

# teaching for equity

AT A GLANCE HANDOUT



## A Guide to Integrating Academics, Well-Being & Anti-Racism in Student Experiences

### Purpose

Our work as teachers is always changing, and never more than this year. A global pandemic forced teachers, administrators, students, and families to make an almost instant switch to remote learning, redefining how instruction happens in classrooms around the globe. At the same time, a reckoning with systemic racism fueled by generations of police brutality and the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor demonstrated the urgency of supporting teachers to connect current events with experiences in the classroom. Teachers have the awesome responsibility of being “lead learners” and rarely has there been a moment when that matters more than now.

**Teaching all students requires us to critically understand and center racial identity to disrupt the patterns of harm our country has inflicted on communities of color and that our education system continues to perpetuate.** These barriers to opportunity are magnified when seen together with other factors such as gender and gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, and social class. Black, Latino/x, and Indigenous students and other students of color deserve excellent teaching every day that affirms their inherent strengths and cultivates the knowledge they need to pursue their ambitions. As a country, we have yet to fulfill this charge. That is why we as teachers must continue to reflect on the daily actions we can take to learn, grow, and act in community with all students and each other.

*Teaching for Equity* is an integrated framework designed to guide us to reflect on our practice, to see the connections across areas of research that support whole students, and to live out our commitments to anti-racism. Our students are counting on us.

**Think back to your own experiences in school or to the experiences of students you know and care about. What does it look, sound, and feel like when learning is academically rigorous? Supportive of well-being? Affirming? What does it NOT look, sound, and feel like?**

Decades of research tell us that supportive teaching combines academically rigorous content; social, emotional, and cognitive development; and anti-racism. Therefore, we propose a vision for equity in teaching that acknowledges these domains as equal and interdependent parts of teaching whole students.

***Teaching for Equity:* Equitable instruction honors students’ strengths and identities while ensuring each student has access to the content, mindsets, and social, emotional, and cognitive skills they need to succeed and thrive in college, career, and life. Teachers committed to teaching for equity believe in the power of their practice to disrupt inequities, transform students’ experiences and outcomes, and to create a more just and joyful world.**



Download the full framework and access more resources at [leadingeducators.org/equity](https://leadingeducators.org/equity).

## The Framework At-A-Glance

The instructional vision captured in *Teaching for Equity* translates and integrates research into five strands of teacher beliefs, practices, and resources.

The beliefs in the three classroom strands offer a cohesive vision of educational opportunity and the teacher mindsets that support it, alongside a menu of practices that support teachers in putting our beliefs into action.

- The **Anti-Racist Curriculum & Standards** strand discusses *what* we teach, focusing on lessons that integrate academics, anti-racism, and social, emotional, cognitive, and identity development to support learning, well-being, justice, and joy.
- The **Radically Inclusive Relationships & Communities** strand focuses on the identities, mindsets, relationships, and practices that support equitable learning communities where all students belong, learn, and thrive.
- And, finally, the **Equitable Instructional Practices** strand describes *how* teaching and learning happen live in the classroom, with a focus on the interplay between students, teachers, and the content of the lesson.



In addition to the work inside of classrooms, we acknowledge that no one teacher can do this work alone. To transform beliefs, practices, and outcomes, teachers need resources, both personally and systemically, and so the classroom strands are built upon two resource strands. **Inner Resources** are the values, beliefs, and practices that support our personal well-being and fuel reflection and growth. The **School and System Resources** strand describes the resources, policies, and learning conditions that create foundational support for equitable teaching and learning.

Working together, these five strands for the *Teaching for Equity* framework foster excellent and equitable learning experiences and outcomes for every student.



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# Beliefs At-A-Glance

Anti-Racist Curriculum and Standards	Radically Inclusive Relationships & Communities	Equitable Instructional Practices
<i>We believe...</i>	<i>We believe...</i>	<i>We believe...</i>
(1) The purpose of school is more than academics; our lessons offer the chance to integrate a focus on academics, social, emotional, cognitive, and identity development, and anti-racism to support learning, well-being, justice, and joy.	(6) Teachers have the power to find, celebrate, and build on students' brilliance and to affirm their identities as people and as learners.	(11) Students are at the center of equitable classrooms; when teachers are willing to step back, they encourage students to take on the cognitive lift.
(2) College and Career Readiness standards are a foundation of equity for all students. Starting from standards-aligned materials helps to ensure students have the opportunity to engage with grade-level content.	(7) When teachers authentically believe in students' potential, communicate this belief to students, and intentionally support students with productive mindsets and cognitive development, students succeed.	(12) Teachers have the power to support students in collaborating and learning collectively, paying close attention to group dynamics and trends in participation to interrupt patterns of racism and marginalization.
(3) Students' cultures and identities are valuable; lessons offer the chance to affirm and include students' cultures as scaffolds for learning and to broaden students' perspectives by learning about other cultures.	(8) Learning is social and emotional; students deserve social and emotional development in order to build the skills to understand and process their own emotions, to better understand and connect with others, and to repair, restore, and heal from harm, when needed.	(13) When teachers pay close attention to students' ideas and ask strategic questions, we are able to gather evidence and uncover what students know and don't yet know.
(4) Every student deserves both access to grade-level learning and the scaffolds to succeed with it, including scaffolds and extra-linguistic supports for students who are neurodiverse or emergent multilinguals.	(9) Building relationships with students and families is a crucial foundation for learning; when teachers and families form trusting partnerships, students are supported to succeed.	(14) Combining content knowledge with evidence of students' learning helps teachers tailor instruction to support all students in succeeding with the lesson.
(5) Students deserve learning that matters to them and is in service of their goals. Lessons have the power to invite students to make choices during learning, to have voice, and to see the relevance of learning to their lives, communities, and the world.	(10) Classrooms have the power to be safe learning communities where all students belong and thrive; students deserve support with the skills and routines to support collaboration and learning together.	(15) Offering students feedback has the power to reinforce productive mindsets and beliefs, celebrate progress, and describe next steps for their individual growth toward learning goals.

