SPECIAL EDITION

T-CARE

Teachers Connecting to Advance Retention and Empowerment

Equity, Access, and Social Justice

Contents

Remember when we didn't know if all computers would stop working when we went from 1999 to 2000? How just moving to the year 2000 seemed like a very futuristic idea? How naïve we were! Now we have entered 2020 and it feels, to me anyway, like the future finally has arrived. Unfortunately, we aren't getting the "super-cool, flying-cars and automatic-hot-delicious-dinner-food-dispenser" kind of future but the kind of future that includes words like "pandemic, riots, essential workers, racism, quarantine, food and housing insecurity, and Zoom-bombing." Many of our students and teachers are expected to work from home on-line, despite the additional stressors and the fact that many may not have the same access to technology or connectivity or resources as their peers. Never before have the issues of equity, access, and social justice been as evident – and indeed, as critical - as they are now.

While the last special issue on 'Teaching, learning and working in a virtual environment' was clearly a timely topic, this special issue is even more clearly hitting a collective nerve. More articles were submitted for consideration than ever before. Authors in this issue share practical tips for recognizing and addressing equity issues related to technological access, how to ensure classroom management strategies are culturally sensitive, and how to combat ableism by teaching to social justice standards.

They share suggestions for how to support the social needs of students with intellectual disabilities and how to thoughtfully integrate technology into instruction. They address difficult topics like how to become an anti-racist educator and why it is not only acceptable, but crucial, to acknowledge your own feelings, have meltdowns, and name what you are seeing and doing to combat inequities.

The authors in this newsletter have been willing to address difficult topics. They have acknowledged the fact that our schools, and our society, need to change, as we admit that all Americans are not in fact treated equitably. They offer personal reflections that offer an insight into what it feels like to be persons of color, as students and adults. They detail actions that can be taken right now to make a difference. In the very first article, the President of my own university, Dr. Dianne Harrison, provides a thoughtful reflection on what one university is doing to combat systemic racism head-on, to increase inclusive and equitable practices, and to take steps to, as she puts it, "do more." I am proud to be a part of a university so committed to diversity, equity, access, and social justice.

Each of these articles is designed to encourage you to think about complex issues. Push yourself to "do more" than think about them; push yourself to act. I will too.

Respectfully,

Wendy W. Murawski, Ph.D.
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Admin Corner

Reflections of a University President

Social Justice, Access, and Equity

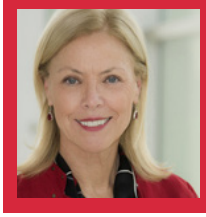
In late May, while in the middle of a public health crisis unprecedented in modern times, the world witnessed the senseless killing of George Floyd by police officers. Mr. Floyd's death brought attention to other similar deaths and to the racism and inequality, both systemic and overt, that continue to pervade our society, and the need for greater social justice. Across the country and around the world, people have declared that Black Lives Matter and demanded an end to deep-rooted racism and inequality.

Like many universities, my campus — California State University, Northridge (CSUN) — takes pride in our diversity and inclusive learning environment. As one of the most diverse universities in the country, we are proud of our ethnic studies programs, including our distinguished Department of Africana Studies, which in 2019 celebrated the 50th anniversary of its historic founding. And we have achieved success in supporting and advancing our diverse student body. In 2019, Diverse Issues in Higher Education ranked CSUN among the top 10 universities in the country awarding undergraduate degrees to minority students. And in 2016, we appointed our first Chief Diversity Officer and constituted the Commission on Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives composed of faculty, staff, students, administrators and community leaders. But our work is never done. We, too, must do more.

At CSUN, listening, strategizing and planning are needed, but there are already have been reinvigorated conversations about concrete action, such as enhancing our recruitment practices to promote greater diversity of our faculty. College deans are discussing deeper integration of social justice into existing curriculum. CSUN's Police Services leadership is examining their policies and community engagement strategies. We are exploring ways to more deeply engage alumni, especially Black alumni, in our effort to ensure success for our Black students. Many other tangible ideas have been shared, and we plan to communicate more details in the coming months.

As educators responsible for preparing the nation and community's future leaders, universities and K-12 schools are among the most powerful forces for equality and justice in society, and have an important role to play in this moment. Beyond being allies in the fight against racism and calling for equality, we must be united in working to create the change needed in our communities in order to eradicate injustice and systemic racism, and put an end to the violence perpetrated against African Americans. Now is the time for action.

In this moment of history and transformation, our teachers and partners in the K–12 community play an especially important role in advancing social justice and fighting systemic racism. As a teacher and role model for the children in your schools and classrooms, you help shape the future of our community and society, by instilling in students the values of respect, tolerance and understanding, of equity and of equality, and the need to advocate for their rights and especially the rights of people in our community who for too long have been targeted by violence and racism, and not been given the same opportunities and respect all people deserve, merely because of the color of their skin. I truly feel we are at a turning point and I am grateful for the efforts of all educators in affecting change...so that today's children can live in an inclusive and equitable society.



Dr. Dianne F. Harrison

Dianne F. Harrison, Ph.D., has served as president of California State University, Northridge since June 2012. Prior to her appointment, she served as president of California State University, Monterey Bay since 2006 and for nearly 30 years worked at Florida State University, where she began as a faculty member and served in various administrative leadership roles.

What Students of Color Wish You Knew

Almost 80% of US public school teachers are white, while students of color make up more than half of the population (NCES, 2020). This disparity can create challenges for teachers and students. The following advice comes from K-12 students of color in response to the question "What do you wish your teachers knew?"

Silence is deafening.
When major news events such as the Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests highlight the existing racism in the US, it can be stressful for students of color. They may wonder about their safety, what friends and teachers think, and worry about future experiences. Oftentimes, when we don't know what to say, we say nothing. However, in tense racial situations, the silence can be heartbreaking to students of color. They need to know their teachers care about them and are open to learning. Don't be afraid to speak up in an age-appropriate manner for your students; say that you don't understand their experiences and that you know it's a stressful situation.

Where am I in the curriculum?
Students of color may not often see themselves represented in the curriculum. Make a point to include people of color. Teach about the art of the Mayans, the perspective of Native Americans, or influential scientists and mathematicians of color. Not only is it important for students of color to see themselves in the curriculum, it's equally important for white students to learn of the contributions others have made to their world. People from various backgrounds have made the world what it is today. Celebrate the achievements of people from multiple backgrounds.

Be consistent.
The research indicates that students of color are more likely to receive negative feedback in the classroom (Scott et al., 2019). Be conscious of how you state expectations. Ask, "Do I say the same thing in the same way for the same behavior for all students?" Be careful not to attribute behavior or academic achievement with race. Be consistent with consequences, both positive and negative, irrespective of skin color. Praise students equally.

how you say something is as important as what you say.

How we teach is just as important as what we teach. When teaching sensitive subjects, such as slavery, call it for the evil it is while also honoring the lives of slaves themselves. Teach about Columbus. However, don't only celebrate his "discovery of America," but address his mistreatment of native peoples, too.

Avoid "I don't see color."
This is often said with good intention, but what it really does is make students of color feel invisible. Many are proud of their heritage, their culture, and their family. Saying we don't see color negates the beauty of the diversity. It's the colors, the differences in the shape, height, and scent of flowers that make a garden so beautiful. Likewise, it is the diversity in our classroom that is beautiful. Don't be afraid to embrace the color, the heritage, the backgrounds, the cultures, of your students.

Remember your biracial/bicultural students.
Your biracial/bicultural students want both of their heritages to be seen and recognized. Their peers are going to pressure them to choose one with statements such as, "You act white." When you hear statements like that, address them; don't avoid them. Encourage students to celebrate all of their heritage and be careful not to label them as a certain racial background because they look a specific way.

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Culturally Responsive Classroom Management

Matthew is a White first-grader who attends a fairly diverse elementary school. The children in his classes are from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, represent various races and ethnicities, and many speak a primary language at home other than English. Matthew's mom hoped this diversity would help him to make friends from many backgrounds, so she was surprised when she asked if he'd like to invite his friends from school to his birthday party and Matthew said: "Mom, I don't want to invite all of the kids." He specifically asked her to exclude the majority of his male Black and Brown classmates. When she asked him why, he simply responded, "they always have their clips on red".

Matthew was referring to the class "clip chart," which is evident in various forms hanging on classroom walls. Clip charts display a range of colors associated with general feedback such as "great," "ready to learn," and "stop and think." Each child's name is written on a clip that can be moved up and down the chart. While these charts are meant to manage classroom behavior, they often create anxiety for children who are terrified of being humiliated in front of their peers, and they do little to teach and encourage developmentally appropriate classroom expectations for behavior. Only a year into his formal schooling, Matthew was already making associations between the clip chart and who he should and should not select as friends.

Research has demonstrated that Black and Brown students are disproportionately and more harshly disciplined than their White peers for similar behaviors (White et al., in press). Furthermore, poor and ineffective classroom management practices, such as the aforementioned clip chart, can inadvertently develop racial biases in our students. If we want to create socially just learning environments, we need to ensure implementation of equitable classroom management plans. Rather than relying on reactionary, public displays to motivate student behavior, teachers can use preventative, proactive strategies to encourage appropriate behavior (Simonsen et al., 2008).

In order to address disproportionate disciplinary practices and reduce learned racial bias, educators should couple culturally relevant teaching with effective, evidence-based classroom management practices. Culturally responsive teachers consider their students' racial and ethnic identities, language and dialects, learning histories, immigration status, socio-economic status, (dis) ability status, gender and sexual orientation, and family expectations.

We cannot address inequities in education without ensuring implementation of unbiased classroom management and discipline practices. Let's throw away the clip chart and other ineffective practices and instead use strategies that foster nurturing, inclusive, and safe environments for all students.

Classroom Management Practice (Simonsen e al., 2008)	**Consider Cultural Relevance** (Aceves & Orosco, 2014; Sugai et al., 2014)
Develop and teach clear routines and positively-stated expectations for behavior	Provide explicit instruction and modeling of routines and expectations. Scaffold support as students learn routines and expectations to build student confidence. Be sensitive to students' culture and identity.
Provide prompts to help students develop habits	Provide both verbal and visual prompts. Consider use of prompts that represent various cultures and languages.
Increase student engagement by providing high rates of opportunities to respond (OtRs) to instruction	Use multi-cultural instructional materials to engage students. Vary OtRs (gestural, think pair share, choral responding, group work). Teach, model, monitor and reinforce appropriate participation for all students. Use participation to build relationships among peers.
Use strategies such as specific, contingent praise to support appropriate behavior	Provide high rates of immediate, positive, specific feedback to all students. Consider student preferences for public vs. private praise.
Quickly and calmly address behavioral errors	When addressing behavioral errors, be sensitive to students' identities and learning histories. Feedback should be supportive and private. Check for student understanding.

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Equitable Instruction in the Online Learning Environment

Providing equitable online instruction has moved to the forefront of instructional practices due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Educators are being asked to teach online, while considering a variety of student needs. This article will address the barriers associated with equitable online instruction and provide tips for overcoming those barriers while meeting the needs of all students.

Barriers to Equitable Online Instruction

Barriers to online instruction have been brought to the forefront of education since March 2020. It is important that educators identify the barriers associated with online instruction, so we can more easily identify strategies to meet students' needs. Barriers to equitable instruction might include:

1. Discomfort or embarrassment with allowing classmates and teachers to see students' homes or families.
2. Multiple children or siblings "in class" at the same time, in the same location.
3. Older students may be supervising younger siblings or working outside of the home to assist with family finances.
4. Streaming, video sharing, and participating online may be nigh impossible on older devices or mobile devices.
5. Spotty, intermitent internet or internet data limits may impact connectivity.
6. Working parents and families may struggle with balancing work and students' educational needs.

Tips for Creating Equitable Online Instruction

While the aforementioned list isn't comprehensive of all barriers students may face, it provides a starting point for providing supports. The following tips can help meet the online learning needs of students and create a more equitable learning environment.

- Survey families to identify what their needs and barriers are, as well as what access they have to technology, using online resources such as Survey Monkey or email, or even mail paper copies home to determine their needs.
- Minimize or alleviate required use of cameras by allowing students to use the chat feature, "thumbs up" option, or other emojis to indicate participation. This helps those students who would rather avoid having others see their environment, as well as students who don't have video technology.
- Consider alternate ways for students to interact with academic content, including: (a) break-out room interactions, (b) "back channels" for discussions, using platforms like Trello or Padlet (c) QR code apps, (d) classroom social media accounts, (e) pen pals and "old fashioned" letters, or (f) using text messages through apps like Remind.
- Whenever possible, consider alternatives to "real-time" instruction and provide supplementals for students who may not be able to stream videos consistently. Use both low and high technology options that can be completed at the student's pace. Pre-recorded lessons, recorded videos of class instruction, aysnchronous content modules, Boom Cards, Nearpod, Quizlet, or flashcards are all great options.
- Check-in with families on a bi-weekly or weekly basis. If parents and families have internet access, teachers can set-up virtual meetings through platforms such as Zoom or Google Meets. If internet is an issue, weekly connections can occur via phone, email, or text messages.
- Help families create school schedules and brainstorm ideas for keeping students on task when other distractors and responsibilities are present in their surroundings. Strategies may include creating designated school hours, wearing headphones or earbuds, using science boards for "office space," and the like.

During this unusual time of online instruction, teachers must be more cognizant than ever of issues that challenge equitable instruction. While some of these challenges can be tackled through flexibility, frequent conversations and careful planning will further address students' online learning needs. For more information on ways to ensure equitable instruction in your online classroom, please visit the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) website (www.iste.org) or the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) website (www.idra.org).

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Don't be Afraid to Name It

Naming Anti-Blackness

In the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement, discussions about anti-Blackness have become more common, however, what does this concept mean? Anti-Blackness at its core dehumanizes Black individuals (Curry & Curry, 2018; Sondel, et al., 2019), and further removes consciousness of the historical and contemporary systemic racism that Black individuals have suffered for centuries (Curry & Curry, 2018). Anti-Blackness occurs in P-12 schools through disciplinary policies and actions and in larger society through housing, and healthcare, with the latter experiencing an uncovering of and reckoning with the fact that for centuries the belief existed - and still does - that Black bodies are devoid of humanity (Dancy, et al., 2018). Today we see this evidenced by the continuing murders of unarmed Black individuals at the hands of police, and the physical, emotional, and mental brutalizing of school-aged children in schools across the U.S. (Johnson, et al., 2019). To understand why anti-Blackness has persisted for centuries in the U.S., it is critical to examine the white supremacist and colonial frameworks on which this country was founded.

Naming white supremacy and white fragility

White supremacy is the belief that whiteness and white bodies are superior, and the human ideal (DiAngelo, 2018). It is not simply an extreme form of neo-Nazi skin head extremists, but rather a deeply engrained belief that permeates every level of our society and systems of governance and power (Menakem, 2017). White fragility is the "defensiveness, silence, argumentation, and other forms of pushback" that can emerge (DiAngelo, 2018, p. 8) when white people are confronted with racism. According to DiAngelo (2018), white fragility contributes to the failure of White people to interrupt systemic racism.

Naming Anti-Racism

According to anti-racist educator and author, Ibram X. Kendi (2019), anti-racism is the action of combating systemic racism in all its forms that must follow both the emotional and the intellectual awareness of racism. It is not enough to be "non-racist" or "not a racist." Anti-racism is the work we all must do to dismantle racist policies and racial hierarchy to yield racial equity.

The question for all of us becomes: How have we already, or will we, as educators and clinicians take action against anti-Black racism and white supremacy in our personal lives and as professionals with our peers and our students?

After reflecting on our personal situations (as described on the next page), we identified the following Take-Aways and Action Steps:

1. **Pause, Reflect, and Acknowledge Feelings**; most importantly, be honest with yourself
2. **Connect with Trusted Colleagues and Friends**
3. **Join Advocacy/Affinity Groups**
4. **Consume Relevant Content by anti-racist educators**: Books, Webinars, Trainings, Social Media, Movies, Documentaries and include sources from Black scholars, authors, and filmmakers
5. **Take Action; Action creates congruence**: Actions speak louder than words
6. **Model Personal and Professional Responsiveness**: Lead by example and be transparent in the process
7. **Create Safety** for Students/Supervisees to process, learn, and take action themselves

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By: Dr. Deborah Buttita, Dr. Shyrea Minton, & Dr. Dana Stone
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Our Personal Work and Call to Action

Shyrea – Using Experiences of Pain to Engage Students

As a Black cisgender woman and counselor educator, it is critical for me to engage in regular reflection and introspection to process the experiences of anti-Blackness and racism that I and my community have encountered and still do on a daily basis. These reflective and introspective practices must be approached with care, as the continuing murders of people who look like me at the hands of those who have sworn to protect stir within me grief, pain, anger, rage, and extreme sadness. I use all of these emotions in my teaching and engagement with students who are training to be future school and clinical counselors who will one day work with BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color). I challenge my students to critically interrogate the structures that exist in the U.S. that create and maintain systemic inequity. It is because of my students and future generations that I continue to hope for better acknowledgement, understanding, advocacy, and action that will lead to systemic changes that dismantle the racial inequities and injustices that exist. Hope helps me to remain grounded and present for my students and leads me to center the discussion around racial injustice, trauma, and grief at the forefront of our encounters, as my students—many of whom are also BIPOC—must learn to navigate these areas for themselves (as they work through their own grief and pain) and for their future clients and students.

Dana – Navigating the Grief of Racial Injustice

As I was preparing to teach my first class of summer school, America was confronted with another senseless murder of a Black man, George Floyd. This was just after the lynching of Ahmad Aubrey and the killing of Breonna Taylor were making national headlines and in the midst of a global pandemic that is disproportionately affecting and killing Black and Latinx people in the United States. I am a professor of marriage and family therapy, someone who teaches graduate students who are becoming therapists. As a biracial Black-white, cisgender female I am deeply affected by the collective racialized trauma Black people experience as it relates to racial injustice. And as an educator, clinical supervisor, and social justice advocate, I must constantly confront and process my own emotional, mental, and physiological responses to racial injustice and then figure out how to facilitate dialogue, processing, and learning for my students. This summer, that has meant me taking time to grieve (individually and collectively with BIPOC), sharing openly with my students my own sense of despair, and then creating space for my students to engage in whatever capacity they are able. There is no right way to do this, but there is a professional responsibility as an educator and as a supervisor of future therapists to address the pandemic of racial injustice against Black people in America directly.

Deborah – Taking Stock and Recalibrating

As a clinical supervisor, I was eager to support our clinicians personally and professionally. We held a community of support supervision meeting to process reactions of the murder of George Floyd and the protests. I went into that meeting with the hope that I could create safety. However, it became evident early on that I didn't have a map for all that was emerging, including unending silence. I took note of my own reactions – I felt flooded with anxiety, anger, pain, grief, and uncertainty; my typical facilitation skills seemed no match for the power of this moment. I identify racially as white, and although I have other intersecting identities as a cisgender gay female, I realized that it was my racial identity I needed to focus on. The implications of being a white supervisor working with trainees some of whom identify as BIPOC and others as white, called for greater intentionality, a deeper understanding of the complexity of this moment, and a commitment to meaningful allyship as a co-conspirator in the fight for racial equality.

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Social Connectedness of Adolescents with Intellectual Disabilities

While teenagers may often be found texting or perusing social media, they have freedoms to spend leisure time going to parties, listening to music, playing sports, joining in multiplayer online games, or any number of activities. The majority have a choice. But what about our youth with significant disabilities?

Adolescents with intellectual disabilities (ID) have the same hopes and desires as their non-disabled peers, but they lack the same opportunities. They face substantial barriers to accessing basic social and life activities the majority of their peers participate in on a regular basis. Students with ID often feel isolated from their communities and have limited engagement in social activities, such as playing sports, joining clubs, or simply hanging out with friends (Lipscomb, et al., 2017). The current quarantine is, for many of our students with ID, creating even more social isolation than previously. Teachers need to consider how to help these students have access to friends and opportunities to engage with peers.

Educators are in a prime position to create equitable experiences for social connectedness and community-based learning for secondary students with ID. Here are a few tips to get started!

1. First and foremost - Ask the Student:

Use the student's preferred communication modality (e.g., speech, sign language, alternative communication devices) to express their preferences through group discussions, one-on-one conferences, or interest surveys. Focused questions within a group discussion can facilitate positive connections between students, especially when they want to learn about the same topic or have similar interests.

2. Collaborate with Families:

Involve parents, siblings, grandparents, cousins, and any other interested family members. Make them part of the goal-setting and decision-making process for creating instruction on life skills and socialization. Identify what resources families have to support social experiences, such as transportation, finances, and time. Use Zoom meetings, emails, phone calls, surveys, or even a weekly newsletter to gather parent feedback on target skills, likes/dislikes, benefits or drawbacks of activities, perceptions of social learning gains, etc. Collaborating with parents is crucial in supporting our students to develop more positive and meaningful social connections.

3. Involve Peer Mentors:

Seek out high school students, siblings, cousins, or pre-service teachers in local post-secondary teacher education programs to serve as peer mentors. Peer mentors serve as social role models and help students with ID feel included. Many even develop truly meaningful friendships.

4. Try some Video Modeling:

You be the star! Or, if you are camera shy, recruit some enthusiastic peer mentors (with necessary permissions). Take short video clips of peers talking to a friend, completing daily activities, or demonstrating hobbies. Create a YouTube channel or email video links for students with ID to watch on their own time. Remember to have fun!

5. Connect Face-to-Face and Virtually:

Role-playing and learning with social scripts in the classroom is a great way to build a social community among students with ID. However, it is crucial to generalize social skills to authentic settings and activities in the community. Reach out to local businesses and organizations to arrange field trips, such as to libraries, banks, restaurants, college campuses, and even the mall! Right now, given the pandemic, face-to-face social outings are obviously not feasible or desirable. So, make use of technology to virtually connect with friends. Help students with ID and their families to schedule structured social activities through online meeting rooms (i.e., Zoom or Google Meet). Try out some dance parties, cooking demos, or Quiz games based on student interests, or set up daily chat times for text messaging with peer mentors.

Let's get creative and build more opportunities for our youth with ID to socially connect with their peers and their community.

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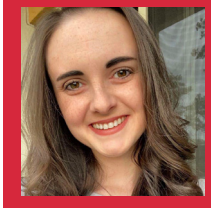

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Using TPACK to Guide Successful Technology Integration

Now more than ever, integrating technology into instruction is a high priority. Due to COVID-19 challenges, schools are faced with the difficult task of developing feasible, high-quality instructional options for their communities amidst fluctuating state and local guidelines. Many are relying heavily on virtual instruction to support phased models of re-opening or offering families opportunities for remote learning. Regardless of the reason for such abrupt pedagogical adjustments, technology integration needs to be well-planned, developmentally appropriate, and aligned to student outcomes.

There is no "one size fits all" approach to technology integration, however systematic implementation should be grounded in best practice and research. As Koehler and Mishra (2009) point out, technology integration should not occur as an "add-on" to instruction, but rather as an integral component of a dynamic planning process. Ongoing research in technology integration has been supported by several frameworks for implementation, one of which is Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). The purposeful blending of content, pedagogy, and technology to promote effective and engaging instruction is the basis of TPACK. The framework allows educators to focus on the content they want their students to learn, use best pedagogical practices and strategies in their teaching, and weave in technological tools that match and promote the instruction and pedagogy. TPACK helps to marry three different components of teaching into one effective moving part.

While planning and implementing a lesson using the TPACK framework, educators first need to have strong knowledge of the subject matter. As Koehler and Mishra (2009) state, content knowledge is of utmost importance for teachers since it is the teacher's responsibility to impart that knowledge to the student. The educator must also have a firm grasp of pedagogical knowledge in which they recognize the best practices and processes of effective teaching. Teachers with strong understanding of pedagogy consider how students construct knowledge and skills to learn and make connections throughout their lives. Educators with technological knowledge understand the value of incorporating technology into the lesson and know how to use technology to enhance instruction. In this case, the mere presence of technology does not improve the lesson, but the blending of technology with content and pedagogy is what makes the lesson effective and engaging (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). As teachers plan instruction using the TPACK framework, a simple planning guide can be used to help blend the content, pedagogy, and technology.

Implementation of the TPACK framework should not focus first on the technological tool and how to make it fit into the curriculum, but instead should put emphasis on good teaching and match the appropriate technology to the specific content. Proper training provided to teachers through meaningful, targeted professional development opportunities focused on best practice is a necessity when considering this framework. Training on various tech tools and digital literacy is also integral, and teachers must have a solid understanding of the technological tool and how to troubleshoot prior to its implementation.

After planning a TPACK-focused lesson, the teacher should reflect upon its effectiveness for engaging students and producing expected outcomes prior to and after instruction. Educators can refer back to the planning guide to ensure the technology supports the content and pedagogy instead of driving the lesson. Peer review of the plan, or lesson itself, may be a helpful practice to gain additional insight on future modifications to consider when integrating TPACK.

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Scan for Planning Guide!

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Integrating Dis/ability to Combat Ableism

Activities Paired to Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards

As teachers, we are tasked with integrating citizenship education, including diversity education, into our curriculum in meaningful ways. As such, it is critical that we educate about dis/ability and ableism (intentional or unintentional discrimination because of variation in physical, cognitive, emotional, or medical diagnosis). When dis/ability and ableism are not mentioned, we miss a critical opportunity to teach an appreciation for human difference, provide tools to question and disrupt oppression, and influence the next generation to eliminate barriers faced by those who identify as having a dis/ability (Baglieri & Lalvani, 2020). One way of ensuring that dis/ability is integrated into any curriculum is by using activities related to The Teaching Tolerance: Social Justice Standards (https://www.tolerance.org/frameworks/social-justice-standards).

The Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards focus on four subsets: (a) identity, (b) diversity, (c) justice, and (d) action. The following table includes activities that could be applied to your classroom with the specific focus of each strand. While lists of activities in the table are located under specific strands, they could fall into multiple strands depending on your class needs. Additionally, you can come up with more activities based on your school context and the student diversity in your own classroom.

Strand	Goal	Suggested Activities
identity	1. Develop a positive identity 2. Use appropriate language 3. Recognize intersectionality 4. Be proud; have dignity 5. Describe traits	• Host Dis/ability awareness events (e.g. Autism Awareness, Deafness awareness) • Emphasize multiple ways to learn and excel in all content areas • Teach vocabulary for visible and invisible disabilities • Create alternative word/ phrase lists for ableist language (e.g. wheel-chair user, not wheelchair-bound) • Integrate dis/ability related topics into the curriculum (e.g., dolls with disabilities into play, dis/ability in human biology, artists and authors with dis/abilities) • Emphasize parity between general and special education teachers
diversity	6. Engage respectfully 7. Describe similarities and differences 8. Respectfully engage in ideas and beliefs 9. Respond with empathy, respect, and by connecting 10. Examine social, cultural, political, and historical context	• Develop book studies with characters who have dis/abilities accurately portrayed • Examine cultural differences in dis/ability perception • Invite content experts who happen to have a dis/ability • DO NOT engage in "disability for a day" activities which cause a false impression of what it is like to have a disability (Silverman, et al, 2014) • Use children's books to address diversity issues (Kurtts & Gavigan, 2008) • Use guiding questions that a) facilitate critical thinking, b) critically address similarities and differences, and c) have no right or wrong answers.
justice	11. Recognize stereotypes 12. Recognize bias and injustice 13. Analyze the impact of bias 14. Recognize power and privilege influences 15. Identify relevant social justice groups, figures, events	• Include dis/ability groups in family resource materials • Include dis/ability history as American history (e.g. eugenics, ADA, epidemics, historical figures with dis/abilities) • Analyze disability portrayal in media (e.g. characters, health stories, inaccuracies) • Identify inaccessible community resources (e.g. businesses, public services, activities)
action	16. Express empathy for exclusion 17. Stand up to exclusion, prejudice, and injustice 18. Speak up when hurt or witnessing hurt 19. Decide how to engage in anti-bias action 20. Plan and carry out the action	• Fundraise for local causes • Teach computing skills for inclusion (e.g. captioning, alt-text, style formatting) • Engage in play/meals with students in self-contained settings • Write letters to organizations addressing injustice and inequality against dis/ability • Support local government in planning for accessibility

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Becoming an Anti-Racist Educator

Intentional Practices in the Classroom

Disruption of systemic and institutional racism begins with the adoption of classroom practices that are responsive to culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. Classroom culture is critical to establishing an environment that values CLD students as it strongly influences the adopted norms, beliefs, and values of teachers. Implementing inclusive policies and practices provides a pathway to access and equity.

Data from the USDOE (2019) exposes the disproportionate identification of CLD students for special education, illuminates inequitable disciplinary practices, and highlights the reduced value felt by CLD students in classrooms which fail to recognize their strengths. Teachers must not only be culturally responsive, but culturally proactive by adopting anti-racist practices. Anti-racism is a positive approach that moves the narrative from not tolerating racism to promoting racial equity by eliminating racism in systems, policies, and practices within the classroom.

Proactive Teaching Practices

Creating a cycle of anti-racism within teaching strengthens and sustains classroom culture. This culture starts with the teacher identifying, acknowledging, and addressing their own biases. With this foundation, educators can implement anti-racist teaching practices. Essential proactive strategies include adopting resources and routines which communicate that diversity is valued, such as interweaving resources with depictions of all races and adopting classroom calendars with multicultural holidays pre-marked. As you plan instruction, incorporate specific cultural elements, preferences, and experiences of your CLD students in your instructional techniques. Connect to who students are as individuals within their race, culture, and background to increase student engagement. Anti-racist educators bridge opportunity gaps by focusing on strengths (not deficits), infusing student success in lesson implementation, and sustaining high expectations.

Responsive Behavior Management

School climate colors the context of how a best practice in one culture may be an incompatible practice in another. Fortunately, restorative behavior management is receiving growing acclaim. Restorative practices center on the understanding of ecological variants of students by addressing the harm done during a behavioral incident. Students take agency, acknowledge harm, apologize, take collaborative action to repair the harm, and engage in a form of leadership to change future behaviors. Such protocol presents a communal approach to conflict resolution as opposed to suspension or classroom removal. Community-building strategies include building trust through accountability, encouraging students to become peer leaders, weaving restorative practices in behavior management plans, and practicing restorative methods throughout the year.

Empowering Trauma Perspectives

Trauma is a crisis which exists along a continuum, forcing students to make meaning of difficult events like food insecurity, abuse, or homelessness. Understanding trauma allows teachers to address students' underlying needs. Trauma informed teaching requires educators to teach with awareness of individual and collective strengths. Teachers can provide in class examples of historical narratives of resistance and empowerment, while also respecting a student's freedom of choice not to disclose their trauma. (Teachers are not expected to be trauma detectives). Educators can collaborate with social workers and guidance counselors to problem solve. Empowered trauma perspectives require trauma informed schools, policy, curriculum, and family engagement; professional learning alone is not enough.

Continuous Professional Learning and Reflection

Educators know the importance of professional learning to improve practice. Just as we engage in professional learning for content and strategies, anti-racist pedagogy must be included. This means learning and reflecting on the historical and contemporary status of race within our country, community, and schools and growing our knowledge of different cultures and experiences. We must be vulnerable and engage in lifelong learning because, as Maya Angelou said, "When you know better, you do better."

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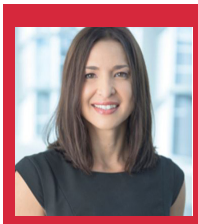

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Are Meltdowns Okay?

Making Room for Feelings in the Social Justice Revolution

I have feelings…I'm angry, sad, overwhelmed, chronically tearful, relieved, and guilty! We all have feelings about this season, but do revolutions have time or space for authentic feelings? Not just the nice, identity politics, appropriately assimilated into polite American culture feelings, but the raw, untamed, unnamed, and generational barring feelings? I would say it must! It is time we take a look at our nation, our communities, our friendship circles, and ourselves. Nothing changes until we acknowledge that perhaps things are not what we thought, we have not been as "woke" as we thought, and just "being a good person" or educator is not enough.

In the midst of two pandemics, COVID19 and the Black Racial Uprising, it is easy to oversimplify in order to move through hard moments when we feel out of control or overwhelmed. People say things like, "This too shall pass" or "It could be worse." We scroll through social media and see pictures of folks living their best lives despite Trans Black women being murdered, the possibility of voter suppression, unresolved immigration policies, systemic racism in health care, xenophobia, unaddressed police brutality, and more. *I would say always looking on the bright side misses a very real and important part of the picture.* People grow when they are uncomfortable, and uncomfortable is the space in which we are required to dwell right now. I urge us to fight against Toxic Positivity or "the excessive and ineffective overgeneralization of a happy, optimistic state across all situations" (Quintero & Long, 2019, para. 3). The denial of feelings on a full spectrum is counterproductive to the fabric of life and stunts the possibilities of transformative change.

So, what can do with the feelings? There are many possibilities, but here are some recommendations.

- **Lean into relationships** and work on being present and honest about how you are really doing. We are all programmed to say "good" when asked, "How are you?" What if you told the truth? Maybe your honesty will give others permission to be honest too.
- **Seek support.** I found a counselor to help me process all of my emotions. She also helped me to start to identify unhealthy habits that I had learned over time to avoid working through painful feelings.
- **Listen.** Social justice movements require those with systemic power to become better listeners. Listen, not to defend that you are one of the "good ones" but to listen for meaning and to learn. No one owes you their story or their pain, but when it is given, we have an obligation to hold the moment as sacred and to build our empathy muscle. Change is not coming from new laws or from force; right now, the U.S. has an empathy problem. Every time you find an excuse to explain away a protester's anger or support a system that has denigrated millions of marginalized people for decades, please stop and ask yourself: Have I been listening with my heart?
- **Do something.** Use those feelings as a catalyst to do something. People are often stuck behind guilt and it is a self-serving emotion when allowed to sit idle. Use feelings of guilt as a moment to humble yourself, to learn something new, and to admit "I don't know, but I know I can do better."

As we transition to a new school year, Jesse Jackson said, "You can't teach what you don't know; you can't lead when you won't go." Our students will follow our lead this fall. We cannot pretend it is business as usual. I challenge us to show up differently. Make room, engage, normalize, share and acknowledge all feelings and emotions in your classroom. These small but intentional changes might lead us into a more just world as fully intact emotional human beings.

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Self-Care Around Social Justice: Simulate It!

Educators nationally are currently facing difficult situations and even more challenging questions from their students. As children hear their parents worry about things like COVID, racism, and climate change, they'll also hear words like "pandemic, riots, Armageddon, and increasing mortality rates." Topics like social justice, social-emotional learning, anti-racism, and trauma-informed practices are coming to the forefront of education – even in K-12 classrooms. How do teachers prepare themselves for these questions?

The Soraya Summer Arts Institute at California State University, Northridge (https://www.thesoraya.org/arts-ed/arts-education/pd/) typically focuses on providing K-12 teachers with arts integration strategies to embed the arts within all content classes. This year, however, organizers couldn't ignore all the stressors that teachers and students are experiencing. Thus, the Institute also included strategies on mindfulness and a simulation to help prepare teachers in how to create a trauma-sensitive classroom.

Teachers faced a virtual class of avatar students who questioned why masks had to be worn, who expressed concern that they'd be homeless if the main breadwinner in the family contracted COVID, and who argued with one another about whether "Black Lives Matter" or "All Lives Matter." As this was occurring, one teacher participant quickly stated, "We need to get them to focus on content. It's not our jobs to talk about this kind of stuff." This led to an important discussion about why this is, ***absolutely***, exactly our job. If these issues are not addressed honestly and sympathetically, then a student's ability to focus on content will likely decrease dramatically.

Using SIMPACT (www.csunsimulation.com), the immersive learning simulator, allowed teacher participants to practice answering students' questions, reframing situations, managing difficult conversations, and ultimately not ignoring critical questions that relate to social justice issues. These are tough situations for educators, but allowing them to practice responses in advance helps to relieve their stress. ***Having had a chance to work through their answers in a safe virtual environment, teachers felt more prepared to do so with their own students.***

Are you worried about how to respond to your own students when they ask you if you think police are racist? What to say when someone says it's "just politically correct" to look at history from different perspectives? If so, consider playing out those scenarios in advance and thinking through your responses. Better yet, actually engage with virtual students through a simulator like SIMPACT. ***Don't ignore these difficult questions; simply prepare yourself to answer them. That is what your students need.***

Scan for More Info on SIMPACT!

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T-CARE is dedicated to helping educational professionals, at all experience levels, identify what really works, reflect on the best practices, learn from one another, and engage in self-care

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