

How Might We Foster Equity For All Our Learners?

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Twenty-One Trends for the 21st Century . . .

2. In a series of tipping points, majorities will become minorities, creating ongoing challenges for social cohesion.
12. In a world of diverse talents and aspirations, we will increasingly discover and accept that one size does not fit all.
19. Understanding will grow that sustained poverty is expensive, debilitating, and unsettling. *Marx (2014)*

“... Equity in education can be seen through two dimensions: fairness and inclusion. Equity as fairness implies that personal and socio-economic circumstances, such as gender, ethnic origin or family background, are not obstacles to success in education. Equity as inclusion means ensuring that all students reach at least a basic minimum level of skills. Equitable education systems are fair and inclusive, and support their students in reaching their learning potential without either formally or informally erecting barriers or lowering standards.”

Andreas Schleicher (2014)



THE EQUITABLE SCHOOL: A FEW INDICATORS

1. Curriculum materials are reviewed consistently for biases such as those related to race, gender, socio-economic status.
2. Materials, including history and literature books, are selected for inclusiveness.
3. The curriculum is user-friendly and does not exclude or alienate students.
4. The staff is reflective of the larger community.
5. The staff is able to recognize and deal with prejudice in self and in students.
6. The staff addresses systemic barriers which limit the life chances of students.
7. The teaching and classroom practices are free of bias.
8. Achievement data are disaggregated by race, gender, socio-economic status.
9. High expectations for achievement are communicated to students.
10. Students see themselves and their cultural backgrounds reflected in the curriculum.
11. Zero-tolerance for racism, sexism or other anti-human behaviours is clearly articulated.
12. Parents feel welcome in the school and are encouraged to play a meaningful role in their children's education.
13. Cultural and class biases in standardized tests are recognized and they are not used as a basis of decision-making around program selection and placement of students.
14. To an outsider, placement in programs and learning groups would not appear to be based on race, gender or social class.
15. Students are monitored closely and are demitted regularly from special education programs.
16. The culture and management of the school are bias-free.
17. Discipline is applied consistently and fairly.
18. Those who graduate from the school reflect the race, gender and socio-economic diversity that exist in the school.

Equitable School Systems Ask Tough Questions:

- ♦ *Who are the students who have historically underperformed?*
- ♦ *What factors contribute to low performance?*
- ♦ *What are the obstacles to success?*
- ♦ *What specific interventions have we instituted?*
- ♦ *Have we focused on high-impact, research informed approaches*
- ♦ *How will we monitor progress?*
- ♦ *How will we provide meaningful feedback?*

Glaze et al. (2012)

“Recent research reveals that early interventions can produce meaningful, sustainable gains in cognitive, social and emotional development for high-risk children. Research-based principles of early intervention explode the myth that nothing works for economically disadvantaged students”

Neuman (2007)

QUOTES FOR DISCUSSION

1

Know thy Impact!

Hattie, *Visible Learning* (2012)

3

"We can judge how well we are doing by the levels of success being achieved by our most vulnerable students."

Glaze and Mattingley (2012)

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"The new mission for schools is to achieve 100% success, and to have specific explanations and strategies for addressing any figure that falls short of full success."

Fullan (*February, 2015*)

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"Statistically speaking, the best advice I would give to a poor child eager to get ahead in education is to choose richer parents."

R. W. Connell (1993) *Schools and Social Justice*

8

"What commentators call the "ethnic gap" is, in fact, a teaching gap, a curriculum gap, and an expectations gap." Reeves (2006)

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"Improving Student Achievement: What Does it Take?"

1. High Expectations for Learning with Growth Mindsets
2. Effective Instruction in the Digital Age
3. Early and On-going Assessment, Interventions and Support
4. Inclusive, Culturally-Responsive Pedagogy
5. Innovation, Creativity, Entrepreneurship and Career Education
6. Leaders as Co-Learners
7. Character Development

Avis Glaze - TEDxUofT (2015)

"Current practices in Canadian schools do not address satisfactorily the problem of students' disengagement and dropping out. This problem may be alleviated by the development of an inclusive curriculum that promotes alternative, non-hegemonic ways of knowing and understanding our world." (George Sefa Dei, 1996)

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"We must develop school cultures where diversity is celebrated, where students feel welcomed and safe and where discrimination and racism are not tolerated." Glaze & Mattingley (2012)

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In Equitable Schools:

... "educators examine and look for explanations within school contexts instead of the usual tendency to blame home contexts."

Anthony (1993)

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"Instruction, itself, has the largest influence on achievement."

Schmoker (1993)

7

"School leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on student learning."

Leithwood et al. (2006)

Emergent Literacies at a Glance

Computer Literacy

Cultural Literacy

Game Literacy

Media Literacy

Multiliteracies

Multimedia Literacy

Network Literacy

Social Literacy

Visual Literacy

Web Literacy

Information Literacy

New Literacies

Digital Literacy

Dustin C. Summey (2013)

"Schools of the future will have an embedded culture of outrage, a genetic commitment to accountability, and a mentality that believes and requires, with rare exception, that all children should achieve significant levels of proficiency in reading, math, and other basic skills ... there must be a built in view that it is not acceptable for children to fail..."

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In schools of the future leaders will assume highly consistent academic results the same way flight crews assume flawless performance, the same way doctors and patients now expect near perfection in certain basic procedures. In hospitals and airplane, lives are on the line. In schools, the quality of those lives is determined. The standard should be the same." Whittle (2005)

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"Teacher preparation for equity means learning how to differentiate the means of instruction to make high status knowledge and academic success accessible to culturally, ethnically and socially different students as to students who are members of the majority culture..."

Teaching with equity means first helping children gain fluency in their natural and individual ways of knowing - ways of studying, asking, answering, understanding, cogitating, expressing, and engaging with others - and then challenging and assisting them to learn other forms to broaden their repertoires." Gay (1990)

Sample Strategies to Engage Students

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- ◆ Connect students with role models with similar backgrounds
- ◆ Provide relevant curricular content
- ◆ Connect to the student's community
- ◆ Provide extra-curricular activities that appeal to a diverse student population
- ◆ Provide an environment free from stereotypes, harassment and racial slurs
- ◆ Celebrate the accomplishments from various cultures
- ◆ Ensure school and classroom libraries have resources that reflect the school's diversity.

Glaze et. al, *Breaking Barriers: Excellence and Equity for all* (2012)

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Success for All

- All pupils can achieve high standards, given sufficient time and high-quality support.
 - All teachers can teach to high standards, with the right example and conditions to help them.
 - High expectations and early interventions are essential.
 - Teachers need to learn all the time and they need to be able to articulate what they do, why they do it and how effective it was.
- OFSTED (2009)

15

"There are examples of educational excellence without accountability, or common standards. But there are no examples of educational excellence without high quality teachers and teaching." Hargreaves & Shirley, (2012)

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"Inclusive education is central to the achievement of high-quality education for all learners and the development of more inclusive societies. Inclusion is thought of in some societies as an approach to serving children with disabilities within general education settings. Internationally, however, it is increasingly seen more broadly as a reform that supports and welcomes diversity amongst all learners." UNESCO (2008)

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"... Put simply, effective teaching is all students. Indeed, it has been suggested that what are seen as specialized pedagogies further marginalizes and exclude children with difficulties..." Ainscow, Dyson and Weiner (2013)

19

"There should be no throwaway kids ... we need all our children to be contributing members of our Canadian society." Glaze (2014)