Courageous Conversations: Making Equity Matter

Maisah Howard M.Ed., MSW, PPSC
ICLE/HMH Consultant
The Howard Group
twitter: @maisahhoward

1

Follow, Comment, & Tweet

on twitter: @maisahhoward
@MoASSP
@RigorRelevance

2

JOURNEY WITH ME

3

* 75% of Black and Latinx students attend majority minority schools; about 40% are in schools where the white population is less than 10%.

* The typical White student attends a school that is 75% White.

* Minority students are frequently subject to "double segregation" by race and poverty.

* The typical Black student attends a school with a 67% poverty rate.

Orfield, Gary, Kucsera & Siegel-Hawley, E Pluribus...Separation, 2012, The Civil Rights Project.

4

Cultural Humility

The "ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the [person]".

Hook, Davis, Owen, Worthington and Utsey (2013)

5

Courageous Conversations

"A **difficult discussion** about an uncomfortable or harmful topic, issue, or event. The conversation is most productive when it is situated within an environment **built on respect, transparency, active listening, self-reflection**, and **empathy**"
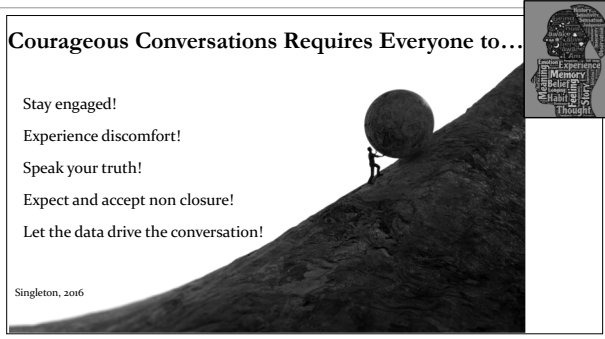
--Tyrone C. Howard

(All Students Must Thrive)

6

Courageous Conversations Requires Everyone to...

Stay engaged!

Experience discomfort!

Speak your truth!

Expect and accept non closure!

Let the data drive the conversation!
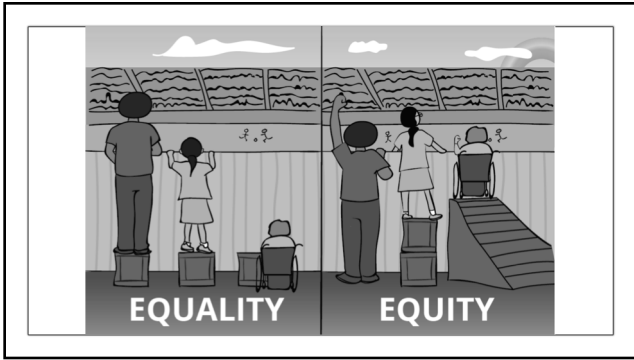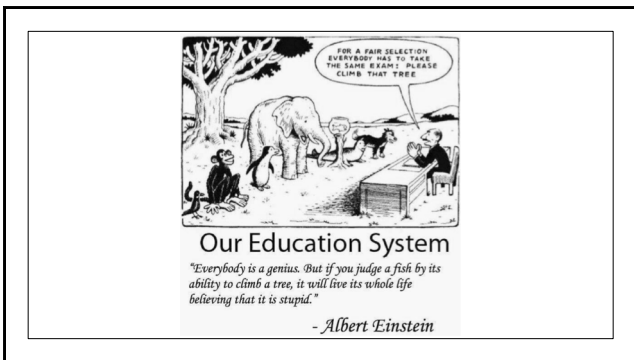
Singleton, 2016

7

WHAT IS EQUITY?

8

Equity in education means making sure that each and every student has the support they need to be successful.
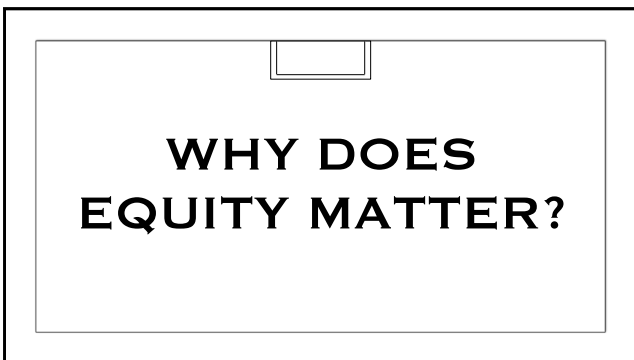
Thought Leaders, 2012

9

10

11

12

Historical Trauma

Historical trauma is cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences.

(Heart, M. Y. 2003), (Bombay, A. n.d.)

13

ARE WE REALLY WILLING TO HAVE COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS?

14

Do funds flow to schools according to need?

Do we provide high level curriculum in all schools for all students?

CURRICULUM

RESEARCH

Is teacher quality distributed equitably?
Do all student groups have fair access to the best teachers?

Are discipline rates similar for all groups?
Are some students being pushed out?

Equity Agenda

15

In 2012, the poorest districts in the nation- those in the bottom quartile received $1,200 less per pupil than the wealthiest, top quartile districts.

(Education Trust, 2015)

16

WHO ARE OUR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS?

- Students of color
- EL's
- Foster Youth/Youth in Out of Home Care
- Low Income
- LGBTQ +
- Students with Disabilities
- Youth Experiencing Homelessness
- Military Offspring
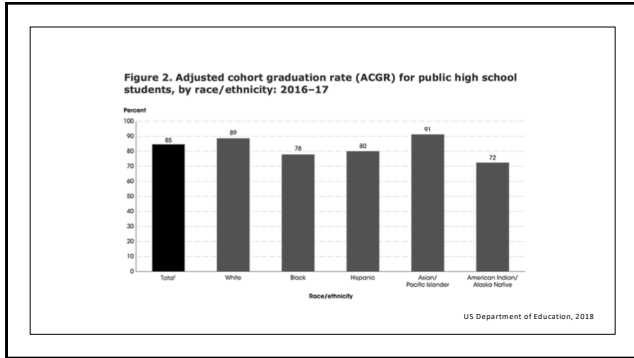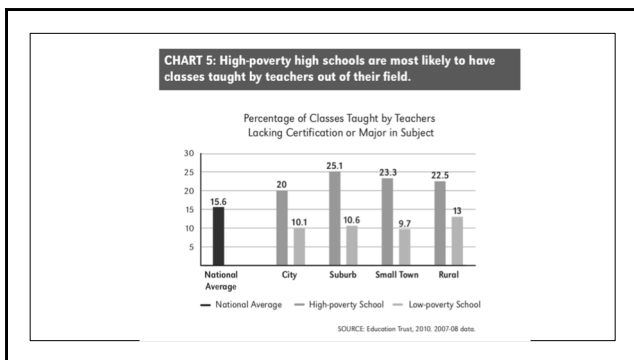
17

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?

Are we sensitive to the needs of students in out of home care?

Do we believe all students are capable learners?

Do we see ELs through a deficit lens?

Are we intentional about creating support groups and safe spaces for marginalized groups? Ally/Advocate, GSA/BSU

Do we really practice schoolwide inclusiveness?

18

Figure 2. Adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR) for public high school students, by race/ethnicity: 2016–17

19

CHART 5: High-poverty high schools are most likely to have classes taught by teachers out of their field.

20

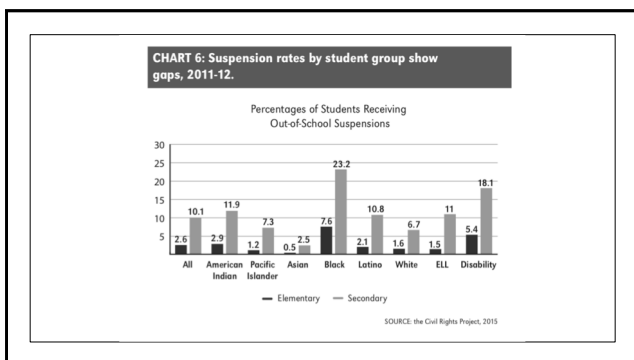CHART 6: Suspension rates by student group show gaps, 2011-12.

21

"Gay and lesbian youth are four times more likely to contemplate or attempt suicide. Trans youth are ten times more likely to do so."

Charles Radcliffe
Chief, Global Issues, OHCHR New York

22

Let's Have a Courageous Conversation

10 WAYS TO PURSUE EXCELLENCE THROUGH EQUITY

Pedro Noguera, 2018

23

#1 CHALLENGE THE NORMALIZATION OF FAILURE	#2 SPEAK UP FOR EQUITY
▪ Has your school grown accustomed to certain kids from certain backgrounds underperforming? ▪ How does your school ensure equity for individual students and populations of student?	▪ Are you complicit in the production of disparities ? ▪ Have you acknowledged that some students have been denied an opportunity to learn? ▪ Are inexperienced teachers being charged to teach the highest need students?
Recommendations ▪ Look for positive deviants, the outliers will expose what we need to do more of for the other students.	**Recommendations** ▪ Engage in honest conversations that may be uncomfortable but can help to move the needle in the best interest of children.

24

#3 EMBRACE IMMIGRANT STUDENTS AND THEIR CULTURE	# 4 PROVIDE STUDENTS CLEAR GUIDANCE ON WHAT IT TAKES TO SUCCEED
▪ Do immigrant students feel included? ▪ Do we allow language to be a barrier for students gaining access to high quality education services? **Recommendations** ▪ Ensure that immigrant students are in rigorous courses whether they are ELs or not. ▪ Identify school models. The Internationals Network of Schools is one such model.	▪ Are there AVID programs at your school? Who has access to AVID? ▪ Are there barriers to accessing programs designed to support student success? **Recommendations** ▪ Demystify success for kids. ▪ Ensure all students receive explicit teaching in the areas of: Study Skills Note Taking Organization Time Management

25

#5 BUILD PARTNERSHIPS WITH CAREGIVERS BASED ON SHARED INTERESTS	#6 ALIGN DISCIPLINE PRACTICES TO EDUCATIONAL GOALS
▪ Is the school a welcoming place for caregivers? ▪ What efforts are being made to get parents involved in their students educational success? **Recommendations** ▪ Acknowledge that parents and schools have a shared goal of students success. ▪ Build relationships based on respect, trust, understanding and empathy. ▪ Use varied modes of communication.	▪ Are the students with the greatest need being punished most? ▪ Are these students being denied critical learning time? **Recommendations** ▪ Seek to identify root causes of behaviors. ▪ Use restorative discipline approaches in all responses to inappropriate student behaviors.

26

#7 RETHINK REMEDIATION, FOCUS ON ACCELERATION	#8 IMPLEMENT EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES & EVALUTATE FOR EFFECTIVENESS
▪ Are there supplemental programs offered throughout the year to support learning for students? ▪ Are we creating self fulfilling prophecies with the labels that we place on students? **Recommendations** ▪ Focus efforts and resources on acceleration, opportunities to help students who are behind. ▪ Offer ongoing supplemental support services.	▪ Do all students have access to high quality evidence-based instruction? ▪ Are teachers differentiating instruction for diverse learners? **Recommendations** ▪ Make sure teachers are using the most effective teaching practices in classrooms. ▪ Evaluate your practices and work with local colleges and universities to draw on strategies and practices that research demonstrate are effective. ▪ Connect equity issues with good teaching strategies.

27

#9 BUILD PARTNERSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY TO ADDRESS STUDENT NEEDS

- What efforts have been made to engage community partners?

Recommendations

- Don't go it alone.
- Identify community partners to support the needs of the school community.
- Provide teachers with the necessary support to address student needs.
- Seek models for developing community partnerships. Two models are the Harlem Children's Zone, and the Children's Aid Society both located in NY.

#10 TEACH THE WAY STUDENTS LEARN RATHER THAN EXPECTING THEM TO LEARN THE WAY WE TEACH

- What are student centered approaches to learning and has your school moved toward student-centered learning?

Recommendations

- Don't assume that something is wrong with a student because they are not learning the way they are being taught.
- Engage in Universal Design Learning (UDL) to meet the needs of all students.

28

WHAT ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS WOULD BE NEEDED TO MAKE EDUCATION MORE EQUITABLE FOR ALL STUDENTS IN YOUR SCHOOL?
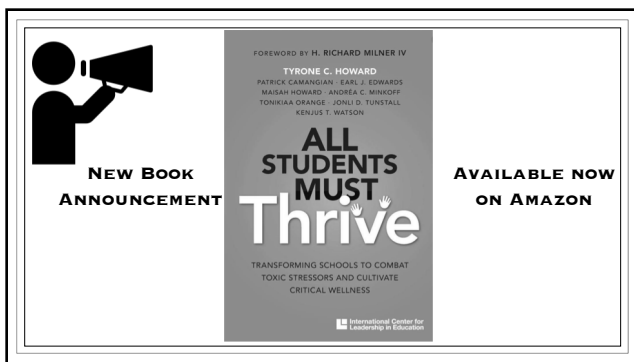
29

Equity Cannot be Realized if ANY Member of Our School Community is Left on the Fringes.

30

31

32

33