Foundations of American Education: A Critical Lens

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MELISSA WELLS AND COURTNEY CLAYTON

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Part II: Education in Action

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Introduction

> **"One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world."**
>
> — *Malala Yousafzai, I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*

Odds are good that we all have had at least one teacher who left a lasting impact on our lives. Perhaps that teacher greeted you with a smile each day that let you know everything would be OK, or helped you see the potential you hadn't noticed in yourself. Maybe that teacher made learning an empowerful, engaging experience; maybe that teacher helped you see beyond your classroom and into society at large. Whatever your specific experience, you have likely encountered the power teachers have to transform lives–of their students, families, communities, and themselves.

Teaching is an increasingly complex profession. In addition to the daily instructional duties, there are planning meetings to organize, data to collect and analyze, notes and messages from administration and families to respond to, new initiatives to be informed of, meetings to attend, committees to lead, paperwork to fill out, new standards and curriculum to be evaluated, and before- and after-school duties to attend to. It

can be an overwhelming set of responsibilities that do not end when students leave your classroom. On top of all of these responsibilities, there are often misconceptions about what roles teachers actually fill and how.

At the same time, it is one of the most rewarding professions. You get to watch students learn and grow over the course of a semester, a year, or even multiple semesters/years, and you get to watch yourself learn and grow with and through your students. You get to see how students solve meaningful, real-world problems in innovative ways that you never would have thought of yourself. You get to watch the human experience play out in your classroom: the joys of watching students discover their strengths and talents, the tumult of navigating social standing (in kindergarten and high school alike), the sadness of loss, even the unexpected drama when your class's living things unit goes horribly wrong when the crayfish escape their containers over the weekend[1]. You get to try new things, grow in your own professional knowledge, and start all over again the next semester or school year. You will continue honing the science and art of teaching every year you remain in the profession.

Founding Principles of This Book

As former K-12 educators and university faculty working with pre-service teachers, we saw the need for a text that is *open,*

1.
True story. Dr. Wells had not one, but two, harrowing crayfish escapes during her first year teaching. She held a funeral as a cross-curricular integration activity to honor the life cycle of the crayfish (science) while also studying the genre of eulogies (English). To this day, she can no longer eat crayfish.

applicable, backward-designed, and *critical* that can be used in a variety of contexts, including undergraduate introduction to education courses or educational studies programs; postgraduate programs working toward teaching credentials; pre-college teacher preparation programs (like Teacher Cadets and Teachers for Tomorrow); and more.

Open

While David Wiley first used the term "open content" in 1998 ("History of the OER Movement," 2021) and the term **Open Educational Resource (OER)** was first used in 2002 at UNESCO, the OER movement has grown in popularity in recent years. According to Creative Commons (n.d.), "Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching, learning, and research materials that are either (a) in the public domain or (b) licensed[2] in a manner that provides everyone with free and perpetual permission to engage in the 5R activities[3]" (para. 2).

    The 5R Activities of OER are to:

- Retain: make and control a copy of the resource

- Revise: edit/modify your copy of the resource

- Remix: create something new by combining your original/revised resource with other existing material

2.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/
3.
https://opencontent.org/definition/

- Reuse: publicly use your original, revised, or remixed copy of the resource
- Redistribute: share copies of your original, revised, or remixed copy of the resource

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Critical Lens: OER, Licensing, & Intellectual Property

There are several different types of licenses[4] when producing OER. Basically, different licenses set limits on how you have to attribute the original creator; how you are allowed to modify the original creation, if at all; and how you are allowed to share the original resource or remix you create (i.e., you might not be allowed to publish it commercially). As you learn more about OER and use it yourself, be aware of the license associated with each source and how it impacts your ethical use of that content.

A central tenet in this movement focuses on equitable access to educational materials, specifically access that is not prohibitive in cost. As textbook prices continue to rise, the OER movement recognizes that affordable (even free!) materials are necessary for students to succeed. Textbooks are not the only resources created as OER; others include open courseware, focusing on a more holistic educational experience beyond just the textbook; repositories of educational materials, where users can access OER and share or remix them; and other published materials, such as videos with Khan Academy.

Because of the interactive, digital nature of these resources,

4.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/

OER also allows materials to be timely, relevant, and current. Printed textbooks can take years to revise; this OER resource can be updated and re-published instantly to reflect the ever-changing nature of education.

The video below explains more about the importance of OER.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://viva.pressbooks.pub/ foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=4#oembed-1

Applicable

Because this text is OER, it allows us to incorporate unique aspects that make this work applicable. First, the Creative Commons licensing of this text (CC BY-NC-SA) allows other users to adapt this text for their context, as long as the original authors are attributed (BY); the source is not used for commercial purposes, such as selling the work (NC or Non-Commercial); and subsequent adaptations also follow the same CC BY-NC-SA license (SA or Share Alike). Therefore, you can take out pieces that aren't applicable to you and add others that are to provide a personalized learning experience for your own specific context. Secondly, the interactive nature of OER gives you chances to apply your learning to your own personal set of experiences. You'll find more information about that in the "Key Features" section below.

Backward-Designed

Backward design (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998) is an instructional principle that you will learn more about in Chapter 6 that involves starting with the end goal of instruction in mind. It consists of 3 key elements:

- First, identify the desired results.
- Second, decide what evidence is needed that those results have been met.
- Third, plan instruction.

Following this logic, we have started with the vision of what a competent, successful educator in the 21st century needs to know and be able to do. We then designed this text to support you in acquiring those skills and dispositions. One key area that we notice is missing in traditional "Introduction to Education" texts is asking future educators to take a critical stance, which we'll explore together now.

Critical

Schools are microcosms of society, which means that educators and students bring their worlds and experiences to school every day. Critical theory asks us to question how those worlds and experiences give power and opportunities to certain groups while restricting power and opportunities for other groups.

Sometimes the word "critical" can carry negative connotations, but critical theory goes much deeper than getting negative feedback in a critique of a project. The basic idea behind **critical theory** notes that there are issues of power, access, and equity in our society that privilege some people and oppress others. Critical theory strives "to create a world which satisfies the needs and powers" of all people (Horkheimer 1972, p. 246). To create such a world, we must constantly question and challenge the existing structures of power.

Education is no exception. While we often hear of or think of education and educators as apolitical, the reality is "there is no pedagogical experience that is not political in nature" (Freire & Macedo, 1987, p. 115). Schools are microcosms of society, meaning they often mirror inequitable power structures. Whose voices are featured in required reading lists and whose are silent? How does a "Muffins for Moms" family engagement event impact a student whose mom is not in their lives, or maybe who has two moms? If a school has a high proportion of English Learners but no correspondence is sent home in

families' home languages, what message does that send about whose language matters and whose doesn't? Why are students of color over-represented in special education programs and school punishment statistics?

   As educators, we have daily opportunities to create learning environments that are welcoming and reaffirming for our students' varied backgrounds while also interrupting inequitable power structures. One way that we can practice critical theories in our classroom is to engage in culturally relevant teaching.

Culturally Relevant Teaching

If you close your eyes and envision your quintessential American classroom, odds are good that you'll envision desks (most likely in rows) facing a teacher's desk at the front of the classroom, situated in front of the board. What you're envisioning might look a lot like this.

   While some of our learning might have occurred in a space that looked somewhat like this, there are a lot of important components missing. The room is set up in a way that situates

the teacher as the instiller of knowledge, and the students as receivers of the teacher's knowledge. This a concept known as the banking model of education (Freire, 1970). Think of it like a piggy bank: the piggy bank is empty until it is filled up with coins. In this case, the students are the empty piggy banks, waiting to be filled with the knowledge (coins) deposited by the teacher. Furthermore, in the image above, the room is completely devoid of any sense of community. We see white walls and a map. Where are the students–their work, their passions?

Enter **culturally relevant teaching (CRT)**. Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994/2009) originally created this concept in the 1990s. Instead of viewing students as empty piggy banks waiting to be filled with coins of knowledge, culturally responsive teaching recognizes that students bring a variety of experiences and knowledge with them to the classroom, and that these resources can be used to design classroom experiences that are relevant to the students' cultures and experiences. Another way to look at culturally relevant teaching is to "teach to and through [students'] personal and cultural strengths, their intellectual capabilities, and their prior accomplishments" (Gay, 2010, p. 26).

Critical Lens: Variations on CRT

There are many different terms for this type of teaching: culturally responsive teaching (CRT), culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP), culturally sustaining pedagogy, culturally and linguistically relevant pedagogy, and more. While there are slight differences among these theories

and approaches, the overall idea is the same: powerful learning occurs when we recognize the knowledge, backgrounds, languages, and experiences that our students bring with them to our classrooms and design instruction around these elements.

Ladson-Billings (1995, 2001) established three key pillars of culturally relevant teaching.

1. Academic success: For teachers to embrace culturally responsive teaching, they have to believe that all students are capable of academic success. This belief involves setting high–but attainable–academic expectations for all students. Unfortunately, students who come from minoritized backgrounds (students of color, students from poverty, and more) sometimes are held to lower standards than their peers, which then becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy–those students don't perform as well because of the lack of high academic expectations. However, high expectations aren't helpful if they aren't attainable. Just like you would not ask a couch potato to run a marathon tomorrow, you can't ask a student to advance multiple years' worth of academic skills–or even one year's worth–without proper scaffolds and support.

2. Cultural competence: Being a culturally competent teacher means you recognize that your own culture, worldview, and understanding does not necessarily reflect your students'. Being culturally competent is especially vital when we look at the demographics of

today's schools. Students are increasingly diverse, but the profile of teachers remains somewhat the same. In the United States, only 20% of teachers are not White (Geiger, 2018).

3. Sociopolitical consciousness: Being a teacher with sociopolitical consciousness means you are willing to acknowledge and critique inequities. An inequity occurs when some people have certain benefits that others don't have. For example, throughout the history of the United States, rules, laws, and social norms have given more power to people with certain characteristics–such as being White, male, heterosexual, and at least middle-class–than people with other characteristics, such as being a person of color, transgender, or poor. Some of these rules and norms have prevented groups of people from earning money, buying property, going to school, and more–all elements that affect a person's ability to be successful for years and generations to come. Acknowledging and critiquing these inequities is an important part of culturally relevant teaching.

DIVERSITY IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS 2018

Percentage of books depicting characters from diverse backgrounds based on the 2018 publishing statistics compiled by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison:
ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp

23 BOOKS	170 BOOKS	219 BOOKS	301 BOOKS	984 BOOKS	1,558 BOOKS
1%	5%	7%	10%	27%	50%
American Indians/ First Nations	Latinx	Asian Pacific Islander/Asian Pacific American	African/ African American	Animals/Other	White

The CCBC inventory includes 3,134 books published in 2018. This graphic would not have been possible without the statistics compiled by the CCBC, and the review and feedback we received from Edith Campbell, Molly Beth Griffin, K. T. Horning, Debbie Reese, Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, and Madeline Tyner. Many thanks.

Illustration by David Huyck, in consultation with Sarah Park Dahlen
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Part of culturally relevant teaching is making sure students see themselves in curricular resources, including books. As this graphic shows, however, White students are far more likely to see themselves and their experiences in books than students who are Black, Asian American, Latinx, or American Indian.

Beyond these three key pillars, there is no one "right way" to do culturally relevant teaching. You might make sure you have a classroom library full of books that reflect your students and worlds beyond your students' own worlds (though this is an ongoing challenge!). You might make sure that your math problems have real-world applications and use names from your students' families and friends. You might make sure that you are teaching multiple sides of history, instead of just the "winning side" (who, again, tends to be the people with more power, as explained above). There is no set curriculum that you must use to be a culturally relevant teacher. Instead, being a culturally relevant teacher involves aligning yourself with the three pillars above and knowing your students. In addition, a culturally responsive classroom has a feeling of community

in the classroom. Everyone supports one other's success in a culturally responsive classroom.

While the thought of culturally relevant teaching might be overwhelming right now, especially if you have not experienced this yourself as a learner, there are clear benefits from approaching your teaching this way. Gay (2010) described the potential of culturally responsive teaching as:

- validating,

- comprehensive,

- multidimensional,

- empowering,

- transformative, and

- emancipatory.

Looking back at the classroom pictured earlier in this chapter, you can see how such an environment would have a very hard time inspiring any of these characteristics!

To that end, we have a responsibility to look at some of our own privileges as authors of this text. We both identify as White women. Dr. Wells grew up in a middle-class household that put a lot of emphasis on success in school yielding future attendance at college. Dr. Clayton grew up in a family that also valued education, including the expectation of a college degree. While different pieces of our identities combine in different ways to make each of us the individuals that we are (we will talk more about this concept of **intersectionality** in Ch. 1), we both do benefit from certain privileges and positions of power. Sometimes this can make us overlook ways that we could be more culturally relevant teachers. The important thing to remember is that being a culturally relevant teacher is an

ongoing process of learning and implementing instruction that builds off of our knowledge of our own students.

Stop & Investigate

If you'd like to learn more about culturally relevant teaching (CRT), here are some high-quality resources.

- Delpit, L. (2012). *"Multiplication is for white people": Raising expectations for other people's children.* The New Press.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Howard, T. C. (2010). *Why race and culture matter in schools: Closing the achievement gap in America's classrooms.* Teachers College Press.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American childre*n (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Nieto, S. (2009). *The light in their eyes: Creating multicultural learning communities.* Teachers College Press.
- Paris, D., & Alim, H.S. (2017). *Culturally sustaining practice: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world.* Teachers College Press.

How This Text is Organized

Being a teacher involves a balance of understanding information about teaching and actually applying that information into instruction. For this reason, this text is organized into two parts.

Part 1: Foundations of Education

Part 1 of this text will focus on the "nuts and bolts" of education–the basic theoretical, social, and historical constructs that underlie the teaching profession in the United States.

- Chapter 1, "The Teaching Profession," explores practices of effective teachers, common professional competencies, and how individual teachers' beliefs impact their classroom practice.

- Chapter 2, "Influences on Learning: Student Similarities and Differences," digs into students' unique learning strengths and needs against the backdrop of societal norms in the United States. Specific groups of students who have distinct learning needs, such as English Learners and students with disabilities, will be discussed, alongside theories of learning.

- Chapter 3, "Philosophical & Historical Foundations of American Education," surveys key developments in education in the United States over the centuries, and also examines how various philosophies of teaching translate into classroom practice.

- Chapter 4, "Schools in America," examines varying

models of schools available in the United States while also explaining how schools are governed and financed.

- Chapter 5, "Ethical & Legal Issues in Education," positions modern American education against the historical antecedents of landmark court cases, how legal systems impact schools and classrooms, and implications of ethical practice in today's classrooms.

Part 2: Teaching in Action

- Chapter 6, "Curriculum: Planning, Assessment, & Instruction," provides an introduction to the process behind preparing for and implementing instruction, including types of curriculum and considerations for planning, instructional delivery, and assessment.

- Chapter 7, "Classroom Environment," encapsulates the best practices behind structuring an organized classroom learning environment that supports all learners. Community-building strategies, trauma-informed practice, meeting the needs of the whole child (including social and emotional learning), and community partnerships–especially with families–are featured.

- Chapter 8, "And Now What? The Path Forward," considers what it means to be a professional teacher amidst current events, trends, and changes in the evolving profession of education.

Key Features

Each chapter will feature similar structures to guide your learning, such as the following.

- Unlearning: Aligning with our critical framework that causes us to question and challenge knowledge that is taken for granted, we will open each chapter with a common misunderstanding related to the topic of that chapter.

- Multimodal content: As 21st century learners, we take in information from a variety of "texts," not just printed words. Therefore, we will incorporate videos, websites, podcasts, and more throughout the book to keep you engaged with the content in current and innovative ways.

- Interactive components: Being an effective teacher means that you have a solid knowledge of issues related to teaching, but you are also able to apply that knowledge to real-world situations. Interactive components throughout the text that will invite you to stop and apply your learning to your own contexts as a future educator include prompts for you to pause and ponder and opportunities to stop and investigate to deepen your understanding of a topic. Note that users of the downloaded PDF can access interactive components that are not preserved in the PDF version of this text in Appendix A.

- Critical Lens Boxes: Critical theory challenges us to stop and question power structures and inequity, including in educational contexts. Each chapter features Critical Lens Boxes to push your thinking

about equity from multiple perspectives, often tied to current events and real-world application.

Who We Are

Before we get started, though, allow us to introduce ourselves. First and foremost, we are both teachers! Even though we are now both teacher educators who get to work with the newest future teachers, we both spent time teaching in K-12 schools before moving into higher education.

Dr. Melissa Wells

I spent the first eight years of my career teaching in the South Carolina public schools as a third grade teacher, a kindergarten teacher, and an elementary literacy coach. All of my positions served **Title 1** schools, which we will talk more about later in this book, but these are schools typically situated in less-affluent communities.

Dr. Wells holds a newly-hatched duckling in her kindergarten classroom. They are cuter than crayfish.

When I was in fifth grade, I helped a kindergarten class at lunch, and this experience helped me decide that I wanted to become a teacher one day. While opening milk and mustard packets (trust me, they are so much worse than ketchup packets) were some of my early responsibilities as a lunchroom volunteer, I also

got to visit the class during other parts of the day, such as instruction and recess. I met one little girl in the class named Aubrey[5]. Aubrey stood out to me early on because she was one of the only students who could tell me apart from my twin sister (who also helped with the kindergarten class), her love of giving the tightest hugs, and her unique communication techniques (I figured out one day that she stuck out her tongue just a little to request that her hot dog be cut into tiny pieces, and she stuck out her tongue more if she wanted her hot dog in larger, but still anti-choking-sized, pieces). Aubrey also happened to have Down Syndrome. While this meant that Aubrey had some special learning needs, I was able to work with her teachers to see so many of the things Aubrey was capable of instead of just what she *wasn't*. I knew then I wanted to be a teacher who saw possibilities, who focused on what students *do* bring with them instead of what they *don't*.

Dr. Courtney Clayton

Being an educator was not my goal when I graduated from college. I majored in French Literature in college. I studied what I was passionate about, but when it came time to graduate, I realized I was in the minority of students at my school: most of them wanted careers in business, law, or medicine. I knew med school was out–too much blood; went to one interview in a suit for a large business firm–nope. When I really started to consider applying to law school, I realized that wasn't for me either. I decided to go a different direction and ended up in something that piqued my interest: video, film and commercial

5.
   As teachers, we have to protect our students' privacy, so we will use pseudonyms throughout this book.

production. I worked in this industry for many years, becoming increasingly disillusioned, until one day I remember distinctly that I was on a commercial shoot for eyeglasses. The director was yelling at the producer, my boss, saying that she couldn't get anything right, and I stood there thinking, "Seriously, this is what I am doing with my life?" I went home that night and considered what else I might want to do for a living.

I thought back to when I was in elementary school and how much I loved my teachers; how school was a safe haven for me from my own family's struggles; how much I loved reading and learning new things. That was it–I wanted to try teaching. Before I jumped head-first into a teaching licensure program, I wanted to see about getting my feet wet first. I applied and was hired for a position as an assistant teacher at a school for boys that serviced a residential treatment facility. All of the students in the facility had been removed from their families due to significant emotional and physical trauma. The work was tough, but I loved it. I loved working with young people. Even in this very traumatic setting, the students needed their teachers and looked to them for instruction and guidance.

I went on to get my teaching license in K-6 education with a CLAD (Crosscultural, Language, and Academic Development) certificate and Master's degree in Education. The CLAD certificate was something that California had started requiring in the mid to late 1990s (when I was doing my certification) to be qualified to teach the linguistically and culturally diverse student population we were to encounter in schools, including English Learners. Though nothing can completely prepare a White, suburban-raised woman for the rich diversity of schools, I did study topics like applied linguistics, second language acquisition, and multicultural education at a time

when most colleges of education had not begun to consider the importance of these issues and topics.

After teaching in California for several years, I moved to Boston. I taught at an independent school first since my teaching license did not transfer (we will discuss license **reciprocity** more in Chapter 1), and then got hired at the International School of Boston, which ran a dual language program in French and English. I was trained as an ESL specialist and taught 2nd grade. As a teacher there, combined with my experience in California schools, I became more and more interested in students whose first language was not English, and more importantly, the best ways to instruct them. I decided to pursue my PhD, and my dissertation focused on what made an effective teacher of English Learners in full classroom settings, not as ESL teachers. Since that time, I have worked in supporting preservice teachers to learn about how best to work with our English Learners in schools, particularly in the area of using culturally and linguistically responsive teaching.

> ### Pause & Ponder
>
> Who are you? What brings you here to explore the profession of teaching? How might your experiences and who you are impact the educator you may one day become?

Conclusion

Now that you have a feel for how this text is organized and

what frameworks underlie it, we are ready to explore the Foundations of American Education. Whether you are choosing to become a teacher or just want to learn more about the field of education, you are making an important step to be an advocate and informed stakeholder of education by engaging in this text. Congratulations, and welcome to the world of teaching!

Part I: Foundations of American Education

In this part, we will explore the theoretical and historical roots of American Education.

Chapter 1: The Teaching Profession

Chapter 2: Influences on Learning: Student Similarities & Differences

Chapter 3: Philosophical & Historical Foundations of American Education

Chapter 4: Schools in The United States

Chapter 5: Ethical & Legal Issues in Education

Chapter 1: The Teaching Profession

Unlearning Box

"Those who can, do. Those who can't, teach."

"It's easy to become a teacher."

"Teaching is an 8:30-3:00 job. You have it so easy!"

You may have heard people in your own life share quotes and comments such as these. These quotes are hurtful and untrue. Teaching is a profession. Teachers are capable, intelligent, and held to extremely high professional standards. Quotes and comments like these demonstrate gross misunderstandings of what it means to be a teacher in the United States.

In this chapter, we will begin to peer behind the scenes of what it means to be a teacher in the United States. We'll walk

through a day in the life of a teacher, break down what is involved to become a teacher, and close with characteristics of effective teachers.

> ## Chapter Outline
>
> 1. A Day in the Life
>   1. Elementary Perspective
>   2. Secondary Perspective
>   3. Special Education Perspective
>
> 2. Becoming a Teacher
>   1. Profile of Teachers Today
>   2. Pathways Toward Teacher Certification
>   1. Traditional Preparation: Education Preparation Program (EPP)
>   1. Undergraduate Degree Program
>   2. Graduate Degree Program
>   3. Accreditation of EPPs
>   2. Alternative Preparation
>   1. Provisional Certification
>   2. Residency Programs
>   3. Maintaining a Teaching License
>
> 3. Characteristics of Effective Teachers
>   1. InTASC Standards

2. Professionalism & Dispositions

3. Teacher Beliefs

4. Conclusion

A Day in the Life

To get started, let's drop into three different classrooms to get a feel for a day in the life of an elementary teacher, a secondary (high school) teacher, and a special education teacher.

Elementary Perspective

The school doors open at 7 AM, and you greet children as they enter the cafeteria for breakfast. Once morning duty is over, you hurry to your classroom to await the 25 students that will come filing in momentarily. You make sure materials and directions for tasks are ready and calming music is playing. As students enter, you gather signed forms and respond to notes from families, help students with their morning activities, take attendance, and hold a morning meeting. The rest of the day, you are simultaneously teaching the content areas–English, math, science and social studies–and social skills as students navigate groupwork and friendships. Various other educators drop in throughout the day: the reading specialist to work with a group of readers who need extra support, the occupational therapist to help a student with some motor skills still developing, the speech pathologist to help students with articulation and language development, the instructional coach

and sometimes the principal to give you feedback on your instruction.

A day in the life of an elementary educator could involve students collaborating to create products of learning.

Pauses throughout the day from the busy pace of classroom life include related arts, where students go to learn about music, visual art, library, P.E., and more while you meet with your grade level for team planning; and lunch and recess, which involve scarfing down your lunch while getting your students through the lunch line, figuring out who changed their lunch choice or left their lunch at home, opening mustard packets, reminding students to eat while they talk with friends, and hopefully scuttling off to check your school mailbox and take a bathroom break. After a post-recess water break, you return to classroom instruction, with a few interruptions for students leaving early for doctor's appointments, a student needing to go to the nurse's office, another teacher popping in to borrow a book, or sometimes even a whole-school assembly for a class play or anti-bullying program.

When it is time to pack up for the day at 2:30, you make sure all students know how they are getting home that day, have their materials packed and ready to go, and then you bid them farewell at the door with a hug, high-five, or handshake as they head to their dismissal area. Once your room is empty, you go to monitor a dismissal area to make sure everyone is safe. After school, you might have a faculty meeting, a debrief with an instructional coach based on today's observation, or time to prepare tomorrow's instructional materials. You marvel at how

quickly yet another day has passed in the life of an elementary school teacher.

Secondary Perspective

The bell rings at 8:15 AM, but you've already been at school for more than an hour–making copies, checking emails, and writing the plans and goals for the day on the board. As an English teacher, you've decided to work on writing fluency during this year, so as the students enter the classroom, they take out their journals and begin responding to the prompt on the board. Every day the class meets, the students will write for five minutes and then briefly discuss their responses with each other and as a whole group. You write alongside them to model what it looks like, and often share your own writing–at the beginning of the year, most of the students struggled to write for five straight minutes, but now nearly all of them have gotten the hang of it. The rest of the lesson involves a minilesson on figurative language, small group discussions about students' literature circle books, and a whole group review game to prepare for the unit test on Wednesday.

The school adopted a block schedule last year, so your classes are 75 minutes long. You teach three of four blocks each day; today is an A day, so first block is 9th grade honors and the other two are 10th grade general English. Tomorrow, you will teach two blocks of 9th grade general and one block of 10th grade College Preparatory English. You hate these labels and what they do to the students in the room, and, as department chair, you have been working with your principal to remove such rigid tracking.

"Bear Block" falls between 1st and 2nd block, and ten students stream into the room to retake tests, make up missed homework, or just hang out and read. You glance at the learning management system and see that there are 45 essays waiting for you, but there won't be time to look more

A day in the life of a high school teacher could involve guiding students in their work, as this English teacher is doing.

closely at them until later tonight. During lunch, some of your journalism club students are in the room, partially working on stories and layouts, but mostly sharing the latest news about their friends and acquaintances.

For the Professional Learning Community (PLC) meeting during fourth block, you will meet with the other 10th grade English teachers to look at the results of a common assessment. At some schools in the district, the grade-level teachers all teach the same lessons, but luckily at this school you have more freedom in how you teach the material. There is a new teacher on the team who is struggling with classroom management, so the first 15 minutes of the meeting is spent discussing some strategies that have worked in other teachers' rooms.

The end of the day comes at 3:15 PM, but it will be another hour or two before you head home–there are sub plans to finish for Thursday because you will be attending a district-wide training for working with English Language Learners, and you are hoping to send at least ten texts and emails to parents. The initial fear of parent contact faded quickly, and now it's one of your strengths–you reach out early and often, connecting with families around student successes first. Later,

if students begin struggling, contact is much more seamless. It's been a long, exhausting day, but interacting with the students has made it all worth it.

Special Education Perspective

You arrive early in the morning, an hour or so before teachers officially start the school day. You greet the office manager, principal, and custodian on the way to your classroom. Aside from these three, the building will be mostly empty for another half hour. You've found that this quiet morning time provides the best opportunity to catch up on Individualized Education Plan (IEP) paperwork, reflect on student data from the prior day, and make adjustments to instruction for the coming day. As the official start time for the school day draws close, you make a quick dash to the copy machine, fingers crossed that it isn't broken and that there isn't a line of teachers anxiously waiting their turn. It's your lucky day. Your last photocopies shoot out of the machine just as the overhead announcement calls teachers to report to their morning duty stations. You quickly drop the copies off in your classroom, pick up your data binder, and dash out the door to the bus loop.

The bus loop is a flurry of activity. You greet students with high-fives, occasional hugs, and countless reminders to "use walking feet." Amid all of these informal greetings, you are slipping in some IEP services by completing morning check-ins with several students who have behavioral or social-emotional goals on their IEPs. From an outsider's view, these check-ins don't look that different from your interactions with any other student. However, intermixed with those high-fives and hugs you quietly assess needs, remind students of the goals they are working on, offer supports where needed, and quickly make

notes in your data binder. On this particular day, a third grader with autism reports that he is feeling like "a category 3 hurricane." You know he needs some quiet time before joining his homeroom class, so you walk him to the computer lab where he has an open invitation to help the instructional technology specialist get the computer lab set up for the day.

The halls begin to clear as the instructional day begins. You spend the next six hours in constant motion, serving 18 students across four grade levels. You transition between co-teaching in general education classes and pulling small groups of students to your own classroom for intensive intervention in literacy, math, or social skills. When co-teaching, your job is to supplement the general education teacher's deep knowledge of grade-level content with specialized instructional strategies that make content meaningful and accessible for students with disabilities and other learning differences. When providing intensive intervention, you implement research-based programs that target specific skills identified in your students' IEPs. Data collection is on-going and individualized for each student, so your trusty data binder is by your side in all settings.

Normally, you would end the school day completing check-outs with the same students you saw in the morning. Today, you assign that responsibility to a teaching assistant so you can participate in a special education eligibility meeting. It is the initial eligibility meeting for this student and her family. A team of educators work with the parents to determine if the first grader has a disability and needs special education. Her parents feel overwhelmed by the process and fearful when the team concludes that their daughter has an intellectual disability. This is a moment when your job and your passion meet. You assure the parents that the future is bright for their

daughter, that the educational label does not change who she is or who she will be, and that you will highlight her strengths and address her needs as you plan her education with them as equal partners. The decisions that you will make with this family are new to them, but for you they are a familiar and important part of your day as an elementary special education teacher.

Becoming a Teacher

The scenarios above describe some typical teaching days, but not all days are the same in teaching. In fact, each one will be different in some way. Deciding to become a teacher is an exciting commitment to shaping the future, and it is both demanding and rewarding. We'll take a look at the profile of teachers today in the United States, and then discuss various routes toward earning the credentials necessary to become a classroom teacher.

Profile of Teachers Today

The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) collects data on various aspects of education, one of which is the demographics of teachers and students. In the 2017-2018 school year, there were 3.5 million full- or part-time public school **K-12** teachers (NCES, 2020a). (K-12 means the range of grades public schools serve, starting with kindergarten in elementary school and culminating with 12th grade in high school.) Of those teachers, 76% were female[1], 79% were White, 90% held a

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1.
The demographics from NCES are only broken down by male/female.

standard teaching license (more on that below), and 58% had earned a graduate degree (at the master's level or beyond). A majority of teachers were in the middle of their careers, with 40% having ten to twenty years of experience in the classroom. The average salary of a full-time public school teacher was $57,900, with the average first-year teacher earning $44,200. (Note that salaries vary based on years of experience, highest degree earned, and location.)

Stop & Investigate

Check out the demographics of teachers in your state or school district. How do they compare? Find the salary scale for teachers in your local school district. How does it compare?

Let's revisit some of those demographics on racial diversity. Figure 1.1 depicts specific racial categories of public school teachers in the 2017-2018 school year, compared with the 1999-2000 school year.

Figure 1.1: Racial Demographics of U.S. Public School Teachers, 1999-2000 and 2017-2018
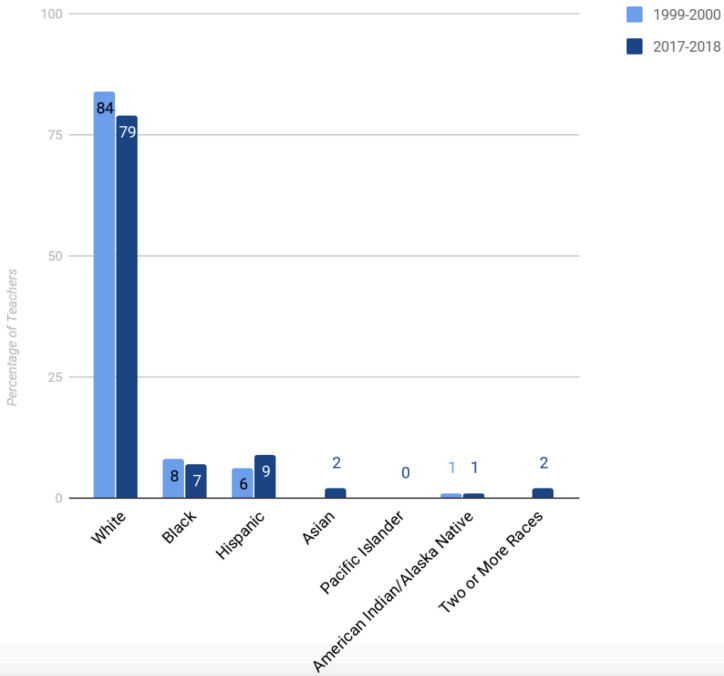
Note: Data for teachers who identified as Asian, Pacific Islander, and two or more races in 1999-2000 was unavailable. The 2017-2018 data for teachers who identified as Pacific Islander rounded down to 0.

The trends are clear: in the United States, we lack a racially diverse teaching force, and that trend has not changed much in the past 20 years. While the 2017-2018 school year included more Hispanic, Asian, and multi-racial teachers, teachers are still overwhelmingly White. In the same school year, however, students who attended public schools were only 44% White (NCES, 2020b). That means that generally, there are more White teachers and more students of color (Geiger, 2018). This trend is concerning, given that research shows that having teachers of color benefits all students, not just students of color (Wells, Fox, & Cordova-Cobo, 2016).

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://viva.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=5#oembed-1

There are many reasons why teachers in the United States are not racially diverse. While the U.S. Supreme Court's 1954 decision in **Brown v. Board of Education** (further explained in Chapters 3 and 5) demanded all schools integrate to address some of

Increasing diversity of U.S. teachers is an important goal.

the inequalities between separate schools for White and Black students, it did have other consequences that directly impacted the diversity of teachers in the United States. This case caused 38,000 Black teachers (about one-third of the Black teachers in the country) to lose their jobs in the years following the case (Milner & Howard, 2004; Thompson, 2019). Even though this historical antecedent did limit access to teaching jobs for Black people, racial discrimination in the hiring process continues to compound this issue. D'Amico et al. (2017) found that despite equally-qualified candidates applying for jobs in one large school district, White teacher candidates still received a disproportionate number of job offers: of the 70% White applicants, 77% received job offers, while of the 13% Black candidates, 6% received job offers (D'Amico, Pawlewicz, Earley, & McGeehan, 2017; Klein, 2017). Beyond the hiring process,

retention of hired teachers is lower for teachers of color than for White teachers. For example, between the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years, only 15% of White teachers left their jobs, compared to 22% of Black teachers and 21% of Hispanic teachers (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Critical Lens: Naming Races
You may have noticed in this section that races are capitalized (like White and Black). Capitalizing these names recognizes the people more than the color. In fact, the Associated Press recently changed its writing style guide[2] to capitalize Black and Indigenous when referring to racial categories.

Pathways Toward Teacher Certification

High-quality, well-prepared educators are the foundation of our educational system. Well-prepared teachers are more effective in the classroom and also tend to have higher rates of retention, meaning they choose to stay in the teaching profession (Darling-Hammond, 2010). There are several different ways that you can become a teacher, depending on where you are in your life and career. These pathways toward teacher certification fall into two general categories: traditional or alternative preparation. **Traditional preparation** involves an undergraduate or graduate degree program affiliated with

2.
https://apnews.com/
71386b46dbff8190e71493a763e8f45a?utm_campaign=SocialFlow&utm_source
=Twitter&utm_medium=AP

an **Educator Preparation Program (EPP)**, while **alternative preparation** can take many forms, including provisional certification or residency programs like Teach for America. No matter how you obtain your **teaching license**, you will have to renew the license periodically.

Traditional Preparation: Educator Preparation Program (EPP)

The most traditional way to earn your teaching certificate is through an Educator Preparation Program (EPP). An EPP could offer a few different programs that would culminate in your teaching certificate. Two popular options are an undergraduate degree program or a graduate degree program.

Undergraduate Degree Program

In this pathway toward teacher certification, participants enter a 4-year degree program knowing that they want to become a teacher upon graduation. Exact majors vary: sometimes you might major in education, or in a specific form of education (like elementary education). If you want to teach elementary school, you are expected to be more of a generalist: you will likely teach all content areas to your students. Therefore, you will take education classes in all of these areas. If you want to teach middle or high school or become a **related arts** teacher (arts, language, etc.), you will major in your future area of specialization, such as history if you want to teach social studies, or music if you want to be a music teacher. Regardless of the exact structure of the specific program, participants take classes that help them learn about **pedagogy** (the art and science of teaching), along with specific **methods** of

instruction (such as how to teach the structures of different disciplines like literacy, math, science, or social studies).

Completing coursework is just one part of becoming a teacher in a traditional undergraduate degree program. There are also tests that future teachers must pass to prove they are prepared to teach. Some of these tests occur early in the degree as entrance requirements to an education program to assess basic literacy and math skills; some of these tests occur at the end of the degree as a culmination of all courses. These tests, run by ETS, are called **Praxis** tests. Their website[3] has information about testing requirements in different states.

Critical Lens: Bias in Standardized Assessments

While standardized assessments have been associated with measuring intelligence and learning for many years, some schools are moving away from relying solely on standardized tests as a measure of aptitude. You or someone you know might not be a great test taker, and you may have experienced first-hand (or second-hand through an acquaintance) how standardized tests aren't always a reliable measure of what you know. Beyond test anxiety, standardized tests also tend to be culturally biased. That means that some cultural norms are assumed to be shared by all test takers, but this isn't necessarily the case. A passage in a reading assessment, for example, might assume that a test-taker can build on background knowledge of certain experiences, like going camping,

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3.
https://www.ets.org/praxis

that they haven't had, or use vocabulary words that are more common in middle-class White households. Another standardized test of intelligence, the IQ test[4], was used early on by eugenicists to argue that White test-takers scored higher because they were the smarter race, using questionable statistical analyses and overlooking that the tests were written to benefit White test-takers. However, these standardized tests were often used to choose "highly qualified" candidates for jobs such as military leaders, therefore limiting access to certain professions based on race and socioeconomic status.

One of the most important parts of preparing to become a teacher is getting practice working in actual classrooms with actual students. In a traditional undergraduate degree program, you will engage in two different types of field placements. The first types of field placements are sometimes called

As a future teacher, your practicum experiences in actual classrooms will give you important experience to prepare you for your future career.

practicum, which are part-time placements that are often tied to specific courses (like methods classes, where you learn about how to teach specific content areas like language arts, math,

4.
https://www.businessinsider.com/iq-tests-dark-history-finally-being-used-for-
good-2017-10#:~:text=The%20first%20of%20these%20tests,basis%20for%20mo
dern%20IQ%20testing.

science, or social studies). You attend practicum a few hours a week in between your other coursework. In these practicum placements, you get to try out what you are learning in class with actual classrooms, teachers, and students. Sometimes you are observing to learn more; other times you are actively leading instruction in one-on-one, small group, or whole group settings. Your various practicum placements typically will be in different schools and different grade levels to give you experience working with many different types of students and teachers. The second type of field placement is called **student teaching** or an **internship**. This full-time placement occurs at the very end of your degree program. You spend all day, every day at your placement, just like the classroom teacher does. As the semester progresses, you will take on more and more responsibility for planning and teaching. By the middle of the semester, you will usually be responsible for all of the planning and teaching for all content areas for several weeks. After those few weeks, you begin passing the instructional responsibilities back to the classroom teacher. Both practicum and student teaching will require you to work closely with the classroom teacher, who may be called your **mentor teacher**. Neither type of field placement is an official job, so you should not expect to be paid for these experiences.

After you have completed all of your undergraduate coursework, your field placement hours, and your state's required testing, you will earn your teaching certificate and be ready to apply for your first teaching job.

Graduate Degree Program

The first graduate, or post-baccalaureate, degree programs were developed in the 1970s as Masters of Arts in Teaching (MAT)

programs (Darling-Hammond, 2010). A post-baccalaureate degree program is designed for people who want to become teachers, but who have already completed their undergraduate coursework in a field other than education. Therefore, a post-baccalaureate degree program allows people to learn how to become teachers while earning a master's degree. In a post-baccalaureate degree program, courses are often offered in the evenings to cater to the needs of adult students who may be working or have family commitments during the day. Even though its structure is a little different, a post-baccalaureate degree program also has the field experiences explained above (practicum and internship).

After you have completed all of your post-baccalaureate coursework, your field placement hours, and your state's required testing, you will earn your teaching certificate and be ready to apply for your first teaching job. The master's degree you will earn in a post-baccalaureate program can result in higher pay for teachers in some states. (Even if you earn your teaching credential in an undergraduate program, you can still earn a master's degree in education and get a pay increase in many states.)

Accreditation of EPPs

Research has shown that teachers who earn their teaching certificate through an educator preparation program (EPP) feel significantly more prepared to meet their students' needs than those that pursue other routes toward licensure (i.e., Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002). One reason for this finding lies in the high standards that EPPs must meet. EPPs must be accredited by either state or national agencies. **Accreditation**

means that the programs have met specific standards of high-quality teacher preparation programs.

The first national credentialing agency was the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), which was founded in 1954. By 2016, NCATE was replaced by **CAEP** (pronounced "cape"), which stands for the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. In their mission, they state: "CAEP advances equity and excellence in educator preparation through evidence-based accreditation that assures quality and supports continuous improvement to strengthen P-12 student learning" (CAEP, 2020b, "Mission"). To receive CAEP accreditation, EPPs have to demonstrate evidence of their success in five areas, or standards[5]: (1) content and pedagogical knowledge; (2) clinical partnerships and practice; (3) candidate quality, recruitment, and selectivity; (4) program impact; and (5) provider quality, continuous improvement, and capacity. When you enroll in an EPP with CAEP or state-level accreditation, you know you are in a high-quality program that has provided evidence of meeting rigorous standards to prepare teachers.

Alternative Preparation

Sometimes, you decide to become a teacher after you have already earned an undergraduate degree in another field. Perhaps you've even worked in another field for several years, and you realize that you would like to become a teacher instead. While each state has different policies and programs for preparing teachers beyond undergraduate coursework, a

5.
http://caepnet.org/standards/introduction

few common approaches include provisional certification and residency programs like Teach for America.

Provisional Certification

Some schools face shortages of teachers in certain content areas or in more urban settings, which mean they need teachers as soon as possible–even if those teachers aren't officially certified just yet. A **provisional teaching license** allows an individual to become a teacher temporarily, while they work with their employer to arrange to meet the requirements of earning a teaching license (such as taking the required Praxis tests). These licenses might be valid for a period of time ranging from one to three years and typically are not renewable, meaning that if you do not meet the licensure requirements before your certificate expires, you will not be able to continue teaching. Sometimes provisional certification is also called emergency certification, since it is designed to meet an immediate need.

Residency Programs

Residency programs are another alternative pathway to receive a teaching credential. Typical participants in a residency model already have a bachelor's degree prior to beginning a residency program. During the residency program, future teachers work simultaneously on a master's degree in education while being placed in a school full-time. Typically residents do not serve as the teacher of record in the classroom, meaning they are not solely responsible for all instruction. Residency programs are particularly popular in high-needs areas where there is high teacher turnover and recruitment and

retainment of teachers is challenging, such as urban centers. Some critiques of residency programs center on the short-term, intense nature of the experience: while a traditional undergraduate pathway toward a teaching credential takes around four years, a residency may last only one year, with the field experience occurring concurrently with coursework (NYU Steinhardt, 2018).

Teach for America (TFA) is one well-known residency program. TFA recruits from undergraduate completers, mostly from programs other than education, to complete intensive training in the summer immediately following their graduation and prior to assuming their teaching position. Teach for America places candidates in higher-needs areas, while incentivizing the program by offering candidates a free master's degree in education while they complete two years of teaching in the program. However, fast-tracked, alternative certification programs like Teach for America do tend to have lower rates of retention (Hegarty, 2001). Retention refers to how long teachers stay in the field of education. Higher retention rates lead to higher-quality teachers, since you will keep growing in your competency as a teacher the longer you stay in the profession. Therefore, some alternative certification programs like Teach for America receive critiques for their short-term placement of teachers in schools for a couple of years instead of long-term teaching careers.

Maintaining A Teaching License

Once you have earned an initial teaching license, you will be able to teach for a period of time before you have to renew it. Usually, you will have to renew your license every three or five years; each state sets their own regulations, and different

licenses sometimes have different timespans. Renewing your teaching license is important because teaching and learning are constantly changing and evolving, and you will best serve your students by being up-to-date on the latest information. You can earn renewal credits in a variety of ways, including taking graduate courses, attending conferences, attending professional development opportunities offered in your district and beyond, and more. The year your license will expire, you will have to submit a request to renew your license to your state Department of Education, including evidence of how you met your continuing education requirements. You cannot be a teacher with an expired license, so it is important that you remember to keep your teaching license current.

Each state has their own policies for becoming a teacher, so what happens if you earn a teaching license in one state and then have to move to another state? Many state Departments of Education have **reciprocity** with other states, meaning that your license could be transferred to a new state without having to start over completely. You might have to meet a few additional requirements unique to your new state, such as Praxis tests, but you don't have to go back to school to get another degree in education. Learn more about reciprocity from the Education Commission of the States[6], including a state-by-state comparison of reciprocity conditions[7].

6.
https://www.ecs.org/50-state-comparison-teacher-license-reciprocity/
7.
https://c0arw235.caspio.com/dp/b7f93000c5143bf0c78540a0bfa4

Stop & Investigate

Look up the licensure and reciprocity policies for your state. Here is Virginia's licensure website[8]. What do you notice about your state's policies?

Characteristics of Effective Teachers

First of all, what does it mean to be an effective teacher? Effectiveness can be hard to define. Some ways to measure effectiveness include student achievement, such as test scores; performance ratings from supervisors, like administration members observing a lesson; or informal feedback in the form of comments from students or other stakeholders. Defining effectiveness is further complicated by the reality that there are many variables that a teacher cannot control that still impact these various measures (Stronge, 2018).

Pause & Ponder

Who was a teacher who positively influenced your life? What did they do that left this impact? Was it how they approached instruction, interacted with you as a person inside or outside of school, or facilitated an extracurricular club? Now, think about a teacher who

8.
https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/licensure/index.shtml

negatively affected you. What did they do that caused you to have a less than desirable experience?

As you yourself have experienced as a learner, there are certain characteristics that effective teachers share. Even though all teachers have distinct personalities and instructional approaches that they bring to the classroom–since teachers, like students, are still individual people–here are some practices that effective teachers have in common.

Over the span of 15 years, Walker (2008) asked college students what made effective teachers in their own experiences and found twelve recurring characteristics.

- Prepared. Effective teachers were ready to teach every day and used time efficiently.
- Positive. Effective teachers were optimistic about their jobs and their students.

Effective teachers share some recurring characteristics, such as being compassionate, respectful of students, and prepared.

- Hold high expectations. Effective teachers believe everyone can succeed and challenge students to do their best.
- Creative. Effective teachers come up with new, innovative ideas to teach content.
- Fair. Effective teachers establish clear requirements for assignments, give everyone what they need to

succeed, and recognize that learners are unique.

- Display a personal touch. Effective teachers connect with students by sharing stories about themselves and participating in their students' worlds, like going to a performance or sporting event.

- Cultivate a sense of belonging. Effective teachers make students feel welcomed and safe in the classroom.

- Compassionate. Effective teachers are sensitive and empathetic to students' situations.

- Have a sense of humor. Effective teachers bring humor into the classroom, but never at a student's expense (i.e., laugh with, not at, students).

- Respect students. Effective teachers maintain privacy and don't embarrass students in front of the class.

- Forgiving. Effective teachers don't give up on students and start each day without holding grudges about how previous days have gone.

- Admit mistakes. Effective teachers apologize when they make mistakes and make adjustments accordingly.

In addition to these personal qualities, there are specific ways to structure learning that are more effective than others. Creemers and Kryiakides (2006) called this the "dynamic model of educational effectiveness." The dynamic model focuses more on teaching and learning than other factors that are beyond the teacher's control in the classroom. Eight factors that tend to have an impact on student learning are explained in Table 1.1 (adapted from Muijs et al., 2014).

Table 1.1: Eight Factors that Impact Student Learning (Muijs et al., 2014)

Factor	Examples/Elements
Orientation	• Providing specific objectives for lessons/units • Asking students to name why they are doing a certain activity during a learning experience
Structuring	• Beginning with explanation of learning goals/objectives • Signaling transitions between different parts of the lesson • Reviewing main learning points throughout the lesson
Questioning	• Asking varied questions with varied difficulty levels (i.e., different levels of **Bloom's Taxonomy**, discussed in Chapter 6) • Giving students time to respond (wait time) • Being responsive to students' answers
Teaching modeling	• Teacher/peers modeling problem-solving strategies • Inviting students to develop their own strategies • Encouraging the use of modeling (showing how something is done)
Application	• Practicing/applying learning in a variety of contexts (whole group, small group, individual activities) • Use application tasks to connect to subsequent instruction

The classroom as a learning environment	• Establishing expectations for productive, on-task behavior • Establishing rules and structure for respectful participation in the learning environment
Management of time	• Organizing the classroom environment • Maximizing time on task/student engagement
Assessment	• Collecting data to assess students' mastery of knowledge and skills • Analyzing data to identify strengths and needs • Sharing this data with students and families • Using this data to evaluate/reflect on own instructional practices

As you can see, while we all bring our own personalities to our own classrooms and instruction, there are some practices that have consistently impacted student learning. We will continue discussing those specific practices throughout the rest of this book, and you will continue honing those skills as you continue on your pathway toward becoming a teacher.

InTASC Standards

Common characteristics of effective teachers can be found in ten **InTASC standards**. A nonpartisan, nationwide group of public officials with leadership positions in U.S. K-12 education called the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) created a subgroup called the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). InTASC created a list of

ten standards that cover model core teaching practices that high-quality K-12 teachers should be able to demonstrate as effective teachers. These standards were originally released in 1992 to guide early-career teachers, but the group realized that these characteristics were actually applicable to all teachers. Therefore, in 2011, InTASC revised the standards and expanded them to all teachers. Table 1.2 breaks down the 10 standards into the four overarching categories.

Table 1.2: InTASC Standards by Categories

The Learner and Learning

This category recognizes that before we can teach, we must understand our learners.

- Standard #1: Learner Development
  - "The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences." (p. 8)
- Standard #2: Learning Differences
  - "The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards." (p. 8)
- Standard #3: Learning Environment
  - "The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation." (p. 8)

Content Knowledge

This category focuses on the depth of knowledge teachers need to possess in their corresponding content areas in order to support students in their accurate learning of content.

- Standard #4: Content Knowledge
  - "The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content." (p. 8)
- Standard #5: Application of Content
  - "The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues." (p. 8)

Instructional Practice

After mastering the content knowledge itself, effective teachers need to understand how to deliver instruction by weaving together assessment, planning, and instructional strategies.

- Standard #6: Assessment
    - "The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making." (p. 9)
- Standard #7: Planning for Instruction
    - "The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context." (p. 9)
- Standard #8: Instructional Strategies
    - "The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways." (p. 9)

Professional Responsibilities

In this category, a teacher's role as a life-long learner is the focus. Learning can occur through professional development (like trainings and classes), reflection, taking on leadership roles, and collaborating with various stakeholders.

- Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice
  - "The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner." (p. 9)
- Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration
  - "The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession." (p. 9)

Professionalism & Dispositions

The last category of InTASC standards focuses on professionalism. Teachers are held to very high standards as professionals because of their influence on shaping students' learning, outlook, and futures. Teachers are expected to be role models, both within and beyond the classroom. Therefore, there are certain interpersonal skills–sometimes called **dispositions**–that teachers are expected to demonstrate as professionals.

Pause & Ponder
In your own experience as a student, what are some

behaviors or actions you have observed from teachers that made you respect them or lose respect for them? How will this impact how you practice professionalism in your future classroom?

A challenge related to dispositions is that research has not yet established an exact set of non-academic qualities that teachers need to demonstrate in order to be successful (CAEP, 2020a). Therefore, expectations of which dispositions should be observed will vary. Overall, here are a few examples of dispositions that you should possess as a future teacher.

- Communication. You will be expected to demonstrate mastery of oral and written communication with a variety of stakeholders, including students, co-workers, administration, and families. Communication should be respectful and positive, and teachers are often expected to demonstrate mastery of conventions of standardized English.

- Professional image. Related to communication, you are expected to portray a professional image in words and actions. You will be expected to dress professionally. You will be expected to avoid documentation of overly reckless behavior, such as photos on social media of drinking to excess at a party. As a teacher, you are a representative of your school district, and you are expected to maintain that professionalism within and beyond the classroom.

- Organization. While there is no one "correct" way to

be organized, you will be expected to manage your time, complete tasks by deadlines, and show up to work on time. You will also need to be able to organize student records (including assessments) and return assignments to students in a timely manner.

- Collaboration. You will be expected to collaborate with a variety of stakeholders, including students, co-workers, administration, and families. Many times, you will be interacting with people whose backgrounds differ from your own, and it is very important that you respect the contributions of others, even if you would not approach a situation in exactly the same way.

- Reflection. You will be expected to reflect on your instructional practice and adjust your next steps accordingly. Rarely does an instructional activity go perfectly, and that's OK! Teachers must be able to reflect on what went well and what to change going forward.

Critical Lens: Linguicism

You're heard of lots of -isms: racism, sexism, classism. What about linguicism? Fain (2008) cites Skutnabb-Kangas (1988) to define **linguicism** as "unequal treatment of languages based upon power structures that privilege certain languages as having legitimacy" (p. 205). People often assume that "Standard English" is right and everything else is not (Wheeler & Swords, 2006).

Standardized English received this position as a "prestige dialect" (Wheeler & Swords, 2006) about 500 years ago, when the self-declared "superior" Europeans came to the Americas and began interacting with the so-called "inferior" native people. Linguistic discrimination, therefore, is a result of the "racist project of colonialism" (Otto, 2004, p. 3). Linguicism can be applied to languages, such as Spanish, or dialects, such as African American Language or Southern English. As Wheeler and Swords (2006) remind us, "while language varieties clearly differ, difference does not signal deficit" (p. 14). (Note: We use the term "Standarized English" instead of "Standard English" to highlight the artificial construction of one language as the "standard" and all others as "substandard" [Wheeler & Swords, 2006].)

Many of these dispositions and expressions of professionalism are culturally bound. For example, tattoos may need to be covered in some school districts, while others do not mind if age-appropriate tattoos are visible. It is important to know the expectations within your local context so that you can act accordingly. In Chapter 5, we will discuss more about your legal and ethical protections and expectations as a teacher.

Stop & Investigate

Explore the purple "Critical Disposition" boxes in the InTASC standards document[9] (starting on p. 12). What

9.

> trends do you see? What will this mean for your future classroom?

Teacher Beliefs

In the teaching profession, it is also important to be aware of our beliefs. Awareness of our own beliefs can be particularly challenging because sometimes we are socialized into certain beliefs and do not even realize we hold them until we meet someone who holds different beliefs. Furthermore, in education, "Whiteness is the invisible norm" (Derman-Sparks & Ramsey, 2006, p. 35). As we established earlier in this chapter, most teachers in the United States identify as White. That means that the majority of teachers share certain aspects of mainstream cultural backgrounds and bring them

The old expression about a fish being the least aware of water because it is always surrounded by it applies to our beliefs too. Sometimes we aren't aware of our own beliefs because we are always surrounded by them. Even though we might not see them directly, we all have beliefs, and we need to be aware of these beliefs and their impact on our instruction.

https://ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/InTASC_Model_Core_Teaching_Standards_2011.pdf

into their schools and classrooms, often teaching next door to other teachers who share those same mainstream cultural backgrounds. That is how one cultural background can become the invisible norm.

We teach who we are. We bring our identities into our classrooms on a daily basis, just like our students do. Who we are involves many different facets of our identity, called **intersectionality**. Legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) invented the term "intersectionality," and it has since been applied in varied contexts, including education. The idea behind intersectionality is that many different aspects of our identity–including characteristics such as race, economic class, gender, and more–overlap and "intersect" with one another. Our identities–and our students' identities–are greater than any one isolated characteristic. In this short video, Kimberlé Crenshaw explains intersectionality and its impact in educational settings.
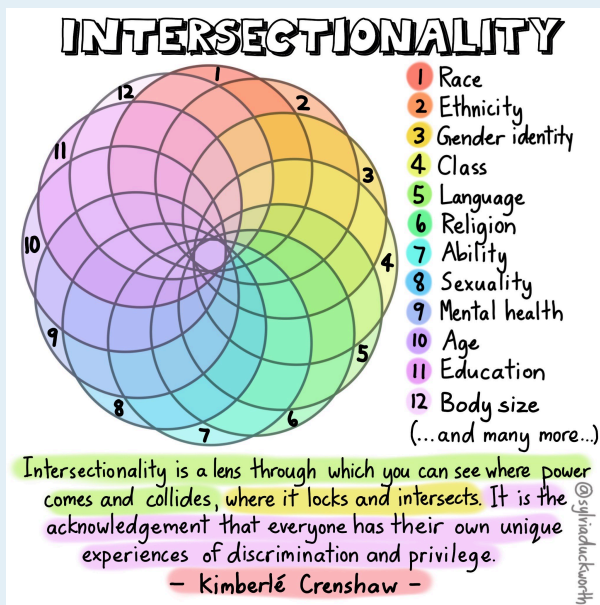
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Pause & Ponder

Where do some of your identities lie in this diagram of intersectionality? Which groups within each characteristic tend to have the most power? (For example,

which racial groups tend to be the most empowered or disempowered?) What other characteristics would you add to this diagram?

INTERSECTIONALITY

1 Race
2 Ethnicity
3 Gender identity
4 Class
5 Language
6 Religion
7 Ability
8 Sexuality
9 Mental health
10 Age
11 Education
12 Body size
(...and many more...)

Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it locks and intersects. It is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.
— Kimberlé Crenshaw —

@sylviaduckworth

As human beings, we have a natural desire to belong in order to survive. This drive to survive results in our grouping people–both consciously and unconsciously–based on their similarities or differences to us. Unfortunately, those same survival skills mean that we may think less of people who are different from us. We may think they aren't as smart, or aren't as good at what they do, or don't do things the "right" way (the way we do them). Judging or evaluating another culture based on your own culture is called **ethnocentrism**. If we aren't careful, we can let ethnocentrism interfere with our

professionalism as teachers. We might think a student is less capable of success in our classrooms or beyond based on our own cultural beliefs about certain characteristics. Sometimes we assume people from certain racial, socioeconomic, ability, and other demographic groups are less capable, simply because of our own expectations or cultures. We might consciously or unconsciously believe certain **stereotypes**–sweeping, oversimplified generalizations about a group–and those stereotypes will filter into our interactions with our students, our expectations of our students, and our teaching in general. As Gorski (2013) reminds us, "no amount of resources or pedagogical strategies will help us to provide the best opportunity for low-income students to reach their full potential as learners if we do not attend first to the stereotypes, biases, and assumptions we have about them and their families" (p. 69).

Therefore, an important aspect of being an effective teacher is knowing yourself. Freire (1973) discussed the importance of critical consciousness, the ability to see beyond one's own limited realm of experiences. Members of mainstream groups must be especially aware of their identities and how these identities impact their teaching (Gay, 2010; Harro, 2000).

Conclusion

In this chapter, we surveyed the teaching profession in the context of the United States. You learned that teachers today are mostly White females with 10-20 years of experience in the classroom. Pathways toward preparing high-quality teachers can be traditional, such as earning an undergraduate or graduate degree in education, or alternative, such as provisional certification or residency programs like Teach for

America. No matter how you earn your initial teaching license, you will need to renew it periodically. Finally, the teaching profession depends on characteristics of effective teachers. InTASC standards remind us of ten common characteristics of effective teachers across four domains, and dispositions relate to our general professional demeanor as teachers. Additionally, we must be aware of our beliefs and how they consciously and unconsciously contribute to our instruction. In the rest of this book, we will continue to explore the complexities of the teaching profession.

Chapter 2: Influences on Learning: Student Differences and Similarities

Unlearning Box

"He is just so lazy – sits there and refuses to do any work. And his parents are no help – they never return phone calls or emails. Why bother?"

This is an actual statement by a teacher frustrated with a fourth grader in her classroom. What this teacher did not know was the context in which the student was living. He was homeless and living out of his mother's car. His mother couldn't pay her cell phone bill, so had no way of receiving phone calls or emails. The teacher failed to

realize what else could be contributing to his "laziness":
hunger, fear, lack of adequate care, and a parent
unavailable to him with her own struggle to survive.
You will hear this repeated in this text again and again:
in order to teach our students, we have to know them.
Multiple influences affect our students and their
environments.

In this chapter, we will focus on how student differences and similarities influence students' experiences in our classrooms. First, we will investigate how different systems influence learning. Next, we will explore selected theoretical perspectives on development. Finally, we will consider how additional similarities and differences can impact learning, specifically for English Learners (ELs) and students with disabilities.

Chapter Outline

1. Systems that Influence Student Learning
   1. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory
   2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
   3. Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences

2. Theoretical Perspectives on Development
   1. Cognitive Developmental Theory: Piaget
   2. Sociocultural Theory: Vygotsky
   3. Psychosocial Theory: Erikson

Systems that Influence Student Learning

As humans grow and develop, there are many different systems

that influence this development. Think about systems as interrelated parts of a whole, just like the solar system is made up of planets and other celestial objects. Three theories that consider varying impacts on student learning are Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (see Figure 2.1) is a theory of child development which outlines five levels of influence from a student's environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1989).

- In the center is the individual–in this case, the student. Features of the individual include age, gender (including pronouns), sexual orientation, race, religion, and ethnicity.
- The microsystem is the next circle. This includes the student's family structure, school, peers, the church (if the student goes to church) and any other context with which the student interacts on a more direct level.
- The mesosystem is where these microsystems make connections with one another, such as between a teacher and a family member.
- The exosystem is the larger social system with which the student may not interact directly, but which influences their environment. In the case of a student, this could be social services that are provided to the family.

- The macrosystem incorporates the global influences on the student's environment and development. One example of the macrosystem is cultural norms, which impact a student's environment on a large scale.

**Figure 2.1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory**
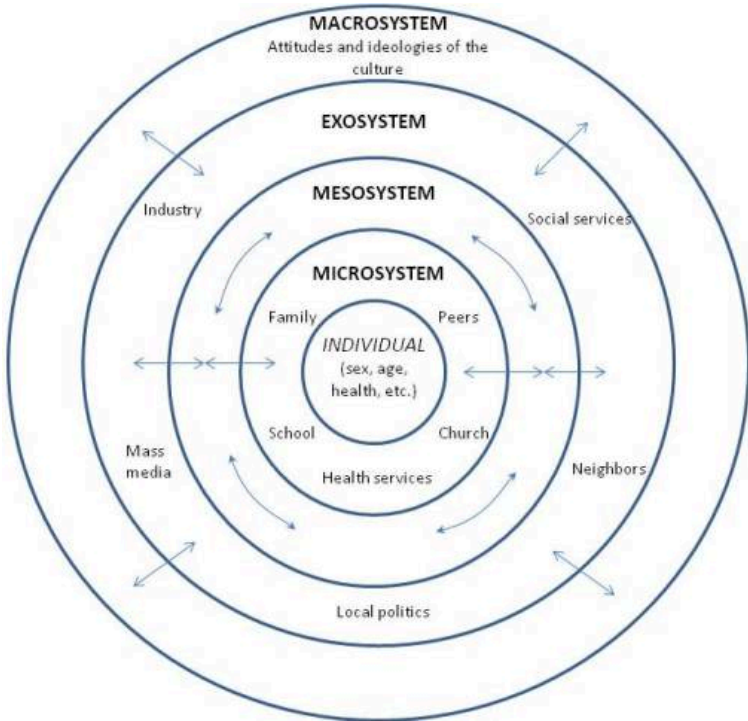
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Another way to conceptualize other influences on student learning is through need systems within **Maslow's hierarchy of needs** (see Figure 2.2). Maslow theorized that people are motivated by a succession of hierarchical needs (McLeod,

2020). Originally, Maslow discussed five levels of needs shaped in the form of a pyramid. He later adjusted the pyramid to include eight levels of needs, incorporating need for knowledge and understanding, aesthetic needs, and transcendence. Figure 2.2 depicts these eight needs in hierarchical order. The first four levels are deficiency needs, and the upper four are growth needs. The first four are essential to a student's well being, and they build on each other. These deficiency needs must be satisfied before a person can move on to the growth needs. Moving to the growth needs is essential for learning to truly occur. Now we will examine each of the elements within Maslow's hierarchy of needs in more depth.

Figure 2.2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
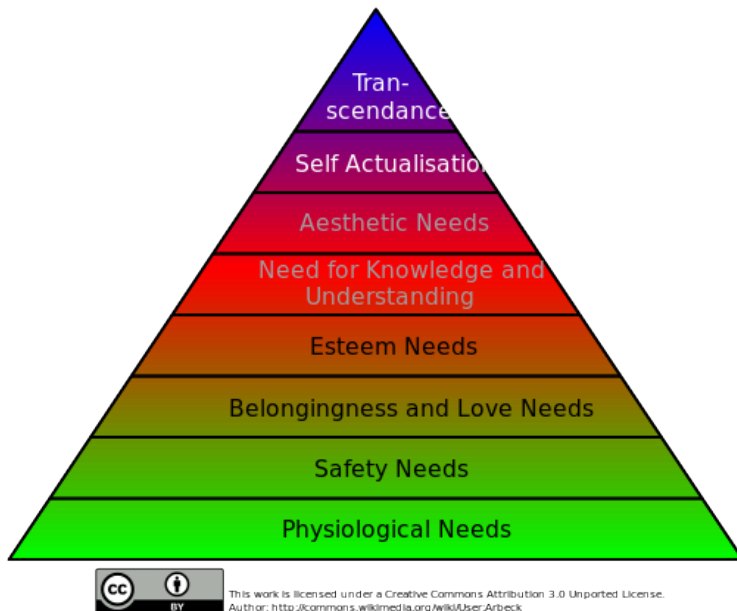
Of the eight levels, the first is physiological needs. These needs include food, water, and shelter. In this case, do students have a home where they are properly nourished? If not,

students who are not attending to their work may be hungry, not just daydreaming. This is the reason why free and reduced breakfast and lunch programs are so essential in schools.

Safety and security needs are the second level of the pyramid. Students need to feel that they are not in harm's way. Though schools are responsible for maintaining safe environments for students, classrooms also need to feel safe and secure. This requires classroom rules that all students follow, including protecting students from bullying and threatening behavior. There are effective and less effective ways to structure a classroom so that it is safe for all students, which you'll learn more about in Chapter 7.

The third level of Maslow's hierarchy is love and belonging. In schools, these needs are met primarily through positive relationships with teachers and peers, and people with whom students regularly interact. Feelings of acceptance are necessary here, and teachers can play a huge role in creating these feelings for students. It is critical that teachers are non-judgmental towards their students. It does not matter how you, as a teacher, may feel about a student's lifestyle choices, beliefs, political views or family structures; it matters how a student perceives you as someone who accepts them, no matter what. For example, a student who misbehaves is communicating something to you. To address this, we must not judge the student, but rather the behavior.

The fourth and final level in the area of deficiency needs is esteem needs: self-worth and self-esteem. Students must have experiences in schools and classrooms that lead them to feel positive about themselves. Self-esteem is what students think and feel about themselves, and it contributes to their confidence. Self-worth is students knowing that they are valuable and lovable. One critical issue in this level of the

pyramid is teachers ensuring that their students do not develop learned helplessness. Learned helplessness has to do with students' locus of control. If a student thinks that doing well in school is something out of their control, then they feel that nothing they do will affect their success. If teachers ensure that students experience success, then students will feel that hard work does, in fact, pay off. This can also be referred to as students having fixed mindsets or growth mindsets (Dweck, 2006). Students who develop a fixed mindset "accept the premise that [they] are born smart or not smart–able or not able" (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2018, p. 29). By contrast, students who develop a growth mindset "believe that while genetics may sketch out a starting point in [their] development, it is [their] own determination and persistence–in combination with persistent and determined support–that predict success" (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2018, p. 29).

CRITICAL LENS: CRITIQUES OF MINDSETS

Despite the popularity of the growth mindset movement, there are some critiques of this theory. First, some of Dweck's original studies came into question for their design and inconsistent results when other people tried to replicate them (i.e., Li & Bates, 2019). In research, it is important that if another person replicates the same study design, they find the same results; if they don't, it calls into question what the original study did and found. Sisk et al. (2018) conducted two meta-analyses into many studies surrounding growth mindset and found weak effects overall (contrary to the dramatic benefits usually

claimed when using growth mindset), though some benefits did exist of doing mindset work with lower-income students or students who struggle academically. Dweck herself[1] admits that the theory is complex and misapplied, specifically when teachers simply teach growth vs. fixed mindset without changing other instructional and environmental supports, or when teachers think the growth mindset is developed simply by praising students' efforts.

Following the four deficiency needs, next in Maslow's hierarchy of needs are growth needs. Once students reach growth needs, they are ready for true, meaningful learning. The fifth element, the need to know and understand, can also be referred to as cognitive needs. It is our job as educators to motivate students to want to know and understand the world around them. In order to do this, we must be sure we are providing our students with questions that move them to higher-order thinking skills. An instructional model that is well-developed and utilized in many classrooms is **Bloom's Taxonomy**. It can be used to classify learning objectives, and it is a way to encourage students to think more deeply about content and motivate them to want to know more. This model will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

The sixth level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is aesthetic needs. At this level, we can learn to appreciate the beauty of the natural world. When we are focused on deficiency needs in the lower levels of Maslow's theory, it is more difficult

1.
https://www.tes.com/news/growth-mindset-where-did-it-go-wrong

to see the beauty in our environment and surroundings. In education, students need to be exposed to the beauty that is reflected in the arts: music, visual arts and theatre. Most schools separate these into distinct periods or blocks; however, it is essential that arts are also integrated into the curriculum. Additionally, students should be exposed to arts outside of Western art. As we have already discussed, students come from a variety of cultures and backgrounds; therefore, they need to encounter art forms that include representations of all cultures, particularly their own.

Self-actualization is the seventh need on the pyramid and is another growth need. Maslow indicated that this happens as we age. It is our intrinsic need to make the most of our lives and reach our full potential. A way of thinking about this is to consider what we think of our ideal selves–or, for young people, how they see ourselves or what they see ourselves having achieved and broadly experienced as we get to later stages in life.

Finally, transcendence needs are the highest on Maslow's hierarchy. Maslow (1971) stated, "transcendence refers to the very highest levels of human consciousness, behaving and relating, as ends rather than means, to oneself, to significant others, to human beings in general, to other species, to nature, and to the cosmos" (p. 269). Though most of us in K-12 schools will not experience students at this level, it is important to note that this is the goal in life, according to Maslow.

Critical Lens: Origins of Theories

Sometimes we hold theories as universal truths without

stopping to consider the context in which they were made. For example, Bridgman, Cummings, and Ballard (2019) recently investigated the origin of Maslow's theory and discovered that he himself never created the well-known pyramid model to represent the hierarchy of needs. Furthermore, there are concerns that Maslow appropriated his theory from the Siksika (Blackfoot) Nation. Dr. Cindy Blackstock (Gitksan First Nation member, as cited in Michel, 2014) explains the Blackfoot belief involves a tipi with three levels: self-actualization at the base; community actualization in the middle; and cultural perpetuity at the top. Maslow visited the Siksika Nation in 1938 and published his theory in 1943. Bray (2019) explains more about Maslow's hierarchy of needs and its alignment with the Siksika Nation. You should be informed of Maslow's hierarchy, but you should also be aware that critiques of this theory exist.

Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Teachers need to determine students' areas of strength and need to allow students to work and grow in those areas. One approach to doing this is to determine students' strengths in different intelligence areas. Theorist Howard Gardner (2004, 2006) initially proposed eight **multiple intelligences** (see Figure 2.3), but he later added two more areas: existential and moral intelligence. Though there is little educational research evidence to support instructing students in these eight

intelligences (for example, you should not plan a lesson eight different ways to address all eight intelligences in one lesson!), Gardner's goal was to ensure that teachers did not just focus on verbal and mathematical intelligences in their teaching, which are two very common foci of instruction in schools.

Figure 2.3: Gardner's Multiple Intelligences
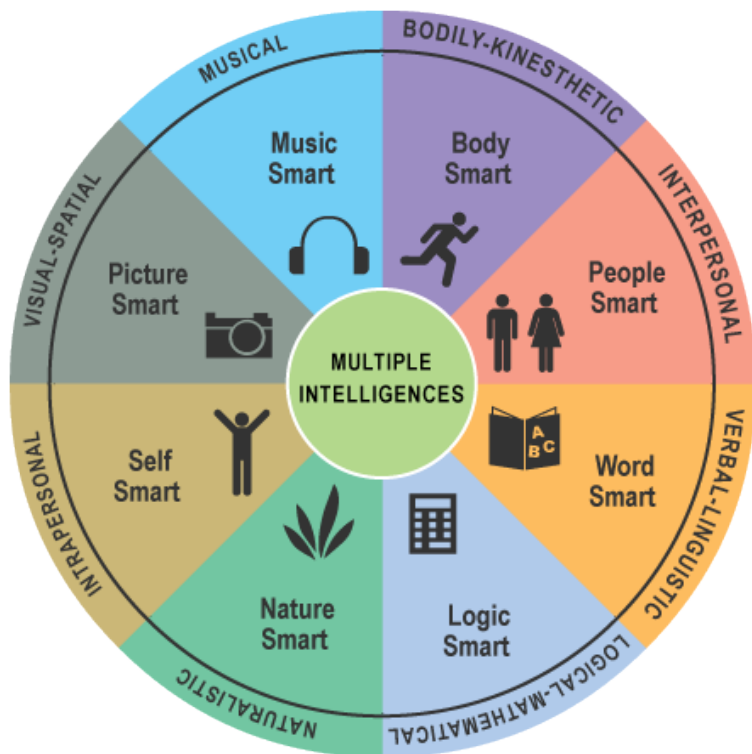
Gardner's eight multiple intelligences include musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, naturalistic, intrapersonal, and visual-spatial.

Similarly, while we often can hear reference to **learning styles** (often including visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic, or VARK), they have no research-based support.

Instead, "people's approaches to learning can, do, and should vary with context...Rather than assessing and labeling students as particular kinds of learners and planning accordingly, a wise teacher will do the following:

- Offer students options for learning and expressing learning

- Help them reflect on strategies for mastering and using critical content

- Guide them in knowing when to modify an approach to learning when it proves to be inefficient or ineffective in achieving the student's goals" (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2018, p. 161-162).

Learn more about the myth of learning styles in the video below.

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https://viva.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=151#oembed-1

Theoretical Perspectives on Development

While all human beings are unique and grow, learn, and change at different rates and in different ways, there are some common trends of development that impact the trajectories our students follow. Four common theories of development are Piaget's cognitive developmental theory, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Erikson's psychosocial theory, and information processing theory.

Cognitive Developmental Theory: Piaget

Cognitive developmental theorists such as Jean **Piaget** posit that we move from birth to adulthood in predictable stages (Huitt & Hummel, 2003). These theorists argue these stages of development do not vary and are distinct from one other. While rates of progress vary by child, the sequence is the same and skipping stages is impossible. Therefore, progression through stages is essentially the same for each child.

In 1936, Piaget proposed four stages of cognitive development for children:

- the **sensorimotor stage**, which ranges from birth to age two;
- the **preoperational stage**, ranging from age two through age six or seven;
- the **concrete operational stage**, ranging from age six or seven through age 11 or 12;
- and the **formal operational stage**, ranging from age 11 or 12 through adulthood.

Piaget argued that key abilities are acquired at each stage. We will now look at each stage in depth, along with videos demonstrating these abilities in action.

In the sensorimotor stage, little children learn about their surroundings through their senses. In addition, the idea of **object permanence** is emphasized. This is a child's realization that things continue to exist even if they are not in view. An example is when parents play peek-a-boo with their infants. The child sees that the parent or caregiver is actually gone when the parent's or caregiver's hands are in front of their faces. The video below demonstrates the idea of object permanence.

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In the preoperational stage, children develop language, imagination, and memory, working toward symbolic thought. One of the key ideas is the principle of **conservation**, meaning that specific properties of objects remain the same even if other properties change. The notion of **centration** is critical here in that children only pay attention to one aspect of a situation. An example is filling a shallow round container with water, then pouring the same amount of water into a skinny container. The child in the preoperational stage will say that there is now more water in the skinny container, even though no additional liquid was added. The video below demonstrates the principle of conservation.

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Additionally, in the preoperational stage, Piaget suggested that children have egocentric thinking, meaning that they lack the ability to see situations from another person's point of view. The video below demonstrates the idea of **egocentrism**.

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In the concrete operational stage, children begin to think more logically and abstractly and can now master the idea of conservation as they work toward operational thought. Children in this stage are less egocentric than before. Key developments in this stage include the notions of **reversibility**, which is defined as the ability to change direction in linear thinking to return to starting point, and **transitivity**, which is the ability to infer relationships between two objects based upon objects' relation to a third object in serial order. The video below demonstrates the ideas of reversibility and transitivity.

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Finally, the formal operational stage continues through adulthood. This is when we can better reason and understand hypothetical situations as we develop abstract thought. Key ideas include **metacognition**, which is the ability to monitor and think about your own thinking; and the ability to compare abstract relationships, such as to generate laws, principles, or theories. The video below demonstrates the idea of

hypothetical thinking, where we see how a boy in the concrete operational stage and a woman in the formal operations stage respond to the same scenario.

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In addition to his four stages of cognitive development for children, Piaget also discussed how we add new information to our existing understandings. Key terms in his conceptualization of cognitive constructivism include schema, assimilation, accommodation, disequilibrium, and equilibrium. **Schema** refers to the ways in which we organize information as we confront new ideas. For example, children learn what a wallet is and that it generally contains money. Next they learn that a wallet can be carried in various places, i.e. a pocket or a purse. The child is making a connection now between the idea of a wallet and the category of places where it can be carried. The child's schema is developing as ideas begin to interconnect and form what we can call a blueprint of concepts and their connections.

In order to develop schema, Piaget would have said that children (and all of us) need to experience **disequilibrium**. Children are in a state of **equilibrium** as they go about in the world. As they encounter a new concept to add to their schema, they experience disequilibrium where they need to process how this new information fits into their schema. They do this in two ways: assimilation and accommodation. **Assimilation**

uses existing schema to interpret new situations. **Accommodation** involves changing schema to accommodate new schema and return to a state of equilibrium. Let's try an example. A child knows that banging a fork on a table makes noise, and the fork does not break. That child and concept are in a state of equilibrium, with the existing schema of knowing banging things on tables does not break the item. The next day, a parent gives the child a sippy cup. The child bangs it on the table and it also does not break, so the child assimilates this new object into their existing understanding that banging items on tables does not break the item. One day, a parent gives the child an egg. The child proceeds to bang it on the table, but what happens? The egg breaks, sending the child's schema–everything that they bang on the table remains unbroken–into a state of disequilibrium. That child must accommodate that new information into their schema. Once this new information is accommodated, the child can once again move into equilibrium. The video below explains the idea of schema, assimilation and accommodation.

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> foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=151#oembed-7

Sociocultural Theory: Vygotsky

Whereas Piaget viewed learning in specific stages where children engage in **cognitive constructivism** (Huitt & Hummel, 2003), thus emphasizing the role of the individual

in learning, Lev **Vygotsky** viewed learning as socially constructed (Vygotsky, 1986). Vygotsky was a Russian psychologist in the 1920s and 1930s, but his work was not known to the Western world until the 1970s. He emphasized the role that other people have in an individual's construction of knowledge, known as **social constructivism**. He realized that we learned more with other people than we learned all by ourselves.

One of the major tenets in Vygotsky's theory of learning (Vygotsky, 1986) is the zone of proximal development. As shown in Figure 2.4, the **zone of proximal development (ZPD)** is the difference between what a learner can do without help and what they can do with help.

**Figure 2.4: Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)**
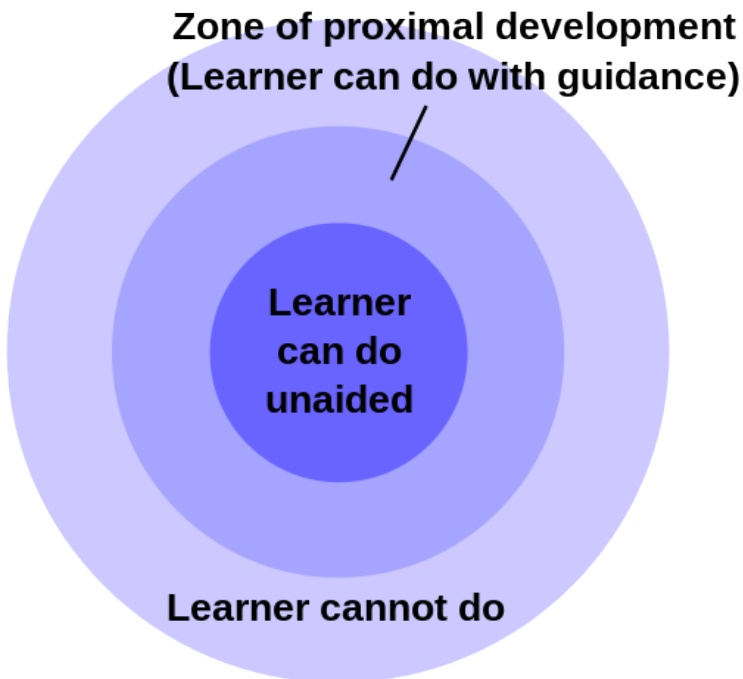
Vygotsky's often-quoted definition of zone of proximal development says ZPD is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). The concept of scaffolding is closely related to the ZPD. Scaffolding is a process through which a teacher or more competent peer gives aid to the student in her/his ZPD as necessary, and tapers off this aid as it becomes unnecessary, much as a scaffold is removed from a building during construction. While we often think of a teacher as the more "expert other" in ZPD, this individual does not have to be a teacher. In fact, sometimes our own students are the more "expert other" in certain areas. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes that we can learn more with and through each other.

Psychosocial Theory: Erikson

According to Erik Erikson (1963), as people grow (or students, in our case), they face a series of what he called **psychological crises** that shape our students' personalities. Each crisis focuses on a particular aspect of personality and involves the person's relationship with other people, specifically parents, caregivers, other family members, classmates, peers, and partners. Figure 2.5 depicts the series of psychological crises that Erickson identified: trust vs. mistrust; autonomy vs. shame and doubt; initiative vs. guilt; industry vs. inferiority; identity vs. role confusion; intimacy vs. isolation; generativity vs. stagnation; and ego integrity vs. despair.

Figure 2.5: Erikson's Psychological Crises
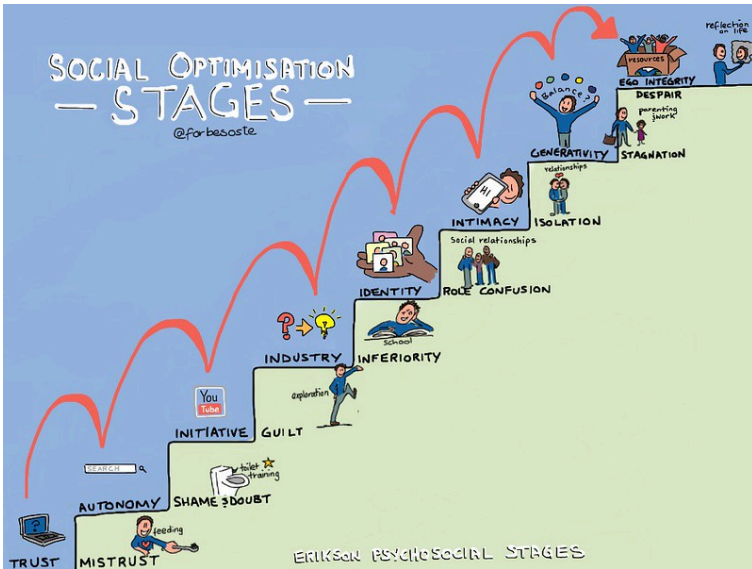
The video below details Erikson's proposed stages.

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The essential takeaway from Erikson's theory (Erikson, 1963) for us as teachers is that our students could have experienced any number of these "unresolved" stages, which can mirror certain behaviors they exhibit in the classroom. Students can often show feelings of doubt, mistrust, and inferiority at the younger grades. In older grades, we can see more issues of students' sense of identity playing out in terms of peer interactions and sometimes feelings of isolation. It is important to keep these issues in mind as teachers, but we also do not

want to be so strict in the theory's application that we overgeneralize our students' actions.

Information Processing Theory

In terms of how our students process information that we are teaching in class, we have to look at how theorists, specifically cognitive psychologists, have looked at how the brain functions when it is processing information. According to the **information processing theory** (Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1977), we have the ability to think and problem solve using three basic mental processes:

1. attending to sensory input in the sensory register;
2. encoding the attended information into short-term or working memory; and
3. retrieving information from long-term memory.

Information processing theory explains why teaching something one time doesn't result in all students remembering it. You may hear teachers say, "I taught this content last week, and my students don't remember a thing." That is because the information hasn't been processed, or encoded, into long-term memory. The best way to help students store new information in long-term memory is to use strategies such as rehearsal and mnemonics, a memory technique to help your brain better encode and recall important information.

The following video provides an explanation of the information processing model.

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CRITICAL LENS: CONTEXT MATTERS

As we examine these four theories, it is also important to analyze the context of this work: these theorists and researchers all identified as White, often working with individuals close to them to conduct research (for example, Piaget studied his own children). As you learned in Chapter 1, we all absorb certain beliefs and social norms from our communities, so knowing that these theories came from communities that represented fairly limited diversity is important.

Additional Similarities and Differences that Can Impact Learning

In addition to the influences on student learning we have already explored in this chapter, there are two additional sub-groups of students you will work with in your future classroom that have very unique learning strengths and needs: English learners (ELs) and students with disabilities.

English Learners

English Learners (ELs) are the fastest-growing group of

students in U.S. schools: in 2018, they comprised 10.2% of learners, totaling over 5 million students (NCES, 2020). Most teachers can now expect to have ELs in their classrooms at some point in their teaching careers. The majority of our ELs know Spanish as their first language, but there are many different languages that ELs know as their first languages, including Korean, Arabic, Urdu, Vietnamese, Japanese, French, as well as less common regional languages, such as those from various African countries.

STOP & INVESTIGATE

Take a moment to determine the most common language of ELs in your state and local school district. A good resource to use is your state department of education statistics. For example, the Virginia Department of Education houses this information on its EL website[2]. When you looked at your own state, is what you found surprising? Expected? What does this mean for you as a teacher?

English Learners have gone by many acronyms over the years, and the most accepted and widely used term right now is English Learners. When these students were first identified/categorized as a group in U.S. schools, they were termed **Limited English Proficient (LEP)** students. The federal government and most states in their regulations still refer to ELs as LEP students. However, the term LEP suggests a deficit

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2.

https://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/esl/guidance.shtml

view of students learning English. It was argued, rightly, that "limited" focused on what students lacked, rather than looking at students learning English as *already* coming with knowledge of their first language. Terms that followed included English as a Second Language (ESL) students, with a criticism of this term being that students who are English Learners sometimes already know two or three, or more, languages prior to learning English. Another term that is often used to describe English Learners is **English Language Learners (ELLs)**. This is considered an acceptable term for describing students who are learning English in schools. Additional acceptable terms used to describe students learning English in schools are multilingual learners, bilingual learners, and language learners. Regardless of the words used, all of these terms refer to students who are learning English in schools who are also proficient in a first language, or L1, which is also referred to as the home language or mother tongue. Table 2.1 breaks down preferred and less-preferred language and the reasons for each.

Table 2.1: Preferred and Less Preferred Language and Rationales

Preferred Language & Rationale	Less Preferred Language & Rationale
• **English Learners (ELs)**: Acknowledges students as learners of English with a positive connotation. • **English Language Learners (ELLs)**: Acknowledges students as learners of English with a positive connotation. • **Multilingual Learners (MLs)**: Acknowledges students as learners of English with a positive connotation, while also noting that students may be learning multiple languages. • **Language Learners**: Acknowledges students as learners of English with a positive connotation.	• **Limited English Proficient (LEP)**: Focuses on what students cannot do/are limited in (speaking English) over what they can do (speaking at least one language that is not English). • **English as a Second Language (ESL)**: Assumes that our students only speak one other language, while in reality they may speak multiple languages before learning English.

Programs that service ELs in schools are most often referred to as **ESL programs** (English as a Second Language programs) or **ESOL programs** (English for Speakers of Other Languages programs). These programs are generally taught by licensed ESL teachers who specialize in language learning. Most ESL/ESOL programs are "pull-out" programs where small groups of students work with the ESL teacher during certain parts of the day, depending on student and ESL teacher schedules. In these pull-out programs, ESL teachers are working with students

on their English skills, while at the same time often assisting classroom teachers with **frontloading** academic content. This means that the ESL teachers find out what content areas the classroom teachers will be focusing on next, and they work with their ESL students to prepare them for the academic English demands of that content.

> ### PAUSE & PONDER
>
> What do you think may be difficult for ELs in terms of learning English? What might affect their language learning? Think broadly when considering these issues.

Most ELs are assessed using ACCESS testing, which is based on the **WIDA (World Class Instructional Design and Assessment)** standards used across most states. The WIDA standards[3] were developed to assess ELs' English language skills. These are not content standards, such as the Standards of Learning used in Virginia and other standards in other states to assess students' content knowledge in the major areas of math, history, language arts, and science. The WIDA standards were developed in response to the **No Child Left Behind Act** of 2001, from which **Title III** was established. Title III required all states to create English Language Proficiency Standards and a standards-based assessment system to measure EL performance in relation to those standards. These English Language Proficiency standards were required to be linked with grade-level content standards and be rooted in what is

3.
https://wida.wisc.edu/

called "academic language," often referred to as the language of schooling. Some states developed their own proficiency standards, such as Massachusetts, but some states decided to work together to create standards that could be used across state lines. The standards this consortium of states developed are the WIDA standards. Forty states have adopted these standards, which helps with collecting data on their effectiveness, in addition to making it easier to determine an EL's language proficiency level if they move schools within a state or across states.

It is important to understand that the ACCESS testing measures language proficiency. The testing is not used to determine whether or not an EL has a learning disability. It can be challenging for teachers to differentiate between a language issue and a learning issue. A general rule to follow is that if the issue is manifesting itself in the student's first language, such as a delay in understanding the sound/symbol relationship in phonics, then it is likely a learning issue. However, because letters make different sounds in different languages, this could also be a language issue. The best course of action is to seek assistance from colleagues (such as your school's ESL teachers or special education teachers) if you, as the classroom teacher, feel that your EL student is not making typical progress in learning English.
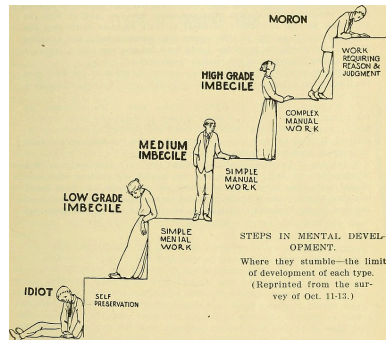
In the following section, we will discuss in more detail students who do have special needs.

Disabilities in the Context of Public Education

Upon entering any U.S. public school today, you will likely see evidence that learners with disabilities are present and included. You might see a student using a wheelchair or talking with peers using a voice output communication device. You might see adapted swings on the playground or calming sensory rooms as you walk down the halls. You might

Published in 1915, this illustration depicts the perceived long-term outcomes of individuals with disabilities at that time.

see students and staff creating sidewalk art on April 2 to advocate for autism acceptance or wearing wild socks on March 21 to raise awareness about Down Syndrome.

These signs of inclusion weren't always present. In fact, the history of education in the United States is marked by practices that excluded, segregated, and marginalized people with disabilities based on the presumption that they were incompetent or incapable of benefitting from instruction. This presumption is demonstrated in this illustration, which depicts the expected limits of development for individuals with disabilities as described in a report to the Virginia General Assembly in 1915 (Virginia State Board of Charities and Corrections, 1915).

State School for the Feeble-Minded in Minnesota circa 1893

Because they were viewed as incapable and incompetent, individuals with clearly identifiable disabilities, such as significant intellectual disabilities or visible physical impairments, were often placed in institutions and residential facilities away from their families and communities well into the 20th century. This practice was described as a charitable and responsible way for society to protect them. This photograph depicts one such institution (Minnesota, 1893). This site was originally opened as the Minnesota Institute for Defectives in 1887 and was officially renamed the School for the Feeble-Minded in 1895 (Minnesota History Center, 2020). These images and the terms used in them are representative of practices and beliefs that existed to some degree well into the 20th century.

CRITICAL LENS: INSULTING LANGUAGE

When you look at some of the language used in the image above, you might see some overlaps with language used as insults (like calling someone an "idiot" or a "moron"). It is important to realize that these terms do have a long history of referring to people with special needs in negative ways. Learn more about which words have insulting histories[4], and check yourself when you use

4.

terms like "idiot," "moron," or "crazy" in your daily conversations. Watch this video to learn more about the "r word" and why it should be eliminated from your daily discourse.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://viva.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=151#oembed-10

Exclusionary practices continued into the 1970s when 1.75 million school-age children with disabilities were fully excluded from public schools and an additional three million children were placed in educational settings that did not meet their needs (Yell, 2019). These practices began to change in 1975 when the **Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA)** was passed. This law established a foundational set of protections for individuals with disabilities in U.S. public schools, which have since been expanded upon. These protections included the right to (a) a free education for all students between the ages of 3 and 18, (b) education in community schools when appropriate, (c) non-discriminatory evaluation to identify educational needs, (d) parent involvement in decision making, and (e) an individualized

https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrewpulrang/2021/02/20/its-time-to-stop-even-casually-misusing-disability-words/?sh=15c02fd57d4e

learning plan that defines appropriate goals and supports for each student with a disability (Yell, 2019).

Today, the educational rights of students with disabilities are protected by three major laws. These are Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004; a reauthorization of EAHCA), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1990). These laws differ in how they define disability and in how they provide supports and protections.

Legal Protections for Students with Disabilities

The **Rehabilitation Act** established a very broad definition of disability in 1973, which was subsequently incorporated into the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** in 1990. Any individual who has an impairment that significantly impacts their ability to perform a major life function (such as walking, speaking, learning, or sitting) is defined as an individual with a disability and receives protection under these two laws (Rehabilitation Act, 1973). The Rehabilitation Act and ADA are civil rights laws that evolved from the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and extend the protections of educational access and equal opportunity to individuals with disabilities.

Broadly, the Rehabilitation Act addresses disability-related discrimination by any institution that receives public funding and **Section 504** of the Rehabilitation Act specifically applies to schools, including institutions of higher education. The ADA provides protections in all public facilities other than

Curb cuts are one example of an ADA support that can provide accessibility for all. It helps people in wheelchairs and people pushing shopping carts, for example.

churches and private clubs (Smith, 2001). Generally speaking, educators implement the protections of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA by providing accommodations that allow students with disabilities to fully access curricular materials and physical spaces. In most cases, accommodations provided through Section 504 are specific to the needs of the individual student and are documented in a 504 plan. Examples include providing technology with speech-to-text features for a student with physical impairments that significantly impact writing or a chair with armrests for a student who needs additional support for core stability. Conversely in school settings, ADA supports are often proactively added to public spaces and materials to provide accessibility for all. Examples include closed captioning of videos, curb cuts, ramps or elevators, and fire alarms that provide both auditory and visual alerts.

In contrast to the Rehabilitation Act and ADA, the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)** has a much more specific definition of disability. An individual must have characteristics that align with one or

more of 14 eligibility categories (referenced in Table 2.2) and those characteristics must have a negative impact on learning. A very specific evaluation process is used to determine if a student qualifies for services under the IDEIA.

Table   2.2: Categories   of   Disability   under   the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

• Autism • Deaf-blindness • Deafness • Developmental Delay • Emotional Disturbance • Hearing Impairment • Intellectual Disability	• Multiple Disabilities • Orthopedic Impairment • Other Health Impairment • Specific Learning Disability • Speech/Language Impairment • Traumatic Brain Injury • Visual Impairment, including Blindness

The IDEIA provides protections to students between the ages of 3 and 21, though the protections are discontinued when a student graduates from high school with a standard diploma. The law is focused on ensuring that students with disabilities receive a **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**. This means that students must receive specially designed instruction, including special education and accommodations, that allows them to make meaningful progress toward the curriculum and their individual learning goals. All of these services must be provided at public expense. A unique learning plan for each student, called an **Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**, must be developed annually by a team that includes   general   and   special   education   teachers, administrators, the student's parents, and the student (when

age-appropriate). Additionally, the IEP must be implemented in the **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**. The principle of LRE states that students with disabilities must be educated in the same setting as their peers who do not have disabilities, unless it is not possible for the student to make progress in that setting even when additional supports are added.

Critical Lens: IDEA or IDEIA? The Lingo of Special Education

In 1990, Congress reauthorized the Education for All Handicapped Children Act and renamed it the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The acronym IDEA quickly became embedded in the lingo of education, referencing the law itself and the "idea" that equal educational access for individuals with disabilities was becoming a valued part of our educational system. In 2004, Congress reauthorized the law again, providing some additional clarity and protections.They named this update the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, making the official acronym IDEIA. Although IDEIA is the most technically correct abbreviation, educators still use the word "idea" when discussing the law.

Serving Students with Disabilities in the General Education Classroom

Teachers of all levels and subjects should expect to work with students who have disabilities. Data from the 2018 – 2019 school year show that 7.1 million students, approximately 14%

of the total school-age population, receive special education under the IDEIA. Of those students, 82% spend at least 40% of their school day in a general education classroom (Institute of Education Sciences, 2020). Essentially, this means that most students who have disabilities are taught in the same setting and by the same teachers as learners who don't have disabilities for large portions of the school day. Therefore, all teachers must be prepared to educate these students.

It is important for teachers to realize that special education is a service, not a place. This means that services including specialized instruction, accommodations, and modifications that address student needs can be provided in any setting and school teams are required to ensure that this happens in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Both the IDEIA and Section 504 establish the general education classroom as the first consideration for LRE. Teams may only consider more restrictive settings, such as separate special education classrooms, when specialized supports added to the general education classroom are ineffective at meeting student needs.

In addition to supporting students with identified disabilities under IDEIA or Section 504, educators will also serve students whose disabilities may be unidentified. Because so many factors influence student development and learning, as discussed earlier in this chapter, it is critical that educators thoughtfully and systematically distinguish learning challenges caused by disabilities from learning challenges caused by social and environmental factors. When concerns develop about a student's learning, general education teachers are expected to provide research-based interventions in an attempt to meet student needs and to collect progress monitoring data to support educational decision making. This process, often called **Response to Intervention (RTI)**, is beneficial in that all

students who demonstrate learning difficulties are systematically supported, regardless of whether they ultimately qualify for special education. Further, Response to Intervention (RTI) models have been shown to reduce misclassification of students with disabilities.

While teachers may feel challenged to meet the diverse and complex needs of students with disabilities in the general education classroom, the outcomes can be rewarding for students and teachers, alike. Benefits for students with disabilities include academic gains, improved social skills, and increased friendships (e.g., Wehmeyer et al., 2020). Peers who do not have disabilities have been shown to have deeper understandings of themselves, positive expectations of interactions with people with disabilities, and, in cases where peers act in support roles, greater academic engagement (e.g., Carter et al., 2015). Additionally, general education teachers have reported feeling more aware of and more effective at meeting the needs of all students after working with students with disabilities (Finke et al., 2009). These positive outcomes are linked to the use of strategies that provide a broad range of support for all students.

Universal Design for Learning

One framework that can be particularly beneficial to teachers in attempting to meet the needs of all learners is called **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**. The concept of universal design originated in architecture and is grounded in the idea that it is more efficient to build supports for accessibility into a structure from the beginning than to add supports after a structure has already been completed. In architecture, such supports benefit many people, not just those

with disabilities. Consider, for example, how ramps help people pushing strollers or moving heavy items on carts, in addition to providing building accessibility to people using wheelchairs.

When carrying the principle of universal design from architecture into Universal Design for Learning (UDL), teachers develop lessons around three core concepts that support accessibility: engagement, representation, and expression (CAST, 2018).

- Engagement refers to optimizing student interest. Strategies that support engagement include creating opportunities for student choice and designing learning activities that allow learners to connect classroom content to authentic local and global issues.

Representation	Action and expression	Engagement
Provide options for:	Provide options for:	Provide options for:
• Perception	• Physical action	• Recruiting interest
• Language and symbols	• Expressive skills and fluency	• Sustaining effort and persistence
• Comprehension	• Executive functions	• Self-regulation
Resourceful, knowledgeable	Strategic, goal-directed	Purposeful, motivated

UDL Guidelines 2.0

- Representation refers to the means by which content is presented. UDL lessons present content in multiple formats (e.g., text, images, song, spoken language, physical models) allowing students to engage a variety of senses. Additionally, effective teachers select representations of content that make new vocabulary clear and activate student background knowledge (CAST, 2018).

- The final component of UDL is expression. In strong UDL lessons, students have the opportunity to express their understanding of content using a variety of modalities (e.g., speaking, writing, building, creating).

Lessons that incorporate multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression have demonstrated benefit for diverse learners. Learn more about UDL in the video below, or by visiting the ThinkUDL podcast[5].

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://viva.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=151#oembed-11

Accommodations & Modifications

Lessons built upon the principles of UDL will address the needs of many learners in a classroom. However, some students will need individualized support. Accommodations and modifications are individualized supports that may be provided to students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who are receiving other types of intervention.

An **accommodation** is a change to learning materials, the environment, or an assessment that does not fundamentally change the curriculum expectation or lower the standard of performance for the student. Clear examples of accommodations include seating a student away from distractions, providing enlarged print, or reading a history exam aloud. In each of these cases, students complete the same learning standards and activities as their peers. The accommodations are designed to reduce the impact of the individual's disability or learning difference.

5.
https://thinkudl.org/

In contrast, a **modification** is a substantial alteration that reduces the complexity of the learning standard for a student. Modifications should be considered after all possible accommodations have been exhausted. The key to distinguishing an accommodation from a modification is understanding the grade-level learning objective. If the change alters the grade-level standard, it should be considered a modification. Examples include a student using a calculator to solve multiplication facts on a math test designed to assess the student's knowledge of multiplication or when a student has to describe the characteristics of two planets while their classmates are expected to describe the characteristics of eight planets. Accommodations and modifications are both appropriate for students with disabilities at times. However, persistent use of modifications alters the curriculum that a student is exposed to and has long-term implications for grading and graduation.

It is important for teachers, parents, and students to discuss accommodations and modifications to make sure they are specifically selected to address each individual student's strengths and needs. They should also be selected to maximize student independence and provide a realistic picture of student skill (Lai & Berkeley, 2012). Once selected, accommodations and modifications are clearly spelled out in IEPs and 504 plans for students with disabilities. They may be described in other types of learning plans, as well. It is important that teachers understand that accommodations and modifications are not optional. Once they are in an IEP, 504 plan, or any formal written plan, the teacher is legally obligated to provide them.

CRITICAL LENS BOX: ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

It is not uncommon for educators to be confused about the differences between accommodations and modifications. Many teachers and parents have also questioned the fairness of students who receive accommodations or modifications being on the A/B honor roll with their peers who do not receive those supports. It is sometimes helpful to think of these supports outside the realm of academics to get a better understanding of their implications. Remember that in order to determine if a support is an accommodation or modification, one must have an understanding of the standard of performance. Think for a minute about the "standards of performance" in a baseball game. What is a player expected to do? What skills does a baseball game assess? With those skills in mind consider these two images. The first image shows a left-handed pitcher using a glove designed to go on his right hand. Most baseball players are right-handed and use gloves designed for their left hands. The second image shows a very young baseball player using a tee ball stand to hit a ball. Most baseball players hit a ball that is pitched to them.

Left-handed pitcher, Cesar Ramos, is using a glove on his right hand.

A tee ball player swings a bat at a ball on tee.

Both of these players are using a support that addresses an individual need. One of them could be described as using an accommodation. The other is clearly using a tool that modifies the standards of baseball.

In considering the implications of these supports, most would agree that the baseball player using a left-handers glove has achieved the same standards as his teammates

and is therefore deserving of the same salary as other baseball players. However, the tee ball stand clearly does alter the standards of baseball and would be considered a modification to the game. It is a needed support for the young player, but should not afford him the same recognition (or salary) as a player who does not use the modification. The same principles would hold true for grades and academic tasks. A student using accommodations has completed the same standards as peers who do not use them and should be afforded the same recognition. Students who require modifications, should be granted those supports so they can make progress in their own time. However, the modifications must be documented in the student's academic record to provide a clear picture of the student's level of knowledge and skill. That does not mean, however, that a student participating in a modified curriculum should be excluded from the honor roll, or identified as different in recognition ceremonies. These types of activities were designed to recognize student effort and accomplishment, not to compare students.

Specialized Instruction Provided by Special Educators

In addition to high-quality instruction from general education teachers, students with disabilities served under the IDEIA also receive specialized instruction from a special education teacher. Specialized instruction refers to research-based intervention that is specifically designed to address areas of need that are linked to the student's disability. These interventions differ

from general education instruction in pace, intensity, and structure (Bateman & Bateman, 2014). They are also often delivered with a smaller pupil-teacher ratio. Specialized instruction can be delivered in the general education classroom. There are also times when an IEP team may determine that specialized instruction should be delivered in a special education setting.

Serving Students with Disabilities in Special Education Settings

There are some instances when the needs of a student with a disability cannot be fully addressed in the general education classroom. IEP teams may determine that a special education setting is the Least Restrictive Environment for some or all of a student's school day. This may be because the intensity of the specialized instruction cannot be provided in a large group setting, because there are health or safety concerns, or out of respect for a student's privacy. For example, an eighth grader who reads at a first grade level may be uncomfortable working on reading intervention in the general education language arts class and therefore receive reading intervention in a special education setting. The IEP team must document and provide a rationale for any time that a student is removed from the general education setting per IDEIA regulations.

Even when students with disabilities receive instruction in a special education classroom for some or all of their school day they still have a right to access the general education curriculum, engage in extracurricular activities, and socially engage with same-age peers. Truly inclusive schools make this a priority.

Critical Lens: Labels and Representation

As culturally responsive educators, we have a duty to speak with and about our students, families, and communities in respectful ways. We are currently experiencing a societal shift in understanding what this means, especially in relation to
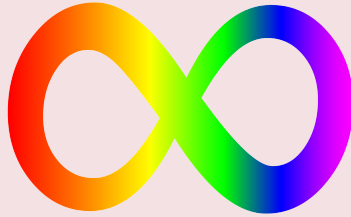
This rainbow infinity symbol is one representation of autism.

labels and representation of race/ethnicity, gender identity, and ability. We have recognized that individuals within various communities have a right to select the language and symbols that are used to represent them. Since 1990, educators have been taught to use person-first language when discussing disability. For example, we would say "a student with a learning disability," rather than "a learning disabled student." This language was intended to reflect the idea that a person is not defined by any single characteristic, including their disability. While person-first language is generally considered the respectful standard when an individual's preference is unknown, we now understand that many embrace identity-first language. This is particularly true in the Deaf community and for certain portions of the autism community. Identity-first language begins with the disability label (e.g., a Deaf woman, an autistic author), and is chosen by some individuals to indicate that the

labeled characteristic is integral to their being. It is important that we listen to our students and their family members and follow their preferences for either person-first or identity-first language. Similarly, we must be mindful of preferences when choosing images that represent groups of people. The puzzle piece and color blue have long been associated with autism. There is a portion of the autism community that rejects these symbols as ableist representations, preferring either a rainbow-colored infinity symbol (as shown below) or multi-colored hexagon (as seen in the logo of the Autistic Self Advocacy Network).   For more insight into perspectives on representing autism you may wish to visit The Autism Puzzle Piece: A Symbol That's Going to Stay or Go?[6]

Looking Forward

We have come a long way from the days when individuals with disabilities were systematically excluded from or segregated in U.S. public schools. Many would say that the promise of the original Education of All Handicapped Children Act has been met. Today, every child has the right to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. There is still work to do, however. Our focus now is not just on allowing every child to have access to school buildings and content, but ensuring that every learner gets the support they need to make meaningful progress toward an independent and fulfilling life

6.
https://the-art-of-autism.com/the-autism-puzzle-piece-a-symbol-of-what/

after graduation. We need to recognize and confront practices that stigmatize difference, set low expectations, and create disproportionately negative impacts on our diverse learners.

Table 2.3 lists additional resources that can support you as you advocate for your learners with special needs in your future classroom.

Table 2.3: Additional Resources for Special Education Topics

Resource	Description
Virtual Museum of disAbility History https://www.museumofdisability.org/ virtual-museum/index.html	This virtual museum provides images and documents reflecting the history of education, medicine, and advocacy for individuals with disabilities in the United States.
CAST http://www.cast.org/our-work/ about-udl.html#.Xwd7XEBFyat	This site provides information about Universal Design for Learning. Resources include videos, tools for creating educational materials with UDL, and a database for exchanging lesson ideas and materials.
UDL Lesson Builder http://lessonbuilder.cast.org/ explore.php	This site provides exemplar lesson plans that incorporate elements of Universal Design for Learning.
A Day in Our Shoes https://adayinourshoes.com/wp-content/uploads/IEP-Accommodations-and-Strategies-printable.pdf	This site provides an extensive list of accommodations and modifications for consideration.
IRIS Center https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/ module/rti01/	This online interactive module explains how a Response to Intervention model can be used to determine the presence of a learning disability in an elementary-school aged student.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we surveyed how student differences and

similarities in various contexts influence their learning. Systems that influence students' learning include Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. Selected theoretical perspectives on development include Piaget's cognitive developmental theory, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Erikson's psychosocial theory, and the information processing theory. Additionally, we studied how special groups of learners–English Learners (ELs) and students with special needs–bring unique strengths and challenges that significantly impact their learning environments.

As we saw in the Unlearning Box at the beginning of this chapter, all of our students bring different characteristics with them to our classrooms. While some (not all!) students may share certain characteristics and overall developmental trajectories, teachers must acknowledge that each student in the classroom has individual strengths and needs. Only once we know our students as individual learners will we be able to teach them effectively.

Chapter 3: Philosophical and Historical Foundations of Education in the United States

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Unlearning Box

You may have heard comments implying that education in the United States is not political, separate from religion, and accessible to everyone. The reality is that from its early existence in the New World in the 1600s, it was indeed political, religious, and accessible only to a select few. These traits continue to influence the evolution of

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education in the United States today.

In this chapter, we will explore how philosophical and historical foundations have shaped the trajectory of education in the United States.

Chapter Outline

1. Philosophical Foundations
2. Historical Foundations
    1. Colonial America
        1. Puritan Massachusetts
        2. The Middle and Southern Colonies
    2. American Revolutionary Era
        1. Federalists
        2. Anti-Federalists
        3. Democratic-Republican Societies
    3. Early National Era
        1. The Common School Movement
        2. The Development of Normal Schools
        3. Conflicts in the Common School Movement
        4. Higher Education in the Colonies and Antebellum America
    4. Post Civil War and Reconstruction

1. Increasing Influence of the Federal Government
2. The Beginning of Education in the South
3. The Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890
4. Native American Boarding Schools: Cultural Imperialism and Genocide

5. The Progressive Era
    1. Differing Approaches to Progressivism
    2. Emergence of Critical Theory
    3. Extending Schooling Beyond the Primary Level
    4. The Development of Teacher Unions

6. Post World War II and The Civil Rights Era
    1. Ongoing Inequalities and Federal Funding
    2. Separate Is Not Equal
    3. Increasing Access to Education for Minoritized Groups

7. The 1980s and Beyond
    1. Establishing the Department of Education
    2. *A Nation at Risk* and Standards-Based Reform

Philosophical Foundations

As students ourselves, we may have a particular notion of what schooling is and should be as well as what teachers do and should do. In his book entitled *Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study*, Dan Lortie (1975) called this the "apprenticeship of observation" (p. 62). Many people who pursue teaching think they already know what it entails because they have generally spent at least 13 years observing teachers as they work. The role of a teacher can seem simplistic because as a student, you only see one piece of what teachers actually do day in and day out. This can contribute to a person's idea of what the role of teachers in schools is, as well as what the purpose of schooling should be. The idea of the purpose of schooling can also be seen as a person's philosophy of schooling.

Philosophy can be defined as the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality and existence. In the case of education, one's philosophy is what one believes to be true about the essentials of education. When thinking about your philosophy of education, consider your beliefs about the roles of schools, teachers, learners, families, and communities. Four overall philosophies of education that align with varying beliefs include perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, and social reconstructionism, which are summarized in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Four Key Educational Philosophies

Educational Philosophy	Purposes & Beliefs
Perennialism	Focus on the great ideas of Western civilization, viewed as of enduring value. Focus on developing intellect and cultural literacy. Also called a classical curriculum.
Essentialism	Focus on teaching a common core of knowledge, including basic literacy and morality. Believes schools should not try to critique or change society, but rather transmit essential understandings.
Progressivism	Focus on the whole child as the experimenter and independent thinker. Believes active experience leads to questioning and problem solving. Approaches textbooks as tools instead of authoritarian sources of knowledge.
Social Reconstructionism	Focus on developing important social questions by critically examining society. Recognizes influence of social, economic, and political systems. Believes schools can lead to collaborative change to develop a better society and enhance social justice.

Perennialism is an educational philosophy suggesting that human nature is constant, and that the focus of education should be on teaching concepts that remain true over time. School serves the purpose of preparing students intellectually, and the curriculum is based on "great ideas" that have endured through history. See the following video for additional explanation.

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Essentialism is an educational philosophy that suggests that there are skills and knowledge that all people should possess. Essentialists do not share perennialists' views that there are universal truths that are discovered through the study of classic literature; rather, they emphasize knowledge and skills that are useful in today's world. There is a focus on practical, useable knowledge and skills, and the curriculum for essentialists is more likely to change over time than is a curriculum based on a perennialist point of view. The following video explains the key ideas of essentialism, including the role of the teacher.

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Progressivism emphasizes real-world problem solving and individual development. In this philosophy, teachers are more "guides on the sides" than the holders of knowledge to be transmitted to students. Progressivism is grounded in the work of John **Dewey**[1]. Progressivists advocate a student-centered curriculum focusing on inquiry and problem solving. The

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1.
https://www.pbs.org/onlyateacher/john.html

following video gives further explanation of the progressivist philosophy of learning and teaching.

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https://viva.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=108#oembed-3

The final major educational philosophy is **social reconstructionism**. Social reconstructionism theory asserts that schools, teachers, and students should take the lead in addressing social problems and improving society. Social reconstructionists feel that schooling should be used to eliminate social inequities to create a more just society. Paulo **Freire**[2], a Brazilian philosopher and educator, was one of the most influential thinkers behind social reconstructionism. He criticized the banking model of education in his best known writing, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Banking models of education view students as empty vessels to be filled by the teacher's expertise, like a teacher putting "coins" of information into the students' "piggy banks." Instead, Freire supported problem-posing models of education that recognized the prior knowledge everyone has and can share with others. Conservative critics of social reconstructionists suggest that they have abandoned intellectual pursuits in education, whereas social reconstructionists believe that the analyzing of moral decisions leads to being good citizens in a democracy.

2.
https://iep.utm.edu/freire/

Take some time to answer the questions in this survey to see where your philosophical beliefs align with progressivism, perennialism, essentialism, or existentialism. What did you learn about your own philosophical views? How will these impact your future classroom?

Historical Foundations

Where did these philosophies originate? To examine this question, we now turn to the historical foundations of education in the United States. Education as we know it today has a long history intertwined with the development of the United States. In this section, we will follow historical events through key periods of U.S history to see the forces that left lasting influences on education in the United States.

Colonial America

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https://viva.pressbooks.pub/ foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=108#h5p-2

(Note: If you are using a downloaded version of this text and cannot load the interactive timelines throughout this chapter,

please turn to Appendix A to see image versions of these timelines.)

Public education as we know it today did not exist in the colonies. In the First Charter of Virginia in 1606, King James I set forth a religious mission for investors and colonizers to disseminate the "Christian Religion" among the Indigenous population, which he described as "Infidels and Savages." His colonial and educational mission would impact settlement and education in America for centuries. Next, we will explore how education began evolving in Puritan Massachusetts and the Middle and Southern Colonies during the colonial period.

Puritan Massachusetts

Puritans in Massachusetts believed educating children in religion and rules from a young age would increase their chances of survival or, if they did die, increase their chances of religious salvation. Puritans in Massachusetts established the first compulsory education law in the New World through the **Act of 1642**, which required parents and apprenticeship masters to educate their children and apprentices in the principles of Puritan religion and the laws of the commonwealth. **The Law of 1647**, also referred to as the **Old Deluder Satan Act**, required towns of fifty or more families to hire a schoolmaster to teach children basic literacy. Because of similar religious beliefs and the physical proximity of families' residences, formal schooling developed quickly in the commonwealth of Massachusetts. Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania followed in Massachusetts' footsteps, passing similar laws and ordinances between the mid- and late-seventeenth century (Cremin, 1972).

This illustrated alphabet from the 1721 New England Primer infuses religious and moral lessons into basic literacy skills.

During this time, children learned to read at home using the Holy Scriptures and catechisms (small books that summarized key religious principles) as educational texts. The primers that were used "contained simple verses, songs, and stories designed to teach at once the skills of literacy and the virtues of Christian living" (McClellan, 1999, p. 3).

The importance of faith, prayer, humility, rewards of virtue, honesty, obedience, thrift, proverbs, religious stories, the fear of death, and the importance of hard work served as major moral principles featured throughout the texts. When Indigenous people were depicted or mentioned in texts, they were portrayed as "savages and infidels," needing salvation through English cultural norms.

Another form of education occurred in **dame schools**. Where available, some parents sent their children to a neighboring housewife who taught them basic literacy skills, including reading, numbers, and writing. Because families paid for their children to attend dame schools, this form of education was mainly available to middle-class families. Teaching aids and texts included Scripture, hornbooks, catechisms, and primers (Urban & Wagoner, 2009).

More expensive than dame schools, **Latin grammar**

schools were also available. The first Latin grammar school was established in Boston in 1635 to teach boys subjects like classical literature, reading, writing, and math at what we would consider the high school level today in preparation to attend Harvard University (Powell, 2019).

The Middle and Southern Colonies

In Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, town or village schooling was not as common. Their populations were sparser, and they focused more on economic opportunities for survival than religion. Education was considered a private matter and a responsibility of individual parents, not the government. Schooling was seen as a service that should be paid by the users of that service, creating a stratified system of education where wealthy families had access to schooling and others did not. Wealthier parents often sent their children to English boarding schools or paid for private schooling in the colonies. Wealthy families also sent their children to **parson schools**, operated by a highly educated minister who opened his home to young scholars and often taught secular subjects. Education for the poor was usually limited to the rudiments of basic literacy learned in the home or occasionally at church.

Charity schools, often referred to as "endowed 'free' schools" (Urban & Wagoner, 2009), were occasionally established when an affluent individual made provisions in his or her will, including land, to construct and manage a school for the poor. In addition, **field schools** were occasionally built in rural areas. Named after the abandoned fields in which they were built, these schoolhouses offered affordable education to students. The teacher's salary came from fees students' families paid, and teachers often boarded with a local family while

serving a field school. These schools were also called rate schools, subscription schools, fee schools, and eventually district schools (Urban & Wagoner, 2009).

In Colonial America, education in the mid-Atlantic and southern colonies was heavily stratified and remained out of reach for most inhabitants. New England Puritans worked hard to establish schools. Fear, anxiety, and the struggle for survival lent urgency to their quest for cultural transmission, which helps us understand their desire for formal schooling. Table 3.2 summarizes the main forms of schooling in Colonial America.

Table 3.2: Forms of Schooling in Colonial America

New England	Middle and Southern Colonies
- Home - Church - Town schools - Dame schools - Latin grammar schools - Colleges	- Home - Church - Parson schools - Charity schools - Field schools - Apprenticeships - Colleges

PAUSE & PONDER

Even though today's public schools operate separate from religion, the first schools in the U.S. had strong ties to religion. Where do you see those roots still in action today, even implicitly?

American Revolutionary Era

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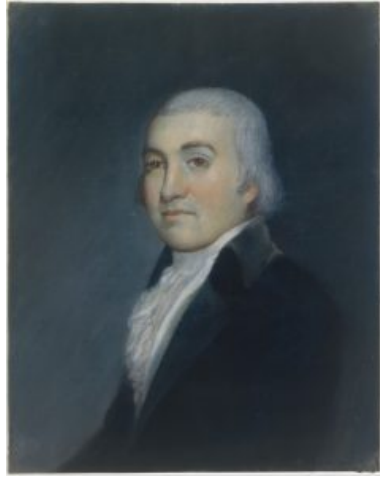> https://viva.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=108#h5p-3

After the American Revolution, our new country was establishing its systems and identity. Many key Founders believed public education was a prerequisite in a republic. Three groups had distinct post-revolutionary plans for education and schooling, all of which were intended to serve as part of the founding process: Federalists, Anti-Federalists, and the lesser known Democratic-Republican Societies.

Federalists

Alexander Hamilton, George Washington, and John Adams, among other **Federalists**, focused on building a new nation and a new national identity by following the new Constitution, which consolidated power in a new federal government. The Federalists supported mass schooling for nationalistic purposes, such as preserving order, morality, and a nationalistic character, but opposed tax-supported schooling, viewing it as unnecessary in a society where elites rule.

Noah Webster was one of the great advocates for mass schooling, and the purposes for which he supported schooling included teaching children not just "the usual branches of learning," but also "submission to superiors and to laws [and] moral or social duties." Smoothing out the "rough manners" of frontier folk was very important to Webster. Furthermore, Webster placed great responsibility among "women in forming the

As a Federalist, Noah Webster believed education should teach morality.

dispositions of youth" in order to "control...the manners of a nation" and that which "is useful" to an orderly republic (Webster, 1965, 67, 69-77). Webster's treatise on education and his spellers (like his 1783 *American Spelling Book*) were intended to develop a literate and nationalistic character to shape useful, virtuous, and law-abiding citizens with strong attachments to Federalist America.
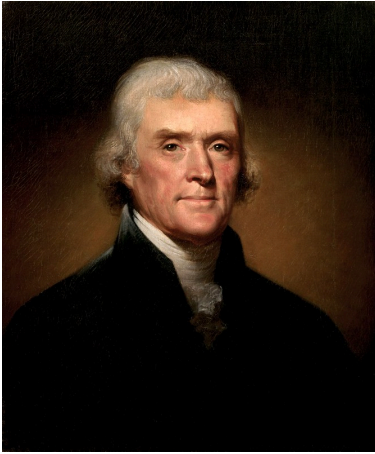
Anti-Federalists

Anti-Federalists, on the other hand, were opposed to a strong central government, preferring instead state and local forms of government. The Anti-Federalists believed that the success of a republican government depended on small geographical areas, spaces small enough for individuals to know one another and

to deliberate collectively on matters of public concern. Anti-Federalists feared concentrated power.

Thomas Jefferson was an Anti-Federalist. An aristocrat whose genteel lifestyle was bolstered by his violent oppression of enslaved people, Jefferson put forth proposals to educate all white citizens in the state of Virginia. Jefferson proposed a system of tiered schooling. The three tiers were primary schools, grammar schools, and the College of William and Mary. The foundation of his tiered schooling plan included three years of tax-supported schooling for all white children with limited options for a few poor children to advance at public expense to higher levels of education. While he suggested very limited educational opportunities for women, no other key Founder advocated giving high-achieving scholars from poor families a free education. Religion was not a core curricular area in the primary and grammar schools. However, his plans were viewed as too radical by his aristocratic peers, and they correspondingly rejected his state education proposals.

As an Anti-Federalist, Thomas Jefferson believed education should be locally controlled.

Democratic-Republican Societies

The third group of post-revolution political activists formed several clubs broadly described as the **Democratic-**

Republican Societies during the 1790s. Members of these political clubs included artisans, teachers, ship builders, innkeepers, and working class individuals. They generally supported universal, government-funded schooling, not simply to secure allegiance and order, but also to develop democratic citizen virtue and venues for deliberative learning and opportunities for dissent. The Democratic-Republican Societies viewed education as a means to prepare active citizens for new civic roles, and they considered the government responsible for providing positive benefits to individuals to realize a more fulfilling citizenship through venues such as education.

Table 3.3 summarizes the key differences among these three political groups and how they related to their views of education.

Table 3.3: Federalist, Anti-Federalist, and Democratic-Republican Stances

Federalists	Anti-Federalists	Democratic-Republican
Support strong central government via the new Constitution	Support a decentralized system of governing: states and local governance	Support a decentralized system of governing: states and local governance
Maintain social and economic status quo	Accept limited structural change in order to develop economic and political independence among individuals	Accept structural changes in order to develop economic and political independence among individuals
Support publicly funded school systems to develop and maintain strong inner moral values based on Christianity and patriotic adherence to the nation-state; order and harmony are emphasized	Support public school systems detached from religious institutions and a greater focus on the use of individual reason; preparation for limited political participation at the local level; three years of primary schooling available to all white children at public expense with opportunities for male scholars from poor families to advance	Support universal public schooling throughout the United States at public expense; curriculum expected to focus on some form of critical analysis of the status quo and preparing citizens to be active in democratic governance

> **Pause & Ponder**
>
> Where do we see elements of these different ideologies in today's schools? What has remained and what has changed? What approach do you see as the most valuable in terms of today's public schools?

Early National Era

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During the early- to mid-nineteenth century, the United States was expanding westward, and urbanization and immigration intensified. This period of history was defined by the emergence of the common school movement and normal schools, though conflicts over the organization and control of education continued. This period also saw the advent of higher education.

The Common School Movement

Common schools were elementary schools where all students–not just wealthy boys–could attend for free. Common schools were radical in their status as tax-supported free schooling, but their conservative-leaning curriculum addressed traditional values and political allegiance. Schooling offered increasing opportunities for families' children, especially working-class families, by teaching basic values including honesty, punctuality, inner
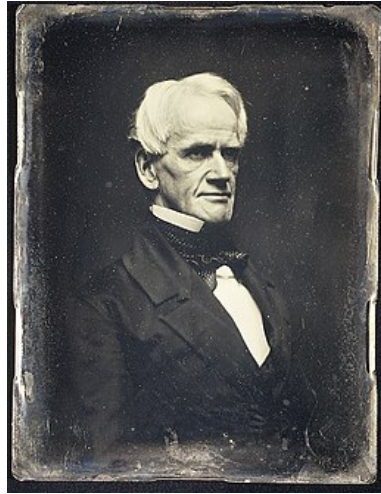
Horace Mann established the common school movement and also advocated for normal schools to prepare teachers.

behavioral restraints, obedience to authority, hard work, cleanliness, and respect for law, private property, and representative government (Urban & Wagoner, 2009). **Horace Mann**, Massachusetts's first Secretary of Education and Whig (formerly Federalist) politician, was the leader of the common school movement, which began in the New England states and then expanded into New York, Pennsylvania, and then into westward states.

The Development of Normal Schools

With the rise of common schools, Horace Mann then turned to how female teachers would be educated. For Mann, the answer

was to create teacher training institutions originally referred to as **normal schools**. A French institution dating back to the sixteenth century, *école normale* was the term used to identify a model or ideal teaching institute. Once adopted in the United States, the institution was simply called a normal school.

The first normal school in America was established in Lexington, Massachusetts in 1839 (now Framingham State University). They were primarily used to train primary school teachers, as middle and high schools did not yet exist. The curriculum included academic subjects, classroom management and school governance, and the practice of teaching. Teacher credentialing began and was regulated by state governments. Moreover, this contributed to the professionalization of teaching, and normal schools

Catherine Beecher, the first well-known teacher, became an instructor at a normal school to prepare other teachers.

eventually became colleges or schools of education. Many normal schools eventually became full-fledged liberal arts and research institutes. **Catherine Beecher** was the first well-known teacher of the time and one of the normal schools' first teachers.

Because the teaching profession was being feminized, administrators and policymakers viewed this as an opportunity. Men were exiting the profession, and women were

typically paid much less, allowing more women to be hired for less money to educate the growing ranks of students as common schools spread westward. Furthermore, once the profession was feminized, teaching became perceived as a missionary calling rather than an academic pursuit. While male policymakers insisted women were better nurturers and more suited to teaching morality and correct behavior in children, framing the discourse of teaching around a calling helped rationalize lower pay for women and fewer advancement possibilities.

PAUSE & PONDER

How do you see the early roots of feminizing the teaching profession still in effect today?

Conflicts in the Common School Movement

The common school movement was not without its conflicts. Whigs (formerly Federalists), including Horace Mann, sought to establish state systems of schooling in order to create standardization and uniformity in curricula, classroom equipment, school organization, and professional credentialing of teachers across state schools. Democrats, however, often supported public schooling but feared centralized government, thus opposing the centralization of local schools under the common school movement. The battle between Whigs and Democrats during the nineteenth century represents one of the initial conflicts related to public schooling.

Another important conflict related to the common school

movement was the clash between urban Protestants and Catholics. Typically from Protestant backgrounds, common school reformers continued to use the Bible as a common text in classrooms without considering the potential conflict this could generate in diverse communities. Horace Mann advocated using only generalized Scripture in order to prevent offending different sects. However, what appeared to Protestants as a generalization of Christian text was actually very insulting to Catholic immigrants, who were becoming the second largest group of city dwellers at the time. Protestants realized that it was best to reduce the religious content in the common school curriculum, but unhappy Catholic leaders created their own private parochial schools. This conflict generated a greater theoretical acceptance of the separation of church and state doctrine in publicly-funded common schools, though in practice, common schooling continued to infuse Protestant biases for over a century.

Common schools also faced conflict in Southern states, including Jefferson's Virginia, until after the Civil War. Planters had no interest in disturbing the status quo by educating poor whites or enslaved people. Driven by Southern aristocracy, education continued to be viewed as a private family responsibility and class privilege. In fact, many southern states prohibited educating enslaved people and passed state statutes that attached criminal penalties for doing so, such as the ones below.

Excerpt from a 1740 South Carolina Act:
Whereas, the having slaves taught to write, or suffering them to be employed in writing, may be attended with great inconveniences; Be it enacted, that all and every person and persons whatsoever, who shall hereafter teach or cause any slave or slaves to be taught to write, or shall use or employ any slave as a scribe, in any manner of writing whatsoever, hereafter taught to write, every such person or persons shall, for every such offense, forfeit the sum of one hundred pounds, current money.

Excerpt from Virginia Revised Code of 1819:
That all meetings or assemblages of slaves, or free negroes or mulattoes mixing and associating with such slaves at any meeting-house or houses, &c., in the night; or at any SCHOOL OR SCHOOLS for teaching them READING OR WRITING, either in the day or night, under whatsoever pretext, shall be deemed and considered an UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLY; and any justice of a county, &c., wherein such assemblage shall be, either from his own knowledge or the information of others, of such unlawful assemblage, &c., may issue his warrant, directed to any sworn officer or officers, authorizing him or them to enter the house or houses where such unlawful assemblages, &c., may be, for the purpose of apprehending or dispersing such slaves, and to inflict corporal punishment on the offender or offenders, at the discretion of any justice of the peace, not exceeding twenty lashes.

Enslaved people have often been depicted in American history textbooks as passive toward their owners. This is a misrepresentation of history. African Americans escaped, committed espionage on plantations, negotiated statuses, and occasionally educated themselves behind closed doors. For enslaved people, education and knowledge represented freedom and power, and once they were emancipated, they continued their relentless quest for learning by constructing

their own schools throughout the South, even with minimal resources. Unlike many free whites, African Americans placed an exceptional value on literacy due to generations of bondage.

CRITICAL LENS: WORDS MATTER

You will notice in this chapter that we use the term "enslaved person" instead of "slave." Part of critical theory involves questioning existing power structures, even in word choice. Recently, academics and historians have shifted away from using the term "slave" and have begun replacing it with "enslaved person" because it places "humans first, commodities second" (Waldman, 2015, para. 2).

Even while slavery continued throughout the South, segregation continued in the North. One of the first challenges to segregation occurred in Boston, Massachusetts. Benjamin Roberts attempted to enroll his five-year-old daughter, Sarah, in a segregated white school in her neighborhood, but Sarah was refused admission due to her race. Sarah attempted to enroll in a few other schools closer to her home, but she was again denied admission for the same reason. Mr. Roberts filed a lawsuit in 1849, *Sarah Roberts v. City of Boston*, claiming that because his daughter had to travel much farther to attend a segregated and substandard black school, Sarah was psychologically damaged. The state courts ruled in favor of the City of Boston in 1850 because state law permitted segregated schooling. This case would be cited in *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1898 and in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954.

Higher Education in the Colonies and Antebellum America

Colleges throughout the eastern seaboard states and former colonies served as symbols of elite education. These institutions developed throughout the North, Mid-Atlantic, and southern states, often subsidized by state legislatures. Religious sects competed to establish colleges in multiple states in hopes of garnering more adherents to their respective sects. Baptists, Catholics, Quakers, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians were among the groups responsible for this competition. Table 3.4 includes the 25 oldest colleges in the United States and who established them.

Table 3.4: The 25 Oldest Colleges in the U.S. and Their Founders

College	Founders and Year Established
New College (Harvard University)	Massachusetts Colonial Legislature (Puritan or Congregational), 1636
College of William & Mary	King William III and Queen Mary II (Church of England), 1693
King William's School (St. John's College)	Maryland Colony, Church of England, 1696
Collegiate School (Yale University)	Puritan or Congregational, 1701
Kent County Free School (Washington College)	Non-Sectarian, Maryland, 1723
College of Philadelphia (University of Pennsylvania)	Benjamin Franklin, 1740
Bethlehem Female Seminary (Moravian College)	Moravian Church in Pennsylvania, 1742
Free School (University of Delaware)	Francis Alison, Non-Sectarian, 1743
College of New Jersey (Princeton)	New Light Presbyterians, 1746
Augusta Academy (Washington & Lee College)	Presbyterian, 1749
King's College (Columbia University)	Church of England, 1754
College of Rhode Island (Brown University)	Baptist Church, 1764
Queen's College (Rutgers University)	Dutch Reformed Church, 1766
Dartmouth College	Eleazar Wheelock (Puritan or Congregational), 1769
College of Charleston	Church of England, 1770

Little Girls' School (Salem College)	Moravian Church, 1772
Dickinson College	Presbyterian, 1773
Hampden-Sydney College	Presbyterian, 1775
Transylvania Seminary (Transylvania University)	Virginia Assembly, 1780
Washington & Jefferson College	Princeton Graduates (clergy), 1781
Georgia College (University of Georgia)	Georgia General Assembly, 1785
Pittsburg Academy (University of Pittsburg)	Hugh Henry Brackenridge, Non-Sectarian, 1787
Franklin & Marshall College	Ministers in Pennsylvania, 1787
Georgetown College (Georgetown University)	Jesuits, 1789
University of North Carolina	North Carolina General Assembly, 1789

Post Civil War and Reconstruction

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Following the Civil War, significant restructuring of political, economical, social, and educational systems in the United States occurred. Schooling continued to be viewed as a necessary instrument in maintaining stability and unity.

During this era, education was shaped by increasing influence of the federal government, the beginning of education in the South, the Morrill Acts, and Native American boarding schools.

Increasing Influence of the Federal Government

Elazar (1969) asserted that "crisis compels centralization" (p. 51): when the nation undergoes a calamity, it eventually leads to the federal government exercising extra-constitutional actions on its own will or as a result of demands made by state and local governments. The post-Civil War Era provides one example of this effect. The U.S. Congress established requirements for the Southern states to reenter the Union. Radical Republicans, as they were identified after the Civil War, believed that the lack of common schooling in the South had contributed to the circumstances leading to war, so Congress required Southern states to include provisions for free public schooling in their rewritten constitutions.

Of course, southern states followed through with the requirements and drafted language supporting schools, but they created loopholes like separate and segregated schools. Black schools received substantially lower funding than White schools, creating yet another form of institutionalized racism that would have long-lasting consequences for African American communities.

The Beginning of Education in the South

Following the Civil War, nearly four million formerly enslaved people were homeless, without property, and illiterate. In response, Congress created the **Freedmen's Bureau** (officially referred to as the U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and

Abandoned Lands). Supervised by northern military officers, the Freedmen's Bureau distributed food, clothing, and medical aid to formerly enslaved people and poor Whites and created over 1,000 schools throughout the southern states. The Freedmen's Bureau effectively lasted only for seven years, but it represented a massive federal effort that provided some benefits.

In addition to Freedmen's schools, Yankee schoolmarms also headed south as missionaries to help educate formerly enslaved people. They sought mutual benefits: to educate the illiterate and simultaneously secure themselves in the eyes of God. As missionaries, female teachers learned that their work was a calling to instill morality in the nation's students, and this calling was pursued for the good of mankind instead of financial gain. This same missionary status fueled both the migration of teachers westward following national expansion, and the thousands of schoolmarms that migrated to the South to educate formerly enslaved people who, they believed, had to be redeemed through literacy, Christian morality, and republican virtue (Butchart, 2010).

However, African Americans were preemptively educating themselves. Formerly-enslaved people knew the connection between knowledge and freedom. Ignorance was itself oppressive; knowledge, on the other hand, was liberating. Literate African Americans were often teaching children and adults alike and creating their own one-room schoolhouses, even with limited resources. By 1866 in Georgia, African Americans were at least partially financing 96 of 123 evening schools and owned 57 school buildings (Anderson, 1988). The African American educational initiatives caught Northern missionaries off guard:

Many   missionaries   were   astonished,   and   later

chagrined...to discover that many ex-slaves had established their own educational collectives and associations, staffed schools entirely with black teachers, and were unwilling to allow their educational movement to be controlled by the 'civilized' Yankees." (Anderson, 1988, p. 6)

In addition, **industrial schools** were built in the South for Black Americans. Southern policymakers, northern industrialists, and philanthropic groups partnered to establish industrial schools focused on vocational or trade skills. Southern policymakers benefitted because industrial schools resulted in segregated higher education, which further limited access to equality. Northern industrialists benefited because they gained skilled laborers. Philanthropists believed they were giving Black Americans access to education and jobs.
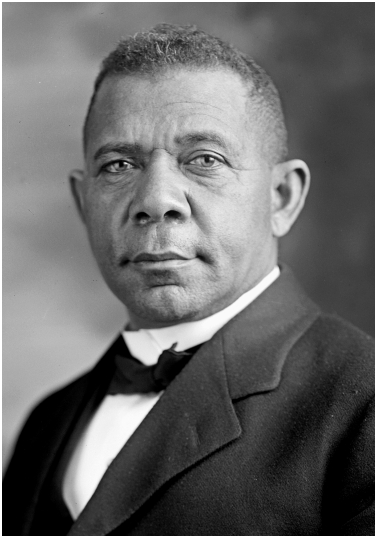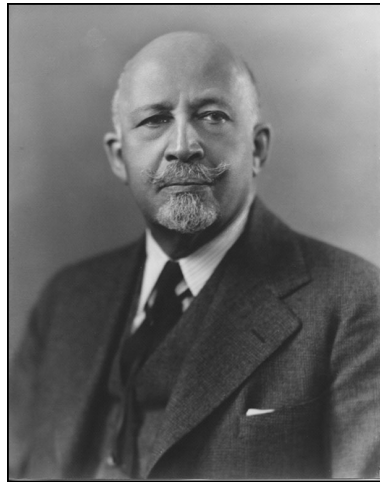

Booker T. Washington advocated for the industrial schools being established for African Americans.

Two African American leaders in the late nineteenth century had different perspectives on newly-developed industrial schools. **Booker T. Washington** was born an enslaved person in 1856 and grew up in Virginia. He attended the Hampton Institute, whose founder, General Samuel Armstrong, emphasized that "obtaining farms or skilled jobs was far more important to African-Americans emerging from slavery than the rights of citizenship"

(Foner, 2012, p. 652-653). Washington supported this view as head of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. In his famous 1895 "Atlanta Compromise" speech, Washington did not support "ceaseless agitation for full equality"; rather, he suggested, "In all the things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress" (Foner, 2012, p. 653). Washington feared that if demands for greater equality were imposed, it would result in a white backlash and destroy what little progress had been made.

W.E.B. Du Bois viewed the situation differently. Born free in Great Barrington, Massachusetts in 1868, Du Bois was the first African American to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard University. He served as a professor at Atlanta University and helped establish the **NAACP** in 1905 to seek legal and political equality for African Americans. He opposed Washington's pragmatic

W. E. B. Du Bois established the NAACP.

approach, considering it a form of "submission and silence on civil and political rights" (Urban & Wagoner, 2009, p. 176).

The Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890

In addition to the Freedman's Bureau, the federal government implemented two legislative acts related to education. The

Morrill Act of 1862 gave states 30,000 acres of land for each senator and representative it had in Congress in 1860. The income generated from the sale or lease of this land would provide financial support for at least one agricultural and mechanical (A&M) college, known as a land-grant institution (Urban & Wagoner, 2009). Land-grant institutions were designed to support the growing industrial economy. The second **Morrill Act of 1890** required "land-grant institutions seeking increased federal support…to either provide equal access to the existing A&M colleges or establish separate institutions for the 'people of color' in their state" (Urban & Wagoner, 2009, p. 188). The Morrill Acts demonstrated how industrialization and westward expansion resulted in increasing involvement of the federal government in education policy to meet national needs.

Critical Lens: The "Value" of Education

The opinions of Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois are prevalent in today's options for education after high school. Some believe that technical schools have a place in society for those who do not choose to, or who are not able to afford, four-year colleges. In essence, that the four-year college experience is not needed to be a contributing member of society. Others believe that one must attend college to expand understanding for future, more "professional" careers. Who is right in these scenarios? What influences where students choose to learn in post-secondary education? It is important to

critique the implicit biases we hold regarding others' educational choices.

Native American Boarding Schools: Cultural Imperialism and Genocide

Native American boarding schools were designed to take away Indigenous culture and assimilate Indigenous children into mainstream American culture.

Using its military, the federal government created a number of Native American boarding schools throughout the country. The first and most famous of these was the Carlisle School, founded in Pennsylvania in 1879. The federal government convinced many Native American parents that these off-reservation boarding schools would educate their children to improve their economic and social opportunities in mainstream America. In reality, this experiment was intended to deculturalize Indigenous children. Supervisors at the boarding schools destroyed children's native clothing, cut their hair, and renamed many of them with names chosen from the Protestant Bible. The curriculum in these schools taught basic literacy and focused on industrial training, intended to sort graduates of these boarding schools into agricultural and mechanical occupations. A total of 25 off-reservation boarding schools educating nearly 30,000 students were created in several

western states and territories, as well as in the upper Great Lakes region. Based in **ethnocentrism**, or the belief of the White, Protestant mainstream culture that they were superior to other cultures, these boarding schools relied on a harsh form of assimilation, a fundamental feature of common schooling.

Critical Lens: Indigenous Boarding Schools in the News

In the summer of 2021, the dark history of Indigenous boarding schools made headlines as Canadian authorities discovered unmarked graves and remains of children[3] killed at multiple boarding schools for Indigenous children. In July 2021, the U.S. launched a federal probe[4] into our own Indigenous boarding schools and the intergenerational trauma they have caused. These boarding schools are one way that education has been used to oppress and deculturize a particular group of Americans.

The Progressive Era

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3.
https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-57592243
4.
https://www.npr.org/2021/07/11/1013772743/indian-boarding-school-gravesites-federal-investigation

online here:
https://viva.pressbooks.pub/
foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=108#h5p-6

The Progressive Era was defined by social reform, and education was no exception. Many of the philosophies you learned about earlier in this chapter were established in the Progressive Era. Changes in education during this period included varying forms of progressivism, the emergence of critical theory, extending schooling beyond the primary level, and the development of teacher unions.

Differing Approaches to Progressivism

During the Progressive Era's focus on social reform, different approaches emerged. One group was called **administrative progressives**, who wanted education to be as efficient as possible to meet the demands of industrialization and the economy. Efficiency involved centralizing neighborhood schools into larger urban systems, allowing more students to be educated for less money. Graded classes, specialized and differentiated subject areas, ringing bells, an orderly daily itinerary, and hierarchical management–with men serving as school board members, superintendents, and principals, and women at the bottom of the rung as teachers–also increased educational efficiency. Educational efficiency required preparing good workers for a rapidly changing economy. Administrative progressives adopted factory models in schools to become better at processing and testing the masses, a continued form of educational assimilation.

Curricular or pedagogical progressives were focused on changes in how and what students were learning. Many of these progressives saw schooling as a vehicle for social justice instead of assimilation. John **Dewey** is often referred to as America's philosopher and the father of progressivism in education.
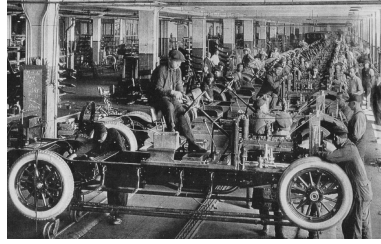
Similar to actual factories, factory models in education increased efficiency, which was important to administrative progressives.

In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey (1944) theorized two types of learning: "conservative," which reproduces the status quo through cultural transmission and socialization, and "progressive," which frames education more organically for the purposes of experiencing "growth" and broadening "potentialities" (p. 41). In this case, "progressive" learning has no predetermined outcome and is always evolving, or progressing. Democratic education, Dewey believed, must build on the existing culture or status quo and free students and adults alike toward conscious positive change based on newly-discovered information, improvements in science, and democratic input from all members of the community, which added legitimacy to a society's growth.

John Dewey was known as the father of progressive education.

Dewey and his like-minded progressives have often been referred to as **social reconstructionists**. They believed education could improve society. Dewey recognized "the ability of the schools to teach independent thinking and to the ability of students to analyze social problems" (Kliebard, 1995, p. 170). Dewey did not expect the school to upend society; rather, as institutions that reached virtually all youth, he saw schooling as the most effective means of developing the habits of critical thinking, cooperative learning, and problem solving so that students could, once they became adults, carry on this same activity democratically in their attempts to improve society. Their attempts were often met with contempt because such critique threatened the existing socio-political system, which conservative individuals wished to preserve.

Emergence of Critical Theory

In Germany in 1923, **critical theory** was developed at The Frankfurt Institute of Social Research. With roots in German Idealism, critical theorists sought to interpret and transform society by challenging the assumption that social, economic, and political institutions developed naturally and objectively. In addition, critical theorists rejected the existence of absolute truths. Instead of blind acceptance of knowledge, critical

theorists encouraged questioning of widely accepted answers and challenged objectivity and neutrality, noting that these constructs avoid addressing inequality in political and economic power, social arrangements, institutional forms of discrimination, and other areas. The original Frankfurt School theorists were dedicated to ideology critique and the long-term goal of reconstructing society in order to "ensure a true, free, and just life" emancipated from "authoritarian and bureaucratic politics" (Held, 1980, p. 15).

A decade later amidst the Great Depression, America witnessed the emergence of its own Frankfurt School. In the United States, critical theory was aligned with social reconstructionism and situated in social foundations programs in various academic institutions, including its first department in Columbia University's Teachers College. Why would this movement find its home in American education? Educators were "a positive creative force in American society" that could serve as "a mighty instrument of...collective action" (Counts, 2011, p. 21). Critique, reflection, and action, often referred to as praxis, are intrinsically educational, and these actions transcend the mere transmission of knowledge and culture. America's social reconstructionists attempted to cultivate a specialized field that drew from many academic disciplines in order to develop professional teachers' understanding of how schooling tended to reinforce, evangelize, or perpetuate a given social order. They repudiated a predetermined "blueprint" for training teachers, rejecting "the notion that educators, like factory hands, merely...follow blueprints" (Coe, 1935, p. 26).

When education stops reproducing the status quo, when we self-reflect and become self-critical, when we attempt to produce change and social improvement, when the work of powerful and vested interests is challenged by new knowledge, this is when intellectuals and education
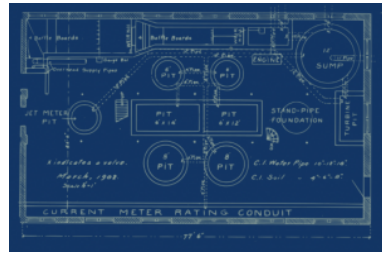
Social reconstructionists viewed teachers as professionals who did not need "blueprints" to tell them exactly how to teach.

become threatening. What developed, and what continues to be a center of conflict today over the issue of education, is a struggle over two polarizing purposes of formal schooling. The first purpose is generally described as the transmission and indoctrination of the values, customs, ideologies, beliefs, and rituals, often controlled by and aligned with more powerful social groups. The second purpose of education, often perceived as more radical, is the view that education should serve as a means of critique and social reconstruction in order to improve society.

Extending Schooling Beyond the Primary Level

While high schools existed in New England towns since the establishment of the Boston Latin Grammar School in 1636, it was not until the early nineteenth century that high schools started appearing in urban areas, and they were not commonly attended until the early twentieth century. While common elementary schooling focused on teaching students morality, a differentiated curriculum in the early twentieth century high schools "reflected a new, largely economic, purpose for

education" (Urban & Wagoner, 2009, p. 234). Debates arose around the high school curriculum: should it teach a classical curriculum, or focus on vocational training to meet the needs of the rapidly changing economy in the U.S.? In 1918, the National Education Association published a report called "The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education" to establish the goals of high school education, including "health, command of fundamental processes, worthy home membership, vocation, citizenship, worthy use of leisure, and ethical character" to prepare students "for their adult lives" by "fitting [them] into appropriate social and vocational roles" (Urban & Wagoner, 2009, p. 271-272). The functionalistic nature of high school also resulted in the development of extracurricular programs including, but not limited to, "athletics," school "newspapers, and school clubs of various kinds" in order to teach "students the importance of cooperation" and to "serve...the needs of industrial society" (Urban & Wagoner, 2009, p. 272-276). This resulted in the high school becoming a major institutional mechanism in developing the future teenager.

> ### Pause & Ponder
>
> How did these "Cardinal Principles," published over a century ago, shape your own high school experience?

Changes beyond high school also occurred in the Progressive Era. It was also during this period that the educational ladder expanded to include not only a system of elementary and high schools, but also junior high schools, community colleges, and

kindergartens, which had served as separate private institutions since the mid-nineteenth century. Not only were more children attending school at this time, they were attending for longer periods of time. Moreover, patriotism, the abolishment of German language instruction in many schools, and intelligence testing were introduced to education following World War I.

The Development of Teacher Unions

While teaching offered career opportunities for women at the time, their increasing presence in the profession was met with little pay and much exploitation. Female teachers were expected to teach more students, particularly in urban areas where immigration tended to ebb and flow. It was not unusual for teachers to forego their salaries during economic downturns, and they had little or no benefits or rights to due process (which will be discussed in Chapter 5). Male administrators and policymakers typically justified their ill-treatment of teachers by treating them as martyrs for their communities (Goldstein, 2014).

The **National Education Association** was established in 1857, initially to address the interests of school administrators. Today, it serves as a major interest group for the teaching profession lobbying at all levels of government. The **American Federation of Teachers** emerged in 1916 as an outgrowth of teacher associations in Chicago. This group joined with organized labor unions, such as the AFL-CIO (The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations) in order to increase its formative power. Both organizations continue to exist today with state and local chapters.

Stop & Investigate

Check out the websites of the National Education Association[5] and the American Federation of Teachers[6] to learn more about these organizations, what they provide, and how they support active change in the teaching profession.

Post World War II & Civil Rights Era

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https://viva.pressbooks.pub/
foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=108#h5p-7

In the decades following World War II, the U.S. prospered, and education saw many significant shifts, especially focusing on equality of educational opportunities. In this period, ongoing inequalities in educational opportunities led to limited federal funding, *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) deemed segregated schools illegal, and other minoritized groups continued to fight for equitable access to education.

5.
https://www.nea.org/
6.
https://www.aft.org/

Ongoing Inequalities and Federal Funding

The 1945 Senate committee hearings on federal aid to education highlighted ongoing inequities in schooling, as well as the fact that "education was in a state of dire need" of financial resources and more equitable funding (Ravitch, 1983, p. 5). Most school funding came from property taxes, which continued to exacerbate inequities, as will be discussed in Chapter 4. Other changes took place following World War II to worsen already existing inequalities. After the War, "white flight" from the inner city to suburbs resulted in highly-segregated communities, falling urban property values, and rising suburban property values. White flight contributed to greater de facto segregation, and it increased segregated schooling and enhanced inequalities in school funding.

After Russia launched Sputnik in 1957, U.S. federal support of schools increased to allow for global competition.

In response, the federal government offered limited assistance. The National School Lunch Program was passed in 1946 in order to enhance learning through better nutrition. In response to the anxiety created over the launching of the Russian satellite Sputnik, Congress passed the 1958 National Defense Education Act, which provided increased federal funding for math, science, and foreign languages in public schools. While these examples are not exhaustive, they illustrate the piecemeal federal approach to funding public schools: if a problem was perceived

as a crisis and reached the federal legislative agenda, it was more likely to attract congressional funding.

In 1965, President Johnson worked with Congress in order to pass what became known as the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)**. The ESEA served as the largest total expenditure of federal funds for the nation's public schools in history. Aligned with Johnson's war against poverty, the purpose of the law included increased federal funding for school districts with high levels of poor students. The law included six Titles (sections). Title I served as the primary legislative focus and included about 80 percent of the law's total funding. Title I funds were distributed to poorer schools districts in an attempt to remedy the unequal funding perpetuated by reliance on property taxes. Title VII, or the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, provided funds for students who were speakers of languages other than English. The other Titles provided federal funding for school libraries, textbooks and instructional materials, educational research, and funds to state departments of education to help them implement and monitor the law. This resulted in the growth of state power alongside the expansion of federal power since states gained greater oversight of federal programs and mandates.

Separate is Not Equal

In 1896, *Plessy v. Ferguson* established the separate-but-equal doctrine. In its decision, the U.S. Supreme Court circumvented the original intent of the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause, which was intended to give all persons equal rights under the law. The Court strategically

The landmark 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision began the process of school desegregation, which took several decades.

interpreted the clause to mean that as long as segregated public facilities were equal, they were constitutional.

The 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision ended the separate-but-equal doctrine. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) found five plaintiffs representing four different states (Delaware, Kansas, South Carolina, and Virginia) and the District of Columbia to challenge segregated primary and secondary schools. All five cases were heard under the name *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka.* The Court ruled unanimously in 1954 to overturn *Plessy.* In his majority decision, Chief Justice Earl Warren made the following conclusion:

> Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children. The impact is greater when it has the sanction of the law, for the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the

Negro group…Any language in contrary to this finding is rejected. We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. (347 U.S. 483, 1954)

Even though Brown v. Board found segregation unconstitutional, desegregation faced many challenges from White students, families, educators, and others.

After ruling segregation unconstitutional, the Court then had to consider a reasonable set of remedies in order to ensure desegregation. In 1955, The Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* II that desegregation would occur "on a racially nondiscriminatory basis with all deliberate speed." This vague language, particularly the phrase "all deliberate speed," contributed to chaos and enabled state resistance, with each state and district deciding its own approaches or avoidance thereof (Ryan, 2010).

When integration did take place, it occurred on white terms. Integration resulted in Black teachers losing their jobs and the closing of their schools. Black students were integrated into White schools and were suddenly being taught by White teachers while being subjected to an all-white curriculum. Black students and teachers alike experienced "cultural dissonance that exacerbated student rebelliousness, especially among African American boys." Furthermore, "the actual implementation of integration plans and court orders remained largely in the hands of white school boards" (Fairclough, 2007, p. 396-400). Due to massive resistance to desegregation,

Congress passed the 1964 Civil Rights Act as an attempt to force compliance. Following the passage of ESEA, which provided millions of federal dollars to each state, the federal government could now threaten non-compliant states (and school systems) by withholding these large sums of money annually under Title VI of the act.

Many urban school systems began drawing plans to bus white and non-white children to schools across neighborhoods in order to increase racial diversity in all of a district's schools (i.e., *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, 1971). However, in 1974 in *Milliken v. Bradley*, the U.S. Supreme Court

Busing children to different schools not in their neighborhoods was one attempt to increase racial diversity in schools.

decided schools were not responsible for desegregation across district lines if their own policies had not explicitly caused the segregation. President Nixon, who opposed inter-district busing, argued that in order to protect suburban schools, inner city schools should be given additional funds and resources to compensate urban school children from the harms of past segregation and the legacies of inequitable funding (LCCHR, n.d.). According to Ryan (2010), "Nixon's compromise, broadly conceived to mean that urban schools should be helped in ways that [did] not threaten the physical, financial, or political independence of suburban schools... continues to shape nearly every modern education reform" (p. 5). The Milliken decision halted any possibility to integrate schools effectively. Due to the existence of de facto segregation, there was no significant

way to integrate students unless they crossed district boundaries.

Nixon also worked with Congress to pass the 1974 Equal Educational Opportunities Act. This legislation embodied the rights of all children to have equal educational opportunities, and it included particular consideration to students with limited English proficiency (LEP). The EEOA's applicable breadth is exemplified the law's intent, which prohibits states from denying equal educational opportunity on account of race, color, sex, or national origin. Moreover, the EEOA prohibits states from denying equal educational opportunity by the failure of an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs.

Increasing Access to Education for Minoritized Groups

The African American Civil Rights Movement gave hope to Mexican and Asian Americans, as well as women, people with disabilities, and to a lesser extent, Native Americans. Like African Americans, Mexican Americans utilized the courts to overturn segregated schools in the southwest, particularly in Texas and California. In fact, the earliest segregation case was filed by Mexican Americans in 1931 in Lemon Grove, California[7]. Other cases would be filed in the 1940s and 1950s, including *Mendez v. Westminster*[8] in 1947.

7.
https://www.zinnedproject.org/news/tdih/lemon-grove-incident/
8.
https://www.zinnedproject.org/news/tdih/mendez-v-westminster/

> ### Pause & Ponder
>
> When we talk about the history of desegregation in U.S. education, *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 is often the first case that comes to mind. However, desegregation cases occurred decades before in the 1930s in California. Why is desegregation of Black schools in the formal curriculum but desegregation of Latino/a communities is not? In your formal education, what have you learned about the fights for equality amongst various groups, and which groups' voices seem to be missing?

A class action suit in San Francisco, California, led to legal rights for English Language Learners. In *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), parents of approximately 1,800 non-English-speaking Chinese students alleged that their Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection rights had been violated since they could neither understand nor speak English, the language of instruction, which meant their children were not benefitting from educational services. The U.S. Supreme Court concluded that the school district violated Section 601 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which banned discrimination based "on race, color, or national origin" in "any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." As recipients of federal funds, schools were required to respond to the needs of English language learners effectively, whether this meant implementing bilingual education, English immersion, or some other method of instruction. The Court concluded, "There is no equality of treatment by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum, for students who do not

understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education."

As discussed in Chapter 2, children with special needs also received increased access to education, who historically had been excluded from many educational opportunities. In 1972, *Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*[9], guaranteed the rights of disabled children to attend free public schools. Congress followed up in 1973 by enacting the Rehabilitation Act, which guaranteed civil rights for people with disabilities, including appropriate accommodations and individualized education plans to tailor education for students based on their unique needs. Providing children with disabilities in least restrictive settings was implemented in the 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act.

Women continued to fight for equal pay and respect in the workplace, and some success was achieved in the passage of Title IX as one of the amendments to the 1972 Higher Education Act. **Title IX** "prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity" in "colleges, universities, and elementary and secondary schools," as well as to "any education or training program operated by a receipt of federal financial assistance," including intercollegiate athletic activities (The U.S. Department of Justice, n.d.).

Native Americans were able to enjoy greater control in limited ways over reservation schools including, but not limited to, the Rough Rock Demonstration School (recently renamed Rough Rock Community School[10]), located in

9.

http://www.pilcop.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/PARC-Consent-Decree.pdf

10.

northeastern Arizona. A collaboration between the Office of Economic Opportunity and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the school opened in 1966 intending to give "Navajo parents...control" over "the education of their children" and to "participate in all aspects of their schooling." Moreover, these efforts served as an "attempt to preserve the Navajo language and culture," which was "in contrast to the deculturalization efforts of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" (Spring, 2008, p. 394). Despite the fact that the history of federal and Native Indian relations consisted in genocide, relocation, dispossession, and controlled boarding school experiments, Rough Rock Demonstration School continues to provide an example of Navajo empowerment and a locally developed form of Native cultural redemption.

The 1980s and Beyond

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https://viva.pressbooks.pub/
foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=108#h5p-8

In the 1980s and beyond, education saw increasing federal supervision and support, though ultimate control of education still remained with individual states. In this period, the Department of Education was established, *A Nation at Risk* led to standards-based reform like No Child Left Behind, and social emotional learning emerged.

http://www.roughrock.k12.az.us/default.htm

Establishing the Department of Education

While the federal government has no constitutional authority over public education, its power and influence over schooling has reached a pinnacle since the 1980s. In 1979, President Jimmy Carter created the federal **Department of Education**. Ronald Reagan, who succeeded Carter, tried and failed to abolish it. Reagan's neo-conservative followers largely consisted of traditionalists and evangelicals. The traditionalists believed moral standards and respect for authority had been declining since the 1960s, while evangelicals (also known as the Religious Right) were concerned by increasing U.S. secularism and materialism (Foner, 2012). For example, in *Engel v. Vitale* (1962), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that directed prayer in public schools was a violation of the First Amendment's Establishment Clause, which forbids the state (public schools and their employees) from endorsing or favoring religion. While the Religious Right saw this decision as taking God out of America's public schools, the Court viewed separation of church and state as necessary to protect religious freedoms from government intrusion. As established earlier in this chapter, however, the moral values taught in the public schools were often based on or connected to Protestant Christianity, so complete separation of church and state in schools was impossible.

Pause & Ponder

Not all people agree with having a Department of Education. Why would the federal government choose to

abolish it? What would be the benefits and drawbacks of keeping the Department of Education?

A Nation at Risk and Standards-Based Reform

In 1981, Reagan created the National Commission on Excellence in Education to address the perceived problems of educational decline. In 1983, the commission released a 71-page report entitled ***A Nation at Risk***. The authors of the report, who were primarily from the corporate world, declared, "American students never excelled in international comparisons of student achievement and that this failure reflected systematic weaknesses in our schools and lack of talent and motivation among American educators" (Berliner & Biddle, 1995, p. 3). However, *A Nation at Risk* was somewhat "sensational" (Urban & Wagoner, 2009, p. 402), containing numerous claims that were uncorroborated or misleading generalizations as a pretense for a larger political agenda intended to discredit public schools and their teachers.

Developing the perception that America's schools were in crisis, *A Nation at Risk* justified a top-down, punitive approach to school reform. While standards-based reform had been around for several years as primarily a state issue, it "provided new theories about 'systemic' reform, which emphasized renewing academic focus in schools, holding teachers accountable for educational outcomes, measured by students' academic achievement, and aligning teacher preparation and pedagogical practice with content standards, curriculum, classroom practice, and performance standards" (DeBray, 2006, p. xi).

What are some of your own experiences with standards-based reform? How has increasing standardization of schools helped or hurt your own learning experience?

President George W. Bush signs into law the No Child Left Behind Act Jan. 8, 2002, at Hamilton High School in Hamilton, Ohio.

The **No Child Left Behind Act** (NCLB, 2001) was an example of standards-based reform. As a bipartisan-passed reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, it was "the first initiative to truly bring the federal government as a regulator into American public education" (Fabricant & Fine, 2012, p. 13). Before, the federal government's outreach typically extended only to funding; now, NCLB would hold schools, teachers, and students accountable for passing numerous standardized tests given annually in math and reading in grades 3-12. The law also required states to test English language learners for oral, written, and reading proficiency in English each year.

Critiques of NCLB include the acute focus on standardized testing and teaching to the test, uniform curricula that have little or no connection to an increasingly diverse student population, and the punitive nature of the law on students, teachers, and administrators. Madaus et al. (2009) asserted that

testing "is now woven into the fabric of our nation's culture and psyche," which is evidenced by the fact that even "the valuation of homes in a community can increase or decrease based on these rankings" (p. 4-5). The most problematic nature of NCLB is its supporters' assumption that uniformity, standardization, centralization, and punitive measures can compel learning and decrease achievement gaps. Assumptions that all children learn uniformly in all respects reveals a lack of understanding of the complexity of the learning process and the various demographic differences among children in a diverse society, including cultural, language, and ability differences.

CRITICAL LENS: STANDARDIZED TESTING

In a society experiencing greater diversity, it is more important than ever to realize how culture plays a significant role in shaping children's school experiences, making standardized assessments all the more problematic as they tend to be culturally biased. Therefore, relying on standardized assessments in making conclusions about student achievement (or lack of achievement) make it all the more difficult for teachers to respond appropriately to the cognitive abilities of their students. Rote memorization and test preparation skills can easily inhibit creativity and imagination, not to mention the fact that this kind of educational focus is teacher-centered, less dynamic, and assimilatory.

In 2015, the No Child Left Behind Act (originally the

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) was reauthorized as the **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**. The law:

- Advances equity by upholding critical protections for America's disadvantaged and high-need students.

- Requires that all students in America be taught to high academic standards that will prepare them to succeed in college and careers.

- Ensures that vital information is provided to educators, families, students, and communities through annual statewide assessments that measure students' progress toward those high standards.

- Helps to support and grow local innovations, including evidence-based and place-based interventions developed by local leaders and educators.

- Sustains and expands investments in increasing access to high-quality preschool.

- Maintains an expectation that there will be accountability and action to effect positive change in our lowest-performing schools, where groups of students are not making progress, and where graduation rates are low over extended periods of time (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.).

By specifically tying federal funds to standardized assessments, standardized curricula, and accountability measures, along with requiring states and state education agencies to devote extraordinary resources toward fulfilling these mandates through oversight, America's public schools were being

governed by the federal government like never before. Increased federal influence illustrates the underlying belief that if the U.S. is going to maintain economic superiority and global competitiveness, public schooling must become a national responsibility. Contemporary goals focusing on preparing children to compete globally are significant for a number of reasons, not the least of which include the evolving nationalization of our public schools and the simultaneous loss of local authority and discretion over fundamental matters related to student learning.

Social Emotional Learning

Recently, educators have advocated for a more holistic approach to education beyond testing. **Social emotional learning** (SEL) is "the process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviors" (Edutopia, 2011, para. 3). Advocates of SEL note that these skills will support students' personal development and academic performance simultaneously. Early pilots of SEL-influenced approaches to education occurred in the 1960s in New Haven, Connecticut with two low-achieving schools serving mostly African American students. By the early 1980s, these two schools' academic performance were above the national average. In 1994, the Collaborative to Advance Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) was established, and Goleman's book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More than IQ* brought this concept into popular culture (Edutopia, 2011). ASCD's "Whole Child Approach" continues to advocate for education

that keeps students healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged (ASCD, n.d.).

> ### Pause & Ponder
>
> What social emotional learning (SEL) skills did you learn at school or wish you learned? How will this impact your future classroom instruction?

Conclusion

Education in the United States has a complicated past entrenched in religious, economic, national, and international concerns. In Colonial America, Puritans in Massachusetts knew education would teach children the ways of religion and laws, vital to survival in a new world. Meanwhile, the Middle and Southern Colonies viewed education as a commodity for the wealthy families who could afford it. After the American Revolution, Federalists, Anti-Federalists, and Democratic-Republican Societies all had different perceptions of how schools should be organized to support our newly-established independent nation. In the Early National Era, common schools, normal schools, and higher education grew as education became more widely established. Following the Civil War, the federal government was increasingly involved in education, including the temporary creation of the Freedmen's Bureau and subsequent federal funding of agricultural and mechanical colleges with the passage of the Morrill Acts. In

the Progressive Era, efforts to maximize the efficiency of educational systems and to utilize education as a venue for social reform prevailed. After World War II, equitable access to education became a primary focus, as "separate-but-equal" doctrines were overthrown and schools grappled with institutional discrimination against non-White students, students with disabilities, women, and English Learners. The 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act provided federal funds to public schools, while states and local school districts continued to exercise considerable discretion over curriculum, assessments, and teacher certification. In the 1980s and beyond, increased pressures for standardization and accountability resulted in standards-based reform, including the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001. More recently, education has been leveraged to support all of a students' developmental needs, not just academic. Common educational philosophies including perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, and social reconstructionism reflect varying beliefs about the roles education should fill.

Like learning, teaching is always developing; it is never realized once and for all. Our public schools have always served as sites of moral, economic, political, religious and social conflict and assimilation into a narrowly defined standard image of what it means to be an American. According to Britzman (as quoted by Kelle, 1996), "the context of teaching is political, it is an ideological context that privileges the interests, values, and practices necessary to maintain the status quo." Teaching is by no means "innocent of ideology," she declares. Rather, the context of education tends to preserve "the institutional values of compliance to authority, social conformity, efficiency, standardization, competition, and the objectification of knowledge" (p. 66-67).

It should be no surprise then that contemporary debates over public education continue to reflect our deepest ideological differences. As Tyack and Cuban (1995) have noted in their historical study of school reform, the nation's perception toward schooling often "shift[s]... from panacea to scapegoat" (p. 14). We would go a long way in solving academic achievement and closing educational gaps by addressing the broader structural issues that institutionalize and perpetuate poverty and inequality.

Chapter 4: Schools
in the United States

> **Unlearning Box**
>
> As a student, you may have enjoyed going to school with friends who lived in your neighborhood. But did you know that where you live also can impact how well-funded and well-resourced your school is? Because schools get much of their funding from property taxes, areas with more expensive houses have higher taxes, resulting in more school funding. While the United States believes education should be accessible to all, where you live can determine which resources will or will not be available to benefit your learning.

This chapter will start with a discussion of the models of schools present in the United States today, including their funding, enrollment policies, and key characteristics. Within these models of schools, varying configurations of classrooms and instructional models are present. Governing and financing

of schools varies at the federal, state, and local levels. Finally, the variety of schools in the United States present some families with the option of school choice. Current policies surrounding school choice, including charter schools and vouchers, will be explained.

Chapter Outline

1. Models of Schools
    1. Enrollment Policies
    2. Key Characteristics
    3. Classroom/Instructional Models

2. Governing Structures in Schools
    1. Federal
    2. State
    3. Local

3. Financing of Schools
    1. Federal Funding
    2. State and Local Funding

4. School Choice
    1. Charter Schools
    2. Vouchers
        1. Voucher Funding
        2. Voucher Outcomes

5. Conclusion

Models of Schools

One central tenet of the U.S. education system is that all people in our country deserve access to education, regardless of the language you speak, how much money you make, where you live, or the color of your skin. Some other countries employ **tracking**, which means that certain individuals are channeled into certain educational "tracks" based on their perceived capabilities for future success. Tracking limits access to education for certain groups of people. In the United States, all children and youth have access to K-12 educational opportunities.

CRITICAL LENS BOX: TRACKING

While the U.S. does not "track" students in the ways some other countries do, we do still engage in some forms of tracking. For example, you may have heard of–or even experienced–ability grouping. This term refers to placing students in homogeneous groups by ability levels. In secondary school, tracking may result in college prep, honors, or AP-level courses. Historically, these different curricula were developed when more Black and working-class students were entering schools, and elite educational opportunities were reserved for upper-middle-class students, who were often White, wanting to attend college (Education Week, 2004). Therefore, tracking "quickly took on the appearance of internal segregation" (para. 2),

which is a problem since racial discrimination in education is illegal. So, while U.S. educational systems do not force a student into a specific educational track for a specific career at an early age like some countries do, tracking by ability level is still a harmful practice in many U.S. schools. Teachers need to be aware of potential biases toward students in certain tracked groups (i.e., AP students are "good" and college prep students are "bad").

The majority of schools in the United States fall into one of two categories: public or private. A **public school** is defined as any school that is maintained through public funds to educate children living in that community or district for free. The structure and governance of a public school varies by model, but shares the characteristics of being free and open to all applicants within a defined boundary. A **private school** is defined as a school that is privately funded and maintained by a private group or organization, not the government, usually by charging tuition. Private schools may follow a philosophy or viewpoint different from public schools; for example, many private schools are governed by religious institutions.

There are a variety of public school models, including traditional, charter, magnet, Montessori, virtual, alternative, and language immersion. Private school models include traditional, religious, parochial, Montessori, Waldorf, virtual, boarding, and international schools. Some school models may be public or private. Table 4.1 includes a breakdown of school models, their funding source, and key characteristics.

Table 4.1: School Models by Funding, Enrollment, and Key Characteristics

School Model	Public or Private	Enrollment	Key Characteristics
Traditional Public	Public	Open/School Boundary Lines	State and local governance, policy and curriculum.
Magnet	Public	Open across school district/ Application or lottery	Specializes in program (art, science, math, etc), promotes diversity across a district.
Alternative	Public	Students that cannot attend traditional school due to a variety of factors.	State and local governance, policy and curriculum. Small class sizes and alternative scheduling. Individualized support.
Language Immersion/ Bilingual	Both	Open across school district/ Application	A portion of instruction is taught in a language other than English. Students are immersed in a second language for part of instruction.
Charter	Both	Open across school district/ Application or lottery	Autonomous from local and state authority as long as the school meets charter mission and performance measures.
Montessori	Both	Open across school district/ Application	Philosophy that children need connection to the environment. Focuses on real life experiences.

Waldorf	Private	Application/ Tuition	Believes each child has unique potential that should be developed through education to better humanity as a whole. While not specifically religious, Waldorf schools are based on general spirituality. Focuses on imagination and fantasy.
Virtual	Both	Open across school district/ Application	The majority of instruction is provided in an online environment.
Traditional Private	Private	Application/ Tuition	Curriculum decided upon by the governing body (board, organization, or company). May be non-profit or for profit.
Religious	Private	Application/ Tuition	Mission is to teach religious values in addition to teaching core curriculum.
Parochial	Private	Application/ Tuition	Mission is to teach religious values in addition to teaching core curriculum. School is sponsored by a local church through funding.
Boarding	Private	Application/ Tuition	Community of scholars, artists, and athletes. School provides food and housing.

International	Private	Application/ Tuition	Follows a curriculum different from that of the country in which the school is physically located. May use International Baccalaureate curriculum, among others. Students consist of a diverse population that is often highly mobile.
Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA)	Public	Serves military and Department of Defense dependents serving overseas and in the U.S. U.S. contractor dependents may attend for a fee.	Follows a standard curriculum across schools. Makes up the 10th largest school district in the U.S. Consists of two parallel districts: Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) operating in Europe and the Pacific and Department of Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools operating in the Americas.

One type of school not listed in the table is **homeschool**. Homeschooling is a type of schooling that would not fall into either the public or private category. Homeschooling is defined as a child not enrolling in a public or private school, but receiving an education at home. Each state has its own rules and regulations that families must follow and report on if homeschooling. For example, the Virginia Department of Education (2021) requires that families inform the school division of their decision to homeschool their child, update the

school district with the student's annual academic progress, and provide evidence that the homeschool instructor (such as a parent) meets specific qualifications to fill the role.

Pause & Ponder

Which type(s) of school model(s) did you experience as a student? What were some benefits and drawbacks you experienced in that model of schooling?

Enrollment Policies

In addition to the schools being separated by their funding source, schools are defined by their process of enrollment. The majority of public schools operate on two basic enrollment guidelines: boundary or open. Districts with enrollment policies using school boundary lines allow all students within a geographic area to enroll in the school. If a school has an **open enrollment** policy, then the school will also allow students from other geographic areas within the district to enroll if space permits. School boundary lines are often highly politicized. Schools are publicly rated and this affects everything from property values to the quality of teachers recruited. Ratings may be based on data sources like the school report card, which may include data on teacher education levels, teacher retention, student demographics, student performance on standardized tests, and student and teacher attendance rates. However, ratings also can be culturally biased: one nonprofit rating site called GreatSchools, which often is integrated into online realtor websites as families are

choosing where to move, redid their rating formula in 2017 after it realized that their previous rating system prioritized schools in predominantly White neighborhoods (Barnum & LeMee, 2019).

Critical Lens: Redlining

Although the Supreme Court made segregated schools illegal in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, you will see many schools today that continue to have student populations that are separated by race or socioeconomic status. This trend is due to a practice called **redlining**, in which housing was allowed or denied in certain areas based on people's race or socioeconomic status. Redlining has resulted in ongoing ***de facto* segregation**, which means that while overt segregation was outlawed, it still continues in other ways. In this map from EdBuild[1], you can see the relationships between racial/socioeconomic segregation and access to educational resources.

1.
https://edbuild.org/content/dividing-lines/main
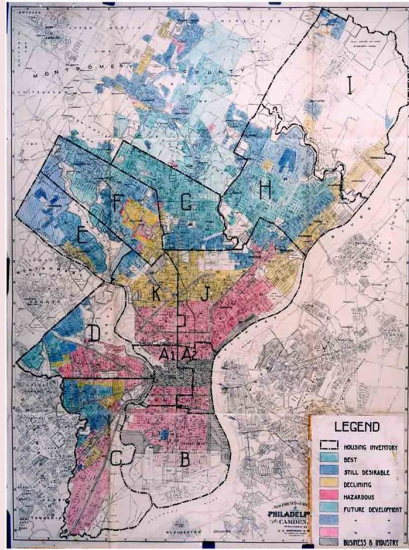
This map shows the results of redlining in Philadelphia in 1937. The hazardous, declining, and business and industry sectors align with lower-income areas, while the best, still desirable, and future development sectors align with higher-income areas. Therefore, schools would reflect these demographic distributions.

Some public school models, including charter, magnet, and language immersion, may have more students desiring to apply than there is space. In these schools, applications or lotteries may be used. An application system allows the schools to choose students based on characteristics, such as grades, demographic diversity, or geographic area. Often these schools

are looking for high-achieving students or have a mission of diversifying the school. A lottery system gives each student that has applied an equal chance of attending and is decided by randomly selecting names from the pool of students.

Pause & Ponder

Look up some schools you attended as a student and, if you are in a new setting, some schools in your current area. How are they rated? What are their demographic compositions?

Key Characteristics

Schools also differ in several key characteristics beyond funding and enrollment. One key characteristic of schools is what individuals or entities provide supervision or oversight of the school's functioning. A school's ability to follow curriculum (how instruction is organized and managed) and policies (such as rules, expectations, and norms that school community members must follow) is directly tied to their funding. We will learn more about how schools are funded later in this chapter.

For the majority of public schools (excluding charter schools), state and local entities supervise curriculum and policies. In private schools, boards, organizations, or companies often supervise curriculum and policies. In addition, a school's curriculum is often defined by its mission or philosophy. Schools may differ in how curriculum is presented or in specialized programs. For example, language immersion

schools present standardized curriculum in two languages, while magnet schools place an emphasis on a certain part of the curriculum like science or art. Religious schools may focus on presenting curriculum based on a religious viewpoint or values.

Classroom/Instructional Models

Within each school a variety of classroom models may be utilized. Traditionally, schools have different grade levels with a different teacher for each grade. However, some schools may incorporate **multi-age classrooms**. Multi-age classrooms allow for students of different grades to be in one class. For example, students in second and third grade may be combined in one classroom. While this may seem difficult to manage, a traditional classroom model does not guarantee that all students with the same chronological age will be at the same developmental stage. Children develop at different rates and have different academic skill levels. Many multi-age classrooms recognize this and are able to provide both homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings in the classroom. When students are grouped homogeneously for small group lessons, a younger student may benefit from instruction at a higher level that they may not have had access to at their grade level. Heterogeneous grouping of students also provides peer modeling and support from more advanced students (Carter, 2005).

Many multi-age classrooms and traditional classroom models utilize **co-teaching**. Co-teaching is when teachers are paired up in a classroom and share the responsibility of planning, teaching, and assessing students. Having more than one teacher in a classroom provides additional support for students that need one-on-one instruction or additional supports. This is often seen in classrooms where special

education or bilingual teachers are paired with a classroom teacher to make instruction for students with disabilities or English Language Learners more inclusive. Co-teaching also may elevate instruction by having two teachers plan together. The division of teaching responsibilities may present itself in a variety of ways, including the following: one teacher teaches and the other observes, one teaches and one drifts, teachers teach at stations, team teaching (both tag team at teaching same lesson), and parallel teaching (class is divided into two groups that receive the same instruction simultaneously) (Trites, 2017).

Sometimes an individual teacher may loop with their students. **Looping** occurs when a classroom teacher moves with a group of students from grade to grade. For example, a teacher may have a group of students for third grade, and then move with them to fourth grade. Early looping, or teacher cycling, has foundations in one-room schoolhouses. In the early 1900s, looping was also promoted in urban school districts as a way to improve relationships between students and teachers. Looping is also a key component of Waldorf schools. Looping may increase student-teacher relationships and family-teacher relationships, but it also may increase instructional time from year to year. When teachers loop with students, the classroom routines and structure remain the same, so valuable instructional time is not spent on teaching new routines and classroom structure. Teachers may also spend less time on initial assessment of students. Research has shown that when teachers loop, less retention and referral of students occurs (Grant, Richardson & Forsten, 2000). For looping to be successful, a teacher must feel comfortable teaching across grade levels and be seen as effective. If a teacher is ineffective, then students looping would be at a disadvantage. A teacher

wanting to loop may also have difficulty doing so if it is not common in their school or district. Many teachers only teach one grade, but if a third-grade teacher loops to fourth grade, it means a fourth-grade teacher at the school must also be willing to leave that grade level.

Different classroom and teaching models vary from school to school and district to district. Multi-age classrooms, co-teaching, and looping may be implemented by choice, or as a way to consolidate or expand resources. For example, multi-age classrooms may help schools save space when classroom space is limited within the physical school. These practices may also help students when academic or developmental needs are highly diverse. If a school has a large percentage of children that are academically diverse, then dividing them by chronological age may not be appropriate. These decisions are often made at the school level by the principal.

Pause & Ponder

Have you experienced any of these instructional models? Do any of these instructional models intrigue you for your future classroom? Why or why not?

Governing Structures in Schools

When considering how decisions concerning schools are made, there are various levels of involvement in educational governance at the federal, state and local levels. The federal government has limited powers, but maintains influence through promoting educational policies and reforms. The state

government determines standards and policies for the state. The school district, sometimes called the local educational agency, is responsible for reporting and working with the state educational agency. At the local level, schools are combined by geographical lines to make up school districts. Finally, schools themselves follow a local governing structure. Figure 4.1 shows how schools are governed at the federal, state, district, and school level. The following section will discuss the structure and models at each level.

Figure 4.1: School Governance at Federal, State, District, and School Levels (adapted from Powell, 2019)
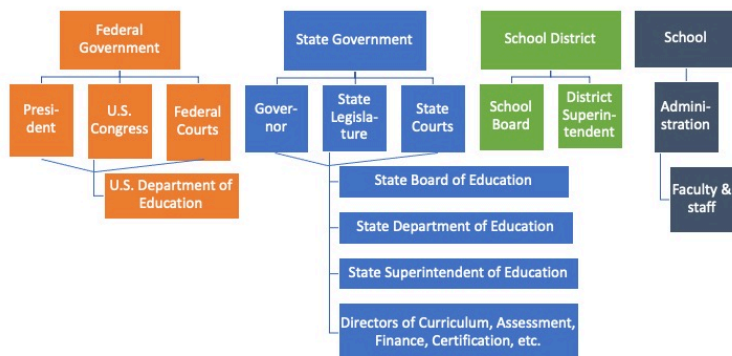
Federal

As you learned in Chapter 3, the United States federal government does not have direct authority over schools in each state. It does not tell schools what to teach or how. However, it does have the power to lead by:

- promoting policies and reform efforts;
- providing federal assistance appropriated by Congress;

- enforcing civil rights laws pertaining to education; and

- collecting and providing statistics on education (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

President Andrew Jackson created a cabinet-level Department of Education in 1867, and Congress officially established the United States Department of Education in 1979. The department maintains its power through the distribution of federal education assistance. The head of the U.S. Department of Education is nominated by the president and approved by the Senate (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

> ### Stop & Investigate
>
> Who is the current U.S. Secretary of Education? What policies have they enacted during their tenure? What educational background do they bring with them to the position?

Many educational reforms have been promoted over the years. Table 4.2 outlines major educational acts and their impact on the U.S. education system. An **act** is an individual, stand-alone law. Major components of these acts and policies were designed to increase student achievement, which is measured through standardized testing. These acts also work to promote desegregation, protect against discrimination, and provide funding for underresourced students.

Table 4.2: Major Federal Acts in Education

Year	Title/Act	Outcome
1958	National Defense Education Act (NDEA)	Provided federal school funding tied to testing and assessment requirements.
1964	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act	Prohibits discrimination "on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance."
1965	Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)	Created federal funding to support local schools in funding children in disadvantaged localities.
1973	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act	Prohibited discrimination based on disability.
1975	Education for all Handicapped Children Act	Required public schools to provide free, appropriate education to students with disabilities.
2002	No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001	Reauthorized ESEA (1965), but increased student testing, resources for recruiting teachers, and implementing research-based education programs.
2009	American Reinvestment and Recovery Act; included Race to the Top Initiative (U.S. Department of Education, 2009)	Earmarked $90 billion for education; designed to spur educational reform through $4.35 billion in competitive grant funds. This act also became the catalyst for the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

2015	Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) reauthorized (ESSA, NCLB, and ESEA all refer to the same law, but differed in authorizations) (U.S. Department of Education, 2019)	Protections for disadvantaged and high-need students (English Language Learners) put in place. Requires states submit plans for academic standards, annual testing, and school report cards.

It is important to note that all of these acts include federal funding formulas and methods of distributing federal funds. The progression of reform progressively ties funding to standardized assessment and curriculum, while also providing earmarked funds for Title 1 schools, which will be discussed below.

State

At the state level, there are three major positions that make decisions related to education.

- The governor acts as the chief officer and oversees policy. The governor also has the ability to veto and approve legislation.
- The state board of education includes members that act as policy makers and liaisons for educators.
- The chief state school officer, also called the state superintendent, is responsible for administrative oversight of state education agencies. The chief state school officer may be a member of the state board of education, but is directly responsible for making sure policies and state laws are followed.

These positions are elected or appointed in four different governance models. In the first model, the electorate elects the governor, who then appoints the state board of education and the chief state school officer. In the second model, the electorate elects the governor, who appoints the state board of education, who then appoints the chief state school officer. In the third model, the electorate elects the governor and the chief state school officer, then the governor appoints the state board of education. In the fourth model, the electorate elects the governor and the state board of education, who then appoints the state chief state school officer. There are also states that use modified versions of these models. It is important to understand your own state's structure to see where accountability and authority are positioned.

At the state level, there are many central decisions made for all of the local school districts. First, the state allocates funds to each school district. Later in this chapter, school funding will be discussed, but the state makes up a considerable portion of funds for students. The state also sets standards for assessment and curriculum. It is then up to each locality to decide how the curriculum is implemented. The state is also responsible for licensing public and private schools, charter schools, and teachers and public-school staff (Chen, 2018). In addition, states establish compulsory education laws, which dictate between which ages students must attend school, often from ages five or six through 17 or 18, reflecting the range of the K-12 spectrum.

Local

Most states give responsibility for the operations and accounting to local school systems. These local school systems are defined by school districts. School district boundaries are

often determined by geographic lines that may be drawn by county or centers of population. The majority of school districts are then run by school boards. School board members are either appointed by the mayor or city council, or they are elected by the public. The school board then elects a superintendent to oversee the district. The local school district makes decisions on allocation of funding within the district, curriculum, school policies, and employment policies and decisions.

Stop & Investigate

What school districts are near you? How are their boundaries determined? How many schools do they contain?

The most local governance structure occurs in individual schools. Each school has its own leadership structure, usually headed by the principal (Chen, 2018). Other members of the school administration include assistant principals, with the number of assistant principals corresponding to the size of the student body. Administrators of individual schools are responsible for supporting their faculty and staff to fulfill district and state educational policies. Administrators are also liaisons between schools, families, and local communities.

Financing of Schools

School funding follows a similar pattern as school governance. The federal government distributes monies to **State Education**

Agencies (SEAs), who then distribute monies to **Local Education Agencies (LEAs)**. The following section will discuss how these funds are distributed and equality issues that arise.

STOP & INVESTIGATE

As you orient yourself to the existing structures for funding education in the U.S. in the following section, be aware that these current structures aren't perfect. The organization EdBuild researched challenges with existing school funding systems in the U.S. Their research explains how the existing funding system is broken[2], some ideas for fixing it[3], and provides other tools to learn more[4].

Federal Funding

The federal government is responsible for providing around nine percent of a school's budget. While this may not seem like very much, in 2013, that amounted to $71 billion dollars in federal funding (Census Bureau, 2015). The amount of federal funding for schools depends on the annual budget proposed by the president and set by Congress through a budget resolution. SEAs then submit plans to the federal government outlining

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2.
https://edbuild.org/content/category/problems
3.
https://edbuild.org/content/category/solutions
4.
https://edbuild.org/content/category/tools

how they will assess student progress and what their learning outcomes are.

In 1965, Congress passed the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)**. In this act, Title I, Part A (Title I) provides federal assistance to LEAs and schools with large percentages of students from low-income, under-resourced families. These funds are to help ensure that all students are able to meet

The federal government supplies about 9% of a school's budget. The remaining 91% comes from state and local sources, often derived from taxes.

the state academic standards. Schools that receive these funds are often known as **Title I schools** or districts. The federal government provides funds to SEAs, who then allocate the money to LEAs. The LEAs are then responsible for allocating the funds to each school based on a funding formula. In general, these funds are used for targeted assistance programs, or if more than 40% of the students are eligible for Title I funds, then the funds may be used for school-wide improvement (EdBuild, 2020). The goal of distributing funds in this way is to make schools more equitable; however, these funds only account for nine percent of a school's funding. The other 91 percent comes from state and local funding.

State and Local Funding

State and local school funding is based on complex funding formulas, with income often sourced from taxes on income, property, or sales. In general, most states use one or a

combination of three different types of funding formulas: a student-based formula, a resource-based formula, or a hybrid formula. A **student-based formula** assumes a set amount that estimates how much it costs to educate one student. Adjustments are then made for students that are low income or receive special services for special education or English Language Learners. A **resource-based formula** uses the cost of resources or programs to fund specific programs. A **hybrid funding formula** will rely on multiple formulas. In 2020, 38 states used a student-based or hybrid funding formula. Across the nation, each state sets its own education budget, thus creating variance in funding and equitable education across states.

Stop & Investigate

On the Data Dashboard from EdBuild[5], choose your state and see which school districts have the highest and lowest distributions based on per pupil revenue. Do your findings surprise you? Why or why not?

This funding disparity is further widened at the local level. Local funding makes up around 45 percent of a school's budget. Once a state distributes funds to LEAs, the LEAs are then in charge of distributing funds to each school. In 47 states, funding for education is raised through property taxes (EdBuild, 2020). Thus, schools within wealthy districts will raise more funds than schools in economically disadvantaged areas.

5.
https://shiny.edbuild.org/apps/edbuild-dashboard/

The federal funds distributed to low income areas through Title I do not make up for the inequities in funding.

Critical Lens: Inequitable Funding

Funding public schools based on local property taxes can perpetuate issues of inequity when it comes to accessing resources needed for high-quality education. This NPR article (Lombardo, 2019) explains how predominantly White school districts can receive up to $23 billion more than districts that serve predominantly students of color. Watch this video to learn more about how systemic racism impacts school funding.

> One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
> https://viva.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=141#oembed-1

School Choice

With so many school models available in the U.S., how do families choose which type of school their child should attend? **School choice** is a complex issue for families to navigate. What may be best for one student is not always best for another. The choices for students also vary by geographic and

socioeconomic boundaries. Many families make school decisions based on the following factors:

- transportation and distance to chosen school;

- cost or tuition of school;

- curriculum and programs available;

- religious affiliation; and

- fit for the individual student.

Families in some areas of the U.S. also have greater access to the different models of schools presented at the beginning of this chapter than others. Small rural towns may only have one school within the immediate area. However, federal reform policies, such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), have increased the number of charter schools and use of vouchers.

Stop & Investigate

Go to edchoice.org to explore what resources are available to support families with school choice options.

Charter Schools

In 2001, when NCLB was signed into law, federal and state funds required schools to make an **Annual Yearly Progress (AYP)** report, based on assessment data. Schools that did not meet AYP for two consecutive years were often required to earmark money for student tutoring or allow students to transfer. When a student transfers, the school's funding formula decreases by one student, resulting in a loss of funds for the school. If a school continues to not meet AYP, then the

school may be closed. When a school is closed, it often becomes a charter school (Brookhart, 2013).

As shown earlier in Table 4.1, **charter schools** are often publicly funded, but they do not have the same requirements as a traditional public school. When a student transfers out of a traditional school to a charter school, the funds follow the student. Charter schools are autonomous from public schools and to operate must meet the educational goals set forth in their charter. Charter school admittance is also application based, usually being first come, first served or by lottery. In 2010, charter schools comprised six percent of public school students, but now the number is closer to 30 percent in some localities (Prothero, 2018).

Why does it matter if public schools become charter schools? In many regions, like Minneapolis-St. Paul, California, and Texas, charter schools are more segregated than the public schools within those same boundaries, which were already highly segregated (Institute on Race and Poverty, 2008). Because charter schools rely on applications for admission, parent participation in the admission process also separates students by socioeconomics (Frankenberg et al., 2011).

Vouchers

One reason that school choice has become so politicized is the use of school vouchers. **School vouchers** are defined as "a government-supplied coupon that is used to offset tuition at an eligible private school" (Epple et al., 2017, p. 441). In the 1960s, some of the first school vouchers were awarded to promote desegregation. School voucher policies and programs today vary across localities and are present in over thirty states. Students who receive vouchers enroll in a private school,

which receives those funds. The voucher may cover tuition in full, or offset it significantly. This video explains some of the pros and cons of vouchers.

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https://viva.pressbooks.pub/
foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=141#oembed-2

Voucher Funding

Vouchers are funded by one of the following: tax revenues, tax credits, or by private organizations (Epple et al., 2017). The majority of states that use tax revenues to fund their vouchers provide vouchers to under-resourced students. For example, Milwaukee, Cleveland, New Orleans, and Washington, DC provide vouchers to students whose family income is just above the poverty line. Some areas, such as in Ohio and Indiana, provide vouchers using tax revenues to all students in failing school districts.

Some states (including Florida, Iowa, Georgia, Indiana, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island) utilize tax credits to fund vouchers. Businesses in these states that fund vouchers are provided a tax credit. For example, Florida businesses can receive 100 percent corporate tax income credit up to $559.1 million dollars (EdChoice, 2019). In addition to tax revenues and tax credits, many states also have privately funded voucher programs. One notable voucher program is the Children's Scholarship Fund, which was founded with contributions from the Walton Family Foundation (Epple et al., 2017).

Voucher Outcomes

When a student uses a voucher to attend a private school, this changes the funding formulas for a local school. This student is no longer included in the funding formula for the LEA or SEA. This means that the local and state budget is lowered because one less student is being counted in that funding formula. School vouchers are provided and promoted to give underresourced students school choice, but not all students have equal opportunities.

Public schools allow and are required by law to provide services for all students. While policies prohibit private schools from discriminating against students based on race, many religious private schools may consider religious affiliation, sexual orientation (except Maryland, which has laws prohibiting private schools utilizing vouchers to do so), and disability in their admission decisions. Private schools are not exempt from discrimination laws, but the application process allows them to choose which students to admit. For example, a private school receiving government funds must provide students with disabilities with accommodations, unless these accommodations change the philosophy of the academic program, or create "significant difficulty or expense." A large portion of private schools do not hire teachers trained to provide accommodations; thus, many claim they do not have the resources to serve students with disabilities. Vouchers are not beneficial for students with disabilities that cannot attend private schools, but vouchers also hinder these students further by diverting funds from the public schools, who do provide these services, when other students use vouchers.

Conclusion

While many individuals and groups call for school reform in order to provide equity to all students, the process is complex. As you have seen in this chapter, federal oversight of schools is somewhat limited, allowing school governance to be different within each district and state. What may seem beneficial for students in one school or community may not be beneficial for students in another school or community; therefore, the federal government leaves many decisions about education to the discretion of state and local agencies. Many school, district, and state policies are also tied to federal, state, and local funding, which all use a variety of funding formulas. In order to create change, it is important that an individual understands how policy and funding decisions are developed and implemented.

School choice and the varied school models within the U.S. also makes school reform highly political. While families are given the right to choose their own child's education, many families' choices are constrained by geographic and economic resources. The landscape of schools in the U.S. is constantly changing, but one principle will remain as the foundation of schools in this country: everyone deserves access to education.

Chapter 5: Ethical & Legal Issues in Education

Unlearning Box

A high school English teacher is planning to have his students read *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison. Set during the Great Depression, the main character searches for her identity and sense of self. In addition, there are themes of race, class, exploitation, and sex. Can the teacher include this book in his reading list for the year even though it was banned by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA)?

Actually, there is no clear answer for this teacher. The National Education Association (NEA) Code of Ethics suggests a **standard of reasonableness**. When making decisions as a teacher, ethics oftentimes presents a 'gray area' and does not always provide a definitive resolution.

In this chapter, we review the roles and responsibilities of teachers in today's public schools as they relate to ethical and legal issues in education. We explore ethical teaching, along with legal parameters, established through case law and set up in the U.S. Constitution and its amendments. Rights for both teachers and students are examined, and current implications are discussed.

Chapter Outline

1. Ethics in Education
   1. What Is A Code of Ethics?
   2. Code of Ethics in Action

2. The U.S. Constitution and the 1st and 14th Amendments
   1. Due Process

3. Foundational Legal Cases
   1. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

4. The Court System and Education
   1. State Oversight

5. Rights of Teachers
   1. Teaching License, Contract, and Tenure
   2. Unions and Participation in Professional Organizations
   3. Academic Freedom

Ethics in Education

When you think of your favorite teacher, it is not often that you consider whether he or she was ethical. Yet professional ethics and dispositions, as well as the legal responsibilities of teachers, are central in defining how students view their favorite teacher. Ethics provides a foundation for what teachers should do in their roles and responsibilities as an educator. It

is a framework that a teacher can use to help make decisions about what is right or wrong in a given situation.

What is a Code of Ethics?

Most professions have a **Code of Ethics** that binds its members together through shared values and purpose. This professional Code of Ethics is a widely accepted standard of practice that outlines the accountability of its members to those they serve as well as to the profession itself (Benninga, 2013).

For educators, this shared Code of Ethics is outlined by various educational organizations, as shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Varying Codes of Ethics in Educational Organizations

Educational Organization	Code of Ethics
National Educational Association (NEA) http://www.nea.org/	The educator recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the teaching process. The desire for the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of the members of the community provides the incentive to attain and maintain the highest possible degree of ethical conduct *(NEA, Code of Ethics, 2019).*
Association of American Educators (AAE) https://www.aaeteachers.org	The professional educator endeavors to maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law, and by demonstrating personal integrity *(AAE, Code of Ethics, Principle II, 2019).*
The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) https://ccsso.org/ • Standard 3, *Learning Environments* • Standard 9, *Professional Learning and Ethical Practice*	The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation *(CCSSO, InTASC Standard #3, 2013).* The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate their practice, particularly the effects of their choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner *(CCSSO, InTASC Standard #9, 2013).*

Each of the statements on ethics from these teacher professional organizations complements the others, outlining expected behaviors and dispositions, identifying professional intent, and solidifying commitments that are expected from educators in their roles representing public schools throughout the state and nation.

Let's see how a Code of Ethics could impact the scenario that opened this chapter. Recall that the high school English teacher wanted to include a controversial book on his reading list for the school year that has been banned from use. He believes this book will provide a rich experience for his students and provide stimulating class discussion and debate around identity and race. In determining whether or not to incorporate the text, the teacher must ask himself if he is truly presenting different points of view. In so doing, the teacher is adhering to the National Education Association (NEA) Code of Ethics, specifically Principle I, Item 2:

> Principle I: Commitment to the Student
>
>> *The educator strives to help each student realize his or her potential as a worthy and effective member of society. The educator therefore works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.*
>
> Item 2:
>
>> *In fulfillment of the obligation to the student, the educator shall not unreasonably deny the student access to varying points of view* (National Education Association, 2019, para. 8).

With this Code of Ethics in mind, this teacher could argue that reading this book stimulates the spirit of inquiry and knowledge acquisition, and not reading the book would

unreasonably deny the students access to varying points of view.

Code of Ethics in Action

As you consider the following scenario, think about the ethical dilemmas that are present and the ethical decisions that this teacher must make. Consider how each decision that this teacher makes impacts the functioning of the school, the well-being of the students, and the personal goals of the teacher in pursuit of the profession of teaching and supporting student learning. (Note: If you are using a downloaded version of this text and cannot load the interactive activity below, please turn to Appendix A to participate.)

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://viva.pressbooks.pub/ foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=22#h5p-1

As you gathered from this activity, there is not always one right "answer" to any given situation. A Code of Ethics provides moral standards to help guide your decision making and teaching practice. It helps with what you *should* do. It does not provide specific directions on what *to* do or even *how* to do it.

In the above scenario, the teacher is questioning her beliefs about academic integrity and whether the repercussions of reporting the act of cheating will cause this student unreasonable harm. The NEA Code of Ethics under Principle I, Item 4 states that part of a teacher's responsibility is to *make a*

reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions that could be harmful to learning (National Education Association, 2019, para. 10).

Depending on the teacher's interpretation, she might believe that she should not report the student for cheating because it would impact his grade point average and cause more stress for his mother. Another teacher might interpret this situation differently, believing instead that this student would be harmed if she were to ignore the transgression by not

Just like doctors have to pledge the Hippocratic Oath to do no harm to their patients, the NEA Code of Ethics states that educators must similarly protect the students in their care from conditions that could harm their learning in Principle 1, Item 4.

being held accountable and not having an opportunity to learn an important lesson about cheating.

Ethical decisions take place every day in our classrooms. Oftentimes, you may believe that treating students equally is an ethical approach. But if you go into a classroom, you may notice a teacher calling on a shy student and not calling on another student who usually dominates the discussion. Is this equal? The teacher is clearly treating the two students differently. This is what we refer to in education as good teaching practice. The NEA Code of Ethics guides your teaching behaviors by placing your students central to your practice. Always consider that you must treat all students equitably, not necessarily equally.

A professional Code of Ethics governs a teacher's relationships, roles, conduct, interactions, and communication

with students, as well as families, administrators and the larger community. It provides educators with a way to regulate personal conduct and ethical decision making. It does not tell a teacher *why* he or she should do something. Having an informed awareness of statutes, laws, and other legal influences will assist you in defining your role as an ethical teacher who is also fair and responsible.

> ### Pause and Ponder
>
> What are your own personal ethical beliefs? What situations could you envision in teaching that would require ethical decision-making?

The U.S. Constitution and the 1st and 14th Amendments

Significant, ground-breaking court cases have influenced the practice of public schools throughout history and many have come from the U.S. Supreme Court. The majority of these cases focus on the First and Fourteenth Amendments.

The **First Amendment** addresses the freedom of speech, religion, press, and the right to petition the government, and assemble peaceably (U.S. Constitution, First Amendment).

It states:

> *Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the*

> *press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.*
>
> *-First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution ratified in 1791*

Courts have been called to answer questions about the freedoms outlined in the First Amendment as they relate to teachers and students (American Library Association, 2006). From wearing religious or political symbols to speaking profanity at a school assembly, the consequence of dismissal or suspension has been petitioned to the courts questioning the reasonableness or fairness of the accusation or offense.

The Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., has settled many cases in our country's history about how the U.S. Constitution, especially the First and Fourteenth Amendments, relates to public schools.

For the first time in U.S. history in *Bartels v. Iowa* (1923), the Supreme Court affirmed that a teacher has First Amendment rights and provided teachers a degree of protection for in-class curricular speech. In *Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico by Pico* (1982), the Supreme Court found that the school board could not restrict certain books in the school system's libraries because school board members disagreed with the content. This was found to be a violation of the First Amendment and our protection with regards to freedom of speech.

These rulings have come into conflict over the years due to school systems also having the right to set the curriculum.

This school system precedent was upheld in *Krizek v. Board of Education* (1989) when a non-tenured English teacher showed an "R"-rated film to high school students and her contract was not renewed. The district court found that the teacher's First Amendment rights were not violated, rather the school board acted reasonably in determining that the film was inappropriate. (We'll discuss tenure in more depth later in this chapter.)

The **Fourteenth Amendment** of the U.S. Constitution guarantees equal opportunity for due process and equal protection to all who live within the jurisdiction of the United States. This amendment was ratified in 1868 and written specifically to protect the rights of recently freed enslaved people.

Ensuring that this opportunity applies to all persons, it reads:

> *All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.*
>
> *–Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution ratified in 1868, Section 1*

The Fourteenth Amendment provides a guarantee that a state cannot take away constitutional rights or privileges as identified in the U.S. Constitution (National Constitution Center, 2020). It has three primary clauses:

- Citizenship Clause, which grants citizenship to those born or naturalized in the United States;

- Due Process Clause, which affirms that states may not deny any person "life liberty, or property, without due process of law"; and

- Equal Protection Clause, which establishes that states may not "deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws".

Both the Due Process and the Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment significantly impact education. The Equal Protection Clause is examined throughout this chapter as it relates to foundational legal cases, racial issues, and LGBTQ+ rights and discrimination. Next, we will consider how the Due Process Clause affects educators and students.

Due Process

For educators and students, due process requires considering whether a constitutional right has been infringed upon, and then affords the accused student, teacher, school district or state the right to a fair and impartial trial. If an individual believes an action is unfair or unjust, the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment allows the accused to have an unbiased trial or hearing.

All members of the school community have the right to due process with the purpose of providing a fair trial. The central premise of due process is fairness. A school district can be sued if it is believed that it was unfair or unreasonable. This legal argument can be brought by a teacher, student, parent, or community member. Anyone who believes that they were unfairly or unreasonably impacted by a policy or procedure of the school can bring a legal case against the school.

In the Supreme Court case *Hortonville Independent School*

District No. 1 v. Hortonville Education Association (1976), the Justices ruled that the school board was able to deliver due process in a reasonable manner when it fired teachers who went on strike after contract negotiations failed. The teachers were asked to return to work but refused. They were then terminated. The teachers argued that their dismissal violated their due process and should be reviewed by an impartial decision maker. The court did not agree, citing instead that the school board was viewed as the impartial decision maker, and they did not need to be independent from the issue.

Foundational Legal Cases

Throughout U.S. history, there have been many notable court cases heard by the Supreme Court related to public education in the United States (National Constitution Center, 2015). Select foundational legal cases are highlighted in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Examples of Foundational Legal Cases in Education

Case	Decision
Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)	Racial segregation was upheld, allowing states to segregate schools under the "separate but equal" doctrine: equal but separate accommodations did not violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.
Brown v. Board of Education (1954)	This landmark Supreme Court case overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) and addressed segregation of public schools on the basis of race. African American students who were denied admittance to public schools argued that the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment was violated. The Justices agreed stating that "separate but equal educational facilities for racial minorities is inherently unequal".
San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez (1973)	The Justices ruled that education is not afforded protection under the Constitution. The Supreme Court also held that a school district is responsible for providing only a "minimum educational threshold" for students within their jurisdiction, as defined by the state, and which adheres to federal law.

Plyler v. Doe (1982)	The Supreme Court held that education is not a "fundamental right" because it is not mentioned in the U.S. Constitution nor the Bill of Rights, but reinforced that public education does have "a pivotal role in maintaining the fabric of… society and in sustaining … political and cultural heritage" of society. The Justices then went on to state that, "deprivation of education takes an inestimable toll on the social, economic, intellectual, and psychological wellbeing of the individual, and poses an obstacle to individual achievement" and because of this a public education system cannot "deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws". This ruling underscored the importance of public schools throughout the United States and held that *all* children within a state's jurisdiction, whether legal or illegal, have the right to a public education, if a public education is provided by the state.

Throughout U.S. history, courts have become more involved in helping school districts make decisions that affect how localities and states conduct schooling (Thomas, 2019). As diversity increases throughout the United States, school policies and procedures continue to be challenged in our court systems. When pursuing legal action, the goal is to ensure that schools provide a fair and reasonable system of education for all students.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** was signed into law in 2015 (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015). It replaces the **No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act** that was enacted in 2002. ESSA requires states to be more accountable for the

achievement of students within their public schools. Its purpose is to provide equitable opportunity for students with diverse backgrounds to include those living in poverty, minorities, special needs, and English language learners.

ESSA provides school districts more control in how they set education standards and determine consequences for low-achieving schools in their districts. States provide an accountability framework to the federal government that assures that all students receive a high-quality education. States are responsible for having an accountability plan and specifying the accountability measures that they and their school districts will follow (Lee, n.d.).

The state educational plan must include how each school within the state will:

- maintain academic standards;
- provide annual testing in grades 3-8 in reading and math;
- identify accountability measures that look at academic achievement, progress, English language proficiency, and high school graduation rates; and
- measure school success by kindergarten readiness, advanced placement coursework, college readiness, and chronic absenteeism or discipline rates (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015).

Schools must provide to the federal government a plan that outlines how they will ensure that students learn and achieve in their schools. If underperforming in any of the above areas, schools must additionally present a plan for improvement.

The Court System and Education

Just as laws regulate society, they also standardize the teaching practice and schools throughout the United States. The U.S. judicial system is designed to address challenges to laws or policies within education in an impartial manner and one based on fairness.

When considering your teaching practice and the role of schools within your local community, be aware of the influence of state and federal laws. As you review case law in one state or across the United States, you will notice that there are several defensible decisions for one single issue. This makes the role and responsibility of schools less clear and more open to ambiguity.

In the United States, one of our core educational priorities is giving access to education to all people. Sometimes, legal challenges have to determine what is the fairest way to protect this right.

Schools in the United States accept responsibility for children as they enter through their doors, and teachers have responsibilities that relate to educating students as well as providing physical, social, and emotional safety to all children, beyond teaching the required curriculum. Because of the diverse nature of schools, the U.S. court system helps to balance teachers' and students' responsibilities and rights.

Legal arguments can be heard in state or federal courts depending on the allegations from the plaintiff, the person or entity that has a complaint. Before hearing a case related

to education, state policies prefer that the plaintiff follow procedures set forth by the local school board. The issue is discussed in the school and if not settled equitably, it is then taken to the school board for an impartial hearing.

If the decision is not agreed upon, the complaint can be taken to the school superintendent for review. If the accused is still not satisfied with the decision issued, they can take their complaint to the state board of education or state superintendent. In addition, at any time the complaint can be taken to the lower court in the jurisdiction of the school. A teacher or a student can also take their complaint to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) which investigates the complaint to determine if a civil rights law has been violated (U.S. Department of Education, 2020c).

State Oversight

States have a responsibility to provide a minimum public education to each child in their respective jurisdiction. Thus, each state has a **compulsory attendance statute**, which is a law requiring children to attend school based on specific age ranges. For example, in Virginia, students are required to attend school between the ages of 5 and 18 (Compulsory Attendance, 2020).

Each state must follow its respective State Constitution as well as the U.S. Constitution when defining the role and responsibilities of public schools within their state. Although education is a responsibility of the state, school districts have authority over their individual schools as it relates to curriculum and discipline. Rights are afforded to teachers in normal day-to-day functioning and when appealing grievances as it relates to such things as contracts, policies, denial of

tenure, or suspension. Students must also adhere to this authority, unless it overrides a student's constitutional rights.

States provide a wide range of oversight. They identify the minimum licensure requirements for educators. States also dictate what educators must do within that state to maintain their teaching license. State laws provide guidelines regarding how schools are organized based on funding. The legislature and Governor of each state allocate a certain amount of funding to school districts throughout their state. School districts then decide how those funds are spent. State legislatures and courts have intervened to help reduce funding disparities among poorer and wealthier school districts to better ensure that all students have equal access to education. States also create a state board of education, set-up school districts throughout the state, and establish school boards for each district. State laws also help to define student discipline and due process policies.

Examples of state involvement within public schools include:

- Creating school districts
- Allocating a budget to school districts
- Regulating schools throughout those districts
- Establishing the organizational structure for schools
- Defining policies and functions of the school
- Setting minimum curriculum requirements for schools
- Defining licensure requirements for educators, and
- Determining working conditions (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2020).

Within a state, courts serve a certain geographical area or jurisdiction. When a state court makes a decision, it does not necessarily become state law. It is also important to note that

with multiple decisions being made in multiple courts across a state, decisions will sometimes conflict between the different lower circuit courts. As such, judges tend to review case law from previous cases to find precedents that align to their interpretation of the law when making a ruling on a specific case.

Laws influence the functioning of public schools in the United States. This includes the role and responsibilities of teachers and students and the policies and procedures outlined in the teacher and student handbooks as it relates to schooling. Because state courts are different and each follow their own State Constitution, there tends to be a multitude of state laws to choose from on an issue or topic when making a ruling. Only the federal Supreme Court opinion influences national statutory precedent.

Cases in State courts:	Cases in Federal courts:
• Involve state laws • Concern school board policies • Are impacted by the State Constitution	• Involve federal laws • Deal with national regulations • Concern U.S. Constitutional issues

Neither the state nor the school district's power is unlimited. The judicial system provides the necessary checks and balances. Because of this balance of power, a school has limits on its control, operations, and functioning. It must also provide evidence of effectiveness and document adherence to state and federal laws.

Stop & Investigate

Look up legislation[1] in your state. What kinds of cases are being brought, and what decisions are being made?

Rights of Teachers

As a teacher, you have certain protected rights related to your legal employment, membership in unions and other professional organizations, academic freedom, freedom of speech and expression, liability, privacy, and religion. It is important to be aware of the rights you do have, as well as the limits of your legal protection.

Teaching License, Contract, and Tenure

As discussed in Chapter 1, the first step in becoming a legally-recognized teacher is to earn a **teaching license**. Each state has different requirements for earning a teaching license, as they define the specific dispositions, knowledge, and skills needed to obtain and maintain employment within a school in that state. If you choose to complete an educator preparation program (like an education major in college), you will be working toward fulfilling the requirements of a teaching license in the state where your institution is located. Many states have **reciprocity** with other states' teaching licenses, meaning that you can earn a teaching license in one state and

1.
https://www.ncsl.org/research/education/education-bill-tracking-database.aspx

still go teach in another one, as long as you also complete the requirements for earning a teaching license in that new state. Oftentimes, reciprocity means getting a second teaching license is as simple as taking a test, or it may require a few additional classes or trainings. In most states, you will need a valid teaching license to teach in public schools; private schools may or may not require a teaching license, depending on the state.

Stop & Investigate

Look up your state's licensure requirements. What do you notice? What kinds of knowledge, training, and experience are you required to have? How is your understanding assessed before you are granted licensure?

Once a teacher applies for and receives a job at a school, they receive a **teaching contract**. A teaching contract is a written agreement between the school system and the teacher and serves as a legal document identifying the roles and responsibilities for the teaching position. If the school board negotiated with a teacher's union, then the policies and regulations of the union will also be identified in the contract. The teaching contract must be signed by the teacher, school, and ratified by the school board to be binding. The teaching contract is binding unless it is breached, should either party fail to perform as agreed during the time frame specified in the teaching contract. Each state has a different definition of the types of teaching contracts that are presented to teachers

within the state, but some traditional types of teaching contracts are explained in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Comparison of Teaching Contracts

Type of Contract	Length of Contract	Description of Contract
Probationary or Provisional	Short (usually 1-2 years)	Issued early in a teacher's career; may not carry tenure; may vary based on hours worked per day, amount of teaching experience, emergency need for teachers, etc.
Specified Term	Varies (usually 1-5 years)	After the specified term expires, the teacher must complete specified tasks (such as professional development) to apply for re-certification
Continuing or Tenured	Longer term; often lasts until a teacher resigns or retires	Typically offered after a teacher has met the probationary or provisional requirements; awarded once teachers have met specific criteria defined by the state and the local school district as necessary to continue employment

You may have heard of the word "tenure" in discussions about teaching contracts. **Tenure** protects teachers from arbitrary dismissal by school officials. Tenure derived from the Pendleton Civil Service Act of 1883, which was originally established as a merit system for government workers. Tenure rights for teachers in the United States date back to 1909, when the **NEA** lobbied for these rights. States define tenure laws for teachers in public schools, including elements like probationary periods and termination procedures. A school district can dismiss a tenured teacher for justifiable reasons such as noncompliance, immoral conduct, committing a crime, and insubordination. A

teacher can also be dismissed for financial reasons, such as when a school district has a deficiency of funds.

Tenure does not guarantee a teacher a job for life, nor does it offer lifetime employment security (Hart, 2010). The focus of tenure is on supporting and protecting good teachers. It is an earned process that mandates due process. The benefits of a continuing contract or tenure are that a school must show cause in order to dismiss you because you, as the teacher, have due process rights. Advocates for tenure see its benefits for teachers in that it "significantly strengthens legal protections embodied in civil service, civil rights, and labor laws" and "protects a range of discriminatory firings not covered under race and gender antidiscrimination laws" (Kahlenberg, 2015, p. 7). In addition, teacher tenure has been shown to increase morale and overall teacher involvement within a school and collaboration among colleagues. Tenure affords teachers the ability to question and engage with school leadership as it relates to the functioning of a school and in building a strong school culture, which has been linked to increased academic achievement for students (Lee & Smith, 1996).

Presently, some states are changing their legislation as it relates to teacher tenure. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and Race to the Top grants through the U.S. Department of Education both require states to evaluate student achievement and teacher effectiveness. Certain state legislatures view teacher tenure as a barrier to these initiatives because it is more difficult for school districts to dismiss tenured teachers for poor performance, and as a result, relatively few tenured teachers are fired (Goldhaber & Hansen, 2010). Therefore, some states have begun to change tenure laws to adhere to the accountability requirements stipulated by the U.S. Department of Education as it relates to teacher

evaluation and student achievement. As a result, some tenure systems have been removed or revamped with annual contracts requiring satisfactory performance. Florida, Indiana, North Carolina, and Kansas have eliminated tenure completely (Underwood, 2018). Additional states are also currently contemplating limiting or removing tenure for teachers.

Unions and Participation in Professional Organizations

The **National Education Association (NEA)** and **American Federation of Teachers (AFT)** are two of the largest teacher labor unions and professional organizations in the United States at present. Both have been in existence for more than 100 years and support teachers, along with other school personnel. As unions, both organizations support their members with collective bargaining, whereby they work alongside teachers as they negotiate with their respective school districts to resolve disputes, as well as to lobby Congress for state and federal legislation that would impact educational related issues, including teacher rights and responsibilities.

You can join either organization, but since not all states recognize unions, the NEA or AFT may not be able to assist you with collective bargaining or school board negotiations, depending on your state of employment. Collective bargaining is illegal in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Texas, and Arizona. You may hear this

In some states, teacher unions will support your right to strike as a means of collective bargaining. Because of their legally-binding nature, negotiating fair contracts can be a common cause of a strike.

referenced as a "right to work state," which means that employees have a right to work without being forced to join a union. Even so, each professional organization provides support, a rich network of educators, and professional development around issues and opportunities that can be beneficial for your teaching practice.

It is not often that educators are permitted to strike because they are employed by the state and are considered vital to public service. Still, some teachers do strike regardless of state laws that may prevent them from striking, such as we saw in 2018 in West Virginia, Kentucky, and Oklahoma. When teachers go on strike, the impacted school board can obtain a court injunction to order teachers back to the school and teachers can lose pay for each day on strike. In many states, they can also be dismissed from their teaching positions for striking.

> ## Stop & Investigate
>
> You may have heard of the #RedforEd movement, which involves teachers striking or protesting in many different states as a way to advocate for students. Watch this video to learn more about this movement from the National Education Association (NEA).
>
> > One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
> > https://viva.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=22#oembed-1

Academic Freedom

Many teachers consider **academic freedom** to be a constitutional freedom outlined by the First Amendment. Because a teacher is a state employee and has signed a legally binding teaching contract, the teacher has a legal obligation to adhere to the rules and regulations identified by the school board and the laws of the state and federal government. A teacher represents the school and cannot do whatever he or she wants in the classroom. Likewise, a teacher does not have complete freedom of speech to say whatever he or say wishes either. All teachers must follow guidelines represented in their teacher contract and the policies and procedures of the school board.

While the legal system has afforded teachers the right to select appropriate class materials, the educational purpose, the age and sophistication of students, and the context and length of time to complete assignments must all be considered. For example, if you wanted to teach the muscular system in human anatomy in your sixth grade science curriculum, but this content is not taught until tenth grade, you would not be able to change the curriculum framework set by the school district per your teaching contract.

If an activity aligns to your curriculum framework and you have followed the guidelines set forth by the school board, you could, for example, have a speaker come into your classroom to talk about an aspect of your curriculum or use an article published in the newspaper. This would not be in breach of your contract. As you prepare for class instruction, consider your assigned curriculum, review school policies, and ask your school principal or other mentor teachers for guidance.

Freedom of Speech and Expression

Pause & Ponder

Imagine a teacher publishes an opinion piece in the local newspaper. In the editorial, they were very critical of a policy that the school board had just passed. They also included many allegations that were not accurate. The community reacted very strongly on both sides of the issue. What rights does this teacher have for freedom of expression outside of their position as a teacher in this school district?

Freedom of expression for a teacher outside of the classroom has been challenged in the court system if it was felt that the speech or behavior was disruptive to the effectiveness or efficiency of a school. Because a teacher has a professional responsibility to their school, educators must be careful about what they say, both at school and outside of school.

In the *Pickering v. Board of Education* (1968) case, the Supreme Court reversed a lower court ruling and found that the teacher's First Amendment right to free speech had been violated after he was dismissed by the school board for writing and publishing a letter in the local newspaper criticizing the board. The court held that teachers were able to voice concerns, even if those concerns were unfavorable to the school, as long as the regular school operations were not disrupted. In the case, the court's opinion was that the plaintiff's First Amendment rights to free speech were not lost because a school district believes the speech is not in its "best interest." After this ruling, the teacher in this case was reinstated to his position.

As a professional educator, you are an employee of your school district, and you have certain legal and ethical responsibilities as a representative of your school district. That means that you need to be careful about what you say or even post on your personal social media accounts.

This influential case regarding First Amendment rights and freedom of speech for public school teachers established precedent that public employees have the ability to speak out

on issues of public concern, even as state or government employees. Even so, the rights of public employees continue to be challenged in the U.S. court system.

In *Connick v. Myers* (1983), the Supreme Court again reversed a lower court decision and ruled that speech of public employees is protected only when they speak on matters of public concern. The case results here showed that the rights of public service employees must be balanced between matters of public importance and an employer's interest to maintain a disruptive free workplace.

Similar to freedom of speech, a teacher's freedom of expression can also be called into question as it relates to personal presentation and dress. Court cases surrounding dress code requirements established by school boards and imposed on teachers in their local schools have established some legal precedent, but this also continues to be a hotly debated topic. As a public school teacher, can you exercise your own 'personal liberty' in how you dress?

In *East Hartford Education Association v. Board of Education* (1977), a public school teacher was reprimanded for failing to wear a necktie while teaching an English class. Joined by his teachers union, he sued the board of education on the basis that the admonishment for the dress code violated his rights to free speech and privacy. This case was heard in the U.S. Court of Appeals who found that the school board was justified in imposing the dress code. As a teacher and public servant in a position of trust, the court felt that this professional requirement and overall governance by the school board on the appearance of its teachers was warranted.

For many teachers and students alike, dress and personal appearance is considered a freedom of expression. Geographic diversity and individual school culture can also be a factor in

what is allowed or not allowed as it relates to dress codes in schools across the United States (Sternberg, n.d.). What is acceptable in southern California may or may not be in West Virginia or Vermont.

School principals often become the main authority for ensuring compliance (Waggoner, 2008). A **standard of reasonableness** is useful when crafting a successful dress code, along with clarity of language and flexibility dependent on the situation to determine appropriate dress and professional presentation. Review the dress code for your school and district to ensure that you are in compliance.

Critical Lens: In the News

In the fall of 2020, a teacher at a charter school in Texas says she was fired after wearing a mask with "Black Lives Matter" written on it (Pygas, 2020). The school told her the mask was a violation of the dress code and asked her to avoid wearing the mask due to the "current political climate." When she stated in an email that she would not stop wearing the mask, the school said she had "effectively resigned her position," since she did not intend to follow the established policy. Dress codes are one part of the professional behavior you may be expected to follow once you sign a teaching contract, so it is important to know exactly what your dress code policy says and what your rights are.

Liability and Teachers

Now, imagine an elementary school teacher is outside with their students on the playground. Two children ask if they can climb on the climbing wall. The teacher agrees and begins to walk over so they can monitor their play. At that very moment, a child falls off the monkey bars she was playing on and begins to cry. The teacher quickly walks over to the fallen child and notices that she has a cut on her arm. Can this teacher be sued for negligence?

When at school, educators have a responsibility that is referred to by the courts as *"**in loco parentis**"* or "in place of parents". This means that while in school it is the responsibility of educators to make similar judgements as it relates to the safety of children that a parent might make. Because an educator is legally responsible for the safety of children under their supervision, a teacher is considered negligent if they fail to protect a child from injury or harm.

Accidents happen, and there are multiple ways that a child could be injured, such as in the playground scenario described above, in the lab of a science classroom, or even running down the hallway. However, if it is determined that negligence did occur, or even if a parent believes that negligence took place, a liability suit can be brought against the teacher or the school. The person who was harmed can bring civil or criminal charges against the student or teacher who threatened harm. In addition, a teacher can be dismissed and lose his or her teaching license as well as be criminally or civilly charged.

Protections exist for teachers that limit liability. These include:

- A reasonable attempt was made to anticipate a dangerous condition;

- Proper precautions were instituted to include establishing rules and procedures to prevent injury;

- Students were warned of possible danger; and

- The teacher provided proper supervision (Legal Information Institute, n.d.).

The Supreme Court of Wyoming held in *Fagen v. Summers* (1972) that the teacher did everything possible to keep students safe following a playground accident, citing that "a teacher cannot anticipate the varied and unexpected acts which occur daily in and about the school premises." Schools and/or teachers are generally not held responsible for accidents occurring on school property under these types of circumstances.

In another playground accident in Louisiana several years later, *Partin v. Vernon Parish School Board* (1977), the judge reiterated the importance of a teacher demonstrating a "high degree of care" for students under his or her supervision, while confirming the earlier decision and citing that "the teacher is not the absolute insurer of the safety of the children she supervises." In both of these cases, the teacher was not found guilty of any negligence based on the above criteria.

Teachers can have a lawsuit brought against them for civil liability or civil statutes if it is believed that:

- a student has been mistreated or abused either verbally, physically, emotionally, or sexually.

- a teacher discriminated against a child due to his or her gender, race, or a special need(s).

- a teacher treated certain children unfairly, such as through grading practices.

- offensive material was assigned by the teacher for

homework (Legal Information Institute, n.d.).

Once you begin teaching, your school and state will have specific policies regarding liability protection for teachers.

Critical Lens: Who Gets to Define "Offensive"?

What happens if what some families deem offensive is the lived experience of others? For example, a teacher in Texas was placed on administrative leave when some families complained about posters on the "walls" of her virtual Bitmoji classroom (Fitzsimons, 2020). These virtual "posters" depicted affirmations of LGBTQ+ communities and the Black Lives Matter Movement. But what about the students who see themselves in these LGBTQ+ and Black Lives Matter posters? How do we create classroom communities that are inclusive of various cultures and perspectives, while also acknowledging that some groups deem certain cultures and perspectives as "offensive"?

Teacher Privacy

Privacy is considered to be a protection in the U.S. Constitution under the Fourth Amendment as it relates to unreasonable searches and seizures (U.S. Constitution, Fourth Amendment).

> *The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.*

-Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution ratified in 1789, revised 1992

In the Supreme Court case, *O'Connor v. Ortega* (1987), the court ruled that public employees retain their Fourth Amendment rights with regard to administrative searches in the workplace. The Court held that a **standard of reasonableness** was sufficient for work-related intrusions by public employers, citing that an employee's expectation of privacy may be unreasonable when the intrusion into the office is by a supervisor rather than a law enforcement official in conducting normal business functions.

For teachers, the school is considered a public place and therefore there are minimal limitations placed on search and seizure. All places in a school building and on school grounds are considered public space. This means all classrooms, teacher desks, offices, even student lockers are considered a part of the workplace and can be searched, and items seized. Personal belongings are separate from this public workspace. This means your personal effects, such as a phone or bag, do not belong to the workplace and if searched, require a warrant. For your own protection, use care when deciding what to bring into the school.

Religion and Schools

The First Amendment separates religion from the business of the state. Government is prohibited from imposing religious beliefs on any person. Public school serves as a state government service and therefore it must be neutral and not promote religious beliefs on anyone in the school. Religion in schools has been challenged from prayer in schools, to religion

in the curriculum, religious clubs and access to public school facilities, to artifacts and clothing.

The Supreme Court has continuously upheld the separation of religion from the school environment (ACLU Legal Bulletin, 2020), as shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Supreme Court Cases on Religion in Schools

Year	Outcome
1962	In *Engel v. Vitale,* the Supreme Court upheld that nondenominational prayers were unconstitutional because it promoted religion and schools could not officially encourage student prayer as it would interfere with the function of school.
1963	In *Abington School District v. Schempp*, the Supreme Court ruled that the state legislation passing a law requiring all schools to read the Bible daily was unconstitutional.
1971	In *Lemon v. Kurtzman,* the Supreme Court held that prayers or blessings by clergy at the opening or closing of a public ceremony in a school violates the free exercise clause. From this case there was a test that courts use to determine if religion in schools is constitutional. The questions are: • Is the policy or the act for a secular purpose? • Does the primary effect either advance or inhibit religion? • Does the law or policy result in excessive entanglement of government and religion?
1981	The Supreme Court ruled in *Stone v. Graham* that a Kentucky state law requiring the Ten Commandments be posted in school classrooms was illegal.

The courts have upheld that there is a separation between church and state even to the extent of your own personal beliefs. In 1980, a teacher refused to teach a city-designed curriculum that she said violated her own religious beliefs. In the *Palmer v. Board of Education of the City of Chicago* (1980)

decision, the court recognized that a teacher can have personal views that might be different from the curriculum, but upheld that the mandate of the school district to provide an education requires that teachers "cannot be left to teach the way they please."

Rights of Students

Students share many of the same constitutional rights to ensure protection as adults. Several sections outlined below follow those shown above under Teacher Rights, but with additional emphasis on the students themselves.

Courts have mandated that for a school to operate safely it needs to have broad authority to establish rules and regulations as it relates to student conduct within the school. This means that parents agree to give some level of control to schools when they enroll their child in the public school system. The courts have also insisted that students do not lose all of their constitutional rights and a school's influence is not absolute. Within the U.S. legal and educational systems, control is defined as a *standard of reasonableness* which was similarly stated in multiple examples above.

Freedom of Speech and Expression

Schools have an obligation to provide a safe and orderly learning environment. Reasonable limits are put in place regarding language, such as banning offensive language, to assure appropriateness and respect. Forms of expression that are protected in schools include:

- the right to wear religious clothing and talk about

    religion,

- to be free from bullying and harassment, and
- to be free from racial or national origin discrimination (United States Courts, n.d.).

Protecting students' rights to political speech was explored in*Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District* (1969). It served as a landmark Supreme Court case and the decision upheld that free speech was permitted in schools.

This ruling was later challenged in 1986 when a student used what was considered 'vulgar' language by the school in a speech at an assembly. The student was reprimanded by the school and the student sued the school claiming that his constitutional right to freedom of speech had been violated. The case went to the U.S. Supreme Court where the court decided in *Bethel School District No. 403 v. Fraser* (1986) that a school is not required to permit offensive or disruptive speech on school grounds at a school sanctioned event because offensive speech or language disrupts the educational mission of the school and is inappropriate for a school setting.

Freedom is also limited as it relates to a student newspaper. In *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier* (1988), the U.S. Supreme Court decided that a student newspaper can be regulated for "legitimate pedagogical concerns" allowing a school to remove articles that school officials deemed inappropriate for the school community. The decision went further, allowing a school to determine if the speech was written in a reasonable manner for members of the school community and ensuring that it did not contain language that was "ungrammatical, poorly written, inadequately researched, biased, prejudiced, vulgar or profane, or unsuitable for immature audiences." The court found that because a school

newspaper is not intended to have a public forum, a school can limit speech by imposing reasonable constraints if it is determined the speech would disrupt a classroom and the normal functioning of a school.

In the present day, free speech as it relates to the Internet is the same for teachers as it is for students. If it is found that the speech posted online 'substantially disrupts' the functioning and purpose of a school, disciplinary actions can be taken against either cohort.

In *Doninger v. Niehoff* (2008), a student's derogatory comments posted online were found to make a substantial disruption to the school. A blog post contained language that would be prohibited within the school and was disruptive to the work and discipline of the school. A Court of Appeals held that even though the online comments were made off campus, the speech could be restricted to promote school related goals on campus.

Schools have the right to limit forms of expression–including speech, digital communication, and dress–when it interferes with the pedagogical mission and goals of a school.

This case relates to disruptive speech and cyberbullying. It underscores school responsibility in maintaining a safe environment for students.

The speech of students and teachers is constitutionally protected, but the extent of the speech, as it relates to the mission and goals of a school, must always have a legitimate pedagogical focus and direction. This holds true whether it is

in print in a school newspaper, in the local newspaper, or in electronic format. It is true if it is part of the curriculum or in a theater production on school grounds. Speech is influenced both on and off campus and can come under the school's authority both in-person and online.

Dress Code

Dress codes have been challenged by students and teachers alike as a form of freedom of speech and expression. Courts have upheld that school boards can impose student dress codes to include symbols, clothing, and jewelry if it is believed to have the potential to disrupt a school's functioning.

In addition to supporting free speech as discussed above, the *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1969) case also weighed in regarding dress code. During the Vietnam War, students planned to wear armbands to protest the War. The principal tried to limit these protests by banning armbands. The court ruled against the school, holding that there was no evidence that students wearing armbands would disrupt school functioning.

In 2006, a student wore a shirt to school that other students found offensive and which depicted a particular political viewpoint. He was asked to cover the shirt based on the off-putting image and speech. He refused and was given a disciplinary referral. In *Guiles v. Marineau* (2006), the student then sued the school administrators to have the disciplinary referral expunged from his record and to disallow the school from enforcing the dress code policy against him. The District court held that the school was entitled to enforce its dress code policy, but upon appeal, the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that the shirt was protected speech under the First and Fourteenth Amendments.

In another case, *B.H. and K.M. v. Easton Area School District* (2013), students were suspended for wearing bracelets that showed support for breast cancer awareness. In this case, the judge ruled in favor of the students. The school district then elevated the case to the Supreme Court, but the court refused to hear the case, stating that the message on the bracelet did not use lewd language and was not disruptive to the purpose of education. The First Amendment requires schools to see all student views equally, as long as they are not obscene or disruptive, irrespective of the message expressed (Sherwin, 2017).

The purpose of a dress code is to provide an optimal learning environment. It can also do the opposite with gender-biased language that results in stricter enforcement of rules for female minority students rather than other sub-groups. A gender-neutral dress code is recommended, along with gathering student input when revising the school dress code and ensuring that female students are not 'victim-blamed' (Barrett, 2018).

Critical Lens: In the News

Pay attention to the news–you are likely to hear many examples of dress code violations that systematically oppress certain groups. For example, a school in Houston made the news in early 2020[2] for their dress code policy that required male students to keep their hair "ear-length or shorter," thus banning dreadlocks. One male student, De'Andre Arnold was told he would have to cut his

2.
https://www.texastribune.org/2020/08/18/texas-school-dreadlocks-ban/

dreadlocks in order to walk at graduation. Despite complaints, the school district stood by its policy. In August, a federal court ruled this policy was discriminatory.

The American Civil Liberties Union also provides guidance on student rights as they relate to school dress codes, gender, and self-expression:

- Views are protected by the First Amendment and therefore schools cannot ban symbols or slogans or messages that they disagree with on student shirts, buttons, wristbands, or other garments or accessories.
- While public schools can establish dress codes, they cannot treat boys and girls differently, censor viewpoints, or force students to conform to gender stereotypes under federal law.
- Students are allowed to wear clothing that aligns with their gender identity and expression (ACLU Fact Sheet, 2016).

Schools administrators must be aware of the constitutional rights of students and protect these freedoms. Schools can assert certain restrictions as they relate to freedom of speech and expression, but at the same time they also need to be cognizant of student diversity and cultural differences, as well as gender distinctions, and economic disparities.

> ## Pause and Ponder
>
> Think about some of your experiences with dress codes. Which cultures were normalized and which were marginalized? Here are a few ideas to get you started.
>
> - Gender and sexuality: Were males and females held to different standards? (For example, were females expected to wear skirts or not to wear strappy shirts? See the #Iamnotadistraction movement[3] or the Let Her Learn report[4] advocating for female bodies not to be hyper-regulated and sexualized in dress codes.)
> - Race: Were certain hairstyles or traditions allowed or not? (For example, Black hair styles[5] are frequently at risk of marginalization, along with Black and Brown bodies in general[6].) Or, are certain racial groups punished more frequently[7] for dress

3.

https://responsiblesexedinstitute.org/rsei-blog/iamnotadistraction-how-dress-code-policies-sexualize-young-bodies/

4.

https://nwlc-ciw49tixgw5lbab.stackpathdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/final_nwlc_Gates_GirlsofColor.pdf

5.

https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/07/17/534448313/when-black-hair-violates-the-dress-code

6.

https://www.edweek.org/leadership/why-do-schools-hang-on-to-discriminatory-dress-codes/2020/03

> code violations?
>
> - Religion: Are head coverings and facial hair regulated? (For example, the Air Force updated their policy[8] in February 2020.)
> - Socioeconomic: Were certain types of clothing allowed or not? (For example, some dress codes limit cheap plastic flip flops but allow more expensive leather ones.)

Search and Seizure

Imagine that a teacher suspects a student has illegal drugs in her backpack. They noticed the student at her locker placing a small bag in the front pocket. The teacher immediately reports their suspicions to the principal. What should be the next step? The school administrator must have a "reasonable suspicion" based on facts specific to the student or the situation. A "hunch" is not sufficient. Rather, the principal must believe that searching the student will turn up evidence of violating a school rule or law. "Reasonable" is based on what is being searched for and the age of the student.

7.
https://kappanonline.org/pavlakis-roegman-dress-codes-gender-race-discrimination/

8.
https://www.military.com/daily-news/2020/02/11/air-force-issues-new-guidelines-beards-turbans-and-hijabs.html

The Fourth Amendment of the Constitution protects U.S. citizens from unlawful search and seizure of possessions. If there is probable cause for a search, a warrant is required from the court system before a person can be searched. Because of the nature and purpose of school, courts have allowed schools to both search and seize possessions if there is probable cause.

Personal materials, including lockers, are not supposed to be searched without reasonable suspicion that a student is in violation of the law or a school rule.

In *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* (1985), the Supreme Court established a *standard of reasonableness* for student searches conducted at school and by public school personnel. While the Fourth Amendment of disallowing unreasonable search and seizure still applies, if school administrators have a reasonable suspicion that a student has either broken the law or violated a school rule, the search is justified. In this case, the student was found smoking in the bathroom, a violation of school rules, and taken to the principal's office where her purse was searched based on a reasonable assumption that the student had cigarettes in her purse.

Random drug tests have historically been permissible for both teachers and students. In the Supreme Court case *Board of Education of Independent School District No. 92 of Pottawatomie County v. Earls* (2002), the court held that athletes can be randomly tested for drugs to protect the safety of the school and to ensure a drug free school. The safety and knowledge of the drug free school outweighed the privacy rights of students who were voluntarily participating in the sporting events. The

Court concluded that while the students participating in extracurricular activities have limited Fourth Amendment rights, within the school setting there is a lesser expectation of privacy, and the students' rights must be balanced against the school's interest in keeping illegal drug use to a minimum (Staros & Williams, 2007).

In 2005, a 13-year old special education student was called out of class and questioned by police officers with school officials present regarding neighborhood burglaries. His parents were not contacted, nor was he read his Miranda rights, such as the right to remain silent, leave the room, or have access to a lawyer. The child confessed to the crime but later sought to suppress his confession based on not receiving any indications of his rights while he was in police custody in the school conference room. This case, *J.D.B. v. North Carolina* (2011), was later heard by the Supreme Court where they ruled that age should have been considered in deciding whether the student was in police custody within the school grounds. The Justices went on to state that there are psychological differences between an adult and a child, and when police are involved in questioning students, they must use "common sense" due to the developmental differences of children. The Miranda warnings should have been applied in this case in a manner appropriate for the student prior to his questioning.

Search has also been controversial with the use of video surveillance and metal detectors in schools. Currently, courts have held that if school safety has been threatened, means of surveillance can be introduced into the school, but that extensive surveillance using video or metal detectors can hinder reasonableness of the surveillances and violate Fourth Amendment protections. The intent of school policies and procedures are consistently to provide and maintain "a safe,

secure, healthy, and disruption-free learning environment" that is conducive and supportive to teaching and learning (Vacca, 2014, p. 5).

Privacy of Records

In 1974, Congress passed the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA),** also called the Buckley Amendment. This was an Amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of student educational records. FERPA requires schools to allow parents and students access to official school records. It also requires schools to provide procedures for parents to challenge the accuracy or completeness of information in their child's record. Parents retain the rights of access to their child's school record until the child reaches the age of eighteen or is enrolled in a postsecondary institution.

The intent of FERPA is to improve parental access to their child's information within the school. It does not guarantee access to all school records on a child, such as personal teacher notes, letters of reference, grade books, or correspondence with a principal. These items are exempted from view. There may also be files or information that is kept separate from a student's file to protect the privacy rights of other students in the school.

Passed in 1978, the General Education Provisions Act is an amendment to FERPA. It additionally provides access to parents, guardians, and the students themselves on research collected on students. The Act also states that no student is required to participate in testing nor can students be questioned about their personal beliefs, such

FERPA requires that families and students be allowed to access student educational records, which must be kept confidential and private. As a teacher, you must keep student data secured where other people cannot see it.

as sexual attitudes or behaviors, political affiliations, or income. It also limits asking about feelings or behaviors, such as psychological or mental issues.

In total, the FERPA guidelines require schools to:

- Inform parents annually of their rights regarding their child's records.
- Provide parents access to their child's records.
- Maintain procedures that allow parents to challenge and if needed, amend inaccurate information.
- Protect parents from disclosure of confidential information to third parties without their consent (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 1974).

As a teacher, you want to consider information and data collected on students carefully. Any information collected must serve a legitimate goal for both instruction and the school. The privacy of student educational records must be protected, and official records and confidential documents securely stored.

Discipline

Classroom discipline has been presented in the courts to assist in decisions regarding the reasonableness of discipline procedures from both teachers and schools. While the U.S. court system upholds that a school has the authority to enforce standards, it also recognizes that this authority is not without restrictions. For example, suspensions and time outs cannot limit students and their right to a public education.

The purpose of discipline is to modify the behavior of a student who is disrupting learning and the functioning of the school. The school has the right to preserve the rights of other students by enforcing disciplinary actions if it is determined that the enforcement is fair and reasonable and supports the education process.

Students who have disciplinary actions brought against them have the right to procedural due process. This was upheld in *Goss v. Lopez* (1975). The Supreme Court ruled that any suspension of a student requires procedural due process that provides the student both oral and written notice, as well as an explanation and evidence of the charges. The student then has the right to explain their side of the argument and provide evidence. It is important that all students be afforded due process. The student and parent or guardian must be provided all of the evidence that makes the school's case and have an opportunity to speak in their defense.

Students with Special Needs

All students have a right to a **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)** as part of their educational entitlement in the United States. This is supported through the

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, **Section 504** which addresses protection for students with disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). In 1975, the **Education for All Handicapped Children Act** was signed into law to support states in protecting the rights and meeting the needs of students with disabilities. This law was amended in 1997 and is currently the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)** (2004).

This law guarantees every child with a disability access to a free appropriate public education. The IDEIA Act requires schools to make accommodations for students with disabilities and to create individual education programs in the least restrictive way for each student that has a special need (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2003). Public schools must provide reasonable and safe accommodations for students with disabilities, and at the same time provide them with an equitable education. You read about the specific disability categories listed in this act in Chapter 2.

The intent of IDEIA is to provide equal educational opportunity and protection for students. This basic access includes consistent specialized instruction and services that are individually designed for students to provide similar educational benefits to a child with special needs (U.S. Department of Education, 2020a). Individual states and local educational systems can choose services and programs in cooperation with a parent or guardian.

Current Implications

Throughout the history of schools in the United States, ethics and the function of laws have evolved as society has changed. To date, current issues continue to be addressed in our nation's

public schools and within our court systems. While others exist as well, below are three current issues within education and society as a whole.

Racial Issues

Today, racial concerns remain a key issue for schools and society at large. In *T.B. et al. v. Independent School District 112* (2019), African American students filed a complaint against white students in Minnesota. They claimed they had been harassed and the school did not intervene to remove racism, harassment, and discrimination nor did it protect their rights to safe and equal access to education within the school environment. This is required as part of the Equal Protection Clause under the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. As of this writing, the case remains open in the court of appeals.

> Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states, "*No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance*" (Civil Rights Act, 1964).

Racial harassment continues to occur in schools to the present day. As a teacher, you are responsible for enforcing policies and procedures that are appropriate within the classroom to maintain a safe environment for all students. Immediate action is required to respond to bullying and intimidation, such as speaking up and talking with the offending students and reporting the action to your principal when you hear or see questionable behavior or actions within your school. Regular professional development and training

can additionally help inform and support teachers. A culture of inclusion and acceptance is required by school leadership that permeates throughout the school and community.

Freedom of Speech

Freedom of speech continues to be challenged in our schools. In *B.L. v. Mahanoy Area School District* (2019), a court of appeals in Pennsylvania held that a school district violated a student's First Amendment rights when they removed her from a school event for a Snapchat message. The message was sent by the student on a weekend and away from the school. The case made it to the U.S. Supreme Court, and the final ruling on *Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L.* (2021) found that the student had First Amendment rights to free speech and that the school's decision to suspend her was wrong. The court used the ruling of *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969) in its opinion stating that the student's message was posted off campus and was not controlled by the school. Therefore, the First Amendment protected the student when she engaged in off-campus speech similar to a community citizen.

   In another case, *Ali v. Woodbridge Township School District* (2020), a high school history teacher in New Jersey was terminated in 2016 from his teaching position for altering curriculum and teaching what the school believed were "conspiracy theories." The teacher appealed to the courts, stating that his dismissal was discriminatory, and he was wrongfully terminated on the basis of his race, ethnicity, and religion. The case was resolved in 2020 after the court of appeals upheld the lower court's decision in favor of the school and the teacher's dismissal, stating that the teacher does not

have the right to decide what is taught in the classroom; rather, that is the public school's responsibility.

LGBTQ+ Rights and Discrimination

Discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity are important issues in today's schools. For LGBTQ+ teachers, **Title VII** of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employers from discriminating against individuals because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (Civil Rights Act, 1964). For students, **Title IX** under the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education bans sex discrimination in schools and reads "*No person shall, on the basis of sex, be denied admission, or be subjected to discrimination in admission, by any recipient to which this subpart applies*" (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

LGBTQ+ teachers and students have legal protections that make discrimination against them illegal under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX under the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education.

Students or teachers who believe they have been discriminated against can bring litigation under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Equal Protection Clause in Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment states:

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which

> *shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws* (U.S. Constitution, Fourteenth Amendment).

In addition, in 1984 Congress passed the **Equal Access Act** requiring federally-funded secondary schools to uphold students' First Amendment rights to conduct meetings and hold an open forum with equal access to extracurricular student groups or clubs (Equal Access Act, 1984).

In *Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education* (1999), the mother sued the school system on behalf of her fifth-grade daughter for failing to prevent sexual harassment by another student. The Supreme Court upheld that there is an implied right to education under Title IX and found that the school board acted with deliberate indifference, ignoring the mother's complaints of harassment that were serious and systematic.

In *Nabozny v. Podlesny* (1996), the Court of Appeals ruled that public schools and their officials could be held liable for failing to protect homosexual students from antigay harassment and harm. Since signed into law in 2009, schools must follow the **Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act** (2009). This law expanded the federal hate crime law, to include crimes motivated by the victim's actual or perceived gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

On the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender identity, students receive protection from bullying by other students, teachers, and school staff and cannot be discriminated against in school by being unfairly denied access to facilities, sports teams, or clubs. Both anti-bullying and school nondiscrimination laws support and protect LGBTQ+ students.

In addition, sexual harassment guidelines are provided through the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education (2020b). It is the responsibility of a school to take meaningful steps to support and protect all students.

> ### Pause & Ponder
>
> What cases have you heard in the news recently related to legal and ethical issues in schools? Did the decisions align with the ones you read about in this chapter or differ? Why do you think the outcomes were what they were?

Conclusion

During this chapter, you have learned about how ethical and legal issues impact education. A professional Code of Ethics influences a teacher's practice by outlining standards that ensure that all teachers demonstrate integrity, impartiality, and ethical behavior to assure that students receive a fair and equitable education. Teachers and students do not give up their constitutional rights when entering into public schools in the United States; however, the courts have declared that there is a difference between teacher and student rights outside of a school and those inside the school. Rights and responsibilities must align to state and federal law, as well as the safety of students, and the mission of the public school. Case law has provided guidance for schools on procedures and regulations as well as the roles and responsibilities of teachers and students. The legal cases highlighted in this chapter are significant to the purpose and goals of public schooling throughout the United

States. There continue to be challenges over time, especially as society changes and the United States becomes more diverse. A robust legal system is needed to maintain a fair and responsible system of education that supports all students. Understanding ethical and legal issues related to education will help you make informed decisions as an educator in our public school system within the United States.

Part II: Education in Action

In this part, we will move beyond the theoretical roots to focus on the practice of being an educator in American schools.

Chapter 6: Curriculum: Planning, Assessment, & Instruction

Unlearning Box

A substitute teacher was supposed to give an assessment while the classroom teacher was away, but one student refused to take the test. "He started yelling and walked out of the room, saying he wasn't going to take this test that the teacher left for him. He kept saying that he is supposed to have questions read aloud to him, but that isn't fair and I wasn't going to do it!" Sometimes we think that fairness means everyone is treated the same way, but in reality, "fairness" involves meeting the needs of different students.

In this example, the student had an IEP accommodation that allowed him to have tests read aloud to him. When considering planning, instruction, and assessment, sometimes treating all students the same is actually quite unfair, since students have different learning needs and strengths.

In this chapter, we will begin to explore the inner workings of classroom curriculum. Planning, assessment, and instruction all intertwine within a classroom curriculum, and being aware of the relationships among the various components of curriculum can lead to appropriate and fair assessments and instruction.

Chapter Outline

1. Types of Curriculum
2. Planning
   1. Lesson Plan Components and Models
3. Assessment
   1. Accountability
4. Instruction
5. Conclusion

Types of Curriculum

You have had some kind of experience with schooling, whether

it was homeschool, private school, public school, or some combination of those. No matter the setting where you learned, someone decided what you would learn. This is the curriculum. It reaches far beyond the textbooks that you might have used or the novels that you read. It even includes things that are unstated.

There are different kinds of curriculum, including the explicit curriculum, implicit curriculum, and null curriculum. **Explicit curriculum** is the state, district, and schools' formal accounting of what they teach. Another term for explicit curriculum is **formal curriculum**. The explicit or formal curriculum is often laid out in standards or other curricular materials. **Implicit curriculum**, or **informal curriculum**, involves hidden messages that students learn from schooling that aren't specifically in the standards and possibly aren't even explicitly taught. For example, students may see bulletin board displays where people who look like them are missing and therefore feel like they do not belong in that classroom, or they may see the way the teacher treats students when it comes to conflict and realize the teacher displays favoritism towards certain students. Finally, **null curriculum** is made up of those things that are not taught in schools at all for a variety of reasons, such as contributions in science by scholars of color or women (Eisner, as cited in Milner, 2017).

> **Pause & Ponder**
>
> What are some of the big ideas that you recall from your own education? Can you identify what was emphasized in

your explicit or formal curriculum, or what was missing? Can you explain why that was the case?

There is immense power in determining what students will learn, with many competing forces at play. Because schooling in the United States is left to the jurisdiction of individual states, certain content is viewed, valued, and taught differently depending on the collective values of the state or county. For example, some students are taught about the Civil War as the "War of Northern Aggression," while other schools may not allow confederate flags in their buildings or on school grounds. Historical events are a part of the curriculum, but in many cases these have been boiled down to the simplest pieces of information. Consider, for example, the difference between the following two lesson objectives: "Identify that Abe Lincoln wears a top hat" and "Explain how and why Abe Lincoln created the Emancipation Proclamation." Imagine how different learning could be if more complex and important details were a part of the curriculum for all students.

Critical Lens: Racial Justice in the Curriculum

Recent concerns and protests about racial justice in the United States are another example of the tensions among explicit, implicit, and null curricula. Some schools may openly address and discuss protests for racial justice, while other schools may not mention them at all. The reasons for not addressing this topic range from not wanting to upset students or parents to openly racist

thinking at the classroom, district, or state level. However, if something is never mentioned in school and therefore becomes part of the null curriculum, students take note of what is missing. Milner (2017) describes events like the violence in Charlottesville in 2017 as exactly the kind of topic that students must learn about in schools to cement the importance of social justice for future generations.

Planning

Effective teachers must plan effective lessons, which are based on standards. **Standards** vary depending on the state where you teach. In Virginia, for example, teachers follow Standards of Learning (SOLs)[1]. These standards tell teachers the key information that students should understand in specific content areas at varying grade levels. As a teacher, you are responsible for knowing the standards you are responsible for teaching and planning effective lessons to help students learn the information explained in the standards. An elementary school teacher is responsible for standards in English, math, science, and social studies; a secondary teacher typically specializes in one area, such as history. There are also standards for fine arts, languages, and other areas.

While Virginia is the only state to use the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs), other states use other standards. Sometimes these are state-developed standards, like Virginia developed. Many other states adopted the Common Core State Standards[2].

1.
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/
2.

These standards have been an attempt to move the nation closer to a unified set of standards. As of 2021, 41 states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) have adopted them, with varying degrees of implementation and support at the district levels (Common Core States Standards Initiative, 2021).

> ## Stop & Investigate
>
> What are the standards in your state? Look at your state's Department of Education website to learn more. The Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs)[3] are accessible on the right-hand side of the provided webpage.

It is not uncommon to hear a teacher or parent say that they want schools to "cover" curriculum or standards; however, "coverage" is not conducive to deep understanding. Instead, a teacher should review the standards and local curriculum as a part of their planning, with a focus on big, transferable ideas (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). This is considered depth of material, rather than simply breadth of material. You may hear some teachers talking about the importance of "depth versus breadth" for this reason.

Standards and curriculum are not the same thing. Standards tell you what to teach; curriculum (and corresponding methods) tells you how to teach. Figure 6.1 compares and contrasts standards and curriculum. (As you begin considering your own classroom instruction, representing information

http://www.corestandards.org/

3.

https://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/index.shtml

graphically like this Venn diagram does can be a useful strategy for your future students.)

Figure 6.1: A Comparison of Standards and Curriculum

Standards

Curriculum

- Skills (cite textual evidence, measure volume)
- Apply knowledge (how did X event affect Y?)
- Same for nearly all students

- Valued skills, knowledge, and content
- Often students have limited voice

- Texts (*Romeo and Juliet*)
- District-wide assessments (a five-paragraph essay)
- Local parent, student, and teacher choice
- May vary depending on school/level
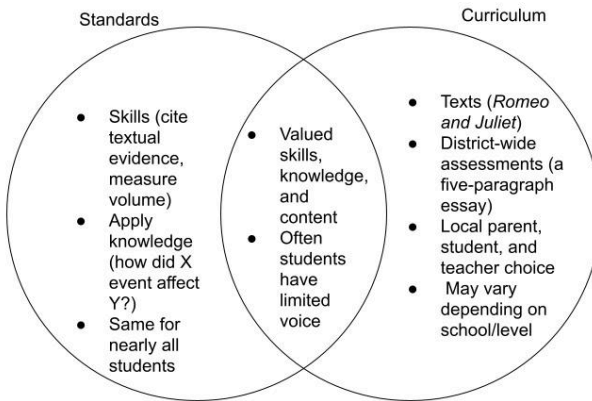
Pause & Ponder

At the center of the diagram, you will see that students often have limited voice in the creation of standards and curriculum. Did you have a say in what you learned in school? Can you think of ways that teachers could make a space for more student voice when it comes to what students learn and how they learn it?

As a teacher, you will have many opportunities to collaborate with your peers to strengthen your teaching practice. One structure to do this collaborative work is a Professional Learning Community (PLC).

Sometimes your school or district will provide lesson plans for you, but more often, you will have the autonomy to make your own lesson plans. Teachers may be part of a **Professional Learning Community (PLC)** with other teachers in the same grade or content area. During these PLCs, teachers plan together and often look at student assessment data to determine what to further emphasize for students or teach in a different way. They may also have a common book or article to read in the field of education to expand their knowledge of teaching and learning. A teacher of a "special" area or elective subject like music or art might occasionally meet with teachers in other local schools to share information and discuss curriculum, lessons, or assessments. Working with others in planning is a critical skill to learn as a teacher.

One of the most effective planning strategies is **Backward Design** (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Figure 6.2 depicts a backward design planning process. While it is common for new or inexperienced teachers to focus on "filling the time," or "what" they will teach, backward design involves following these steps:

- Identifying the desired goals and objectives;
- Determining acceptable evidence and assessments; and
- Planning instruction (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

This does not mean that a teacher will have the exact final assessment ready before the first day of instruction; however, teachers should have a clear idea of the format of the assessment and know what kinds of questions and content will be on it.

Figure 6.2: Backward Design Process
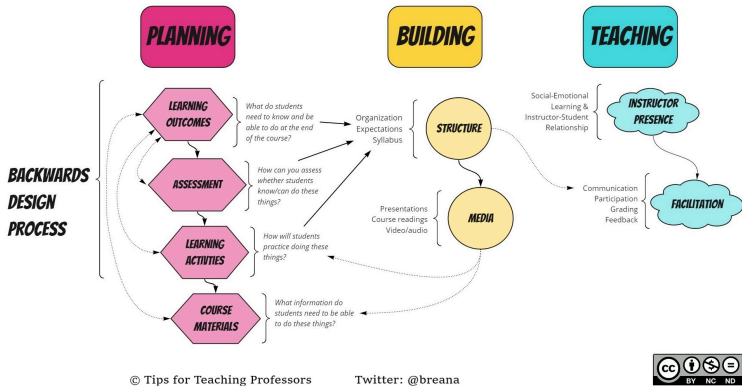
This is one way to think of the backward design planning process in higher education, which does have direct correlation to the work you will do in your future K-12 classroom.

Lesson Plan Components and Models

Lesson planning is a key component to any effective instruction. Experienced teachers do not usually script their lesson plans; however, many districts will ask even seasoned teachers to turn in lesson plans for the week or month. All lesson plans will contain similar elements, sometimes in a different order.

- **Standards**: Select the specific standards you will teach in this particular lesson. Note that you will often choose one sub-standard, or piece, of a standard to teach, and it may take multiple lessons

for students to master the content.

- **Objectives**: State what students will know, understand, and do by the end of the lesson. Objectives can be phrased as "The student will…" or, from a student perspective, "I can…". Content objectives should directly relate to the standards, and language objectives should be included for English Learners.

- **Materials**: List all materials, such as books, resources, tools, websites, and other items that will be used for the lesson. This assists you with gathering materials so you are prepared to teach the lesson.

- **Procedures**: Break down the lesson into specific steps you will follow. Think of it as programming: you must provide simple, clear steps to achieve the lesson's instructional goals.

- **Differentiation**: Consider how you will adapt your lesson to meet the needs of specific types of learners. For example, how will you support your English Learners, challenge your students who are gifted, or enable a student who struggles with spelling to participate without getting frustrated? Sometimes you may design a lesson around a **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** framework, which means you've built these considerations into the plan and do not need to retrofit differentiation strategies later.

- **Assessment**: Explain how you will measure students' progress toward lesson objectives and mastery of selected standards. Make sure you are

collecting tangible evidence. More information on assessment will be provided later in this chapter.

In addition to these basic components, various lesson planning models exist. One common lesson planning structure is the **5 E model**. The 5 E's are engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate. This type of lesson plan is considered an **inquiry-based model**, in which students are encouraged to question and explore instead of receiving information directly from the teacher. (To learn more, read how one math teacher uses the 5 E components[4].) Another common approach to lesson planning is the **Herbartian five-step lesson plan**. It is based on more **direct instruction**, which involves the teacher directly giving information to students. You may hear this common type of lesson plan called the "I do, We do, You do" plan, based on the **gradual release of responsibility** model. This model of lesson planning includes five distinct steps:

1. Anticipatory Set: Get students interested in what is to come in a lesson as a way to engage students. This can take many forms, including connections to prior learning or a model of a learning outcome or assessment task.

2. Introduction of New Material: Teach new content to students, generally through direct instruction of content and checking for understanding. This is known as the "I do" phase.

3. Guided Practice: Model application of new content with students as a whole class or in small groups

[4].
https://www.therouttymathteacher.com/2018/04/how-to-create-a-5e-model-math-lesson-plan.html

while the teacher guides and facilitates. This is known as the "we do" phase.

4. Independent Practice: Ask students to apply new content independently. This is known as the "you do" phase and can be accomplished through independent classwork or homework.

5. Closure: Review the content and wrap up the lesson. Sometimes this step is referred to as a reflection, where students briefly summarize what they have learned either together or independently.

You will notice that the teacher gradually releases the responsibility for performing the target skills of this lesson to the students. While you do not have to

Gradual Release of Responsibility Framework
Teacher Responsibility
Focus Lesson — "I do it"
Guided Practice — "We do it"
Independent Practice — "You do it"
Student Responsibility
(adopted from Fisher & Frey, 2008)

follow these steps in order every time, a delicate balance is key. Students may feel panicked or unsupported if you ask them to do a task before showing them how it works first. At the same time, if you never release that responsibility to your students, they will never get to demonstrate their understanding. It is important for students to get ample time practicing a skill in order to master it.

Critical Lens: Homework

We all have had homework during our K-12 schooling. You may have had it as early as kindergarten. There is debate about whether or not schools should even give

homework, especially for a grade. Why? It comes down to issues of equity. If a family member is not available to help or is not fluent in the language of instruction, then the student has less of a chance to accurately complete a homework assignment. Since homework is often factored into grades, this can negatively impact students without additional resources. What is also important to remember as teachers is that homework should never be new material: it should always be a review and reinforcement of instruction that has already been provided. Listen to the "Is It Time to Ban Homework?"[5] podcast from Trending in Education to learn more.

Assessment

Even though you may think of instruction–the day-to-day activities of teaching–as the biggest part of your job as a future educator, assessment should actually come first. If you are following the backward design process, you should think first about your objectives and assessments, and then about the activities that the students will do.

Pause & Ponder

Think back to your own schooling. What kinds of assessments do you recall? Did you do mostly tests or

5.
https://podcasts.apple.com/nz/podcast/is-it-time-to-ban-homework-trending-in-education-episode-176/id1150805729?i=1000434491636

quizzes? Did you do projects or speeches? What positive and negative memories do you have associated with various forms of assessment?

It is likely that when you think of assessment, you think of the grade you received at the end of an instructional unit. However, there are many kinds of assessment that serve different purposes. Table 6.1 outlines the differences among three key types of assessments: **diagnostic, formative,** and **summative**.

Table 6.1: Types of Assessments

Type	Timing/Scoring	Purpose	Formats
Diagnostic	• Before instruction • Scored, but never graded	• To learn what students know before instruction • Enables a teacher to know whether their instruction had an impact	• Brief quiz • Questioning • Free write
Formative	• During instruction • Given frequently • Scored, but not usually graded	• To show students and teachers what students have learned during instruction	• Do Now/ Bellringer • Kahoot!, Quiziz, or similar digital tool • Exit Ticket • Observation • Questioning • Student notes • Daily assignments • Quiz • Homework

Summative	• After instruction • Scored and graded	• To show what students have learned as a result of instruction • To enable teachers to consider their next steps in terms of planning and teaching future units	• Test • Quiz • Project • Portfolio • Essay • Research Paper • Performance assessment such as a speech

Assessment can also be formal or informal. **Formal assessments** measure systematically what students have learned, often at the end of a course or school year. Standardized tests are a common example of formal assessments. In Virginia, students take SOL assessments (related to, but not to be confused with the SOL standards) after completing certain grade levels and content areas. These high-stakes, formal assessments are designed to measure how well students have mastered the content listed in the standards. Formal assessments may be norm or criterion referenced. **Norm-referenced assessments** compare students' performance to other students. **Criterion-referenced assessments** compare students' performance to specific performance criteria. On the other hand, **informal assessments** tend to be local, non-standardized, and contextualized in daily classroom learning activities. Informal assessments are usually performance-based, meaning students

are performing, or demonstrating, their understanding through a specific task. Teachers design assessments and may evaluate them with grades, rubrics, checklists, or other scoring conventions.

You will learn more about how to design high-quality assessments as you continue your journey toward becoming a teacher. For now, remember that high-quality assessments should always relate to the standards you taught in that particular lesson. This is called **alignment**. In addition, good assessments ask the right questions. For example, consider which of the following is more important as a life-long literacy skill: matching a secondary character in a text to a short phrase about what that person did, or presenting a coherent argument that advances your position on a controversial topic? A useful tool for thinking about levels of questioning is **Bloom's Taxonomy** (Figure 6.3). Bloom's Taxonomy is a framework (Bloom et al., 1956) that divides levels of thinking into six categories, ranging from Knowledge to Evaluation. In response to some criticism, the taxonomy was later revised by a group of scholars, including Krathwohl (2002). The new version of the taxonomy included levels ranging from Remember to Create. It is important to understand that the framework is not meant to serve as a ladder that students must climb, where simpler knowledge and questions must always come first; rather, it is possible for students at all levels to consider information at all levels and move among them. This framework enables teachers to think about the kinds of questions they ask, and vary them as needed. Less experienced teachers tend to rely more upon lower-level questions that require basic recall skills, so be intentional about asking questions that challenge students to venture into other levels of the taxonomy as well.

Figure 6.3: Bloom's Taxonomy (Revised)

Bloom's Taxonomy

create — Produce new or original work
Design, assemble, construct, conjecture, develop, formulate, author, investigate

evaluate — Justify a stand or decision
appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, critique, weigh

analyze — Draw connections among ideas
differentiate, organize, relate, compare, contrast, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test

apply — Use information in new situations
execute, implement, solve, use, demonstrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch

understand — Explain ideas or concepts
classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate

remember — Recall facts and basic concepts
define, duplicate, list, memorize, repeat, state

Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching

Bloom's Revised Taxonomy gradually increases intellectual rigor of questions and learning tasks over six levels: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. The original version was similar, with its six levels including knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Designing and administering assessments that align with your standards and engage students at various levels of Bloom's Taxonomy is an important first step, but another key part of effective assessments is analyzing the data you collect. Analysis of data can occur on individual student, small group, or whole class levels. If many students demonstrate a similar misunderstanding on an assessment, that data indicates the teacher should re-teach that content to increase students' mastery. **Data-driven instruction** looks at the results of various assessments when considering next instructional steps. This analysis can be done by individual teachers or with colleagues in a PLC.

Assessment and grades are not the same. Grades can be a form of assessment, but not all assessments are graded. Assessments can include both quantitative and qualitative data. For example, observing students during an activity would not

be a grade, but it would give you important information about what a student does or does not understand. There are many practices that exist to support students during assessments, such as IEP accommodations, differentiated assessments, retakes, and no-zero policies. Grading involves assigning scores or labels–such as letter grades, rubric scores, complete or incomplete labels, or numeric values–to a student's performance on a task. Two forms of grading that you may have experienced in school include mastery grading and standards-based grading. **Mastery grading** means to structure courses in a way that allows students the time and flexibility to focus on mastering a standard rather than achieving a certain number or letter grade. **Standards-based grading** breaks down the subject matter into smaller "learning targets." Each target (often phrased as an "I can" statement) is a teachable concept that students should master by the end of the course. Throughout the term, student learning on each target is recorded (Common Goal Systems, 2021). For example, in a simple grade on a report card, it may say the student received an A, or a percentage, such as 96%. In a standards-based report card, each target is broken down, such as "I can solve number sentences that have brackets", with a score of 1-4; then, "I can find the sum of two-digit numbers", with a score of 1-4. In this scale, 1 indicates little or no mastery and 4 indicates advanced mastery. Teachers track student progress, give appropriate feedback, and adapt instruction to meet student needs. The video below offers more explanation of standards-based grading.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can

view them online here: https://viva.pressbooks.pub/
foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=166#oembed-1

The issue of grading is complex and often confusing for new teachers. There may be department-, school-, or district-wide rules about how many grades a teacher should have in a quarter or semester. Some parents and students are very focused on high grades, even if they don't reflect the student's actual level of understanding. There could also be policies about homework: is it graded or ungraded? Do students receive zeros for work that is not turned in, or is the lowest grade possible a 60? Most would argue that the primary purpose of the grading system is to clearly, accurately, consistently, and fairly communicate learning progress and achievement to students, families, postsecondary institutions, and prospective employers (Great Schools Partnerships, 2021); however, grading can sometimes interfere with assessments of students' actual understanding.

Critical Lens: Reducing Bias in Grading

In an ideal world, grades and assessments are fair and impartial. However, the reality is that bias often creeps into assessment systems. One simple work-around is to use rubrics with specific criteria. Quinn (2021) conducted an experiment in which he gave teachers two second grade writing samples, one presented as a Black student's work and one as a White student's. Teachers gave the White student higher scores *except* when they used a

grading rubric with specific criteria, which caused the pre-existing racial bias in the scores to disappear. Therefore, rubrics not only help students know up front what expectations are for an assignment, but also reduce opportunities for bias to impact grading.

Accountability

Accountability is a term often heard in education. It refers to holding teachers, schools, and districts responsible, or accountable, for increasing student learning and performance. Accountability carries both benefits and challenges. Of course, all educators and educational stakeholders share a common goal of advancing student learning. However, accountability can be hard to measure, and sometimes standardized test scores become the primary way to measure how effective a teacher is. This measurement can be unfair, especially when we consider the varying resources allocated to schools, the cultural bias of standardized testing, and the reality that some students are not good test takers.

Another aspect of accountability involves designing effective assessments within the classroom to measure growth in student performance. When analyzing assessments, effective teachers should consider:

- Are they fair? (Do they measure what you have taught to students? Have you asked the questions in appropriate and unconfusing ways?)
- Are they reliable? (Are the results consistent for each student and across groups of students? Would another teacher score or grade the assessment in

similar ways?)

- Are they valid? (Does it measure what is designed to measure?)

Reliability and **validity** can be easily confused. To illustrate these concepts, let's consider the example of a scale. If you stand on a scale, get off the scale, and get right back on the scale, you would expect to see the same number displayed. That's reliability. Just like a reliable scale, an assessment should produce consistent (reliable) results. As for validity, you would step on a scale if you wished to measure your weight. If you got on a scale and it computed your height or your shoe size, that scale would not be measuring what it was designed to measure. Similarly, a test should measure what it is designed to measure.
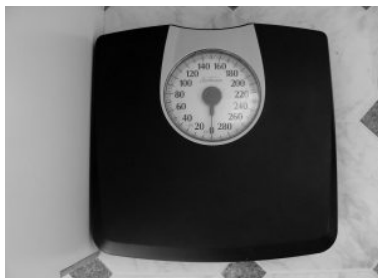
A scale is designed to measure weight (validity). Getting the same measurement repeatedly is reliability.

What can a teacher do to ensure that their test is fair, reliable, and valid? First, teachers should plan their assessments before they begin instruction, and design the instruction to prepare students for those assessments. Teachers should regularly meet with other teachers, parents, students, and experts to get input on their assessments and the resulting data. Finally, teachers should provide many opportunities for students to practice what they have learned and get feedback before any final, summative assessment of their knowledge and skills.

Critical Lens: Invalid Assessments

An example of an assessment that was not valid was given on a standardized state test in Massachusetts to fourth graders. The essay writing portion of the test asked students to describe what they did on a snow day. When disaggregated, test results demonstrated that students from Haiti (a large population in Boston in particular) performed poorly on this portion of the standardized test. Why? Because Haiti has consistently hot weather, Haitian students had never experienced snow days and were therefore unable to write anything for this prompt. Therefore, this portion of the test was not valid because it did not measure what it was supposed to measure for Haitian students: their writing ability.

Instruction

Now that we've laid the foundation for an effective lesson by discussion planning and assessment, we can turn to instruction. Instruction involves the actual act of teaching a lesson and is usually what comes to mind when you envision teaching. You likely have experienced both good and poor teaching in your life as a student. Teaching is not telling. To teach well requires careful planning and knowledge of the learners in the room. There are various tools, techniques, and strategies that help teachers organize their instruction more logically and deliver it appropriately.

What teaching strategies do you remember your teachers using that helped you the most as a learner? The least? How will your own experiences shape your future classroom instruction?

Teaching strategies are usually a series of steps that a teacher might have the students follow to encourage interaction or deeper thinking during instruction; strategies usually take from 5 to 15 minutes to enact during a lesson. An example of a strategy is "think-pair-share," where a student turns to a partner to discuss a question or prompt before sharing with a larger group. Other strategies include using graphic organizers or creating metaphors to help students see content in a new way. You will have entire classes about teaching strategies in different content areas, often called methods courses, as you continue in your journey toward becoming a teacher. For now, we'll investigate one very powerful, research-based strategy that can be used in all grades and content areas: Think-Pair-Share.

Think-Pair-Share is a particularly effective strategy because it allows students to share ideas with just one other person before being asked to share with the class. Students can have an opportunity to articulate their ideas prior to whole-class discussion. Extended Think-Pair-Share is a strategy used for English Learners. Instead of just an open-ended dialogue, students are prompted to use sentence frames, such as "I think the experiment showed us_____ because I saw _____happen." Or, "That character in the story is very

_____. I know this because he _____". In this way, the dialogue is more structured with English Learners practicing correct English syntax in the process. This video shows a math teacher using the Think-Pair-Share strategy during a lesson.

> One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
> https://viva.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=166#oembed-2

Critical Lens: UDL in Instruction

As you learned in Chapter 2, **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** works to reduce barriers to learners for all students before the barriers arise instead of after they become issues. Working strategies like Think-Pair-Share into your instruction helps all kinds of learners. For example, English Learners get to rehearse their speaking and listening skills in a low-stakes environment with a partner. Learn more about extending the Think-Pair-Share strategy to support ELs in your future classroom[6].

An instructional model is a longer series of steps that might provide structure to an entire 20- to 40-minute (or longer)

6.
https://education.wm.edu/centers/sli/events/ESL%20101/extending-think-pair-share.pdf

lesson. Just as an architect uses a blueprint to build a house, so too does a teacher use models as a framework to structure their lesson. Models can be deductive and inductive. In a **deductive model**, the teacher provides the rule first, and then students follow it. An **inductive model** will ask students to figure out the rules from a completed example. These are easy to get confused–one tip to keep them clear is that **direct instruction**, one of the most popular and effective models, is deductive (they both start with a "D"), and inductive models involve more inquiry (they both start with an "I"). You will choose if your lesson should be deductive or inductive based on your standards, objectives, and assessments. For example, science lessons often are natural fits for inductive models, since inquiry is intrinsic to scientific discovery. However, some material works better with a deductive model.

For example, let's imagine that Ms. Lopez is teaching students how to create an origami model of a butterfly as part of an interdisciplinary unit on art and geometry. She has several options, but one could involve showing students an origami butterfly and asking the students to figure out how to create it. This would be an inductive model of instruction. Some students may be able to do this, but most would likely be frustrated by the process. Another option could involve sharing the steps first, and guiding students through a process where they create an origami model with her feedback. This would be a deductive model of instruction, since students could follow a series of steps with the support of the teacher to produce the final product.

An inductive approach to teaching engages students in inquiry, allowing them to construct their own understanding of a topic rather than having the teacher "deposit" this knowledge into learners.

Deductive and inductive models both have their place in effective classroom practice, but sometimes there are misconceptions about both models. When people hear the phrase "direct instruction," many think it means "lecture," but they are not the same. A brief (5-15 minute) lecture might present new information, but this model is designed to guide students through a series of steps. If a teacher wishes to convey a list of dates, people, or events, the direct instruction model is not the best choice for that content. Examples of content that would work in a direct instruction model include how to write numbers in scientific notation, how to cite in MLA format, how to solve a quadratic equation, or how to write a limerick. There are many instructional models that suit various kinds of knowledge and learner needs (Estes, Mintz, & Gunter, 2015).

Table 6.2 compares a deductive and an inductive approach to a lesson with an objective of identifying the main components of a fairytale.

Table 6.2: Deductive and Inductive Approaches to a Fairytale Lesson Plan

Deductive Lesson Plan	Inductive Lesson Plan
• Teacher tells students the main components of a fairytale. • Teacher gives students an example of a fairytale. • Students identify those elements in the text.	• Teacher provides students with multiple examples of fairytales. • Students read texts and determine main components of a fairytale based on shared elements. • Teacher confirms/names main components of a fairytale.

When planning instructional activities, always keep them aligned with your standards, objectives, and assessments. While it can be tempting to turn to Teachers Pay Teachers, Pinterest, or TikTok for instructional inspiration, many of these "fun" activities do not result in meaningful learning. Always keep your instructional goals at the forefront of your selection of instructional activities.

Conclusion

Curriculum, planning, assessment, and instruction are all inextricably linked. Planning instruction is like a spider web, where all of the threads are connected in a carefully designed pattern. There are different kinds of spider webs, just as there are different ways to plan and deliver instruction and assessment.

This chapter outlines effective methods of instructional planning, but other methods exist in the world. You may have observed a teacher teach differently, perhaps more spontaneously, and enjoyed the experience. Keep in mind that all students are not the same. What worked for you or your family or friends is likely not the best or only way that teaching should be done. Teaching is challenging, complicated work, but with a solid understanding of curriculum, planning, assessment, and instruction, teachers are prepared to reach all students and move them to the next level of knowledge, skill, and understanding.

Chapter 7: Classroom Environment

> **Unlearning Box**
>
> *Joey comes to school in the morning, and one of his classmates makes a negative comment about his shirt. It's already been a rough morning–he accidentally overslept his alarm and his grandma was yelling at him to hurry up so he wouldn't be late–so he snaps at his classmate, "Oh shut up." His teacher overhears and says, "We don't use that language at school, so now your card is on yellow." He tries to explain: "But he–" but his teacher interrupts. "Oh, now you're talking back to me? That's a red card and now you have silent lunch."*
>
> Joey was having a rough morning, and the classroom environment didn't help him at all. In this example, you can see how some traditional approaches to behavior management–including card-flipping systems and silent

lunch–don't get to the root of the problem and actually can cause more harm, making them ineffective practices.

In this chapter, we will investigate the elements of classroom environment, how trauma impacts classroom environments, critical community stakeholders in classroom environments, and strategies for building a positive classroom environment.

Chapter Outline

1. Elements of Classroom Environment
2. Trauma in the Educational Setting
    1. Adverse Childhood Experiences
    2. ACES in the Classroom
    3. Bullying in the Classroom

3. Critical Community Stakeholders in Classroom Environments
    1. School Social Workers
    2. Families and the Community
        1. Family Involvement vs. Family Engagement
        2. Interrupting Bias and Stereotypes in School/Family Partnerships

4. Strategies for Building a Positive Classroom Environment
    1. Don't: Clip   Charts   and   Card-Flipping

Systems

2. Don't: Public Humiliation/Shaming

3. Don't: Isolation

4. Don't: Group Punishment

5. Don't: Assign Laps at Recess

6. Don't: Be A Negative Role Model

7. Do: Know Your Students

8. Do: Establish Positive Relationships with Families

9. Do: Routines

10. Do: Morning Meetings

11. Do: Classroom Responsibilities

12. Do: Individual Contracts

13. Do: Teach Social/Emotional Skills & Mindfulness

    1. Mindfulness in the Educational Setting

    2. Benefits of Mindfulness

5. Conclusion

Elements of Classroom Environment

In order for students to be successful at school, we must first carefully craft a supportive, learning-centered **classroom**

environment. There are many aspects to consider when designing your classroom environment. Some are within your direct control as an educator, and others are not.

Three things you can control as you craft your own classroom environment are physical set-up, overall atmosphere, and behavior management. Together, you may hear these elements referred to as "classroom management." The idea behind this term is that you have certain systems in your classroom that need to be "managed," or organized, in order to scaffold your students' success.

- Physical set-up: How are desks and tables arranged? Can all students easily see the Smartboard or dry erase board? Are there spaces for students to participate in whole-group, small-group, and individual learning? Are learning materials (including math manipulatives, paper, pencils, science notebooks, and books for reading) easily accessible and organized?

One component of classroom management is the physical arrangement of the room. Where will students keep their personal belongings? How will students access instructional materials throughout the day? A clear organizational system within the physical arrangement of the room is necessary.

- Overall atmosphere: Does the classroom feel structured, warm, and welcoming, or does it feel cold, sterile, and depersonalized? Does the teacher interact with students in positive ways that build

their trust, or does the teacher yell at students and talk down to them? Do students feel like this is a "home" for them and their learning, or do they count down the hours each day until they can leave?

- Behavior management: Are there clear expectations of acceptable behavior in the classroom? Are there clearly-established norms or policies, or is everyone unclear exactly what the "rules" are? Are there clear consequences or rewards for off- or on-task behavior? Are these rewards and consequences applied to all students equitably, or are some students in certain groups offered more rewards or more consequences compared with similar behaviors in their peers? Is there a communication system in place so educators, students, and families know these expectations and how the performance of their specific student measures up?

Some elements are beyond your control in your classroom, such as trauma students may have experienced previously, or what resources your families or community has access to or lacks. In addition, sometimes cultural differences manifest themselves as apparent "misbehavior." For example, if an educator comes from a culture where young people should look their elders in the eyes to show respect, they may accidentally label "misbehavior" in students who come from cultures where avoiding eye contact is actually a sign of respect. You may hear of these characteristics as part of a metaphorical "cultural iceberg" (Figure 7.1). On the surface, you may see cultural elements like cuisine, holidays, or ways of dressing; however, even more lies below this "visible" surface, such as body

language, concepts of fairness, and even expectations of what "good behavior" means.

Figure 7.1: The Cultural Iceberg Model
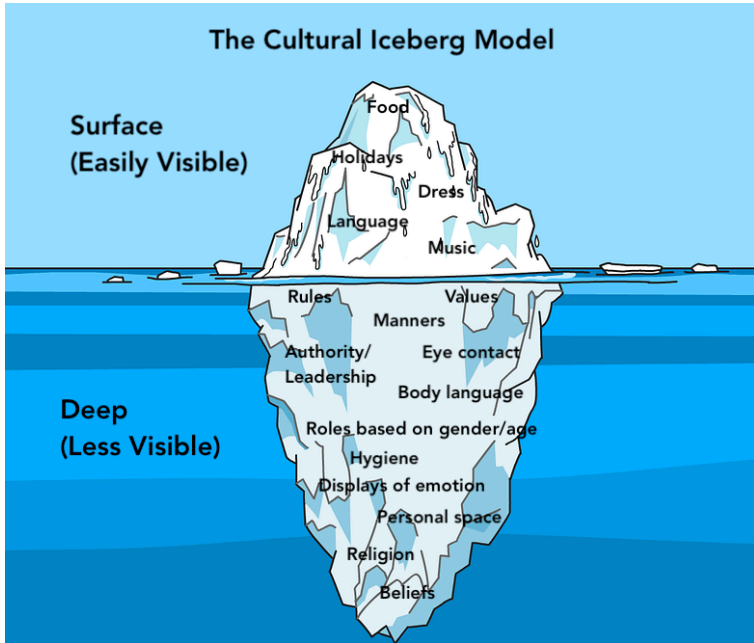
The Cultural Iceberg Model (Hall, 1976) acknowledges that there are some surface aspects of culture that are more easily visible, but other equally important aspects might be harder to see.

Trauma, resources, and culture, though not part of "classroom management," still impact the overall classroom environment, and therefore are important to be aware of. For this reason, we intentionally refer to "classroom environment" throughout this chapter because we feel it is more inclusive of the many contexts and systems that impact your students' learning success.

Critical Lens: Race and Classroom Management

While we like to think of our classrooms as fair, equitable places when it comes to classroom management, the reality is that this isn't always true. Teachers of all races are more likely to punish Black students (Smith, 2015), and Black girls are seven times more likely to be suspended than White girls (Finley, 2017). Sometimes, getting in trouble at school is an entry point into the juvenile detention system, leading to what is known as the "school-to-prison pipeline."[1] It is important for educators to be aware of these statistics and trends in order to proactively support all students' success within the classroom and beyond.

Trauma in the Educational Setting

When you think of a classroom environment, you may first think of a warm, welcoming environment where all students can thrive. The reality is that trauma can have a very real impact on students' participation in instruction and the classroom community. Sometimes this trauma happens outside of the classroom, like Adverse Childhood Experiences; sometimes this trauma happens inside the classroom, like bullying. Being aware of different ways our students experience trauma both within and beyond the classroom helps us create learning environments that meet the needs of our students.

1.
http://www.justicepolicy.org/news/8775

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Our students, like Joey, come to school each day wearing an invisible backpack, filled with all of the experiences they have had in life. Some of these invisible backpacks are light because our students' experiences thus far have been loving, safe, and predictable. Unfortunately, too many of our students wear heavy backpacks full of experiences that have been frightening, unpredictable, and unsafe. These experiences can be characterized as **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**. Childhood exposure to abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction may lead to increased social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties as well as decreased academic performance in the educational environment. Additionally, traditional means of interventions and support may not be successful in modifying behaviors for the long-term. Meeting the needs of our students impacted by adverse childhood experiences requires a shift in the educational setting to focus on the consistent development of healthy relationships between students and staff including the implementation of trauma-informed classrooms and interventions.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) is a term coined by Anda and Felitti (1998) following a two-year, retrospective study in partnership between Kaiser Permanente and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In this study, researchers examined the relationship between childhood experiences and the long-term impact on health. A questionnaire was developed utilizing pre-existing surveys and explored childhood exposures to certain experiences with the following categories of questions: psychological abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, exposure to substance abuse, mental illness, violent treatment of mother or stepmother, and

criminal behavior. These categories were chosen to build upon existing research on the long-term effects of single episode child abuse. Felitti et al. (1998) recognized that other areas of dysfunction can co-occur with abuse and believed failing to measure the presence of these conditions in combination with abuse may wrongly attribute outcomes to one incident as opposed to the cumulative impact of multiple experiences. The study also identified 10 health risk factors including "smoking, severe obesity, physical inactivity, depressed mood, suicide attempts, alcoholism, any drug abuse, parental drug abuse, a high lifetime number of sexual partners, and a history of having a sexually transmitted disease" (Felitti et al., 1998, p. 248). The original ACE study found correlations between the number of childhood exposures and the development of health problems in adulthood. It is also found that ACEs were common, with 52% of participants experiencing at least one adverse childhood experience, and co-occurring, with 40-74% experiencing at least two (Felitti et al., 1998). Due to the correlation with social, emotional, and cognitive impact, this research suggests that preventing exposure to ACEs in childhood could potentially reduce the long-term negative impact at a societal level.

Results of the original ACE study yielded a strong correlation between early experiences and later outcomes as an adult. However, it is critical to note that the study, although ground-breaking at the time, had several limitations. Felitti et al. (1998) indicated that due to the retrospective and self-report study design, the results should only be interpreted as demonstrating that a relationship may exist between the presence of adverse childhood experiences and later health concerns. They also recognized that other factors, such as the age at which exposure occurred, the intensity and frequency

of exposure, as well as the presence of protective factors may exist, impacting the relationship between the two, which were not included in the study (Anda, Porter & Brown, 2020). In fact Anda, Porter, and Brown (2020) released an article cautioning against the use of the ACEs questionnaire as a diagnostic tool. In this article, they state, "questions from the ACE study cannot fully assess the frequency, intensity, or chronicity of exposure to an ACE" (Anda, Porter, & Brown, 2020, p. 1). Furthermore, they indicate the ACE score should not be used to screen, diagnose, plan for treatment, or predict future outcomes of individuals as it was designed for research purposes at the larger level. This is essential to understand for our students in schools because identifying an ACE score does not give us a picture of the whole child, including their strengths and protective factors.

Critical Lens: Advocating for Appropriate Uses of ACEs

Anda, Porter, and Brown (2020) caution us against using the ACE questionnaire and resulting score to screen, diagnose, plan for treatment, or predict an individual's future outcomes. What should you do if you are in a professional development and the leader advocates for one of these misuses of the ACEs survey? One approach could be to talk to the session leader, or another trusted leader at your school, about your concerns and provide them a copy of Anda, Porter, and Brown's (2020) article. Most importantly, make sure you are not defining your own students by their ACEs score.

The original ACE study was conducted between 1995-1997, and there are several potentially important factors not considered, such as the presence and impact of social media and homelessness on our students today. Although limitations exist, the study has been replicated numerous times with similar findings. A meta-analysis conducted by Hughes et al. (2017) found moderate to strong associations between ACEs and health conditions such as smoking, alcohol and/or drug abuse, heart disease, and mental health issues among other conditions with long-term impact. A study conducted by Merksy, Topitzes and Reynolds (2013) looked at the relationship between ACEs and health outcomes for minority adults in the Chicago Longitudinal Study and found the outcomes confirmed the results in the original ACE study. Correlations among adverse childhood experiences, poor health, and medical concerns in adulthood continue to be found and explored with different subgroups of the population. The overall message continues to be clear: a relationship does exist between ACEs and later functioning as an adult; however, we must not assume that an ACEs score will predict how we should interact or work with students in our classrooms, as will be further discussed below.

Critical Lens: Understanding Replication

Above, we mentioned that studies on ACEs have been replicated with similar findings. Why is replication of a study so important? Replication helps confirm that the findings of an original study weren't just an accident. Before we extend information gathered in a study to large

groups of people, it helps to be sure that the findings are accurate and withstand repeated testing over time and in different contexts. Sometimes, studies don't have the same results when they are repeated, which leads to the original study or finding being retracted.

The relationship between early adverse experiences and later health outcomes can be impacted by a variety of factors, including **resiliency**, or the ability to bounce back from these experiences. The Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University studies resilience in children and explains what it is in the video In Brief: What is Resilience?

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://viva.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=75#oembed-1

Resilience can be fostered through protective factors including one strong, positive relationship with an adult. As educators, we have the opportunity to be a protective factor in our students' lives through our understanding of adverse experiences, their impact on our students, and developing and utilizing empathy in the classroom.

ACEs in the Classroom

Our students' invisible backpacks can be filled with

experiences that weigh them down and impact their ability to function successfully in the educational environment. These can be single-episode experiences, such as a house fire or car accident, or the more complex experience of developmental traumas. Developmental traumas can include ongoing physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, physical and emotional neglect, and household dysfunction. **Abuse** is defined by a caregiver's action, or failure to act, resulting in death, significant physical or emotional harm, or the exploitation of a child under the age of 18 (Child Welfare Information Gateway, n.d.). **Physical neglect** can include failure to consistently meet basic needs such as food and shelter, as well as providing a safe, clean environment. (Recall **Maslow's hierarchy of needs** that you learned about in Chapter 2: our physiological needs, such as food and shelter, must be met before we can do other things, like learning.) Failure to provide adequate medical and dental care are also forms of neglect, though families without resources are subject to these issues and, as a result, children experience a lack of adequate care, beyond their families' control. **Emotional neglect** involves the failure to meet or recognize a child's emotional needs. Household dysfunction is the most common adverse childhood experience in childhood as many of the characteristics are often co-occurring. This category includes a variety of factors impacting caregivers such as divorce or separation, alcohol and/or substance abuse, mental health issues, domestic violence, and incarceration (Felitti et al., 1998).

Stop and Investigate

In many areas, teachers are considered mandated reporters. That means that if you see evidence of abuse or neglect in your students, you are required to report it to Child Protective Services, or to a different individual at your school (like a guidance counselor) who serves as a liaison with Child Protective Services. Failure to do so can lead to the loss of your job. Research if teachers are considered mandated reporters in your local school district.

Cerebrum (Forebrain)

Cerebellum (Hindbrain)
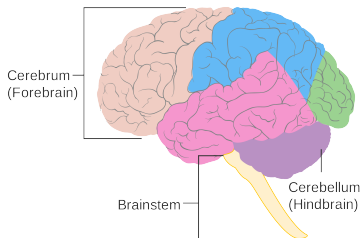
Brainstem

Trauma causes students to function in the brainstem, the part of the brain responsible for autonomic responses of fight, flight, and freeze. A child without trauma will use the prefrontal cortex, located in the cerebrum, more to regulate emotions, engage in healthy relationships, and complete other executive functioning tasks.

The dose-effect, or the frequency, severity, and duration of the experiences in our students' lives can heavily impact their behavioral, social, emotional, and academic success. Bessel van der Kolk (2014) states the impact of chronic traumatic stress, the repetitive exposure to an experience overloading the body's ability to cope, includes "pervasive biological and emotional dysregulation, failed or disrupted attachment, problems staying focused and on track, and a hugely deficient sense of

coherent personal identity and competence" (p. 168). In essence, our students who experience chronic, traumatic stress can struggle to tolerate frustration and control their emotions, struggle to engage in healthy peer and adult relationships, as well as struggle to engage in executive functioning tasks such as initiating, sustaining, and completing work. This primarily occurs because trauma impacts their ability to access the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain responsible for these functions. The prefrontal cortex is part of the cerebrum. Instead, students with higher exposure to adverse childhood experiences tend to function more frequently in the brainstem, the part of the brain responsible for the autonomic responses of fight, flight, and freeze.

Figure 7.2 highlights the differences in brain functioning for a child who experienced typical early development and one who experienced developmental trauma. The areas of the brain responsible for cognition are far less active in students with developmental trauma while the part of the brain responsible for survival (i.e. fight, flight, or freeze) becomes the default response system.

Figure 7.2: Brain Development and Trauma

Brain Development, No Trauma

| Cognition |
| Social/Emotional |
| Regulation |
| Survival |

Brain Development, With Trauma

| Cognition |
| Social/ Emotional |
| Regulation |
| Survival |

Adapted from Holt & Jordan, Ohio Department of Education
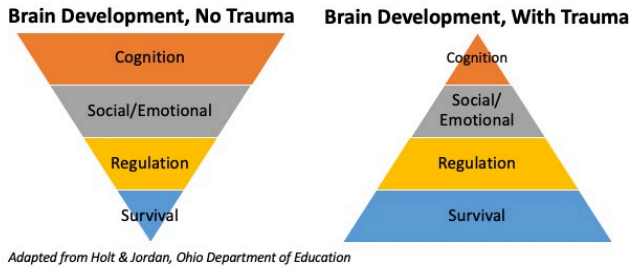
The presence of trauma influences how the brain develops. Without trauma present, most of the brain's functioning is devoted to cognitive tasks, with less of a focus on survival tasks. With trauma present, the inverse is true: most of the brain's functioning is devoted to survival tasks, with less bandwidth available for tasks related to social/emotional or cognitive load.

The fight, flight, or freeze response in the educational environment can inhibit our students' ability to access their education effectively. It can also be disruptive to the learning of their peers. Some examples of fight, flight, or freeze responses include hitting, kicking, screaming, elopement (running away), pulling away from adults, not moving, hiding under furniture, shutting down, and withdrawing. It is important for us to remember these behaviors are coping skills that developed in response to stress or trauma the student was unable to manage any other way. Additionally, our student is not doing this to *us*. They are responding to a situation, internal or external, in which there is no other accessible way to cope. These situations are commonly referred to as triggers and may not always be predictable or observable for students with developmental trauma. For this reason, it is vital we develop policies and practices within the classroom which are trauma-informed as

it will foster an environment in which empathy is present and healing can occur.

Bullying in the Classroom

While ACEs occur outside of the classroom setting, another element of trauma for students in school can be **bullying**. In 2017, about 20 percent of students ages 12–18 reported being bullied at school during the school year (U.S. Department of Justice, 2017). In order for behavior to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

1. An imbalance of power. Students who bully use their power–such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity–to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

2. Repetition of behavior. Bullying behaviors happen more than once and establish a pattern of behavior. One stand-alone hurtful comment or action is not the same as bullying.

There are generally three types of bullying: verbal bullying, social bullying, and physical bullying. Verbal bullying is saying mean things and includes behaviors such as teasing, name calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting and threatening to cause harm. Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes leaving someone out on purpose, telling other children not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors about someone, and/or

embarrassing someone in public. Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes behaviors such as kicking or hitting, spitting, tripping or pushing, taking or breaking someone's things, and/or making rude or mean hand gestures. In 2017, about 42 percent of students who reported being bullied at school indicated that the bullying was related to at least one of the following characteristics: physical appearance (30%), race (10%), gender (8%), disability (7%), ethnicity (7%), religion (5%), and sexual orientation (4%) (U.S. Department of Justice, 2017).

Pause and Ponder

What kinds of bullying have you seen/experienced/been a part of? How did this make you feel? Were you ever a bystander and did not intervene? What did that feel like for you?

Cyberbullying, also referred to as electronic bullying, is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers and tablets, as well as communication tools such as social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Unlike bullying, cyberbullying can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and reach a student even when they are alone. It can happen any time of day or night. Cyberbullying messages can be posted anonymously and distributed quickly to a wide audience. It can be difficult and sometimes impossible to trace the source. Deleting inappropriate or harassing messages, texts, and pictures

In our increasingly technological world, instances of cyberbullying are becoming more common. Cyberbullying is particularly hard to control because it can happen anytime, anywhere, and evidence of the original creator of hurtful content can be deleted or obscured.

can be extremely difficult after they have been posted or sent.

Bullying and cyberbullying have significant implications when it comes to trauma and our students' school and life experiences. Children who are cyberbullied or bullied in school are more likely to use drugs and alcohol, skip school, be unwilling to attend school, receive poor grades, have lower self-esteem and more health problems. There can also be the most devastating of consequences: a child committing suicide.

As an educator, you are in a position to prevent bullying or intervene when it happens. Later in this chapter, we will discuss how to create a positive classroom environment for students in order to mitigate the chances of bullying in school and beyond.

Stop and Investigate

Explore StopBullying.gov or one of the bullying resources from Harvard's Making Caring Common project[2]. What did you find, and how could this information help you as you create a classroom environment that actively interrupts bullying?

Critical Community Stakeholders in Classroom Environments

As teachers, we are not expected to create positive classroom environments all by ourselves. Community stakeholders, including school social workers and families, also play a critical role.

School Social Workers

With their unique training, perspective, and expertise, **school social workers** can be valuable assets in school communities. Introduced to the education system in 1906, "visiting teachers" (as they were then called) were tasked with gathering the histories of students to assist in the evaluation process, and then delivering interventions based on those results. Community groups saw a need to connect the home and school environments in order for under-resourced students to access education (Constable, 2016). In 1913, the first "visiting teachers"

2.

https://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/resources-for-educators/bullying-resource-list

were hired by a school district in Rochester, New York. At that time, the Rochester Board of Education noted that "in the child's environment outside the school there are forces that often thwart the school in its endeavors to educate" (p. 14). This event marked the first time schools began to focus on the whole child.

Initially, the role of school social workers focused on acting as the liaison between home and school, with an understanding of environmental factors impacting student engagement and achievement. Over time, however, the role shifted from an environmental focus to one in which interventions were child-specific and related to mental health. The role of school social workers continued to adapt and change through the years to meet the educational needs of vulnerable populations and to focus on ensuring that students were able to equitably access their education. As awareness increased of the impact of the environment on a person's development, the role of school social workers shifted again: they began to look not just at a student, but how that student was shaped and existed within multiple communities and systems, such as **Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory** that you learned about in Chapter 2.

Today, school social workers are considered to be "trained mental health professionals who can assist with mental health concerns, behavioral concerns, positive behavioral support, academic, and classroom support, consultation with teachers, parents, and administrators as well as provide individual and group counseling/therapy" (School Social Work Association of America, n.d.). Although school social workers may not be utilized in all states or school districts, the benefits for those that do are clear. As members of school teams, they are able to assist at the building level as well as classroom, group,

and individual levels to meet the social-emotional needs of both students and staff. Their commitment to bridging the gap between home and school can facilitate stronger engagement and relationships with caregivers in the academic lives of their children. Additionally, school social workers are educated in understanding the impact of systemic experiences and structures on the development of children and families. This knowledge is important in today's schools as we learn more about the effects of adverse experiences on our students' abilities to fully benefit from their education.

School social workers can provide prevention and intervention services at the building level, including developing and implementing social-emotional curricula aimed at improving emotional intelligence and developing a sense of belonging within the school setting. Support can be provided at the classroom level as well to provide more targeted interventions based on the need of small groups. Teachers can work with school social workers to discuss specific student and family concerns, gain ideas for social-emotional interventions, and to monitor the progress of students' behavior. School social workers can also assist with prevention programs, such as those for reducing student drop-out or suicides, as well as targeting specific populations, such as students experiencing homelessness, who may need additional support.

THE ROLE OF A SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

School Social Workers are the link between school and community in providing services to students, families and school personnel to promote and support students' academic and social success.

SERVICES TO SCHOOL PERSONNEL
- Assessing students with mental health concerns.
- Developing staff in-service training programs.
- Assisting teachers with classroom management.

SERVICES TO STUDENTS
- Providing crisis intervention.
- Develop intervention strategies to increase academic success.
- Help conflict resolution and anger management.
- Helping children develop social-emotional skills.

SERVICES TO PARENTS/FAMILIES
- Interview the family to assess problems affecting the child's education.
- Work with parents to facilitate support in their children's school adjustment.
- Alleviate family stress for the child to function more effectively in school.

SERVICES TO DISTRICTS
- Develop alternative programs for drop-outs, truants, delinquents, etc.
- Identify and report child abuse and neglect
- Providing prevention programs for school violence, substance abuse, & teen pregnancy.
- Helping districts assess school climate and develop school safety plans.

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY LIAISON
- Obtain and coordinate community resources to meet students' needs.
- Helping school districts receive adequate support from social and mental health agencies.
- Coordinate systems of care to provide wrap-around services.

School Social Work Association of America

SSWAA.ORG

At the family level, school social workers can connect families with community resources to increase stability, safety, and health within the community. School social workers can meet with families in their homes to better understand any specific concerns or needs the family may have and determine the appropriate interventions. Robert Constable (2016) stated, "The basic focus of the school social worker is the constellation of teacher, parent, and child. The social worker must be able to relate to and work with all aspects of the child's situation, but the basic skill underlying all of this is assessment, a systematic way of understanding and communicating what is happening and what is possible" (p. 6). Operating from a strengths-based perspective, school social workers can engage with families in a nonjudgmental manner and ensure that all parties have a common understanding and goal.

Finally, the role of school social workers is heavily focused on ensuring the social-emotional health and needs of students are supported. Direct services provided can include individual

and group counseling, as well as crisis response, such as conducting risk assessments for students experiencing suicidal ideation. Social workers can provide clinical intervention in a variety of school-related mental health concerns including anxiety, depression, coping skills, and emotional regulation. Services can also be provided to address social skills deficits including assisting students in understanding their social environment. The School Social Work Association of America (n.d.) provides a visual representation of The Role of School Social Workers.

School social workers can be valuable members of a comprehensive team within school communities. As an educator, it is important to remember social workers are bound by a professional Code of Ethics which emphasizes the importance of confidentiality as well as the right to self-determination (National Association of Social Workers, n.d.). As such, social workers will share confidential information with other school staff when it is necessary to meet the needs of the students in the educational environment. They may limit what information is shared to maintain confidentiality. Additionally, social workers may need to advocate for a student's right to self-determination, or the right to have a voice regarding if and how services occur. The benefits of direct services to students increase significantly when the student is able to participate in the decision to engage in the setting of goals. Working in collaboration with social workers can ensure all parties have a common goal: meeting the needs of students.

Families and The Community

Pause & Ponder

Imagine you hear a teacher saying to another teacher in the hallway, "Families don't come to conferences because they just don't care about their kids." How would hearing that statement make you feel as a teacher? A student? A family member?

This statement in the box above is one you may have already heard from teachers talking about their students' families, or is one you will likely hear sometime during your teaching career. This statement conveys a deficit view of families by positioning families as "uncaring," while the reality is likely quite different. Families might be unable to attend a conference due to various challenges with scheduling, transportation, childcare, or their own negative experiences in school. This statement also reveals misunderstandings of the differences between family involvement versus family engagement, two terms that are often used interchangeably but actually are distinct concepts.

Family Involvement vs. Family Engagement

Family involvement tends to be more school-oriented, whereas family engagement tends to be more family-oriented. Ferlazzo (2011) described **family involvement** as the school holding the expectations for family participation and telling families what they need to do. In other words, the school does things "to" or "for" families and families respond. For example,

consider when it is time for teacher conferences: the school sends out a schedule, and the expectation is that families will come to school at the appointed time. The goal for these meetings is often a one-sided transition of information, where the teacher reports back to the family how the student is performing in class, while expecting the family to be somewhat passive acceptors of this information.

Family engagement, on the other hand, indicates working "with" families: sharing responsibility and working together to support children's learning. In this case, when it is time for teacher conferences, the teachers are encouraged to work with families and find ways to communicate with all of them. While some families will come to school at the scheduled time, some might schedule a phone call when they are on break from work, while others might prefer to do FaceTime because they want to see the teacher. Teachers will also engage family members as contributors, asking them what they have seen at home, or what their celebrations, goals, or concerns are for their child's learning.

Schools cannot exist without families, and therefore there is a great need for partnerships between schools and families. Families can contribute to school communities in a variety of ways, even well beyond volunteering in classrooms or contributing to required fundraisers. Families can use their firsthand knowledge of the local community to help connect teachers with community agencies or experts for a field trip or classroom visits. All students bring a wealth of background experiences–often built with their families–to the classroom each day, which can help students connect to and understand learning goals and the world around them. Remember that while there are some more visible, traditional forms of support (like volunteering or joining the PTA), families partner with

educators in limitless ways to support a common goal: their child's learning and growth.

> ### Critical Lens: Cultural Norms for Family Engagement
>
> Different cultures have different norms for how families should be involved in their child's education. Some cultures believe that educators are the trained experts and leave their child's learning fully up to the school as a sign of respect for the teacher's position. Some cultures believe that families and teachers are co-educators. Be careful not to judge family engagement based on your own cultural background!

Building strong partnerships between schools and families also requires a reconfiguration of the traditional view of "family." Be careful not to assume that a student's family consists of a mother and father. Families might consist of same-sex parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, step-parents, adopted parents, foster parents, older siblings, and more. For this reason, using the word "family" instead of "parents" can be more inclusive. In addition, we need to view communities as part of families, and schools can engage with their community "families" in creative ways. For example, some schools have "grandmas." These community grandmas come into the classroom a few days a week to tell stories about their lives and listen to students share their own stories. This partnership demonstrates a beautiful way to build meaningful relationships between the school and community.

Pause and Ponder

Think back to your own school experience. How was your family invited to be a part of a school/family partnership? Were there activities you looked forward to or dreaded your family being a part of at school? What are some ways you could envision building true family/community partnerships in your future classroom?

Interrupting Bias and Stereotypes in School/Family Partnerships

Chimamanda Adichie (2009) warns us about stereotypes in her TED Talk, The Danger of a Single Story. The issue with stereotypes, she states, is that they are partial and provide one lens: "they make one story the only story." Viewing children and families through one lens, a deficit lens, is harmful and imposes limits on what they can accomplish. This "single story" is especially likely to harm children and families of color.

 One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://viva.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=75#oembed-2

Sometimes, single stories about our families–especially families and communities of color–can lead to stereotypes and

assumptions that hurt our families and weaken school/family partnerships. Let's look at two fairly common stereotypes.

One common stereotype is that families do not come to school because they do not care. In reality, there are many possible reasons why families do not come to school. Edwards (2016) offers that families of color may have had unpleasant experiences in schools themselves and are not willing to succumb to the "ghosts" of school again. As children they were not welcome or well-treated in school and cannot bring themselves to enter the buildings again; schools were traumatic places.

Another common stereotype is that families have nothing to offer their children or school. In reality, families are their children's first teachers. Deficit views of families negate the fact that prior to coming to school, children have learned their family's language and culture by being immersed in them. Children learn their families' and communities' ways of knowing and being by interacting and engaging with community members and families.

To build stronger school/family partnerships. schools can reframe the traditional reliance upon family involvement instead of family engagement. The norm for involving families is that the school dictates the needs and reaches out to families, telling them the needs. Instead, reframing this partnership to one of family engagement invites collaboration and shifts from a deficit orientation to a strengths-based perspective. Families have a lot to offer in an educator's work toward building positive classroom environments, and schools need to take note of the resources available in their community and extend invitations for meaningful work.

Strategies for Building a Positive Classroom Environment

The development of a strong sense of community and belonging in the classroom is essential to building relationships that may serve as protective factors for our students. Implementation of practices and approaches built around **empathy**, the ability to recognize and feel the emotions of others, has the ability to positively impact all students, but is critical to the success of students who have experienced adversity.

At times, it is difficult to separate our empathy with students from our sympathy for students. Some of our students experience such difficult lives and our sympathy leads us to expect less of them. Interacting with students from a place of sympathy does not build our connections with them and does not let them know we believe in them. Table 7.1 shows differences in statements focused on empathy versus sympathy.

Table 7.1: Statements Focused on Empathy vs. Sympathy

Empathy	Sympathy
I can see you are frustrated right now. How can I help you?	I'm sorry you're frustrated, but you need to get back to work.
Wow, you had a really hard morning. When I have a hard morning, sometimes I need a few minutes before I'm ready to work. Would you like some time before you get started?	Wow, what a horrible morning. You don't have to do this assignment.
I noticed you aren't with your friends like usual. Is there anything you want to talk about?	Why weren't you with your friends today?
Can you tell me how you are feeling right now?	What's wrong?

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://viva.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=75#oembed-3

It is our job as educators to create an environment that models empathy for students to facilitate trust and security. Bob Sornson (2014) states, "By helping children learn empathy, we raise the odds they will have strong positive social relationships, truly care for others, and be able to set appropriate limits in their own lives without using angry behaviors or words" (para. 2). Traditional elements of a classroom environment, including structured, predictable routines and morning meetings, can be expanded with the intention to increase opportunities for empathy on a daily

basis. However, some traditional models of classroom management include practices that interfere with the development of healthy connections between teachers and our students. Building connections with students can be challenging at times and take effort and repeated attempts with students who have experienced adversity; furthermore, these relationships can be damaged quickly if we use practices that do not align with building empathy.

Table 7.2 provides an overview of some management practices to avoid and to use, though you will get much more in-depth information on classroom management strategies as you continue in your pathway as a preservice teacher.

Table 7.2: Classroom Management Practices

Classroom Management Practices to Avoid	Classroom Management Practices to Use

• Clip charts and card-flipping systems
• Public humiliation/shaming
• Isolation
• Group punishment
• Assigning laps at recess
• Being a negative role model
	• Know your students
	• Establish positive connections with families
	• Routines
	  ○ Schedules (with visual and verbal reminders)
	  ○ Expectations and rehearsals of transition times
	• Morning meetings
	• Classroom responsibilities
	• Individual contracts
	• Explicit teaching of social/emotional skills (including mindfulness)

Stop & Reflect

Stop & Reflect: What do you recall about some of your own experiences with classroom management as a student? Were these positive or negative memories? Why?

DON'T: Clip Charts and Card-Flipping Systems

Clip charts and card systems are one genre of behavior management strategies that are punitive and shaming in nature. The idea behind these systems is that when students break a rule or demonstrate an established misbehavior, they will be asked to "move their clip" (often lower down a chart of behavioral levels) or "flip a card" (often from green to yellow to red). Each clip or card level carries its own consequences. These systems are publicly shaming because students

Clip charts and card-flipping systems, which often are based on a variant of a "stoplight model"–green indicating on-task behavior, yellow indicating a warning for misbehavior, and red indicating a repeated infraction–are punitive and shaming in nature and should be avoided in the classroom.

have to move their clip or flip their card in front of their peers, often after a teacher provides a verbal reprimand that the entire class hears. Also, any member of the classroom community–or even a visitor who steps into the classroom–can see at a glance how every child in the room is doing at any given moment. Using clip charts may activate a student's fight, flight, or freeze response, indicating the student no longer feels safe in the environment.

DON'T: Public Humiliation/Shaming

It is never acceptable to yell at a student. It is even less

acceptable to do it in a public environment. Frustration as a teacher is expected. We are the adults, however, and we need to remain calm. Students look to us to keep them safe, to protect them from those who may be shaming them for being "different" and humiliating them in front of their peers. We do not want to add to that shame and humiliation. Other forms of public humiliation and shaming can include visible punishments like writing a student's name on the board or asking a student to stay in or away from a certain part of the classroom (i.e., standing in a corner or not joining the group on the carpet). (Do note that sometimes students need space to decompress and regulate their emotions, and this can be done without publicly humiliating the student.)

DON'T: Isolation

Additional practices that can activate this response include isolating students who are experiencing strong emotions. As adults, we feel a range of emotions throughout the day. Our students can experience this same range of emotions. If our classrooms are not based on empathy and understanding, we may exacerbate the situation by sending the student out of the room or to a calm-down space as a punitive response to their emotion. An empathetic response validates the student's feelings and may need to set a limit or consequence if safety is a concern.

DON'T: Group Punishment

Group punishment occurs when one student or a small group of students demonstrate off-task behavior and consequences are applied for all the students in the class, whether or not they

participated in this off-task behavior. You might have heard statements like, "If anyone talks during snack time, no one gets to go outside for recess," or "If any student shouts out during this activity, no one gets added game time." These kinds of punishments are not realistic or reasonable. Some students who struggle with self-regulation skills become the scapegoat for "ruining it" for all the students in the class, which can lead to resentment from their peers and exclusion from their peer group.

DON'T: Assign Laps at Recess

A common consequence for misbehavior or noncompliance with classroom policies (such as completing homework) is asking the student to walk laps at recess. This practice is not productive for several reasons. First, it associates exercise with punishment. Students need to have positive associations with exercise in order to maintain their own physical health; if walking is something one only does when they are in trouble, they are less likely to continue this healthy behavior for their own well-being. Secondly, it takes away the unstructured break time from the students who often need it most. Students who need constant redirection for socializing or being on the move during class, for example, would definitely benefit from ample opportunities to socialize and move at recess!

DON'T: Be a Negative Role Model

Role modeling is critical in the development of empathy. Unfortunately, we are not perfect and, at times, we may model inappropriate behaviors. For example, a student may have something that does not belong to them and, out of frustration,

we go over and grab it from the student. Later that day, the same student wants something someone else has and goes over and grabs it from them. Our typical response would be some sort of consequence, leaving the student feeling as if "it isn't fair." In reality, we modeled the behavior and provided a consequence to the student for using an adult-modeled behavior. These moments will happen and are opportunities for us to acknowledge our behavior and repair the relationship with the student. A response oriented toward repairing the relationship may sound like this: "Joey, I'm sorry. Earlier I grabbed something from your hands. When you did the same thing to Raúl, I gave you a consequence. I need help remembering to do the right thing sometimes too. Do you think you could help me?" This response models for Joey that even adults make mistakes and how to recover and repair when they occur.

The practices listed above–including clip charts, isolating students when strong emotions come up, and making missteps in our own reactions as teachers–can trigger a student's automatic fear response. A student in a fight, flight, or freeze state struggles to learn and is no longer thinking through their choices. As educators, and models of empathy in the classroom, we need to minimize the use of these practices and replace them with those that build our students' emotional intelligence.

DO: Know Your Students

Positive relationships that affirm students' membership in the classroom community are a foundation of a welcoming classroom environment; therefore, educators need to develop individual relationships with their students as much as possible. Get to know your students as individuals through

activities like beginning-of-the-year "getting to know you" surveys, sitting with your students during lunch, chatting during less structured time like breaks or recess, and asking families for their tips (after all, families have known our students for far longer!). Attend sporting events, performances, and other activities that students invite you to. Use the information you gather to work personalized references into classroom instruction, but make sure you do so equitably.

At the same time, remember that your job is not to be a student's friend. You are still the professional adult, and you must keep this professional boundary in mind. The age of your students also plays a role. A kindergarten teacher being invited to a child's birthday party is quite different from a high schooler inviting a teacher to a birthday party.

Critical Lens: Inclusive Practice

As you develop getting-to-know-you surveys or beginning-of-the-year activities, it is important to make sure all students will be able to answer the questions. Avoid questions that may be impacted by privilege such as those related to vacations or material items.

DO: Establish Positive Relationships with Families

From the very beginning of the school year, reach out to families in a variety of ways–phone calls, notes, messages through your school's learning management system–to establish positive relationships. Provide specific, positive feedback on what you are seeing their child accomplishing in

the classroom to demonstrate to families that you know their child as an individual. Some teachers like to use "surprise" notes home that highlight positive achievements and accomplishments for individual students for families to celebrate. (Be sure to send these notes home for all children–you may wish to keep track to make sure you are equitably distributing these positive notes.) While the beginning of the school year can be hectic, investing time up front in building positive relationships means that when you need more support later if an issue arises, you'll have a partnership already built with the family.

Also, keep in mind that educators and families share a common goal: wanting what is best for their children. Sometimes educators and families may have different perspectives on how to get to that same outcome. Remembering that families and educators are partners in this common goal can help when conflicts do arise. This Edutopia article[3] shares some communication strategies to try with families at the beginning of the year.

DO: Routines

As human beings, we feel safe when we know what to expect. Routines help our students know what to expect. Established and predictable routines can include visual and verbal reminders for the flow of a typical day in the classroom, such as a posted schedule with the times and activities listed. These

3.
https://www.edutopia.org/article/teacher-parent-communication-strategies-start-year-right?fbclid=IwAR3l1jG8xYncn3QzgS96wj1FOD4CoqLLXMYmQ3lJZk7S5QXD6Xuj1iUdey0

routines are also explained and practiced with the students frequently at the start of the school year. Routines can include special greetings, expectations for various parts of the day like arrival and departure, and procedures for accessing materials like writing utensils during instruction. Predictable routines create a feeling of safety and security for students as they can reasonably expect to know what is coming next. Preparing students repeatedly, ahead of time, for any changes in the routine also facilitates trust within the environment and can act as a preventative measure for those who experience dysregulation related to change.

DO: Morning Meetings

One daily routine that can build empathy and community is a morning meeting. These classroom community gatherings can occur on a classroom carpet or at their desks and typically include both academic and social-emotional activities. For example, students may engage in special morning greetings with their peers and the teacher can talk about the plans for the day. Morning meetings are a fantastic opportunity to build in activities which increase a sense of belonging and community in the classroom. Allowing students to openly express how they feel in the classroom and about the environment helps to give them a voice and feel like they are a valued member of the group. At the secondary level, educators can allot a few minutes at the beginning of each class to complete a brief check-in with their students. This can include asking non-threatening questions or providing students the opportunity to share on a rotating basis. At times, the secondary level is overlooked when conversations about building emotional intelligence are discussed. These students are undergoing

significant developmental changes and also need the opportunity to be heard and have a sense of belonging. Minor modifications to daily interactions with students build in opportunities for empathy and social-emotional development. This increases their exposure to healthy, prosocial skills which can increase their ability to function in healthy relationships.

DO: Classroom Responsibilities

Classroom responsibilities, sometimes referred to as classroom jobs, provide students with ownership of the classroom environment. Common elementary classroom responsibilities include line leader, caboose, and paper passer. Students can also be "librarians" responsible for maintaining and organizing books in the classroom. Dr. Clayton also had what she called a "S.I.C.," which stood for "student in charge." This student would "take over" when Dr. Clayton was working with a small group, such as a reading group. Students would go to them to ask to use the bathroom, for example. (Side note: be sure the answer that they give is "yes"!) Responsibilities can continue into middle school and high school. Of course, a high school student is not interested in being the line leader, but they can be the teacher's assistant for the day, such as running errands to the front office. Just be sure that these responsibilities rotate among students so that no favoritism is interpreted.

DO: Individual Contracts

Sometimes, certain students need more specific structures and rules that everyone in the class doesn't need. Instead of creating a "one-size-fits-all" behavioral management system that actually does not meet the needs of all of your students, consider writing individual behavior contracts. These contracts should have specific, observable goals

This Angry Birds-themed behavior chart represents an individual contract between a student and the teacher to focus on a specific behavior in concrete ways.

with clear time parameters, along with straightforward, tangible outcomes. For example, in Dr. Wells's kindergarten class, she had one student who was really struggling with self-regulation skills, but she also knew he was obsessed with Angry Birds. She created an Angry Birds behavior chart with this student only. After she chose a target behavior (such as listening and following directions the first time they are given, an important safety skill), she would establish criteria to set the student up for demonstrating the target behavior. At first, the goal might be that the student follows 1 out of 10 directions in one hour. Despite the nine times the student didn't follow directions, the student still earns the reward–in this case, playing a round of Angry Birds on the classroom tablet for five minutes–because they need to experience success first. Then, as this goal becomes easier, increase the challenge: now, the student needs to keep 5 out of 10 Angry Birds on his chart (signifying he listened 5 out of 10 times) in an hour. Next,

expand the time slot. Perhaps the student has to keep 5 out of 10 birds for the whole morning, and then reset for the afternoon with the same expectations. If your behavior contract uses a chart like this one, remember to keep it private. Instead of taping it to the board for the entire class to see, consider keeping it on a clipboard and discretely marking on it, and then privately conferring with the student out of earshot of peers when the established time period has ended.

When making individual contracts, remember it is important to know your students, their needs, and their interests. While some students may have multiple areas for growth–shouting out and following directions the first time when given, for example–pick the one area you need to see growth in first for the student to feel safe and trusted. Also, be aware that individual contracts won't fix everything immediately: they take time, patience, and consistency.

DO: Teach Social/Emotional Skills & Mindfulness

The implementation of social-emotional learning activities into the curriculum can assist in the development of self-regulation and conflict resolution skills. If students are taught to recognize and regulate their own emotional states, they will be better able to recognize the states of others, remain in the thinking part of the brain and more likely to resolve conflicts in a way that is mutually beneficial. Skills such as using a regulation space, a place in the classroom where students can go when they need a break or need to regulate their emotions, must be taught repeatedly and should be taught to the whole class. This space should include sensory items such as stress balls, fidget sticks, and putty, as well as self-regulation tools such as social stories, coloring pages, deep breathing tools, and visual reminders for

how to use the area. Normalizing the use of this space removes any stigma or punishment associated with experiencing strong emotions and makes the use of regulation skills a positive experience for students. Additionally, educators should role model the use of regulation skills to the class throughout the day. For example, using statements such as "Class, I am feeling frustrated right now. I can feel myself starting to get warm and my heart is going faster. I'm going to use Figure 8 Breathing to calm down."

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://viva.pressbooks.pub/
foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=75#oembed-4

Mindfulness in the Educational Setting

The ability to self-regulate is an important developmental milestone for all students and requires co-regulation from a loving, consistent adult to develop in early childhood. The use of mindfulness-based activities in schools is a research-based strategy with benefits for students, teachers, and the classroom community as a whole. Strategies can include external and internal focuses as well as utilize the five senses to help students remain rooted in the present moment. Activities can be embedded into the structure of the daily classroom routine and increase the sense of calm across the environment. Mindfulness strategies can be modified and adapted to meet the needs of a variety of students. Utilizing these skills regularly in

the classroom is a social-emotional strategy that can benefit all students regardless of their early life experiences.

Jon Kabat-Zinn (2003), an expert in mindfulness, defines it as "the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment" (p. 145). Simply put, it is intentionally noticing our internal and external environments without judging what we find. This intentional awareness requires consistent training and practice in order to benefit. Mindfulness can include a variety of activities based around movement, touch, breathing, and the senses as well as the use of reflection. Kabat-Zinn goes on to say, "We are all mindful to one degree or another, moment by moment. It is an inherent human capacity" (p. 145-146). Some mindful techniques that are commonly engaged in include taking a deep breath and noticing the taste of a food in your mouth. Additional training and practice can help develop already existing strategies and add new ones to increase the benefits to our wellbeing. Most research on the benefits of mindfulness-based practices has been conducted with adults and modifications are necessary to increase the accessibility for children.

Students may need teaching practices to be adapted by using shorter activities, using more activities with movement (such as yoga), and using props or visual aides to assist them in focusing on specific sensations. Small things such as the use of a stuffed animal can be beneficial to teaching deep breathing by allowing the student to put it on their stomach and instructing them to make it go up and down using their breath. A strategy to use mindfulness to focus on sensations is the use of a mint to facilitate students' ability to engage. Teachers can guide this practice by inviting students to use their senses to explore the

mint. Questions that can be asked include: What color is the mint? Is there a pattern? What does the mint smell like? What does the mint feel like on your tongue? What does it taste like? How does the texture or size of the mint change over time? What sound does the mint make when you bite it? Having students focus on an object and use their senses to explore it, keeps students grounded in the present moment which is the essence of mindfulness practice. It is important to remember students may need concrete activities to be able to access the practices effectively. Additionally, students should be given the option to keep their eyes open during any mindfulness activity to promote safety and trust.

Mindfulness strategies can be simple activities which can be easily implemented in the daily routines of a classroom. It is important to consider the developmental age of our students as well as what activities might be appropriate on a given day. Implementation of practices should begin with short activities and increase as students are able to successfully engage in the strategies. Some activities may require props to implement and others can be done using visual or auditory guides from the internet. Waterford.org provides a list of 51 Mindful Exercises for Kids in the Classroom that can be accessed and used with a variety of age groups. Activities for secondary students are available from PositivePsychology.com under 25 Mindfulness Activities for Children and Teens. Remember, implementing mindfulness strategies in the classroom can cost nothing, other than the commitment to practicing intentionally and protecting time within the day for our classroom community.

Pause & Ponder

What helps you be calm or mindful? Think about how you might stay calm or be mindful in your own teaching practice. Similarly, what might you do in your classroom to help your students be calm or mindful?

Benefits of Mindfulness

The regular and consistent use of mindfulness strategies has been found to be beneficial for the whole person, including both physical and mental well-being. Hofmann et al. (2010) reviewed 39 studies on the impact of mindfulness-based therapy on a variety of mental health and physical diagnoses. Results of the meta-analysis revealed improvement in symptoms of anxiety and depression, including those that may be related to an underlying medical condition. Additionally, the benefits of mindfulness were not found to be relative to specific diagnoses because of the impact on general wellbeing. Within the school system, mindfulness has also been proven to positively impact a variety of areas for students, including attention, emotional regulation, compassion, and reduction of stress and anxiety (Mindful Schools, n.d.). The consistent use of these strategies also benefits teachers and improves teacher-student relationships (Flook et al., 2013).

Zelazo and Lyons (2012) report, "Mindfulness training disrupts the automatic elicitation of emotional responses, resulting in greater calmness and emotional stability" (p. 157-158). Regular practice also helps students to identify what they are feeling in a safe way before they act, leading to

increased benefits in other areas of their functioning. Student reflection also allows students to identify their automatic thoughts and change their emotional response, thus gaining control over their behaviors.

The benefits of stronger emotional regulation through mindfulness-based practices extend into all areas of our students' lives. Schonert-Reichl et al. (2015) found implementation of a social-emotional curriculum for as little as four months led to improved behavioral and academic functioning for students. Additional benefits include improved impulse control, focus and attention, and stronger peer relationships through the development of compassion and empathy for others. The implementation of a regular mindfulness practice in the classroom benefits not only individual students, but also the entire classroom community, including the teachers.

The practice of intentional and non-judgmental awareness by students and teachers holds many benefits for individuals and the classroom environment as a whole. Mindfulness can include both internal reflection and focusing on external stimuli and sensations in an effort to help us remain grounded and focused on the present. Practice requires consistency and adaptation to meet the developmental needs of our student populations. The benefits for students include increased emotional regulation, focus and attention, impulse control, compassion and empathy, as well as improved relationships within the school environment. Mindfulness practices in the classroom also benefit teachers by decreasing burnout and psychological distress as well as improving self-compassion and positive observations of student behavior. Implementation of these practices in the school is part of a trauma-informed

classroom and is helpful to all students, regardless of their early childhood experiences.

Conclusion

Before students can learn, they must first feel safe, supported, and valued. Creating empathy-driven classroom environments involves intentional decisions about specific elements under the educator's control, such as an accessible physical arrangement of the classroom, an affirming atmosphere, and using humanizing management strategies while intentionally avoiding those that cause humiliation or shame. Additionally, educators can partner with critical community stakeholders, such as school social workers and family or community members, to access additional resources to support students' success.

Creating empathy-driven classroom environments also involves awareness of elements that are not under the educator's control. Adverse childhood experiences are common within our classrooms, with varying degrees of impact on the social, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive functioning of our students. Understanding the unique histories of each of our students is important, but so is uncovering who they are as individuals including what makes them resilient. A history of adverse experiences does not mean our students cannot learn and grow and develop healthy relationships. It means they have experiences that may change the path that gets them there and will need the positive adult connection we can provide as their teacher even more.

To create an empathy-focused classroom environment, there are certain elements to include–such as routines, morning meetings, and developing individual relationships with

students–and elements to avoid, such as clip charts or card-flipping systems, group punishment, and public humiliation. Building and implementing a trauma-informed classroom with empathy at the core is a practice that supports all students and will increase a sense of community and belonging for all.

Building and modeling empathy fosters a reciprocal relationship in which students can feel educators' genuine care and concern for their best interests. We lay the foundation for our students' success by intentionally creating a humanizing classroom environment in which they can learn and grow.

Chapter 8: And Now What? The Path Forward

> **Unlearning Box**
>
> You may already be envisioning with excitement your journey toward becoming a teacher, perhaps by walking across a stage to accept your diploma and later getting the keys to your very own classroom. While this is an important first step in your path toward becoming a professional educator, your journey does not end as soon as you have completed your teaching credential. You will have a lifetime of opportunities to continue learning, growing, and leading in the ever-changing and evolving field of education.

So far together, our journey through this book has surveyed the various roots of teaching in the United States, including

an overview of the teaching profession, various influences on student learning, philosophical and historical foundations, structures of schools, ethical and legal issues, curriculum, and classroom environment. But now what? What is the path forward?

In this chapter, we will close with a brief look at the path ahead. We invite you to stay informed, stay engaged, and stay focused.

Chapter Outline

1. Stay Informed
2. Stay Engaged
3. Stay Focused
4. Conclusion

Stay Informed

As we've mentioned in other places in this book, one of the most exciting parts of being a teacher is that you get to be a life-long learner yourself. First of all, you will continue to learn and hone your craft as a teacher through many venues. You may choose to complete additional courses, future

As a teacher, you will have opportunities to attend conferences as you continue to stay informed.

advanced degrees (maybe even a doctorate so you can work with preservice teachers as a college professor), or certificates (like becoming a Google-certified teacher[1]).

Another important way to stay informed is to become a member of professional organizations that support teachers. These organizations are often focused on specific sub-fields, like literacy, math, or science, but some organizations support teachers in general. These organizations often have both state and national (or even international) networks and conferences, which can be an exciting way to keep your learning current while meeting other educators like you. Sometimes students and early-career teachers can join these organizations or attend conferences at a discounted rate–sometimes even for free. Table 8.1 lists a few of these professional organizations.

Table 8.1: Professional Organizations for Educators

1.
https://edu.google.com/teacher-center/certifications/?modal_active=none

Name of Organization	International, National, State	Focus of Organization
AERA (American Educational Research Association) https://www.aera.net/	International and regional chapters	All areas of education with special interest groups, such as teacher research
ASCD (formerly the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) (https://www.ascd.org/)	International; state chapters (and even college chapters) also exist	General K-12 (and sometimes K-16) education
ILA (International Literacy Association) https://www.literacyworldwide.org/	International and state chapters	A global, literacy-focused professional organization serving K-12 and higher education
NABE (National Association of Bilingual Education) https://nabe.org/	International, regional, and state chapters	Professional organization devoted to representing bilingual/ multilingual students and bilingual and dual language education professionals

NAFME (National Association for Music Education) https://nafme.org/	National, state, and local chapters	An organization of American music educators dedicated to advancing and preserving music education as part of the core curriculum of schools in the United States
NCSS (National Council for the Social Studies) https://www.socialstudies.org/	International, national, state, and local chapters	A U.S.-based association devoted to supporting social studies education
NCTE (National Council for Teachers of English) https://ncte.org/	National, state, and local chapters	A United States professional organization dedicated to improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education
NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) https://www.nctm.org/	International, national, and regional chapters	The world's largest mathematics education organization

NSTA (National Science Teaching Association) https://www.nsta.org/	National, state, and local chapters	An association of science teachers in the United States and is the largest organization of science teachers worldwide
TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) https://www.tesol.org/	International, national, and state chapters	The largest professional organization for teachers of English as a second or foreign language

Stop & Investigate

Choose one of these professional organizations and visit their website. Do they have a chapter in your state or even at your university?

In addition to these formal venues, you can stay informed through keeping up with high-quality websites, podcasts, and other online resources. A high-quality online resource is often vetted by an editor or a content expert. While sites like TeachersPayTeachers and Pinterest can have some ideas for inspiration, these sites are not moderated and therefore are not guaranteed to have high-quality, accurate content and resources. Below are some websites and podcasts that you might find useful. (If you are using a downloaded version of

this text, please turn to Appendix A to access written-out URLs for these resources.)

Websites:

- Edutopia
- Learning for Justice
- Cult of Pedagogy Blog
- ReadWriteThink
- EdShelf
- Discovery Education
- OER Commons
- Dave's ESL Cafe

Podcasts:

- The Cult of Pedagogy Podcast
- TED Talks Education
- Teachers in America
- Shaping the Future
- Sunday Night Teacher Talk
- TeachLab with Justin Reich
- Teaching Keating with Weston & Molly Kieschnick

Stop & Investigate

Choose one resource from the websites and podcasts listed to explore. What kinds of resources does it house? How could you see this resource helping you stay informed?

One final way for you to stay informed as a future teacher is to keep up with current events, policy and legislation, and other visible ways education is in the news. While sometimes it can feel overwhelming to maintain your day-to-day responsibilities as a teacher while also keeping an eye on outside events, this awareness of current events is vital for your ongoing advocacy for your students, your colleagues, and yourself. Here are a few online resources that are completely devoted to covering

headlines related to education. (If you are using a downloaded version of this text, please turn to Appendix A to access written-out URLs for these resources.)

- Chalkbeat
- EducationDive (divided into K-12 Dive and HigherEd Dive)
- The Atlantic: Education
- EducationWeek

Pause & Ponder

What was the last time you heard education in the news? Was the story positive or negative? What was the goal of this coverage? Whose story was told and whose story was not?

Education is constantly evolving, and often outside forces have long tried to shape the trajectory of education. (Remember from Chapter 3 how interrelated education was–and is–with other sectors in the United States, such as the economy, politics, and instilling expected morals and beliefs.) For example, just in the first few years of the 2020 decade,

Some topics can be difficult to teach, but that doesn't mean we can ignore them or erase them from our curriculum. This teacher is mapping out routes slave traders sailed in a lesson about the "New World."

headlines about education addressed the pandemic, issues of

equity with online learning, critical race theory in schools, and more–topics that were of timely consideration due to other social, economic, and political factors and contexts. Listening closely to these news stories can also highlight misunderstandings people have about how education works in the United States. For example, the recent backlash against critical race theory being taught in schools sometimes implied that the Federal Department of Education endorsed or required its teaching. You know from your journey through this text that the Federal Department of Education has no jurisdiction over curriculum; such educational decisions are left to individual states.

Critical Lens: Critical Race Theory in Education

In 2021, Critical Race Theory became an often-covered headline related to education. In this piece[2], Deborah Plummer explains what Critical Race Theory is and why it is controversial. In this interview with NPR[3], Gloria Ladson-Billings, one of the first people to apply Critical Race Theory to the field of education, explains some of the recent bills to block the teaching of Critical Race Theory. After you have explored those two sources, consider: how did what you read and heard in these pieces compare

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2.
https://medium.com/age-of-awareness/why-critical-race-theory-crt-is-controversial-da90c8daa67b

3.
https://www.npr.org/2021/06/22/1009182206/academic-who-brought-critical-race-theory-to-education-says-bills-are-misguided

> with what you were hearing on the news? What new understandings and questions do you have?

Furthermore, part of staying informed involves seeking news from multiple sources instead of accepting as truth what you hear from one source. Make sure that you are seeking input from well-studied experts in the field. When reading the news about education with a critical lens, here are a few questions to consider.

- What is the headline/story about?
- Why is this a significant event to cover?
- Who seems to be driving the narrative in the piece?
- Whose voices seem to be excluded?
- What emotional response from the listener/viewer/reader does the piece seem intended to evoke, and why?
- What stances from actual stakeholders in education–teachers, families, students, administrators, or others–are centered or de-centered?

When you listen to current events and stories about education in the news with a critical lens, you will sometimes notice that teachers' voices are often not heard. Deprofessionalization is a common problem in education. When education is micromanaged–when teachers are told what to teach and given scripted, "teacher-proof" curriculum to teach from–and when teachers are undervalued–expected to do extensive work for low wages–deprofessionalization occurs. As you learned in Chapter 3, education's long history in the United States as

a female-dominated field directly correlates to deprofessionalization, especially when women teachers were paid less and encouraged to think of their work as a "calling" instead of a profession.

As you've read so far, staying informed is part of your ongoing journey toward becoming a teacher, and you should continue to stay informed even after you earn your teaching license. Next, we'll consider ways to stay engaged.

Stay Engaged

The best way to learn to be a teacher is to get experience actually working with students, so consider various ways to stay engaged with young people. One way to stay engaged is to seek out opportunities to volunteer in local classrooms. Teachers can always use help with creating classroom materials, working one-on-one with students, and other classroom tasks. You also may be able to apply to be a substitute teacher in your local school district, even before you finish earning your teaching credential. While this can be a powerful way to develop your future teaching skills, you should also be aware that being a substitute teacher is not the same as being a full-time classroom teacher.

Pause & Ponder

Think about your own experience as a student–when you had a substitute teacher, how did you respond? How did the sub respond? Why do you think substitute teaching isn't the same as being a full-time classroom teacher?

Another way to stay engaged is through opportunities in your local community. You may be able to help with an after-school tutoring program or homework club. If your community has a high number of refugees, there may be special programming available to support this portion of the population. You could also be involved with designing and implementing curriculum for local summer camps or children's museums. Wherever your passions lie, there are likely to be many opportunities to stay engaged with young people that will strengthen your skills as a future teacher.

However you choose to stay engaged, be sure you are aware of any policies various organizations may have about volunteers and visitors. Many public schools require background checks for volunteers who will be in schools regularly (such as when you are completing a practicum experience); others may simply ask you to check in at the front office when you arrive and let them know when you leave. As a volunteer, you should also never be alone with a student. These rules and expectations are in place to keep students safe, so it is important that you are following them at all times.

Tutoring is one way to stay engaged with young people and build your future teaching skills.

One final consideration as you stay engaged is to make it a

priority to stretch yourself outside of your comfort zone. While it may be extremely tempting to go back to the summer camp you loved as a child as a counselor now, that experience is one you are already familiar with. Go beyond your local community and experiences to expose yourself to different places, people, and ways of thinking. Your future classroom will be full of diverse learners, and stretching your horizons now will only make you a more effective teacher.

Stay Focused

Finally, the path forward will require you to stay focused. Teaching is an exciting profession. No day is exactly the same: you will have different learners with different experiences, strengths, and needs, and this community will shape the outcome of every day in your future classroom. With this excitement comes other emotions too. In your determination to become the best possible teacher, you will also find some self-doubt. Remember that it can take three to five years to feel like you have mastery of your craft as a teacher, so it is quite common to feel like you don't have all the tools in your teacher toolbox when you are an early-career teacher. As we mentioned above, staying informed is one of the best parts of being a teacher: even veteran teachers can keep learning and adding to their teacher toolboxes.

Another emotion you might feel is exhaustion. You know from your own experience as a student, from your readings in this book, and from your interactions with friends and family members who are educators that teaching is hard work. You work long hours with few breaks, and then beyond the instructional day there are emails, family conferences, faculty meetings, and other special events. You find yourself in the

grocery store aisle worrying about one of your students and if they will have food to eat that night, or if what you said to one student when you were frustrated came across much harsher than you meant it to. You'll find yourself watching TV or talking to friends when new ideas for lessons come to mind, or when you realize you have something else you need to add to your never-ending to-do list.

In these moments, stay focused on the outcome. You have worked hard for the privilege of guiding your future students' learning and growth. You also need to stay focused on your own well-being. Speak up when you are feeling overwhelmed, and carve out moments for yourself. Keep practicing hobbies that bring you joy. After all, if you aren't taking care of yourself, it's hard to be the best possible teacher for your students.

Pause & Ponder

What are some activities that bring you peace and joy now? How could you see yourself continuing these when you are a teacher, or what new activities might you want to try? What network of resources do you have for when you do need help getting through a tough time?

In this video, you'll hear about 25 things you should know as you prepare to become a teacher to help you stay focused.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

https://viva.pressbooks.pub/
foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=605#oembed-1

Conclusion

While our journey through the foundations of American education has come to a close, your journey toward becoming an effective, life-changing teacher is just beginning. In the years to come, you will continue to develop your craft by staying informed, engaged, and focused. You will have opportunities to see how the field of education is changing now and will continue to change in the future. You will even have opportunities to be a part of efforts to drive change. Knowing what has come before and understanding the deep roots American education has in historical, societal, economic, and legal realms will better equip you to analyze current trends and anticipate new ones. After all, education can be somewhat like a pendulum: certain beliefs and practices tend to fall in and out of favor every few decades.

One trend that will never change, however, is your role in advocating for *all* children. In her TED Talk, Rita Pierson explains why every kid needs a champion.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://viva.pressbooks.pub/
foundationsofamericaneducation/?p=605#oembed-2

In her closing, Rita Pierson states, "Every child deserves a

champion, an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be." As a teacher, you can be that champion. By understanding the foundations of American education, you will be equipped to participate in ongoing advocacy for all students. You will have opportunities to work with colleagues and other stakeholders to make education a better place for teachers, students, families, and communities. As you go forth into the field of education, we challenge you to maintain a critical lens as you perpetually question how to make American education the most inclusive, effective, and successful for all of our learners and their communities.

Appendix A: Interactive Elements

If you are using a downloaded version of this text, use Appendix A to engage in the interactive elements included in the online version of this text.

Chapter 3

Colonial America Timeline

American Revolutionary Era Timeline
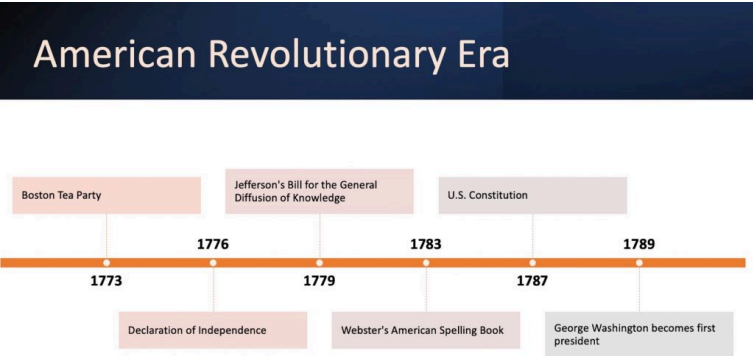
Early National Era Timeline
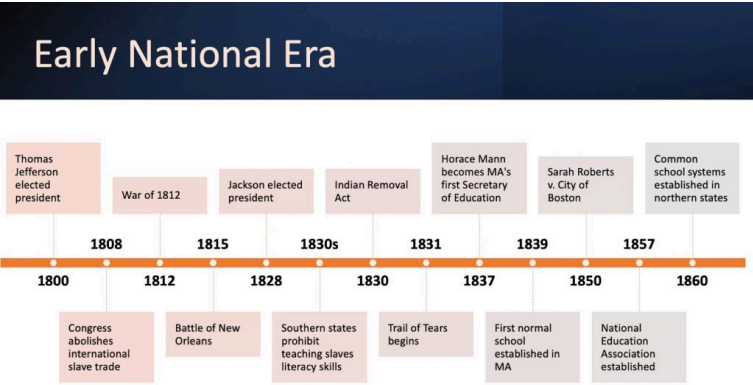
Post Civil War & Reconstruction Timeline
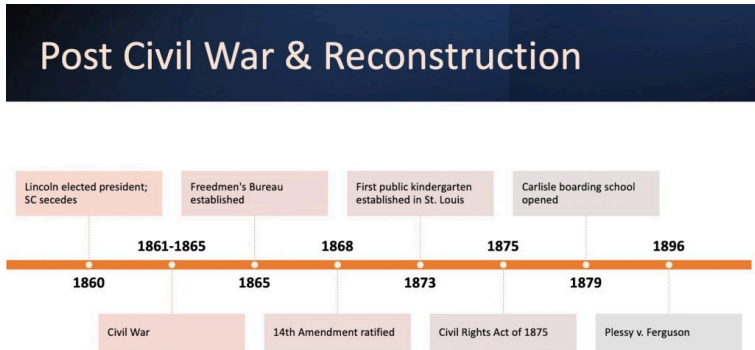
The Progressive Era Timeline
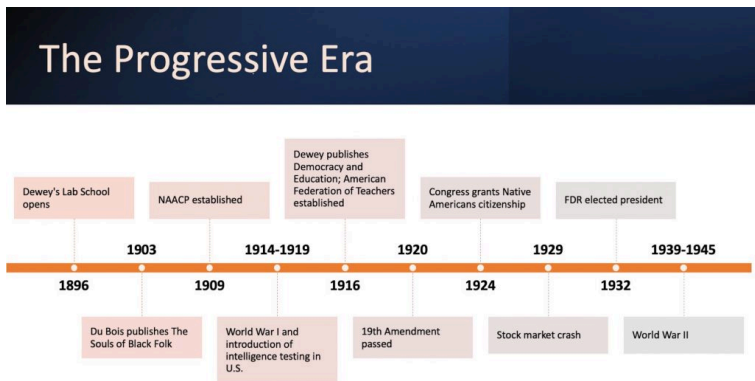
Post World War II & Civil Rights Era Timeline
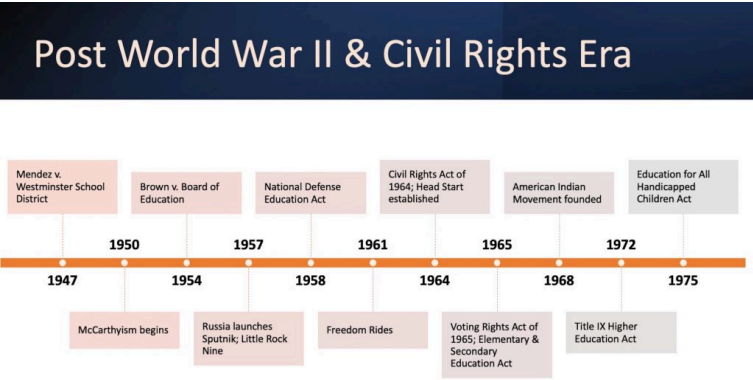
The 1980s and Beyond Timeline
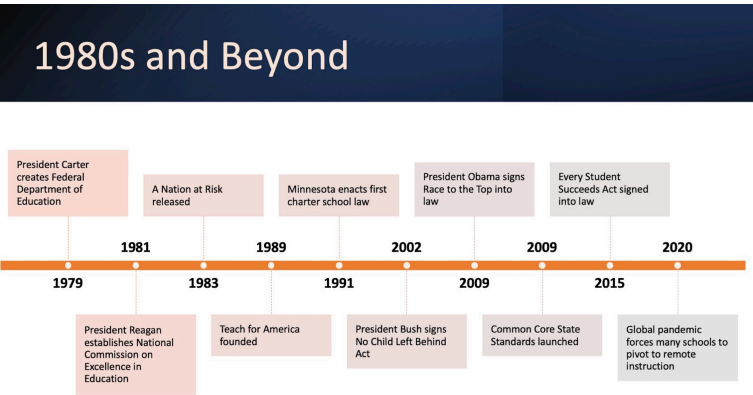
Chapter 5

"Code of Ethics: What Would You Do?"

As educators, we make have to make decisions every day. We have to consider ethics as we make those decisions. Sometimes answers are clear, and sometimes they are harder. Let's try it out!

On a final writing assignment, one of your students turned in a paper that just did not seem to be his work. After further investigation, you discovered complete paragraphs were lifted from the textbook and inserted into his paper. You believe this student has cheated and this act of cheating goes against the school policy of academic integrity.

- Choice A: Report the student's suspected cheating to the principal.
- Choice B: Ignore the suspected cheating.
- Choice C: Talk to the student about the suspected cheating.

Now that you've decided what to do, keep reading to see what happens next.

If you chose Choice A...

You go to your principal, and they say, "Wow, what a shame. I've been talking to him some during lunch. Did you know his mother lost her job about a month ago and the family has been having a difficult time financially? They have worked so hard to make ends meet since they entered the country last year. But we do have a clear academic integrity policy. You need to assign him an F on this assignment, refer him to me for cheating, and then I will need to meet with his family about next steps."

You tell your student that you noticed the copied paragraphs from the textbook, which means he will get an F on this assignment and be referred to the principal's office to meet with his mother. His mom's car is broken and she can't afford to fix it until she finds another job, meaning she can't make it to the school for the meeting.

You watch this student over the next few weeks. Until the cheating incident, he had pretty good grades; now, he seems sad, withdrawn, and depressed. His grades start slipping. He starts missing assignments. He stops asking for help and only engages with his peers when you require it.

As you look over your attendance sheet a few weeks later, you realize that he was absent the day that you explained how to paraphrase sources and cite direct quotations to avoid plagiarism before the paper was due. This student is an English Learner. Is it possible that the "cheating" was a simple mistake?

It's too late now.

If you chose Choice B…

Sure, those paragraphs were identical to the textbook, but you really don't feel like filing the paperwork required for an academic integrity violation. You just move on and ignore it.

A few weeks later, you are called into the principal's office. "We've had reports from several teachers about one of your students cheating on assignments," says the principal. "Actually, your class is the only one where there hasn't been an incident. Are you sure that this student isn't violating our academic integrity policy in your class?"

You come clean and admit to the paragraphs that were copied from the textbook. The principal shakes their head and says, "You know our academic integrity policy. It is in the handbook, and it was clearly explained to you when you first began working here.

Remember that honoring this policy is an expectation of your employment here."

The principal makes a note in your file that you did not follow the academic integrity policy. You are an early career teacher who does not yet have a continuing contract, so you know that this could mean you aren't offered a job again next year.

If you chose Choice C...

During lunch, you ask the student to stay back to talk about the recent paper. You explain, "I noticed that some of your paragraphs were the same as the textbook. Did you realize that copying those paragraphs was a violation of our academic integrity policy?"

The student shakes his head, tears up, and covers his face with his hands. "Well, I wasn't sure. I know you said in class that we have to use evidence, and I know the textbook has lots of good facts. I had been planning to work on that paper before it was due, but my mom lost her job about a month ago and I've been having to do more to help at home, trying to earn a little extra money washing dishes at a restaurant, you know. We just moved to this country last year and my mom's been working so hard to make ends meet. I've had to watch my little sister some to help my mom too, and I just didn't manage my time well. That's why I missed class some last week too. It's been super hard at home."

You look over your attendance roster and realize that he was absent the day you taught the class how to correctly cite evidence without plagiarizing it. This student's grades in your class have been pretty good, and this is the first paper you've assigned.

You come up with a solution. "I need you to re-do the paper, and make sure that you review notes from your peers from that class you missed about how to cite evidence. The school librarian might also be able to help. Our school academic integrity policy means that any assignment you cheated on is an F, but I will

average the scores of these two papers together. I will talk to the principal about this plan, but I need you to understand how important it is that you should never copy someone else's work, OK?"

The next day, the student turns in their revised paper and thanks you for the opportunity to learn from his mistakes.

Chapter 8

Websites:

- Edutopia: http://www.edutopia.org/
- Learning for Justice: https://www.learningforjustice.org/
- Cult of Pedagogy Blog: https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/blog/
- ReadWriteThink: http://www.readwritethink.org/
- EdShelf: http://www.edshelf.com/
- Discovery Education: http://www.discoveryeducation.com/
- OER Commons: http://www.oercommons.org/
- Dave's ESL Cafe: https://www.eslcafe.com/

Podcasts:

- The Cult of Pedagogy Podcast: https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/pod/
- TED Talks Education: https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/ted-talks-education/id470623037
- Teachers in America: https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/teachers-in-america/id1462207570
- Shaping the Future: https://podcasts.apple.com/us/

podcast/shaping-the-future/id1547631983

- Sunday Night Teacher Talk: https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/sunday-night-teacher-talk/id1477725476
- TeachLab with Justin Reich: https://teachlabpodcast.com/
- Teaching Keating with Weston & Molly Kieschnick: https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/teaching-keating-with-weston-and-molly-kieschnick/id1096116254

Education news sources:

- Chalkbeat: https://www.chalkbeat.org/
- EducationDive: https://www.educationdive.com/
    - K-12 Dive: https://www.k12dive.com/
    - HigherEd Dive: https://www.highereddive.com/
- The Atlantic: Education: https://www.theatlantic.com/education/
- EducationWeek: https://www.edweek.org/

Appendix B: Feedback Form

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Chapter 8

Miscellaneous

Glossary

5 E model

Model of lesson planning that integrates inquiry through five phases: engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate.

A Nation at Risk

71-page report released in 1983 that sensationalized a "crisis" in American schooling that led to standards-based reform.

abuse

A caregiver's action, or failure to act, resulting in death, significant physical or emotional harm, or the exploitation of a child under the age of 18.

academic freedom

Idea that educators and scholars should be able to express academic ideas without interference or punishment, usually defended with the First Amendment.

accommodation

In Piaget's theory of cognitive development, changing schema to accommodate new information or experiences. In special education, a change to learning materials, the environment, or an assessment that does not fundamentally change the curriculum expectation or lower the standard of performance for the student.

accountability

Holding teachers, schools, and districts responsible, or accountable, for increasing student learning and performance.

accreditation

Process of formal review of an Educator Preparation Program by an outside agency, such as CAEP.

act

An individual, stand-alone law.

Act of 1642

First compulsory education law in the New World.

administrative progressives

Group in the early 1900s who wanted education to be as efficient as possible to meet the demands of industrialization and the economy.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

From the work of Anda & Felitti (1998), sets of childhood experiences that may include abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction that lead to increased social, emotional, behavioral, and academic challenges.

alignment

Characteristic of well-planned instruction in which multiple elements align with each other (i.e., standards, assessment, and instruction).

alternative preparation

Pathway toward earning teaching certification that does

not involve undergraduate coursework and might involve residency programs or provisional certification.

American Federation of Teachers

Second largest labor union for teachers in the U.S., founded in Chicago in 1916.

Annual Yearly Progress (AYP)

Provision of No Child Left Behind that allows the U.S. Department of Education to determine how public schools and districts are performing academically, as measured by scores on standardized tests.

Anti-Federalists

Political group in the American Revolutionary Era that opposed a strong central government, preferring instead state and local forms of government. Included Thomas Jefferson.

assessment

Component of a lesson in which the teacher measures a student's understanding using varying techniques.

assimilation

In Piaget's theory of cognitive development, use of existing schema to interpret new situations.

backward design

Planning concept designed by Wiggins & McTighe (1998) that involves identifying desired results and then working backward to design assessment and instruction.

Beecher, Catherine (1800-1878)

First well-known teacher of the Common School Movement and one of the normal schools' first teachers.

Bilingual Education Act of 1968

Modification to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 that provided funds for students who were speakers of languages other than English.

Bloom's Taxonomy

Framework designed by Benjamin Bloom and colleagues in 1956, and later revised in 2001. Divides educational goals/cognitive processes into six categories of increasing complexity: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory

A theory of child development which outlines five levels of influence from a student's environment: individual, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem.

Brown v. Board of Education

Landmark Supreme Court case in 1954 that declared separate educational facilities were not equal, ending segregation in schools.

bullying

Aggressive behavior that involves an imbalance of power and repetition of behavior. Can be verbal, social, or physical.

CAEP

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.

centration

> Characteristic of the preoperational stage of Piaget's cognitive developmental theory in which children focus on only one aspect of a situation.

charity schools

> Model of schooling in Colonial America established when an affluent individual made provisions in his or her will, including land, to construct and manage a school for the poor. Also called endowed free schools.

charter schools

> Publicly-funded schools that do not have the same requirements as a traditional public school because they follow their own mission or charter.

classroom environment

> Elements of a classroom community that include physical set-up, overall atmosphere, behavior management, and other considerations.

co-teaching

> Model of instruction in which teachers (usually two) are paired up in a classroom and share the responsibility of planning, teaching, and assessing students.

Code of Ethics

> A widely accepted standard of practice that outlines the accountability of its members to those they serve as well as to the profession itself.

cognitive constructivism

> Act of constructing understanding of the world through cognitive development. Piaget's concepts of schema,

equilibrium, disequilibrium, assimilation, and accommodation are parts of cognitive constructivism.

common schools

Elementary schools where all students--not just wealthy boys--could attend for free. Developed in the 1800s by Horace Mann.

compulsory attendance statute

A law requiring children to attend school based on specific age ranges.

concrete operational stage

Third stage of Piaget's theory of cognitive development in which children between the ages of 6 or 7 through 11 or 12 begin to think more logically and abstractly as they work toward operational thought.

conservation

Understanding developed during the preoperational stage of Piaget's cognitive developmental theory that specific properties of objects remain the same even if other properties change.

criterion-referenced assessments

Formal assessments scored by comparing students' performance to specific performance criteria.

critical theory

Approach of constructing meaning through recognizing issues of power, access, and equity; often involves questioning and challenging the status quo.

culturally relevant teaching (CRT)

Student-centered approach to teaching created by Ladson-Billings (1994/2009) with three key pillars: academic success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness.

curricular progressives

Group in the early 1900s focused on changes in how and what students were learning; saw schooling as a vehicle for social justice instead of assimilation. Also called pedagogical progressives.

cyberbullying

Bullying that takes place using electronic technology.

dame schools

Model of schooling in Colonial America in which parents sent children to a local woman who would teach basic literacy skills for a small fee.

data-driven instruction

Looking at the results of various assessments when considering next instructional steps.

de facto segregation

Segregation resulting not from legal segregation, but from pre-existing segregation that continues (i.e., segregated neighborhoods leading to segregated school enrollment).

deductive model

Model of instruction in which the teacher provides the rule first, and then students follow it (such as during direct instruction).

Democratic-Republican Societies

Political group in the American Revoutionary Era that supported universal, government-funded schooling.

Members of these political clubs included artisans, teachers, ship builders, innkeepers, and working class individuals.

Department of Education

Established in 1979 by President Carter to provide federal oversight of education, though individual states still preserved primary control of educational decisions.

Dewey, John (1859-1952)

Significant 20th century educator also known as the father of progressivism. Advocate for student-centered, problem-based learning. Published several books outlining the role of democracy in education to create thoughtful, productive citizens.

diagnostic

Type of assessment administered before instruction to learn what students know prior to instruction.

differentiation

Portion of a lesson plan that considers any necessary adaptations to meet the needs of specific learners, such as English Language Learners.

direct instruction

Model of instruction in which the teacher directly gives information to students.

disequilibrium

In Piaget's cognitive developmental theory, a new

experience that forces children to accommodate or assimilate existing schema.

dispositions

Interpersonal skills expected of teachers as professionals.

Du Bois, William Edward Burghardt [W. E. B.] (1868-1963)

First African American to earn a Ph.D. at Harvard University. Helped establish the NAACP. Known for "The Souls of Black Folk," among other writings.

Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA)

1975 legislation that established a foundational set of protections for individuals with disabilities in U.S. public schools, including (a) a free education for all students between the ages of 3 and 18, (b) education in community schools when appropriate, (c) non-discriminatory evaluation to identify educational needs, (d) parent involvement in decision making, and (3) an individualized learning plan.

Educator Preparation Program (EPP)

Programs offered through colleges or universities to earn teaching credentials.

egocentrism

Worldview developed during the preoperational stage of Piaget's cognitive developmental theory that means children see the world from their own perspective and not other points of view.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

1965 legislation from President Johnson designed to

provide federal funding to primary and secondary education and provide equal access to education as part of the "War on Poverty." Subsequently reissued as No Child Left Behind (2002) and the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015).

emotional neglect

The failure to meet or recognize a child's emotional needs.

empathy

The ability to recognize and feel the emotions of others.

English Language Learners (ELLs)

Students whose primary or home language is a language other than English. May also be called English Learners (ELs).

English Learners (ELs)

Students whose primary or home language is a language other than English. May also be called English Language Learners (ELLs).

Equal Access Act

1984 legislation requiring federally-funded secondary schools to uphold students' First Amendment rights to conduct meetings and hold an open forum with equal access to extracurricular student groups or clubs.

equilibrium

In Piaget's theory of cognitive development, the balance achieved when schema align with experiences.

ESL programs

Abbreviation for English as a Second Language programs.

ESOL programs

Abbreviation for English for Speakers of Other Languages programs.

essentialism

Educational philosophy that suggests that there are skills and knowledge that all people should possess.

ethnocentrism

Judging or evaluating another culture based on your own culture.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

2015 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965) and No Child Left Behind Act (2002). Shifted accountability provisions to individual states.

explicit curriculum

The state, district, and schools' formal accounting of what they teach. Also called formal curriculum.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

An amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 that protects the privacy of student educational records.

family engagement

Family-oriented approach toward building home-school partnerships that share responsibility for and work together to support children's learning.

family involvement

School-oriented approach toward involving families in schools, with the school holding the expectations for

family participation and telling families what they need to do.

Federalists

American Revolutionary Era group supporting mass schooling for nationalistic purposes, such as preserving order, morality, and a nationalistic character, but opposing tax-supported schooling. Included Alexander Hamilton, George Washington, John Adams, and Noah Webster.

field schools

Model of schooling in Colonial America involving schools being built in abandoned fields in rural areas to offer affordable education to students. Teachers received payment from families and boarded with families. Also called rate schools, subscription schools, fee schools, and eventually district schools.

First Amendment

Prevents the government from making laws that infringe upon the freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, or right to petition the government. Adopted in 1791.

formal assessments

Measure systematically what students have learned, often at the end of a course or school year, such as with a standardized test.

formal curriculum

The state, district, and schools' formal accounting of what they teach. Also called explicit curriculum.

formal operational stage

Fourth stage in Piaget's theory of cognitive development

in which children aged 11 or 12 through adulthood develop better reasoning and abstract thinking skills.

formative

Type of assessment given during instruction that gives teachers insight into students' understanding as it is forming.

Fourteenth Amendment

Addresses citizenship rights, equal protection, and due process, especially for freed enslaved people. Adopted in 1868.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Stipulation of IDEiA that students with special needs must receive specially designed instruction, including special education and accommodations, that allows them to make meaningful progress toward the curriculum and their individual learning goals. All of these services must be provided at public expense.

Freedmen's Bureau

Distributed food, clothing, and medical aid to formerly enslaved people and poor Whites and created over 1,000 schools throughout the southern states after the Civil War.

Freire, Paulo (1921-1997)

Brazilian philosopher and educator who was one of the most influential thinkers in the ideas behind social reconstructionism. Believed that education should be student-centered and avoid the "banking model" of teachers depositing information into students. Wrote several books, including "Pedagogy of the Oppressed."

frontloading

Instructional approach that involves pre-teaching background knowledge or vocabulary necessary for upcoming instruction. Particularly helpful for ELs.

gradual release of responsibility

Model of lesson planning using direct instruction in which the teacher gradually releases responsibility for learning and demonstrating understanding to the students. Also called "I do, We do, You do."

Herbartian five-step lesson plan

Approach to lesson planning that includes five distinct steps: anticipatory set; introduction of new material; guided practice; independent practice; and closure. Aligns with the gradual release of responsibility and tends to rely on direct instruction.

homeschool

Type of schooling in which a child receives an education at home.

hybrid funding formula

Model of school funding that uses various formulas, such as student-based or resource-based formulas, to determine funding.

implicit curriculum

Hidden messages that students learn from schooling that aren't specifically in the standards and possibly aren't even explicitly taught. Also called informal curriculum.

in loco parentis

Meaning "in place of parents."

Responsibility of educators to make similar judgements as it relates to the safety of children that a parent might make.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

Unique learning plan for students with disabilities developed annually by a team that includes general and special education teachers, administrators, the student's parents, and the student (when age-appropriate).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)

Pronounced "idea"; 2004 reauthorization of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) that defines 14 specific disability categories. Also called IDEA.

inductive model

Model of instruction in which students figure out the rules from a completed example (such as in inquiry-based instruction).

industrial schools

Post-Civil War schools built for Black Americans in the South; focused on vocational or trade skills.

informal assessments

Assessments that are local, non-standardized, and contextualized in daily classroom learning activities; often performance-based.

informal curriculum

Hidden messages that students learn from schooling that aren't specifically in the standards and possibly aren't even explicitly taught. Also called implicit curriculum.

information processing theory

Identifies thinking and problem solving through three basic mental processes: (1) attending to sensory input in the sensory register; (2) encoding the attended information into short-term or working memory; and (3) retrieving information from long-term memory.

inquiry-based model

Model of instruction in which students are encouraged to question and explore instead of receiving information directly from the teacher.

InTASC standards

10 standards from the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium that cover model core teaching practices for K-12 educators.

internship

Full-time practicum experience, usually situated at the end of an educator preparation program. May also be called student teaching.

intersectionality

Term coined by Crenshaw (1989) meaning many different aspects of identity--including race, economic class, gender, and more--overlap and intersect with one another.

Jefferson, Thomas (1743-1826)

Anti-Federalist and third U.S. president who proposed a tiered schooling model in Virginia.

K-12

Abbreviation for kindergarten through 12th grade, the traditional span of public schools in the United States.

Latin grammar schools

Model of schooling in Colonial America to teach boys subjects like classical literature, reading, writing, and math in preparation to attend Harvard University. First established in Boston in 1635.

learning styles

Often associated with visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic (VARK) input of information. In actuality, learning styles have no research-based support and are a myth.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Expectation that students with disabilities must be educated in the same setting as their peers who do not have disabilities, unless it is not possible for the student to make progress in that setting even when additional supports are added.

Limited English Proficient (LEP)

Early terminology to refer to English Learners (ELs). Problematic in its deficit framing.

linguicism

Unequal treatment of languages based upon power structures that privilege certain languages as having legitimacy.

Local Education Agencies (LEAs)

Public authorities that exercise local control of education in cities, counties, districts, or other local subdivisions.

looping

Instructional practice in which a classroom teacher moves with a group of students from grade to grade.

Mann, Horace (1796-1859)

Massachusetts's first Secretary of Education and leader of the common school movement.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Succession of 8 hierarchical needs, divided into deficiency needs (physiological, safety, belongingness & love, and esteem needs) and growth needs (need for knowledge & understanding, aesthetic needs, self actualization, and transcendence).

mastery grading

Model of grading in which courses are structured to allow students the time and flexibility to focus on mastering a standard rather than achieving a certain number or letter grade (i.e., often with repeated opportunities to demonstrate mastery).

materials

Portion of a lesson plan in which all materials, such as books, resources, tools, websites, and other items that will be used for the lesson, are listed.

Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act

2009 legislation that expanded the federal hate crime law to include crimes motivated by the victim's actual or perceived gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

mentor teacher

Teacher of record in a practicum placement. Mentors preservice teachers by modeling effective instruction and sharing classroom responsibilities.

metacognition

Ability to monitor and think about your own thinking.

methods

How to teach the structures of different disciplines like literacy, math, science, or social studies.

modification

In special education, a substantial alteration to a learning standard that reduces the complexity for a student.

Morrill Act of 1862

Gave states 30,000 acres of land for each senator and representative it had in Congress in 1860. The income generated from the sale or lease of this land would provide financial support for at least one agricultural and mechanical (A&M) college, known as a land-grant institution.

Morrill Act of 1890

Required land-grant institutions seeking increased federal support to either provide equal access to the existing A&M colleges or establish separate institutions for the People of Color in their state.

multi-age classrooms

Classroom model allowing students of different grades to be in one class (i.e., a combination 2nd/3rd grade class).

multiple intelligences

> Theory created by Howard Gardner in 2004. The eight multiple intelligences include musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, naturalistic, intrapersonal, and visual-spatial.

NAACP

> National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; founded in 1905 to seek legal and political equality for African Americans.

National Education Association

> Largest labor union in the U.S., established in 1857 to represent educators.

No Child Left Behind Act

> Standards-based reform passed in 2001 as a reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Increased educational accountability through standardized testing.

norm-referenced assessments

> Formal assessment scored by comparing students' performance to other students.

normal schools

> Teacher training institutions championed by Horace Mann that arose during the Common School Movement.

null curriculum

> Topics that are not taught in schools at all for a variety of reasons.

object permanence

Realization that things continue to exist even if they are not in view. Developed during the sensorimotor stage of cognitive development, according to Piaget.

objectives

Statement of what students will know, understand, and do by the end of the lesson.

Old Deluder Satan Act

Required towns of fifty or more families to hire a schoolmaster to teach children basic literacy. Also known as the Law of 1647.

Open Educational Resource (OER)

Teaching, learning, and research materials that are either (a) in the public domain or (b) licensed in a manner that provides everyone with free and perpetual permission to retain, revise, remix, reuse, or redistribute those resources.

open enrollment

School enrollment policy in which the school will allow students from other geographic areas within the district to enroll if space permits.

parson schools

Model of schooling in Colonial America in which a highly educated minister opened his home to young scholars and often taught secular subjects.

pedagogical progressives

Group in the early 1900s focused on changes in how and what students were learning; saw schooling as a vehicle

for social justice instead of assimilation. Also called curricular progressives.

pedagogy

The art and science of teaching.

perennialism

Educational philosophy suggesting that human nature is constant, and that the focus of education should be on teaching concepts that remain true over time.

philosophy

The fundamental nature of knowledge, reality and existence; in the case of a philosophy of education, what one believes to be true about the essentials of education.

physical neglect

Failure to consistently meet basic needs such as food and shelter, as well as providing a safe, clean environment.

Piaget, Jean (1896-1980)

Cognitive developmental theorist who identified four stages of cognitive development in children: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational.

practicum

Part-time field placements that are often tied to specific courses to give preservice teachers experience in classrooms.

Praxis

Series of teacher certification tests offered by ETS.

preoperational stage

Second stage in Piaget's cognitive developmental theory in which children between the ages of 2 and 6 or 7 develop language, imagination, and memory, working toward symbolic thought.

private school

A school that is privately funded and maintained by a private group or organization, not the government, usually by charging tuition.

procedures

Portion of a lesson plan that breaks down the lesson into specific steps the teacher will follow.

Professional Learning Community (PLC)

Local model of professional development in which teachers, often in the same grade level or content area, come together to plan, analyze assessment data, read a book/article, or engage in other professional development activities.

progressivism

Educational philosophy emphasizing real-world problem solving and individual development, with the teacher serving as a "guide on the side."

provisional teaching license

Teaching license that is temporary, usually with certain stipulations or provisions attached. Sometimes called an emergency teaching license.

psychological crises

According to Erikson's psychosocial theory, people go

through eight developmental crises: trust vs. mistrust; autonomy vs. shame and doubt; initiative vs. guilt; industry vs. inferiority; identity vs. role confusion; intimacy vs. isolation; generativity vs. stagnation; and ego integrity vs. despair.

public school

Any school that is maintained through public funds to educate children that are part of a community or district for free.

reciprocity

Agreements among different states to honor teaching licenses earned in other states, sometimes with additional requirements added (like testing).

redlining

Practice (currently illegal) in which housing was allowed or denied in certain areas based on people's race or socioeconomic status.

Rehabilitation Act

Passed in 1973 to prohibit discrimination based on disability. Includes Section 504.

related arts

Term referring to teachers in areas like music, visual arts, drama, etc.

reliability

Expectation that an assessment produce consistent (reliable) results.

residency programs

Alternative pathway toward teacher certification in which future teachers work simultaneously on a master's degree in education while being placed in a school full-time.

resiliency

The ability to bounce back from adverse experiences.

resource-based formula

Model of school funding computed from the cost of resources or programs to fund specific programs.

Response to Intervention (RTI)

Research-based interventions to meet student needs and to collect progress monitoring data to support educational decision making.

reversibility

Understanding developed during the concrete operational stage of Piaget's cognitive developmental theory that allows children to change direction in linear thinking to return to a starting point.

schema

Ways in which we organize information as we confront new ideas.

school choice

Program allowing public education funds to follow students to the schools that best fit their needs, even if those schools are not public schools.

school social workers

Trained mental health professionals who can assist with

mental health concerns, behavioral concerns, positive behavioral support, academic, and classroom support, consultation with teachers, parents, and administrators as well as provide individual and group counseling/therapy.

school vouchers

A government-supplied coupon that is used to offset tuition at an eligible private school.

Section 504

Specific section of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act that forbids organizations (including schools) from excluding or denying services to individuals with disabilities. Individual student accommodations are documented in personalized 504 plans.

sensorimotor stage

First stage in Piaget's cognitive development from ages birth to two in which young children learn about their world through their senses.

social constructivism

Approach toward learning that centers social interactions as opportunities for constructing new knowledge. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and zone of proximal development are examples of social constructivism.

social emotional learning (SEL)

Process through which students learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviors.

social reconstructionism

Educational philosophy asserting that schools, teachers, and students should take the lead in addressing social problems and improving society.

social reconstructionists

Group of progressive educators, like John Dewey, who ascribed to the educational philosophy of social reconstructionism, meaning they believed education could improve society.

standard of reasonableness

Benchmark used in legal proceedings to determine if decisions were reasonable within the circumstances in which they were made or enacted.

standards

Formal documents telling teachers the key information that students should understand in specific content areas at varying grade levels.

standards-based grading

Approach to grading that breaks down the subject matter into smaller "learning targets" that are scored on a continuum of 1-4 instead of being assigned letter grades or percentages.

State Education Agencies (SEAs)

State-level government organization in each U.S. state or territory that holds responsibility for education.

stereotypes

Sweeping, oversimplified generalizations about a group.

student teaching

Full-time practicum experience, usually situated at the end of an educator preparation program. May also be called internship.

student-based formula

Model of school funding computed from a set amount that estimates how much it costs to educate one student and multiplied by the number of students at a school.

summative

Type of graded assessment given after instruction to show what students have learned.

teaching contract

A written agreement between the school system and the teacher and serves as a legal document identifying the roles and responsibilities for the teaching position.

teaching license

Earned after meeting state-established requirements (such as courses and testing) in order to become a teacher. Requires periodic renewal.

teaching strategies

A series of steps that a teacher might have the students follow to encourage interaction or deeper thinking during instruction; usually take 5-15 minutes to enact during a lesson.

tenure

Protects teachers from arbitrary dismissal by school officials. Derived from the Pendleton Civil Service Act of 1883.

The Law of 1647

Required towns of fifty or more families to hire a schoolmaster to teach children basic literacy. Also known as the Old Deluder Satan Act.

Title I

Part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that provides financial assistance to educational agencies and schools with high proportions of students from low-income backgrounds.

Title III

Component of No Child Left Behind that created English Language Proficiency Standards and introduced requirements for states to test English learners annually for oral, written, and reading proficiency in English.

Title IX

Part of Civil Rights Act of 1964 that bans bans discrimination based on sex in places such as schools.

Title VII

Part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that prohibits employers from discriminating against individuals because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

tracking

Practice of channeling, or tracking, certain individuals into certain educational "tracks" based on their perceived capabilities for future success.

traditional preparation

One way to earn a teaching license through completing coursework at an Educator Preparation Program (EPP).

transitivity

Understanding developed during the concrete operational stage of Piaget's cognitive developmental theory that allows children to infer relationships between two objects based on objects' relation to a third object in serial order.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Framework for instructional design to meet the needs of all learners in which teachers develop lessons around three core concepts that support accessibility: engagement, representation, and expression.

validity

Expectation that an assessment should measure what it is designed to measure.

Vygotsky, Lev (1896-1934)

Russian psychologist and sociocultural theorist who created the zone of proximal development.

Washington, Booker T. (1856-1915)

Born an enslaved person in Virginia. Attended the Hampton Institute and later led the Tuskegee Institute. Famous for his 1895 "Atlanta Compromise" speech.

Webster, Noah (1758-1843)

Federalist who supported mass schooling and wrote his "American Spelling Book" in 1783.

WIDA (World Class Instructional Design and Assessment)

Consortium that designed standards for and assessments of assess English language skills for ELs.

zone of proximal development (ZPD)

According to Vygotsky, the difference between what a learner can do without help and what they can do with help.