Teacher Education and Social Justice in the 21st Century: Two Contested Concepts

Formación del Profesorado y Justicia Social en el Siglo XXI: Dos Conceptos Controvertidos

Formação de Professores e Justiça Social no Século XXI: Dois Conceitos Controversos

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In 2016, it seems impossible to stipulate that the basic aim of a thoughtful and engaged citizenry for the United States is shared by all. But irrespective of political spectacle, forces of social and cultural reproduction play out in public schools and universities, and often experiences and realities are located and interpreted to privilege an instrumental, quantitative, and some would say narrow construction of the purpose of schooling. This short essay addresses two tropes within education: teacher education (i.e. the ways in which teachers are prepared) and social justice (i.e. one means to an end for such preparation). The current social and political climate in the United States demands that these respective terms stay salient with regard to the needs of children in public schools. Said another way, both social justice and teacher education have become contested concepts. Are they compatible, or is their consonance an educational chimera?

Keywords: Teacher education, Social reproduction, Cultural responsiveness, Justice, Equity.

En 2016, parece imposible estipular que el objetivo básico de una ciudadanía reflexiva y comprometida para los Estados Unidos sea compartido por todos. Pero independientemente del espectáculo político, fuerzas de la reproducción social y cultural se desarrollan en las escuelas y universidades públicas y, a menudo, las experiencias y las realidades son ubicadas e interpretadas para privilegiar una construcción instrumental, cuantitativa, y algunos dirían que estrecha, del propósito de la escolarización. Este breve ensayo aborda dos temas fundamentales dentro de la educación: la formación del profesorado (es decir, las maneras en que los maestros son preparados) y la justicia social (es decir, una forma de proceder para dicha preparación). El actual clima social y político en los Estados Unidos exige que estos respectivos términos permanezcan destacados en relación a las necesidades de los niños en las escuelas públicas. Dicho de otro modo, tanto la justicia social como la formación del profesorado se han convertido en conceptos controvertidos. ¿Son estos compatibles, o es su consonancia una quimera educativa?

Descriptores: Formación de profesorado, Reproducción social, Sensibilidad cultural, Justicia, Equidad.

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Em 2016, parece impossível estipular que o objetivo básico de uma cidadania reflexiva e comprometida para os Estados Unidos seja compartilhado por todos. Mas independente do espetáculo político, forças da reprodução social e cultural desenvolvem-se nas escolas e universidades públicas e, frequentemente, as experiências e as realidades são direcionadas e interpretadas para privilegiar uma construção instrumental, quantitativa, e alguns diriam que próximo, do propósito da escolarização. Este breve ensaio aborda dois temas fundamentais dentro da educação: a formação do professor (ou seja, as maneiras em que os professores são preparados) e a justiça social (ou seja, uma forma de proceder para esta preparação). O atual clima social e político nos Estados Unidos exige que estes respectivos termos permaneçam destacados em relação às necessidades das crianças nas escolas públicas. Em outras palavras, tanto a justiça social como as formações do professor converteram-se em conceitos controversos. São estes compatíveis ou é sua consonância uma quimera educativa?

**Palavras-chave:** Formação de professores, Reprodução social, Sensibilidade cultural, Justiça, Equidade.

**Introduction**

*American society is pluralist; American citizens are ineluctably diverse. We vary in temperament, talent, and capacity within all groups and categories, including those of sex and race. We locate ourselves in the world in the light of experiences we built up over time. We interpret the realities we confront through perspectives made up of particular ranges of interests, occupations, commitments, and desires.* (Greene, 1978, p. 126)

Greene’s (1978) proposition that Americans “locate” and “interpret” our experiences and realities in order to prepare a thoughtful and engaged citizenry remains one of the irreducible challenges of schooling in the United States. In the 2016 presidential election season in the United States it seems not possible to stipulate that the basic aim of a thoughtful and engaged citizenry is shared by all. The rhetorical and at times physical impact of one candidate’s message – that America includes intolerance and unkindness and at times violence – has scared many families with students in public schools¹. But irrespective of the current political spectacle, forces of social and cultural reproduction play out in public schools and universities, and often experiences and realities are located and interpreted to privilege an instrumental, quantitative, and some would say narrow construction of the purpose of schooling. For example, although the name of the US education code has changed recently from “No Child Left Behind” to the “Every Student Succeeds Act,” both use metrics of achievement and progress stemming from narrow definitions of intelligence and success, and superficial attention to diversity. Further, market forces impact education, writ large, and the language of the marketplace, with teachers as sellers and students as buyers continues to infuse the schooling experience with an educational atmosphere that reflects the market ideologies which define other American industries. Some have long argued that this process “engenders a survival of the fittest mentality” that ensures “those with the least will continue to get the least” (Keiser, 2005, p. 43). Teachers and teacher educators exist to insure the development and success of all students but in 2016, it is incumbent upon teachers and professors of education to ask: Where does social justice fit in teacher education?

¹ See *The Trump Effect: The impact of the presidential campaign on our nation’s schools*. Southern Poverty Law Center, Montgomery, AL, 2016.
Returning to Greene’s (1978) proposition that American citizens as a whole “locate” and “interpret” experiences and realities and perspectives shaped by our “interests, occupations, commitments, and desires,” is to try to empathize and understand others’ realities. Said a different way, teachers and educators are charged with teaching and caring for “other people’s children,” (Delpit, 1988). This can challenge Americans’ vast range of distinct beliefs, traditions, backgrounds and experiences. Teachers and teacher-educators can accept that, “the political nature of teaching and the view that teachers should address larger structural inequities may require faculty to explicitly stand outside the mainstream of what constitutes the role of teachers and teacher education within the field more generally” (McDonald, 2007, p. 2063).

This short essay addresses two tropes within the field of education: teacher education (i.e. the ways in which teachers are prepared) and social justice (i.e. the means to an end for such preparation). It begins with rudimentary definitions of each, and then posits that the current social and political climate in the United States demands that these respective terms from stay salient with regard to the needs of children in public schools. Said another way, both social justice and teacher education have become contested concepts. Are they compatible, or is their consonance an educational chimera?

1. Essentially contested concepts

The British philosopher, W. B. Gallie (1955) coined the phrase “essentially contested concepts,” referring to concepts difficult to define and translate. For example, the concept of social justice can mean very different things between different societies, and within any one society or culture may exist various definitions for social justice. As Americans, we think we know what social justice means, yet history reminds us that the term has multiple meanings. For example, Father Charles Coughlin, known as “The Radio Priest” during the 1920’s and 30’s in the United States, had a program with an ongoing diatribe against a democratic society, and in support of the government emerging in Nazi Germany. Coughlin had millions of listeners, and a widely distributed newsletter entitled, “Social Justice.” Although one might disagree with defining social justice from the ideas Coughlin put forth, for his readers the title was appropriate. Similarly, during the run-up to the 2016 Presidential Election, one candidate has wielded the mantle of social justice without necessarily using the term. Is threatening to keep out Muslim immigrants, some of whom are said to be dangerous, an example of social justice or injustice? Is building a wall to keep out people who uphold the foundations of American industry, some of whom may compete with native-born job applicants, socially just or unjust? Are militaristic threats against countries weaker than our own truly representative of social justice? Even asking these rhetorical questions bespeaks a level of public intolerance neither common nor conducive to the creation of an informed, caring, and responsible citizenry.

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2 Note: For the purposes of this article, the term “Americans” is used interchangeably with citizens of the United States. Similarly, “teacher” and “educator” are used interchangeably, if both are used, differentiation between K-12 and college and university teaching will be noted.
2. Social justice from and in education and teacher education

As educators, we abide by a much different interpretation of social justice. In its essence, justice-oriented living can be characterized by several interrelated principles including: caring and compassion for others (Conklin & Hughes, 2016); respectful consideration of other people's viewpoints and argument (i.e. dialogue) based on reason (Agarwal, Epstein, Oppenheim, Oyler, & Sonu, 2010); civic participation and cooperation and an unflagging adherence to the acceptance of diversity as well as the equitable distribution of opportunity to all people regardless of individual differences (McDonald, 2007). Although a nation in its entirety –especially one as diverse as the United States– will not likely agree on any single set of principles, what is important is having an educated citizenry, that schools are to some extent expected to create, who can think critically about the many different characterizations put forth by politicians, public figures and even celebrities. To actualize Greene's (1978) assumptions of this country and its people, we need citizens who can “locate” their own realities within the larger context of American society and then “interpret” their perspectives against the vast array of shared experiences that comprise American life. It is here that we must reinforce public education's role in a democratic society, as well as the role of teacher educator, professionals responsible for preparing preservice teachers for a future in public education.

Teacher education for social justice includes both the professional preparation of preservice teachers and the preservation of a pedagogical core of justice. Nevertheless, the concept of teacher education –like social justice itself– is also a contested concept. Although teacher education programs and teacher educators may hope to reflect the principles of social justice, their efforts are continuously undermined by the systematic inequities engendered by government policies regulating public education and the standards to which it is held. What we have seen lately is a seemingly irrevocable emphasis on accountability and high stakes testing, even at the level of teacher education. Accordingly, “busying teachers with testing and credentialing requirements inhibits the very type of useful professional development –i.e. content integration, differentiated instruction –that would more likely lead to socially just teaching” (Keiser, 2005, p. 40). Teacher education is further complicated by the entrepreneurial alternatives for preservice teachers, such as Teach for America, which are subject to market challenges and competition, but not to the same curricular and testing mandates as public schools. Instead of treating teacher education as a complex and nuanced endeavor, these alternative routes to teaching purport market ideologies that commodify education: the expediency with which these programs push teachers into the classroom drastically depreciates the true value of teachers and educators as professionals, who are viewed as interchangeable parts (i.e. widgets). As Keiser (2005) commented, “…increasingly, teacher’s roles are conceptualized as technicians, examiners, or replaceable parts,” (p. 45). Consequently, the concept of well-trained and educated teachers seems less important and valued by the greater American public. As federal support and student enrollment drop off, not only is the reputation of teacher education programs in jeopardy but the needs of the very individuals the make us “ineluctably diverse.”

As role models for younger generations, teachers and teacher educators must be prepared to enact the doctrines of democracy and social justice within the microcosm of
the school environment. Drawing from her experiences interviewing and working with prestigious teacher education programs, McDonald (2007) asserts the importance of preparing justice-oriented teachers for the daunting task of educating a diverse population of learners (i.e. the demographic imperative), especially within America’s current sociopolitical atmosphere:

Teacher education programs—responsible for preparing the majority of new teachers entering the profession—face the challenges posed by the demographic imperative. To improve the educational opportunities of students of color, low-income students, and English language learners, teacher education programs may need to rethink and reshape the ways in which they prepare teachers for today’s complex task of teaching. Toward this effort, social justice teacher education programs aim to prepare teachers with the knowledge, dispositions, and practices necessary to provide students from diverse backgrounds with high quality opportunities to learn. (p. 2050)

In other words, teacher education programs must first deal with the external pressures from government mandates and public opinion in order to “rethink” and “reshape” the process by which they can prepare preservice teachers for the increasingly “complex task of teaching” in today’s politically-charged public schools. Therefore, teacher educators should not only equip preservice teachers with the knowledge to distinguish between social justice and injustice, but also model for them the nature of socially just practices both in and out of the classroom. In this way, teacher educators must embody the principles they are teaching in the classroom, and maintain a focus on socially just pedagogy.

2.1. Modeling an understanding of social justice

With this question, we are presented the crux of essentially contested concepts they mean nothing until they are defined. Therein lays the importance of systematically defining social justice as it pertains to teacher education: only once we determine its basic principles can we then begin framing more complex conceptions around concrete pedagogical practices. Conklin and Hughes (2016) echo this awareness in their own research of a justice-oriented approach to teacher education: “In this way, we can collectively contribute to clear conceptualizations of teacher education practices focused on socially just outcomes…without these clear conceptualizations, we risk the failure of the entire movement to reform teacher education” (p. 59). Any educators pursuing socially just education must define what they mean by the term “justice-oriented teacher education”, but more importantly, all educators have a responsibility to outline pedagogical strategies and practices that reflect—and uphold—the beliefs on which these definitions hinge. These beliefs, and the meanings derived by them, are negotiated by the educational approaches that work to establish a relationship between a community of practitioners and their shared objectives, (McDonald, 2007). For the community of justice-oriented educators, social justice includes practical applications in the classroom.

As teachers and teacher educators, we have a responsibility to be active participants in classroom proceedings, to model and demonstrate democratic and socially just practices, and facilitate equitable opportunities for all students in the classroom. By modeling what it means to be a member of a democratic and open learning community, teachers can show students how to apply the concept of social justice both in and out of the classroom. Agarwal and others (2010) refer to one of their former students, Allison, who is a justice-oriented teacher in her first year in public education, as an example of an educator’s “commitment to ideals of sharing authority and promoting open dialogue,
illustrating her dedication to student voice and relevant, yet potentially controversial, issues” (p. 244). Hence, making social justice the heart of her curriculum allowed her students to experience it first-hand in the classroom, while also internalizing its principles and applications through experiential learning. Despite her focus on justice-oriented pedagogy, however, Allison reflected on her own authority, privilege and voice (Agarwal et al., 2010, p. 244). Since social justice pedagogy can hinge on how an educator organizes the curriculum and manages the classroom, it is imperative that the practices of justice-oriented educators align with those same principles professed to their students.

For Conklin and Hughes (2016), the negotiation of complex power dynamics – reminiscent of those found within larger sociopolitical contexts– is an integral aspect of their justice-oriented teacher education curriculum, and though in an authoritative position, they posit that educators can choose to not participate in and reinscribe power dynamics to create a more democratic and open learning community” (p. 51). By working against authoritarian practices, teacher educators can model strategies through which preservice teachers can relinquish control of the classroom goings-on in order to create a community where all voices are heard and opinions recognized as important and valuable. Such an approach can pave the way for a variety of socially just practices that can redefine classroom dynamics and, consequently, community roles, interactions and relationships. Nevertheless, teachers and educators still play an important part in the classroom proceedings, particularly regarding the enactment of a just and equitable curriculum. Reflecting the principles of democracy and social justice, teachers should be active participants in the learning process; moreover, they should work with students to define democracy and social justice, and how those principles play out not only in the classroom but in larger society, too. Agarwal and others (2010) also comment on the respective roles of teachers and students in a justice-oriented educational environment, finding that “curriculum enactment is defined as not just the delivery of information or adaptation of curriculum but rather as the interactions between and among students and teachers”, as they interpret and construct meaning through classroom content and pedagogy. Rather than viewing curriculum as information that is transmitted from teacher to student, it becomes experience shared by both student and teacher.

Clearly, social justice in education demands a redefining of the roles traditionally reserved for teachers and their students. No longer are teachers considered directors of the learning process, but rather facilitators whose responsibilities are to guide the thoughts and behaviors of their students towards more equitable and socially just classroom constructions. As active participants, teacher educators can model justice-oriented practices for and with their preservice teachers; preservice teachers can then model these approaches in their own public school classrooms to inform a younger generation of more democratic and justice-minded citizens.

2.2. Compassion and the creation of safe spaces

To ensure the axioms of social justice are integrated into American society via public education requires the acting out of them, first and foremost, in the teacher education classroom. As teacher educators, we must reconsider our roles in the classroom through self-reflection and, at times, self-criticism. For example, in evoking Greene (1978), Conklin and Hughes (2016) argue, “By thinking about where we come from and the cultural locations in our community contexts that have influenced us thus far, we can
more easily recognize our assumptions, judgments, questions, etc., and work toward understanding alternative perceptions and perspectives” (p. 54). As mentioned, this process can allow teachers to become more conscious of their personal biases and perhaps prejudices— which all people naturally rely upon to make individual assumptions and judgments about others. An ability to “locate” and “interpret” our realities amidst the patchwork of lives and experiences in America can serve as a platform for a plethora of justice-oriented practices. Social justice in the classroom is an ideal that must be continuously plopped by teachers and students alike. Through intensive self-critique, teacher educators can unearth a cache of compassion for their students as well as a deeper understanding of the experiences which have brought them to teacher education. Conklin and Hughes (2016) assert a similar proposition:

In the same spirit, we found that another representation of modeling compassion for our preservice teachers was through active efforts and reminders to each other to learn more about them as people living in the world. Without this knowledge, we were often left with assumptions about who they were as students and future teachers. We worked to be mindful of the moments we made judgments about students based on our own assumptions, biases, and/or limited knowledge. (p. 53)

Hence, this process of self-reflection requires teacher educators to actively monitor their assumptions and opinions, and to stay mindful of the times in which they succumb to bias or prejudice. The capacity for compassionate feeling towards those different from us is a critical element of justice-oriented pedagogies, paving the way for the building of interpersonal relationships and creation of learning communities. In my own work, I have found that students of all ages learn about the world through interacting with others different than them. For example, after a short qualitative research project studying the effects of a new train station on their hometown, one high school student opined,

This is a community rich in family bonds and close friends. To many people the area is foreign and the difference makes it scary but in reality it is not horrible. It is very possible that because the area is so segregated from the rest of the town and has such poor relationship with the police that they are, in many ways, falsely profiled. (Keiser, 2005, p. 159)

Still, showing compassion for students and preservice teachers is not enough to guarantee social justice in the classroom; more importantly, we must know what to do with that compassion, how to transform it into actionable practices between ourselves and our students—like actively listening to others and expressing interest in their unique experiences or challenges. By learning from and about others, we display openness to understanding realities outside of our own and respect for individual voices whose knowledge, experiences, or beliefs are different from our own. In this way, “we can create spaces that invite [d] preservice teachers to think differently and embrace new experiences, both through pedagogies they may not have participated in before, and through experiences designed to further their understandings of inequitable social structures” (Conklin and Hughes, 2016, p. 54). This openness can allow teacher educators to build relationships with and among students, thereby creating a safe and accepting environment in which students and preservice teachers are not only valued for their individual knowledge and experiences, but also willing to investigate their world from multiple points of view. As collaborators in a multifaceted learning community, preservice teachers are invited to participate in the active inquiry of important issues surrounding education, diversity and social justice in America.
2.3. Collaborative inquiry and learning in the classroom

After creating safe spaces and inquiry-based learning communities comes the opportunity to introduce challenging, controversial and, at times, uncomfortable curriculum that explores the multiple perspectives inherent in a diverse and democratic society. According to Conklin and Hughes (2016), it is the responsibility of teacher educators to provide an array of learning materials and modes of inquiry accessible to all students regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic, gender or sexuality; in other words, a socially just curriculum requires the representation of multiple viewpoints and experiences of a diverse student body rather than only those of the dominant majority. McDonald (2007) promotes a similar conception of justice in the teacher education classroom, arguing for “the importance of valuing and respecting diversity” and acknowledging that “providing access to opportunities—in this case to all students—is essential” (p. 2059). Clearly, a diverse curriculum is indispensable for justice-oriented pedagogies, particularly when confronted with the increasingly diverse student populations. Even so, Conklin and Hughes (2016) remind us it is not enough just to present a diverse curriculum, with the hopes that our students glean its importance to a justice-oriented perspective, but to involve students in the selection of curriculum materials. The authors admonished their own practice, exemplifying transparent self-critique, for not having “conversations with [our] preservice teachers about those text choices regarding equity and openness” (p. 55). Consequently, dialogue can be viewed as an important aspect of not only learning about someone else’s experiences, but also fully understanding how those experiences might have impacted a person’s development. For Conklin and Hughes (2016), “active and compassionate listening” is imperative to the process of “trying to remain open to others’ points-of-view so we can better understand how they perceive the world in relation to our own perceptions, and being present while listening to someone else” (p. 54). With this ability comes the opportunity to engage in conversation surrounding difficult and controversial subjects relating to educational inequity and social injustice.

At times the very building blocks of school can be used in a socially just pedagogy. For example, the rituals of United States schooling provide apertures. For example, Parker (2006) notes that even when dealing with educational mainstays like the Pledge of Allegiance, a daily recitation in most US public schools, it is important that “discussion” enable “one’s own understanding” of the content to be “fertilized by the views of others” (p. 613). Moreover, diverse opinions and viewpoints mean, “One’s own interpretation is more likely to be challenged in interesting ways.” In this case, the very words of the Pledge can be unpacked and analyzed. As a result, inquiry can become transformative, forcing learners not only to reconsider their own ideologies but also to incorporate the beliefs and opinions of others into a more comprehensive understanding of the content and possibly even the world. For justice-oriented pedagogies, this approach can lead to an in-depth analysis and assessment of the curriculum in order to determine whether such practices as the Pledge of Allegiance are in fact inclusive and equitable, or exclusive and unjust. Through this collaborative process, learning communities can negotiate the different definitions of social justice in order clarify their own understandings of the principles and practices behind justice-oriented pedagogical approaches. More importantly, they are proffered the opportunity to redefine social justice in accordance with the varied realities and experiences—and thus, viewpoints—of the diverse community of which they are a part.
3. Impermanent conclusions and far-reaching recommendations

We return to the initial question: Are social justice and teacher education compatible concepts, or is their consonance nothing more than an educational chimera? Although all things change, at the moment the consonance of the concepts of social justice and teacher education seem incompatible at a macro level but not at a micro level. Said another way, teachers working directly with children and professors working directly with preservice teachers have incentives to teach in socially just ways: the very creation of classroom community and academic success depends in large part on just treatment of all in the learning community.

On the other hand, there seems at the macro levels of policy and politics a continual slide away from caring and just learning communities and the pedagogies needed for all to be successful. Most alarming has been the espousal of principles and values counter to democracy and social justice. For example, racist slurs and xenophobic language continues to seep into public schools. In a disturbing yet invaluable brochure, the Southern Poverty Law Center describes the chilling effect such political discourse can have on students. Teachers cite “uncivil discourse,” “anti-Muslim sentiment,” and “anti-immigrant sentiment,” during the run-up to the 2016 election (SPLC, 2016). Once again, we recall Father Coughlin, the priest who appropriated the phrase “social justice” for the promulgation of ideas in direct opposition to the tenets of a socially just society. In his book, Seeking Common Ground: Public Schools in a Diverse Society, educational historian David Tyack (2003) states, “many members of the Right have embraced pluralism and ‘multiculturalism’ in an effort to promote their own allegedly distinct or even threatened culture” (p. 57). Even today, it is evident the ways in which government administrations, as well as cultural associations or religious denominations, continue to “hijack” politically loaded words or expressions in order promote their own agendas, like nationalism and meritocracy, (Michelli and Keiser, 2005, p. 35) under the banners of democracy and social justice. That these terms align or not with their own ideologies is irrelevant. As Tyack (2003) remarks, “It is easier to devise fashionable slogans about diversity in education than to develop coherent and just policies in schools” (p. 70). His statement further reflects the distancing of policy dictates from the concepts upholding them and, consequently, the estrangement of those theories from their practice in the school environment. Accordingly, literal social justice can be lost in the maelstrom of meaningless words and hypocritical standards. As educators, we must work to rediscover and reiterate the true meaning of social justice in public education before it is too late.

Given the current state of American politics and educational policy, it is becoming increasingly important for justice-oriented educators to clarify their conceptualizations of social justice and its role in teacher education programs. As previously mentioned, justice-oriented education depends on teachers’ abilities to enact and model just practices within the classroom. For teacher educators, this involves modeling social justice for their preservice teachers; moreover, this capacity requires a comprehensive understanding of the values and principles that undergird social justice. Regarding her research of two renowned teacher education programs, McDonald (2007) asserts the “faculty’s capacity to engage in the work of social justice teacher education depended in part on their opportunities to collaborate” (p. 2070). She continues, “From faculty’s
perspective, opportunities to talk about social justice, to focus on their practice as teacher educators, and to discuss the entire curriculum were vital to their joint work” (McDonald, 2007, p. 2070). Of course, time for teachers and teacher educators to discuss practice and pedagogy with one another seems generous, but clearly, teacher educators need to not only model justice-oriented approaches like collaboration and discussion in their respective classrooms, but also in their professional lives. In this way, social justice and its basic principles can be integrated into a conceptualization that is not just taught, but also lived and experienced within real-world contexts.

Moreover, seeing social justice in action can help bridge the tenuous connection between its conception and practice, empowering teacher educators “to help teachers identify the context-specific connections between their conceptions and their practice and to value their own commitments to social justice” (Agarwal et al., 2010, p. 245) particularly as it relates to their personal and professional lives. Although this approach does not remedy the systematic inequities currently ingrained in public education, teacher educators can still encourage preservice teachers to “work with the goals of systemic change in mind without uniformly fitting into any one model of teaching for social justice at all times” (Agarwal et al., 2010, p. 245). With a consistent understanding of social justice and its implications in the classroom, teachers throughout the United States—across increasingly diverse states and districts—can be better ready and able to incorporate its principles and practices into everyday classroom experiences. By creating just and equitable opportunities for learning, teachers and teacher educators can pave the way for future education policies and organizations that address the needs of all students in American public education regardless of race, gender or socioeconomic status.

References


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Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Teaching at Montclair State University (New Jersey, USA). Psychologist, with an M.A. in Secondary Education, he finished his Ph.D. in Education in 1999 at the University of California. As a researcher, he has a special interest in the ways in which the purposes of public education intersection with notions of democracy and social justice, how school/university partnerships work to provide the ethical and effective teachers to public schools, and how the nexus of mindfulness and teacher education can help navigate uncharted waters of the current high-stakes testing climate. He is also the coordinator of the Agenda for Education in a Democracy, where he tries to include many teachers and university faculty members in ongoing professional development for school renewal and change. ORCID ID: 0000-0001-9141-031X. Email: keiserd@mail.montclair.edu