

# Educating Equitably During and After the Pandemic



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# Challenges Created by the Pandemic and Quarantine

- ✓ Limited access to virtual learning
- ✓ Limited support at home
- ✓ Limited guidance to teachers on how to meet the needs of vulnerable students
- ✓ Insufficient guidance on how to make learning meaningful

# Other Challenges



- ✓ Economic uncertainty
- ✓ Fear about the Coronavirus
  - ✓ Disproportionate impact on Black people
- ✓ Housing instability
- ✓ Lack of healthcare

# We must draw upon what we know about youth development and student learning

- Social and emotional needs affect academic performance

  - We need a holistic approach to improve academic outcomes

- Young people learn and develop through relationships with peers and adults

- Students with greatest needs are most likely to be marginalized and be most adversely impacted during the pandemic

- Too much screen time and not enough physical activity is not good for kids

- Stress related to fear and uncertainty is likely to be high

Schools can't solve challenges related to poverty alone, nor can they ignore them



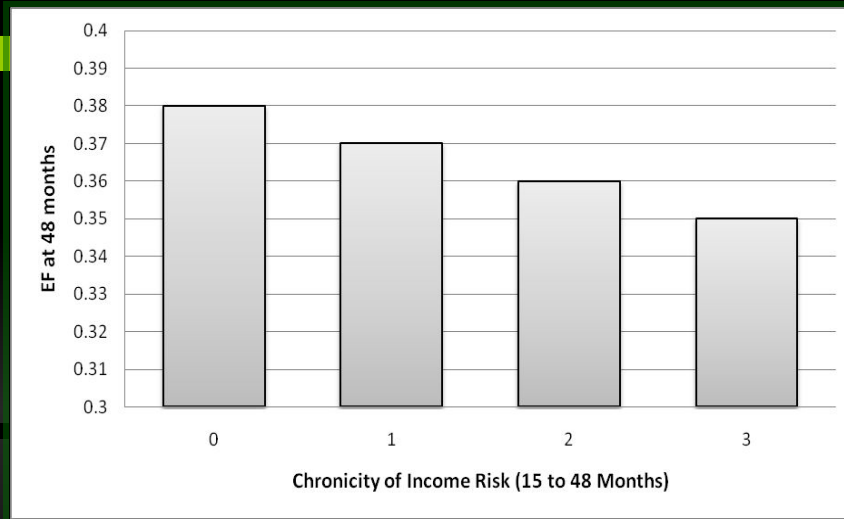
# Poverty is not the problem?

In the debate over how to fix American public education, many believe that **schools alone** cannot overcome the impact that economic disadvantage has on a child, that life outcomes are fixed by poverty and family circumstances, and that education doesn't work until other problems are solved. This theory is, in some ways, comforting for educators...

Problem is, the theory is wrong. It's hard to know how wrong -- because we haven't yet tried to make the changes that would tell us -- but plenty of evidence demonstrates that schools can make an enormous difference despite the challenges presented by poverty and family background.

Joel Klein, Janet Murguia, Michael Lomax, Washington Post, April 9, 2010

# Toxic stress impacts learning



Children exposed to higher levels of poverty for longer periods of time have greater difficulty with

- Attention
- Working memory
- Inhibitory control

Increasing evidence for the toxic stress hypothesis –

Stressors associated with poverty increase wear and tear on cardiovascular and HPA axis-> hypothesized to be “biomediator” of impact on brain development and function



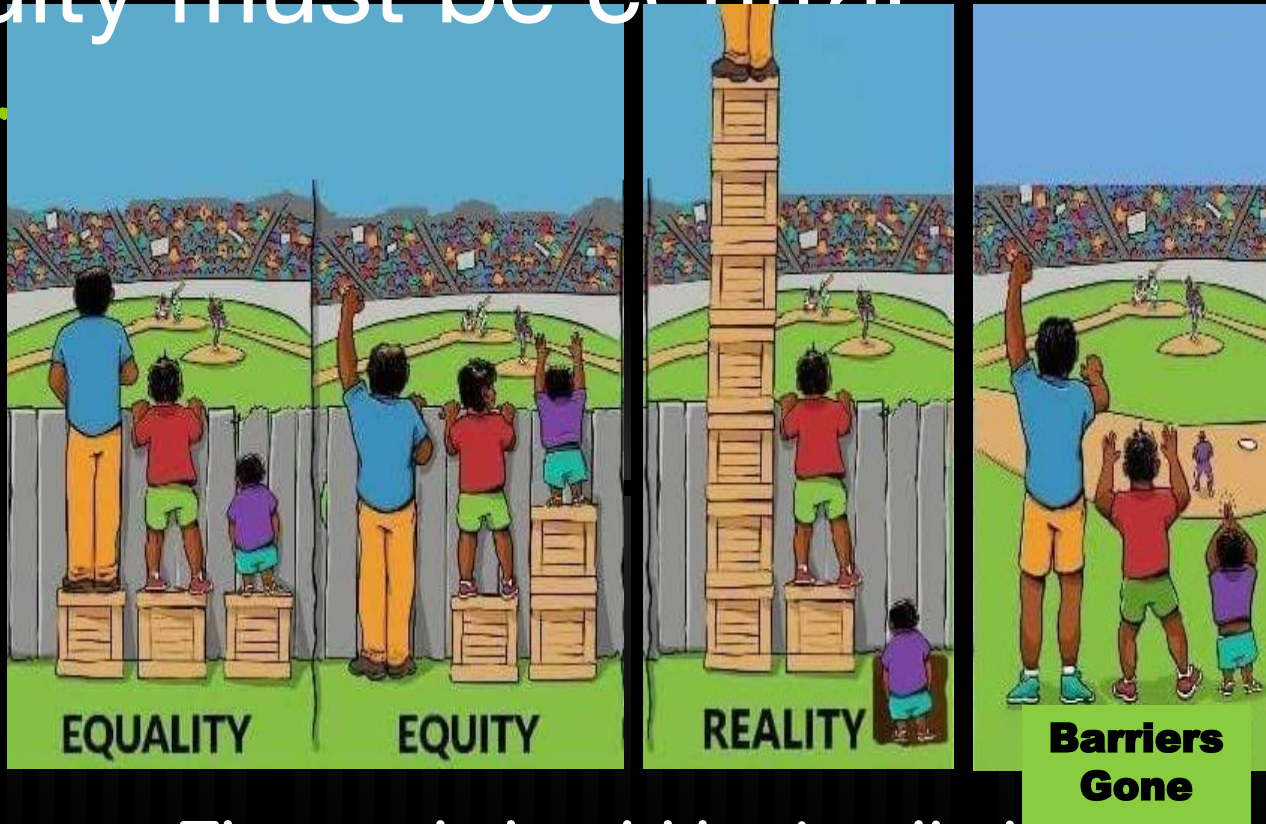




# Social Emotional Conditions for Learning

*Source:* Cantor et al., 2017; Darling-Hammond et al., 2018; Osher et al., 2017, 2018; Osher, Cotla, & Linick, 2018; Osher & Kendziora, 2018; Steele & Claude-Vagas, 2013; Salinger & Osher, 2018)

# Equity must be central



**EQUITY** – giving  
the same,  
less of  
it is what  
d or not  
– giving  
the exactly  
y need,  
ey need it.

The goal should be to eliminate  
barriers to learning for ALL students

# What should our educational goals be during the pandemic?

- ✓ Learning should be meaningful and relevant
- ✓ Relationships should be central
- ✓ Whole child focus should be maintained

# Whenever possible...



- ✓ A commitment to learning that is active
- ✓ Learning that is Collaborative
- ✓ Learning that develops higher order thinking skills
- ✓ Learning that Supports Mastery

# Creating a student centered culture

## Social Justice Humanitas Academy

Community building

Collective decision making

School-community partnerships

Teacher empowerment

Students evaluate teachers

Results: 4<sup>th</sup> highest grad rate in LA, 95% college enrollment,  
no fights in 6 years



# Student Support

- Before schools closed, we surveyed all students to learn their technological needs, food/shelter needs and to see who was concerned about being at home all day. This allowed us to do targeted outreach immediately.
- We have a resource document we use to help students and families access money, food and other basic needs. We have a targeted intake questionnaire and targeted resource response document to support students, staff and families who are now facing the virus head on in their homes.

# Student Support



- We are currently developing a support committee to provide individualized responses to students and staff in need (any kind of need).
- We have done targeted outreach to our ELL families to make sure they understand what is going on and are getting support.
- All but a few students have laptops and hotspots. Each grade level meets weekly to discuss curriculum and which students need the most support.

# Teacher Support

In the first week, teachers had to do 4-5 two-hour sessions of PD per LAUSD. We were able to replace two of those with SEL based PD per the request of teachers who were struggling with "humanizing" online teaching. They emphasized teachers using the Heartset skills to reflect on their lives and their teaching practices before the virus and online.

- They have weekly faculty meetings. Last week Council Ways did a full 75 minute training on how to do councils or circles online.



# SEL Support

- Each grade level is approaching online advisory class differently. 9th and 10th grade teams teachers choose one self-care/SEL strategy they personally want to try - anything from cooking to meditation or yoga to journaling or book club.
- 9th and 10th grades are teaching students how to make a daily or weekly schedule since students (and adults) are struggling with managing their time.
- Women's and Men's groups continue to run online.
- Last month teachers and students completed online "escape" rooms, solving puzzles and working as teams to complete challenges.

# Social and Emotional Learning must be integrated into academic core

SEL includes:

- Impulse control, deferred gratification, empathy, ability to develop positive relationships w others
  - Emotional awareness, social intelligence
- Learning activities can be explicitly designed to teach SEL
- A broader definition of success
- Check in with kids to find out about their social and emotional needs

Strong relationships between teachers and students can foster SEL

# Develop strong, positive relationship w children to promote resilience

Communities and schools can make big difference by investing in universal preschool.

School leaders (and teachers, students) can actively capitalize on classic neuroscientific finding: The “social buffer” hypothesis –

The presence of supportive adult dramatically reduces

biological stress response as well as experience of anxiety for individuals facing major challenge or stressor



# Agency vs. Grit

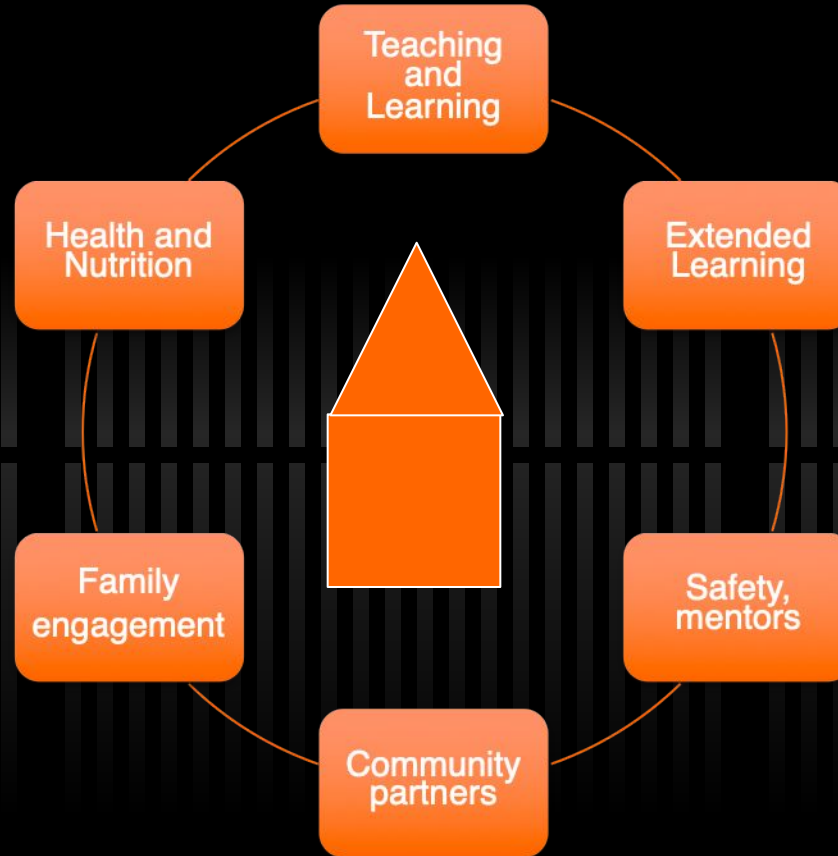
## Grit

- Individual attribute
- Ignores contextual barriers
- Hard to measure except after outcomes are achieved

## Agency

- Can be individual or collective in form
- Recognizes barriers and strategizes to confront
- Measureable through observation of actions and attitudes

# We Need A Holistic Vision



# Useful Resources

- Pandemic Parenting – NY Times 4/19/20
- Stay Engaged During Coronavirus Quarantine
- Supporting Online Learning During the Pandemic
- A Q and A with a Homeschooling Expert from Ed Source – 4/16
- Mental Health Wellness Tips for Quarantine
- All are available on Facebook - Pedro A. Noguera, Ph.D.

# Who are your students?



Does their identity influence how you see their potential or respond to their needs?





Do you see their strengths or just their weaknesses?

