

INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

Tips for gen-ed teachers

LANGUAGE PREJUDICE

How to dismantle it

SCHOOL CLIMATE

Community building on a budget

TEACHING TOLERANCE

TOLERANCE.ORG



ISSUE 43 | SPRING 2013



THE SCHOOL -TO- PRISON PIPELINE

*What you can do to
keep students in class*

THREE NEW RESOURCES FROM TEACHING TOLERANCE

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO IMPROVE

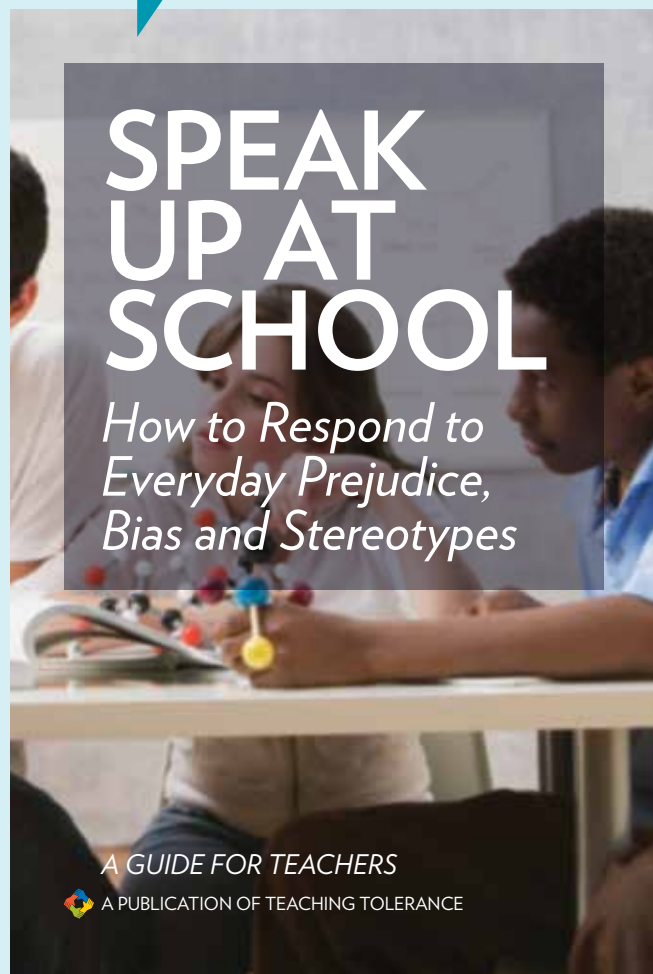
These Teaching Tolerance guides provide a comprehensive view of school-culture issues and direction for educators trying to build an inclusive, nurturing school climate.

Speak Up at School gives educators the tools to help students turn from bystanders to upstanders.

tolerance.org/speak-up-at-school

Responding to Hate and Bias at School shows educators how to respond to a bias incident in school and guides them through crisis management and post-crisis efforts at improvement.

tolerance.org/hate-and-bias



IMPROVE YOUR SCHOOL'S CLIMATE?

Best Practices: Engaging Limited English Proficient Students and Families points administrators to best practices in the effort to create a supportive learning environment for all students.
tolerance.org/ELL-best-practices

DOWNLOAD TODAY!

tolerance.org/publications

Best Practices
Engaging Limited English Proficient Students and Families
A Teaching Tolerance Guide

“Many of the questions we receive are from educators seeking advice about how to respond when someone—a student, a colleague, even a parent—uses biased language or stereotypes in school.”

Maureen Costello,
Director of Teaching Tolerance

OUR SCHOOL CLIMATE

is supportive of both limited English proficient students and their families. We welcome all students and families into our school and provide them with equal access to learning opportunities.

We do not allow English language supports to replace challenging and mainstream curriculum.

We reach out to families to learn from them how best to meet the needs of their children.

We engage in problem solving around issues of ethnic discrimination and inequities.

We have a shared commitment to diversity.

We have a well-defined plan for engaging non-English-speaking families.

We honor and make use of students' native languages.

We respect people of different backgrounds.



TEACHING TOLERANCE

ISSUE 43 | SPRING 2013

DEPARTMENTS

- 5** Perspectives
- 7** Letters to the Editor
- 9** Ask Teaching Tolerance
- 11** Why I Teach
A spoken word event reveals how teachers and students can inspire each other.
- 13** Down the Hall
Sara Kimmel has made her library—and her school—a nurturing, inclusive environment.
- 15** Activity Exchange
- 60** Staff Picks
- 62** Story Corner
When Maggie receives two pairs of shoes for her birthday—moccasins and patent leather—she must learn to walk between two cultures.
- 64** One World



25



29



46



50



on the cover

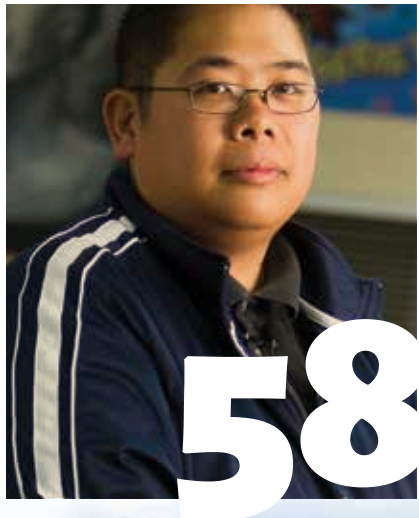
Teaching Tolerance examines how teachers can recognize and dismantle policies and practices that favor incarceration over education.

ILLUSTRATION BY **CHRIS BUZELLI**



FEATURES

- 25 No School Like Freedom School**
Modern-day programs empower and educate students with strategies inspired by the original 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools.
- 29 Sound Effects**
Challenge language prejudice in the classroom by teaching children there are no “wrong” or “right” dialects.
- 32 Found in Translation**
Ensure school environments are welcoming to English language learners (ELLs) and their families.
- 35 Religion in the Locker Room**
Church and state controversy often originates in sports. How can schools make sure the beliefs of all student athletes are respected?
- 38 The School-to-Prison Pipeline**
Policies and practices that favor incarceration over education do us all a grave injustice.



POSTERS

Two colorful reminders of how to make your school a welcoming environment for all families—including those with limited English proficiency. See page 32.

- 44 The Value of Community**
Building positive school community doesn't have to be expensive. Get started with these affordable projects.
- 46 Move to the Music**
From social studies class to the science lab, protest music engages students in discussions about social justice.
- 50 Mimi's Moms**
Small things—like inclusive picture books or gender-neutral school forms—can make children of LGBT families feel included.
- 53 Seamless Teaching**
General education teachers may not be fully prepared to teach students in special education. These tools and tips can help.
- 56 Buttoned Down**
School uniforms—once hailed as the panacea for behavior problems—aren't living up to educators' expectations.
- 58 And the Winners Are ...**
Meet the five educators receiving the 2012 Teaching Tolerance Award for Excellence in Culturally Responsive Teaching.



ACTIVITY EXCHANGE
Challenge your students with these lessons on diversity. (see page 15)

HOW WILL YOUR STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT?



IN PERSON

The Civil Rights Memorial Center in Montgomery, Ala., honors those who lost their lives for equality. Student group tours are free!



splcenter.org/civil-rights-memorial

FILM

A Time for Justice and *The Children's March* bring the movement to life for students.



tolerance.org/teaching-kits

ACTIVITIES

The Civil Rights Activity Book uses puzzles, songs and photos to teach children about martyrs and events of the civil rights movement.



tolerance.org/civil-rights-activity-book

TEACHING TOLERANCE

A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

DIRECTOR Maureen B. Costello

DESIGN DIRECTOR Russell Estes

SENIOR EDITOR Alice Pettway

ASSOCIATE EDITOR Lisa Ann Williamson

SENIOR MANAGER FOR TEACHING & LEARNING Thom Ronk

TEACHING AND LEARNING SPECIALISTS Emily Chiariello, Sara Wicht

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Victoria Williams

PROGRAM ASSOCIATE Michele Lee

INTERN Nina Nolan

DESIGN

SENIOR DESIGNER Valerie Downes

DESIGNERS Michelle Leland, Scott Phillips, Kristina Turner

DESIGN ASSOCIATE Sunny Paulk

PRODUCTION

NEW MEDIA MANAGER Scott Pittinsky

NEW MEDIA CONTENT MANAGER Annah Kelley

ACCOUNTING OPERATIONS MANAGER Regina Collins

ONLINE OPERATIONS MANAGER Brian Youngblood

CONTRIBUTORS

Steve Adams, Lincoln Agnew, Lesley Barnes, Lois Barrett, José Bisailon, Michelle Bixby, Chris Buzelli, Octavian Cantilli, Raquel C. Cuperman, Marilyn Elias, Anthony Freda, Michael Glenwood, Joe Golossi, Rick Hovis, Julie Alice Huson, Warren Hynes, Judy Kaufmann, Carrie Kilman, Darlene Koenig, Susan Estelle Kwas, Sol Linero, Maggie Messitt, Zachariah O'Hora, Rick Olivier, Sean Price, Mollie Surguine, Emily Tweten, Marilyn Vargo, Anne Wilson, Walt Wolfram

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Trevor Barton, Kathleen Brenny, Cameron Calland-Jones, Thomas Carroll, Christine D. Cde Baca, Sara Cohan, Kathleen Crawford, Ameka Cruz, Vanessa D'Egidio, Melissa Diebel, Eileen Hogan Heineman, James Hiller, Rebecca Jallings, Geordie Jones, Dawn DuPree Kelley, Razia Kosi, Sarah More McCann, Michael McDonald, Enid Pickett, Daniel Rubin, Tamika Shuler, Kathy Stanley, Jennifer Trujillo, Kim Vinh, Cleopatra Warren

SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

CO-FOUNDERS Morris Dees, Joseph J. Levin Jr.

PRESIDENT & CEO J. Richard Cohen

DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES Anne Collins

SPLC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Howard Mandell, *Chair*

Alan B. Howard, *Vice Chair*

Marsha Levick Elden Rosenthal

Will Little James Rucker

Vanzetta Penn McPherson Henry Solano

Lida Orzeck Ellen Sudow

Julian Bond, *Emeritus*

EDITORIAL OFFICE

400 Washington Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36104

EMAIL Editor@teachingtolerance.org

SUBSCRIPTIONS tolerance.org/subscribe

Teaching Tolerance is mailed twice a year at no charge to educators. It is published by the Southern Poverty Law Center, a nonprofit legal and education organization. For permission to reprint articles, email us at reprints@tolerance.org.



ISSN 1066-2847 © 2013 SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

Printed with inks containing 27.3% renewable resources



Perspectives

"Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see."

—NEIL POSTMAN, *THE DISAPPEARANCE OF CHILDHOOD*



The production timeline for *Teaching Tolerance* magazine is long—planning for this issue began before the start of the school year. Because of this, we generally forgo topical items in favor of timeless stories that inspire, guide and support educators. We present new ideas, or examine a familiar issue through a new lens. And sometimes, we simply offer succor.

Succor? Oh, yes. After all, who needs positive reinforcement more than educators? Our schools, we're told, are terrible because of bad teachers. Even "good" teachers can't be trusted, it seems, so some parents demand to opt children out of programs designed to promote respect for diversity.

We saw that this fall when the American Family Association urged parents to boycott National Mix it Up at Lunch Day rather than have their children sit with someone too different.

This column is usually written when the final proofs are in hand and I can reflect on what lies between the covers. For this issue, that means I'm writing on December 16, just two days after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. Like so many others, I want to say something that matters, even as I know words are inadequate.

On the Friday the news broke, we quickly posted a blog with advice for teachers heading back to school on Monday. Sadly, we had that advice ready. In the wake of last summer's shootings at the movie theater in

Aurora, Colo., and at the Sikh Temple in Oak Creek, Wis., we had decided to write a magazine article exploring ways teachers could help students cope in the aftermath of violence. The full article will appear in our next issue.*

We knew that, sooner or later, another national tragedy would provoke classroom questions. And we also knew that too many of our students face deadly violence in their neighborhoods. The violence rarely happens in school, but wherever it happens, children are affected.

Whether the violence is local or brought to children via the media, teachers, counselors and principals stand alongside parents as the trusted adults who help children navigate the terrible news.

This time, the violence happened in school, a place where each of you work every day. Most of the victims were children, like those you teach. Others were educators who died protecting their students.

Together with educators across the nation, Teaching Tolerance supports

safe schools. Usually we mean that students should be safe from bullying, from bias and from negative messages that limit their opportunities to learn and grow; we trust that schools will not be places where life itself is in danger. It's heartbreaking to realize that sometimes they are.

We stand with you. Educators know they don't simply teach the basics—they provide the essential nurturing and support that children need to thrive. Sometimes, though, teachers need that too.

This weekend, the nation learned how much educators care about children: we learned that a principal and counselor would tackle a gunman, that a first grade teacher would hide her students and meet the gunman alone, and that others kept their charges safe and calm. Let's hope one good lesson came from this: that teachers care about our kids.

—Maureen Costello

CORRECTION

In the Fall 2012 issue's "Once Upon a Time in America," May 11, 1963, was mistakenly listed as the date on which Vivian Malone and James Hood entered the University of Alabama. In actuality, the date was June 11, 1963.

*Update your info now at tolerance.org/subscribe to get our first all-digital issue on your tablet in May!

TEACHING TOLERANCE COMMUNITY



- I foster DIVERSITY in my classroom.
- I create an INCLUSIVE SPACE for my students.
- I teach about SOCIAL JUSTICE.
- I believe in EQUITY.

Sound like you?

Want to meet other educators who feel the same way?

Join the Teaching Tolerance community for thought-provoking news, conversation and support from educators who care about diversity, equal opportunity and respect for differences in schools.

**FREE
TO TEACHERS**



TEACHING TOLERANCE MAGAZINE

Read about current social justice issues, see which anti-bias lessons are working best for your peers and get the scoop on books fresh from the publisher.



FACEBOOK

Add your voice to the conversation—share ideas, comment on breaking news and let us know what you're doing to teach tolerance in your school.



NEWSLETTER

Stay up-to-date on anti-bias education. Sign up and we'll email you weekly updates on resources, events and news.



BLOG

Read and discuss other educators' real-world experiences.

FIRST BELL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 7 ASK TEACHING TOLERANCE 9
FREE STUFF 10 BEST OF THE BLOG 10 & 12 WHY I TEACH 11
DOWN THE HALL 13 LESSONS LEARNED 14



Reader Exchange

“Yoga in Schools” got the online community talking.

I think all of my students ... would benefit from a little breathing and stretching. I can only imagine what a positive effect it would have on my anxious students, my hyperactive kids (who no longer have any sort of recess at all), or the older students who are so busy that they hardly have the time to pause and breathe.

—SUBMITTED BY ERIN M.

It seems to me that since yoga is a branch of the Hindu religion that it is a violation of separation of church and state to teach yoga techniques in the classroom.

—SUBMITTED BY CHARLIE J. RAY

Readers told us they planned on reading “Confronting White Privilege” first when they received the last issue, and “Yoga in Schools” sparked interest from teachers who wanted more specifics about classroom relaxation techniques.

INVISIBLE DISABILITIES

My son has Asperger’s and was horrendously bullied at school for many years. After one particularly heinous day he commented to me that, “They would never treat Sarah [not her real name] the way they treat me, because her disabilities are visible and mine are invisible.” I’m pleased to see Teaching Tolerance address this issue, as most of the recent focus on bullying has been solely on LGBT students. I empathize deeply with their

challenges, yet also found myself wishing someone would talk about our kids with “invisible disabilities.”

CAROLE
VIA FACEBOOK

TIMELY AND RELEVANT

Our suburban district has been slammed with the highest foreclosure rates in our county and the numbers of our homeless children have tripled. “Struggling in Suburbia” would make a difference to our staff as they are

becoming aware of the nouveau poor amongst us.

ERIN LAVERDIERE
Sumner, Wash.

WOMEN NOT WELL REPRESENTED

I was struck by the Title IX article talking about supporting women and then by the lack of women in your civil rights article. One woman? Where was Ella Baker or Diane Nash? Or any number of other women?

MARY ANNE JOYCE
Portland, Ore.



TITLE IX GETS GOOD CLASSROOM USE

Teachers are now charged with the task of using more “informational texts” in our classes to satisfy the requirements of the new national Common Core State Standards. I am planning to use “Title IX Turning 40.”

DAN DIERCKS
Hagerstown, Ind.

CHILDREN’S MARCH SETS GREAT EXAMPLE

Thank you for producing such an interesting and timely material packet. It is good to see children doing good and courageous things to make a difference in our world.

JERRILYN S. YOUNG
Abita Springs, La.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS LACKING

I recommend Ms. Swalwell [author of “Confronting

White Privilege”] and your readers investigate at a much deeper level the educational settings in which “bursting the bubble” of white privilege has occurred or is occurring.

Within the current social-cultural-political-class-gender-religious ... divisions ... it is necessary to go beyond the hopeful to the effective.

GEORGE HESS
Woodstock, Ga.

SPEAK UP AT SCHOOL OFFERS VALIDATION

Speak Up validated my actions, but it also validated my fear and sadness that there is so much more to be done on disability-bias education.

JANIS SOMMERS
Harwich, Mass.

FUTURE TEACHERS NEED RESOURCES

Thank you so much for continuing to make resources like *Speak Up at School* and *Responding to Hate and Bias at School* available ... impressing

upon the next generation of teachers [that] the important work of social justice is a challenging task but so essential.

PATY STINGER-BARNES
Knoxville, Tenn.

SPEAK UP AT SCHOOL HAS GREAT LESSONS

I just downloaded *Speak Up at School* and *Responding to Hate and Bias at School*. I find these lessons particularly appropriate in that I teach a class on social justice to eighth-graders. I am continually impressed with the quality of educational materials produced by Teaching Tolerance and the Southern Poverty Law Center. Thank you for your good work.

MIKE MICHALIK
St. Paul, Minn.



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

Have an opinion about something you see in *Teaching Tolerance* magazine or on our website? Email us at editor@tolerance.org. Please put “Letters to the Editor” in the subject line. Or mail us a letter to 400 Washington Ave., Montgomery, AL 36104.

Katrina Marie Loera

You folks have changed my life. Thank you for your resources and for what you do to teach all of us what it means to be tolerant.

Miki Clark

I use the Teaching Tolerance movies, magazine articles, etc. throughout my 10th-grade curriculum. Kids don’t get out of my room without learning something about tolerance: race, sex, religion.

Georgina C. Perez Nice

I used Teaching Tolerance, Bill Bigelow and Howard Zinn for a social justice summer camp (provided for by a grant). Thanks for all of the GREAT work you guys do for teachers and our students.

Pat Finn

A great program to teach tolerance for all, and to eliminate bullying in our schools.



Joan May Cordova @ForCommunities @Tolerance_org Inspired by re-viewing your #film “The Children’s [March]” @#nonviolence training by Kazu @globe808ppwn.org.

DID YOU KNOW?

95% of Americans consider music part of a well-rounded education. —GALLUP POLL

Ask Teaching Tolerance



are different, they will have a competitive edge as adults.

Do you have any suggestions for responding to a black student who says she's performed poorly on tests or has been punished for back talking, swearing and lying because her white teachers are racist?

Think about being ready for a conversation instead of having a ready response. In your best “warm defender” mode, probe her thinking. Ask about her experiences and how they might lead her to these conclusions. Above all, take her seriously.

Next, consult with specialists in your school to come up with a program of positive academic and behavioral supports to increase her capacity for success. If she has special needs, make sure you work with the individualized education program (IEP) team to understand how you can support this child's growth.

Finally, take a deep breath and reflect on whether what she says might have a grain of truth in it. In many schools, children of color are disproportionately disciplined for attitudinal behavior such as back talking. Think of her sass and swearing as important clues to a puzzle that only you, the professional educator, can unlock.

ASK TEACHING TOLERANCE!

Need the kind of advice and expertise that only Teaching Tolerance can provide?

Email us at editor@tolerance.org with “Ask TT” in the subject line.

Q How do you attract more teachers of color to a school that has students of color but an all-white faculty?

With difficulty. The teaching force is projected to become less diverse, so you're wise to think about a plan to ensure your students of color have role models and all your students interact with a diverse faculty. Research shows that students of color see measurable gains in academic achievement when they have a teacher of color.

You can't hire people who don't know about the position. Be sure to send the job announcement to places where people of color are well represented. These might include HBCUs (historically black colleges and universities), a local chapter of the NAACP, the Black Student Union at your local teacher's college and community churches.

And don't forget the website of the National Alliance of Black School Educators, where you can post your job and browse resumes.

No one wants to work where he or she feels isolated, so do some homework to find out how to make your school a welcoming environment for new teachers. Involve racially diverse parents and community groups in making your school attractive to applicants.

Finally, invest in the future by providing experiences for your students that allow them to see teaching as a possible career. These might include peer-tutoring programs, future teacher clubs, “each one teach one” classroom strategies and cooperative learning.

How do you get parents in a homogenous community to understand the importance of diversity for their children?

Give them the facts. Show them how their children can benefit from going to schools with diverse student populations. Research shows that attending a school that is integrated—both racially and economically—increases academic achievement, graduation rates and college attendance for all students, including those who are white and middle class.

More than that, diverse schools prepare students for college and careers where they will interact with people from different racial, ethnic, religious and economic backgrounds. If they learn alongside others who

BLOG 8.06.12//INCLUSIVITY

We Honor Sikhs by Learning About Them

We know little about the motives of the gunman who opened fire yesterday [Aug. 5, 2012] in a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. Many of us will monitor the news during the day, hoping to learn more about what the shooter thought he was doing, sure to hear more about the heroism and horror inside the building.

But it's Monday, one of the first days of school for students throughout the South, where school starts early. In those classrooms, teachers need to know how to talk about the shooting now, this morning.

Teaching Tolerance suggests starting with educating students about the Sikhs ...



... and readers replied: "We need to learn about people who are different as early as possible and to teach that difference is what makes us unique, not something to fear."

"Children should learn respect for all religious beliefs. We empower the next generation when we teach them to value all and not just their beliefs and values."

GET THE FULL DISCUSSION HERE

tolerance.org/blog/we-honor-sikhs-learning-about-them



HAVE YOU SEEN OUR BLOG LATELY?

Check out some of the most talked-about blog posts. Go to tolerance.org and search for these headlines.



Don't Let Malala Yousafzai's Voice Be Silenced



Seeing Through the Privileged Haze



A Sheet Protector Taught Me to Hear



After Election Day

FREE STUFF!

These Web resources offer diversity-rich information and materials for teachers.

Project Civis offers four middle school U.S. history units—organized around concepts of conflict and democratic citizenship—designed to engage promising yet underachieving or at-risk students in thoughtful discussions and guided inquiry into the past.

projectcivis.wmwikis.net

PBS Teachers offers a wealth of resources for teachers at all grade levels on diverse subjects. Classroom activities include lesson plans, extension ideas, multimedia resources and glossaries. The site also provides professional development materials.

pbs.org/teachers

ESL Monkey supplies ESL teachers with practical teaching materials like free lesson plans, books and interactive tools. The founders created the site "to make ESL a much more practical and accessible subject for teachers, schools and students worldwide." They succeeded.

eslmonkeys.com

Active Voice presents video modules, Web content, film discussion guides and educational toolkits to transform concerned citizens into active ones. A diverse portfolio of story-based campaigns focuses on issues such as immigration, criminal justice, healthcare and sustainability.

activevoice.net

DARREN HAUCK/GETTY IMAGES (SIKH WOMEN); JEFFREY PHELPS/AP IMAGES (SIKH COUPLE)

Why I Teach



Craven is a middle school English teacher in Louisiana.

Letting the Inspiration Flow

TOWARD THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR, OUR STUDENTS HOSTED A SPOKEN word event. A couple of staff members performed, but the main show was the kids. Most of them had never performed poetry before. Many of them were wary of getting up to share schoolwork with their classmates. During the noncompetitive slam, confident and shy students alike shared their observations, feelings, pleas and confessions.

The only white boy in the 8th grade shared an emotional ode-slash-critique about a friend who had dropped out of school. A girl who identifies as queer performed a poem about love; her main point that everyone deserves to receive it, no matter her individual circumstances. Students performed pieces about self-doubt, stereotypes, uniqueness and overcoming poverty.

After the event, students praised each other with a maturity they don't always demonstrate. It reminded me that our job is to give students the space and the tools they need to be their best selves. When we provide them with a way to share their truths, they will.

The energy I felt after that event reminds me why I teach. Students and teachers can have a symbiotic relationship. We can inspire each other.

My motive to teach came a little bit from each of these:

Indignation,
Inspiration,
Frustration with all those too exhausted,
resigned or uninterested
To actively pursue
Justice.

I chose teaching because where else but in schools do you encounter so many growing minds and hearts?

I teach because, like Frederick Douglass said, "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."

Because I can't help but notice an inverse correlation between levels of education and levels of incarceration.

On the other hand, many other jobs, which require a diploma certifying a certain graduation, seem to me utterly unappealing, Small-minded centers of stagnation.

I teach because too many adolescents are still
Unable
To read.

Because I feel it is the duty of a nation to give children what they need.

I teach because it was only 50 or so years ago that schools were legally segregated, And today a growing number of schools just so happen to be.

And it "just so happens" that students of color struggle more than white students in our schools, and standardized tests—

Evidence strongly suggests—
Are biased
Against them.



SHARE YOUR STORY What motivates you to get up each morning and serve students in our nation's schools? We want to hear from you. Send your submission for the "Why I Teach" column to editor@teachingtolerance.org.

“Our job is to give students the space and the tools they need to be their best selves.”

I teach because it was schoolchildren who mobilized in Alabama and got the attention of the nation.

I want every kid to know about that.

I want to instill in them that determination.

That bravery,

That energy ...

Because I believe my children, my students, Can rally that same energy and effect national change.

They will.

I teach because there are ideas that need to be shared

That aren't found in textbooks.

I teach what I know the best I can.

I think children have the right to expect that of us.

I teach because for some kids,

I am one of very few adults who checks in with them

If they don't look like they're doing all right.

I'm someone they can talk to about the chaos in their neighborhood the previous night.

I teach because Gandhi said that if you want something to change, then do it.

I teach because I think youth is a magical state, and I like being nearer to it.

I teach because we all have stories worth telling.

We all deserve the ear of someone who cares.

I teach because teachers helped me build my own story,

And all children

Deserve the tools

To tell theirs.

—Carrie Craven

DID YOU KNOW?

Four in 10 LGBT youth say their communities are unaccepting of LGBT people.

—HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN SURVEY

BLOG 9.27.12//STEREOTYPES

Disney's Skinny Minnie Sends Wrong Message

Yesterday, the Walt Disney Company provoked my consumer response when I saw images of the soon-to-be released versions of Minnie Mouse, Daisy Duck and Goofy characters in my news feed. Disney and Barney's New York companies teamed up on a three-dimensional short film featuring Disney characters as supermodels. It's part of Barney's advertising campaign for the holiday season. The launch of the film, where "runway-ready" Minnie Mouse fantasizes

about attending Paris Fashion Week, is slated for Nov. 14.

I'm disappointed that Barney's marketers altered the 84-year-old character to fit to current high fashion instead of tailoring fashion to work with the icon.

And while we won't soon be seeing skinny Minnie dolls, this is not the image we want glorified for our children, nor one I want my daughter to emulate.



... and readers replied:

“External influences change self-images ... this can be detrimental to the emotional and physical health of children ... such an iconic and influential institution could rise above anorexic body imagery to endorse a healthier lifestyle.”

“I was skinny as a young girl and people accused me of being anorexic and/or bulimic. People frequently made comments like, ‘You’re so skinny it makes me sick.’ I felt bullied and considered myself ugly and repulsive.”

GET THE FULL DISCUSSION HERE

tolerance.org/blog/disney-s-skinny-minnie-sends-wrong-message

Any Small Act of Kindness

Sara Kimmel's wisdom isn't the kind you acquire overnight, so it's no surprise to find that she's been working with students and educators for 18 years. By speaking up about bullying and advocating anti-bias resources, she has made her library—and her school—a nurturing, inclusive environment for all.

Why did you become a librarian?

I wanted to work with all the students in my school. I believe my role has changed very little over the years. I see myself as a conduit to information and an advocate for my patrons.

How does your school promote diversity?

Our school has a variety of clubs and organizations for students. Some are traditional sports clubs, but there are also clubs for students who might not feel comfortable in those settings. For example, the students in the Anime Club are not the jocks, or the musicians, or the brains, or the thespians or the ... anything. But they have found a welcoming home in the library.

What's the best way to involve parents in their children's educations?

Our school has made parent-teacher communication a priority. And it's not just about infractions. Each teacher is encouraged (and given time) to reach out to parents regularly about the positive things their children have done.

Not all educators stand at the front of a class. In each issue, we interview an outstanding educator who works outside the classroom.



Sara Kimmel is a librarian at Rush Henrietta Senior High School in New York.

If money were no object ...

I would give every student and teacher his or her own personal tablet preloaded with textbooks and supplemental reading, with access to ebooks and audiobooks. Every classroom would have a white board. That said, even the most powerful tool becomes useless in the hands of someone who has not been taught how to use it, so I would add training.

What is the most important school climate issue?

Respect. To encourage respect, we implemented a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports system and began Link Crew, which pairs high school sophomores with incoming freshman. We have an

anti-bullying club, which boasts about 50 members, and the Gay Straight Alliance also offers opportunities to support and encourage others who face bullying every day.

Your colleague describes you as a “proactive ally” of the Gay Straight Alliance. How so?

It's about the little things—a friendly smile, a wave hello, eye contact. All of these things tell someone you accept them. Also, I am not afraid to speak up about unacceptable behavior or language. Knowing this, students feel safe in the library.

What have you done to create an inclusive environment?

We work very closely with our ESL and



“When we approach people with compassion, understanding and love, they generally respond with the same.”

Life Skills teachers and know that it is extremely important to speak respectfully to their students; many people treat them with condescension or even disdain. Our Life Skills students read stories from *Dear Bully*, edited by Megan Kelley Hall and Carrie Jones, and discussed their experiences. I arranged for one of the authors, A.S. King, to visit the school. It was a wonderful chance for the students to relate their learning to real life.

Was there ever an incident of bias you wished you’d handled differently?

Absolutely! I was once accused of being racist for asking an African-American student to leave for disrupting my class. I was hurt and unfortunately raised my voice in anger. Luckily, over time, the student and I recovered our relationship.

What is the greatest lesson you’ve learned from students?

Children have just as many worries

and problems as any adult; sometimes they have more. We never know what people carry around with them. Any small act of kindness or cruelty can make or break a person’s day. When we approach people with compassion, understanding and love, they generally respond with the same.

What are your favorite books on social justice issues?

One of my all-time favorite books is *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee with its subtle themes of women’s rights and children’s issues. Another book I have recommended many times is *Mississippi Trial, 1955* by Chris Crowe. Told through the eyes of children, these stories show us how things really are and how things ought to be.

DOWN THE HALL

Know an excellent administrator, librarian or counselor we should interview? Email us at editor@tolerance.org and put “Down the Hall” in the subject line.

Lessons Learned

We post lessons online each week. Activities are grade-specific and address a range of issues. Here are five of the most-visited in recent months. Find them at tolerance.org/activities.

Female Identity and Gender Expectations

(Middle and High Schools)
This four-lesson series explores different aspects of gender for today’s girls and women.

Reading Ads with a Social Justice Lens

(Early Grades)
This lesson series opens up important conversations about the relationship between advertisements and social justice. Children will see that they have the power to decide how media will influence them.

Beyond Rosa Parks: Powerful Voices for Civil Rights and Social Justice

(Middle and High Schools)
Students learn how Maya Angelou overcame hardship and discrimination to find her own voice and to influence others to use their voices for positive change.

Introducing Kids to the Idea of Environmental Racism

(Early Grades)
In this lesson, students participate in an activity designed to simulate the inequity of environmental racism.



Teachers of Hispanic origin are one of the fastest growing groups of teachers.

—NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION INFORMATION

ACTIVITY EXCHANGE

HAVE YOU CREATED A CLASSROOM ACTIVITY TIED TO A SOCIAL JUSTICE TOPIC? THINK IT WOULD BE PERFECT FOR TEACHING TOLERANCE? WE'LL PAY \$250 FOR ACTIVITY EXCHANGE ITEMS WE PUBLISH. TO SEE [SUBMISSION GUIDELINES](#), GO TO [TOLERANCE.ORG/ABOUT](#)

GRADE K-2, 3-5

We Are All Unique

For this activity, you will need *People* by Peter Spier. You will also need to have a copy of the similarities and differences worksheet (available for download at [tolerance.org/similarities-worksheet](#)), a pencil, five rectangular cards, string, markers, scissors and a square dowel (approximately 12 inches long) for each student.

Write this quote on the board; *“Know thyself’ is a good saying, but not in all situations. In many it is better to say ‘know others.”* Brainstorm the quote’s meaning as a class. Allow 10 minutes maximum for discussion.

After reading the entire book together, revisit the quote. Ask students why they think the author included it and what it means in the context of the story.

Next, follow these

instructions:

Pair up the students carefully, trying to keep friends separate.

Distribute the similarities and differences worksheet and a pencil to each student.

Ask students to write observed physical traits on the worksheet without speaking.

Then ask partners to share non-observable qualities such as likes, hobbies and special abilities. Both students should be filling in the worksheet during the questioning/discussion period.

Next, students should narrow each category to one characteristic.

Distribute the rest of the materials, and ask students to write and illustrate each characteristic on an individual card.

Students should write

their partners’ names on their dowels.

Ask students to create mobiles by attaching the cards to their sticks with string.

Exhibit mobiles in the classroom, so students can discover details about each other throughout the year.

This activity helps to show students that all

our differences are precisely what make us similar. During the process—and once the mobiles are exhibited—students seem to discover that they have many things in common with others whom they had not considered as possible friends.

Raquel C. Cuperman
COLEGIO LOS NOGALES
BOGOTA, COLOMBIA



For activities that help students understand their multicultural selves and the cultural norms that shape the way we see and interact with the world, visit [tolerance.org/activity/shaping-our-culturally-responsive-selves](#).

ACTIVITY EXCHANGE



GRADES 3-5

The Chain That Connects Us

After participating in this activity, students will be able to identify ways they are similar to and different from peers and understand why diversity is positive.

Give each student a copy of the chain link template worksheet (available for download at tolerance.org/chain-link-template).

Tell students that you

will be doing an activity in which they will learn more about similarities and differences. Explore with students why it is positive that we are alike in some ways and different in others. School and life would be boring if we were all exactly the same—we wouldn't be able to tell each other apart.

To begin the activity, give each student

a worksheet, scissors and glue. Each student should talk to six different classmates, determining two positive facts about each—one they share and one they differ on. Students will record these facts on their chain link worksheets. Remind students that they may have to ask each other multiple questions before they are able to find a similarity and a difference. For example: What is your favorite color? Where were you born? What subjects do you like best?

When students have completed all six chain links on the worksheet, have them cut each link along the lines and then glue the ends together, interlocking links to make a chain. After they finish, connect the chains together to create one large chain. Display it in your classroom as a reminder to students of how both our similarities and our differences connect us.

Emily Tweten
PENNOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BRIGHTON, COLO.

Check out another fun activity in which students learn more about each other and celebrate classroom diversity at tolerance.org/activity/identity-posters.

GRADES 3-5

Fruit Salad

This lesson will generate student interest by asking children how they eat a meal. Try these questions to get started: What do you eat first? What do you save for last?

After some discussion, pass out pictures of a fruit salad. Alternatively, bring an actual large fruit salad—it makes a big impression and can be shared after the lesson. Explain that people approach things on their plates differently depending on what they like and don't like, and help students to think about how personality impacts choices.

Ask the students how they would eat the salad. During the discussion, echo statements that help children respect the various approaches. Write comments on the board. Then show a

second picture of a bowl of fruit with a large, wrinkled, brown unfamiliar food item in the middle.

This can be a dried fig, or another fruit unfamiliar to most of the children in the class—but it is important that it not look particularly appetizing to everyone.

Ask the children how they would approach the fruit salad *now*. I find it more powerful to let the children's remarks be heard by one another than to comment myself. Steer children toward understanding that it might not be fair to push the strange item away, but instead, to try it before deciding.

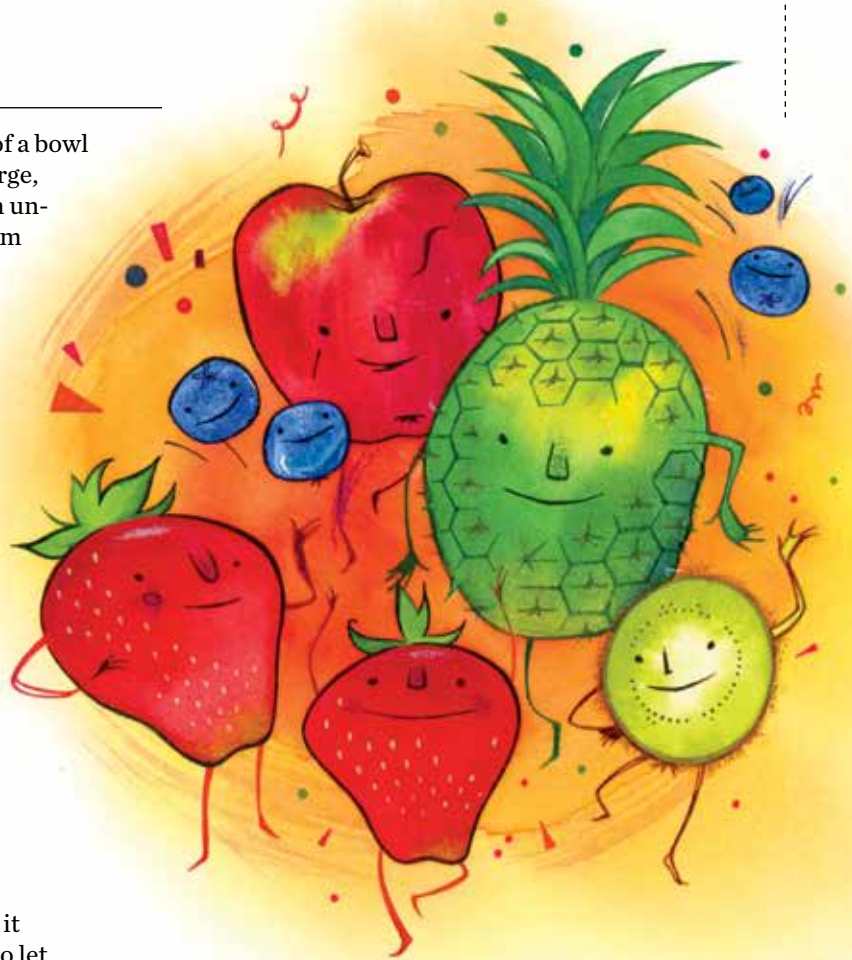
You might hear:
"I would not eat it because of that horrible fruit in the middle."

"I wouldn't eat it at all because the fig has touched it."

To conclude the les-

son, the fruit salad can be eaten—and the new fruit sampled. I ask the children how a community is like the salad bowl. With time, I invite children to share other dishes that could be used as a metaphor for the diverse populations of the United States.

Julie Alice Huson
SAN RAFAEL CITY SCHOOLS
SAN RAFAEL, CALIF.



To go from salad bowl to community to family, visit tolerance.org/activity/shape-home.

ACTIVITY EXCHANGE

GRADES K-2, 3-5

Six Secrets of Friendship

In this classroom activity, students use sight and touch to learn how powerfully words can affect relationships. Students participate verbally (through discussion) and physically (through volunteering and creation of a Six Secrets of Friendship Bag). In the end, each student will have a concrete and tangible reminder of the activity.

Getting Started: Place piles of the following six items assembly-line style in the classroom. Be sure to provide enough for every student to receive one of each item (e.g., if you have 25 students, you will need 25 of each item).

Once the assembly line is set up, ask for one student volunteer to stand next to each pile of items. Ask the first volunteer, “What do you think your item has to do with friendship?” First give the six volunteers a chance to share their thoughts

about the item, and then open the discussion to the whole class.

After several students have had the opportunity to share, move on to the next item on the assembly line, and repeat the procedure. Continue the discussion in the same fashion for each of the six items.

1. Popsicle stick

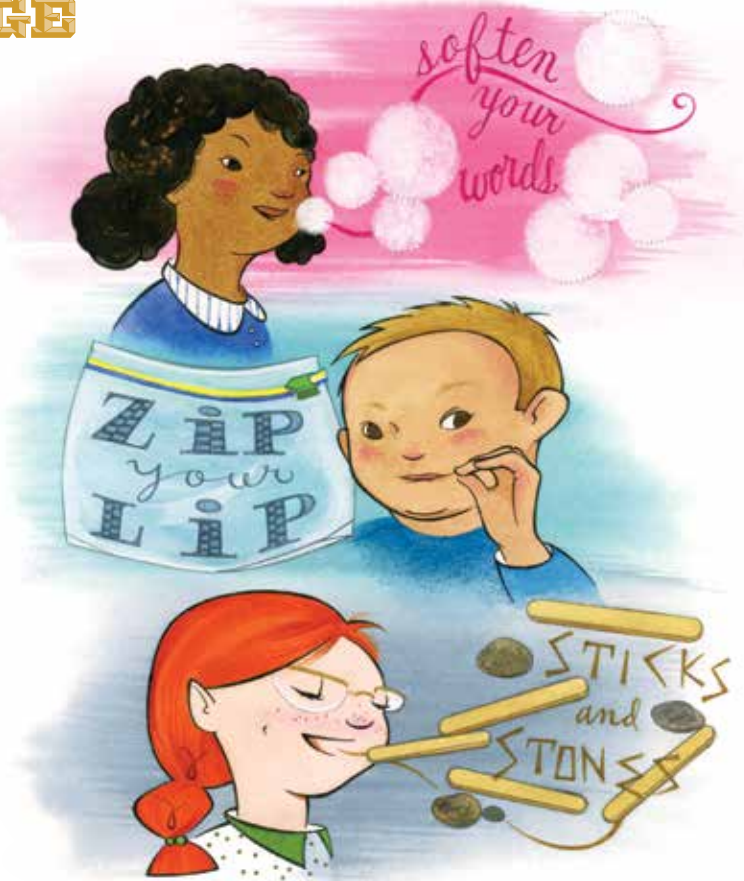
Represents “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.” Discuss this saying with students to help them realize words can indeed be “invisible weapons” that hurt others.

2. Blank mailing label

Represents reputations and how people can be “labeled” based on innate characteristics.

3. Cotton ball

Represents softening words to avoid hurting feelings. Students may share examples such as: I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to say that to you. I’m having a bad day and didn’t mean to take it out on you.



4. Inspirational quotes

Represent positivity and inspire kids to feel good about themselves. Some examples of kid-friendly quotes to use are: “Say what you mean, mean what you say, but don’t say it mean.” or “You are always in control of your choices; words are only words unless you react to them.”

5. Chocolate candy

Represents how sharing shows friendship and respect and is an act of kindness. Encourage discussion about the impact on friendship if individuals share the treat.

6. Resealable plastic bag

Represents the choice

of “zipping your lips” when you have nothing nice to say to someone.

Finally, have students create individual Six Secrets of Friendship Bags by placing one of each item into a resealable plastic bag. Encourage students to keep their Six Secrets of Friendship Bags at school as a visual reminder to use kind words and actions with others.

Students will want to eat or share their chocolate candy. Tell them to enjoy it—they earned it!

Help students continue to build healthy relationships by learning assertion and refutation skills at tolerance.org/activity/assertion-jar.

Marilyn Vargo
MYERS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
TAYLOR, MICH.

STOP! Boxing Bears? What's the Meaning?

In this lesson, students will review and reinforce inference skills while learning about ethnocentrism.

You will need to gather images of signs before starting this activity. Start online, but you may also want to take pictures of local street signs in your area or pictures of foreign signs during travels.

Start with a familiar American street sign.

Students may make comments like “That’s easy. I know what that means.” However, the absence of words on the sign requires students to decipher the message based on color, pictorial clues and past experiences.

Discuss the sign’s color, how its images are used and locations where students have seen the sign previously. Mov-

ing on to a second sign, you could ask students to contrast the font and color. Continue with one or two more signs found in your community.

Next, move on to unfamiliar signs. I have an image of a sign from Japan that cautions viewers not to engage the wildlife. The sign has a man who looks like he’s boxing a bear with a large “X” over the man and bear. The

students get quite a chuckle over this unfamiliar sign.

I allow students to discuss what is

prompting their giggles, pointing out they didn’t laugh at the school crossing sign, even though both have a safety message. Be prepared to address derogatory remarks, such as, “That’s a dumb sign, who’s going to punch a bear? If I see a bear, I’m going to run.” The bias favoring one’s own culture should be addressed as students voice their explanations for laughing. Remind them to use their inference skills, and they should come up with reasonable explanations of the sign’s meaning.

Afterwards, I give this definition of ethnocentrism: the tendency to evaluate the values, beliefs and behaviors of your own culture as being more positive, logical or natural than those of other cultures. We then discuss the consequences of ethnocentrism. I also use this opportunity to stress the patience and tolerance that should be afforded to those who are unfamiliar with the local culture.

Mollie Surguine
ON TRACK TUTORING
AND ACADEMY
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ.



Find various street signs to get you started at tolerance.org/street-signs.

ACTIVITY EXCHANGE

GRADES 6-12

Are those who produce Happy Meals really that happy?

To begin exploring the human cost of food, my eighth graders read excerpts from *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (Young Readers Edition)

by Michael Pollan and *Chew on This: Everything You Don't Want to Know About Fast Food* by Eric Schlosser and Charles Wilson. Both of these

works have eye-opening chapters dealing with the conditions of workers who process our food.

To give my students a historical perspective on agricultural work, we examine several documentaries.

Edward R. Murrow's 1960 *Harvest of Shame* (available on the YouTube CBS Channel) deals with the plight of agricultural workers on the east coast. Teaching Tolerance's *Viva La Causa* allows students to demonstrate that farm workers have the power to organize and create positive change.

Discussions are often initiated by students: What do we do as consumers to enable these poor

working conditions? What role does the government play in maintaining and/or improving these working conditions?

As a culminating activity, my students formulate a food consumers' bill of rights. This is a chance for the students to synthesize what they have learned while encouraging people to become socially conscious consumers.

Most students' bills of rights highlight the poor working conditions of food workers and encourage students' peers and families to purchase food from farms or companies that promote fair labor practices, but some students choose to focus on other important issues concerning our food consumption, such as animal rights or the nutritional impact of poor-quality foods.

Joe Golossi
ELYSIAN CHARTER SCHOOL
HOBOKEN, N.J.

The *Viva La Causa* DVD and teaching kits are available to educators, free of charge, at tolerance.org/viva.





PERSPECTIVES *for a DIVERSE* AMERICA

Coming this fall—a Teaching Tolerance curriculum makes rigor relevant. BY DARLENE KOENIG

LAUREN GALLANT IS COMMITTED TO MAKING SOCIAL JUSTICE issues part of her U.S. history teaching. An avid user of Teaching Tolerance materials, she’s always in search of tools “that help illuminate the subject matter and the human condition.” But the Simi Valley High School, Calif., teacher has a typical challenge: There is little time for “extras” while working to meet state and district goals. And she’s currently in the middle of training on the Common Core State Standards. Adopted by 45 of the 50 states, the standards are to be formally implemented by 2015.

Teaching Tolerance is stepping up to meet that challenge. Next fall, it will launch *Perspectives for a Diverse America*—a literacy-based, K-12 anti-bias curriculum that pairs the relevance of multicultural content with the rigor of the Common Core standards.

The free, web-based curriculum will include the following components:

Anti-bias standards—the first of their kind—that are grouped into the perspectives of identity, diversity, justice and action.

An anthology of central texts—non-fiction essays and speeches, literature, songs, video clips and maps—that will help students consider and challenge multiple points of view.

An integrated learning plan that

offers flexible components for teaching the texts. Teachers will be able to choose and download options for vocabulary development, reading comprehension, discussion, persuasive writing and social action. These parts of the learning plan align to the Common Core anchor standards of language, reading, writing, speaking and listening.

The Anti-Bias Standards: An ‘Explicit Blueprint’

Teaching Tolerance’s anti-bias standards are the soul of *Perspectives*. Emily Chiariello, who has headed the development of *Perspectives* at Teaching Tolerance, says the Teaching Tolerance team realized early on there were no widely accepted standards, so they began by looking at Louise Derman-Sparks’ four goals of anti-bias education. The goals are included in her 1989 book, *Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children*.

Chiariello says the *Perspectives* development team unpacked Derman-Sparks’ goals into 20 standards in four perspectives: identity, diversity, justice and action. The resulting standards are being used to select texts for the curriculum. She says they also helped match a “culturally responsive pedagogy with the rigor of the Common Core.”



“An invaluable resource for teachers committed to keeping equity and social justice at the forefront of the curriculum”

— Amy Vatne Bintliff

“The fact that *Perspectives* is literacy-based and makes use of diverse texts is important,” says Dr. Jennifer Trujillo, an associate professor and teacher education coordinator for Linguistically Diverse Education at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colo. “But it is the four unique anti-bias perspectives ... that make it distinct.”

“Based on my experiences ... this will be the first curriculum of its kind to offer an explicit blueprint designed to move students into the position of advocate,” says Trujillo, who is also an advisory board member for Teaching Tolerance. “This will have a great impact on learner success.”

A ‘Gold Mine’ of Rich Text

If the anti-bias standards are the soul of *Perspectives*, the central text anthology is its heart. The framework’s central texts alone “are a gold mine,” says Dr. Alfred Tatum, author of *Teaching*

Reading to Black Adolescent Males: Closing the Achievement Gap. “I am excited to gain access” to them.

The anti-bias texts will reflect the Common Core’s approach to complexity, range and quality. And they will represent both literary and informational text types. Visual and multimedia texts will also be included in the online anthology, giving students opportunities to locate information among photographs, political cartoons and recorded interviews.

Chiariello says researchers are scouring available resources for texts that highlight and foster the exploration of identity, authentic accounts of real-life experiences, intergroup understanding, historical empathy, the awareness of prejudice and injustice, individual and collective struggles against injustice and—finally—action against injustice.

With the Common Core’s focus

on literacy across curriculum areas, “everybody is a reading teacher,” says Chiariello, who emphasizes that the texts will reflect a balance of issues and voices. The topics will go beyond the more common issues of race and ethnicity to include wealth and poverty, disabilities, religious discrimination and immigration.

“I’m always accumulating new books about diversity issues to read to my first-graders,” says Chicago teacher Joel Blecha. “I am particularly drawn to the fact that the texts in *Perspectives* encompass themes covering not only race and ethnicity—there are countless books available on these topics—but less-covered, equally important themes like gender, sexual orientation and class.”

Amy Vatne Bintliff, author of *Re-engaging Disconnected Youth: Transformative Learning Through Restorative and Social Justice Education*,



PERSPECTIVES for a DIVERSE AMERICA

A K-12 LITERACY-BASED
ANTI-BIAS CURRICULUM

says the anthology “allows teachers to easily access a variety of complex texts in one central location—texts filled with opportunities for rich discussion around social justice themes ... it’s an amazing collection of powerful texts.”

Building a Modular Learning Plan

Teachers will have the opportunity to dig right into *Perspectives*’ always-accessible anthology, and they will have their own control over teaching the texts.

The *Perspectives* integrated learning plan will include five phases: Word Work (vocabulary); Close and Critical Reading (reading comprehension); Community Inquiry (discussion); Write to the Source (persuasive writing); and Do Something (social action).

Thom Ronk, senior manager of teaching and learning at Teaching Tolerance, says teachers will choose among 10 or more strategies for accomplishing these phases—essentially building their own lesson plans depending on classroom goals and skill levels. Teachers then will be able to download and print their chosen strategies or move them to another platform.

That means that *Perspectives* will not have conventional or scripted lesson plans. This flexibility will allow

COMING FALL 2013

Sign up for our weekly newsletter at tolerance.org to receive updates about *Perspectives for a Diverse America*.

teachers to match the meaningful text content with effective, curated instructional strategies.

Meredith Liben is with Student Achievement Partners, a nonprofit organization that pulls together educators and researchers to improve student achievement. The group was founded by three of the contributing authors of the Common Core State Standards. She says SAP reviewers did a careful reading of the *Perspectives* curriculum.

“[We] were happy to see that it achieves the key instructional shifts called for by the Common Core State Standards for Literacy,” she says. “The texts are authentic and complex, and the questions and activities focus on the readings and consistently require readers to produce textual evidence for their positions.”

Of course, veteran

users of Teaching Tolerance materials know there are hundreds of supplemental lesson plans already on its website. Those existing plans will still be available, says Ronk. And similar materials will still be produced around topical issues and in partnership with outside organizations.

What all Teaching Tolerance materials will have in common are the new anti-bias standards.

“I’m certain that Teaching Tolerance veterans will be thrilled with this streamlined curriculum and that ‘newbies’ will learn how to implement this framework for teaching tolerance and addressing justice in their schools,” says Trujillo. The curriculum is “fresh and innovative, yet its marriage to the Common Core will allow it to be widely implemented.”

Bintliff agrees that “*Perspectives* will be an invaluable resource for teachers committed to keeping equity and social justice at the forefront of the curriculum.”

But it’s Gallant, the Teaching Tolerance veteran in the classroom, who’s most excited. She can’t wait to get started.

“I love the idea of materials that will help us achieve three goals at once,” she says, “addressing social justice issues and building literacy, while continuing to provide our students with the background” across subject areas. ♦



Toolkit

Sample anti-bias text exemplars.

VISIT >> tolerance.org/perspectives-toolkit



How can I get Teaching Tolerance's educational resources? Just click.

► tolerance.org

**FREE
TO TEACHERS**



LESSON PLANS AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

help you promote respect for differences in your classroom.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

encourage personal reflection and staff learning.



SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS

provide current information on anti-bias education.



SIGN UP ONLINE TODAY!

Access the entire suite of Teaching Tolerance anti-bias education resources.

tolerance.org/signup



No School Like Freedom School

Based on the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools, modern-day programs educate and empower students.

BY LISA ANN WILLIAMSON

“YOU ARE THE HOPE OF THE FUTURE.”

That’s the message Marian Wright Edelman, executive director of the Children’s Defense Fund (CDF), gave more than 1,500 excited college students and recent graduates as they began a week-long training for the CDF’s Freedom Schools. She was preparing them for a daunting task—that of transforming the educational prospects for thousands of students across the country.

Later, one group of trainees, crowded inside the confines of a bright Hula-Hoop, tried to move in tandem toward a pink and orange ball. In this exercise, the ball represents a child who struggles in class and fears that she, like her mother before her, will not finish school.

The trainees traded ideas about how to move closer and reach the “child” despite the encircling Hula-Hoop. In



MATTHEW/THE IMAGEWORKS

SNCC volunteers and local students in Mileston, Miss. in 1964. Above: College students and recent graduates train to become CDF Freedom School instructors at Haley Farm in Clinton, Tenn.

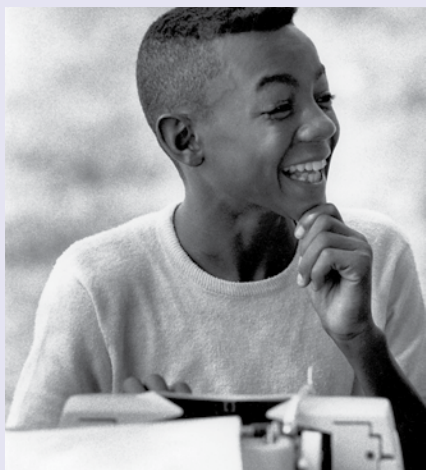
the follow-up discussion, team members expressed frustration about the barriers they had faced. Though the trainees had been afraid of failure, the exercise had forced them to speak up and build on each other’s ideas. More

than anything, they had pulled together as a team.

This and other team-building activities—along with intensive study of reading instruction, language strategy, cultural economics, social justice,



Clockwise: A summer volunteer and students in Hattiesburg; a car hood turned classroom outside the Mileston Community Center; art created by Freedom School students; Freedom School student Eddie Carthan, who became mayor of Tchula, Miss., in 1977.



GEORGE BALLUS/TAKE STOCK/THE IMAGE WORKS

The Original Freedom Schools

The legacy of the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools—that change comes from the bottom up—is timeless.

When the schools were founded, fewer than 6 percent of African Americans could vote, and schools for black children lacked basic resources. Inspired by the Highlander Folk Schools of the labor movement, groups like the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), SNCC and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) teamed up to create activists, organize residents, register voters and form an alternative political party that included African Americans.

Classes taught by student volunteers—including historian and college professor Howard Zinn and activist Stokely Carmichael—were held in churches, open fields and residential backyards and included a mix of black history, civil rights movement philosophy, leadership development, reading and math. Students ranged from preschoolers to adults.

parent engagement and learning barriers—inform trainees’ work with real children in the CDF’s summer academic-enrichment program.

The trainees have become what Ella Baker—a civil rights activist who helped organize the original Mississippi Freedom Schools, coordinate the Freedom Rides and create the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in the 1960s—referred to as servant leaders.

Modeled after the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools, which were designed to change a community by giving residents the tools to develop leaders and exercise their political power, modern Freedom Schools—such as those run by the CDF—emphasize the connection between education and freedom. Their main goal is to replace the cradle-to-prison pipeline with a cradle-to-college track.

Last summer, more than 11,300 students were served through CDF Freedom Schools sponsored by schools, churches and nonprofit organizations at 177 sites in 82 cities across the country.

“What we hope and have seen is that children will form a love of books and a love of ideas in books,” says Jeanne Middleton-Hairston, national director of the CDF Freedom Schools Program. “We want to empower children to understand that they are valuable ... and not proscribed by their circumstances.”

Freedom Schools use techniques—such as call and response, motivational music and an emphasis on social action and family interaction—rooted in African culture, the black church and the civil rights movement. But CDF Freedom Schools are not an “Afrocentric program,” stresses Middleton-Hairston.

Instead, the racial makeup of each Freedom School reflects its community. At some, most students are children of mixed heritage. A growing number of students and servant leaders are Latino. In New Orleans, one Freedom School enrolled primarily Vietnamese



CDF Freedom School trainees listen to and learn about the music of the civil rights movement sung by former SNCC Freedom Singers.

Cheers and chants start the day at CDF Freedom Schools

The Way We Start the Day

This is the way (hey)
 We start the day (hey)
 We got the knowledge (hey)
 To go to college (hey)
 We won't stop there (hey)
 Go anywhere (hey)
 We work and smile (hey)
 'Cause that's our style (hey)
 We love each other (hey)
 Help one another (hey)
 There's nothing to it (hey)
 Just have to do it (hey)
 This is the way (hey)
 We start the day (hey)
 'Cause we don't play (hey)
 Now what you say (hey hey
 hey heeey)

students and embraced that culture. Teacher demographics are the reverse of most public schools. Nearly three-quarters of servant leaders are African-American, and more than one-third are men.

Regardless of demographics, all students benefit from cultural exchange and literature that features children and families of color.

The CDF Freedom Schools curriculum focuses on five content areas—academic enrichment; parent and family involvement; social action and civic engagement; intergenerational leadership; and nutrition and health.

Freedom School students read a selection of books they may not be exposed to during the school year, giving them the chance to connect on a

deeper level with characters and circumstances that “work with the whole child and make a connection between what is read and what is in the minds of children,” said Dr. Carole McCollough, a retired library sciences professor who heads up the book-selection committee for CDF Freedom Schools.

Energetic cheers, chants and songs are also a big part of the CDF Freedom School culture. Students clap hands, tap feet and bob their heads to the beats of songs like the “Hallelujah Chorus” from Handel’s Messiah and the call-and-response chant “Rock the Freedom School.”

Fred Kelly, of Charlotte, N.C., saw a transformation in his son Iman after he attended a CDF Freedom School. Iman developed a new love of learning. “He started talking about reading things, which he never did before,” Kelly says. “He got to choose stories to read, and those stories were often connected to black history or the African-American experience. He felt like he could tell us new things at the dinner table.”

Iman, now 13, attributes his newfound love of reading to the CDF Freedom Schools’ curriculum. He says the books were about young people who

Other Modern Freedom Schools

The CDF Freedom Schools Program is only one of many based on the original Mississippi Freedom Schools.

In the summer of 2005, Kathy Emery helped launch the San Francisco Freedom School, a six-week Saturday adult course featuring civil rights history, presentations by civil rights movement veterans, discussions, film screenings, readings and activities.

Another program, the Chicago Freedom School, helps high school students create change in their communities. This year, 16 students will design projects to build healthy communities as well as fair and just schools.

In Detroit, after students walked out to protest failing schools, they called for a Freedom School. And in Arizona, a ban on ethnic-studies programs in public schools led students and teachers to organize the Paulo Freire Freedom School—a charter that focuses on social justice and environmental sustainability for middle school students in Tucson.

The 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools are a powerful model that warrants duplication nearly 50 years later, says Emery. “Schools are so essential to movement building,” she says. “The goal is to empower people.”

How to Build a Grassroots Movement



The most powerful component of the Montgomery Bus Boycott was the people who identified the injustice, devised a strategy to change it, and developed methods to communicate the plan and use alternative transportation.

It's a perfect example of the type of effective grassroots movement we saw recently as protesters in the Occupy movement sprang up across the country.

"The Occupy movement is the Montgomery Bus Boycott of our day," says Kathy Emery, executive director of the San Francisco Freedom School. She says building an effective movement requires "planning, strategizing and thorough training in the discipline of nonviolent direct resistance."

There is no one way to effect change. What's needed is steady conversation exploring the issues needing change, says Emery. In addition to use of the arts and nonviolent resistance, the following steps help build a movement:

- ➔ Think creatively about solutions to problems.
- ➔ Build relationships one at a time
- ➔ Form networks and coalitions.
- ➔ Study the civil rights movement.
- ➔ Locate the civil rights veterans in your community and learn from them.
- ➔ Take direct action.



RICK HOVIS

BOOKS

What Are Kids Reading at CDF Freedom Schools?

Mr. George Baker by Amy Hest

Those Shoes by Maribeth Boelts

The Journey of Oliver K. Woodman
by Darcy Pattison

The Carpet Boy's Gift by Pegi Deitz Shea

Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper

The Road to Paris by Nikki Grimes

Romiette and Julio by Sharon M. Draper

*The Other Wes Moore:
One Name, Two Fates* by Wes Moore

OCTAVIAN CANTILLI



Will Choice, top, who attended a CDF Freedom School as an adolescent, became a servant leader intern in Sanford, Fla. last summer. Iman Kelly learned to love reading at the CDF Freedom School in Charlotte, N.C.

excel in spite of adversity, and the lessons included activities. "I really like hands-on activities with the reading," Iman said. "I know I need my education. I feel like I improved in reading, and I like participating in discussions now."

Will Choice was 11 years old when he enrolled in a Freedom School in his hometown of Sanford, Fla. He says he struggled with reading and was frequently reprimanded for talking in class. He felt disconnected from traditional school. When he went to a Freedom School for the summer, his reading skills improved. His confidence soared.

Choice, now 20 and a junior at Stetson University, served as a servant-leader intern last summer at a Freedom School. "I

feel like I owe where I am to Freedom Schools," Choice said. "I hope to inspire at least one child to take interest in school."

Many Freedom School graduates feel compelled to become servant leaders when they reach adulthood. They have firsthand knowledge of the power of the program and want to pay it forward.

This intergenerational model of education works. In 2010, a two-year study of CDF Freedom Schools in Charlotte, N.C., and Bennettsville, S.C., found that 65 percent of students' reading test scores improved and 90 percent reported no summer learning loss. A study of Freedom Schools in Kansas found that students improved their reading skills by two grade levels.

Given these results, it's not hard to agree with Wright Edelman's sentiment—the CDF's young servant leaders are indeed changing the future. ♦



Toolkit

Implement best practices from the Freedom School model in your school and classroom.

VISIT» tolerance.org/freedom-schools



SOUND EFFECTS

CHALLENGING LANGUAGE PREJUDICE IN THE CLASSROOM

BY WALT WOLFRAM ILLUSTRATION BY ANNE WILSON

IN A TELLING EXPERIMENT CONDUCTED by Marilyn S. Rosenthal, children were asked to accept a box of crayons and drawing pad from one of two “magic boxes.” The boxes looked identical, but the voices that played from a hidden speaker within each box were different: Steve spoke Standard American English and Kenneth spoke African-American

English. The interviewer played the same message from the different boxes, followed by questions such as “Which box has nicer presents?” and “Which box sounds nicer?”

The responses were revealing:

“I like him [points to Steve] cause he sounds nice. I don’t like him [pointing to Kenneth].”

“I think I want my present from Kenneth, if he doesn’t bite.”

“Cause Steve is good, Kenneth is bad.”

The children in the experiment ranged from ages 3 through 5. Children acquire attitudes about language differences early and these attitudes quickly become entrenched. Linguist Rosina



Some ways of speaking have acquired regional, social and ethnic associations, becoming proxies for attitudes about particular regional and social groups. New York City regional speech is often viewed as aggressive and rude; Southern speech might be seen as backward and “country.”

Voices in television cartoons frequently portray villains as accented speakers of English. Standard English is reserved for superheroes and winsome characters. Even the voices in Disney’s animation reinforce stereotypes—main characters speak in Standard American or British dialects and mean or ignorant animals tend to speak in African-American English or Southern English.

It’s not surprising that young children develop prejudices about language differences that can accompany them through life—unless these stereotypes are challenged.

Lippi-Green concludes in her book, *English with an Accent: Language, Ideology, and Discrimination in the United States*, “Accent discrimination can be found everywhere in our daily lives. In fact, such behavior is so commonly accepted, so widely perceived as appropriate, that it must be seen as the last back door to discrimination. And the door is still wide open.”

While other forms of inequality, prejudice and discrimination have become more widely recognized and exposed in recent decades, language prejudice is often overlooked and, in some cases, even promoted.

The Seeds of Language Prejudice

Children grow up in a world immersed in language attitudes. Adults use words such as “right,” “wrong,” “correct” and “incorrect” to label speech. Language that “falls short” of the sovereignty of Standard English is thrown into a single wastebasket, even when the phrases represent natural regional and socio-ethnic dialect traits. We are socialized

“We all speak dialects, whether we recognize it or not.”

into a simple dichotomy: Language forms are right or wrong.

Most people are shocked when they go to a different region and are told that they speak a dialect, since they take for granted that it is other people who speak dialects. But we all speak dialects, whether we recognize it or not. We may order a *soda*, *pop*, *Coke*, *co-cola*, *tonic* or *soft drink* to drink with our *submarine sandwich*, *sub*, *hoagie*, *grinder*, *torpedo* or *hero*, but we won’t eat unless we make a dialect choice in ordering our sandwich and carbonated drink. Dialects are inevitable and natural, and we all speak them.

Integrating Language Diversity into Education

Even as multicultural education moves forward, the study of language diversity has lagged behind. Educating students about language diversity should be an essential component of language arts, history and social studies—or better yet, all disciplines.

Several curricular programs on language and dialect differences have now been established and incorporated into public education programs with striking results.

A middle school curriculum developed in North Carolina includes a variety of activities ranging from analytical exercises to uncover the patterned nature of dialect differences to engagement with a rich array of audio and video resources featuring different



Toolkit

Raise student awareness about the impact of language prejudice with our short video and activity.

VISIT» tolerance.org/sound-effects

Commonsense Views and Dialect Reality

Most people think that dialects in the United States are dying out because of increasing mobility and the influence of a relatively homogenous media voice. But this is not the case.

Though there is some erosion of once-isolated dialects, some major dialect areas are actually diverging from each other. For example, a recent survey of the dialects in the United States reveals that the dialects of northern cities such as Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland and Buffalo are actually more distinct today than they were 50 years ago.

Studies of socio-ethnic language varieties such as African-American English and Hispanic English show that they are also more robust and distinct than they were in the past. Finally, new regional dialects are emerging in California, Oregon and Washington, as West Coast dialects develop a distinct regional voice that conveys, in part, a newly emerged social and regional identity.

local dialects. In one exercise, students examine what judgments they make about a person on the phone based on her accent or dialect.

Jeffrey Reaser's study—developed in 2005 and updated in 2007—of student reactions to this language curriculum showed that there was a significant change in attitudes toward and knowledge about dialects. Ninety-eight percent of the students reported they learned something that would change the way they thought about dialects.

Students noted that “dialects aren't sloppy versions of Standard English” and that “they follow specific patterns that are logical.” They came to understand “there are tons of stereotypes, which are almost always wrong” and that “dialects represent people's culture and past.” As one student put it, “[Dialects] are special and hold customs of how people live.”

Teachers also reported strong results. One said the examination of dialect differences “has proven to be empowering for my minority students. For many of them, this is the first time they have been told in a school setting that their dialect is valid and not ‘broken.’”

Teacher Leatha Fields-Carey

She observes that “to understand language is not only to know how to speak and write ‘Standard English’ correctly, but also to value the rich tapestry of language in all its forms.”

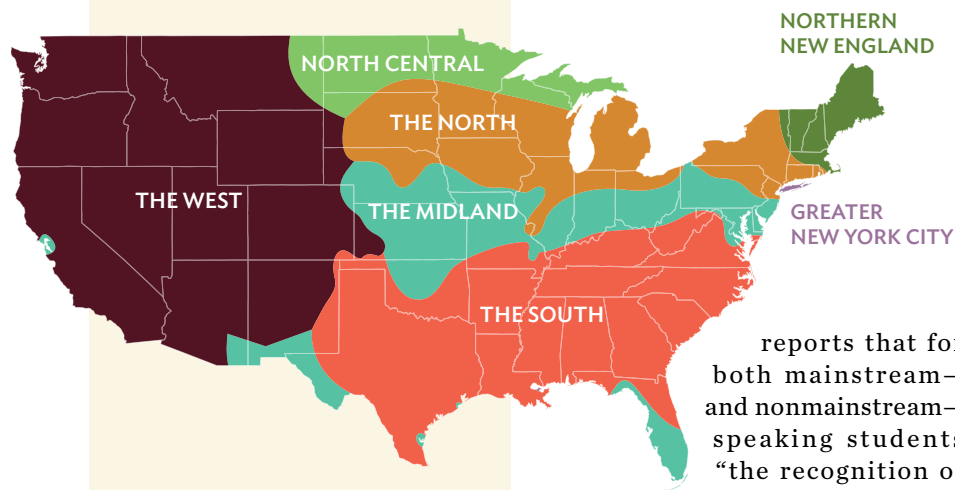
The study of language and dialect differences challenges a set of “common sense” assumptions, stereotypes and prejudices that too often fly under the radar, even in multicultural education. Unless we confront these attitudes, they will continue to negatively impact those who speak dialects other than Standard English—and that's now a majority of the American population.

Three Things Teachers Can Do

1. Expose students regularly to language differences in cultural context. Create opportunities for your students to connect with students from other dialect regions and groups via Skype to collaboratively explore language differences. Have them compare and discuss dialect words and pronunciations from their respective regions.

2. Challenge assumptions about language differences as they occur. Students who negatively comment on the speech of others should be guided to examine the basis of their assumptions. For example, if a student says a particular pronunciation or word choice sounds “weird” or “funny,” initiate a conversation about the nature of language differences, how they develop and what they signify.

3. Integrate the discussion of language variation into the conversation of cultural and regional differences. Language and dialect should be discussed as a natural consequence of other historical and culture differences. Include lessons examining how culture and history have influenced language variation when studying the history of Southern Appalachia, African Americans in the United States or American Indians. ♦



Based on dialect map by Rick Aschmann

For full map, including Alaska and Hawaii, visit aschmann.net/AmEng

reports that for both mainstream—and nonmainstream—speaking students “the recognition of language patterns and governing rules made the students feel for the first time that their varied use of ‘standard’ English did not indicate a lack of intelligence.”



IS HERE!
RTS NOW.

ADING
GRADE LEVEL
SCIENCE
SOCIAL

PELLI
GRADE LEVEL
AND WRITING



(A)

(B)

(C)

Found in Translation

A TEACHING TOLERANCE GUIDE ILLUSTRATION BY LINCOLN AGNEW

FUELED BY TWO DECADES OF HISTORIC IMMIGRATION, AMERICAN DEMOGRAPHICS are changing. Many school districts are often ill prepared to meet the needs of limited English proficient (LEP) students and families.

Teaching Tolerance created best practices for engaging LEP students and families in an effort to help administrators build a supportive learning environment for all students. They provide guidance for forming a comprehensive communication plan that puts LEP parents on equal footing with English-speaking parents. Our tips will help you steer clear of discrimination during student registration and create a leadership checklist to help your staff make sure the school environment is welcoming to English language learners (ELLs) and their families.

In 2011, Durham Public Schools ELL students and their LEP parents contacted the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) seeking legal help. They complained about limited access to interpreters, untranslated school documents and a general climate of exclusion. The SPLC agreed to work on behalf of more than 6,000 students and their families affected by the North Carolina school district’s policies.

Durham Public Schools eventually entered into a voluntary resolution agreement with the United States Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights outlining a plan of action to create a school environment that nurtured every child, regardless of English language ability.

As a project of the SPLC, Teaching Tolerance is disseminating these best practices to districts across the United States. They are intended to help administrators create inclusive school climates.

Communication

Parents depend on basic school communications—report cards, bus schedules, permission slips—to stay involved in their children’s education. When a school fails to provide translation support to LEP families, these lines of communication can break down.

- Develop a written communications plan to ensure timely and effective communication with LEP parents.
- Maintain a list of LEP parents who require languages other than English and make this list available to all staff members.
- Notify LEP parents annually that free translation and interpretation

services are available and explain how to request these services. A multi-language poster by the office explaining the resources available to LEP families can simplify communication.

- Provide free interpretation and translation services to LEP parents at parent-teacher conferences, meetings with the school principal and special education meetings.
- All parent notices (e.g., registration/enrollment forms, emergency notification cards, report cards, bus schedules, field trip permission forms, privacy policies and class schedules) should include appropriate translations.

- Train staff to effectively communicate with LEP parents—when and how to obtain qualified language assistance, use of interpreters when staff receive or make calls to language-minority individuals, and applicable record-keeping procedures.

School Climate

Perhaps your school has had a sudden change in demographics that has led to tension, or maybe ethnic hostility is an old problem. Either way, a strong—and evolving—anti-bullying policy can go a long way towards creating a learning environment that nurtures all of your students.

- Disseminate the schools’ anti-bullying policy—including a section on national-origin-based harassment—to all staff, students, parents and community members at the start of the school year. Don’t forget to print it in multiple languages.
- Administer an annual student survey on school climate—such as Teaching Tolerance’s School Climate Survey on tolerance.org—and use the results of the survey to identify and address issues related to harassment, including national-origin-based harassment. Again, be sure to provide the survey in multiple languages.
- Hold community meetings with interpreters present at least twice each year to provide information regarding registration/enrollment and communication services and to receive input from LEP parents and community members.

GET STARTED

Have translated forms on hand.

- Change of Address or Telephone
- Student NOT Riding Bus
- Reason for Absence
- Request for Conference
- Early Dismissal
- You can download a sample booklet of translated information and common documents at tolerance.org/translated-school-forms

Build a strong relationship with the community.

- Involve families in events such as Teaching Tolerance's Mix It Up at Lunch Day to break down cultural barriers.
- Encourage teachers to make periodic home visits.
- Invite families to share their cultures with students either in the classroom or at a special afterschool event.
- You can download everything you need to host a Mix It Up at Lunch Day event at mixitup.org

Hold an information session for families before registration begins.

- Have interpreters present.
- Explain your registration process in detail.
- Assure parents that the school's only goal is to provide their children with an outstanding education.
- Inform parents of their children's rights with our downloadable trilingual brochure, "Un Futuro Mas Brillante: El derecho de su hijo/a de aprender."
tolerance.org/trilingual-childrens-rights

- Develop cultural sensitivity training for all instructional staff, cafeteria staff, bus drivers, school office staff and school-level administrators.

Student Registration

Even inadvertent discrimination can discourage parents from enrolling their children. Ensure that school publications, policies, practices and procedures are equally inviting to all parents by avoiding these common registration missteps.

- Registration and enrollment forms should not request or require information regarding a student's, parent's or guardian's citizenship or immigration status.
- Registration and enrollment materials should not state or imply that a student or guardian must provide a passport or any other immigration-related document as a form of identification.
- Any request for a student's, parent's or guardian's social security number should clearly state that disclosure is voluntary and explain both why the number has been requested and how it will be used. ♦

RESOURCES

Examining Your School's Climate

Strategies and tools for assessing your school's climate
tolerance.org/activity/examining-your-schools-climate

Teaching Diverse Students School Survey

Assess whether conditions in your school support teaching that addresses the needs of all students in racially and ethnically diverse classrooms.
tolerance.org/tdsi/schools-survey

Enhancing Teachers' Cross-Cultural Communication Skills

Methods for developing teachers' abilities to engage in cross-race interactions with families.
tolerance.org/tdsi/asset/enhancing-teachers-cross-cultural-communication

Inviting Engagement

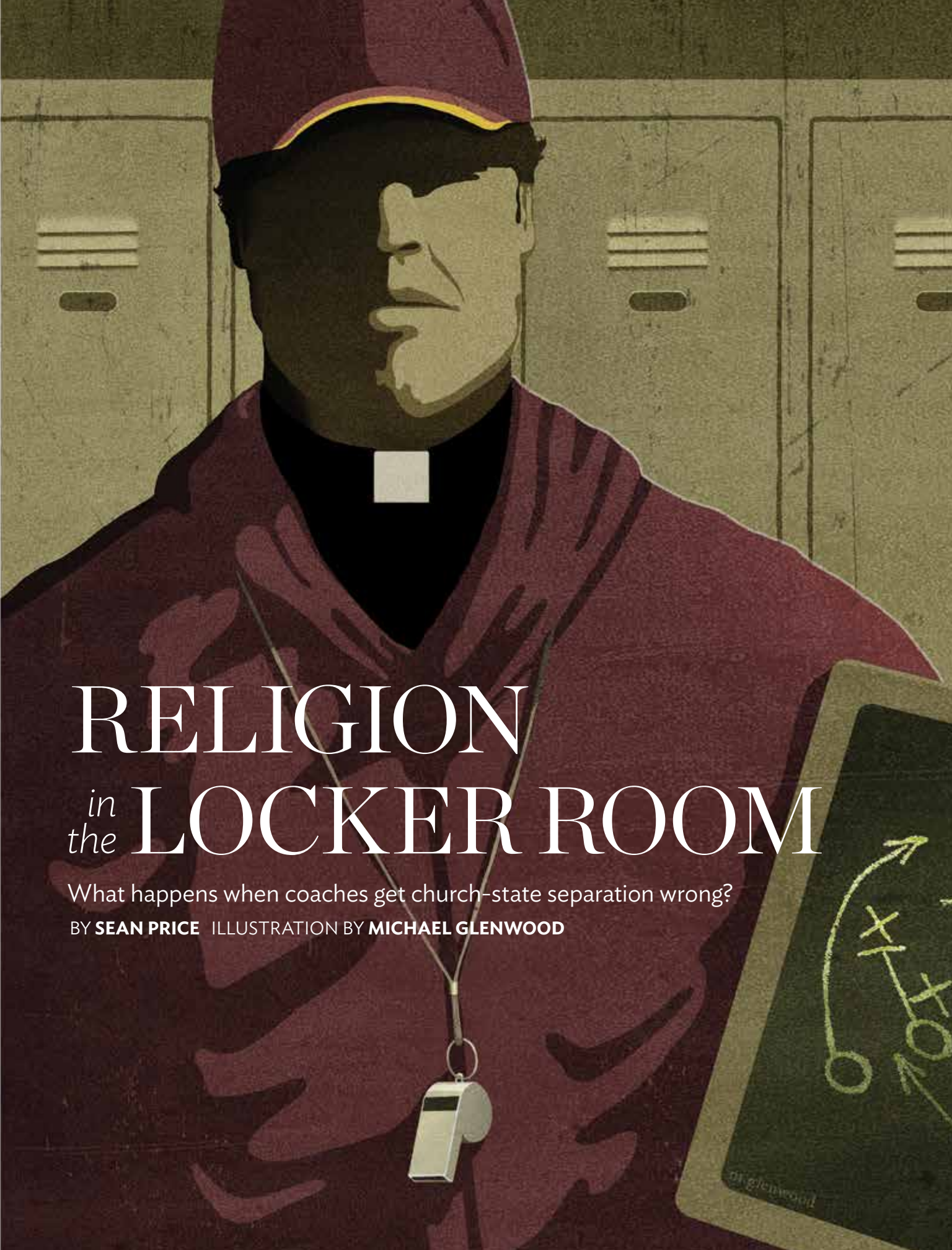
Strategies for better serving diverse parent populations
tolerance.org/activity/inviting-engagement

Translated School Forms

Downloadable example forms in Spanish and English
tolerance.org/translated-school-forms

Diversity Responsive Schools

A paper for school leaders describing characteristics of schools that are likely to be particularly successful in facilitating the learning of racially and ethnically diverse students.
tolerance.org/activity/diversity-responsive-schools



RELIGION *in the* LOCKER ROOM

What happens when coaches get church-state separation wrong?

BY **SEAN PRICE** ILLUSTRATION BY **MICHAEL GLENWOOD**

IN SEPTEMBER 2011, PAUL PHILLIPS stepped out of his football team's field house and into a struggle over the separation of church and state. Like most teams, Paul's practiced after school. But one day he found that the coach had called in a local minister to conduct a weekly half-hour "team chapel" before practice.

"[The minister] would come in and tell some story that at the end would relate to a biblical story or something about God," says 16-year-old Paul (which is not his real name). "The coach would stand off to the side while he [the minister] talked. And then the minister would finish and we'd get up and go practice."

Paul, who does not believe in God, knew that the law would be on his side if he complained. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that public schools may not endorse prayers or religious activities.

Team chapel would surely fit in this category, but Paul worried about what his coach, a deeply committed Christian, might do if he found out about Paul's beliefs. Paul knew that most of his teammates had no problem with the coach inviting a minister to talk about God at school; some would even be angry at anyone who tried to stop it. "At least 95 percent of them are religious," he says.

Religious minorities in public schools face situations like Paul's



Need advice about how to discuss religion at school?

Go to tolerance.org/getting-religion-right

every day, and student athletes face them more often than most. Why? In part because the conservative culture of many athletic programs is slow to accept legal changes—or the increasing religious diversity of the United States. Also, some coaches may feel that religion is a good—if not the only—way to bring out the best qualities in young athletes.

"I think it's fair to say that it's more difficult to convince some of

the coaches," says Charles C. Haynes, director of the Religious Freedom Education Project at the Newseum in Washington, D.C. "It's tough to move from 'we're all good Christian people here' to 'we have to protect the rights of conscience for everybody.'"

Remaining Neutral

In the 1960s, the U.S. Supreme Court protected the right of conscience by issuing a series of landmark cases on religion in schools, starting with *Engel v. Vitale* in 1962. Among other things, the high court prohibited schools from leading prayers

More God Than Ever

Even today, a simple Google search can produce recent headlines from the mainstream media that say something like "Prayer Banned at Graduation" or "School Football Resumes After Prayer Ban."

This is ironic for two reasons. First, prayer has never been banned in public schools—only school-sponsored prayer. Second, the Supreme Court decisions, aided by changes in federal law, have opened the door for students to become more religiously active at school, not less.

According to Charles C. Haynes, by the early 1980s, many schools had become religion-free zones. That is because cautious school officials overreacted to the controversies stirred up by the 1960s-era Supreme Court decisions. Wary of causing more controversy, they tried to keep out all mention of religion. It was not discussed in textbooks, and students were wrongly told to keep their religious beliefs at home.

Such incidents do still occur. In 2011, school officials at a Los Angeles elementary school tried to prevent a fifth-grader from singing the Christian song "We Shine" at its talent show. The principal mistakenly believed that allowing students to select songs with religious themes would violate the separation of church and state. However, when school officials allow students in a talent show to select which songs they wish to perform, they may not prohibit songs with religious content. After a threat of legal action, the school backed down and allowed the song.

Although these kinds of stories make a splash in the press, Haynes says that such incidents are much less common than they used to be. Increased litigation is one reason. Another is that a 1984 law called the Equal Access Act opened the door for student-initiated religious clubs in secondary schools.

"There are kids meeting around the flagpole [to pray] every September in thousands of schools," says Haynes. "There are kids handing out religious tracts in thousands of schools across the country. There are kids praying in the lunchrooms. There are kids bringing scriptures [to school] and reading them at recess. Before the Equal Access Act of 1984, there was no such thing as a religious club in a public school. So this has been a sea change."

or school-sponsored Bible readings, and from giving clergy preference in speaking to students. Essentially, the court required public schools to remain neutral on all religious matters.

Some people misunderstood the intent of these Supreme Court decisions, but in reality, the rulings did nothing to interfere with the personal religious observances of young people. Students remained free to pray alone or in groups, as long as they didn't disrupt school or interfere with the rights of others. In fact, under current law, students may pray during their free time, wear religious symbols, take the Bible or other holy books to school, talk about their faith with classmates and, in secondary schools, form religious groups if the school allows other extra-curricular clubs.

However, many conservative Christians saw the 1960s-era decisions by the Supreme Court as an attack on their faith. "Eighty percent of the American people want Bible readings and prayer in the schools," said the Rev. Billy Graham in 1962. "Why should the majority be so severely penalized by the protests of a handful?"

That view has been reinforced by such groups as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) and Athletes in Action, both of which formed thousands of coach-led clubs—or "huddles," as the FCA calls them—in public schools. In 2009, the FCA was the largest sports ministry in the world; it now reaches 2 million students. Some professional athletes—including New York Jets quarterback Tim Tebow, whose signature celebration pose of kneeling on one knee in prayer became known as "Tebowing"—also contribute to an increasingly religious atmosphere in sports.

Defying the Courts

Given the growing inclusion of religion in sports, it's not surprising that several recent high-profile legal cases involving religion in schools were related to athletics.

Religious Affiliations Shown as percentage of adult U.S. Population.

Evangelical Protestant Churches	26.3%
Catholic	23.9%
Mainline Protestant Churches	18.1%
Unaffiliated	16.1%
Nothing in particular	12.1%
Agnostic	2.4%
Atheist	1.6%
Historically Black Churches	6.9%
Jewish	1.7%
Mormon	1.7%
Other Faiths	1.2%
Unitarians and other liberal faiths	0.7%
New Age	0.4%
Native American Religions	0.3%
Don't know/Refused	0.8%
Jehovah's Witness	0.7%
Buddhist	0.7%
Orthodox	0.6%
Muslim	0.6%
Hindu	0.4%
Other Christian	0.3%
Other World Religions	0.3%

* ± 0.6% MARGIN OF ERROR, BASED ON 35,556 CASES
SOURCE: RELIGIONS.PEWFORUM.ORG/AFFILIATIONS

In the 2000 *Santa Fe Independent School District v. Doe* case, two families—one Mormon, one Catholic—filed suit against their Texas school district for allowing student-led, student-initiated prayer over the loudspeaker at football games. The high court ruled that the school's policy was unconstitutional because loudspeaker prayers clearly were not private speech and effectively drowned out the voices of religious minorities. In 2009, the court also turned down an appeal from a New Jersey high school football coach who wanted to bow his head and kneel during prayers led by his players.

Legally speaking, U.S. public schools should be more religiously neutral than ever. Yet it is easy to find schools that routinely defy the Supreme Court's rulings. Dawn Dupree Kelley is a principal

in Birmingham, Ala., and the wife of a minister. She says that in her experience, just about any school-sponsored athletic event—from a football game to a volleyball banquet—can take on a religious flavor. "You don't dare start off any venture without some sort of prayer," she says.

Even when students question these traditions, determined schools find ways to skirt the Constitution. For instance, when Paul's father complained to the principal about team chapel, the coach moved it off campus and declared it voluntary but continued to hold it at the same time each week.

Paul opted to skip the team chapel sessions. But, he says, there was still an underlying coercion to the situation. Because of his non-religious worldview, he was forced to skip the weekly school-sponsored religious event held during instructional time and attended by most of his other teammates.

After the school district received a letter from the Americans United for Separation of Church and State explaining why off-campus team chapel was still unconstitutional, district officials told the coach that he was to have no role in the weekly meetings and that they must be completely student run.

Despite the fact some coaches still see schools as places to promote their religious viewpoints, Haynes says, "there's a trend to sort this out in public schools and get it right." He has seen a growing awareness among educators of the laws concerning church-state separation and Supreme Court precedents. Also, a growing number of schools have adopted guidelines to help teachers deal with religious issues.

"In order to protect all the students, coaches have to be there for all the students," Haynes says. "They cannot take sides in religion." ♦



Toolkit

Teach your students more about freedom of religion and separation of church and state.

VISIT» tolerance.org/religion-locker-room



BUZELLI

The **School-to-Prison** Pipeline

POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT FAVOR INCARCERATION OVER EDUCATION DO US ALL A GRAVE INJUSTICE.

BY **MARILYN ELIAS** ILLUSTRATION BY **CHRIS BUZELLI**

IN MERIDIAN, MISS., POLICE ROUTINELY ARREST and transport youths to a juvenile detention center for minor classroom misbehaviors. In Jefferson Parish, La., according to a U.S. Department of Justice complaint, school officials have given armed police “unfettered authority to stop, frisk, detain, question, search and arrest schoolchildren on and off school grounds.” In Birmingham, Ala., police officers are permanently stationed in nearly every high school.

In fact, hundreds of school districts across the country employ discipline policies that push students out of the classroom and into the criminal justice system at alarming rates—a phenomenon known as the school-to-prison pipeline.

Last month, Sen. Richard Durbin, D-Ill., held the first federal hearing on the school-to-prison pipeline—an important step toward ending policies that favor incarceration over education and disproportionately push minority students and students with disabilities out of schools and into jails.

In opening the hearing, Durbin told the subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee, “For many young people, our schools are increasingly a gateway to the criminal justice system. This phenomenon is a consequence of a culture of zero tolerance that is widespread in our schools and is depriving many children of their fundamental right to an education.”

A wide array of organizations—including the Southern Poverty Law Center, the

NAACP and Dignity in Schools—offered testimony during the hearing. They joined representatives from the Departments of Education and Justice to shine a national spotlight on a situation viewed far too often as a local responsibility.

“We have a national problem that deserves federal action,” Matthew Cregor, an attorney with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, explained. “With suspension a top predictor of dropout, we must confront this practice if we are ever to end the ‘dropout crisis’ or the so-called achievement gap.”

In the words of Vermont’s Sen. Patrick Leahy, “As a nation, we can do better.”

What is the School-to-Prison Pipeline?

Policies that encourage police presence at schools, harsh tactics including physical restraint, and automatic punishments that result in suspensions and out-of-class time are huge contributors to the pipeline, but the problem is more complex than that.

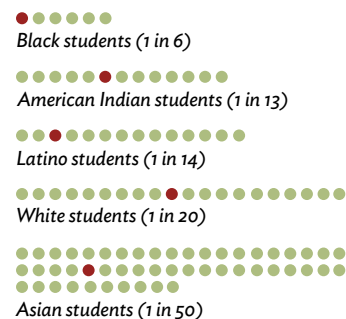
The school-to-prison pipeline starts (or is best avoided) in the classroom. When combined with zero-tolerance policies, a teacher’s decision to refer students for punishment can mean they are pushed out of the classroom—and much more likely to be introduced into the criminal justice system.

Who’s in the Pipeline?

Students from two groups—racial minorities and children with disabilities—are disproportionately represented in the school-to-prison

The Odds

Students Suspended During the 2009-2010 School Year



Avoiding the Pipeline

How can school districts divert the school-to-prison pipeline?

1. Increase the use of positive behavior interventions and supports.
2. Compile annual reports on the total number of disciplinary actions that push students out of the classroom based on gender, race and ability.
3. Create agreements with police departments and court systems to limit arrests at school and the use of restraints, such as mace and handcuffs.
4. Provide simple explanations of infractions and prescribed responses in the student code of conduct to ensure fairness.
5. Create appropriate limits on the use of law enforcement in public schools.
6. Train teachers on the use of positive behavior supports for at-risk students.

pipeline. African-American students, for instance, are 3.5 times more likely than their white classmates to be suspended or expelled, according to a nationwide study by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. Black children constitute 18 percent of students, but they account 46 percent of those suspended more than once.

For students with disabilities, the numbers are equally troubling. One report found that while 8.6 percent of public school children have been identified as having disabilities that affect their ability to learn, these students make up 32 percent of youth in juvenile detention centers.

The racial disparities are even starker for students with disabilities. About 1 in 4 black children with disabilities were suspended at least once, versus 1 in 11 white students, according to an analysis of the government report by Daniel J. Losen, director of the Center for Civil Rights Remedies of the Civil Rights Project at UCLA.

A landmark study published last year tracked nearly 1 million Texas students for at least six years. The study controlled for more than 80 variables, such as socioeconomic class, to see how they affected the likelihood of school discipline. The study found that African Americans were disproportionately punished compared with otherwise similar white and Latino students. Children with emotional disabilities also were disproportionately suspended and expelled.

In other studies, Losen found racial differences in suspension rates have widened since the early 1970s and that suspension is being used more frequently as a disciplinary tool. But he said his recent study and other research show that removing children from school does not improve their behavior. Instead, it greatly increases the likelihood that they'll drop out and wind up behind bars.

Punishing Policies

The SPLC advocates for changes to end the school-to-prison pipeline and has filed lawsuits or civil rights complaints against districts with punitive discipline practices that are discriminatory in impact.

According to the U.S. Department of

Justice, the number of school resource officers rose 38 percent between 1997 and 2007. Jerri Katzerman, SPLC deputy legal director, said this surge in police on campus has helped to criminalize many students and fill the pipeline.

One 2005 study found that children are far more likely to be arrested at school than they were a generation ago. The vast majority of these arrests are for nonviolent offenses. In most cases, the students are simply being disruptive. And a recent U.S. Department of Education study found that more than 70 percent of students arrested in school-related incidents or referred to law enforcement are black or Hispanic. Zero-tolerance policies, which set one-size-fits-all punishments for a variety of behaviors, have fed these trends.

Best Practices

Instead of pushing children out, Katzerman said, "Teachers need a lot more support and training for effective discipline, and schools need to use best practices for behavior modification to keep these kids in school where they belong."

Keeping at-risk kids in class can be a tough order for educators under pressure to meet accountability measures, but classroom teachers are in a unique position to divert students from the school-to-prison pipeline.

Teachers know their students better than any resource officer or administrator—which puts them in a singularly empowered position to keep students in the classroom. It's not easy, but when teachers take a more responsive and less punitive approach in the classroom, students are more likely to complete their education.

The information on the following pages highlights common scenarios that push young people into the school-to-prison pipeline and offers practical advice for how teachers can dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline. ♦



Toolkit

Want to deepen your understanding of the school-to-prison pipeline?

VISIT >> tolerance.org/school-to-prison-pipeline

A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO

Rerouting the Pipeline

BY EMILY CHIARIELLO



PRINCIPALS, SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS, probation officers and social workers are typically charged with responding to school discipline problems. But in reality, classroom teachers spend the most time with students. Their daily decisions can help divert students from the school-to-prison pipeline.

MEET MICHAEL

Michael is 15 and repeating the ninth grade. He's in your world history class and habitually tilts his chair back and drums annoyingly on his desk with a pencil. This morning, he was doing it—again—while you were trying to teach.

What do you do? A punitive teacher might take the pencil away, kick Michael out of class, or even refer him for disciplinary action. But there's always the opportunity to reflect and be more responsive.

Responsive teachers shift their reactions in important ways. They adopt a social emotional lens: What does Michael's tapping say about his mood? Is he bored or frustrated? Does the tapping bother other students, or just me?

It's also important to know

students and develop cultural competency. Is Michael comforted by percussive rhythms? Maybe you could encourage him to join the band.

The third shift calls for planning and delivering effective student-centered instruction. For instance, what kinesthetic or rhythmic learning strategies might engage Michael?

Move the paradigm from punishment to development by determining what initial expectations—like not drumming for 10 minutes—Michael can meet.

Finally, resist the criminalization of school behavior. Consider the consequences Michael will face if he misses class because he is suspended.

These five responsive shifts in teacher thinking apply even as a student's behavior escalates—and they can be the key to rerouting the school-to-prison pipeline.

Rerouting the Pipeline

TYPE OF BEHAVIOR

Verbal Disrespect

Michael is defiant and uses inappropriate language when verbally redirected.

A PUNITIVE TEACHER'S REACTIONS

Argue with Michael, kick him out of class or refer him for disciplinary action.

TYPE OF BEHAVIOR

Dress Code Violation

Michael comes to class without a belt on, pants sagging.

A PUNITIVE TEACHER'S REACTIONS

Lecture Michael about the dress code in front of classmates, kick him out of class or refer him for disciplinary action.

TYPE OF BEHAVIOR

Lateness or Truancy

Michael is frequently absent from or tardy to his first-period class and is failing.

A PUNITIVE TEACHER'S REACTIONS

Lock the door after the bell rings and give Michael zeros with no make-up option for work he missed.

A RESPONSIVE TEACHER'S REFLECTIONS

SHIFT 1

How can I address Michael's feelings of powerlessness so he is less defensive when I assert my authority?

SHIFT 2

How might my words, tone and body language make Michael feel disrespected?

SHIFT 3

How can I differentiate my instruction to better meet Michael's needs and tap his strengths?

SHIFT 4

How can I use assertive communication to demonstrate empathy, explain disappointment and set expectations for changed behavior?

SHIFT 5

What are the consequences for Michael if he misses class because he is suspended?

A RESPONSIVE TEACHER'S REFLECTIONS

Does Michael have a belt? Should I keep an extra one in the classroom?

How can I affirm that clothing norms are different at school and home but neither is good nor bad?

How does my teaching affect Michael's self-image?

Should I sponsor a club where students who consistently meet the dress code get special privileges?

Does enforcement of the dress code target particular groups of students?

A RESPONSIVE TEACHER'S REFLECTIONS

What personal problems might prevent Michael from getting to school on time?

Are there family problems that might prevent Michael from getting to school on time?

Is my curriculum relevant to Michael's identity and lived experiences?

Should I set up a conference with family, teachers and other school staff to design a behavior intervention plan that supports Michael?

Can our school provide free bus passes to prevent truancy and positively impact Michael's future?

TYPE OF BEHAVIOR

Aggressive Physical Behavior

Michael shouldered his teacher out of the way when she blocked the classroom door as he tried to leave.

A PUNITIVE TEACHER'S REACTIONS

Argue with Michael, call the school resource officer, bar him from class or press assault charges.

TYPE OF BEHAVIOR

Fighting

Michael got into a fight in the hallway during first period. There were no serious injuries.

A PUNITIVE TEACHER'S REACTIONS

Avoid involvement or request that Michael not be allowed back in class because he poses a threat.

A RESPONSIVE TEACHER'S REFLECTIONS

What clues did I miss that Michael was upset before he tried to walk out?

What social and cultural capital did Michael risk if he had backed down from me in front of his peers?

Michael is most irritable when we read. Can the literacy coach and special education team suggest reading intervention strategies?

Can Michael and I come up with a signal to let me know he is feeling stressed and needs a three-minute cool down?

How can I encourage my administration to consider creative interventions as alternatives to suspension and adjudication?

A RESPONSIVE TEACHER'S REFLECTIONS

How can I help Michael deal with his feelings about the fight and help him see school in a positive light?

Who can best help Michael through things I've never experienced?

How can I use our curriculum to increase Michael's ability to nonviolently resolve conflict?

Would training students in peer mediation be a positive intervention strategy for Michael?

How can I encourage my administration to consider creative interventions as alternatives to suspension and adjudication?

- SHIFT 1** ADOPT A SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LENS
- SHIFT 2** KNOW YOUR STUDENTS AND DEVELOP YOUR CULTURAL COMPETENCY
- SHIFT 3** PLAN AND DELIVER EFFECTIVE STUDENT-CENTERED INSTRUCTION
- SHIFT 4** MOVE THE PARADIGM FROM PUNISHMENT TO DEVELOPMENT
- SHIFT 5** RESIST THE CRIMINALIZATION OF SCHOOL BEHAVIOR



Toolkit

Learn how teachers can shift their behaviors and help reduce student push-out. VISIT » tolerance.org/school-to-prison



AFFORDABLE WAYS TO BUILD POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

BY WARREN HYNES ILLUSTRATION BY MICHELLE LELAND

SO YOU HAVE A CLEAR GOAL—TO NURTURE and build school community. But you also have a clear problem—you don't have much money to throw at new projects. So, you ask yourself, how can we carve out a deeper sense of community in an inexpensive way?

Across the nation, many schools have managed to craft creative and inexpensive community-building projects. Perhaps the three projects featured below will spark some new ideas for your own school.

The Hunger Games Come to Texas

At New Tech Odessa High School in Odessa, Texas, Suzanne Collins's novel *The Hunger Games* was more than an engaging read for the school's 116 freshmen—it was the inspiration for a cross-discipline project that electrified the school.

The project began with students reading the novel in their English classes. Then, one spring morning, students reported to school for their own version of the novel's "reaping." Instead of finding out who was to do battle in an arena, they were handed a new schedule for the next eight days. It placed every student in one of 12

countries, mirroring the 12 districts in Collins's novel. Faculty facilitators had designed the schedules to put students in groups that took them "out of their comfort zones and out of their normal rotations," according to Tina Lopez, the school's art facilitator.

By the time students graduate from high school, they have each spent about 16,380 hours in school—even more reason to build a positive school climate.

Then the fun began. In every discipline, students and teachers used the academic subject at hand to work through a *Hunger Games*-inspired dilemma. In social studies and science classes, for instance, students studied the geography and nutritional aspects of hunger in their assigned countries. The impoverished characters of the book's District 12 inspired students to move beyond their own worlds and to understand—and positively impact—the nutritional struggles in other countries and in their own community.

Each "country" of students was asked to raise awareness of hunger in both the school and community and

to combat the problem by holding a canned-food drive and creating artistic sculptures out of the collected cans. Community members were invited into the school (for a \$1 entrance fee) to view the sculptures and vote on their favorites. Students from the winning country were given the entrance-fee money to donate to a nonprofit organization of their choice.

New Tech Odessa's Hunger Games project was a labor-intensive effort for the school's dedicated faculty, but the financial cost was minor—one set of books. "When we plan projects, we are always looking for ways to make [them] authentic," Lopez says. "This project was not [only] impacting our individual classrooms but the school and beyond. We were working with each other for a common good."

Tough Mudders in Macungie

Over the years, Eyer Middle School in Macungie, Pa., has built a successful behavior-reward system called Positive Attitudes Will Succeed (PAWS). Students work together to earn privileges and perks by acting responsibly and respectfully throughout the school year. This year, the PAWS

committee decided to sponsor a mini Tough Mudder event.

Tough Mudder is a relatively new and increasingly popular sporting event whose participants use teamwork and determination to complete a challenging obstacle course. Eyer's event was the brainchild of Beth Witte, a veteran health and fitness teacher at the school. The family of a PAWS committee member donated materials, and a proactive parent group jumped in to help coordinate the day. "I'm very fortunate that when I come up with these weirdo ideas, we have a lot of people who say, 'Yeah, we can do this,'" Witte says.

Witte didn't give students their team assignments until the day of the event, and she made sure that students were placed on teams they wouldn't have chosen themselves. As for the event, the focus—in true Tough Mudder fashion—was placed on finishing the race, not on winning it. As youngsters ran all over the field, Witte witnessed school community-building in action.

She looked out and saw three athletic boys guiding one of their team members—a girl with Asperger's syndrome—along the course. "They said, 'We've got you, go ahead,'" Witte recalls. "It was really cool to see how they worked together."

Stepping to the Mic in Dedham

For the past three years, a small group of students in Dedham, Mass., who call themselves TALK, has gathered on Thursday afternoons in a first-floor room at Dedham High School. TALK members have committed this time to talk about topics that are often left untouched—social, economic and political issues.

Mashaunda McBarnett, last year's club president, started meetings with icebreakers, then posed broad questions about hot topics. "I'd go on Yahoo! and try to find stories that were controversial or confusing or weird and try to make it a conversation on that particular topic," she says. The dedicated group of 15 to 20 teens would sit down together, put away their cell phones, and discuss gender equity, religious tolerance, abortion and the Trayvon Martin case in a manner more befitting a college seminar than a high school club.

Aware of the group's success, Robert Blaney, director of the Dedham Youth Commission, recommended the students take their voices to the larger community via an open-mic night. The group agreed.

On a Wednesday evening in May, a dozen teenagers from TALK stood in front of a microphone in a donated venue and shared poems and songs in the theme of "Where I'm From" with 50 members

of the Dedham community—half of them adults, half students. The event increased discussion and awareness of diversity within the students' school and town. Plans are already under way for another open mic this school year, with even more teachers and students involved.

"Dedham is becoming more diverse, and this was a great way to start [the] conversation about how people can really celebrate each other," Blaney says. "This is one of the first times there's really been an event [here] to celebrate diversity."

Community Building Essentials

All three of these events illustrate the two keys to creating strong, but

inexpensive, community-building projects—creativity and thoughtful structure. It's not enough to just toss *The Hunger Games* into a school day, nor is it sufficient to simply shift kids outside their usual social groups. But when thoughtful ideas are coupled with an organized plan to help kids expand their comfort zones, amazing things can happen. ♦



*schoolwide
collaboration
to build
community*



*academics
all the time*

A Few More Affordable Community-Building Projects

These three projects are just the tip of the iceberg. There are many inexpensive ways to build community. Just remember to put the necessary elements of creativity and structure in place to effectively build positive relationships.

- **Orchestrate a school-wide book read, complete with discussion groups, to start conversations about diversity in your school and community.**
- **Plan a "No-Screen Week" free of technology, to create openings for personal interaction and relationship building.**
- **Organize a peer-interview project in which students learn and share one another's stories.**



Toolkit

Download a practical planning guide to help you organize a creative, structured and inexpensive community-building project at your school.

VISIT > [tolerance.org/
inexpensive-community](http://tolerance.org/inexpensive-community)



One tribe, one time, one planet, one race
It's all one blood, don't care about your face

— BLACK EYED PEAS, "ONE TRIBE"

Move to the Music

Protest Songs in the Classroom

BY ALICE PETTWAY ILLUSTRATION BY SOL LINERO

TEACHERS DON'T TYPICALLY ENCOURAGE students to bring iPods to school, but when a girl in Ken Giles's class brought him "One Tribe," a song by the Black Eyed Peas, he was thrilled. Giles, a music teacher in Washington, D.C., uses protest music to illustrate the connections among culture, art, history and social movements and to help his students understand how music can effect social change. Kids have access to an almost infinite number of songs, but this student saw through the clutter, says Giles. "She figured out that, 'This modern song is like the historical songs he's been teaching us.'"

Protest songs are part of our cultural consciousness—and a powerful tool in the classroom. Just as music has brought together members of different socioeconomic groups, races and religious convictions into cooperative social movements, protest songs can serve as a versatile teaching resource, culturally relevant to students of diverse backgrounds.

"Everyone has some musical interest," says Dr. Christopher Andrew Brkich, author of the article "Music as a Weapon: Using Popular Culture to

Combat Social Injustice." That interest is a tool that can be used to hook students and to convey powerful messages that they might miss in traditional texts.

Protest songs allow people to bond on an intellectual level as well as on a deeper, subconscious level reached through shared experience, says William G. Roy, author of *Reds, Whites and Blues: Social Movements, Folk Music, and Race in the United States*. That shared experience goes beyond listening.

When students are given the opportunity to engage with protest music by singing, the learning experience is enriched. "Music is a very social thing," says Brkich. "If you've ever been to a musical concert, the entire audience sings along with the artist who's up on the stage. The same thing happens in class."

Giles agrees that there is greater power in making music than in simply listening to it. "I really do wish people would sing and play instruments," he says. "When civil rights activists would go out on a demonstration and sing 'we shall not be moved,' everyone in the line was singing."

Protest Music Hit Parade

"We Shall Overcome"

» civil rights movement

"Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round"

» civil rights movement

"El Aquila Negra" (The Black Eagle)

» United Farm Workers boycott

"What's Going On"

» Vietnam War protests

"We Are the Many"

» Occupy Wall Street movement

"It couldn't but cement the learning experience more strongly," says Brkich. "The whole class gets engaged in the learning experience."

As important as the music experience is, it is even more essential that students connect to a song. Students are more likely to participate in class if they can relate to the subject matter. For

READY TO BRING MUSIC INTO YOUR CLASSROOM?

These classic protest songs from the civil rights movement are a great place to start.

If You Miss Me at the Back of the Bus

If you miss me at the back of the bus,
and you can't find me nowhere,
come on up to the front of the bus.
I'll be sittin' right there.
I'll be sittin' right there.
I'll be sittin' right there.
Come on up to the front of the bus.
I'll be sittin' right there.

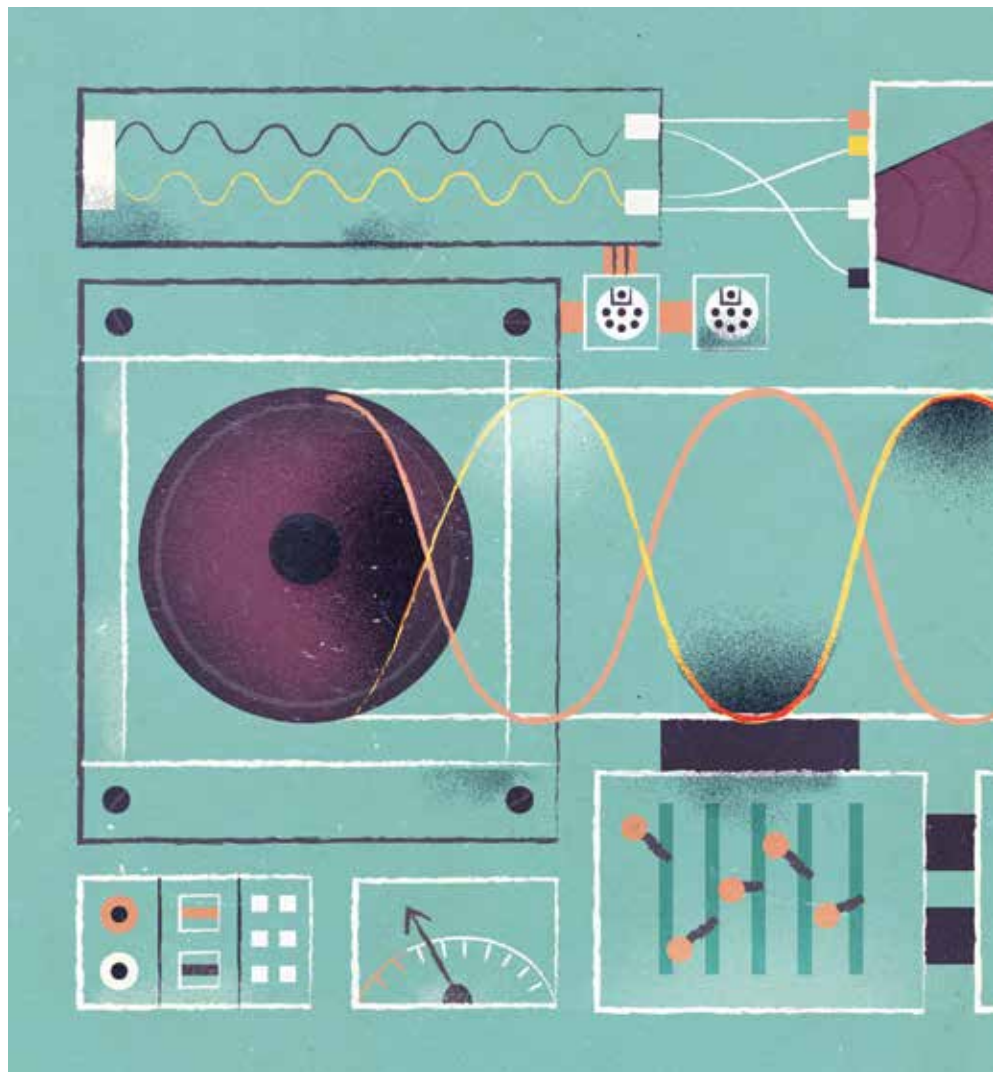
© 1963 Figs D. Music (BMI) on behalf of itself and Sanga Music (BMI) care of The Bicycle Music Company

Strange Fruit

Southern trees bear a strange fruit,
Blood on the leaves and blood
at the root,
Black bodies swinging in the
Southern breeze,
Strange fruit hanging from the
poplar trees.

—Music and lyrics by Abel Meeropol

Copyright © 1939 (Renewed) by Music Sales Corporation (ASCAP). All Rights for the United States controlled by Music Sales Corporation (ASCAP). International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Reprinted by Permission.



a teacher, this may mean working with contemporary music, or illuminating the circumstances in which an old song was originally sung. “Try to tell the story that surrounds the song,” Giles advises. “Who were [the singers]? What were they doing? What did they think?”

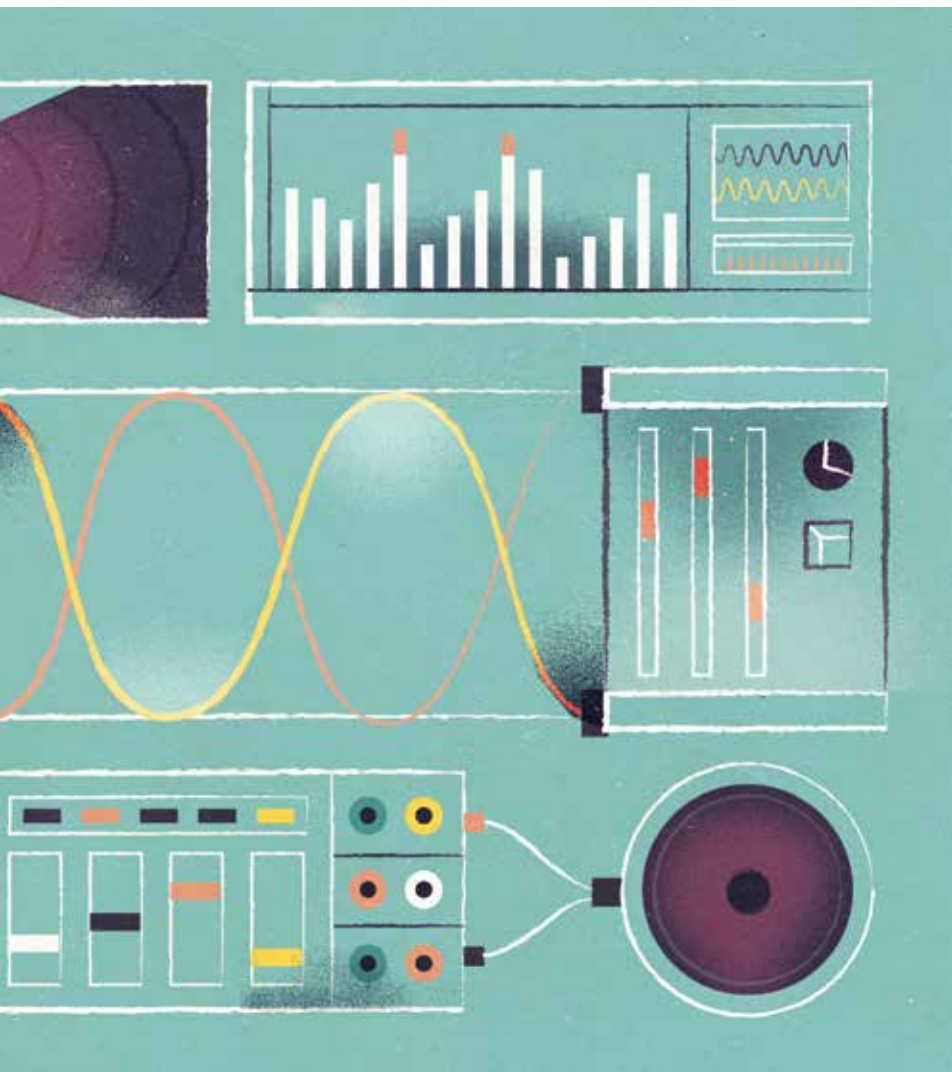
Even young children can understand the significance of a song if they are given the story to go with it, says Giles. “Little kids can sing a song like ‘If You Miss Me at the Back of the Bus,’ and they understand ... people used to have to sit at the back of the bus, and now they can sit wherever they want.”

“Having students bring in music in which they are interested is really a

powerful, powerful tool to get the students invested,” says Brkich. “I try to include hip-hop, some rap, some punk music and some rock and roll ... but the students will know the music in which they’re most interested.”

Using contemporary music in the classroom can be a challenge because it’s likely to be perceived as not academic and because lyrics are often explicit. Brkich suggests educators inform parents and administrators at the beginning of the year that they intend to address social-justice issues through song in their classrooms.

“I would always let my students know ... [that] I don’t like the fact that



because it was a horrible subject. She had to change recording companies ... [but] it raised a tremendous amount of public awareness. I think in the long run it helped end lynchings.”

In the past, the hassle of records, cassette tapes, CDs, their requisite players and recording requirements have made it difficult for educators and students to bring music into the classroom, but today’s students have the Internet and mobile devices at their disposal.

“Kids just punch in the name of their artist and the name of their song [into YouTube] and boom it’s there,” says Brkich. “Nowadays [they] have smart-phones ... flash drives, all sorts of things that make music a lot more transportable, and when it’s more transportable it’s a lot more easily brought into the classroom.”

This new accessibility, combined with the potential of protest songs to bridge both time and culture within a classroom, makes music a formidable teaching device. “I want the kids to realize that we’ve had a lot of problems to try to deal with in our society,” says Giles, “but there are lots of songs that focus on these issues and actually do make things a little better.”

“Students bringing in their own music and talking with each other to build their own communal sense of social justice through music ... puts the power in the classroom into their hands,” says Brkich.

Whether used as an entry point to discussion of past social movements or an examination of contemporary culture, protest music can reach students of all backgrounds with the message that they, like other young people before them, are an essential component of social change. ♦

Protest Music in the Science Classroom

Protest songs aren’t only for the social studies classroom. Socioscientific issues, such as stem-cell research and genetically modified food, are a great fit for science teachers who want to bring social justice into their curricula. As Brkich points out, “Music that addresses those topics would be very easy to implement into a science classroom.”

there is racism. I don’t like the fact that there is sexism. I don’t like the fact that there is religious intolerance ... [and that] I would be working to raise awareness of instances in the past and present where these things occur.”

The same strategy may apply for older songs as well. When parents are on board with a teacher’s intent, even disturbing lyrics, such as those in Billie Holiday’s

song “Strange Fruit”—which graphically describe lynchings of the Jim Crow era—can be valuable teaching tools.

Giles presents “Strange Fruit” to his elementary school students in the context of a story about Billie Holiday’s bravery. “She was courageous to sing the song,” he says. “People told her not to sing the song



Toolkit

Engage students in close reading and discussion of their favorite social justice songs.

VISIT > tolerance.org/move-to-the-music

Mimi's Moms

Creating welcoming classrooms for young children of LGBT families.

BY **CARRIE KILMAN** ILLUSTRATION BY **STEVE ADAMS**

BEFORE MICHELE HATCHELL AND HER partner, Liz, sent their child, Mimi, to school for the first time, the family sat down and created a script. “What can you say,” Hatchell prompted, “if someone asks if you have two moms?” They helped Mimi come up with answers: Yes, I have two moms. Who’s in your family? And, Yes, there are a lot of families like mine. They sent Mimi’s teacher picture books depicting families with two mothers. And they met with the principal, requesting Mimi be placed in the same classroom as another child with same-sex parents.

“It’s hard being the only one of anything,” Hatchell says. “We didn’t want Mimi feeling singled out for being different.”

Hatchell, who teaches art at Shorewood Hills Elementary School in Madison, Wis., was one of the first openly gay teachers on staff. She understands the concerns of LGBT parents sending their children to school for the first time: *Will this be a safe place for my child? Will our family be welcome here?*

It’s About Family

“People get uncomfortable talking about gay and lesbian issues at the elementary level because they think it’s about sex,” Hatchell says. “But really it’s about family.”

In fact, the “family unit” is one of the first lessons young children encounter in school.

In a 2012 study titled *Playgrounds and Prejudice*, researchers from the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network asked a national sample of elementary-grade teachers if they included LGBT examples when teaching about family. Eight of 10 said no. When asked why, the most common response was, “It hasn’t come up.”

This is alarming news for the 7 million LGBT parents who have children in U.S. schools—and it suggests a silence that arguably violates the code of ethical conduct from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, which prohibits “practices that are emotionally damaging” and “disrespectful.”

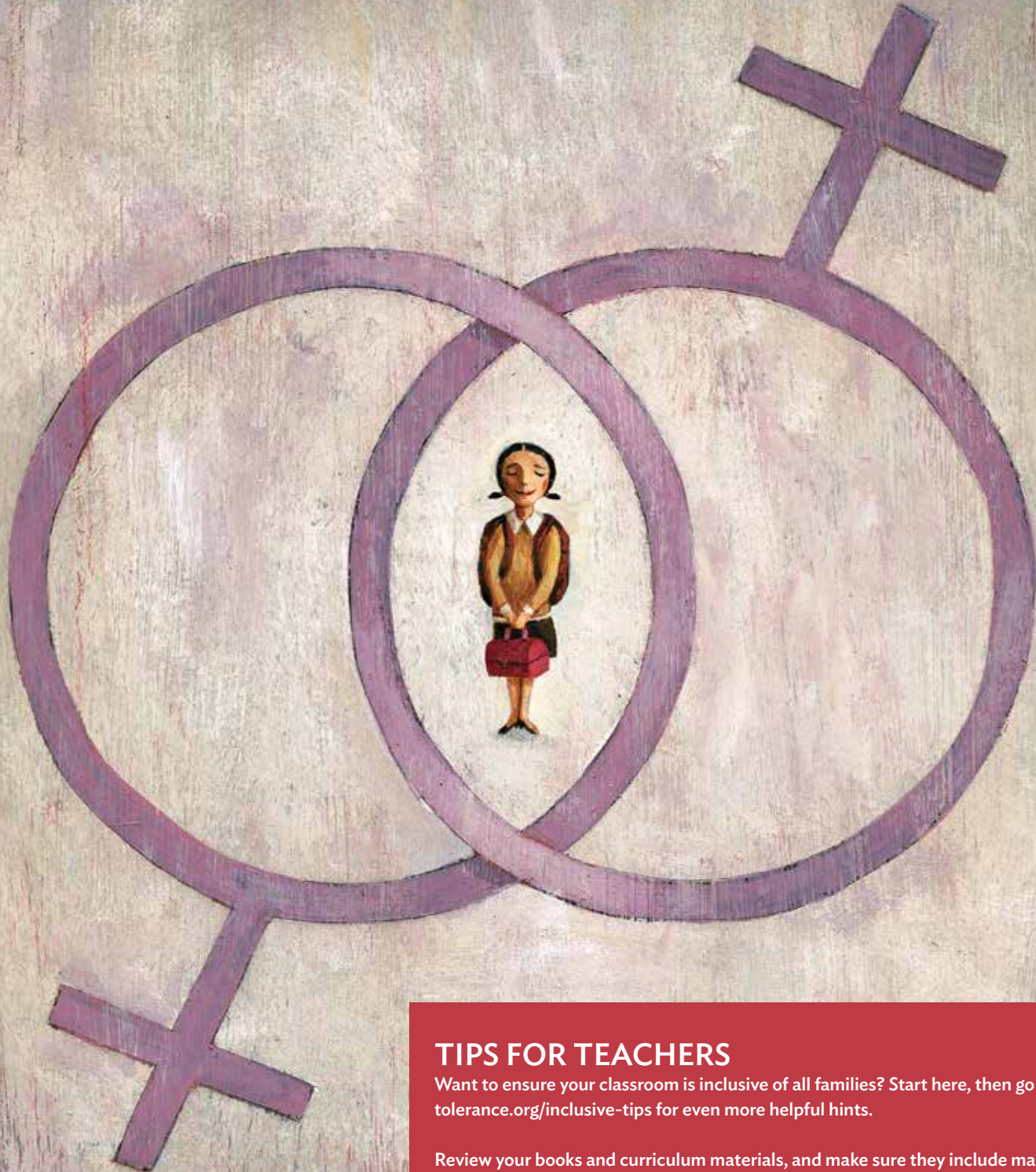
“There is a huge connection between family representation and self-esteem,” veteran K-3 teacher Erica Eide explains. “If a child doesn’t see their family represented, it creates a disconnect and interrupts their learning. If you don’t feel recognized by your peers and your surroundings, how can you thrive?”

Involved but Invisible

In 2008, GLSEN worked with COLAGE (a national movement of children, youth, and adults with one or more LGBTQ parents) and the Family Equality Council to release the first national study examining the experiences of lesbian, gay and transgender parents of children in K-12 schools.

The report, *Involved, Invisible, Ignored*, found that while LGBT parents are more likely to participate in their children’s education, they often feel unwelcomed by their children’s schools.

Parents told researchers of elaborate prep work—meeting teachers in advance, providing classroom sets of LGBT-inclusive books, sharing advice



and experiences with other LGBT parents. Some spoke of moving to neighborhoods with more accepting schools, while others described classroom practices that were frustrating to navigate—from school forms requesting the names of “mother” and “father” to rules forbidding

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

Want to ensure your classroom is inclusive of all families? Start here, then go to tolerance.org/inclusive-tips for even more helpful hints.

Review your books and curriculum materials, and make sure they include many kinds of families, not merely those with one mom and one dad.

Take gender out of playtime. Make sure all children feel welcome to play with dress-up clothes, kitchen sets, tools or trucks. Avoid sending the message that girls and women do the cooking, and boys and men play sports and fix things.

Check your school forms and parental paperwork—are the spaces labeled “Mom” and “Dad”? A simple change to “Parent or Guardian” is an easy way to make a big difference.

Reading List

These books include families that come in many shapes, sizes and structures:

ABC: A Family Alphabet Book

by Bobbie Combs

All Families Are Special

by Norma Simon

And Tango Makes Three

by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell

Antonio's Card/La Tarjeta de Antonio

by Rigoberto Gonzalez

Carly: She's Still My Daddy

by Mary Boenke

Daddy, Papa, and Me

by Lesléa Newman

Emma and Meesha My Boy:

A Two Mom Story

by Kaitlyn Taylor Considine

Everywhere Babies

by Susan Meyers

Families Like Mine: Children of Gay

Parents Tell It Like It Is

by Abigail Garner

Heather Has Two Mommies:

20th Anniversary Edition

by Lesléa Newman

In Our Mothers' House

by Patricia Polacco

King and King

by Linda de Haan and Stern Nijland

King and King and Family

by Linda de Haan and Stern Nijland

For a full reading list visit tolerance.org/reading-list or see digital edition.

Sources: Parent Services Project, Madison Metropolitan School District, Cooperative Children's Book Center

Class Outing

LGBT educators in early-grade classrooms face their own set of challenges—to check out their stories go to tolerance.org/class-outing-article.

“Mr. and Mrs. Murphy,” and Michelle was regularly told to take things home to her “mom and dad.”

“At the very least, it’s a lack of acknowledgement of your existence,” says Murphy, an administrator at a foster care agency in Hamden, Conn. “It’s hurtful to not be acknowledged. Kids may start to think, ‘I guess my family isn’t as good as other families, because I never hear about families that look like us.’”

Learning the Language

In 2002, employees of the California-based Parent Services Project, a national nonprofit that works with early childhood educators to improve parental involvement, decided to offer professional development training to help educators improve their support for LGBT families. They quickly discovered such a program didn’t exist—so they worked with City College of San Francisco to create one. Today, the curriculum, called *Making Room in the Circle*, is offered as a regular course at universities across the country.

“For many early childhood educators, there is fear around addressing LGBT issues in their classrooms,” says PSP Executive Director Jenny Ocón. “We know it takes a lot of courage to speak up.”

Participants are often surprised to learn how their classroom conduct can reinforce unwelcoming environments. For example, activities as commonplace as creating Mother’s Day cards can create awkward moments for children with two dads.

Not every educator who takes the training necessarily approves of same-sex marriage or is comfortable with LGBT issues. But Ocón says that isn’t the point.

“Even if you believe that to be true, it’s important to think about

the well-being of the child in that family,” she says. “Not acknowledging that family would do real harm to that child—that’s the place we keep coming back to.”

Hitting the Books

Twenty years ago, children’s books that openly referenced LGBT families were almost nonexistent. But since *Heather Has Two Mommies* was published in 1989, the number of LGBT family-themed books for young readers has exploded.

Back in Wisconsin, Hatchell regularly recommended these titles to her colleagues, but she worried there were few such books in the school library. “Our teachers wanted to create inclusive curriculum,” Hatchell says, “but we didn’t have the resources to make it happen.”

So last year, she successfully applied for a district grant to provide LGBT family-friendly books—along with sample lesson plans and staff training—to every school in the city. “It’s not my child’s job to teach other kids about families with two moms,” Hatchell says. “It’s the school’s responsibility, even when there aren’t any children with LGBT families in the class.”

The books have been an immediate hit with parents, teachers and children.

One afternoon earlier this year, Shorewood Hills third-grader Suzanne Oriel browsed the books on display in Hatchell’s art room. “They help other kids be more accepting,” Suzanne says. “It helps them think of our families as just regular families, too.” ♦

non-biological parents from picking up their children at school.

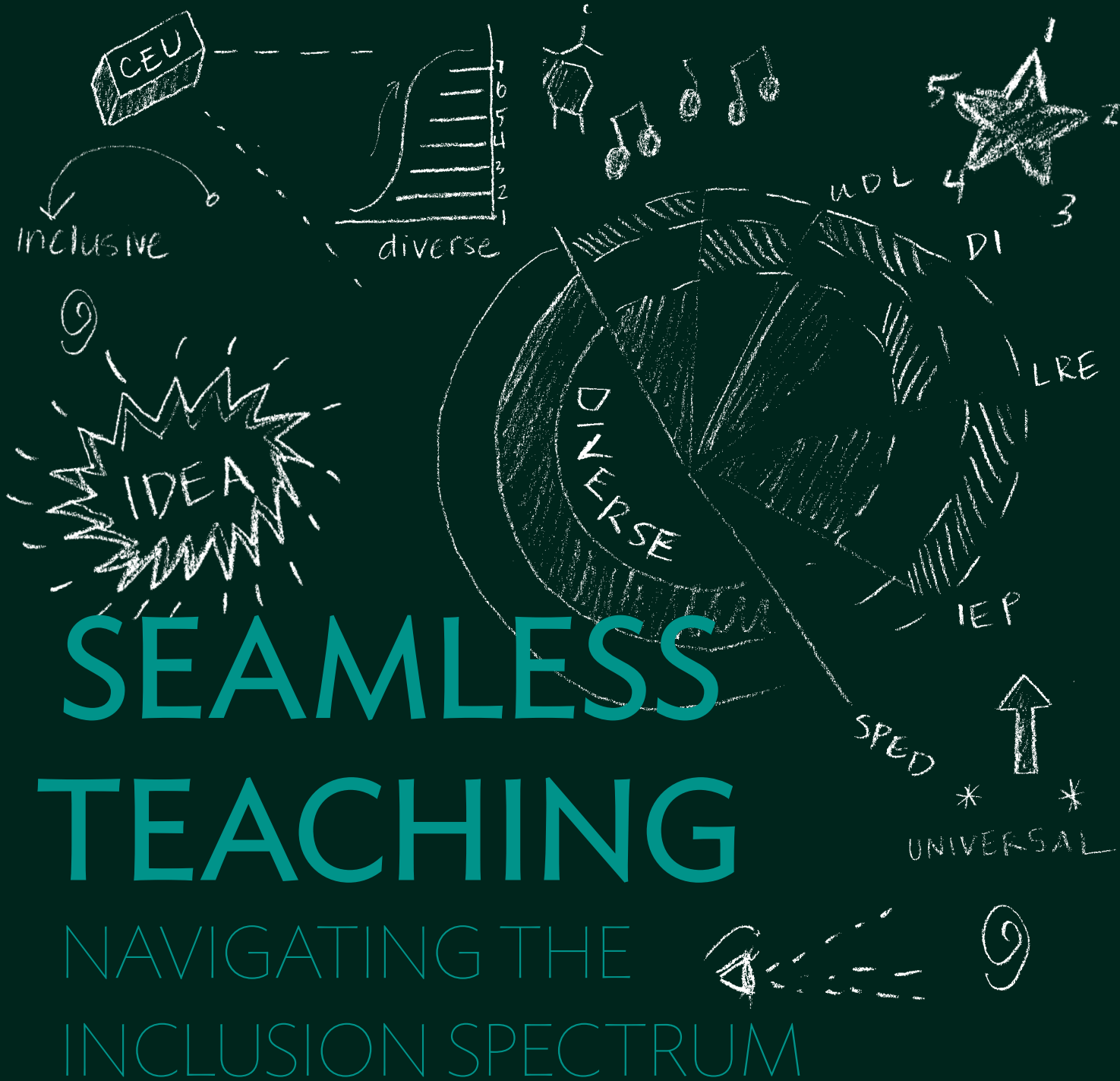
When Tom Murphy and his husband, Dino, sent their daughter Michelle to school for the first time, there weren’t many books in the school library about kids with two dads. Letters would arrive home addressed to



Toolkit

Are your classroom and school inclusive of all families? Take the self-inventory online to begin reflection.

VISIT » tolerance.org/mimis-moms



SEAMLESS TEACHING NAVIGATING THE INCLUSION SPECTRUM

Giving Gen Ed Teachers the Tools to Realize the Potential of Inclusive Classrooms

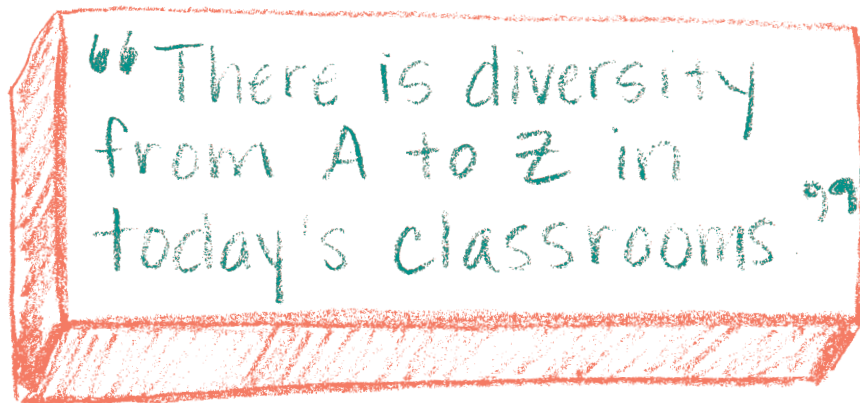
BY LOIS BARRETT ILLUSTRATION BY SUNNY PAULK

IN SCHOOLS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, students in special education and general education are increasingly learning together in inclusive classrooms. This is a significant civil-rights achievement, but it also means students in special

education are being taught by general education teachers who may not have the training and skills to best serve them.

What does this mean for teachers on the ground? “There is diversity from A to Z in today’s classroom, and

teachers need support and encouragement in acquiring the skills to serve all of these children,” says Sharen Bertrando, special education development program specialist at WestEd’s Center for Prevention and Early Intervention.



What general education teachers should know

The central legislative force behind education's inclusion movement is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)—the federal law that mandates that all children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education and that “to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities ... [should be] educated with children who are not disabled.” The law also requires that each child be placed in the least restrictive environment—the educational space most like that

of the child's typically developing peers in which she can succeed academically.

Once a child is identified as having a disability (as defined by IDEA), an individualized education program (IEP)

is crafted by a team of school professionals and the child's parents or guardians. IEPs include information on academic performance, emotional and behavioral issues, and academic and behavioral goals. Teachers have a legal responsibility to implement the requirements outlined in the IEP.

Betsy Weigle, a fourth-grade general education teacher at Adams

Elementary School in Spokane, Wash., says, “IEPs are written in very formal language and can be hard to decipher.” She recommends teachers “go to the person who wrote [the IEP] to get an overview and go over the child's goals together.”

That person is often a special education teacher with a wealth of experience and training for general education teachers to tap into. From model-teaching a lesson to looking over unit plans, a special education teacher's expertise is an essential resource for the inclusive classroom. School psychologists, reading specialists, speech pathologists, occupational therapists and physical therapists, depending on the disability, can also give valuable input.

Barry W. Birnbaum, author of *Foundations of Special Education Leadership: Administration, Placement, and the Law*, suggests general education teachers shore up their skills by taking continuing-education units in special education. Principals can also arrange for special education coursework to be offered on teachers' in-service days, says Birnbaum.

Acquiring the skills and strategies

Fill out a helpful agreement with your co-teacher.

Go to tolerance.org/precollaboration-agreement

to work with students with special needs is essential. It's also important to get to know the whole child. This should include building a relationship with the family. “Very often, parents are left out of the equation,” says Rick Wolfsdorf, a collaborative special education teacher at John W. Dodd Middle School in Freeport, N.Y., “but they shouldn't be. They need to be a part of the team effort.”

Teaching to All Learners

When students in general education and special education share a classroom, it is crucial their teacher create an environment that brings out the strengths of each. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an education approach based on the philosophy that there is no one way in which individuals learn and that lessons, curriculum and classroom configuration should be designed, from the outset, with the needs of diverse students in mind.

UDL calls for instructional goals, methods, materials and assessments to be aligned with the following guidelines:

- Provide *multiple means of representation*—Present content in different ways to give students a variety of options for acquiring information and knowledge.
- Provide *multiple means of expression*—Ensure students have a variety of ways of demonstrating what they know.
- Provide *multiple means of engagement*—Create a stimulating learning environment by offering various ways for a student to engage, based on preferences and interests.

Differentiated Instruction (DI)—the process of modifying instruction and assessment, as needed, to meet the learning needs of a particular student—also allows educators to teach or make assessments in a variety of ways, based on the interests, abilities and knowledge

base of each student. Brad Cohen, assistant principal at Addison Elementary School in Marietta, Ga., insists on seeing differentiated instruction at work in his classrooms. “If you are a teacher and you are teaching all the children in your class the same way, you are not hitting all of their needs,” he says.

The Inclusion Spectrum

Many experts endorse the growing trend toward classes co-taught by a full-time general education teacher and a full-time special education teacher. “There shouldn’t be just one teacher in a classroom, if an inclusion effort is to be successful,” says David J. Connor, associate professor of special education/learning disabilities at Hunter College in New York, N.Y.

According to Connor, building a collaborative teaching relationship is an ongoing process that requires openness and flexibility. He recommends that co-teachers get to know each other before sharing a classroom.

Wolfsdorf says that co-teachers must clarify roles: “Establishing what each is going to do is really important.” Discussing how the class will be structured is key as well. Wolfsdorf says that teachers should strive for seamless teaching. “The students shouldn’t be able to tell which teacher is special education and which is general education,” he says.

Co-teaching, or collaborative teaching, is widely considered the gold standard for educating students with special needs, but inclusion looks different at different schools. Special education teachers or specialists may enter general education classrooms for a set period of time to deliver individualized or small-group instruction to students

in special education (push-in model), or students may leave general education classrooms to receive individualized or small-group instruction (pull-out model). The relationship-building tips above apply to these models as well.

While push-in or pull-out situations may not be ideal, there are still ways to achieve a positive outcome for your students. Students with special needs often feel stigmatized by the special education label; the teacher’s positive attitude can be a mitigating factor. Weigle says that when her students with special needs leave for special instruction, she doesn’t say, “You’re going to special education,” but rather, “You’re going to another classroom. You learn best in a small group—that’s great, go off and do that!”

Weigle offers these tips for general education teachers working with a pull-out inclusion model:

- Invite the special education teacher or specialist to your classroom to see how the student does in a larger setting. “This is particularly important for students with behavior goals written into their IEPs.”

- Make sure the student who leaves your classroom for instruction is working with the same content as your students in general education. To achieve this goal, you must devote time to meeting and planning with the special education teacher.

- It may seem easier to place students in special education near the classroom door since they may leave the classroom more often. However, these students generally benefit from sitting close to the teacher where they can receive individualized instruction.

Wherever their schools fall on the inclusion spectrum,



Techniques and Ideas for Teaching Students with Social Skills Difficulties

BY SHARON JURMAN

- Select two classmate buddies for friendship and social communication.
- Model and script social cues and response repertoires.
- Role-play social situations.
- Tell the child why a verbal response was inappropriate.
- Designate teams for assignments or games; don’t allow the students to choose teams.

Sometimes one or two simple changes can make a world of difference for a child with special needs. Visit tolerance.org/techniques for a complete list of techniques for a variety of situations.

general education teachers who take the time to acquire new skills and learn more about students in special education are fulfilling the potential of IDEA by building truly equitable classrooms. “By doing inclusion well, we remove the barriers that might prevent our special education students from enjoying the opportunities their peers do,” says Weigle, “and that could make all the difference when it comes to them leading productive and rewarding lives.” ♦



Toolkit

Learn more about co-teaching and push-in inclusion models.

VISIT» tolerance.org/gen-ed-special-ed

Buttoned Down

Are school uniform policies a perfect fit for all students?

BY MAGGIE MESSITT ILLUSTRATION BY ZACHARIAH OHORA

IN THE 1999-2000 SCHOOL YEAR, ONLY about 12 percent of U.S. public schools required their students to wear uniforms. Since then, the number of schools requiring uniforms has risen. Uniform policies are now in place at about a fifth of all public schools in the United States—but do school uniforms really level the playing field?

New research has called into question many of the central claims that encourage schools to adopt uniform policies.

UNIFORMS ARE COST-EFFECTIVE FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES.

Proponents of school uniforms often claim they eliminate the pressure on low-income families to purchase name-brand clothing. The reality is while middle-class families may find uniforms cheaper than purchasing high-end clothing, low-income families often don't see it that way. Given today's economic

climate, many families rely on resale shops, hand-me-downs and charitable donations—all of which are cheaper than purchasing uniforms.

In post-Katrina Louisiana, access to uniforms is an ongoing concern.

The New Orleans schools, like many across the country, don't offer uniform subsidies. "Many of us are one paycheck away from being homeless," said Roland McCoy, the father of a ninth-grade student. "Not everyone can afford uniforms." He estimates a single uniform costs around \$165.

UNIFORMS IMPROVE STUDENT BEHAVIOR.

Advocates of school uniforms will tell you that they keep students out of trouble, both in the classroom and off campus—but there is little proof, other than anecdotal evidence, that uniforms positively alter student behavior. In fact, studies illustrate the opposite.

A 2009 University of Houston study based on more than 10 years of data from a large urban district found an increase in disciplinary infractions within



"The vast majority of empirical research hasn't found any positive effects of school uniforms... They don't raise achievement. They don't decrease interpersonal violence. They don't decrease substance abuse. They don't increase attendance or classroom engagement. They don't increase attachment to community. All the things [educators] thought [uniforms] would do have not happened."

—Sociologist David Brunnsma, author of *Uniforms in Public Schools: A Decade of Research and Debate*

uniform schools, specifically for boys.

In schools with zero tolerance policies, uniforms provide another infraction possibility—one that, though seemingly minor, leads to more suspensions and more students pushed out of the system.

Strict uniform policies may also increase absenteeism, said Jerri Katzerman, deputy legal director for the Southern Poverty Law Center. “When forced to choose between sending a child to school in the wrong outfit—which guarantees suspension—or keeping that student home,” says Katzerman, “many parents choose the latter. Either way, it’s the child who loses out.”

UNIFORMS PREVENT CRIME AND VIOLENCE.

Principal Brett Butler of Kathleen Middle School in Lakeland, Fla., is one of many administrators who consider uniforms a critical school security measure. “When I look around campus, if I see someone not in a uniform, I can easily identify a person who may not belong here,” Butler told the *Tampa Tribune*.

Uniforms could increase a school’s ability to identify outsiders on campus, but they’re not a violence prevention measure. In 2008, the Consortium to Prevent School Violence concluded: “There is insufficient scientific evidence



to endorse implementing school uniform programs as a school violence prevention strategy.”

UNIFORMS ESTABLISH A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE.

Boston Public Schools do not assign detention, suspension or expulsion for uniform violations; instead they encourage student compli-

ance through positive reinforcement and incentive methods. But that’s not always the case, said Boston English High School’s former headmaster Sito Narcisse: “Many schools focus on compliance first and not purpose first.”

New Orleans, for instance, runs a top-down, zero tolerance uniform policy. The 2010 report, *Access Denied*, by the Southern Poverty Law Center found that New Orleans schools used suspensions and expulsions as punishment for minor rule violations like uniforms.

These policies do the opposite of creating class-blind schools—lower-income and homeless families often see uniforms as just one more way to identify (and often punish) students who have less. “How is this helping?” asked New Orleans parent McCoy. “The kids feel even worse. They’re not focused, and their self-esteem is really, really low.” ♦



Asking the Right Questions

Still considering a uniform policy for your school or district? Ask yourself the following questions:

Why do we want to use school uniforms?

Examine the reasons. What educational or safety problems are you hoping to solve? What alternative programs address these problems? Are uniforms the only solution? Are they the best way to reach your goals?

Would uniforms be a burden for low-income families?

Identify the actual cost of a school uniform. What would the retail price versus secondhand price be? How would you address student insecurities about secondhand uniforms or inadequate sets?

How would we handle uniform-related infractions?

What are your goals? What punishments would be proportionate? If you decide to implement a school uniform policy, explore the benefits of one that forbids detention and suspension for uniform infractions.

Would a uniform policy infringe upon students’ First Amendment rights?

Brainstorm potential uniform-related conflicts and prepare for case-by-case review—preferably by a peer review board that can address “right to expression” concerns. Empower students as much as possible.



Toolkit

Let your students weigh in on the debate over school uniforms. VISIT » tolerance.org/school-uniforms

And the WINNERS are ...

2012

AWARD *for* EXCELLENCE

IN CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Every year, Teaching Tolerance hears from teachers who are going the extra mile to support students from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. These teachers deserve to be recognized—that's what the Teaching Tolerance Award for Excellence in Culturally Responsive Teaching is all about.

On Jan. 25, this year's five winners will be presented their awards at a special ceremony in Washington, D.C., and awarded \$1,000 apiece. More importantly, video of their teaching techniques will be used to design professional development resources that will help educators across the nation better support students.

"Quite simply, it's easier to understand how to do something when you can see it being done by others," said Teaching Tolerance Director Maureen Costello. "We hope this award not only recognizes the talented teachers reaching students from diverse backgrounds but also provides many other teachers with models to enhance their expertise."

The winners of the 2012 Teaching Tolerance Award are as diverse as their schools and students, but all of them reach out to families and value home culture. All of them see students as individuals with valuable lived experiences. And all of them empower their students to be successful members of our diverse society.



Lhisa R. Almashy
Park Vista High School
Lake Worth, Fla.

"Teaching is the best profession," says Almashy. "Because our 'products' are human beings and we can be part of the vast resources they bring with them." Almashy teaches ESL to ninth-, 10th- and 12th-graders. Her key to success with English language learners is to teach them to integrate their home and school lives by taking the best from both cultures. "I learn about my students' values and experiences from their homes and communities by being involved not only in their education, but in their lives." Through celebrating her students' lived experiences, she steps beyond the stereotypes and generalizations to understand each individual student.



Anna E. Baldwin
Arlee High School
Arlee, Mont.

Baldwin teaches English, composition and speech, and multicultural literature on the Flathead Indian Reservation. About 70 percent of her students are of tribal descent, but she never makes generalizations about her students' backgrounds. "Culture emanates from more than ethnicity," says Baldwin. "There is teen culture, home culture, as well as traditional culture. So, I use [texts] that appeal to students' interests, backgrounds and abilities." Her hope is that through "earnest discussion about things that matter, provocative assignments and texts, and supportive and honest relationships, students will leave [the] classroom with a better sense of themselves, their world and their place in it."

Find out more about this year's winners at tolerance.org/ttaward-2012



Darnell Fine

Atlanta Neighborhood Charter Middle School, Atlanta, Ga.

Robert P. Sautter

Leonard R. Flynn Elementary School, San Francisco, Calif.

Laurence Tan

122nd Street Elementary School, Los Angeles, Calif.

As a child, Fine’s household was labeled “chaotic,” and Fine himself “a behavior problem.” Today, his past struggles motivate him to “build on the knowledge students bring from home ... [and] emphasize meaningful connections to real-life contexts” in his classroom. In addition to serving on his school’s diversity committee, Fine makes a point of building relationships with families. He acknowledges the value of his students’ home cultures by hosting open forums, town hall meetings and Socratic seminars. “In my classroom,” says Fine, “inclusion isn’t limited to celebrating cultural differences... [I provide] spaces for [students] to express their multiple perspectives.”

Sautter believes he has achieved the highest success when a student develops a strong sense of self-efficacy. “Creating a bond of trust is key in building relationships with my students of diverse backgrounds,” says Sautter. He begins each school day with a “community circle” in which students greet each other using their home languages and implements a partnership plan with parents so they can share their goals for their children. “When I am shown the family photos, I listen attentively to the stories told,” says Sautter. “When I am offered dinner, I accept and participate in family customs—and I learn.”

Five pillars of learning inform Tan’s teaching—engage, educate, experience, empower and enact. He values each student’s identity and celebrates diversity, even asking families to share their expertise with students through mini-lessons. At the end of the year he hosts a parent appreciation night where he and his students acknowledge the important role families play in their children’s educational success. Tan says his students succeed academically—and he accomplishes this by using a social justice curriculum. “The development of youth into socially critical and responsible individuals is of the highest importance,” says Tan.

What We're Reading

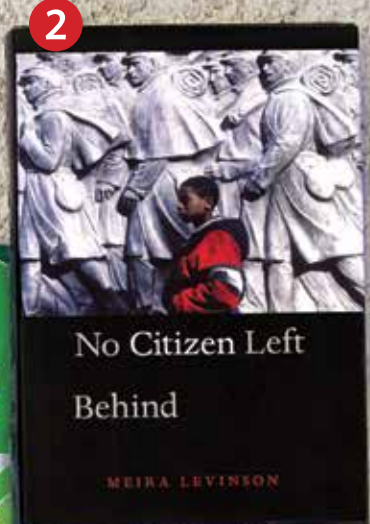
The Teaching Tolerance staff reviews the latest in culturally aware literature and resources, offering the best picks for professional development and teachers of all grades.



1

"A book that shifts your perspective."

— Maureen Costello



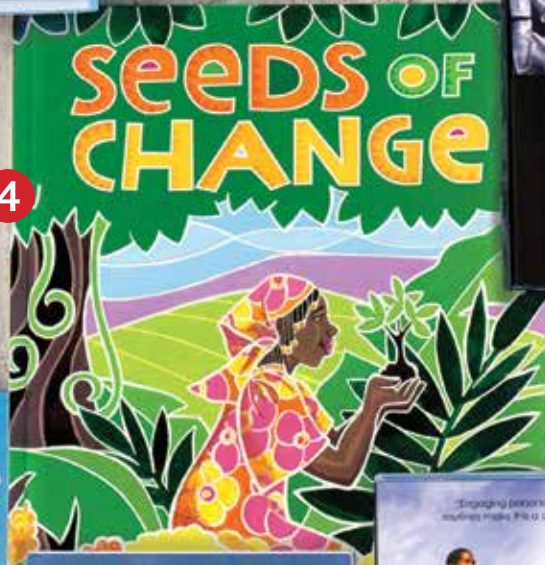
2

"An original gem of historical fiction."

— Emily Chiariello



3



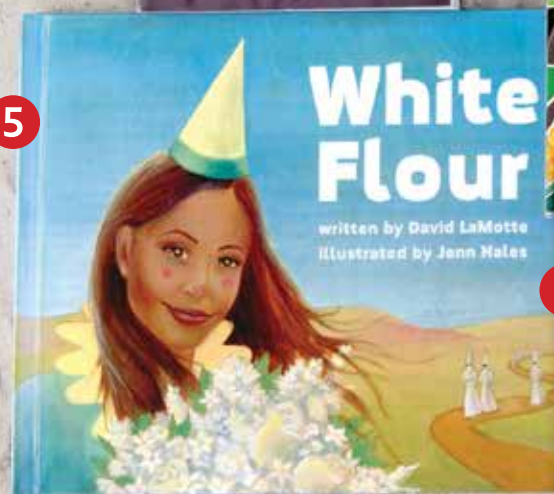
4



7

"Makes you want to cheer."

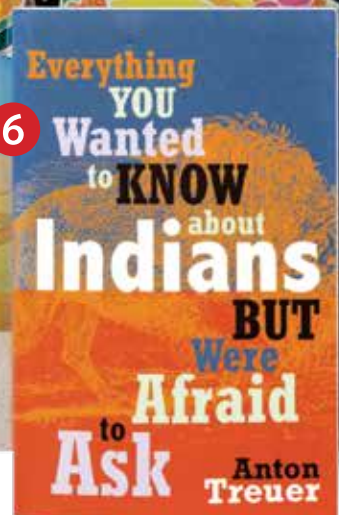
— Lisa Ann Williamson



5

"Inspires us to act—creatively and nonviolently!"

— Thom Ronk



6

1 That Auggie, who was born with horrible facial deformities, survived at all is a “medical wonder.” **Wonder**, by R.J. Palacio is a wonder too. The story, told by multiple characters, exposes every reaction people have to those who are different as it follows Auggie’s transition from the security of home schooling to fifth grade in his neighborhood school. We never learn what Auggie really looks like, but we do come to know and care about the quirky personality behind the deformed face.
middle and high school

2 In **No Citizen Left Behind**, Meira Levinson—a Harvard professor who taught middle school for eight years—urges educators to focus on the civic-empowerment gap. Levinson weaves political philosophy and education research into a readable book full of stories of real-world classrooms. She makes a strong case that we need to galvanize students around issues of contemporary injustice.
professional development

3 In the summer of 1968, Americans were reeling from war, assassinations and racial violence as a decade of historic social change came to a head. Kekla Magoon’s **Fire in the Streets** tells the story of a movement often misunderstood, in the voice of a character too rarely heard.
middle and high school

4 **Seeds of Change**, written by Jen Cullerton Johnson and illustrated by Sonia Lynn Sadler, tells the compelling story of Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai’s struggle for both gender equality and environmental awareness in Kenya.
elementary school

5 Want to learn how one group of activists—The Coup Clutz Clowns—challenged a white supremacist hate group through nonviolence and humor? Read **White Flour**, written by David LaMotte, illustrated by Jenn Hales and inspired by the May 26, 2007, event in Knoxville, Tenn.
elementary school

6 For anyone who teaches American Indian students, or teaches about American Indians, **Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians but Were Afraid to Ask**, by Anton Treuer is a trove of answers to questions you didn’t know you had.
professional development

7 In the documentary **Doubletime**, an international double dutch jump rope competition helps participants navigate gender roles and racial stereotypes while crossing the boundaries between suburban and urban students to ultimately build friendships and a true sense of team.
middle and high school

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Crossing Boundaries: Teaching and Learning with Urban Youth by Valerie Kinloch

Children Under Construction: Critical Essays on Play as Curriculum edited by Drew Chappell

Deepening Literacy Learning: Art & Literature Engagements in K-8 Classrooms by Mary Ann Reilly, Jane M. Gangi and Rob Cohen

MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL

Calli by Jessica Lee Anderson

Last Night I Sang to the Monster by Benjamin Alire Senz

Far from Home by Na’ima B. Robert

You Don’t Even Know Me: Stories and Poems About Boys by Sharon G. Flake

Walk Right In: The Story of the Yale Summer High School produced and directed by Larry Paros

ELEMENTARY

Nim and the War Effort by Milly Lee

Less Than Half, More Than Whole by Kathleen and Michael Lacapa, illustrated by Michael Lacapa

Same Same but Different by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw



Two Pairs of Shoes

BY ESTHER SANDERSON

“**L**ook what I bought, *nitanis*,” Maggie’s mother said, holding out a box, for it was Maggie’s eighth birthday.

“What is it?” asked Maggie.

“Look in and find out,” said her mother.

Maggie’s heart was pounding as she took the box into her hands. She had hoped, but didn’t dare believe, that in the box would be the thing she had been waiting for.

She looked in the box and inside were the most beautiful shoes she’d ever seen—black, patent leather shoes! They were the ones she had seen at Fowler’s Store. She had been dreaming of these shoes ever since she saw them in the store that spring. Maggie quickly tore off her moccasins and slid her feet into the black leather shoes. They fit perfectly!

Down the road she ran to show off her beautiful new shoes to her *Kokom*.

She hardly even felt the ground beneath her as she floated down the gravel road.

When she arrived at her *Kokom*’s house, she was sitting in her favorite chair in the corner of her kitchen.

“Look *Nokom*, I have new shoes,” said Maggie, her little face beaming.

“Come *nosisim*, and let me feel them,” said her *Kokom*, for Maggie’s *Kokom* was blind and could only see by touching.

Kokom felt the shoes all over, while Maggie stood silently watching her.

“They’re very nice, *nosisim*,” said *Kokom* handing Maggie back her new shoes.

“Now go to the box that I keep under my bed and bring out the bag that’s in there.”

The box that *Kokom* kept under her bed was opened only on special occasions. It was known to Maggie, her sisters and brothers as the “special box.” As Maggie looked under the bed she wondered what would be in the special box for her today. She brought the paper bag to her *Kokom*.

“Open it, *nosisim*,” said *Kokom*. Maggie opened up the bag and inside was a pair of moccasins. They were beaded in the most beautiful flower designs that Maggie had ever seen. Tears came to her eyes as she suddenly remembered *Kokom* couldn’t see. How could she have made such a beautiful pair of moccasins?

“Well *nosisim*,” said *Kokom*, “today is a special day for you, for you have been given two pairs of shoes. From now on you must remember when and how to wear each pair.” ♦

nitanis *my daughter, my girl*

nosisim *my granddaughter*

Kokom *grandmother (used when talking about any grandmother but your own)*

Nokom *my grandmother (used when talking to or about your own grandmother)*

© 1990 Esther Sanderson. This work is protected by copyright and the making of this copy was with the permission of Access Copyright. Any alteration of its content or further copying in any form whatsoever is strictly prohibited unless otherwise permitted by law.

For other children’s books by Pemmican Publications, Inc., visit pemmicanpublications.ca



Questions for Readers

Right There: Describe Maggie's two gifts by making a Venn Diagram to compare. Who did they come from? What did they look like? How did they make Maggie feel?

Think and Search: Why is Kokom's blindness an important part of the story?

Author and You: "From now on you must remember when and how to wear each pair," Kokom tells Maggie. Describe an occasion when you think she should choose the moccasins and a time when she should wear the black leather shoes instead.

On My Own: Do you ever feel like you have to remember when and how to wear different parts of yourself? Explain how the way you dress, the food you eat and the way you speak is different when you are at home than when you are at school.

See the online *Teachers' Toolkit* for additional ideas about how to use this story across grade levels and subject areas. VISIT » tolerance.org/two-shoes



ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY FREDA

ENGAGE YOUR STUDENTS—IT'S FREE!

Teaching Tolerance's film kits bring social justice issues to life in your classroom.

ONE SURVIVOR REMEMBERS

Gerda Weissmann Klein's account of surviving the Holocaust encourages thoughtful classroom discussion about a difficult-to-teach topic.
Grades 6-12

A TIME FOR JUSTICE

AMERICA'S CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT
Follow the civil rights movement from Emmett Till to the passing of the Voting Rights Act. *Grades 6-12*

MIGHTY TIMES

THE CHILDREN'S MARCH

The heroic story of the young people in Birmingham, Alabama, who brought segregation to its knees.
Grades 6-12



VIVA LA CAUSA

An introduction to lessons about struggles for workers' rights—both past and present.
Grades 6-12

STARTING SMALL

A tool for early grades educators creating classrooms in which peace, equity and justice are guiding themes.
Professional Development

BULLIED

A STUDENT, A SCHOOL AND A CASE THAT MADE HISTORY
One student's ordeal at the hands of anti-gay bullies culminates in a message of hope. *Grades 6-12*

"I used the *One Survivor Remembers* materials with my eighth graders as an introductory/build background unit with my ESL students—it was FANTASTIC."

CHRISTINA ARGIANAS, teacher

"You saved my curriculum in my Social Activism class and helped enhance my unit on immigration in U.S. History!"

LYNNE KENNEY, teacher

"My students have been profoundly affected by [your] movies over the years."

ISABELLE SPOHN, 6th grade teacher

FREE TO EDUCATORS

All kits include film and teacher's guide.

ORDER ONLINE!

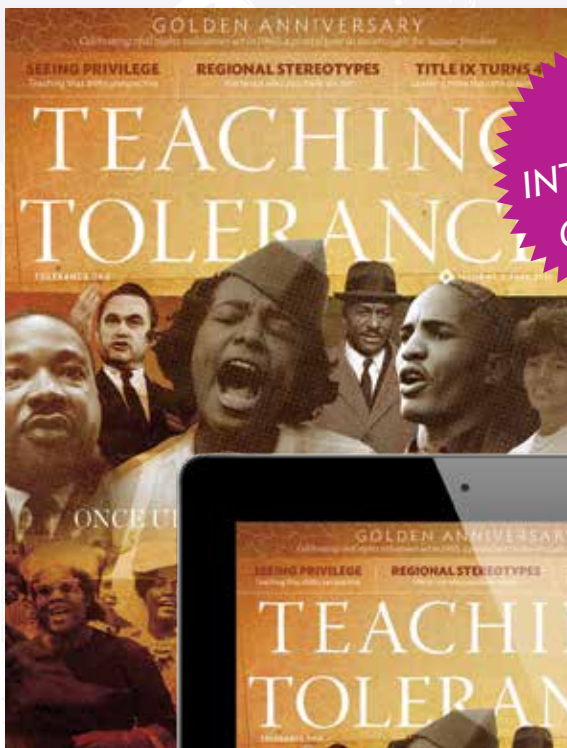
tolerance.org/material/orders

TEACHING TOLERANCE

A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER
400 Washington Avenue • Montgomery, AL 36104

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Southern Poverty
Law Center

GET *TEACHING TOLERANCE* MAGAZINE ON YOUR TABLET



**NEW
INTERACTIVE
CONTENT**

**TEACHING TOLERANCE
MAGAZINE IS
GOING DIGITAL**

SUBSCRIBE NOW

and get three **FREE** issues a year—
fall, spring and summer!

- ✓ Photo galleries
- ✓ Audio and video
- ✓ Toolkits on the go
- ✓ Supplemental information
- ✓ Helpful information

ALREADY A PRINT SUBSCRIBER?

Update your info now to get
Teaching Tolerance on your tablet.
tolerance.org/subscribe

