

**FOREWORD: ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!**

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The Center for Leadership, Equity and Research (CLEAR) was established on the premise and promise for joining the fight towards equity and social justice through action-oriented leadership and scholarship. As such, it promotes a culture of activism through engaging participants in difficult and courageous conversations especially during the era of dominant cycles of ignorance, noisy empty rhetoric, and grotesque passive silence. One of the key aspects of CLEAR's mission is to amplify the voices that need to be heard, despite those desperately seeking to silence them. It also serves as a tool for disenfranchised minority scholars and social justice leaders whose counter-stories do not fit the narrative of the mainstream "elite" professional organizations as they seek to disseminate their empirical accounts and research. Consequently, the Journal for Leadership, Equity, and Research (JLER) has attracted novice and veteran social justice pioneers to share their research efforts and authentic accounts in an attempt to help us understand and face the challenges in society's educational and social institutions.

This regular 2022 edition includes contributions from young and seasoned researchers and social justice advocates who share their insights and findings that have direct implications for educational issues in and out-of-the school settings. Despite the varying foci within each article, readers will find common threads that are keenly linked to their institutions and realities around them. While the context of each discussion is unique, the consensus can be built around the embedded stance and call for action made by every author whose appeal to readers is undoubtedly far-reaching beyond provincialism mindsets. Readers are challenged to revisit their roles to become local-global agents for desired change and are left grappling with the question: When is enough, enough?

**Tala Khanmalek, Gina Waneis, Seleena Mukbel, and Mary Chammas** provide an authentic and conceptual account about their experiences and plight to belong and fit in institutions traditionally deigned for the privileged mainstream audiences. Their voices are echoed by many across educational and social institutions. Their article underscores the need to narrow the acknowledgement gap that has detrimental consequences on participants in the diverse pluralistic society. Focusing on the Southwest Asian and North African (SWANA) groups, the authors illustrated how the benign culture of nihilism in educational institutions contributes to the denial

of their identity, heritage, tradition, and humanity. Despite the fiery declarations and empty rhetoric to embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion, the authentic examples provided by the authors underscore the need to shift from rhetoric to action. Having become sick of getting sick, the authors use activism to defy the current inequities that perpetuate racism, bigotry and discrimination against SWANA populations. Implications of this article are far-reaching for those who are serious and honest about the pronouncements they make about cultivating diversity and promoting an equitable environment for all.

**Allison Briceño** and **Rebecca Bergey** draw implications for implementing basic principles and domains of California's English Learner (EL) Roadmap designed to respond to the unique needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students in schools. Their account underscores the need for educators and policy planners at all levels to ensure sustained linguistically and culturally-responsive pedagogical practices based on students' assets, funds of knowledge as well as their unique needs and expectations. As such, they remind us that the failed reactive and remedial approaches have never stood the test of time simply because such systems were designed for the "best" privileged mainstream populations while leaving out the "rest". Thus, sound instructional practices should be carefully driven without wasting the wealth of cultures, experiences, perspectives and rich universal repertoires ELs bring to their peers, teachers, and learning communities around them. Unless educators build on the world experiences of all learners, the linguistically and culturally diverse continue to fall between the cracks because of the lack of genuine reform efforts to retrofit and revamp the entire education system with keen and relevant connections to the world of reality around them.

In his qualitative study, **Jaime L. Del Razo** explores the experiences of undocumented students in American schools. Drawing upon the Critical Legal Studies frameworks, the author highlights the pressures and challenges facing college-bound immigrant students in an attempt to unveil systems of oppression that put them at a great disadvantage in the country they aspire to make home. Del Razo's research reflects a case of legal oppression as he argues that "by identifying the ways that undocumented youth face both *de jure* and *de facto* detrimental consequences, this study demonstrates how a double layer of legal oppression is formed that is omnipresent in the minds and lives of undocumented students (p. 34, this volume)." The article has direct implications for keeping the hope alive by fostering respect for students regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, language, nationality or immigration status.

**Clara Burgo** tackles the challenges in teaching Spanish to college students during the pandemic over the past two years. She examines the abrupt transition into virtual delivery modes dictated by the COVID-19 global health crisis. Focusing on teaching Spanish virtually and online, Burgo shares some of the obstacles that must be overcome including the potential compromise in achieving educational, social, and emotional goals throughout the remote instructional delivery. Her article echoes observations and findings of countless numbers of experiences across the globe. One of these involves the sudden adaptations that had to be made during the past two years to turn turmoil into triumph. She offers several suggestions based on the lessons learned over the past two years all of which revolve around implementing confluent approaches and compassionate

pedagogies that are keenly linked to the academic and affective needs of learners.

Similarly, **Tracy Reimer** and **Jennifer Hill** shed light on the ever-widening digital gap that has been amplified by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The authors used the Equity Literacy Framework to examine how schools attempted to cross the digital divide and overcome challenges dictated by the global health crisis. They conducted a district level survey by asking technology directors about how schools responded to and addressed inequities within the context of remote learning and alternative modalities. The authors argue that "... districts' efforts to provide students technology devices were efficient and successful," while acknowledging the need for further research around "advocacy for the expansion of broadband service, the pandemic's impact on the mental health of students, and efforts to sustain access to technology for all learners after the COVID-19 pandemic concludes (p. 71, this volume)."

**Mica Pollock, Reed Kendall, Erika Reece, Dolores Lopez, and Mariko Yoshisato** base their article on "data from a national pilot of #USvsHate (usvshate.org), an educator- and student-led "anti-hate" messaging project, (p. 87, this volume)" to examine resistance to pushbacks against Critical Race Theory and its core tenets to combat racism and cultivate diversity while promoting equity and inclusion. Their study's participants revealed that "careers of 'pushback' against even their basic efforts to include (mention or empathize with) marginalized populations, (p. 87, this volume)" in light of key forms of "Backup" strategies. They also shared five key forms of "backup" they had learned to marshalling support and keeping the anti-hate themes and topics alive on the education agendas, albeit how difficult the conversations and discourse might be. Recognizing the fierce battles and pressures equity-minded teachers face, the authors affirm the need for collective efforts to marshal local and global support to "backup" the march towards the basic inclusion efforts.

Consistent with the main premise within each article of this edition, **Shaylyn Marks**, a proud and brilliant Black female educator herself, provides a profound and critical analysis and review of April Baker-Bell's book, *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*. Marks provides a synopsis of the main thrust of the book and its foci that have direct implications for all educators. This review underscores the importance of combating the Anti-Black Linguistic Pedagogy and linguisticism given the power language exerts on learning and teaching outcomes in diverse schools.

The timely themes and discussions throughout this edition should spark resilience and commitment to the cause of diversity, equity and inclusion. Readers will again find a rich collection of authentic voices and powerful arguments compiled by the authors whose insights should promote hope for a more just and equitable society. Like the JLER's continued tradition, the current volume has many immediate implications for *acting* rather than *reacting* to the basic tenets of frameworks and constructs that help all of us to understand and achieve the minimum requirements for equity and social justice in schools and elsewhere.

Finally, on behalf of the JLER team, we are grateful to all partners for preparing this regular issue as well as the contributors, reviewers, and everyone who assisted in the production of the edition. Happy Reading!!