

Knowing and Building Multilingual Classroom Communities

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From this session, I hope you will

- See more clearly the inextricable link between equity and resilience
- Increase what you know about the why and how of creating interactive safe space that build community among all learners
- Have enjoyed activities that build on the assets of multilingual learners



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Parameters for the Session

Everyone has something to offer
All experiences count
Everyone is asked to participate / contribute
Respect for the dignity of everyone in this space

Behaviors that are harmful:
Not Listening
Othering
Discounting
Disrupting

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Who is in the room?

Things you can't change

- Birth order
- Where were you born
- Mother tongue(s)
- Cis or Trans gender

How far do you live from where you were born?

How far did you travel to come to the conference?

How many languages / dialects do you speak (to some degree or another?)



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Teaching in a Stratified Society

- Nothing about teaching is neutral
- Linguistic and cultural diversity is the norm in today's classrooms
- The dominant culture's values and interests frame our behaviors
- Schooling is a process of identity development

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Identity refers to an internalized set of meanings attached to a role played in a network of social relationships. A person's self viewed as ...an organization of the various identities held by the person" (p. 6).

Sheldon Steyler and Peter J. Burke (2000) The Past, Present, and Future of an Identity Theory *Social Psychology Quarterly* 63(4), pp. 284-297



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From Kaylyn William's 2017 Capstone - Definitions of Identity


Tracy Robinson
Individual identity is “both visible and invisible domains of the self that influence self-construction. They include, but are not limited to, ethnicity, skin color, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, and physical and intellectual ability.”

Edward Taylor: Cultural identity is “one’s understanding of the multilayered, interdependent, and nonsynchronous interaction of social status, language, race, ethnicity, values, and behaviors that permeate and influence nearly all aspects of our lives.”

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Funds of Identity



- Identities comprise all those people, skills, knowledge, practices, and resources that people have acquired and now use through their involvement in their various activities, in diverse social interactions.
- People form their identities (visions of themselves) by engaging in social activities and by observing how members interact.

Esteban-Guerra & Moll (2014) "Lived experience, funds of identity and education" *Culture & Psychology* 20(1).
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How is your identity constructed?



- Heritage cultures
- Language
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Expression
- Religion
- Geography

- Home cultures
- School cultures
- Professional cultures
- Age, gender, hobby cultures
- Classroom cultures








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.....[c]hildren live in a world that is not yet a place where all of them have equal opportunity to become all they could be.

Why pay attention to identity development?

We know children need to feel safe and secure in all their many identities, feel pride in their families, and feel at home in [school].

We also know that children need tools to navigate the complex issues of identity diversity, prejudice, and power in their daily lives so that they may learn thrive and succeed.

From John Oakes Edwards and Louise Demant-Sparbo (2010) *Anti-bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves*. NAEYC.
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What happens when a feature of your identity is marginalized in school?

from Louise & George Spindler (1993)

- Enduring Self** – sense of continuity of experience, meaning & social identity
- Situated Self** – contextualized and instrumental, changes selectively to meet the demands of the context
- Endangered Self** – sustained violation of enduring self – damaged identity

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How does this connect to EQUITY & RESILIENCY?


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Turn and Talk

How do you define equity?

Why is resiliency such an important concept in relation to equity?



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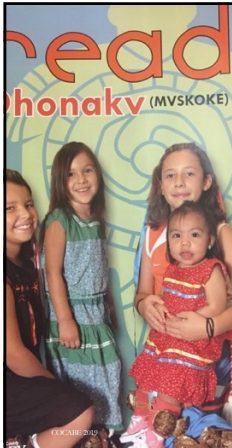
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Because adversity is unequally distributed along the lines of power and privilege in any society

- EQUITY means more than equal access or equal opportunity
- Equity implies equal outcomes

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Equity in Education

Linda Darling-Hammond – 2016 Conference Presentation

- Addressing the academic, psychological, emotional, social needs [and assets] of all students
- Recognizing differences
- Compensating for disadvantages [structural inequities]
- Responding to the needs [and assets] of all students”

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Equity Focused Teachers

Learn about...

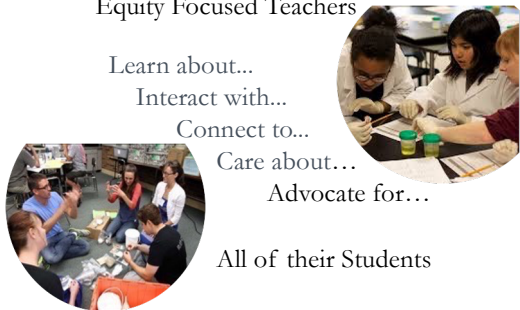
Interact with...

Connect to...

Care about...


Advocate for...

All of their Students



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Resilient Students:

- Adapt to disturbances to functioning and development
- Respond to stress in a way that does not impact an individual behaviorally or psychologically
- Use resources towards positive outcomes
- Are vulnerable to adverse events
- Function in a positive way after adverse events

From: "Supportive Relationships and Active Skill-Building Strengthen the Foundations of Resilience." Working Paper 13. National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2015.

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Resiliency Building Factors In Schools

Things you can do every day in every classroom


- Increase Bonding
- Set Clear And Consistent Boundaries
- Teach Life Skills
- Provide Caring Support
- Set And Communicate High Expectations
- Provide Opportunities For Meaningful Participation

From: Henderson, Nan & Milstein, Mike M. (1996) *Resiliency in Schools: Making It Happen for Students and Educators*

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In the words of Sonia Nieto:



As a teacher you send powerful messages about the worth of each student by what you say and do about cultural and linguistic diversity.

You can disrupt or perpetuate oppression and discrimination by how you treat your students and model for them how to treat each other.


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Every child - no matter their background or circumstances

Deserves a teacher who Cares deeply about them as an individual and their success as a learner

Sees their potential to contribute to their society when they become adults



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Teachers' Actions Matter

Only thing truly within control of a teacher: the relationships they construct with and among their students.

- Teachers have the power to make students feel loved or unlovable, a part of the class family or an outsider.
- We must insist on the intrinsic worth and dignity simply for being human


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Advocacy for Students

Teachers need to be willing to take action to improve students' access to social and political capital and educational opportunities

This begins with everyday interactions in the classroom

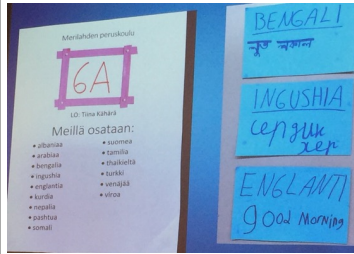


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Culturally responsive teaching includes topics, attitudes, strategies, language, and interactions.

This doesn't "just happen," it takes planning and collaboration among colleagues.



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There are many resources for this work

Anti-bias Education Goals

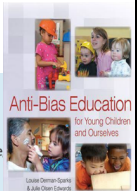
(Identity) Each child will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride positive social/group identities.

(Diversity) Each child will express comfort and joy with human diversity, accurate language for human differences, and deep, caring human connections.

(Justice) Each child will increasingly recognize unfairness (injustice), have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts.

(Activism) Each child will demonstrate a sense of empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions

Derman-Sparks & Edwards (2010)



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3 Approaches to Addressing Race / Difference Consider Language, Gender Expression, Immigration Status etc.

Color-blind
Color-aware
Social Justice

From: Reading Your Way to a Culturally Responsive Classroom Shannon B. Wanless, Patricia A. Crawford (2016) NAEYC Resources / Publications / Young Children

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COLOR (DIFFERENCE) BLIND

- Common but ineffective
- Potentially harmful method

Adults do not directly talk about race with children, yet the absence of an intentional message about race sends a powerful message in itself.

Children are left to develop their own understandings about race, and if they ask questions, they may be met with adults declining to talk about race at school.

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COLOR (DIFFERENCE) AWARE

Intentionally teach children about race and tell them that we see and value their race because it is an important part of who they are.

Bring up race in direct and positive ways, take advantage of teachable moments, and respond to children's race-related questions and interactions with books and activities to advance the conversation.

This applies to all aspects of identity and difference



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SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Considered ideal because it empowers children to play a role in acting against discrimination.
- Teachers using this approach to help children learn how to actively recognize and act on race-related injustices.
- Seek out teachable moments that specifically have to do with unfairness or discrimination

Real life example: "Flesh colored" bandages
Suggest / help children write a letter to a company that makes the bandages to let them know that their products do not match all skin tones in their class.
Propose that the name of the colors should be changed.

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Linguistically & Culturally Responsive Teachers Are Always Growing

- Critically examine themselves in relation to power, privilege and difference
- Develop a critical stance
- Address and foster intercultural competence

[L]ike children, teachers grow into the intellectual life around them.

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Focus on equity and creating a climate of belonging for all students. Commins & Miramontes, 2005)

- Utilize materials that acknowledge students' cultures and help them feel like they belong in your classroom.
- Demonstrate a value for students' ability to use two languages.
- Reach out and bring community members (carpenters, mechanics, business owners, etc.) into the school as partners in building a sense of community, contributing to instruction, and supporting the school in providing for all the needs of its' students.
- Send a unified message from the school encouraging immigrant parents and family members to interact and communicate with their children in their strongest language (usually not English).

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Help students feel welcome and connected to their teachers and peers

Show children that we see and value all aspects of them—including attributes related to gender expression, sexual orientation, race and culture

This means integrating their identities into the materials, pictures and actions in the classroom

NAEYC Wanless & Crawford (2016) p. 3

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Focus on Language

- Linguistic Landscape of your School
- WIDA Name Charts
- Personal Language Histories
 - Languages used by people around you as a child?
 - Languages you speak, read, write now?
 - Languages people watch shows in at your house, in your neighborhood
- Where do your languages live?

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Uncovering Identities: Cultural Puzzle

Drawn from Elinor Brown

In the middle put things about your identity that you can't change – eg where born, birth order, native language...

In each of the other pieces put in important aspects of your identity – and a few words to prompt you in your discussion

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A Math theme alternative

- Choose a polygon that represents how you see yourself.
- Use the shape to distribute aspects of your identity that are important to you now.
 - Think back 10 years were these the same?
 - Think ahead 10 years – how might these change?
 - How might your students view you?

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Create a “tree ring” to represent your life

Begin in the center

Draw rings for your milestones

Include events you are comfortable sharing

Use your tree ring to introduce yourself.

To help you get started

- What are the most meaningful events so far?
- Do some years represent more growth than others?
- Have any events left scars that have now healed?
- Are there any branches to add to your tree?

From Environmental Science

Project Learning Tree

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Who Am I?

Another opportunity to look inside

In each point of the star, draw or write the groups to which you belong and that are of importance to you

- Circulate and find others' who have something similar in one point of the star.
- Try to form a galaxy of stars by putting the similarities together across the group.
- How many connections can you make?
- Could you make these same connections with your pupils?

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Example From A Bilingual Class In Finland


Week 1: Shields & Flowers
Who are We?

Week 2: Cooperation

Week 3: We can be Allies

Week 4: Role Plays –
Going Deeper

Week 5: Class Quilt
We Can Make Norssi a Great Place to Learn



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Introduction: Why are we doing this project?

When you grow up, the most important skills will be to

- Get along with
- Care about
- Learn From
- Work For
- Respect

People who are different from you
NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE



We respect each others' cultures!

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Week 1: Introduction

Students decorated letters “We are all the same, we are all different.”

Discussed importance of the project

Modeled, discussed & created shields


3 things in common, 1 different

What you eat for a special meal

What you do on the weekends

How your family celebrates birthdays

- It makes me happy when,
- It makes me sad when.
- When someone is sad I can...



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Week 2: What do you know about different people? Where do you get your information?

People from the U.S. People in wheelchairs
Poor people Roma


FOR EACH GROUP: Have you had Personal Contact YES / NO

If no, have you heard the term, do you know what I am talking about?

If I were a visitor from outer space (from the moon), how would you describe _____ to me?

- What have you heard?
- What have you seen?
- What has your own personal experience taught you?
- How certain do you feel the information is accurate?

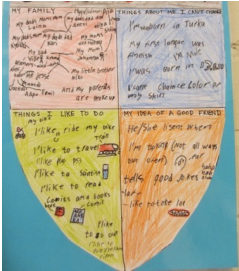
Where did you learn most of your information and what did you learn from which source?
Parents/family, TV, Movies, Books, Internet, Magazines- comics, School, Personal experience



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Week 3: Identity & Cultural Practices



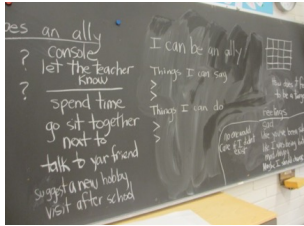
- Cultural practices - Over generalization - Stereotypes
- Use shield to look at aspects of own identity
- Read story “A New Girl” to introduce concepts of Target, Perpetrator, Bystander and Ally
- Tie to Respect for Others from Religion class
- Create role plays in small groups based on scenarios given in Reading to End Racism materials.

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Week 4: What Does an Ally Do or Say?

- Review “Why are we doing this project?”
- Go deeper into the roles. Write in journals “When you have been a target, how did you feel?. What did people do to make you feel better ?
- Final reflection: “Things I can do, things I can say.”
Homework: Think about how we can make Norssi a better school.



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Week 5: Bring It Together With A Class Quilt



“Inside/Outside Circle” to generate ideas
Started simple
Began with “When someone is sad” and then expanded.

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Constructing the Quilt

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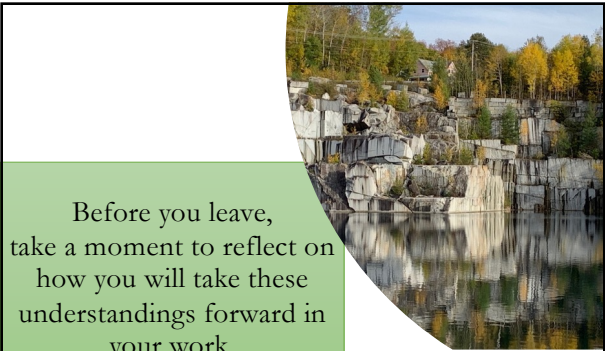
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Before you leave,
take a moment to reflect on
how you will take these
understandings forward in
your work.

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