[Image Description: Black male-presenting, elementary-aged student with a disability in a wheelchair, doing schoolwork at a desk in a classroom. Sitting behind him are two other students at their desks.]

Equity by Design:

An Intersectional Approach to Building Inclusive Schools

Federico R. Waitoller

An Intersectional Approach to Building Inclusive Schools

Abstract

In this brief, I critique the traditional model of inclusion for students with disabilities in the U.S., and provide a blueprint for inclusive education that dismantles intersecting forms of inequity that are part of the DNA of what we consider the general education classroom. Informed by this blueprint for inclusive education, I provide an inventory of promising inclusive practices. Accordingly, the purposes of this brief are to:

1. Describe an intersectional approach to inclusive education
2. Provide concrete recommendations for implementing an intersectional approach to inclusive education
3. Offer a series of questions that can guide conversations among school professionals and stakeholders about developing intersectional and inclusive practices

Introduction

Inclusive education has been an international movement concerned with valuing student diversity, eliminating social exclusion, and transforming schools so that *all* students, regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, gender, and home language, experience a sense of belonging, learn together, and access quality educational opportunities (Aisncow, Booth, & Dyson, 2006). Notions of social justice based on fairness, equality, and valuing all students have always served to justify inclusive education efforts (Christensen & Rizvi, 1996). Despite these common broad features, inclusive education has been an educational movement with multiple meanings, interpretations, and struggles (Kozleski, Artiles, & Waitoller, 2014).

For instance, while the international central aim of inclusive education is the educational inclusion of *all* students (see Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, UNESCO 1994), U.S. inclusive education has remained focused on mainstreaming students receiving special education into general education settings (Artiles & Kozleski, 2007; Baglieri, Bejoian, Broderick, Connor, & Valle, 2011). Such focus on mainstreaming students with disabilities is informed by a *medical* or *deficit* model of disability (Dudley-Marling & Burns, 2014). According to this model, disability is a biological or psychological deficit that resides inside the individual, and acts as an undesirable trait that requires cure or remediation. It also requires modifying the instruction of the general education classroom in order to accommodate students with disabilities' individual needs. The least restrictive environment (LRE) provision of the IDEA, for instance, is informed by a deficit model of disability. Dudley-Marling and Burns (2014) explained

> The assumption is that the regular classroom is the LRE for every child but not necessarily the most

appropriate placement for all children…The regular classroom is the appropriate placement for students with disabilities if they are able to function in the regular classroom without significantly altering the regular education curriculum or student expectations ... If students are not able learn the regular curriculum with supports, and then their performance in class is taken as evidence that the regular classroom is not the appropriate placement for them (p. 19).

Thus, the deficit model of inclusion leaves the educational practices and social arrangements of the general education unaltered. Only those students with disabilities who can assimilate to the general education curriculum with minimum modifications and accommodations can have access to the general education classroom. Students with disabilities are included in the educational practices within which they need to conform, or otherwise segregated in separate classrooms or schools. Thus, the deficit model of inclusion takes a minimalistic approach based on few modifications to accommodate students to a curriculum that was not designed for them in the first place. A clear limitation of the deficit model of inclusive education is that it limits our understanding of exclusion, and consequentially, our potential for transforming schools into inclusive educational spaces.

The rates of inclusion of students with disabilities signal the inadequacies of a deficit model of inclusion. National-level data indicates that, in general, the percentage of students spending more than 80% of their

school day in the general education classroom has increased over time, from 42% in 2002, to 63.5% in 2017 (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). There was also a significant decrease in the percentage of students with disabilities spending less than 40% of the school day in the general education classroom, from 29% in 2002, to 13% in 2011 (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). Yet, there are significant disparities in inclusion rates across disability categories. Students whose need and strengths allow them to be included in the general education classroom with only minor accommodations and modifications are much more likely to be included in such settings than those who require more substantive transformation of the general education practices (Kurth, Morningstar, & Kozleski, 2015). As of 2017, for instance, 87% of students identified a with speech or language impairment, 72% of students identified with learning disabilities,

[Image Description: Male-presenting, elementary-aged student of Color sitting outside, holding a pencil between his toes, writing on a piece of paper clipped to a board]

68% of students identified with a visual impairment, and 67% of students identified with other health impairments spend more

than 80% of the school day in the general education classroom (U.S Department of Education, 2019). In contrast, only 17% of students identified with intellectual disabilities, 13% percent of students with multiple disabilities, 24% of students identified as deaf-blind, and 40% of students with Autism were included in the general education classroom for more than 80% of the school day (U.S Department of Education, 2019). Thus, a medical model of inclusion that focuses only on accommodations and modifications results in inequitable outcomes; it is a selective model of inclusive education.

Furthermore, racial inequities continue to haunt efforts to include students with disabilities in schools and classrooms. Black, Native American, and Latinx students are all disproportionally identified as eligible for special education at national and state levels (Sullivan & Bal, 2013; Voulgarides, Fergus, & Thorius, 2017). Once in special education, Black and Latinx students are more likely to spend time outside of the general education classroom than their White peers with the same disability labels. For instance, only 59% of Black students with disabilities and 62% of Latinx students with disabilities spend more than 80 % of the school day in the general education classroom in comparison to 67% of White students (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Even in school districts that had high rates of including students with disabilities in the general education classroom, Black students were two to three times less likely to be included in such educational settings, a phenomenon even more pronounced among Black students from low-income households (Leroy & Kulik, 2004). After conducting a

national-level study on patterns of inclusion for students with disabilities in the general education classroom, Leroy and Kulik (2004) concluded, "inclusive education is White, middle class, suburban phenomenon for students with sensory and/or physical disabilities. Conversely, a non-White student with a cognitive impairment living in a poor urban district has little chance of accessing inclusive education" (p. 16). These inequities have remained consistent over time and have been documented in both traditional and charter schools (Waitoller & Maggin, 2018) and at both the state and district levels (e.g., de Valenzuela, Copeland, Qi, & Park, 2006; Skiba, Ploni-Staudiner, Gallini, Simmons, & Feggins-Azziz, 2006; Sullivan, 2011).

[Image Description: Black female-presenting, elementary-aged student in a library reading braille.]

Black, Latinx, and Native American students also continue to receive disproportionally harsh disciplinary sanctions (e.g. suspensions and expulsions) compared to their White and non-disabled peers who engage in the same or similar behaviors (Skiba, Horner,

Chung, Rauch, May, & Tobin, 2011). As a result of racial inequities in disciplinary systems that pathologize the behaviors of non-white students and place them at a greater risk of incarceration (Adams & Erevelles, 2016; Broderick & Leonardo, 2016), the school-to-prison pipeline has been particularly damaging for students of color with disabilities (Annamma, 2018). Taken together, these varied forms of exclusion, marginalization, segregation, and victimization have contributed to unequal educational opportunities and diminished outcomes for students with disabilities, particularly those who are also marginalized by race and ethnicity.

Thus, a deficit model of inclusive education has severe limitations to achieve educational equity. Rather than providing accommodations and modifications to a normative curriculum, we need a blueprint for inclusive education that dismantles intersecting forms of inequities that are part of the DNA of what we consider the general education classroom. In this brief, I offer a definition of inclusive education to guide practice and policy. Such definition, attends closely to intersecting forms of inequities. Informed by this definition, I provide an inventory of promising practices to dismantle intersecting forms of inequities and develop an inclusive school. The purposes of this brief are the following:

1. Describe an intersectional approach to inclusive education;
2. Provide concrete recommendations for implementing an intersectional approach for inclusive education;
3. Provide a series of questions that can guide conversations among school professionals and stakeholders about developing intersectional and inclusive practices

Intersectional Inclusive Education Principles

The goal of an intersectional inclusive education is to dismantle intersecting educational inequities and build a more just, pluralistic, and emancipatory democracy (Waitoller & Annamma, 2017; Waitoller & Artiles, 2013; Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013). To guide such a large undertaking, an intersectional inclusive education draws from three interrelated principles from a social justice framework (Fraser, 1997, 2008): economic redistribution, cultural recognition, and political representation. When considered together, these three principles can inform an intersectional and radical vision of inclusive education that calls for strategic alliances to dismantle inequities at the intersections of multiple "isms" (e.g. racism, ableism, classism, and patriarchism). Accordingly, inclusive education is a continuous struggle toward

(a) the redistribution of quality opportunities to learn and participate in educational programs, (b) the recognition and value of differences as reflected in content, pedagogy, and assessment tools, and (c) the opportunities for marginalized groups to represent themselves in decision-making processes that advance and define claims of exclusion and the respective solutions that affect their children's educational futures. (Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013, p. 35)

Economic Redistribution

Struggles for social justice based on redistribution are based on the economic aspects of justice and aim to address injustices based on misdistribution, where social and material resources (e.g., educational opportunities) are given to a small group of already-privileged people (Young, 1990). The redistributive dimension of justice emphasizes socioeconomic injustices and it is based on economic restructuring as a remedy. Struggles for justice based on redistribution of access to schools and quality opportunities to learn dominate the inclusive education debate (Gartner & Lipsky, 1999). Much of the inclusive education agenda has been concerned with providing equal educational access to the general education classroom and resources to students with disabilities. The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) is an iconic example of distributive justice as it stated, among other ideas, that "Every child has a fundamental right to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain acceptable levels of learning" and urged governments to "give the highest policy and budgetary priority to improve the education system to enable them to include all children regardless of individual differences or difficulties" (pp. viii-ix). A redistributive agenda calls for guaranteed access to high-quality, inclusive schools that welcome all students and provide all students with the learning, emotional, and behavioral supports needed to nurture their learning and create a sense of belonging. This means, all schools should be inclusive schools! Yet, such redistribution of access to schools and learning opportunities cannot be based on mere access to educational spaces (e.g., general education classroom) that are exclusionary by design for students with disabilities. A redistributive agenda calls for the restructuring of the social and learning arrangements of the so-called general education classroom so that access to learning is not based on limited accommodations and modifications to an exclusionary curriculum.

> ...we need a blueprint for inclusive education that dismantles intersecting forms of inequities that are part of the DNA of what we consider the general education classroom.

Cultural Recognition

Struggles for justice based on recognition are focused on the cultural aspects of justice. Struggles for justice based on cultural recognition came as a reaction to injustices based on misrecognition (Fraser, 1997), which include racist and ableist beliefs that promote deficit views of students. Cultural groups should be able to meaningfully participate in public institutions without having to leave their identities and cultural repertoires at the door, or suffer injustices because of them. Students' identities based on their race, gender, home language and ability should be recognized, valued, sustained, and empowered (Waitoller & Thorius, 2016). The remedy for

misrecognition is valuing students' identities and addressing them as legitimate forms of participation, learning, and being.
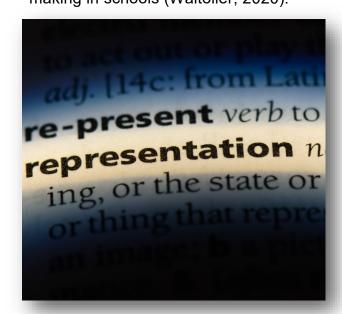
Justice struggles based on recognition have been at the core of inclusive education efforts for transforming schools. Inclusive education efforts have aimed to change schools' culture so that they nurture and create a sense of belonging for all students, regardless of their identities (e.g., ability, class, gender, language, sexual orientation) (Ainscow, Booth, & Dyson, 2006). For instance, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (Rose, Meyer, & Hitchcock 2006), a framework to develop inclusive curriculum, broadens the scope of how competence is defined in the classroom by asserting that various ways to participate in the classroom are legitimate, and that all students' abilities and cultural repertoires can be valued, recognized, and used for learning purposes. An inclusive education agenda based on cultural recognition requires schools to value and sustain students' cultural, racial, linguistic, and dis/abled identities (Waitoller & Thorius, 2016).

Political Representation

The representation principle focuses on the political aspects of justice. As Fraser (2008) wrote:

> The political dimension likewise sets the procedures for staging and resolving contests in both the economic and the cultural dimensions: it tells us not only who can make claims of redistribution

and recognition, but also how these claims are to be mooted and adjudicated. (p. 17)

Injustices based on representation arise when people are denied opportunities to participate in conversations advancing understanding and defining injustice (Fraser, 2008). As a result, they are kept from defining inequities and the corresponding solutions. An inclusive agenda based on representation requires creating and sustaining meaningful and participatory opportunities for parents, youth, children, and other relevant stakeholders to be a part of decision-making in schools (Waitoller, 2020).

[Image Description: Dictionary entry of the partial definition of "representation." Other words and partial phrases include: to act out or play, adj. [14c: from the Latin, re-present verb to, ing, or the state or, or the thing that.]

Though to a lesser extent, the representation principle of social justice has informed struggles for inclusive education. An example of the representation principle is evident in the rights gained by parents and children to

actively and meaningfully participate in the educational decisions that affect their lives such as those made in IEP meetings. However, parents of students with disabilities from minoritized backgrounds face barriers when asserting these rights. For example, school professionals tend to have negative perceptions of African-American families living in poverty, even when knowing little about the ways these families function (Harry, Klingner, & Hart, 2005). Similar examples were also found when examining the participation of parents of children who are labeled English Language Learners (ELL) in IEP meetings (Harry & Klingner 2006).

Intersectionality and Inclusive Education Principles

Students experience interacting forms of oppression and privilege based on their social location at the intersections race, ethnicity, gender, class, and ability/disability (Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2013). Thus, building from Intersectionality Theory (Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1991), an intersectional approach to build inclusive schools attends closely to how intersecting forms of "isms" (such as ableism and racism) affect the redistribution of educational services, the recognition of cultural and linguistic repertoires, and the political representation afforded to minoritized students and their families (Waitoller & Annamma, 2017). An intersectional approach to building inclusive schools equips school professionals to examine how privilege and marginalization are distributed according to students' interacting forms of oppression wherein ability, race, language, class, and gender

intersect (Waitoller & Annamma, 2017). Such approaches to inclusive education establish an economic, cultural, and political agenda to dismantle the normative center from which exclusionary educational practices thrive in schools.

There are at least two cautionary points about this definition of inclusive education. First, these principles are not prescriptive, but rather aim to provide guidance for developing inclusive schools. Second, one dimension should not be treated in isolation (Gewirtz, 2006). Struggles to achieve one kind of justice can compete and be in tension with struggles to achieve another kind of justice (Fraser, 1997). For example, a parent's efforts to obtain quality and well-resourced special education services for their children (i.e., struggles for redistribution) can result in disability labeling, which may contribute to stigmatization and stereotypes about minoritized students (i.e., injustice based on misrecognition). These tensions point out that struggles toward justice and inclusivity exist alongside other structural economic and political arrangements, over which stakeholders have limited or no control. Thus, enacting what an intersectional approach to inclusive education demands requires that one be a constant "cultural vigilante" (Corbett & Slee, 2000), who examines the ongoing and changing intersectional forms of inequities, while remaining alert for the constant threat of reemerging ableism, racism, and other forms of "isms" (Artiles & Kozleski, 2007).

Recommendations for Practice

Based on an intersectional approach to inclusive education, I provide the following recommendations for practice. This is by no means an exhaustive list of all possible promising practices nor do they provide a magic remedy to solve all school problems. The goals of these recommendations, and the guiding questions offered in the next section, are to contribute to the ignition of brave discussion to develop and implement more just and inclusive schools that attend to the multiplied effects of ableism, racism, and other forms of "isms." After all, an intersectional approach to inclusive education demands a continuous inquiry from schools' stakeholders to evaluate how the implementation of these recommendations can affect all students' learning experiences. It demands ongoing learning and action.

> An inclusive education agenda based on cultural recognition requires schools to value and sustain students' cultural, racial, linguistic, and dis/abled identities.

Develop and Implement an Intersectional Inclusive Pedagogy

An intersectional approach to inclusive education requires a pedagogy that can interrogate, contest, and provide an alternative to intersecting forms of "isms," and repair and avoid injustices based on misdistribution, misrecognition, and misrepresentation. Further, an intersecting inclusive pedagogy also seeks to develop and sustain identities that contribute to a participatory and just democracy in which all abilities, languages, literacies, races, and cultures are valued and treated as legitimate forms of participation.

Fortunately, we do not need to completely reinvent the wheel. An intersectional inclusive pedagogy combines and expands various pedagogical insights that focus on dismantling racism and ableism (or other "isms"). Though these ideas exist in separately, together they can offer a powerful transformation towards a more inclusive school. For instance, Waitoller and Thorius (2016) propose cross-pollinating pedagogies that value students' cultural and racial identities such as understanding "culturally sustaining pedagogy" (Paris & Alim, 2014) with inclusive instructional designs such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (Rose & Meyer, 2002).

First, an anti-ableist pedagogy should ensure that no one narrow form of learning and being is privileged and enforced. Humans differ in the ways that they learn and participate in learning activities. For instance, they vary in how they receive, organize, manage, and act on information, as well as how they are motivated (Rose, Meyer, & Hitchcock, 2006). School practices that are narrow, rigid, and punitive end up benefiting some students and marginalizing many others.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles that are based on flexibility and a wide range of learning supports with different levels of intensity offer a promising starting point to develop intersecting inclusive pedagogies. UDL is a framework to develop flexible instructional designs that

offers multiple levels of support with the goal to dismantle barriers to learning for all students (Rose & Meyer, 2002). It moves the focus of instruction from correcting and remediating students' deficits, to interrogating the curriculum itself, searching for and dismantling barriers. Thus, UDL focuses on, rather than suppresses, students' differences.

[Image Description: Elementary-aged female-presenting student of Color in a classroom, using several different colored- and shaped- objects.]

UDL is operationalized in three principles, each of which contains several specific guidelines: *multiple means of representation*, *multiple means of action and expression*, and *multiple means of engagement.* Rather than being an option for schools, providing instruction that is flexible and universally designed should be a core aspect of instruction in all schools. If not, schools will continue to privilege some students and marginalize many others.

Though UDL offers an important step forward, it has many limitations to dismantle intersecting forms of inequities (Waitoller & Thorius, 2016). First, though UDL redistributes learning opportunities by widening the notion of access, it offers limited tools to recognize and sustain students' ability, racial, gender, and linguistic identities.

Thus, culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSPs) (Paris & Alim, 2014; 2017) can extend and benefit from UDL. CSPs builds from previous culturally responsive practices in which students' cultural backgrounds are treated as assets rather than deficits. CSP moves from responsiveness and sensitivity toward students' culture to "perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 95). In addition, CSP attends to youth culture as dynamic and evolving, as youth cross racial and linguistic boundaries to form multiple, layered cultural backgrounds. Yet, it "critically contend[s] with problematic elements expressed in some youth cultural practices" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 85). That is, youth cultures can contribute to oppressive practices shaped by ableism, racism, patriarchy, and homophobia (Paris & Alim, 2017). Thus, an intersecting inclusive pedagogy supports students in interrogating their own beliefs and cultures while supporting them in their identity development.

Intersectional inclusive pedagogies need to specifically address disability as an essential aspect of students' identities; disability is a social identity that should be recognized and sustained (Waitoller & Thorius, 2016). Mitchell (2015) stated that "meaningful inclusion is only worthy of the designation inclusion if disability becomes more fully recognized as providing

alternative values for living that do not simply reify reigning concepts of normalcy" (p. 5). Thus, teaching practices need to recognize disability as a culture. Disabled people have developed diverse cultural patterns and identities in response to social, economic, and cultural demands. For example, the Autism community has developed cultural patterns and identities, which are evident in a myriad of autistic musicians, filmmakers, bloggers, writers, and scholars who think of Autism as a culture and identity (Strauss, 2013). These identities have to be valued and sustained, rather than punished, and should guide teachers and students to explore alternative ways of being and navigating the world.

A critical practical implication of sustaining disabled identities is that disability needs to become a core component of curriculum content. Calling it *curricular cripistemology*, Mitchell, Snyder, and Ware (2014) argue for an inclusive pedagogy that entails an approach to "making crip/queer subjects not just integrated but integral to the contemporary curricular knowledge base, bringing to the surface otherwise latent disability in the classroom" (p. 302). Such a pedagogical shift demands moving beyond the acceptance of disability as diversity and toward a critique of constructions of disability in schools and in curriculum itself, "including its history, its culture, and the ways in which many people are disabled by physical and attitudinal barriers" (Connor & Gabel, 2013, p. 108). A goal of curricular cripistemologies is to foreground disability content as "fortunate failure" (Mitchell et al., 2014, p. 297) that supports students with disabilities to speak about their

experiences in the classroom as a way to interrogate the curriculum.

Yet, nurturing and sustaining youth identities needs to be accompanied by a critical reflexive stance. For instance, disability can not only be understood as cultures, but "culture *as* disability" (McDermott & Varenne, 1995, p. 324). This latter aspect of disability refers to institutional practices in which certain students are identified as disabled (McDermott & Varenne, 1995). Disabilities "are less the property of persons than they are moments in a cultural focus" (McDermott & Varenne, 1995, p. 324). That is, schools produce disability through institutional practices (such as academic and disciplinary policies and practices) and tools (such as academic assessments) that

[Image Description: Male-presenting, middle school-aged student of Color with a disability, sitting in a wheelchair doing classwork at a table.]

assign meaning to students' academic performances and behaviors (Varenne & McDermott, 1998). Students cannot be disabled on their own (Varenne & McDermott, 1998). This view of disability

does not deny individual differences or disability as identity but includes institutional normative practices that treat some differences as problematic, resulting in negative and long-lasting consequences (such as educational segregation). Pedagogies should help teachers and students question how institutions produce disability, and if all disability labels are worth sustaining as part of students' identity formation. For instance, if a Black, Latinx, or Native American student is deemed as emotionally disturbed or having behavioral problems due to rigid and oppressive school and classroom arrangements, should pedagogies aim to sustain such identity?

Provide Behavioral and Emotional Supports Based on Culturally Responsive Positive Behavior Support Principles and Solidarity

Research has demonstrated that positive rather than punitive supports work best not just for addressing students' discipline, but also for improving human relationships and creating more supportive school cultures (Dunlap, Sailor, Horner, & Sugai, 2009). Culturally Responsive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (CRPBIS) provide a path to improve school climate and student discipline. CRPBIS builds upon a framework that school professionals are well familiar with: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is a school wide framework to provide behavioral support to students, and focuses on prevention, progress monitoring, data-based decision-making, and coordination of supports and services (Sugai & Horner, 2009). In a

PBIS framework, school professionals work in teams to examine school data, identify school rules and expectations, and provide and manage behavioral and emotional supports (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). The model is usually implemented in three tiers and aims to be proactive in teaching and reinforcing what the school team considers appropriate behavior.

Though there are a few models for CRPBIS, Bal and colleagues (Bal, 2016, 2018; Bal, Afacan, & Cakir, 2018; Bal, Kozleski, Schrader, Rodriguez, & Pelton, 2014) are the only ones to my knowledge who address issues of misdistribution, misrecognition, and misrepresentation. Bal and colleagues' model for CRPBIS addresses at least two shortcomings of traditional PBIS. First, traditional PBIS has tended to ignore inequities based on misrecognition and misrepresentation, circumventing discussions about race, culture, and power (Bal, 2018). Even those PBIS models that aim to be culturally responsive impose a series of tools for practitioners and administrators. Second, in most PBIS models, the school culture is dictated by administration and professionals with little input from parents and students. That is, teachers and principals decide on the values and rules to be privileged and the data to evaluate students' and schools' progress. Because in most U.S schools, principals and teachers are White, PBIS may end up reproducing White, middle-class expectations of student learning and behavior (Bal et al., 2018). This model of PBIS provides little leverage to dismantle injustices based on misrecognition and misrepresentation.

Bal et al.'s (2018) model of CRPBIS establishes practices and procedures for university researchers, administrators, teachers, alumni, and parents to examine and change disciplinary practices. CRPBIS creates "reciprocal and productive family-school-community coalitions as a solution for building positive, supportive, effective, and adaptive school wide behavioral support systems" (Bal, 2018, p. 12). Consequentially, CRPBIS changes the power dynamics from the hierarchical model that dominates school decisions and serves as a catalyst to generate and implement new disciplinary practices that are sensitive to the cultures of families and students. Further, in a CRPBIS model, school stakeholders move beyond examining superficial outcome disparities to focus on the process in which those outcomes are deeply rooted and creates an ongoing learning space for teachers, administrators, families, and students (Bal et al., 2018).

[Image Description: Black, female-presenting teacher looking on, as female-presenting, middle school-aged student of Color does work on a chalkboard.]

In addition, a CRPBIS framework for creating a school culture needs to be based

in solidarity (Annamma & Morrison, 2018). Annamma and Morrison (2018) stated that "If teachers recognize that multiply-marginalized students face structural inequities and interpersonal violence, historically and through the present day, then they should expect that multiply-marginalized students of color will enter classrooms with a host of emotions" (p. 77). Administrators and teachers need to build solidarity with students and guide their emotions and responses to school practices. Solidarity, in this case, means understanding students' disruptions or misbehaviors as "gifts of resistance" (Annamma & Morrison, 2018, p. 77). That is, schools should support "students to own their emotions and concurrently use that passion to change the system" (Annamma & Morrison, 2018, p. 77), by leveraging the disruption as an opportunity for relationship building for both teachers and students.

Provide Access to Health, Counseling, and Psychological Services That Can Provide Supports for All Students

Schools should work with their districts to redistribute and provide key services such as counseling, health services, and other related services such as speech and language therapy and occupational therapy among others to all students, not only to those identified with disabilities. These professionals should not be overburdened with excessive caseloads or multiple responsibilities. They should be provided the time and the resources needed to provide high-quality service to students.

Provide Spaces and Structures That Support Student Collective Organizing

A key, and often neglected, aspect of developing inclusive schools is student political representation in school wide and classroom decisions. When creating such opportunities for student organizing, school stakeholders need to be aware of power differentials among students, as students with disabilities or other minoritized students can be left out from or offered only minimal participation in students' organizing efforts. For a useful tool to center student voice in inclusive education efforts see the MAP Center resource An Equity Toolkit For Inclusive Schools: Centering Youth Voice In School Change.

Provide Ongoing Learning Opportunities with A Focus on Critical Reflexivity, Justice, and Inclusive Education

The practices offered in this brief provide a good departure point for building inclusive schools. Yet, no practice can be implemented without cyclical interrogation. After all, inclusive education is never a finished product; it is an endless process that requires cultural vigilantes who continually examine who is being excluded and how (Corbett & Slee, 2000). An intersectional inclusive agenda demands not just a transformation of practices but a transformation of ourselves through ongoing collective learning (Waitoller, Kozleski, & Gonzalez, 2016).

Thus, teachers, administrators, parents, and students should engage in ongoing inquiry about the practices that are being implemented in schools. The three inclusive education principles of redistribution, recognition, and representation can guide stakeholders' engagement in such inquiry. As a first step, I offer a list of questions that schools can use to interrogate their own efforts to become more inclusive.

Conclusion

Efforts to develop inclusive schools need to move beyond issues of access to the general education classroom, and towards a more radical inclusive agenda that addresses the pernicious integrating effects of ableism, racism, and other forms of "ism." In this brief, I offered some initial guidance to engage in such a titanic task. I provided a blueprint for inclusive education based on three justice principles: redistribution, recognition, and representation. According to these principles, I offered recommendations for practice and a set of questions for school professionals, families and students to engage in brave conversations that can lead towards more inclusive schools. Developing inclusive schools requires a continuing interrogation of institutional practices and tools, human relationships, and also of our own believes and practices.

About the Author

Dr. Federico Waitoller is an Associate Professor at the Department of Special Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and serves as an Equity Fellow for the Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center. His research focuses on urban inclusive education. In particular, his work examines and addressees policies and practices that generates or reproduces inequities for students of Color with disabilities. Dr. Waitoller is also interested in examining how these inequities are affected by the production of space in urban economies and the role of teacher learning and school/university partnerships in developing capacity for inclusive education.

Guiding Questions

In table 1, I offer a set of guiding questions for parents, teachers, students, and administrators to engage collectively in ongoing inquiry to develop inclusive schools.

Principle	Description	Questions

I. Redistribution	Focuses on the *economic aspects* of justice and aims to address injustices based on misdistribution of social and economic goods (e.g., education). Calls for the just distribution and access of quality inclusive education.	1. In what ways does this practice, school rule, or measure:
		  a. Contribute to redistribution of educational opportunities for all students in a just manner?
		  b. Move beyond accommodations and modifications to the curriculum and contribute to transform the general education classroom?
		  c. Contribute to supporting an intersectional inclusive pedagogy?
		  d. Contribute to providing all students with the supports and resources they need to become meaningful participants in their learning communities?
		2. In what ways does the school employ a flexible curriculum base of multiple means to access information, to participate in learning activities, and to engage students?

I. Redistribution (cont.)	Focuses on the *economic aspects* of justice and aims to address injustices based on misdistribution of social and economic goods (e.g., education). Calls for the just distribution and access of quality inclusive education.	3. In what ways does the division of labor among teachers and administrators contribute to provide varied levels of support for all students? 4. In what ways are opportunities to learn equitably distributed across classrooms?
Principle	**Description**	**Questions**

II. Recognition	Focuses on the *cultural aspects* of justice. It aims to address injustices based on misrecognition of cultural repertoires and identities and the domination of certain groups across institutional and social arenas. Group differences should be recognized, valued, and empowered. The remedy for misrecognition is valuing students' identities and addressing them as legitimate forms of participation, learning, and being and positively valuing groups' identities.	1. In what ways does this practice, school rule, or measure:
		
		  a. Contribute to recognizing, sustaining, and nurturing students' identity, while engaging them in critical reflexivity?
		
		  b. Encourage and support students to interrogate different kinds of injustice affecting their lives and their communities?
		
		  c. Enable students to reflect and critically investigate their own multiple identities?
		
		2. In what ways do schools' instructional approaches capitalize on students cultural, linguistic, and ability repertoires?
		
		3. In what ways are students positioned as experts in the learning activities?

II. Recognition (cont.)	Focuses on the *cultural aspects* of justice. It aims to address injustices based on misrecognition of cultural repertoires and identities and the domination of certain groups across institutional and social arenas. Group differences should be recognized, valued, and empowered. The remedy for misrecognition is valuing students' identities and addressing them as legitimate forms of participation, learning, and being and positively valuing groups' identities.	4. In what ways are school disciplinary practices based on punishment or solidary? 5. In what ways are school behavioral expectations and supports responsive to students' cultural, linguistic, and ability repertoires? 6. In what ways is the school curriculum responsive to disability as culture and culture as disability?
Principle	**Description**	**Questions**
III. Representation	Injustices based on representation arise when people are denied opportunities to participate in advancing and defining injustice. As a result, they are kept from defining inequities and its corresponding solutions. An inclusive agenda based on representation requires creating and sustaining meaningful and participatory opportunities for parents, youth, children, and other relevant stakeholders to be part decision-making in schools.	1. In what ways does this practice, school rule, or measure contribute to creating a more democratic and participatory process of decision-making in the school? 2. In what ways are there resources and structures that support student organizing and student leadership? 3. Who is allowed to identify school problems and their corresponding solutions? 4. In what ways are there resources and structures in place to support inquiry and decision-making groups composed of teachers, administrators, parents, and students?

III. Representation (cont.)	Injustices based on representation arise when people are denied opportunities to participate in advancing and defining injustice. As a result, they are kept from defining inequities and its corresponding solutions. An inclusive agenda based on representation requires creating and sustaining meaningful and participatory opportunities for parents, youth, children, and other relevant stakeholders to be part decision-making in schools.	5. Who is included/excluded from decision making? 6. In what ways do inquiry groups composed of teachers, administrators, students, and parents center their work on critical reflexivity, justice, and inclusive education?

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The mission of the Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center is to ensure equity in student access to and participation in high quality, research-based education by expanding states' and school systems' capacity to provide robust, effective opportunities to learn for all students, regardless of and responsive to race, sex, and national origin, and to reduce disparities in educational outcomes among and between groups. The Equity by Design briefs series is intended to provide vital background information and action steps to support educators and other equity advocates as they work to create positive educational environments for all children. For more information, visit http://www.greatlakesequity.org.

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