong."

"Do you need another man to solve your problems?"

"No."

"Go solve your problem."

A few minutes later I saw the math teacher coming down the hall toward me and he said, "What did you do to that student? Did you get in his face and threaten him with the handbook and suspension? I have been teaching in this building for 26 years and I have never had a student apologize."

Teaching and giving responsibility where it belongs is necessary. Had I suspended the young man, which was under my control according to all the rules, guidelines, board policy, and laws, he would have learned nothing more than another lesson of failure and control. I will say that the young man did make the correct choice to do the right thing and apologize to the teacher. The student could have refused to make his comments right with the teacher and then a suspension might have been in order to create some distance so emotions could calm down.

The Steps to Addressing the Wounded Student

The way to address the wounded student is grounded in our commitment to change and our ability to see the big picture. Remember, every behavior is a chance to esteem or turn away a wounded student and every behavior is a teachable moment. In previous chapters you have learned how to understand and identify the wounded student, now you will learn how to address the wounded student. It is my goal to give you practical programs that you can use in your school to make a difference.

1. Do NOT Turn Over Your Power During a Teachable Moment

I see some teachers, administrators, and school employees who continuously turn their power over to someone else during a teachable moment. Many times it is turned over to someone who may not have as good an answer as you do or someone with less experience to draw on in order to help this student. We sometimes turn this power over because we are afraid that we will be held responsible for making a wrong decision. It is always good to use our school

ADDRESSING THE WOUNDED STUDENT

handbooks and policies to help guide us in making decisions; however, just like in parenting, there is no real handbook that says, if you do this, go to point B and do this and all will turn out well. Sometimes our inability to make decisions or lack of willingness to make a decision can be even more damaging to a wounded child.

This is not to say that students will not struggle or have learning difficulties. In fact, it is quite the opposite. This says that despite any obstacle that gets in the way of learning, we will overcome that obstacle and achieve. Our schools should be viewed as the one place in our community where each and every child will achieve their full potential. We can accomplish this lofty goal of achievement by starting with us and what we set as standards for our students.

One approach is to develop a "No-Failure School." Many wounded students who attend alternative schools or at-risk schools will tell you that they will get an F because that is what they are used to. It is ingrained into their belief system and the sooner they get their F, the sooner they can prove themselves right. Their belief system is destructive to their success. As many of you would guess, it is really not about whether they have the ability to pass their class or state required tests. It is more about their organization skills, test preparation, and the relevancy of the material to their complicated lives. When you throw their belief system of failure into the mix, you spell academic disaster.

2. Change the Way You Grade

The next step in addressing wounded students is by changing the way we traditionally grade in education. This is especially important when working with wounded children. We must try to get away from making finalizations or deadlines to achievement. Instead, we could use incompletes to mark progress. For many students put out of school on suspension, it is more about their behavior and not about their potential to achieve. An incomplete allows the student to feel like he/she still has the ability to accomplish something. It says to the student, "We have not given up on you." It assures the student that we believe he or she has the ability to learn the material. However, it is important to teach students that responsibility, deadlines, and ability in comprehension all have rewards and consequences in the real world.

We do not want to lose these students before the lesson is taught. Many wounded students have not learned this concept of responsibility at home, so the schools may be the only hope for the student to learn this lesson. I worked with a young lady who was pregnant and succeeding in her classes, but the baby came

ADDRESSING THE WOUNDED STUDENT

early in the month of May during the last month of school. At that point, because it had nothing to do with her ability to learn or try, we were able to give her an incomplete grade. In the fall, she was able to pick up where she left off and therefore completed her work and grades. If we had decided to fail her, it would have been perceived as a failure. She was not a failure simply because her child was born early.

Some educators have a hard time with this concept because we are very structured, highly motivated learners who, for the most part, established those skills earlier in our lives due to our upbringing. The first question that many of us asked in school was, "Where is the syllabus?" If we can see what is expected, we can start to plan our attack to accomplish the goals set forth by the teacher, and we could structure our time accordingly. Wounded children have a hard time structuring their time, and it is our job to help them acquire this skill. The best way to help wounded students is to establish relationships that are grounded in the fact that they can and will achieve. DO NOT set up barriers, like policies that say failure is a possibility. It is our job to teach them, and in some cases their failure is more a reflection of our failure than the students'.

As we move toward reaching a student's wounds, it is important to keep in mind that true change happens for most people on the emotional level and not on the cognitive level. That is why relationships that establish trust in your students' ability to achieve are so critical to this process.

A large issue that I had as a school administrator was that many policies in the typical handbooks require that teachers give Fs after so many unexcused absences. A suspension is usu- ally counted as an unexcused absence. Many times, once a student has returned from a suspension, the failure for the grading period has already been determined. How do we expect unmotivated students, who already have a history of failing, to come back from a suspension and sit, let alone try, in a class that they literally have absolutely no chance of passing? We can say they should be there because it's required or just for the sake of learning, but we know this may not work.

This is one reason why alternative discipline is so important. This allows students to remain in the classroom and academically achieve. The consequences can be served in an alternative setting. We will discuss a specific program in chapter 6 that will help increase attendance and graduation while lowering suspension, dropout, and failure rates.

ADDRESSING THE WOUNDED STUDENT

3. Take the Time to Train Your Staff

The third step to addressing wounded students is developing staff training. This sounds like a no-brainer. Realistically, how many of you have been to staff training where you have walked away either not gathering any new information as an educator, or you just simply are hearing the same old, same old? As stated before in the book, I know many of you care deeply for all children in your classroom and want to help, but unless you develop new, specific programs and policies to put in place, you will continue to see the same results. Give yourself the permission to think outside the box and dream big for your students.

Staff training when working with wounded students relies heavily on de-escalation skills and not on discipline techniques to change behavior. What we tend to see is that schools will try to strong-arm these behaviors with more security in case these students get out of hand. Again, I am not against safety or making schools a safe learning environment for teachers and students. In fact, de-escalation skills and training makes schools a much safer place for everyone emotionally and physically. Teaching people to understand wounded children and in de- escalation skills requires a new way of thinking and approach to a situation.

My karate instructor Larry Overholt was a career law enforcement officer for more than 30 years. He always told us that he never used his karate physically in a situation at work to intentionally harm anyone, but he did use it mentally in almost every situation because of its de-escalation techniques. Culturally, we train our officers and those who work in correctional facilities these skills, but no one teaches our educators. Why not? These skills can be of great benefit to us and our students to keep us all safer.

Personally, I believe this lack of training comes from our inability to change our mindset that a person must meet force with force. A place and time exists where this philosophy may be required, but the fact is last year in our public schools 1,511 students were corporally punished (Children's Defense Fund, 2008). This stat reflects that we have a tendency to punish instead of de-escalate. If we work to ensure proper training to all of our educators, I believe we can eliminate many of these issues.

Perhaps the biggest question is whether to give staff training in the area of addressing wounded children. First, ask your- selves, "Is our current plan working?" If it is, I suggest you stick with your successful plan/program. On the other hand, if the answer is no, then seek information in this area. The responses I have received

ADDRESSING THE WOUNDED STUDENT

Excerpted from *Reaching the Wounded Student*

as a public speaker, trainer, and staff developer in addressing wounded children have been overwhelming and shocking. The response has been consistent across the United States where I have spoken in Las Vegas, New Orleans, Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee, Florida, Texas, and Denver. From elementary to secondary conferences, everyone is saying the same thing: We need to have a clearer understanding of these children and programs that work to help them. It is my hope that this book will provide a way to better serve wounded children by sharing programs that will help transform the way we position our profession to help children who are struggling to receive their education. And to do this well, I believe we need workshops, staff training, and professional growth in de-escalation skills. I would suggest contacting your local law enforcement department, children's services, or social service agencies who may be able to provide this type of training. Counselors in your school may also have the training or contacts to get the staff training.

4. Increase Self-Esteem

The fourth way to address wounded students is to form pro- grams that increase self-esteem. As you will see in chapter 6, where the components of self-esteem are described in detail, it is important to realize that the wounded student's self-esteem has been shattered. Understanding the effects of low self-esteem and how it is tied to achievement is critical to reaching the student. Remember that some students are coming from home lives that say they are worthless They are abused mentally and physically, and they come from a life of poverty and, the prevalent factor of low self-esteem, neglect. When a child feels neglected and unloved it damages their self-esteem more than anything else. Keeping in mind that the major influence on a child is the parent, good or bad, we can see why some children come to us with low to no self-esteem.

Every 36 seconds a case of child abuse or neglect is con- firmed (Children's Defense Fund, 2008b). As horrible as this statistic is, this it is just the confirmed cases. Think of all the abuse and neglect that is not reported or that cannot be substantiated. This is not a small subject. This alone could become an entire staff training or book unto itself. How do we begin to deal with this type of figure and still educate these children? Some will argue that student achievement alone in the classroom will start to change this esteem issue. I agree that education plays a major part in helping to reach wounded children, but much needs to be done in the area of esteem building to prepare these students to learn again.

ADDRESSING THE WOUNDED STUDENT

Excerpted from *Reaching the Wounded Student*

Counseling and Emotional Healing

With the current standard throughout schools, testing and data collection is demanding a lot from our school counselors' time. This means that the counseling time that our students need to succeed is lost to time spent on testing. Academic guidance counseling and testing is an important part of the educational process and cannot be ignored. However, our counselors do not have the time required to help wounded students reach the emotional level that they need to reach. In addition, the training really needed to assist these students is not usually offered to our counselors. To bring this to the forefront, our schools need to offer this as part of their counseling or have direct lines to get wounded children the specific help they need to be reached emotionally. We can then have plans in place to help them academically.

Here are some steps that can be general guidelines for you as a teacher when helping to reach wounded children:

Acknowledge: The first step to reaching a wounded student is to first acknowledge the wound. We are a society of stuffers who say *suck it up or pull yourself up by your own bootstraps*. These are all okay statements for the future once support and time are established, but they are not appropriate at the point of the original trauma. Many students will say that they are all right just because it is too painful to deal with the truth of the wounds in their lives. We must either be properly trained or have trained people on our staff to help us appropriately deal with these issues. If we do not acknowledge that our students are living complicated lives filled with pain, fear, anxiety, and trauma, then we may fail them.

Understand: The second step is to understand the student's wounds. I have stressed understanding a lot in this chapter because it is the key to proper care and reaching wounded children. Understanding our students' wounds means helping them bring the pain, along with its location, to light. If we plan to treat these wounds or get them to the correct resource, we must understand where the pain is coming from. Is it an abusive past? Or drugs? For us to help reach them, we must find the origin of the pain and try to understand it. Attempting to treat another wound instead of the one that really exists can be dam- aging to the student.

Relationship: The third step is taking the time to build a relationship with

ADDRESSING THE WOUNDED STUDENT

the student. This should come as no surprise to us. Who do we confide in when trouble surrounds us? We confide in people with whom we have the closest relationships; we trust them. Yet again this becomes a major issue today with educators because of time. When do we have time to develop relationships? We must find the time because of its importance in reaching wounded children. It is key to building relation- ships. If a child at home was in need, we would make that relationship with our own child our highest priority. Without time, how do we teach our child? It is a matter of priority and necessity. I have been to many schools that realize that they need to find ways in their schedule to support this kind of time. Each school will vary based on many issues. But the core of it all is that you must make the time. If our students realize we do not have time for them, it will only further feed their wounds of unintentional neglect and worthlessness.

Reaching wounded children: The fourth step is reaching the student's wounds and addressing them properly through professional care. This can be very cleansing for the student. Remember what we stated earlier, that all wounds must be brought to the surface to create healing. Wounds that stay unattended and are not surfaced will eventually get worse, like any deep flesh wound. These wounds can even start to manifest themselves into other wounds or problems.

Hope: The fifth step to reaching a wounded student is hope. Reaching the student's emotional needs leads to hope. Many wounded students have lost hope at a young age and your ability to teach or to be a great teacher has no meaning for a child who has lost hope. Once steps one through four have taken place, students will begin to see some hope and learning will start to have relevance. Learning needs to make sense to every- one. Hope has been discussed throughout this book and will continue to be discussed; it is the entire essence of this book.

Self-Esteem: The sixth step, self-esteem, can be broken down into four components as described by Clemes and Bean: connectiveness, uniqueness, empowerment, and models (Study on Self-Esteem as cited by Redenbach, 2004, p. 32). When wounded students begin to develop the four components of self-esteem, you will start to see a higher attentiveness to their schoolwork and academic success. We know that low self- esteem could lead to depression, lying, multiple behavior issues, even drugs. Self-esteem is one of the building blocks to reaching the wounds of students that is probably the most critical to the human spirit in restoring hope.

Connectiveness: Everyone wants to feel connected to something else or

ADDRESSING THE WOUNDED STUDENT

something bigger than themselves. Many wounded students feel disconnected from people or organizations such as schools. We all want a sense of belonging, no matter what our age.

Uniqueness: Acknowledging unique qualities gives your students a sense of identity. In our schools, sometimes we punish students subconsciously for being different. Some rules are designed for conformity. A certain sense of conformity is definitely needed for safety and consistency for all. But we take it sometimes to a point where students lose their own style, and this can affect their style of learning as well. Students need to feel unique. They may express themselves through art, music, and sports, but they can sometimes lose that sense of expression in the formal classroom.

Empowerment: Empowering students gives them a sense of control. When students or children in general lash out at others through things such as bullying, fighting, or worse types of violence, it is ultimately a sense of regaining power or a way to gain some type of control.

Models: It is also critical to model behaviors we want students to pick up on. Having someone's values to model that are acceptable in our schools and in society plays a major role in esteem building. Again, as stated earlier, parents are not always present or do not set the proper model for their child's behavior. The teacher then becomes the next powerful model in a child's life. To model a positive outlook on life alone can be a total change to a wounded child's beliefs. Compassion, hope, and grace are all behaviors that some children have never been exposed to and may never get the chance again to be exposed to beyond the teacher. It is important to understand that self-esteem will eventually lead to self-control and self-control to self-discipline which can lead to a whole new area in which most students who are wounded have never been, and that is hope.

The Bottom Line

I believe the whole message behind working with wounded children is our ability as teachers to extend grace, mercy, and forgiveness to the children we are working with. I have had several questions and concerns in this area regarding what we are really teaching students if we give them breaks. Some people have even replied to me that the world is cruel, and giving wounded children a little grace and mercy just sets them up for future failure. "That's the problem with kids

ADDRESSING THE WOUNDED STUDENT

today: they are just given too many breaks." My response to this is: If you have ever had or will ever have any level of wounds, how would you want people to respond to you?

If you are picked up by the police for speeding, would you roll down your window and say to the officer, "I deserve the full punishment for this offense. If it requires the maximum fine, even jail time, I will take it so that I can learn my lesson that the world is a cruel place and this way it will never happen again." In my opinion, the majority of us would roll down that window and hope for some grace, mercy, and maybe a little forgiveness from the officer enforcing the law. Grace is defined as disposition to or an act or instance of kindness, courtesy, or clemency, a temporary exemption (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2008). How many of us have needed a temporary exemption from something at some point in our lives? I know that I have, and the people in my life who have applied that grace and mercy have become some of my greatest teachers because they built a trusting relationship that feels safe to learn under.

We have to keep the main thing the main thing, and that is student achievement. I encourage you to use this with your students. If you apply some of these rules to your classroom instead of punishment and consequences, you will begin to see student success increase. Students will feel safe and know that it is okay to be human.

Chapter 5 Key Points

◆ Consequences rarely result in changed behavior.

◆ Never turn your power over during a teachable moment.

◆ Every behavior is a teachable moment.

◆ Develop staff training regarding wounded students.

◆ Develop de-escalation skills.

◆ Develop self-esteem programs for students.

◆ Have trained professional staff in place to help wounded students.

MAKING STUDENTS FEEL VALUED AND CAPABLE
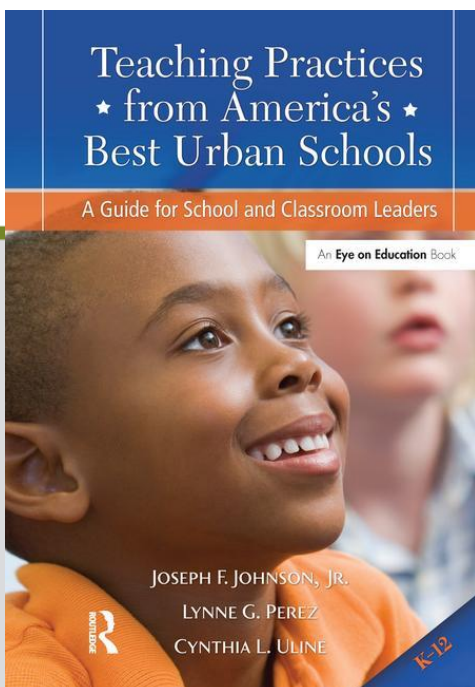
This chapter is excerpted from

Teaching Practices from America's Best Urban Schools: A Guide for School and Classroom Leaders

by Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., Cynthia L. Uline, Lynne G. Perez

Learn more

MAKING STUDENTS FEEL VALUED AND CAPABLE

Excerpted from *Teaching Practices from America's Best Urban Schools*

What It Is & What It Isn't: Making Students Feel Valued and Capable

◆ *What It Is*

Caring enough to demand the best from students

Example: Even though they recognize the next topic on the district's scope and sequence chart as critically important, the middle school math department members acknowledge that it might be impossible to get their sixth-grade students to master the topic in the three days allotted. They determine that approximately 65 percent of their students are two years behind grade level in math. They challenge themselves to determine what students need to know and be able to do in order to master the concept in a way that would meet the grade-level expectation. Then, they determine that they would have a reasonable chance of getting all, or almost all, of their students to this level of mastery if they spent eight days teaching it. Next, they determine the less critical concepts they could remove from "their school's version" of the scope and sequence chart, freeing up the eight days they need to teach this important skill well. Following the eight days of focused instruction, students knew they had accomplished grade-level work. They were proud of themselves. Several expressed that they liked this kind of math. Some talked about how they could be good at math after all.

What It Isn't

Holding students to lower behavioral and academic expectations because of the challenges in their lives

Example: Even though they recognize the next topic on the district's scope and sequence chart as critically important, the middle school math department members acknowledge that it might be impossible to get their sixth-grade students to master the topic in the three days allotted. They determine that approximately 65 percent of their students are two years behind grade level in math, so they decide to focus on a three-day sequence of lessons that would advance the students slightly by teaching the fourth-grade application of the concept. After the three days, some students could be heard complaining about the "baby work" they receive in math. Teachers were frustrated with the students' general lack of mastery. Some students stopped trying. Everyone moved on to the next topic in the scope and sequence.

MAKING STUDENTS FEEL VALUED AND CAPABLE

Excerpted from Teaching Practices from America's Best Urban Schools

◆ **What It Is**

Caring enough to ensure students' academic success

Example: The biology teachers notice that most of the students who fail their end-of-course test are students with disabilities. The biology teachers consult with the district's best special educators to identify a set of teaching strategies that should help students with disabilities (as well as other students) master the biology content. They work with the special education teacher at their school to "frontload" key biology vocabulary. In other words, the special education teacher helps introduce the key vocabulary words prior to their introduction in the biology class. Also, with the help of school administrators, the biology teachers organize an after-school biology club, and they encourage the participation of all students, but offer personal invitations to students with disabilities. The club provides practical, fun experiences through which students utilize important biology concepts. After planning this series of actions, the teachers decide how they will monitor the progress of all students, especially students with disabilities, as they work to learn the content on the biology end-of-course test.

What It Isn't

Settling for minimal levels of academic progress

Example: The biology teachers notice that most of the students who fail their end-of-course test are students with disabilities. They decide to use a lower passing score in grading the end-of-course tests for students with disabilities.

◆ **What It Is**

Caring enough to know and value individual students

Example: During passing periods, the art teacher stands at the door and greets students as they walk by. The teacher's quiet, sincere, and personalized greetings and questions help students know that the teacher cares about them individually.

What It Isn't

Missing opportunities to let students know that educators value them individually

Example: During passing periods, the art teacher stands at the door and does not say anything as students pass by, except to tell students to hurry to their

MAKING STUDENTS FEEL VALUED AND CAPABLE

Excerpted from *Teaching Practices from America's Best Urban Schools*

next class.

◆ *What It Is*

Caring enough to model courtesy and respect

Example: The fifth-grade teacher asks the students to please turn in their homework. Without warning, one of the students yells out, "Bitch!" The teacher calmly finishes giving directions to the class and then walks back to Mark (the student who made the remark) and whispers for him to follow her into the hall. When the two are in the hall- way, the teacher asks, "What was that about?" Mark answers, "I just got a text from my grandmother." Mark shows his cell phone to the teacher, and she sees the text message explaining that Mark's mom was back in jail. "This is the third time she's been in jail," Mark explains with tears rolling down his cheeks. "I'm sorry to hear about your mom," the teacher says. The two of them talk for a minute, and then the teacher asks if Mark needs more time to get himself together. "No. I'm OK," he decides. "So, am I going to have to stay for after-school detention?" Mark asks, before he opens the classroom door. "Absolutely," the teacher responds. "You broke a rule. But, it will be OK. The detention will give you time to work on some math skills."

What It Isn't

Missing opportunities to demonstrate courtesy and respect to students

Example: The fifth-grade teacher asks the students to please turn in their homework. Without warning, one of the students yells out, "Bitch!" The teacher yells back, "If you didn't do your homework, it's your own fault. How dare you call me a name! Get out of my classroom and march yourself down to the office. I don't care if they ever let you come back!"

◆ *What It Is*

Caring enough to praise and acknowledge

Example: As the teacher works with seven first-grade students at the reading table, she comments, "I love the way the Princeton group is working quietly together. And I really appreciate the way the Stanford group is following directions. And my San Diego State group, you are reading so well together. What great scholars we have!" Then, the teacher returns her focus to the group at the reading table. Every five minutes or so, she takes the opportunity to notice and comment on the positive things students are doing at their learning

MAKING STUDENTS FEEL VALUED AND CAPABLE

centers. Her positive comments seem to fuel their interest in staying on task.

What It Isn't

Missing opportunities to praise and acknowledge

Example: As the teacher works with seven first-grade students at the reading table, she does not notice that the other students are attending to their learning center tasks fairly well. After a while, however, the students are less focused and eventually they become loud and disruptive. The teacher raises her voice to tell students to lower theirs, but that still does not work, so the teacher ends the guided reading lesson early.

◆ *What It Is*

Caring enough to create attractive physical environments

Example: The eighth-grade English classes meet in an old portable building on the east end of the campus. Students call the classroom the Writers' Corner because that is the name on the address plaque over the front door. Volunteer students and former students painted the exterior walls with murals of a group of famous artists who represent both genders and various racial/ethnic groups. The same group of volunteers planted sod and flower gardens in ways that make Writers' Corner an attractive place. On one side of the classroom, sofas, love seats, bean bags, and other chairs create the Readers' Circle. On the other end of the classroom, tables and chairs are clustered to facilitate group writing projects. Short bookshelves line the room, filled with a modest collection of interesting reading material. A portable computer lab, with laptop computers, provides easy access to computers and printers. The largest bulletin board in the classroom is the Honor Board. The Honor Board is filled with student writing products that met rigorous criteria. These examples of student work are attractively posted with the scoring guide and teacher comments associated with each project. The contents of the Honor Board are changed each month. Students work hard to ensure that they always have at least one piece of work on the Honor Board. Another wall features the names, pictures, and college affiliations of recent graduates who had been Writers' Corner participants and now attend colleges or universities. A third wall features computer- generated book jackets. When students read books and complete book reports, they generate the book jacket, post it, and sign the inside cover. As other students read the book, they can sign the book jacket, as well. A glass display case holds

MAKING STUDENTS FEEL VALUED AND CAPABLE

Excerpted from *Teaching Practices from America's Best Urban Schools*

the self-published books students from the current and previous classes have written. Students can check out, read, and report about these books, just as they can read and report about other volumes in the classroom. Although Writers' Corner is located in a poorly lit corner of the campus, the computer lab has never been the target of vandalism or burglaries.

What It Isn't

Missing opportunities to create attractive physical environments

Example: The eighth-grade English classes meet in an old portable building on the east end of the campus. Students call the classroom the school's ghetto. The exterior walls are dirty and dingy. One window was boarded up two years ago and has never been repaired. Graffiti covers the side of the building closest to the street. The floor of the building is always dirty because students track in dirt and mud from the barren ground between the main building and the portable. Except for a few store-bought posters, the fire drill procedure, and a teacher-made chart with consequences for bad student behavior, the interior classroom walls are bare. The redeeming feature of the building is the relatively large square footage. The teacher has taken advantage of the large space by placing the thirty-five desks into a seven-by-five array with plenty of space in between desks. Most students hate being assigned to classes that meet in the ghetto.

Practice Guide Related to Making students Feel Valued and Capable

For information on possible uses of this practice guide, please see pages 5–6 in Chapter 1 of *Teaching Practices from America's Best Urban Schools*.

1. Was the classroom clean and attractive?   Ⓨ Ⓝ

2. Were there at least twenty recent (less than one month old) pieces of high-quality student work posted?   Ⓨ Ⓝ

3. Were there at least fifty recent (less than one month old) pieces of high-quality student work posted?   Ⓨ Ⓝ

4. Did the teacher demonstrate courtesy and respect in all interactions with students?   Ⓨ Ⓝ

5. Did the teacher provide specific praise to at least 25 percent of   Ⓨ Ⓝ

MAKING STUDENTS FEEL VALUED AND CAPABLE

the students?

6. To at least 50 percent? Ⓨ Ⓝ

7. Did the teacher and students share a rapport that allowed students to ask questions comfortably? Ⓨ Ⓝ

8. Did the teacher acknowledge and express appreciation for student effort? Ⓨ Ⓝ

9. Di the teacher consistently/fairly enforce rules? Ⓨ Ⓝ

10. If off-task behavior occurred, did the teacher redirect it quickly and calmly? Ⓨ Ⓝ

In a strong lesson, a "yes" answer is recorded for at least five of these items. In an outstanding lesson, a "yes" answer is recorded for at least seven of these items.

Suggested Readings Related to Making Students

Feel Valued and Capable

Research reveals a significant relationship between students' academic achievement and their perceptions that adults in school care for them. Factors such as school attachment and connectedness, a sense of community, trusting relationships, love and belongingness, and even the quality of school facilities, when combined with teacher support, teacher insistence, and academic press, appear to play a significant role in students' beliefs about themselves as capable learners and, ultimately, their ability to perform academically. The following articles and books further substantiate the major findings from high-performing urban schools presented in this chapter.

Blum, R. W. (2005). A case for school connectedness. *Educational Leadership*, 67(7), 16–20.

School connectedness has been defined as students' belief that adults and peers in school care about their learning, as well as about them as individuals. Previous studies demonstrated that a connected school environment is related to higher levels of student achievement. Blum convened key researchers, as well as

MAKING STUDENTS FEEL VALUED AND CAPABLE

Excerpted from *Teaching Practices from America's Best Urban Schools*

representatives from the government, education, and health sectors, to identify the current state of knowledge related to school connectedness. This article presents a set of research-based principles regarding school connectedness to guide the work of schools.

Bondy, E., & Ross, D. D. (2008). The teacher as warm demander. *Educational Leadership*, 66(1), 54–58.

Warm demanders approach their students with unconditional positive regard, first coming to know their students as individuals and then insisting that they perform to high standards. Bondy and Ross describe the ways in which warm demanders build relationships deliberately, communicate expectations of success, and support positive behavior.

Breaux, A., & Whitaker, T. (2012). *Making good teaching great: Everyday strategies for teaching with impact.* Larchmont, NY: Eye On Education.

Breaux and Whitaker offer a wide array of practical suggestions that can help students feel valued, respected, and appreciated by their teachers. These suggestions include ideas for establishing a sincere, caring environment and getting to know students well.

Hallinan, M. T. (2008). Teacher influences on students' attachment to school. *Sociology of Education*, 81, 271–283.

Research has shown that students who like school have higher academic achievement and lower incidences of disciplinary actions, absenteeism, truancy, and dropping out than do students who dislike school. This study focused on the role of teachers in shaping students' feelings about school. Findings demonstrate that, as teachers provide social and emotional support to their students, they increase the degree to which their students like school, which, in turn, improves students' academic and social outcomes.

Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2004). Relationships matter: Linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. *Journal of School Health, 74(7)*, 262–273.

MAKING STUDENTS FEEL VALUED AND CAPABLE

Excerpted from *Teaching Practices from America's Best Urban Schools*

For students to take advantage of high expectations and more advanced curricula, they need support from the adults with whom they interact in school. Klem and Connell observed a general lack of urgency on the part of educators to provide a personalized learning environment for students, even in the face of growing evidence that such an environment influences student academic performance. This study examined the relative payoff in student engagement associated with varying degrees of improvement in relationships between teachers and students.

Lee, V. E., & Smith, J. B. (1999). Social support and achievement for young adolescents in Chicago: The role of school academic press. *American Education Research Journal,* 36(4), 907–945.

This study explored the relationship between the social support young adolescents received and their learning in mathematics and reading over the course of a school year. Using hierarchical linear modeling methods, researchers found that, on average, social support is positively but modestly related to learning. Both learning and the relationship between social support and learning are contingent on the academic press, that is, the degree to which teachers and students experience an emphasis on academic excellence and adherence to academic standards at their school.

Noddings, N. (2005). The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to education (2nd ed.). New York: *Teachers College Press*.

In this second edition of her seminal book on the ethic of care as applied within schools, Noddings positions care as central to current debates on standardization, accountability, privatization, and the continuous struggle between traditional and progressive methods of education. She considers how schools might be organized around domains of caring, acknowledging individual students' strengths and cultivating these strengths within an environment of caring, rather than competition.

Osterman, K. F. (2000). Students' need for belonging in the school community. *Review of Educational Research,* 70, 323–367.

MAKING STUDENTS FEEL VALUED AND CAPABLE

Osterman defines a student's sense of community as a feeling of belongingness within a group. In this article, she reviews the research on students' sense of acceptance within the school community. The findings suggest that students' sense of acceptance influences multiple dimensions of their behavior, even as too many schools adopt organizational practices that neglect, and potentially undermine, students' experience of membership in a supportive community.

Scheurich, J. J. (1998). Highly successful and loving, public elementary schools populated mainly by low-SES children of color: Core beliefs and cultural characteristics. *Urban Education,* 33(4), 451−491.

Scheurich explores five core beliefs and seven organizational cultural characteristics identified by urban principals as foundational to highly successful urban elementary schools. The author describes a practice-based model, developed by urban principals, operationalizing these beliefs and characteristics.

Tschannen-Moran, M. (2004). *Trust matters: Leadership for successful schools.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

This book offers educators a practical, hands-on guide for establishing and maintaining a caring environment of trust within their schools. Tschannen-Moran explores the leader's role in fostering high-quality relationships among teachers, students, and parents and examines examples of positive outcomes of trusting school environments.

Uline, C., Tschannen-Moran, M., & Wolsey, T. D. (2009). The walls still speak: The stories occupants tell. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 47, 400−426.

A growing body of research connects the quality of school facilities to student outcomes, including achievement, behavior, and attitudes about school. Less is known about the mechanisms of these relationships. This study examined the link between school building quality and student outcomes through the mediating influence of school climate. From the data, several

MAKING STUDENTS FEEL VALUED AND CAPABLE

Excerpted from Teaching Practices from America's Best Urban Schools

broad themes related to building quality emerged as central to this interaction between the school facilities and learning, including movement, aesthetics, play of light, flexible and responsive classrooms, elbow room, and security.

INQUIRY INTO RACE

LESSON PLANS AND HANDOUTS

This chapter is excerpted from

Let's Get Real: Exploring Race, Class, and Gender Identities in the Classroom

by Martha Caldwell and Oman Frame

Learn more

INQUIRY INTO RACE

Excerpted from *Let's Get Real*

LESSON 5.1

Fish Bowls

Lesson Objectives

Students will

- participate in a discussion, sharing ideas and listening respectfully;
- discuss what they observe;
- reflect in writing on what they have learned.

Materials Needed

- Guiding questions

Suggested Format

- Ask members of a specific identity group to come into the center of the room and form a circle.
- Ask other students to form a "listening circle" surrounding the students in the inner circle.
- Introduce the guidelines for speaking and listening for the exercise:

    – Only the inner circle speaks and they speak only to each other.

    – The inner circle shares personal experiences and feelings, but not opinions or philosophies.

    – They allow everyone time to speak.

    –The outer circle listens attentively. They show the inner circle respect by listening silently.

    – After the inner circle shares for the allotted time (5–7 minutes), they move to the outer circle and the next identity group moves into the inner circle.

- After each group has had their conversation, open discussion to the entire group.
- Ask students to write a one-page response describing their insights.

INQUIRY INTO RACE

Guiding Questions

- What is it like to be a white male?

- What is it like to be a male of color?

- What is it like to be a white female?

- What is it like to be a female of color?

LESSON 5.2

See Baby Discriminate

Lesson Objectives

Students will

- read carefully and analyze material;

- respond in writing to guiding questions;

- interview their parents regarding race and child rearing;

- participate in a discussion, sharing ideas and listening respectfully.

Materials Needed

- Bronson & Merryman (2009). Even Babies Discriminate.
  www.newsweek.com/id/214989

- "See Baby Discriminate: Guiding Questions" (student handout)

- Project Implicit website: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/research/

Suggested Format

- Advise students to read carefully as the title is misleading.

- Ask students to answer the guiding questions as they read.

- Review questions 1–5 on the worksheet, which covers content, in a class discussion.

- Ask students to share how their families talk about race and the results of

INQUIRY INTO RACE

their parent interviews.

• Ask students to explore why parents of different races address the topic differently.

• Ask students to share early memories of learning about race.

• Ask students to explore the Project Implicit website and take several of the tests.

• Ask students if they would like to share any results that surprised them.

Guiding Questions

1. Why did some of the families drop out of the study on race?

2. Why don't multicultural videos work to change children's attitudes about race?

3. What do the authors believe is the key to changing children's attitudes about race?

4. What is the Diverse Environment Theory? Why does it not work?

5. What are the effects of parents of color preparing their children for racial bias?

6. How often do your parents talk to you about race? What are the conversations like?

7. What are your parents' attitudes about talking about race? Do they feel it's necessary or that it's counterproductive? Please interview them to find out.

8. What is your first memory related to race?

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LESSON 5.3

</div>

<u>Step Forward / Step Back</u>

Students will

• understand the effects of group identity on social advancement;

INQUIRY INTO RACE

Excerpted from *Let's Get Real*

- process their impressions in a discussion;

- write a reflective response describing what they learned.

  Materials Needed

- "Step Forward/Step Back" statements

- An area large enough for students to form a line standing next to each other and enough room for them to move at least 15 feet forward and 15 feet backward

Suggested Format

- Students stand next to each other in a line, arm's length apart.

- They hold onto the hands of the people on either side of them for as long as possible during the exercise.

- Students remain silent during the exercise.

- If there is information they do not wish to reveal, they do not have to respond to every question.

- Read each statement on the Step Forward/Step Back handout. Each statement will instruct them to either step forward, step back, or stand still.

- When all the questions have been read, ask students to look around and silently observe where they are standing in relationship to other students.

- Conduct a debriefing session.

  – What was that like for you?

  – What did you learn?

  – How do you feel about where you were standing at the end?

  – Are there other questions we could have asked? If so, what are they?

Step Forward/Step Back

If the statement is true for you, take a step forward or a step backward, depending on the instructions.

1. If your ancestors were forced to come to the USA, not by choice, take one step back.

2. If your primary ethnic identity is American, take one step forward.

INQUIRY INTO RACE

3. If you were ever called names because of your race, gender, or sexual orientation, take one step back.

4. If people of color have worked in your household as servants, gardeners, etc., take one step forward.

5. If your parents are professional, doctors, lawyers, etc., take one step forward.

6. If you live in a neighborhood where there is prostitution, drug activity, etc., take one step back.

7. If you ever tried to change your appearance, mannerisms, or behavior to avoid being judged or ridiculed, take one step back.

8. If you studied the culture of your ancestors in elementary school, take one step forward.

9. If you started school speaking a language other than English, take one step back.

10. If there were more than 50 books in your house when you grew up, take one step forward.

11. If as a child, you owned more than 6 books featuring characters who looked like you, take one step forward.

12. If you have ever had to skip a meal or were hungry because there was not enough money to buy food, take one step back.

13. If your parents have taken you to art galleries or plays, take one step forward.

14. If one of your parents has been unemployed or laid off, not by choice, take one step back.

15. If you have attended a private school or summer camp, take one step forward.

16. If your family ever had to move because they could not afford the rent, take one step back.

17. If you were told that you were beautiful, smart, and capable by your parents, take one step forward.

18. If you were ever discouraged from academics because of race, take one step back.

19. If you are encouraged to attend a college by your parents, take one step forward.

INQUIRY INTO RACE

20. If you have taken a vacation out of the country, take one step forward.

21. If one of your parents did not complete high school, take one step back.

22. If your family owns your own house, take one step forward.

23. If you have seen members of your race, ethnic group, gender, or sexual orientation portrayed on television in degrading roles, take one step back.

24. If you were ever accused of cheating or lying because of your race, take one step back.

25. If your parents or grandparents ever inherited money or property, take a step forward.

26. If you have had to rely primarily on public transportation, take one step back.

27. If you were ever stopped or questioned by the police because of your race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, take one step back.

28. If you were ever afraid of violence because of your race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, take one step back.

29. If you are generally able to avoid places that are dangerous, take one step forward.

30. If you have ever been scared to walk down a street at night, take one step back.

31. If you can turn on the television and see people of your race widely represented, take one step forward.

32. If your race and gender is widely represented in Congress, take one step forward.

33. If you have been the only person representing your race or ethnicity in a classroom, please take one step back.

34. If there has never been a U.S. President of the same gender as you, step back.

35. If most American CEOS are the same race as you are, step forward.

36. If most American CEOs are the same gender as you are, step forward.

37. If people sometimes avoid eye contact with you or cross over to the other side of the street to avoid facing you due to your race or gender, step back.

38. If you can't buy Band-Aids that match (more or less) the color of your skin, step

INQUIRY INTO RACE

back.

39. If you are expected to do more than an equal share of household chores because of your gender, step back.

40. If you have ever felt that you were being closely watched for shoplifting due to your race, step back.

41. If your religious beliefs differ from the majority of people in your community, step back.

42. If you can arrange to be in the company of people the same race as you most of the time, step forward.

43. If you ever felt uncomfortable about a joke related to your race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, take one step back.

44. If you were ever a victim of violence related to your race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, take one step back.

45. If your parents did not grow up in the United States, take one step back.

LESSON 5.4

Wealth, Income, and Social Class Among Races

Lesson Objectives

Students will

• research statistics about race in small groups;

• record their sources and compare information with other groups;

• recognize that statistics can vary depending on the source;

• build collaborative skills working in pairs and/or groups;

• weigh the economic effects of racial disparities;

• discuss ideas and listen respectfully to other viewpoints;

• reflect in writing on what they have learned.

INQUIRY INTO RACE

Statistics on Race

In groups of two or three, conduct a web quest to find the answers to these questions. Record the source and the date of the information.

1. What percentages of the population in the United States are White, Black, Hispanic, Asian American, and Native American?

2. What percentages of private school students in the United States are Native American, White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian American?

3. What percentages of public school students in the United States are Native American, White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian American?

4. What percentages of the United States Congress (House of Representatives and Senate) are Black, Hispanic, Asian American, White, and Native American?

5. What percentages of Supreme Court justices have been of White, Black, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian American descent?

6. What percentages of Fortune 500 companies' CEOs are Black, Hispanic, Asian American, White, and Native American?

7. What is the average/mean income for White, Black, Asian American, Hispanic, and Native Americans in the United States?

8. What percentages of welfare recipients in the United States are White, Black, Asian American, Hispanic, and Native American?

9. What percentages of your city population are Hispanic, White, Black, Native American, and Asian American?

10. What percentages of students at your school are Hispanic, White, Black, Native American, and Asian American?

11. What percentages of public school students in your city are Hispanic, White, Black, Native American, and Asian American?

12. What percentages of your state's population are White, Black, Native American, Hispanic, and Asian American?

13. What percentages of men incarcerated in the United States are Hispanic, Asian American, White, Black, and Native American?

14. What percentages of death row inmates are Hispanic, Asian American, White, Black, and Native American?

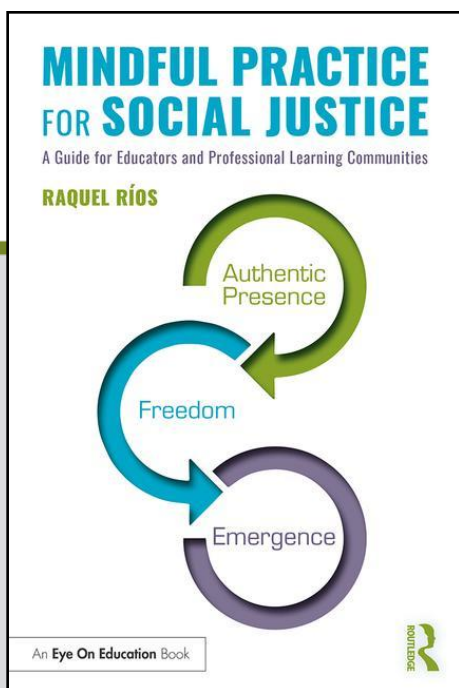15. Find one more interesting statistic related to race in our country, state, or city.

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TRANSPERSONAL AWARENESS AND AGENCY

This chapter is excerpted from

Mindful Practice for Social Justice: A Guide for Educators and Professional Learning Communities

by Raquel Ríos

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TRANSPERSONAL AWARENESS AND AGENCY

Excerpted from *Mindful Practice for Social Justice*

Strategy 3. Shared Mindful Inquiry

In spite of the wealth of knowledge and research we have on equity, we really don't have the answer to the dilemma we face. [9]

Being part of a national instructional design team was a dynamic learning experience. In order for us to design the best learning products for our clients, we had to channel our energy wisely and learn how to work together as a well-functioning team. When we first started, we experienced hiccups and growing pains. Our team was diverse, consisting of veteran writers and newbies, folks who lived in the Eastern, Pacific and Central time zones; each of us had a unique skill set, talent, culture, personality and professional aspirations. The hardest thing, we found, was developing a system and a protocol that was structured enough, but also flexible enough to support creativity. We wanted to harness talent and skill while maintaining a healthy flow of information and communication across the team. We discovered that we had to continuously clarify purpose and desired outcomes, identify which were the best ideas and what were the concrete steps to meet our goals. I realized throughout this experience how much we have evolved. We have evolved in lifestyle and living arrangements, our expectations about work, how we communicate and how we process information. It is no wonder organizations are struggling to keep up. We need time to reflect on these changes, to consider which norms are outdated. We need to spend quality time developing new structures and protocols for working together. We also need to establish ground rules for process based on a commitment to mindfulness, inquiry and equity.

As we move into the role of a Master Teacher, we will inevitably find that a big part of our job is advocating for new systems and protocols for professional learning, experimenting with new ways of doing and reflecting on experience in a way that leads to growth, knowledge and transformation. It is essential that we push back on the constraints on our time and make a commitment to meet regularly with colleagues to unpack the wealth of information and knowledge at our disposal and to select what is most essential and helpful to maintaining and enhancing our lifeworld. We will want to honor in the process our unique identity and culture, our power and potential as human beings and our commitment to purpose— which is always—how will this lead to improving the quality of life for myself and everybody else around me?

Mindful inquiry is an approach that takes into consideration all of these

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Excerpted from *Mindful Practice for Social Justice*

things. It emphasizes the importance of the mindful self; tolerance and the ability to inhabit multiple perspectives; the intention to alleviate suffering; and the notion of clearing space, openness and underlying awareness.[10] We engage in Shared Mindful Inquiry to examine and analyze important topics related to teaching, content area expertise, social justice and equity, and to identify ways that we can improve and adapt our practice.

Mindful Inquiry is unique in that it combines knowledge from critical theory, phenomenology, hermeneutics and Buddhism. It is not important to have an in-depth knowledge of each of these disciplines; we just need to know that it is a holistic, integrated approach. Here is a chart outlining the essential details (Figure 5.3):

Critical Theory	- Focuses on liberation, freedom and critical consciousness - Builds knowledge and skills to critique and challenge structures, institutions and systems that perpetuate inequality
Phenomenology	- Involves the examination of consciousness and knowledge of the world through awareness of inner experience - Builds knowledge and skills to pay attention to and learn from personal, first-hand experience
Hermeneutics	- Emphasizes the understanding and interpretation of texts - Builds knowledge and skills to analyze texts in order to understand how language, symbols and historical context influence knowledge
Buddhism	- Emphasizes the understanding and interpretation of texts - Builds knowledge and skills to train the mind in order to improve our human nature which relieves suffering

Figure 5.3 Essential Elements of Mindful Inquiry.

Most learning organizations have a built in structure that fosters inquiry and shared collaboration amongst colleagues. In schools, we call this a Professional Learning Community (PLC). Shared Mindful Inquiry is a framework and protocol to organize this type of collaborative inquiry. From John Dewey on, theorists have argued that we learn from the past through cycles of action and reflection that lead to new action,[11] and this thinking continues to influence PLCs

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TRANSPERSONAL AWARENESS AND AGENCY

Excerpted from *Mindful Practice for Social Justice*

across the country. When choosing Shared Mindful Inquiry, we are taking a different approach. The goal of this model is *to learn from a future that has not yet happened and discover our role in making sure this future comes to pass.*[12]

Take a moment to review the graphic of the *Shared Mindful Inquiry Cycle*, followed by the Guiding Questions for each stage. The details such as norms and processes for each session are determined by the group on the first day. Notice that Contemplative Practices remain at the center of our work and should continue on throughout any cycle of Shared Mindful Inquiry (Figure 5.4).
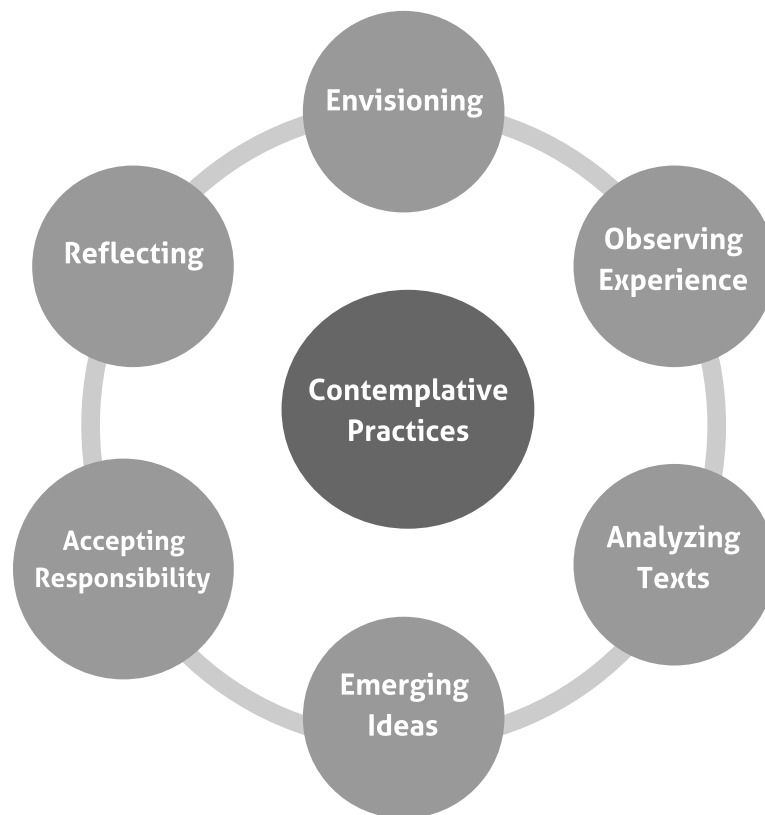
Figure 5.4 Shared Mindful Inquiry Cycle.

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Shared Mindful Inquiry Guiding Questions

Envisioning
- Envision the future, establish a vision for your field or local context
- Identify the benefits of this vision
- Describe in detail the elements and characteristics of the vision
- Describe how people experience this future reality emotionally, intellectually and spiritually.

Observing Experience
- What emotions and feelings come to mind when you think about this future?
- What fears or concerns come to mind?
- What about this vision motivates you and inspires you?
- Who do you think is responsible for the vision?
- What are the practical implications of this vision? What did it take to make it happen?
- What parts of this vision do you think are out of reach or outside your current sphere of influence?

Analyzing Texts
- What books or resources can help us explore this vision?
- What technical knowledge or information is required?
- Is there evidence of or examples of this vision anywhere in the world?
- How can we organize our investigation so that we can capture the most important ideas?

Emerging Ideas
- What have we learned about this vision?
- What patterns or trends do we notice?
- What is important?
- What challenges surfaced?

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TRANSPERSONAL AWARENESS AND AGENCY

Excerpted from *Mindful Practice for Social Justice*

Accepting Responsibility	• What are we doing now that goes against this vision?
	• How can we prepare for this vision?
	• What is one thing I can do in my role to make sure this vision comes to pass?
	• What support will I need?
Reflecting	• What did we learn from this process?
	• What are our next steps?
	• How will we support each other moving forward?

Shared Mindful Inquiry Instructions

Preparation

♦ You will need to organize a small group of three to six people who will meet regularly over an extended period of time. The person who organizes the group will act as a facilitator.

● Aim to meet once a week or bimonthly.

● A cycle of inquiry can extend over several months or it can be a few weeks. You will need a minimum commitment of six 90-min sessions, one for each stage of the cycle. Be flexible and modify as needed.

♦ Determine a place to meet and set a regular meeting time.

● You will need a round table or a circle of chairs.

● Any changes in location and time should be agreed upon.

● If possible, send an email reminder with details.

♦ Materials

● Shared Mindful Inquiry Cycle and Guiding Questions;

● Journal;

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- Texts (For Analyzing Texts Stage);
- Computer;
- Timer.

Purpose, Norms and Protocols

♦ Set expectations for time and participation.

- Each member agrees to individually engage in Contemplation and Meditation throughout the duration of the cycle.
- All members keep a journal to track experience.

♦ Establish purpose.

- Learning from a possible future;
- Envisioning what it's like to have solved a problem of practice.

♦ Determine roles and responsibilities.

- Facilitator, fixed or rotating;
- Notetaker;
- Time manager.

♦ Go over Norms for Conscientious Engagement.

Envisioning

♦ Choose a focus area by thinking about an idea or vision that would improve schools, the system and/or society.

♦ Imagine the idea/vision has already come to pass. Now you want to explore this future reality, examine what happened, the process it took to get there and the outcomes.

♦ Refer to Emergence Strategy 3. Envisioning and Imagination for ideas.

♦ Imagine a future where teachers make highly competitive salaries. The question might be, how have competitive teacher salaries improved schools and society?

♦ Plan for contemplative practices and journaling on the question.

Observing Experience

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TRANSPERSONAL AWARENESS AND AGENCY

♦ Refer to Authentic Presence Strategy 1. Contemplation and Meditation.

♦ Engage in Contemplation and Meditation to reflect on first-hand experience related to the topic.

♦ Share journal entries.

♦ Plan to bring in a text related to the topic.

Analyzing Texts

♦ Review text selections. As a group, choose one.

♦ Refer to Emergence Strategy 3. Wisdom Traditions and Philoso- phy for text analysis.

♦ Each member takes a copy of remaining text selections to read before next session.

Emerging Ideas

♦ Share journal entries.

♦ Discuss trends and patterns.

♦ Identify two to three resonating ideas.

♦ Plan for Contemplation and Meditation and journaling.

Accepting Responsibility

♦ Share journal entries.

♦ Identify and share one action that you agree to apply to your practice.

♦ Discuss and plan for a closing ritual to complete the cycle.

♦ Refer to Freedom Strategy 2. Rituals and Ceremonies.

♦ Plan to journal about one action and your early findings.

Reflecting

♦ Share and discuss final journal entries on action and findings.

♦ Prepare and engage in the closing ritual.

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Excerpted from *Mindful Practice for Social Justice*

Connecting Strategy to Disposition

Curious

♦ How does this protocol channel energy and arouse curiosity?

♦ In what ways might Shared Mindful Inquiry feel difficult or limiting?

♦ How might indulging in or satisfying our curiosity create problems for us?

_____

Notes

9   Rios, R. (2017) *Teacher Agency for Equity: A Framework for Conscientious Engagement.* Routledge, New York, p. 54.

10   Bentz, V.M. and Shapiro, J.J. (1998) *Mindful Inquiry in Social Research.* Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 36–39.

11   Senge, P., Scharmer, C.O., Jaworski, J. and Flowers, B.S. (2004) Presence: *Human Purpose and the Field of the Future.* Crown Publishing, New York, p. 86.

12   Senge, P., Scharmer, C.O., Jaworski, J. and Flowers, B.S. (2004) Presence: *Human Purpose and the Field of the Future.* Crown Publishing, New York, p. 86.

IF YOU THINK YOU'RE GIVING STUDENTS OF COLOR A VOICE, GET OVER YOURSELF!
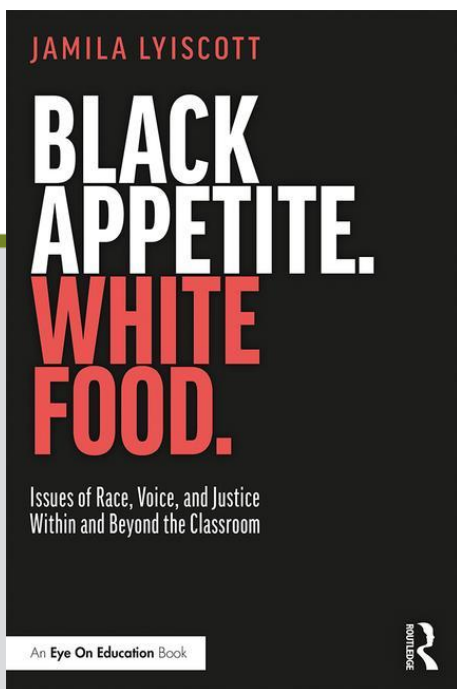
This chapter is excerpted from

Black Appetite. White Food. : Issues of Race, Voice, and Justice Within and Beyond the Classroom

by Jamila Lyiscott

Learn more

IF YOU THINK YOU'RE GIVING STUDENTS OF COLOR A VOICE, GET OVER YOURSELF!

Excerpted from *Black Appetite. White Food.*

Miss, miss! What the C.O. toldju about us? They already gettin' in y'all heads right? Miss, we human! I'm a human! We have families. . . .

—*Rikers Island Youth Workshop Participant*

The walls on Rikers Island are the same as the walls in my high school. In a facility six security check-points deep, where it takes myself and my team of social justice educators over 1.5 hours to get from the first screening to the classroom where we run a workshop with a small group of incarcerated adolescent boys, the walls are the same style of brick as every inner-city school I have ever attended or visited. While I am struck by the visceral effects of this very concrete reality for these young men who have attended public schools across the five boroughs, I am not at all surprised. Still, within the physical, psychological, and emotional confines of this space that they navigate daily, I am the one who often feels the deep constraints of internalized social attitudes and perspectives about young Black and Brown men, who they are, what they need, and how they should be engaged within the context of the classroom. The possibilities of our time together are tethered to my internal work—the shedding of any savior complexes and constant collective reflection with the team to live in the tensions and questions of our work as critical educators.

So imagine my horror when on a recent phone call, a white educator who expressed interest in my youth development work squealed with congratulations and awe for the way that we "give so many young people voice." Her words were deeply disturbing but hardly surprising. Grateful that in our last e-mail I chose the "phone call" over the "in-person" or "FaceTime" option for our meeting, I rolled my eyes and promptly ended the call.

I should not have ended this call. I should have said to this woman was "If you think you're giving students of color a voice, get over yourself," then hung up the phone.

So what's the big deal? Why get caught up on words when you know that kind, well-meaning woman only meant to celebrate the work that you are doing?

Some of the most deeply problematic issues of inequity within the field of education are sustained by well-meaning people embracing progressive politics without intentional frameworks of self-reflection to guide their praxis in a healthy direction.

IF YOU THINK YOU'RE GIVING STUDENTS OF COLOR A VOICE, GET OVER YOURSELF!

Excerpted from *Black Appetite. White Food.*

Here's the Problem

1. **It's paternalistic.** Webster's defines paternalism as "the attitude or actions of a person, organization, etc., that protects people and gives them what they need but does not give them any responsibility or freedom of choice?" The idea of "giving" students voice, especially when it refers to students of color, only serves to reify the dynamic of paternalism that renders Black and Brown students voiceless until some salvific external force gifts them with the privilege to speak. Rather than acknowledge the systemic violences that attempt to silence the rich voices, cultures, and histories that students bring into classrooms, this orientation positions students and, by extension, the communities of students as eternally in need of institutional sanctioning.

2. **Paternalism was a huge part of the rationale for slavery.** When we operate with the mindset that we are "giving" students voice, we align ourselves with a deeply problematic and historical orientation. So much of the rationale for oppression through slavery, colonialism, and imperialism had to do with "giving" civilization to people who were "less fortunate." Do not align your pedagogy with the ethos of slavery and colonialism.

3. **They woke up like that.** When the young men at Rikers share their work, I am fully intimidated by their uses of extended metaphors, similes, and other literary devices. But all we did was lend them an ear. They woke up like that. We did not give them a voice. What we gave them was space to be heard. Students navigate powerful spaces of learning every single day in their homes and communities, especially when it comes to students of color, the skills, experiences, and rich knowledge that shape their voices are devalued in the class-room but are still powerful and have absolutely nothing to do with our "salvation."

Note

1. "If You Think You're Giving Students of Color a Voice, Get Over Yourself" by Jamila Lyiscott from *Medium* (blog), May 18, 2017, https://medium.com/@heinemann/if-you-think-youre-giving-students-of-color-a-voice-get-over-yourself-cc8a4a684f16. Copyright © 2017 by Jamila Lyiscott. Published by Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH. Reprinted by permission of the Publisher. All Rights Reserved.