

EDL530 M1 Discuss And Notes

Discussion

When we started this module, and the terms Equity and Equality came up, I was already looking at the image on the wall in my office; it is the exact image from [Restoring Racial Justice via Boston University](#). What I like about this image is that it goes a step further to Justice. A book that I have read that influences my leadership approach at my school in this area is *The Future of Smart* (Hansen, 2021) which describes Liberatory Education as a way to build on the strengths that come from diversity. I am also lucky to work at a school that has a very strong Social Justice aspect to its vision and attempts to meet the needs of students as individuals. In practice, we have focused on using a trauma-informed lens, which can be perceived as a deficit approach, but when done well, just means that we recognize that we all come with histories (and biases) that impact our present.

In this way, we try to apply trauma-informed, Restorative Practices discipline approach at our school, through classroom management, and in solution-finding. We acknowledge that we each act out of our needs, and trying to get those needs met. If that leads to our individual needs or rights impinging onto other's needs or rights, a conversation must happen so we can come together and repair any damage; we work to reintegrate both parties back into the learning community. Unfortunately, teachers do not always arrive with this strengths-based approach. Often, one student or another is determined to be in the wrong, or coming from a place of more trauma, and is therefore the one at fault or in need of help. We have two Restorative Practices facilitators who work to catch this as early as possible.

Another simple example of a potential deficit-based approach is that we do Dibels 8 testing with students; we identify deficits that are then targeted for growth towards 'average'. On a good day, this builds on a student's strengths and leverages what they do know, other times it is just a deficit-focused, targeted intervention. We work to reframe to the former through the reading coach.

References

Hansen, U. J. (2021). *The Future of Smart: How Our Education System Needs to Change to Help All Young People Thrive*. Capucia Publishing.

Hello Colbey,

I'm wondering what percent of your population is ESL and are they sometimes scheduled as same language cohort or are they always split and mainstreamed? Do they have common time during the day in an ELS breakout or is it all ELS teacher pushing in?

At my last school, we have a very high ESL percentage, predominantly Indian (from the subcontinent!) and Korean and the ELS team provided both push-in and pull out, with individual and small groups, even mixed language sometimes. Similar to your teachers sharing stories of the ESL students' lives, my colleagues created an idioms wall. Did you know that in Korean, if your mouth is bored, it means you are hungry, but if your mouth is itchy you can't wait to tell someone a secret? While this is not content-related, as you described is part of your teachers' struggle, it is a way to humanize, have a laugh, and maybe learn more English, at least at the social level. For the newest students, we also used Google Translate on quizzes, which

were also shorter, for both the questions and student answers (or we made them multiple choice).

Dear Geoa,

We too follow the production line efficiency model when we use Dibels 8 to assess early readers and to target their deficits through interventions. In one of the videos or readings for this first module, it said something about a strength based approach does not mean we do not address what a student needs to learn next but rather uses what they already know, or bring to the desk with them, to leverage the teaching of what they need to learn next. Perhaps the shift does not need to be as overwhelming as creating alternative assessment tools and the rubrics to go with them so that teachers can grade this new diversity, rather to identify the strengths and leverage them to help the students learn. This is something I will bring to my staff at our next staff meeting, particularly the reading interventionist. Thomas

Part 1: Share your understanding of the difference between equity and equality. How will this understanding influence how you approach establishing an inclusive learning culture that supports the holistic growth of all students?

Part 2: Share an example of a deficit-based approach that is present or prevalent in your current school context. What reframing might be necessary to shift to asset-based approaches?

At a minimum, respond substantively and thoughtfully to two of your classmates' initial posts. In your replies, ask a probing or clarifying question and propose an alternative evidence-based approach to replace the deficit-based approach.

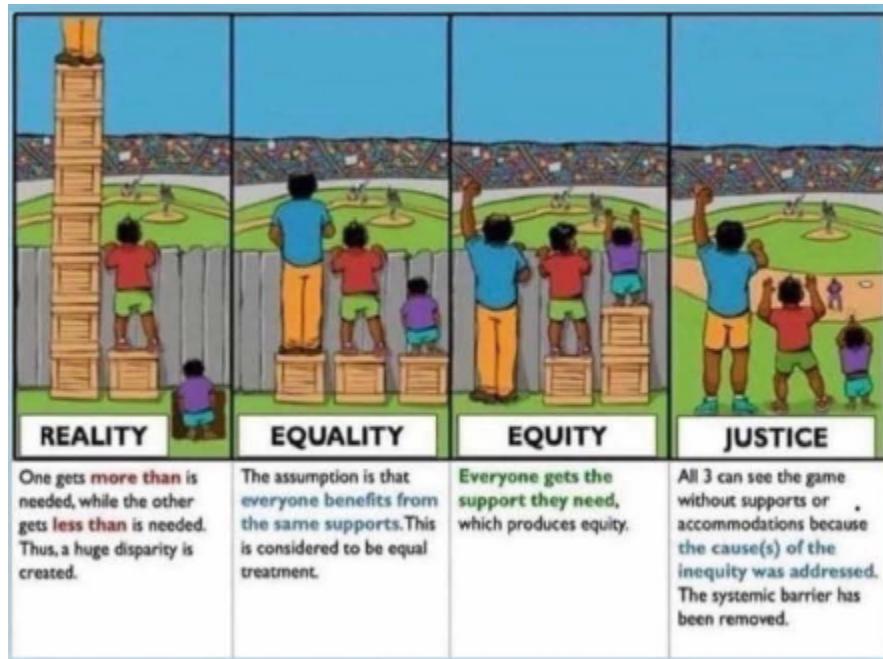
Notes

Required Reading

- Introduction, *Culturally Responsive School Leadership*
- Beachum, F. D., & Gullo, G. L. (2019). [School leadership: Implicit bias and social justice. Handbook on Promoting Social Justice in Education](#), 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-74078-2_66-1
- Fiarman, S. (2016). Disrupting Inequity. [Unconscious bias: When good intentions aren't enough. Educational Leadership](#). (74) (3).
- Fortner, K. M., Lalas, J., & Strikwerda, H. (2021). [Embracing asset-based school leadership dispositions in advancing true equity and academic achievement for students living in poverty](#). *Journal of Leadership, Equity, and Research*, 7(1).
- García, S. B., & Guerra, P. L. (2004). [Deconstructing deficit thinking: working with educators to create more equitable learning environments](#). *Education*

and Urban Society, 36(2), 150–168.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124503261322>

Equality	Assumes that every student has equal access to learning and as such they should all be given the same resources, supports, and opportunities.
Equity	Recognizes that each student has individual needs and challenges.
Equitable	Rather than each student getting the same (ones-size-fits-all), each student gets resources, supports, and opportunities based on their individual needs. The focus is on equal outcomes for all students.



A graphic comparing equality, equity, reality, and liberation.

[\(Source: Restoring Racial Justice via Boston University\)](#)

Beachum and Gullo (2019) define implicit bias as “the attitudes and associations made subconsciously that often do not reflect ‘actual’ or explicit beliefs.”

“We can increase awareness and normalize talking about bias through direct teaching, modeling, and explicitly naming it” (Fiarman, 2016, p. 2).

“Biases are built by repeated exposure to a particular message. Deliberately consuming counter narratives can help break down the automatic reflex” (Fiarman, 2019) of our implicit biases.

Reed (2020) defines deficit thinking as the “act of blaming a student, a student’s family, or a student’s culture for academic or behavioral difficulties that occur at school.” When educators make sense of student’s perceived failures from a deficit lens, they look solely at perceived shortcomings or deficiencies on the part of the student or the student’s parents/family. In making sense of the achievement gap, an educator might attribute it to students’ parents not valuing education, a student not putting forth enough effort, or a student being lazy. When the blame is placed solely on the student, there is no room to examine systems, structures, policies, and practices that are problematic. The approach then becomes “fixing the student.”

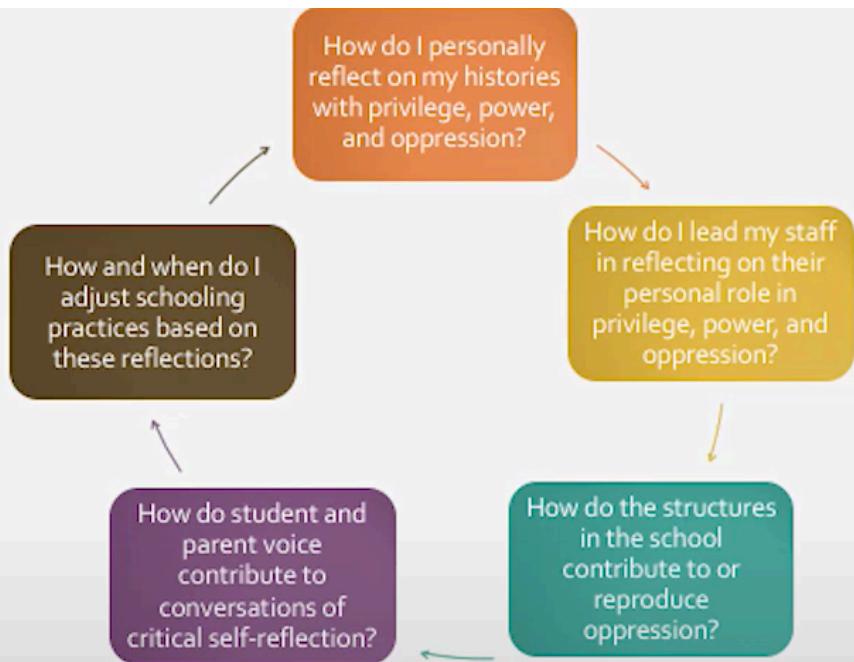
Explore these additional resources on asset-based education:

- [An Assets-Based Approach to School Leadership: 3 Ways to Create a Positive Climate](#)
- [Creating Schools and Systems That Support Asset-Based, High-Quality Instruction for Multilingual Learners](#)

The [CRSL Framework](#) delineates the practices and traits that educators and leaders should continually strive to develop. Broadly, these include:

- Critically self-reflects on leadership behaviors
- Develops culturally responsive teachers
- Promotes culturally responsive/inclusive school environment
- Engages students, parents, and indigenous contexts

How is critical self-reflection led in school?



Institutionalizing critical self-reflection

Types/Spaces of Critical Self-Reflection	Critical Questions
Personal critical self-reflection	❖ How have I enjoyed privilege over other groups, especially those that I serve in my school?
Content critical self-reflection	❖ Am I aligning my discussions and items at staff meetings with equity?
Structural critical self-reflection	❖ Do I leverage school resources in ways that center the needs of minoritized students?
Community-based critical self-reflection	❖ How am I including parent (or caregiver) voice in the governing and policymaking at the school?
Organizational critical self-reflection	❖ Am I hiring a staff that is consistent with community demographics and who are willing to be self-reflective around issues of oppression?
Sustainable critical self-reflection	❖ What are the ways that I routinely and systematically ask the questions in this table (and others like them)?

In this section, we've explored integral aspects of culturally responsive school leadership. Let's Review

Culturally responsive school leaders:

- Strive for equity vs. equality, recognizing that schools do not exist on a level playing field and that there is much work to be done to create equity, opportunity, and opportunity for all students in schools.
- Recognize the structural barriers that hinder educational access and opportunities, and strive to dismantle them making their schools more culturally responsive.
- Are self-aware and willing to examine and counter implicit biases they harbor.
- Are intentional in cultivating a school culture that promotes self-awareness and examination of biases and deficit thinking that can potentially hinder student learning and success.
- View the diversity that students bring as assets and value students' cultural ways of knowing and understanding the world as foundational to their learning and success.

Intro

Share your location, educational and professional background, and one thing that is unique about you personally. In addition, share something you are curious about in relation to the focus of this course.

My name is Thomas Cleary and I am the Director of the Crestone Charter School, in the San Luis Valley of Southern Colorado. I was a teacher here from 2002 to 2011 working with HSers on Math and Science for a few years, MSers in a self-contained classroom for a few more, and I was a k-12 science and experiential ed coordinator for the other years. Something unique about me is that from 2012 to 2021 I was an overseas teacher in American curriculum expat schools in Mali, West Africa (2 yrs), and Mumbai, India (7yrs), teaching all subjects in upper elementary, and also MS math for a bit. In 2021, I returned to Crestone when the directorship opened up and am starting my fourth year in that role. I am a father and husband, an outdoorsman, a builder, an introvert in an extroverted role, and doing what it takes to be a student again.

I am curious about the breadth of the definition of diversity within this course. My school's student population is 90% white, 90% free and reduced lunch, 95% English-first speaking, etc. BUT they are highly diverse (just Google Crestone) with various spiritual, political, educational, family structures, and other aspects that make them 'diverse'. I look forward to exploring equity and diversity through this lens!