

Advancing Inclusive Education Using Equity by Design for Students of Color with Learning Disabilities

EquiLearn Virtual Roundtable

Dr. Taucia Gonzalez, MAP Center Equity Fellow – Wisconsin

TRANSCRIPTION

Robin J: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to *the EquiLearn Virtual Roundtable*. My name is Robin Jackson, products coordinator with the Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center. And I'm serving as your host and technical director today. Today's virtual roundtable is entitled, *Advancing Inclusive Education using Equity by Design for Students of Color with Learning Disabilities*. This virtual roundtable will: push participants to commit to inclusive education beyond thinking about access to general education, to thinking about access to critical emancipatory spaces; introduce the notion of equity by design as an equity construct; and, introduce the University of Wisconsin's 2020 summer youth institute as a model for equity by design for students of color with or without learning disabilities. Please consider this a time and informal space to share your thoughts and insights, leverage learning from your other educators, and ask questions.

Robin J: During today's roundtable, we align to the four commitments when discussing the topic that we borrow from Singleton and Linton. First, stay engaged. Second, experience discomfort. Third, speak your truth. And lastly, expect and accept non-closure.

Cesur D: Good afternoon. My name is Cesur Dagli. I'm the Instructional and Graphic Designer at the MAP Center. I will be serving as the assistant technical director today. Please, feel free to send me chat message directly, if you are having any technical difficulties. *EquiLearn Virtual Roundtables* are intended to be interactive. Participants are asked to interact in real time. We are on teleconferencing format. Also, to reduce noise, we ask that all participants mute their microphones when not speaking. Lastly, the video

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camera function has been turned on. Thus if you have a webcam and you would like to join in, please feel free to do so by clicking the camera icon at the lower right of your screen. Again, please don't forget to mute your microphone when not speaking.

Robin J:

Thank you, Cesur. I am pleased to introduce our roundtable facilitator today. Dr. Taucia Gonzalez is an Assistant Professor of Special Education at the University of Arizona. Her research addresses issues of inequity and inclusion for dual language learners with and without learning disabilities. She is currently examining how youth participatory action research can be used as a social design experiment to support learning and advance equity for dual language learners with and without learning disabilities. The second strand of her research focuses on preparing teachers to work at the intersection of language and ability differences.

Robin J:

Dr. Gonzalez's work bridges general and special education, and has been featured in journals such as *The Journal of Multilingual Research* and *The European Journal of Special Needs Education*. She currently serves as an advisory board member for New York University's Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality. Dr. Gonzalez has spent close to 20 years working in and with Latinx communities as an educator and educational researcher, which has been recognized by Chicanos por la Causa with Esperanza Award and by the University of Wisconsin-Madison with an Outstanding Woman of Color Award. She currently teaches undergraduate and graduate courses that prepare future practitioners and researchers to create more inclusive educational systems across intersecting markers of difference.

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Robin J:

I'm also pleased to introduce our roundtable panelists. Dr. Madeline M. Hafner is the executive director of the MSAN Consortium and an associate scientist at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. MSAN, the Minority Student Achievement Network, is a national coalition of 27 multi-racial, suburban/urban school districts working together to understand and eliminate racial opportunity gaps that persists in our schools. In her role, she works with educators and researchers to carry out the mission of MSAN by collaboratively designing and conducting research, analyzing policies, and examining practices that affect the academic performance of students of Color. Her research and teaching interests focus on developing educators' attitudes and beliefs regarding issues of diversity, equity and social justice, and collaborative university-school partnerships.

Robin J:

Joan J. Hong is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research interests include issues of race, ethnicity, and social design research inspired by cultural historical activity theory to address disparities in academic, emotional, and behavioral outcomes. Welcome all. And now, I'll hand it over to Dr. Gonzalez.

Dr. Gonzalez:

Thank you, Robin. Well, I'm actually going to start by turning it over to Joan Hong so that she can kind of start by situating our discussion in the context of Wisconsin. And just to kind of get that little bit of collaboration and interaction going, I thought it might be interesting just to see since we're going to start talking with context, where the participants are at today. So maybe in the chat feature, everyone could throw in in the initials or the state

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that they're in, and that would just give us a kind of overview of who's in the room. All right. Ohio in the house.

Joan H:

Great. Thank you Robin, and thank you Dr. Gonzalez. So we thought it might be helpful to share a little bit about the context we were in for the work we're wanting to share. And we would like for all of you to also think about not only your current local context, but how it has changed historically. This historical changes can provide a lot of insight into how educational inequities accumulate for some groups over time. So for us in Wisconsin, the Wisconsin population still remains predominantly of European origin, accounting for approximately 87% of the state population. And the groups that we are focusing on are Latinx, which is the largest ethnic minority group in Wisconsin, making up 6.3%, and Hmong Americans, the largest Asian ethnic group in the state of Wisconsin, making up 0.9% of the state population. A large segment of the Hmong community started seeking asylum as political refugees after the political turmoil in Vietnam and Laos in 1975. But despite Wisconsin as being perceived as having liberal context, students from these two ethnic groups, are the most over-labeled, segregated, underserved, over-assessed, and often misunderstood, in public schools. And we're focusing on Latinx and Hmong students who remain the most marginalized groups in our local context.

Dr. Gonzalez:

As I believe everyone on this call probably knows, context really matters. And it's exciting to see how many different parts of the US are represented in the room today. But context shapes opportunities. It can shape risks. We know that being a Latinx student in Wisconsin, for example, is very different experience than being a Latinx student in Arizona. A decade ago, in the Madison area, the school system demographics were very different

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than they are today, and those rapidly changing demographics have resulted in the local school district in Madison, one out of every four students are classified as English language learners. So there's a lot of cultural linguistic diversity there, and not only in Madison, but many schools in the Midwest, if you're in an educational context where you've seen a lot of shifts, you can throw something, some sort of emoji or something over into that chat feature actually. I don't know if they have emojis. You can throw an exclamation mark if you're like, "Yeah. This resonates." But while we're kind of sharing... All right. I see some exclamations. While we're kind of sharing about the context, and some work that we've done in the Wisconsin area, I want you to think about the implications for your local context. We'll move onto the next slide.

Dr. Gonzalez:

So prior to the current project that we'll be discussing today, me and two of my former UW colleagues, Mariana Pacheco, and Yang Sao Xiong conducted a smaller pilot grant. And we wanted to understand the work the Hmong and Latinx parents and youth, with and without disabilities, the work they were doing to create more inclusive educational environments, because, you know, if we're in institutions of higher education or even in local school systems, we have our ideas of what counts as inclusive education. But for us, it was really important to understand what were the parents saying and doing? What were the youth saying and doing? What was inclusive education to them?

Dr. Gonzalez:

And some of the things that we learned from that smaller project was that the youth, despite, you know, educational research and literature that's out there that really positions them as low achieving students or disengaged students, that's not what we found at all. They recognized the importance

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of things such as rigorous course work. So we heard a lot from these high school youth about their desire to really access courses like AP classes, honors classes. But they also talked about a lot of barriers that they encountered. And the barriers ranged from just getting access to the classes, but once they got in the classrooms, feeling like they were the only one, that lack of representation. So that space really speaking to them in ways that said, "You don't really belong here." But other barriers also, such as meeting with school counselors and really being counseled out of enrolling in those classes, sometimes due to their English proficiency, sometimes due to their learning disability, but really receiving subtle cues that maybe it wasn't the best idea for them.

Dr. Gonzalez: So that's one aspect of that study that really stuck with us, and we wanted to really respond to what we learned from these Hmong and Latinx youth by providing them not only access to spaces, but create spaces that would tap into their cultural and linguistic heritages and resources, but also provide them with the support so that they can engage in critical and rigorous learning environments. And if we could go on to the next slide, that was kind of the pre-work to the study we wanted to share today.

Dr. Gonzalez: We were fortunate enough to be awarded an internal grant from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. And this is called a transform grant, and these were awarded to inter-disciplinary teams that could bring scholars from different disciplines together to really bring innovative solutions to social and scholarly problems. And that's what we wanted to do. We really wanted to be innovative and dream big for the... You know, really thinking about the community members we had gotten to know through our research. So our grant is entitled, "Socio-critical Literacy for Community

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Change and Equity: Participatory Action Research with Bilingual Hmong and Latinx Youth with and without Disabilities.” And this is going to fund a summer institute. This is going to be next summer, so the summer of 2020. And we're designing a summer institute that'll be... It's four plus an additional week, so five weeks long, for 30 bilingual Hmong and Latinx youth with and without disabilities who will come and spend their summer with us on the UW Madison campus, and really engage in some exciting work that we'll be telling you about today.

Dr. Gonzalez:

And I just also want to point out this lovely poster that was created by one of our UW... I say “our”...I was previously at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Now I'm at the University of Arizona. But this poster was created by a University of Wisconsin-Madison art student. He read through the proposal, got the idea of the spirit of the proposal, and created some art to really represent what our proposal was.

Dr. Gonzalez:

If we can move on to the next slide. So this is what I would call a dream team for us. So we had this money. We got to really... Okay, dream big, I guess you could say. And very inter-disciplinarily too. So we thought about, in order to create this incredible space for the Hmong and Latinx bilingual students with and without learning abilities, like who should be a part of that team? And we have Mariana Pacheco who's an associate professor in bilingual education at UW-Madison. Myself, I'm a special education professor at the University of Arizona. Yang Sao Xiong, he's an assistant professor in Asian American studies and social work at UW-Madison. You'll be hearing and learning from Dr. Madeline Hafner today. She's the executive director of the MSAN Consortium. And I'm so excited for you to hear from her because her work is so important of really bridging,

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you know, these big dreams and big ideas in the academy with how do you put that into practice in schools and districts? And how do we do a lot of that work? And Joan Hong, you already heard a little on her introduction. How lucky are we that we were able to find a project assistant for this study who is already very excited in social design experiments and grounded in cultural historical activity theory? So this is our dream team. We'll also have some other research assistants working with us.

Dr. Gonzalez:

So, for some of you, let's see. I'm curious if anyone's heard of this phrase, equity by design? And you can just in the chat feature, throw in a yes or a no or a little or never. All right. So we have some people who are saying yes, yes, no. Okay. So we have a range of experience, but to me, equity by design is a really exciting and innovative way of approaching the work that I'm interested in. It's also known as social design experiments, and we really draw heavily from the work of scholars like Chris Gutierrez and Jurow. Because an equity by design, it helps me as a special education professor to really think beyond inclusion, just access to spaces.

Dr. Gonzalez:

We knew that kids not only wanted access to spaces, but they wanted spaces that spoke to who they were, and that they felt like they belonged in. So traditional models of inclusive education might start by getting these people access to AP courses or honors courses. But once they're in it, if they're struggling, they might provide some sort of remediation. Equity by design kind of flips that on its head, and rather than remediating students, we start with equity. When we design spaces, we think about how do we re-mediate, and that comes from Chris Gutierrez's work. How do we remediate these learning ecologies so that students are able to come in, and these things have already been thought of. We're centering equity,

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starting with equity. So rather than remediating students, we're remediating learning ecologies. And in the case of our study, youth participatory action research, or YPAR, that played an important role. We used YPAR as a remedial tool. So we were thinking, "How do we design a space that really centers equity, but also lets youth drive this space?" And for us, YPAR was a very important method in that.

Dr. Gonzalez:

Many of you might be thinking, "All right. I'm in a school or I'm in a district and no one's plopped \$250,000 in my lap to dream big." So that's where I think it's going to be really important for you to hear from my colleague, Madeline Hafner, who's a major part of this project. She's been working closely with schools and districts across the nation that are really figuring out ways to engage in this type of work with youth, especially through MSAN. So what I think is really exciting is, not only are they using YPAR or methods to remediate spaces, they're really letting the youth be a part of that remediation itself. They're the ones that are remediating spaces as well. So Madeline, do you want to go ahead and tell them a little bit about that work?

Dr. Hafner:

Thank you, Taucia. I appreciate that. Hello everyone. If we could flip one more slide? Good afternoon. My name is Madeline Hafner, and the MSAN Consortium is a group of 27 school districts across the United States who see institutionalized racism as the biggest barrier to student success for their students of Color. And so what we do is seek to address the significant opportunity gaps that persist in our schools through three main core practices. Our theory of change really relies on the belief that when schools and researchers engage in collaborative research, when we convene adults and gather as communities of practice, and when we lift

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student voice, our students can come to school in their fuller selves, and achieve with no boundaries placed on them by us.

Dr. Hafner:

And so, I think what's exciting about this project, and with a few of the examples I'm going to share with you is, YPAR as a way of engaging in research, youth participatory action research, is a significant method our districts have used to move their equity agendas along. I always say when those of us... When the white educators sit back and close our mouths and listen... I love when people say, "Oh, we give youth voice." "Well, no. I shut my mouth. I don't give youth anything. They have that voice. I just closed mine for a few minutes." And so that's what MSAN districts really seek to do is the adults provide that support and that frame and the students engage in the activities and really can move, have moved the equity barometers in our districts in really significant ways.

Dr. Hafner:

And so, while YPAR... You can see here on your slide that we have defined it... brought in several definitions that it's a youth-driven collaborative method, centralizes the experience of youth, and aims to transform knowledge and practices that improve the lives of marginalized youth. What we have seen in our districts is former YPAR projects in affiliation with university researchers or research centers, but what I'm going to speak to is a more informal way we have utilized youth participatory action research to really center students' voice, and the outcome of that engagement, talk about re-inventing learning ecologies. It's profound.

Dr. Hafner:

And what I'll speak to is our organization provides an annual leadership development opportunity for our equity leaders. So a group of 200 to 250 amazing racial justice student leaders come and we walk them through a modified YPAR process of learning about gathering data, providing them

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spaces where their own stories are centered and valued, their own histories are brought to the forefront, and a light is shined on those. And we ask them to identify the barriers they experience in their schools, the biggest barriers to their success. And then they come with a variety of data to cull through. They have either engaged in formal or informal data collection prior to our three days of intensive training.

Dr. Hafner:

And what happens is, at the end of this training, for lack of a better word, is our students leave with an action plan for change. So they have placed their stories at the center. They have worked with youth from all over the country to develop action plans to reinvent environments, whether that's their high school classroom that's the physical environments, hallways. Or that psychological environments, creating spaces where students of Color find home, whether that's the formation of a black student union or a Hmong student association. They develop these actions plans for change, and then what is amazing is, they go home. And I have to say, it sounds a little hokey at first, but until you've witnessed the follow-through by the adult educators in the district when they return, you almost kind of can't believe it. It's true.

Dr. Hafner:

And one example that I'd like to give is the students left one of our training sessions and they're supported back in their district, and they said their biggest barrier to success is their experience with racial microaggressions across environments, but particularly around advanced placement courses. They didn't see students who looked like themselves in AP. They didn't feel like the adults invited them or wanted them to be there, all the things Taucia talked about in that seed grant data. And what they felt was the most strategic way to... It wasn't about them being more bold in asking for what

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they needed from the school counselors, although that's a route others took. They felt like combating racial microaggressions was going to give them the most benefit.

Dr. Hafner:

And so what they did is create a public service announcement, a video, describing to the student body what was a racial microaggression. And this is if you just look up on Google, Middleton Cross Plains Area School District racial microaggressions, you'll come up with an 8-minute PSA geared towards high schools students written, directed, and produced by high school students, talking about what is a racial microaggression, how it makes individual students feel, and what students can do to stop engaging in them. And what these young people knew was, they knew who in their high school had the social capital to help educate the white students.

Dr. Hafner:

And so what they did was, they asked the captains of the volleyball team and the basketball team to do training with them on racial equity, and taught them the principles of what is a racial microaggression, how does it make individuals feel, how do you perpetrate them, what does it mean to be an ally--all these things. And then the two captains tell their stories of their coming to understanding of what does it mean to perpetrate a racial microaggression, and how their behaviors changed. These young people, when we sit back and we give them tools and we give them space, Taucia, you said it so well, spaces and supports, they know exactly what to do and how to target the key... They're so savvy, how to gather the key players at the table, again, to serve the greater goal in the best way possible.

Dr. Hafner:

Again, not something that is going to be the most earth-shattering thing anyone's ever known about as a PSA, but when you see the power it's had for three years now running in that high school, it's a pretty profound

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example of what it means to support youth in a more informal frame of youth participatory action research. And you can see here in each of the elements that we've outlined, researcher tools, youth-driven topics, methods, findings and dissemination, every single element of that was present in the process we walked the students through.

Dr. Gonzalez:

So one thing I'd like to add on to that is... Oh, and thank you, Heidi, for adding a link to the video. One thing I'd like to add on to this, if you look at the research on youth participatory action research, oftentimes you seldom see mentioned students with disabilities being purposefully included in this research. And that's one thing, when we were looking at designing this research project, we wanted to purposefully make sure that youth with learning disabilities were included in this because oftentimes, these are youth that have the least amount of access to these spaces. And when you think about new and critical and exciting, innovative programs at schools, who normally has access to them, right?

Dr. Gonzalez:

So this is really important to us as we were moving forward with this work. And if you look over at the little flow chart, that kind of... If you look at this, it doesn't tell you how to do YPAR, and that's because, I mean, YPAR can take many different shapes and flavors. And part of that is, by design, it has to be flexible and that's because if we really want youth to play a role in driving the research, there has to be some sort of framework and structure for them to enter the work. But it also has to be flexible because we don't know what direction they'll want to go. And I love the example of the public service announcement because, I mean, the dissemination of their findings can happen in many different ways. For some people it might be performances, spoken word performances, research presentations, PSAs.

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Are there any other creative dissemination means that you've seen, Madeline?

Dr. Hafner:

No, that's... If I think of one or two, I'll post them in the chat.

Dr. Gonzalez:

Okay. And this flowchart, I also want to point out a couple things. When we talk about we've designed this space that also includes bringing tools, and I kind of think of them as equity tools into that space. And you'll see here, we have listed a few of them. Testimonials, and this is a form of writing where youth are really examining their own self within their context. But I also put theories in there because sometimes when you go to work with youth, especially youth of Color, youth with disabilities, you'll realize how oftentimes, they've also internalized these dominant narratives about the myth of meritocracy, or you work hard, and you get what's yours. So sometimes these lenses that they've internalized, we need to bring new tools into the classroom through theories.

Dr. Gonzalez:

Like you know, we've brought in Tara Yosso's work on community cultural wealth. We've brought in intersectionality theory so that youth have new tools to see the same situations in entirely new ways. And that's part of youth participatory action research. It's not just youth engaging in research. It's also this critical consciousness where they're really examining and understanding their situation through new lenses. And to me, that's also very... a decolonization process because oftentimes, when you don't have those tools, you're internalizing part of this legacy of colonization, as well. So youth... and if you have any questions about that... The slides aren't changing. Okay. I'm just looking over at some of the questions as they're coming up. If you have any questions about that too, feel free to throw

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them up there, and we can talk about that a little more. But if you move down to the third block where it says methods... oh, thank you.

Dr. Gonzalez:

Where it says methods, the research methods really depend on the questions the youth are interested in asking. So we don't go in saying, "Oh, we're going to use this method." We go in first looking at what questions they're interested, what do they want to explore? And then our role as adults supporting youth, is to help them, as kind of like an apprenticeship model, help them really appropriate how to use the research methods they'll need. So it might be youth learning how to write interview questions, create surveys, and then being able to go out and use those research tools to collect the data that they need.

Dr. Gonzalez:

And then finally, it's also finding a way to really disseminate their findings. And dissemination, I love it that Madeline's working in these schools where adults are really listening. And I've worked on other YPAR projects where there are really mixed reaction from adults. But I'm going to say, even with those mixed reactions, youth are learning this critical consciousness that doesn't end when the YPAR project is over. And this is an important form of data that really pushes back on most of the data that comes out of schools, which is very adult-centered. So it's actually a wonderful, powerful opportunity for adults to think about inclusive education, to think about histories of exclusion or just, like Madeline said, learn from youth. I mean, what are they experience? They're the experts in their own experiences, right? So it's not only dissemination, it's really valuable forms of data that schools can tap into if they're open to that, right? So I don't know. If I see a question, am I supposed to...Robin, do you all stop when there's a question or do you want us to just stop and answer any questions that come up?

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Robin J: Cesur, are you seeing any questions coming in over there? It really is up to you, Dr. Gonzalez, if you want to wait to the end, or if you wouldn't mind, if Cesur might interrupt with a question he might see.

Dr. Gonzalez: Okay. Well, I'll speak to Ina's question, how did youth learn about the project? There's probably... Oh no, that's fine. There are probably a lot of different answers to that depending on what project. For our project for the GANAS... Well, I haven't told you about it yet. But for our summer institute next summer, we will be spending this entire school year recruiting in local schools, and that also for us includes, working closely... Teachers are very busy. We have bilingual resource teachers that are also very busy. But we will be recruiting through flyers, through key contacts in schools. And a previous YPAR project that I was involved in in Arizona, we really had a lot of support from the school principal. So he created an after school club for us. So that answer, it depends on the project. Madeline, how have you in the past recruited students, or told them about it?

Dr. Hafner: All of our districts have some sort of racial equity student group, or groups, that meet. For our MSAN districts, that's an ongoing sort of practice that they engage in, at the high school and at the middle school level. And several of our districts even have elementary students who have their own equity groups that meet to start that feedback loop, as well, for kids to have the opportunity to share their ideas with the leadership, with their teachers, and with the building-level leaders.

Dr. Gonzalez: Oh, and I'll add on to this. This is one of my favorite recruitment tools. We had a YPAR project ran at a school for multiple years at the junior high level. And what was so fun was that we would have siblings of former YPAR students then come through and they already knew about it from

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their older brother, sister. So when it starts becoming a family thing, I think that's really fun, too.

Dr. Gonzalez: We'll move on to the next slide, but yeah, feel free if you have questions to just throw them over in the chat function. So our 2020 youth institute... And I'm going to stop and just say goodbye to Madeline. I know she's going to have to leave in a few minutes because she's a mother-scholar.

Dr. Hafner: Thank you everyone. I'm taking my second grader to her back-to-school ice cream social. But if there are any specific questions about MSAN, I've listed my email address in the chat box. Thank you all for being here today, and I will respond to any questions I can. Have a good school year everyone.

Dr. Gonzalez: Bye Madeline.

Robin J: Thank you, Dr. Hafner.

Dr. Gonzalez: So our summer 2020 institute, we actually call it GANAS, is Gira Academica Para Nuestros Alumnos Sociocriticos. And so the acronym is GANAS. But GANAS is also a word in Spanish and it kind of translates into determination or desire. It's kind of like, "Go get it." So we call our GANAS institute, the purpose of it is to advance these equity-driven learning ecologies to promote students making meaning and critical thinking, and advance social change. So I imagine most of the people are more interested in the practice side of it than the research side of it, but just in case anyone is, our research question guiding what we will be doing next summer is, how do bilingual Latino and Hmong youth with and without disabilities develop socio-critical literacies through youth participatory action

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research? The English translation of GANAs is Academic Journeys for our Sociocritical Students. See, it sounds much better in Spanish. Okay, and if we can move onto the next slide.

Cesur D: Dr. Gonzalez, we have a question from Margaret. How the district become a part of MSAN or is it open to more districts?

Dr. Gonzalez: Oh, goodness. That's a great question and I wish Dr. Hafner was still here. I know they have a wonderful website, and you can reach out to her. She's so wonderful to work with and collaborate with. And they have MSAN schools in districts across the nation. So let's see, I'm not sure where you are Margaret. Let's see. Yeah, I'm not sure where you're located but I think Madeline would be able to tell you if there's anything happening near you because it is... Or how to become an MSAN school.

Joan H: I think it's in Madison, DC area, and Arizona, and I'm forgetting a few others. But yeah, that's across the country. Shall we move on to the next slide? Okay. Dr. Gonzalez did a wonderful introduction to GANAS but I'll do a short recap of what we're going to be doing next year. So I'm the PA, and as the PA for this project, I'll be doing a lot of the preparation for having these young people on campus. And we anticipate having 30 bilingual Hmong and Latinx youth with and without learning disabilities. And they will be spending four weeks engaging in youth action research in a multilingual program. And we will be having bilingual Hmong/English and bilingual Spanish/English instructors. And we'll be training them throughout the school year and they will be spending this year enrolled in an independent study with Dr. Pacheco, and immersing themselves in the YPAR and equity by design literature because it's not only helping youth engage in research,

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but supporting them in becoming social critics in order to create community change.

Joan H:

So during GANAS, which will happen next summer, we'll be collecting students' writing assignments, digital stories, and discussion board posts based on their engagement with socio-critical literacies and the YPAR work. And we will also be collecting students' testimonials, which would reveal youth's new and shifting perceptions and critical consciousness as social change agents across the five-week program. So they will be engaging in YPAR work for four weeks and, during the fifth week of the program, the youth will work on preparing for their research dissemination at a youth research symposium that will include their families, company-based organization reps, researchers, and other community members. And while we are creating this space for the youth, we also wanted to compensate for their expertise and service to the community through their research, so each of them will be receiving a stipend of \$500.

Dr. Gonzalez:

We thought that was really important because teenagers love their summers. So we're not using the money to get them there, but we're using that money to make them say the work they're doing is really important, and their time's really important, and they're choosing to spend a summer learning to become researchers. And in the GANAS program, it is going to be a multilingual space. We'll have Hmong, Spanish, and English used as we build community and engage in research. And one thing that I love about YPAR, especially when youth start going out into the community to conduct research, what they start to realize is that when you go outside of schools, it's really helpful to be multilingual. Oftentimes, you're in schools, and English is the language of instruction. There's a lot of capital

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embedded in English as a language. But when you go out into the real world, that power... That really shifts. So they also start seeing the power of being multilingual, the power of being able to move across different communities.

Dr. Gonzalez:

What I'm really excited about is, a year from now, I'm really hoping that we could have another virtual roundtable with our YPAR youth because I think by then, they're going to have a lot to share with this group. I think probably everyone that's on this call is committed to equity, committed to inclusion, really committed to creating better systems for kids. But one thing I hope that you get out of this message is that youth really need to be a part of those changes. If we're only working from the top down, then we're missing out on a lot. So we really need to have that data from youth, that input from youth, and listen to youth so that we can create more equitable systems.

Dr. Gonzalez:

I want to make sure we have some time for questions so we'll just kind of pause right here and open it up, and I'd love to hear what other people are doing. Maybe someone's doing something similar. Maybe someone's like, "Oh. I've always wanted to do something like this with youth." But this is a great time for us to get connected, or just kind of share in ideas. So I'm going to stop for a second and see if we have any questions.

Robin J:

I want to remind everyone that you can post your questions or comments in the chat function, but you can also speak through the microphone as well, if you like.

Dr. Gonzalez:

And while we're waiting for questions, I know I found out where people are geographically, but it'll also be really great to just find out how you're

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connected to the educational systems, if you're in schools, if you're at universities, if you're working in nonprofits. That'd be really neat to see.

Joan H: Dr. Gonzalez, I think Wayne had a question previously. Moving forward, how would you suggest we contextualize what we learned today?

Dr. Gonzalez: That's a great question. So I mean, I guess a few things. One thing we wanted to really foreground is that context matters. I don't think it's a matter of, "Oh. Here's something. Let me replicate it." That's not the kind of work that we're trying to do. I would say that not only thinking about the demographics of your context, but like Joan started off today with giving us kind of a historical gaze of how the local context has shifted. I think that's really important to understanding how different groups in local context have experienced access, have experienced exclusion, and who the school systems have really been set up for.

Dr. Gonzalez: Because oftentimes, school systems don't keep up so well with how the demographics are shifting and changing. So a lot of districts are in situations right now where they're scrambling to make those changes. So, I mean, I guess I would always say start with a local, and kind of like you know what we did with our pilot grant, it might just be being able to start to talk and listen to different groups of community members, whether it be parents, whether it be youth. What are they saying? What do they want? What are their hopes and dreams and desires for their own educations?

Robin J: We have a question here from Rafi. Are you able to provide us with some details about the GANAS agenda during the 5-week period, and when is the institute slated to begin?

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Dr. Gonzalez: Well, that's a great question, also. So we, like I said, YPAR is structured to be somewhat flexible, and Joan was explaining earlier, we actually... Part of creating the curriculum for GANAS, we have our rough outline, what we want to accomplish, what our outcomes are, but we will spend this entire academic year through an independent study, working closely with our graduate assistants so that we're creating the curriculum along the way, but again, creating it with flexibility. So it's not like we yet have a 9-to-2 agenda for the GANAS program, but I really think that there's some good resources out there that kind of break down what YPAR could look like and maybe a year from now, we could kind of say, "This isn't what you do 9 to 2 but this is what we did, and you can think about what that could look like. What would and wouldn't work in your context." And then, this is going to start the, and Joan, correct me if I'm wrong, the last two weeks of June, and then moving into the first three weeks of July.

Joan H: No, I think you're right about the dates.

Dr. Gonzalez: Yeah. And then that last week, when we're at the dissemination week, when students are working on how they're going to disseminate their research, the youth research symposium we'll be having, that'll really bring different, I mean, you could call them stakeholders, or different people committed to education in different ways, together. We'll have the GANAS family members, the youths' family members, community members, and researchers as well, coming together to learn from the youth. And of course, I hope the Midwest and Plains Equity Center will be able to be a part of that learning from the youth, as well.

Speaker 6: Hey. My name is Linae Javis. I'm actually sitting in for Jen Hildendorff. I'm from the Transition Improvement Grant in Wisconsin. This year we are

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heading up a community of practice. We're honing in on having different urban, suburban, and rural community of practices. And I just wanted to say, boy, by pulling in the student piece in this, I think that is the thing that we didn't talk about as a group, and I will bring this back and say, you know, "We need to have their voices at the table." Because any time, obviously, that I feel... Well, we feel, that when youth are in the driver's seat, things just seem to move much more quickly and people are willing to listen. So I just love this whole setup, and I can't wait to share.

Dr. Gonzalez: Thanks for sharing that, Jen. I really appreciate that. And just that point Jen made at the end, sometimes adults, we don't do things because there's not enough time. It would take so many months to do that. And I have seen first-hand, when youth are doing things, they move quickly. They are not afraid and they don't have the same like, there's not enough time. They move quickly and get things done. It's really amazing. So thank you for pointing that out.

Dr. Gonzalez: And, as we close up the conversation, I just want to say I'm so grateful for the opportunity to be able to share this work. You can probably tell, we're very excited about it. Even though I no longer live in Madison, I'm very committed to the youth and the community. And I'll be spending a lot of time commuting for this project over the next year. Please, I believe our contact information is embedded in this presentation. I know all of you are also engaged in really important equity work so don't hesitate to reach out to share what you're doing and think about how we can create these collaborations of people interested in really centering the voices and supporting youth in creating this kind of change.

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Robin J:

Thank you, Dr. Gonzalez and Joan, and off with her two-year-old and ice cream, and I'm not jealous at all, Dr. Hafner, for being with us today. We also want to thank each of you for participating in today's EquiLearn Virtual Roundtable, *Advancing Inclusive Education Using Equity by Design for Students of Color with Learning Disabilities*. We want to also provide a special, special thanks to Dr. Gonzalez, Dr. Hafner, and Miss Hong for taking time out of their schedules to be part of this round table and sharing their expertise with us. In addition, we would like to highlight a couple of resources. The first one is one of our *Equity by Design* briefs entitled, *Disability in English Learners: Intersections of Civil Rights and Best Practice*. This brief previews civil rights law, federal disability laws, and related best practices to help schools conceptualize non-discriminatory effective services to their growing English learner, also known as English-language learners, or ELLs populations, particularly for students with disabilities and those students suspected of having disabilities.

Robin J:

The second resource we would like to share is one of our *Equity Dispatch* newsletters entitled, *The State of Education for Students with Disabilities: Equity Considerations*. This edition of *Equity Dispatch*, I'm sorry, states that every child deserves access to, and the ability to participate in high quality learning experiences, deconstructing notions of ability and disability, and decreasing disproportionality within special education, are important steps towards inclusive educational systems.

Robin J:

Next, we want to encourage you to visit our website for tools and resources, and our Equity Resource Library, such as our bi-monthly *Equity Dispatch* publication, our *Equity Spotlight* podcast series, and our Equity Tools. You can access all materials on our website, as well as stay abreast of

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upcoming events via our calendar of events. Finally, we have another upcoming Virtual Roundtable. Please join us on September 30th, 2019, for our roundtable entitled, *Magnet Schools in the 21st Century: Viable Integration Strategies or Sites of Segregation?* In this Virtual Roundtable, individuals from districts across the Midwest and Plains regions that utilize magnet school admissions in their student assignment policies will discuss the pros and cons of magnet schools in the current school choice context, and offer insights about their efforts to provide integrated schooling environments. For more information, please visit our website.

Robin J:

Thank you for your participation. We would like to hear about how you felt about this session. Cesur's already provided the link a few times in the chat window. Please provide your opinions and feedback on the session in our post-session questionnaire, which has been posted. Thank you so much for attending.

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