Disrupting Poverty: Turning High-Poverty Schools Into High-Performing Schools

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#disruptingpoverty

Turn and Talk...
What needs to change?
What can you change in your sphere of influence?

Turn and Talk
3 minutes
Learner Outcomes

- **Emerge** with enhanced knowledge of what works for underachieving students living in poverty.
- **Understand** how high-poverty schools become high-performing.
- **Prepare to take informed action** to better meet the needs of underachieving students living in poverty.

Network / Collaborate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who Are You?</th>
<th>What Level?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Elementary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialists</td>
<td>High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>District Office</td>
<td>Districtwide</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Ask Yourself…
How Are We Doing?

Validate
Challenge To Improve

Poverty vs. Achievement in Illinois Elementary Schools

Nationally Recognized High-Poverty/High-Performing Schools
Disrupting Poverty Video Series

North Godwin Elementary
Wyoming, MI

Dispelling the Myth Award Winner
2009

North Godwin Elementary

Enrollment: 390

Ethnicity:

• Hispanic: 46.67%
• Caucasian: 23.85%
• African-American: 15.64%
• Asian: 2.56%
• American Indian/Alaska Native: .51%
• Multi-racial: 10.77%

Low-Income Students: 92%
“How many effective schools would you have to see... to be persuaded of the educability of poor children?”

If your answer is more than one, then I submit that you have reasons of your own for preferring to believe that basic pupil performance derives from family background instead of school response to family background...

We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us.”

Ron Edmonds, 1979
If one school can indeed overcome the pervasive effects of poverty on student achievement, shouldn't any school be able to do the same?

What's getting in our way?
Whose interests are we choosing to serve?
“A Framework for Action”

Turn and Talk…

Discuss your understanding of the Framework for Action in relationship to your school.
How Well Do You Know Your Students?

Three Interwoven Practices

- Ask Questions
- Use Data
- Build Relationships

16 Strategies
Foster Healthy, Supportive, Safe Learning Environments

1. Eliminate Blame
2. Establish A Safe Environment
3. Develop an Accurate Understanding of Poverty
4. Level The Playing Field
5. Use Structures/Processes that Promote Relationships
6. Engage Parents As Partners

Do We Understand Poverty?

STRATEGY 3
Establish an accurate understanding of poverty.

An Accurate Understanding of Poverty
Turn and Talk…
What significance does the information have for you in your current role?
What questions does it raise?
Turn and Talk

3 minutes

Confronting Common Myths
Fact or Fiction . . .
- People in poverty are unmotivated and have weak work ethics.
- Education, as a way out of poverty, is readily accessible to everyone.
- People living in poverty are uninvolved in their children’s education because they do not value education.
- People living in poverty tend to abuse drugs and alcohol more than people in other socioeconomic classes.

Understanding Mental Maps
- Are images, assumptions, and stories carried in our minds that shape behavior and attitude.
- Are usually tacit until we examine them.
- Can limit our ability to change.
- Can be identified through inquiry/reflection.
How Do We Talk About Poverty?

- What are the dangers of having a deficit perspective?
- Do we separate children’s developing sense of self from their living conditions?
- How important are the words/labels we use?

Words Matter

Have We Fostered Caring/Bonded Relationships Between Students and School?

**STRATEGY 5:**
Develop programs and structures that support caring relationships.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=9WzIzItpy7
Cultivating Caring Relationships: What Is Relational Trust?

- Mutual Respect
- Competence
- Personal Regard
- Integrity

Source: Bryk and Schneider, *Trust in Schools: A Core Resource for Improvement*

Cultivating Caring Relationships: The Importance of Relational Trust

- Strongest levels of trust: 1 in 2 chance of making significant improvement in student achievement.
- Weakest levels of trust: 1 in 7 chance of making significant improvement in student achievement.

Source: Bryk and Schneider, *Trust in Schools: A Core Resource for Improvement*

Caring Relationships: What Research Tells Us

- Increases student effort and engagement (Qualglia, Fox, Corso, 2010) (Redding, 2013)
- Promotes Resiliency (Johnson, 2008) (Bride & Cutcher, 2015)
- Improves Academic Achievement (Hattie, 2009)
Visible Learning – John Hattie

Teacher/Student Relationships .72

Visible Learning Laboratories
University of Auckland
2008

Building Relationships

Develop Structures That Promote Relationships

Example: Student Advisories
- Faculty/student ratio: 20:1
- 30 minutes/4 days per week
- Four-year commitment
- Performance-based graduation requirements
- Progress reports every two weeks
Taking Action in Your Classroom

- Begin with 4 building blocks: Identification, Authenticity, Empathy, Trust
- View parents/families as a key resource
- Everyday interactions make the difference
- Be fully present, listen, set aside time to bond

8 Tips from Teachers

Taking Action in Your Classroom

- Create a sense of extended family and community in your classroom.
- Move beyond defined roles.
- Harness the power of creativity.
- Build a network of support for yourself and your students.

8 Tips from Teachers (cont.)

Great Ideas from Secondary Teachers

- No Homework…Name Game
- Baseball Cards
- Secret Handshakes
- Team Building: Desert Island/Stacking Cups
- Bell Ringers
- Tech to Connect
- Humans of [insert your class/school]
- Survey, Interviews and Interest Inventories

Taking Action in Your Classroom

Great Ideas from Secondary Teachers
Taking Action in Your Classroom

- Two-Minute Drill
- A Little Bag About Me
- Peer Puzzle
- Team Building: Stand Up/Sit Down
- Bell Ringers/Warm Ups
- Tech to Connect
- Check-in Checklist
- Apple Glyphs

Building Relationships With Students

Turn and Talk…
What does your school do to explicitly build relationships with students?
What do you do in your classroom?
Every school can overcome the debilitating effects of poverty . . .

. . . demographics do not equal destiny!

We must combat hopelessness and instill in EVERY child the self-confidence that they can achieve and succeed in school and in life.
What Do We Choose to Do?

Our students are waiting . . .

YouTube Links

Exam Hall: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6BzcT9vo8

Hard Times Generation:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDj8eJZVjg

*The Disrupting Poverty DVD Series can be found at: