

School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)
(6/4/20)

Special Edition

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From the Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports, UCLA

Please feel free to share with anyone you think might benefit

The hope of a secure and livable world lies with disciplined nonconformists who are dedicated to justice, peace and brotherhood. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Equity of opportunity at school is fundamental to enabling civil rights.

For discussion and interchange:

> **Issues being raised about how schools relate to local police**

Excerpt from: *Amid Uprisings, Schools Consider Terminating Their Contracts With Police*
https://www.huffpost.com/entry/police-in-schools_n_5ed6803ec5b68a110026cd58

The number of police officers stationed in schools has increased in recent decades in response to a devastating wave of school shootings ... But when police walk the halls, Black children are disproportionately arrested, often for low-level offenses, contributing to a cycle called the school-to-prison pipeline.

Now, some activists are hoping that the protests against police brutality and racism roiling the country could be a turning point in efforts to dial back this kind of school security. In Minneapolis, where protests exploded after a police officer killed local resident George Floyd, the school board voted ... in favor of a resolution to cut ties with the police department. Before the vote, board member Josh Pauly told HuffPost that he has already heard from representatives in school districts in "Arizona, North Carolina, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Washington, Oregon, New York, and Illinois" asking for support in crafting a similar resolution. In Denver, a school board member told HuffPost that he has plans to introduce a comparable resolution as well.

After years of non-stop growth in the number of police in schools, even amid high-profile incidents of police brutality against students, "this conversation feels unprecedented," said Jonathan Stith, national director of the nonprofit Alliance for Educational Justice, which advocates against the presence of police in schools. Overall crime in schools has decreased over the last two decades, mirroring larger societal trends, but the amount of security has skyrocketed. In 1997, only 10% of schools employed police officers. By 2017, that number had increased to 58%....

In Chicago, the local teachers union recently called for the board of education to cancel its \$30 million per year contract with Chicago police and direct the money to emergency

counseling and support for students in crisis...."In a district that is 90% students of color, over 80% free/reduced-price lunch, in a city that is violent, we would prefer trauma supports, social workers, school psychologists," said Stacy Davis Gates, vice president of the Chicago Teachers Union.

Data shows that Black and brown students often bear the brunt of this increased policing. When cops are in schools, students, especially Black students, are more likely to get arrested or referred to local law enforcement, even for low-level offenses like vandalism and fights without a weapon. Black students also more likely than other students to attend schools with more school security officers than mental health workers...."

Let us know what's happening locally about this issue.

Watching the heightened activism of young people in recent weeks, of every race and every station, makes me hopeful. If, going forward, we can channel our justifiable anger into peaceful, sustained, and effective action, then this moment can be a real turning point in our nation's long journey to live up to our highest ideals. Barak Obama

For discussion and interchange:

>Issues about re-opening schools equitably

Excerpt from *Reopening Florida schools must be safe, equitable, says teachers union panel*
<https://www.tampabay.com/news/gradebook/2020/06/02/school-reopening-must-be-safe-equitable-fea-panel-says/>

Florida's return to public schools must protect the health of all involved while also promoting the academic needs of children left behind during a hastily implemented period of remote learning this spring.

That sentiment is key to recommendations issued Tuesday by the Florida Education Association for how to reopen schools as the coronavirus pandemic continues. The ideas came from a task force whose members, the union said, were underrepresented when the state planned how it would undertake distance learning.

"Any plan to reopen schools that seeks a return to normal falls short," the group wrote in the introduction to its 16-page report. "Almost seventy years after Brown vs. Board of Education, far too many students of color still attend separate and unequal schools. Therefore, a focus on equity is essential in any reopening plan."

The task force included educators, parents, civic and government leaders from a variety of economic and racial backgrounds.... FEA president Fed Ingram made clear early that, from his perspective, any reopening effort will have a better chance of success if the people affected by it participate and feel comfortable with the recommendations.

Several school districts have followed the lead, conducting surveys and collecting comments from their communities as they prepare their plans. The FEA sought to add its perspective to that discussion. It aimed to look at the broader issues related to the concept, noting that individual districts and schools can have different demands....

It is a strength when protesters, protected by responsible law enforcement, march for a better future. This tragedy -- in a long series of similar tragedies -- raises a long overdue question: How do we end systemic racism in our society? The only way to see ourselves in a true light is to listen to the voices of so many who are hurting and grieving. Those who set out to silence those voices do not understand the meaning of America -- or how it becomes a better place. George W. Bush

We continue to share what we hear from folks. Here an exchange we just heard:

One student's reaction:

Man it is hard to sort through what "facts" are.

I spent this evening listening to the words of a black woman I knew to be empirically correct on the subject she was speaking to.

At the same time I was struck by how others in that moment were listening to Jacob Wohl, a misproportioned mannequin man who firmly believes that Blue Lives Matter above all else, and thought him to be "empirically correct" in his view on current events.

This ambiguity does nothing to dissuade me from my beliefs. Contrary to what I was taught in high school this does not mean I'm "biased", it means I have a backbone.

All I know my plan for protest is to go ready to listen to black organizers and rinse tear gas from eyes if the need arises.

Who am I to tell someone not to smash a window, me who has never in my life needed food badly enough to steal it?

Who am I to tell someone not to take a TV, me who has never been forced live in the run down derelict subsection of a city that was not mine and be told it was my "community" and to take pride in it.

I'm not saying these things are right or wrong; only that it's not up to me to decide that.

There is a paralyzing fear in this country that offering help means that someone "undeserving" may benefit.

Why have welfare if someone can possibly game the system? Why raise the minimum wage for a job a rich teenager will use to get weed money? Why donate to a bail fund if it could potentially be used to help a nasty violent criminal?

I'd rather someone undeserving benefit if it means someone deserving benefits alongside them.

If I'm joining a tightly packed crowd of people during a national pandemic, there better be a damn good reason for it. And I know in my gut if I sit this one out, all my harsh words and nice socialist talk will be just that: talk. And there's more than enough talk in this country. I want to give more.

A response to the student from his grandfather:

By now the news has reviewed the history of race riots.

You asked how this one was different.

How about social media and videos of a couple of recent killings of black men?

How about traffic cameras catching streams of vehicles communing to fine stores for looting?

During the Watts riot the crowds did in their own neighborhood and then the "" good folks had to move into better areas to steal some food so their kids would not starve for the weeks that followed.

Now we have looters who pick from the best stores because they are tired of window shopping and want to smash glass and get only the best stuff.

I keep talking about people and the fictions they create about why they do things and I like to point out that under stress the most primitive emotions drive actions.

Fear, greed, rage, urgency, and drama is what controlled our hunt and gather ancestors.

An overlay of intelligent narrative in front of a TV camera changes little.

Now, I have this grandson who intends to mix with crowds of protestors who crowd and breathe at close quarters shouting slogans of anger and frustration.

After you join this gang of people who have the highest rate of Covina virus where will you isolate for the weeks required?

I have thought long and hard about your need to be true to your thinking and to participate.

Good works start with protecting your family first and risking them to a deadly virus does not fit the bill.

I don't think you should feel guilty about being privileged because your parents and grandparents paid heavy dues to get you there and we are counting on you to save the planet from people like us.

Get on with your schooling and recruit a generation to improving the systems we have and do not waste yourself providing a prelude to looters and police and military violence.

Please share what students, families, and school staff are saying.

And also share resources providing strategies for school staff to anticipate and respond to difficult discussions and reactions.

(For some resources on this, see <http://crlt.umich.edu/multicultural-teaching/difficult-moments>.)

At this critical time, we hope to share what is being done and what you think schools can and should do

- and
- (a) immediately through whatever ways they are communicating with students
 - (b) in planning transformative institutional changes at schools.

Please send ideas, plans, and links to resources to us, and we will share them through the next edition of this community of practice forum. Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu .

People of power, privilege, and moral conscience must stand up and say 'no more' to a racially discriminatory police and justice system, immoral economic disparities between whites and blacks, and government actions that undermine our unified democracy. We are responsible for creating a world of peace and equality for ourselves and future generations. Jimmy Carter

Message From Santa Monica-Malibu Superintendent On Protests

Excerpted from: *Patch* –

<https://patch.com/california/santamonica/message-santa-monica-malibu-superintendent-protests>

"I am proud of our students, faculty, staff, parents and community partners, who are peacefully protesting to affect change." ...

We know the protests we are seeing in some of our neighborhoods and across the country that have followed the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, may be very upsetting and confusing to our students. Students may also feel scared or angry during this time, uncertain about the curfews, and concerned about media reports from streets they may recognize. This may raise stress and anxiety for students on top of what they may already be feeling due to coronavirus and school closure.

I am proud of our students, faculty, staff, parents and community partners, who are peacefully protesting to affect change, stop racism and demand justice be served. I do not support any type of violent protests, including looting and vandalism happening in our neighborhoods, nearby cities, and across the country.

We are thinking about our families and staff during this difficult time, and have concerns about damaged businesses due to vandalism and looting in our communities. ...

Below are some links to resources that may be helpful when discussing protests and racism at home:

Strategies to prepare for a discussion and helpful links:

<https://dcps.dc.gov/sites/default/files/u65602/Preparing%20to%20Discuss%20Race%20and%20Police%20Violence%20in%20the%20Classroom.pdf>

Resources for teaching about race, racism, and police violence

<https://www.tolerance.org/>

Your kids are not too young to talk about race - Resources:

<https://www.prettygooddesign.org/blog/Blog%20Post%20Title%20One-5new4?fbclid=IwAR3t3-vSJ0NXjcw0Xh0fc-9oTIYCGGDh3sqIUSSgtxEPpwNTiOQ6XTbQQZs>

Raising race conscious children: <http://www.raceconscious.org/>

Please be safe and continue to take care of one another.

Sincerely, Dr. Ben Drati, Superintendent

No one deserves to die the way George Floyd did. And the truth is, if you're white in America, the chances are you won't. That truth is what underlies the pain and the anger that so many are feeling and expressing—that the path of an entire life can be measured and devalued by the color of one's skin. Fifty-seven years ago, Dr. King dreamed of a day when his "four little children would be judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." Today, that dream seems even more out of reach, and we'll never reach it if we keep treating people of color with the unspoken assumption that they're less human.

We need to see each other as equally deserving of life, liberty, respect, dignity, and the presumption of innocence. We need to ask ourselves and each other hard questions, and listen carefully to the answers. Bill Clinton

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

Speaking Up Against Racism Around the New Coronavirus

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/speaking-up-against-racism-around-the-new-coronavirus>

COVID-19 and School Funding: What to Expect and What States Can Do

https://ednote.ecs.org/covid-19-and-school-funding/?utm_source=ECS+Subscribers&utm_campaign=8ca37fcc82-ED_CLIPS_06_03_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1a2b00b930-8ca37fcc82-53599575

With schools shuttered, learning lags and students left behind, Reuters survey shows

<https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/health-coronavirus-usa-schools/>

Minn. district cuts ties with police department

<https://www.startribune.com/mps-school-board-ends-contract-with-police-for-school-resource-officers/570967942/>

Understanding Demands: What drives the Movement for Black Lives from a policy perspective

https://m4bl.org/policy-platforms/?utm_campaign=Newsletter&utm_medium=email&hsenc=p2ANqtz--AYCknkKkxLR-iyjW11ONi-VhcYyb5haB9xkJLRfwdZAAa4DVQ72yScCyzMMXufTIkdzc5nizLasmLnl9yX2OGJ0Jrg&hsmi=88882827&utm_content=88882895&utm_source=hs_email&hsCtaTracking=32d84837-eed1-49d4-a56f-1b849c816fc4%7C59d29b35-982f-45b5-85cb-545f348d6cc6

75 Things White People Can Do for Racial Justice

<https://medium.com/equality-includes-you/what-white-people-can-do-for-racial-justice-f2d18b0e0234>

Webinar: Children, Media, Aggression: Addressing Critical Questions

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8287760616556871179>

*For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive the
Community of Practice directly, send an email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu*

*For previous postings of community of practice discussions, see
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>*
