Let's Talk: Advancing Equity Through Critical Discourse

New Tech Network

http://bit.ly/2lZ7uTQ

Facilitators:

Jen Benkovitz, Director of School Leadership (@jbenkovitz)

Anna Kinsella, Senior Director of Coaching (@annakinsella)

Gaylen Brannon, School Development Coach (@gaylenbrannon)

#deeperlearning

We Are Creating a Nation Proud of its Public Schools

Schools can inspire and engage all students. Teachers can offer relevant and authentic learning experiences in all subjects. Students can develop skills essential for both college and career, in addition to mastering academics. As a leading design partner for comprehensive school change, New Tech Network has proven public schools can accomplish all of these aspirations. We do not operate schools; instead, we work with districts and communities throughout the country to transform schools into innovative learning environments.

A Powerful Design for School Change

Technology that Enables
Use of technology tools for easy access to resources and information

Teaching that Engages
Meaningful, problem- solving approach to instruction

Culture that Empowers
School-wide culture of empowerment for students and adults

Outcomes that Matter
Student outcomes that clearly define success

TECHNOLOGY THAT ENABLES

TEACHING THAT ENGAGES

CULTURE THAT EMPOWERS

OUTCOMES THAT MATTER

Working together to transform schools

As a leading design partner for comprehensive school change, New Tech Network, a national non-profit, works closely with more than 175 districts and schools.

126
HIGH SCHOOLS

41
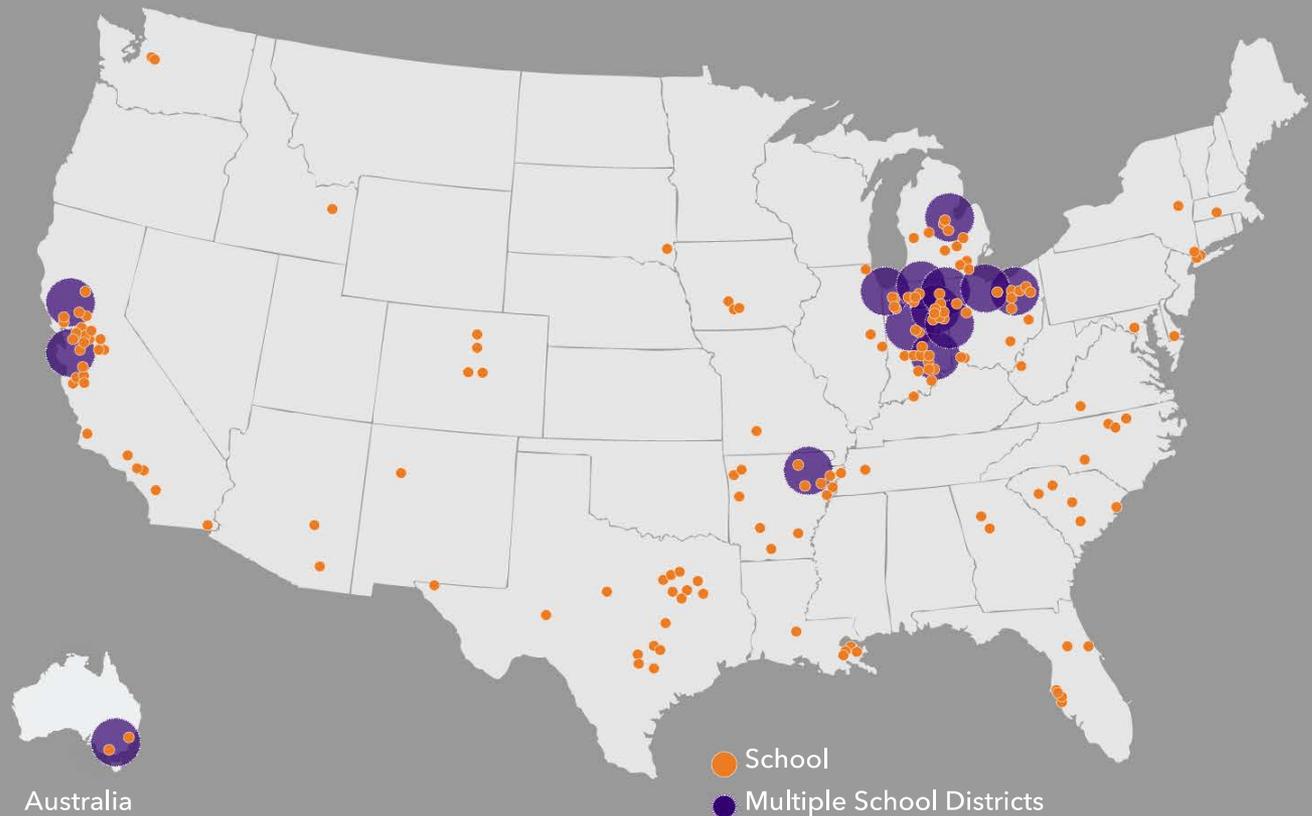MIDDLE SCHOOLS

23
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS

4400
TEACHERS

72000
STUDENTS

118
DISTRICTS

Australia

● School
● Multiple School Districts

Who's In The Room?

- Who are you?

- Where do you work?

- What do you do?

- Why are you in this session today? What are your hopes?

New Tech Network

Expected Outcomes

- Deepen understanding of equity with regard to student learning

- Examine personal beliefs, values and assumptions about student learning in relationship to decisions and behaviors

- Explore strategies for advancing equity through critical discourse

- Develop an artifact that captures your learning, implications for practice and actionable next steps

New Tech Network

A Focus on Race

"Through our careful and isolated examination of race, educators not only discover new meaning in race but also more authentically recognize the intersection of race and other aspects of human diversity and culture." - Glen Singleton

New Tech Network

Driving Question

What does it look, sound and feel like to engage in critical reflection and discourse that advances educational equity?

3/30/2017

New Tech Network

Community Agreements

- Stay Engaged

- Speak Your Truth

- Experience Discomfort

- Expect and Accept Non-Closure

- Listen for Understanding

[document link]

New Tech Network

Community Agreements: Reflection

As you reflect on our Community Agreements, which do you believe will be the most difficult for you to embrace and practice? Which might be the easiest? Why is this so? What do you need to do in order to be fully present today?

Making Sense of Deeper Learning and Equity
Block Party

- **Step 1:** Introductions -- Who are you?

- **Step 2:** Person 1 reads her/his quote out loud and reflects on significance.

- **Step 3:** Person 2 reads her/his quote out loud and reflects on significance.

- **Step 4:** Partner 1 and 2 discuss connections: "How do our quotes connect to one another?"

- **Step 5:** Partners exchange quotes and rotate

New Tech Network

Reflect and Debrief (context)
Making Sense of Deeper Learning and Equity

- What came up for you as you listened/responded to the different quotes? Any surprises?

- How did the quotes/conversations support and/or challenge your beliefs and values about deeper learning and equity?

- Revisit your reflections about why you are in this session today. What are some implications for your practice?

New Tech Network

Debrief (process)
Block Party

- How did it feel to participate in the Block Party process? What about the experience worked for you? What was difficult?

- What purpose did the Block Party process serve in supporting critical discourse about deeper learning and equity?

- How might you adapt/use this process with your own group/staff?

New Tech Network

Quotes & Sources

Deeper learning significantly contributes to educational equity. Working toward equity involves ensuring equally high outcomes for each participant in our educational system…- E. Aguilar

Race: A socially constructed characterization of individuals based on skin color, culture, etc.
Racism: Any act that tolerates, accepts or reinforces racially unequal opportunities or outcomes for children to learn and thrive. **Racism becomes institutionalized** when organizations remain unconscious of or perpetuate and enforce a dominant racial perspective or belief. - G. Singleton

Critical Discourse (Discourse II) is the language that tends to be about uncomfortable, unequal, ineffective, prejudicial conditions and relationships in schools. Discourse II opens up space for ambiguity and change to be part of a purposeful structure. - NEP

Everyone has biases. Unconscious biases are preconceived ideas that a person is either unaware of or cannot admit. – G.Singleton

New Tech Network

Lunch Break

Implicit Bias
Video

Vernā Myers:

How to overcome our biases? Walk boldly toward them

TEDxBeaconStreet · 17:49 · Filmed Nov 2014

💬 24 subtitle languages ❓

🗐 View interactive transcript

New Tech Network

Implicit Bias
Microlab

- Divide into groups of three
- Group takes one minute for personal reflection in response to the question
- Group takes turns responding to the question posed by the facilitator (different person goes first each time):
  - Group simply listens while each person speaks
  - When the facilitator indicates that time is up (1 min.), the next person speaks
  - If a group member does not fill their entire speaking time, maintain a respectful silence
- Continue this until all three group members have had a chance to speak
- At the end of the protocol, we'll debrief our learning as a whole group

New Tech Network

Implicit Bias
Microlab

In her first call to action, Verna states, "We gotta get out of denial. Stop trying to be good people. We need real people."

Question - What stops you from being real (in your work setting)?

Implicit Bias
Microlab

In her second call to action, Verna challenges us to walk toward our discomfort, to do an inventory, and to expand our social and professional circles. She asks us to consider who is and is not in our circles and urges us to "go deeper, closer, further, and build the kinds of relationships, the kinds of friendships that actually cause you to see the holistic person and to really go against the stereotypes."

Question - What are some ways you could walk toward your discomfort (at work)?

Implicit Bias
Microlab

In her third call to action, Verna implores, "When we see something, we have to have the courage to say something, even to the people we love."

Question - In what ways could you take leadership to shift unproductive discourse to something more productive?

Reflect and Debrief (context)
Implicit Bias

- What biases came up for you during the Microlab process?

- How were your beliefs, values and assumptions about deeper learning and equity challenged?

- What are some implications for your practice?

- What might you do differently as a result?

New Tech Network

Debrief (process)
Microlab

- How did it feel to participate in the Microlab process? What about the experience worked for you? What was difficult?

- What purpose did the Microlab process serve in supporting critical discourse about deeper learning and equity?

- How might you adapt/use this process with your own group/staff?

New Tech Network

Multiple Perspectives: "I Dream" *Chalk Talk*

- Chalk Talk is a silent way to reflect, generate ideas, check on learning, develop projects, or solve problems.

- Chalk Talk is a silent activity. Anyone may add to the Chalk Talk with words or graphics as they please. You can comment on other people's ideas simply by drawing a connecting line to the comment.

- The facilitator writes a relevant question in a circle on the board.

- People write as they feel moved. Participants may write comments, ask questions, draw images/graphics, show connections between various comments.

New Tech Network

Multiple Perspectives: "I Dream"
Chalk Talk

- What is Pablo saying regarding the impact of race on his life both in and out of school?

- What might you ask Pablo after reading his poem?

NewTech Network

Reflect and Debrief (context)
"I Dream"

- What came up for you as you participated in the Chalk Talk?

- Can you relate Pablo's experience to students with whom you work(ed)? What do you know about your students? What don't you know?

- How were your beliefs and values about deeper learning and equity supported and/or challenged?

- What are some implications for your practice?

- What might you do differently as a result?

New Tech Network

Debrief (process)
Chalk Talk

- How did it feel to participate in the Chalk Talk process? What about the experience worked for you? What was difficult?

- How did the Chalk Talk process support our inquiry about deeper learning and equity?

- How might you adapt/use this process with your own group/staff?

New Tech Network

Presentations of Learning

Develop an artifact that captures your learning, implications for practice and actionable next steps.

- Work Time

- Peer Feedback (optional)

- Revisions

New Tech Network

Reflections, continued
Connections

Connections is a way for people to build a bridge from where they are or have been (mentally, physically, etc.) to where they will be going and what they will be doing. It is a time for individuals to reflect — within the context of a group — upon a thought, a story, an insight, a question, or a feeling that they are carrying with them into (or out of) the session, and then connect it to the work they will do.

- Speak if you want to.

- Don't speak if you don't want to.

- Speak only once until everyone who wants to has had a chance to speak.

- Listen and note what people say, but do not respond.

New Tech Network

Contact Us

Jen Benkovitz, Director of School Leadership
jbenkovitz@newtechnetwork.org

Anna Kinsella, Senior Director of School Coaching
akinsella@newtechnetwork.org

Gaylen Brannon, School Development Coach
gbrannon@newtechnetwork.org

NewTech Network

Exhibition

Session Title: Let's Talk: Advancing Equity Through Critical Discourse

Driving Question: What does it look, sound and feel like to engage in critical reflection and discourse that advances educational equity?

Expected Outcomes:

- Deepen understanding of equity with regard to student learning;
- Examine personal beliefs, values and assumptions about student learning in relationship to decisions and behaviors;
- Explore strategies for advancing equity through critical discourse; and
- Develop an artifact that captures your learning, implications for practice and actionable next steps.