

# Introducing Equity in the Classroom

By Daphne Northrop, Education Development Center, Inc.

*A sixth grade girl in an urban technical school feels pressure from her parents and teachers to excel in school. But when she does well, her peers call her a "nerd." She starts to participate less often in class discussions and doesn't study as much as she used to study. . . .*

*When two second grade girls want to join the football game at recess, the boys ignore them and continue the game. . . .*

*A high school girl resists higher level math courses, saying she doesn't think she is smart enough to master the material. . . .*

Most teachers have encountered situations like these and are well-acquainted with the multiple ways that students lose opportunities because of gender, racial, or class stereotypes held by someone in their lives, including students themselves. At the same time, many teachers are overwhelmed with the sheer numbers of initiatives, programs, and mandates cascading into their schools. If we ask teachers to make their classrooms more gender equitable, are we only adding to their load?

Not at all, says Susan Shaffer, Deputy Director of the Mid-Atlantic Equity Center, and WEEA Equity Resource Center Associate. "Any helpful hints" on how to reach more students "provide an additional lens that teachers can use to be better teachers." Understanding the subtleties of gender stereotyping, she adds, is "the opposite of a burden. It's an asset for teachers."

The quest for equity in schools can sometimes look like a searchlight, landing alternately on race, gender, disability, socioeconomic status, or learning style. Teachers might wonder how they could attend to all these con-

cerns. A growing consensus is that the chorus of voices is calling—in different words—for the same thing: (1) high, equitable expectations for all students and (2) a new approach to improving student performance in school.

The essence of all equity issues is a question that has consumed educators for years: how can we educate *all* of our students? How can we engage boys and girls of different races, and from different backgrounds who have varying abilities? How can we help students realize their dreams and recognize their opportunities? How can we help all students succeed?

### Where We Stand

Much progress has been made. Girls and boys are taking a broader range of courses; Title IX has had an immensely positive impact on girls' participation in sports; plus more young women are going into law and medical school, boys' and girls' SAT scores are roughly even, and Latina/o and African American students' attitudes about math and science improve as they progress through elementary school. But disparities and inequities persist:

- Among nine-year-olds, African American and Latino/a students score 12 percent below white students in math.<sup>1</sup>
- Boys take fewer English, sociology, psychology, foreign language, and fine arts courses than girls.<sup>2</sup>
- Very few girls take computer science courses even though 65 percent of jobs in 2010 will require those skills.<sup>3</sup>
- By eighth grade, across all racial and ethnic groups, twice as many boys as girls are interested in quantitative disciplines and science careers.<sup>4</sup>
- Poor students of color in urban schools are offered fewer advanced courses—especially in math and science—than are their suburban, usually white, counterparts.<sup>5</sup>

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**When the issues of equity and stereotyping are broached with empathy and helpfulness, teachers are usually very receptive to fine-tuning their sensitivities to the nuances in student behavior or performance or seizing opportunities to reach more of their students more of the time.**

*Introducing Equity . . . continued*

- Relatively few African American, Latino/a, and Native American high school graduates have the skills and knowledge necessary to continue in quantitative fields.<sup>6</sup>

While most teachers do not intentionally discriminate against their students, “subtle messages of sexism and other stereotypes still permeate the ‘hidden curriculum’ of schools and affect students’ class participation, sense of competency, choices, development, and goals,” notes Maria-Paz Avery of the Gender Healthy Schools Project, a project based at Education Development Center that works with teacher-teams in Boston and Cambridge schools. These hidden messages are embedded in the day-to-day interactions between and among the adults and students and persist in curricular materials and policies that define students’ experience of school, she says. The Gender Healthy Schools Project supports teachers, administrators, and students in creating a culture of excellence and equity built on high expectations for all and encourages students to think outside the gender-biased box. Often this work includes helping teachers identify and undo underlying classroom patterns and habits that reinforce stereotypes of who succeeds in what, based on gender, race/ethnicity, ability, and other attributes. “We want to create schools that are physically, emotionally, and socially safe for all students. And we want to change the normative expectations that have limited and restricted the academic and career choices of girls and boys, students of color, poor students, students with disabilities, and English language learners,” says Avery.

Our understanding of equity and how to achieve it in education has evolved steadily over the past decades. Early on, equity specialists focused on gender stereotyping and discrimination and racial bias. Gradually, concerns about patterns of achievement and engagement in specific disciplines demarcated along gender or race lines came to the surface, such as the issue of math and science avoidance for girls and students of color. Today, specialists expect to overcome these barriers with awareness, and find a greater need to focus instead on the challenge for all students (girls and boys, students with disabilities, English language learners, and so on) to be accepted and proficient in a wide range of academic and professional realms, with an eye toward outcomes and achievement.

*Today’s society demands scientists and mathematicians who are also skilled speakers and writers,*

*artists and politicians who can interpret scientific principles, physicists who understand psychology, men and women from all racial and ethnic groups who are fulfilling their potential in an interdisciplinary manner.<sup>7</sup>*

How can we apply what we know about different groups of students to a strong, equitable set of standards for academic achievement and student behavior?

### **Making Changes**

Teachers are quick to comprehend the need to remove inequities in their classrooms, says Jo Sanders, Director of the Center for Gender Equity at the Washington Research Institute, and a former WEEA grantee. “It’s a matter of sensitization, and it’s the kind of thing you catch on to quickly.” In her training work, she says, she strives for the “‘I’ll be damned!’ moment, when teachers have a moment of realization and can see with their own eyes what you’re talking about.” If teachers are introduced to practical strategies that work, they will accept them, notes Susan Shaffer. “Equity is an effective way of teaching. It’s part and parcel of good teaching.”

Teachers want their students to excel, but may not be aware of all of the ways they can help them. When the issues of equity and stereotyping are broached with empathy and helpfulness, teachers are usually very receptive to fine-tuning their sensitivities to the nuances in student behavior or performance or seizing opportunities to reach more of their students more of the time. It’s a matter of presentation and providing opportunity for awareness, says Sanders. For example, to encourage responses from students who are reluctant to be the first to raise their hands, teachers might ask a question of the class then wait five seconds before calling on someone. Awareness goes a long way, Sanders says. Once teachers have that “aha” moment in all of the areas of equity—that one experience that shows how inequity can hold back their students—teachers see they can begin to release a new energy in their classrooms.

Teachers, researchers, and academics agree that teachers can work with students and make their classrooms more equitable by exploring and making changes in four realms:

- teacher expectations
- the classroom environment
- curriculum and materials
- beyond the classroom

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# Reaching At-Risk Learners

By Donna M. Marriott, San Diego City Schools

*Donna M. Marriott is the Literacy Program Manager for San Diego City Schools, San Diego, California. This piece describes her experience as an adult learner in a statistics class, and the insight she gained by being a student herself.*

Statistically, demographics set me up for school success. I am the daughter of white, middle-class, well-educated parents who reside together in an overpriced home in the suburbs. My learning profile matches the institutional expectations of a “good” student. I am organized, cooperative, and reasonably intelligent. I was made for school. School was made for me. Sadly, there are many students for whom these words do not apply. Statistics would play a pivotal role in shaping my professional awareness of the ways in which schools systematically rationalize such failure.

No one was surprised when I enrolled in a doctoral program. After all, the system is designed to offer people like me continuing paths to ever-higher educational opportunities. My family and friends expected that I would take full advantage of this chance to advance myself. There was just one flaw in my otherwise bright future: Applied Statistics and Quantitative Research Methods.

The summer of my statistics course was neither easy nor pleasant. I suffered through serious bouts of anxiety, humiliation, confusion, and immeasurably low self-esteem. Through sheer determination, I got through the course. But I learned much more than hypothesis testing, correlation coefficients, and the ins and outs of the two-way analysis of variance (also known as ANOVA). Statistics forever changed my understanding about what it means to be an at-risk learner.

Educators easily and routinely explain the plight of low-achieving students: Her parents never help with the homework. She doesn’t participate in class. She’s a behavior problem. She needs to be tested for special education. She would do better in a remedial class. The bottom line is, she just doesn’t try. Well, you know how it is with those kids. These responses to institutional failure are unfair, untrue, and self-serving. My course in statistics taught me the other side of the story.

## **Her parents never help with homework.**

My family wanted to help me with my statistics homework. In fact, my son, who is a mathemati-

cal wizard, even offered to help me. Though he had never taken a statistics course, he was able to scan the chapter, look at an example or two, and grasp the concept. However, he had no idea how to convey the concept to me. Repeating a formula louder or slower did not make it any more comprehensible. Showing me a series of shortcuts to expedite a procedure did not make it any more comprehensible. Demonstrating how to program a graphing calculator to process a complicated equation did not make it any more comprehensible. It wasn’t that he didn’t want to help—he didn’t know how to help.

My husband also wanted to be supportive. He would read the chapter with me and try to work through the formulas and processes. But he had never taken statistics, and he had a business to run. One day he asked me, out of frustration and concern, “Isn’t the teacher supposed to explain this?”

Though my family lacked the knowledge base, the pedagogical strategies, and the time to help me, it would be grossly untrue to suggest that they didn’t try, or worse, that they didn’t care. Yet, this allusion to uncaring, nonsupportive parents is inherent in the supposition, “Her parents never help with the homework.”

Teachers are, largely, both demanding and unforgiving of parents. Assignments, projects, and weekly packets are sent home with the absolute expectation that students will get whatever help they need to complete the task accurately, on time, and neatly. But teachers offer little to help families accomplish these tasks. Parents may lack the academic knowledge. Parents may lack the teaching skills. Parents may lack the content-specific language. Parents may lack the time. It’s unfair to suggest that parents don’t want to help. The truth of the matter may be that they simply can’t help.

## **She doesn’t participate in class.**

It’s true. I didn’t participate in class—ever. I sat in the corner all summer hoping, and sometimes actively praying, that I would not be called on to answer a question. I learned to never have eye contact with the professor, to appear to be taking copious notes whenever a general question was asked, and to quietly fade into the background. I couldn’t participate. I was too fearful and too lost.

*My course in statistics taught me the other side of the story.*

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*At-Risk Learners . . . continued*

**Children who don't "get it" need to be actively re-engaged—safely, immediately, continually, and in many different ways.**

There are equity issues inherent in classroom participation. I'll never forget that smart guy who sat in the front row. He would shout out answers before I could even process the question. The professor would praise him time and time again for his quick and insightful responses. And time and time again, I felt dumb, intimidated, and frustrated. The "smart" guy robbed me of the time I needed to participate. It wasn't fair. After a while, I lost interest in participating.

There are also cultural expectations inherent in classroom participation. The professor allowed me to engage in my disappearing act. She did not speak a single word to me all summer. I'm sure she didn't know my name, background, distress level, or my commitment to success. Somehow, early on, the professor and the other students determined who would be the participants and who would be the nonparticipants. It was a mold that once cast was difficult to reshape.

As a teacher, I had been trained to be sensitive to at-risk learners—to respect the time it takes for some children to acquire the comfort level to become participants. Statistics taught me a profoundly different lesson. Children who don't "get it" need to be actively re-engaged—safely, immediately, continually, and in many different ways. We don't do any favors to allow students to become passive nonresponders.

**She's a behavior problem.**

I quickly found the other three at-risk learners in my class. I don't know how we did this exactly. It may have been body language, a far-away look in the eyes, or some chemical reaction to a shared sense of fear—but, by the first coffee break, I had found my "friends." If we had been eight-year-olds, we would absolutely have been behavior problems. Since we were far older than eight, we misbehaved in very grown-up ways. We joked about the class over lattes at the break. We discussed the absurdities of statistics through our e-mails. We exchanged knowing glances during class every time the smart guy showed off.

My behavior caused me to look at my own students with a new, informed sense of personal responsibility. If a child starts to act up, I have learned to ask myself: "How have I failed this child? What is it about this lesson that is leaving her outside the learning? How can I adapt my plan to engage this child?" I stopped blaming my children.

**She needs to be tested for special education.**

I am of normal intelligence, yet math has, sadly,

never been my thing. I have not had a math class since I struggled through high school algebra and geometry. Because I am system-smart, I managed to get through a bachelor's degree, a master's degree, and a teacher-preparation program without ever taking a math course. It's not something I am proud of, but I learned to effectively work around my mathematical deficiencies—in school and in life. Keeping up in a doctoral-level statistics class was an enormous leap for me. I don't think the disparity between what I knew and what I needed to know qualified me for special education. I think the disparity was the result of consistently low expectations and inadequate preparation. I learned my learning disability.

There may be some students with "real" rather than acquired disabilities who are unable to learn in a mainstream environment, though the more I teach and learn, the less I believe this to be true. I belong to the camp that believes all children can learn. While I admit that some will find this a radical thought, I believe that my job as a teacher is to teach the children in my class—all of them. I don't send my children off to the specialists when they are having trouble, though I would not hesitate to ask a specialist to help me identify some teaching-learning strategies. If we really believe that all children can learn, then we must be ready, willing, and able to design whatever array of strategies will help students succeed. Teaching just the easy kids should not be tolerated.

**She'd probably do better in a remedial class.**

I considered the notion of tracking throughout my statistics course. All the doctoral students were placed into the same class. The class included math teachers, business executives, and people like me who had not had a math course in many years. My learning needs were dramatically different from those of the gentleman in the second row, who was on his third statistics course because he thought it was fun. Would I have done better in a statistics-for-dummies class?

I have stood against any sort of academic tracking since I began my teaching career. In fact, I have consciously and conscientiously sought to create classrooms that were as heterogeneous in their composition as it was in my power to make. I created a multiage, full-inclusion classroom that included every group and subgroup that our field has named to date. Yet, within this diverse composition, I have consistently sought to offer children access to learning in ways that reflected individual learning needs, strengths, and interests.

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*At-Risk Learners . . . continued*

I didn't need a remedial statistics class, but I certainly needed something beyond the lecture-style format. I was hopelessly lost in the context of the class. It was only in the small study sessions organized by an infinitely patient tutor that I began to make some sense of the content. The implications for classroom teachers are powerful. Whole-group formats systematically omit many learners.

**The bottom line is, she just doesn't try.**

I don't think anyone could have tried harder than I did. There were all-nighters, study-group meetings, consultations with the tutor, and computer-lab sessions. My enormous effort was unseen by the professor and the majority of my classmates. Nevertheless, my effort was real. It is easy and tempting for teachers to use their limited view of a student to make sweeping generalizations: "She doesn't try." "She's lazy." "She's not interested." Effort is a tricky thing to see and evaluate.

How do we assess a student's interest in learning? I guess it would be fair to say that I didn't "care" much about statistics. Statistics is a fairly remote need in my life, work, and range of interests. But while I may not have cared much about the subject, I cared very much about succeeding in the class. Statistics was a required course. There was absolutely no way in the world I would have allowed myself to fail.

It was my own advocacy that got me through the course. I sought the extra help that I needed. I adapted my schedule to allow time for study. I bought and used supplementary materials. Failure was simply never an option. Who plays this advocacy role for our at-risk kids? Who helps them see how a particular concept, course, or program plays out in the bigger picture of their education or their lives? Who shows them the web of safety nets that can be constructed to prevent failure? Who intercedes on behalf of the eight-year-old child who is two years behind in reading and whose teacher has publicly said, "Oh well, you can't save all of them"? Who holds on to the spirit of at-risk students and tells them that failure is simply not an option?

**Well, you know how it is with those kids.**

In my case, being one of "those" kids meant being a woman. The men in the classroom, without any overt or consciously negative intentions, formed themselves into the coalition of the haves, while the rest of us became the have-nots. I doubt that these men realized how their words and actions demeaned me as a woman. However, I take no solace in their unknowing. While much of the sexism, racism, and classism exists in the fringe

of our consciousness, the pain and damage it causes is no less real.

I grew up in a time when girls didn't need to be good at math. My brother was great at it. I was not. This was acceptable to my family, my teachers, and to me. No one ever believed that I should be good at math. Had this not been the expectation, I might be writing a different story today.

We need to move beyond the excuses that have become our field's self-defeating conventional wisdom. In an era when many are looking to standards-based reform to raise student achievement, helping all students succeed may move from an ethical issue to a job requirement. It used to be that student achievement was a variable. Some students excelled, many students got by, and some students failed. The advent of student academic standards reaches deep within our profession to challenge this norm. The expectation now is that all students will meet or exceed the academic standards—no exceptions, no excuses.

If student achievement is truly to be redefined as a constant rather than a variable, we have the obligation to re-examine the array of conditions, contexts, attitudes, and excuses we have come to accept as educational norms. If a student needs more time to absorb a concept or develop a skill, we need to figure out ways to provide that time. If a student needs a different instructional path to absorb a concept or develop a skill, we need to figure out ways to offer these options. If a student needs a different structure to absorb a concept or develop a skill, we need to figure out ways to restructure or reinvent the routines of teaching and learning.

The demand for accountability is changing the way teachers must work. To meet the challenge, we must move away from false assumptions, unfair accusations, and the incessant finger pointing that serves to explain away the academic lives of far too many students.

It is abundantly clear that it is teachers, and only teachers, who have the capacity, the context, and the opportunity to authentically improve the nature and quality of education for our children. The strategic role that teachers have in the improvement of education is a precious opportunity, an awesome challenge, and a very real responsibility that we must not take lightly. It is no longer acceptable to say: "I taught them." We need to be able to say: "They learned." ♦

Adapted with permission from *Education Week* 20, no. 23 "At-Risk Learners—An Insider's Perspective" (February 21, 2001): 25-27; [www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org).

***If student achievement is truly to be redefined as a constant rather than a variable, we have the obligation to re-examine the array of conditions, contexts, attitudes, and excuses we have come to accept as educational norms.***

*Introducing Equity . . . continued***Teachers' Expectations**

Students usually become aware of others' expectations for them, whether or not their peers, family, or teachers directly convey these expectations. As role models and leaders, teachers have a daily impact on their students—it's why so many have chosen to do such difficult but rewarding work. However, teachers, like all of us, hold preconceived notions and have entrenched habits—not all of them conscious and many unexamined. For example, some teachers may think that girls are better writers and artists, or that boys are naturally more proficient at computer programming. These impressions can be conveyed in a subtle manner in the classroom, and subsequently realized by students. A teacher's expectations, behaviors, and demeanor will convey those perceptions and students may feel limited by their expected roles.

Francena Cummings of the Eisenhower Consortium for Mathematics and Science at SERVE in Tallahassee, Florida, and a former middle school science teacher, says she learned a great deal when she moved from all-black schools into integrated settings. "I did a lot of observing and listening. I learned the truth of the old saying, 'you are more alike than you are different.'" She found she had biases that she had not acknowledged. "As much as we want to think that we would not promote males over females, we need to ask questions as basic as, 'Do I actually call on the boys more than I do the girls?' We have to be mindful of ways we can encourage both boys and girls, especially in math and science," she says.<sup>8</sup>

The highly regarded GESA (Generating Expectations for Student Achievement) program highlights the role of teacher bias: "Once teachers have examined their own biases, as demonstrated by their own behavior toward all students, necessary curricular and environmental changes can be accepted more easily," according to developer Dolores Grayson, a former WEEA grantee who directs GrayMill, an educational consulting agency.

One of the best strategies is to have a colleague observe you and give you feedback, says Marta Cruz-Janzen, associate professor of multicultural education at Florida Atlantic University and WEEA Associate. Videotapes work well, too, she says, to help teachers see what their interactions convey about their expectations, as well as their students' reactions. She noted that even the most seasoned teacher can be surprised at what they do in class and can learn more equitable ways of interacting.

Sometimes students, as well as teachers, believe damaging stereotypes, says Rebecca Gondek, formerly a sixth grade teacher. "Some kids have very stereotypical beliefs about careers, especially those who don't see a lot of professionals in their day-to-day lives or in their families." She worked closely with her urban students to realistically match their future career goals with the skills they needed to develop. "It was a concerted effort to open up possibilities" and challenge race, gender, and class stereotypes, she says. "We'd provide role models, then talk to them about the kind of person they can become—beyond how they'll do in school."

**The Classroom Environment**

Teachers who want to be sure that all of their students have equal opportunities to learn can ask themselves a simple, revealing question, says Grayson, the educational consultant. "What are the behaviors I use with the students from whom I expect the most?"

Her research has revealed that teachers do the following—with all their students—when they have high expectations:

- **Provide a variety of opportunities for students to contribute in class (participate in a small group, work with a partner, make a presentation):** Doing this provides students with a variety of ways to express their understanding of the material and builds mutual respect among the students. Students are less likely to be typecast as certain kinds of learners.
- **Allow students to have "think time" before responding:** Teachers who expect the student to give a correct response wait about five seconds; when they expect the student to be incorrect they wait less than one second. Students with limited English ability, girls in math and science, and boys in language arts may need more time to formulate an answer.
- **Arrange the classroom in a physically close and comfortable way:** Teachers may inadvertently distance themselves from difficult students or unintentionally isolate a student or a section of the room. A teacher's movement throughout the room can integrate all students and activities.
- **Touch students in a respectful, positive, and encouraging manner:** Such touching conveys "care and respect, love and tenderness," notes Grayson. Touching on the hand, lower arm, or shoulder is often a good way to ex-

**Teachers who want to be sure that all of their students have equal opportunities to learn can ask themselves a simple, revealing question, says Grayson, the educational consultant. "What are the behaviors I use with the students from whom I expect the most?"**

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## Common Concerns for Teachers

Equity experts offer suggestions on how to counter some common concerns that arise when equity initiatives are introduced at schools.

- **Many teachers think the gender “problem” has been “solved.”** Equity issues have been on the agenda for decades, and much progress has been made. However, “there is still work to be done,” notes Shaffer. “We must be vigilant about democracy; we also have to be vigilant about this issue.”

There are still achievement gaps by gender in a variety of areas, and looking at class and race is a little more complex than it was twenty years ago. All factors need to be accounted for—class, race, and disability as they relate to gender.

- **Raising the subject of gender equity often sounds like an accusation.** Some teachers balk when they hear about gender equity concerns, says Jo Sanders, gender specialist of the Washington Research Institute. “They hear it as an accusation, that they’re sexist, oppressing girls, that they’re bad teachers.” A more empathetic presentation, pointing out that we are all products of a sexist, racist society, is usually well received.

- **Teachers are already overwhelmed, especially new teachers.** New teachers are trying to balance all of their concerns and juggle lots of new information, says Sanders. The teachers are constantly assessing their performance: Am I doing this right? Am I explaining well? Are the students paying attention? Am I missing signals? Are there problems brewing? Sanders suggests that gender equity specialists be sensitive to the experience of teachers at this stage in their career.
- **Too few men are involved.** So many men in education are quickly moved into administration, notes Cruz-Janzen. The paucity of men “is one of our failings as a field,” says Sanders. Many equity specialists are optimistic that more men will become involved as they come to have a deeper understanding of how sexism affects them and the girls and women in their lives.
- **There is pressure to produce short-term results.** Equity initiatives often suffer under the pressure to produce quick results. Schools rarely have a chance to attempt long-term change, never mind produce data to prove it. “You don’t socialize people in a year,” says Cruz-Janzen.

*To ensure that all students are heard, despite differences in the way they express themselves, teachers can create a sense of fairness among all students.*

### *Introducing Equity . . . continued*

press encouragement and support. Teachers need to be sensitive about possibly offending some students by touching, or who does and doesn’t like to be touched.

- **Express reproof:** Calmly expressing disapproval for inappropriate behavior equitably throughout the class sets an equal standard. Gender differences have traditionally been acute in this area (i.e., boys receiving more reprimands) as are racial differences (i.e., students of color being disciplined more often than white students). Disparities in treatment reinforces children’s own stereotypes and disrupts learning.
- **Listen:** To ensure that all students are heard, despite differences in the way they express themselves, teachers can create a sense of fair-

ness among all students. By avoiding the stereotype that boys should talk, girls should listen, for example, teachers can encourage more well-rounded discussion. Teachers can learn to become sensitive to cultural traditions about listening and talking (some students avoid eye contact as a sign of respect).

- **Probe to allow students to respond more fully:** Teachers can help students arrive at thoughtful responses by asking questions that help them deepen their response. Students from certain backgrounds may have difficulty understanding that teachers view their opinions as valid contributions to the class.
- **Pose higher level questions:** Often teachers will only pursue topics deeply with students

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**Girls weren't afraid to be ambitious in math and science when expectations were uniformly high.**

*Introducing Equity . . . continued*

whom they perceive to be the higher achievers. This shortchanges students most in need of developing sophisticated reasoning skills.

- **Offer analytical feedback (explanations, praise, additional information):** This feedback helps students to understand why they are succeeding or not. Without it, they cannot address the cause of their failings or nurture the cause of their success.

Teachers who use these strategies to build equity in the classroom find that the students who were already achieving continue to do so and the students who had been identified as nonachievers start to improve. "We've been able to close extreme performance gaps," said Grayson.<sup>9</sup>

Gondek, who also taught at a technical high school, believes that equitable, high expectations are key. "Girls weren't afraid to be ambitious in math and science when expectations were uniformly high. It became a pride issue."

Teacher attitudes, expectations, and behaviors can have stunning effects, both in the academic and social spheres. Karma Paoletti, an elementary school teacher at the Maria Baldwin School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, holds "recess meetings," to clear the air after recess. In such a meeting, students might talk about why the girls were excluded from a football game. She helps her second and third graders make suggestions about alternative ways to handle situations. The impact of such discussions on the classroom environment is "invaluable," she says. Her students know that fairness will be discussed in a safe environment.

At Omaha South High School in Omaha, Nebraska, six of the eight computer science teachers are women. That speaks volumes, says Roni Huerta, IT Curriculum Specialist. "The female teachers are sensitive to making everyone feel welcome," she says. While very diverse classrooms are a challenge, the more diverse your school population, the more sensitive your staff will be to all students needs, says Huerta. "People gain a lot of sensitivity in a diverse environment."

**Curriculum and Materials**

Equity experts agree on the bottom line regarding curricular materials: both sexes and all races should be equally respected in class, and the history, contributions, and strengths of all need to be represented and respected. There are many guides for evaluating curricula, and an abundance of materials that teachers already use to supplement traditional curricula. These materials pro-

vide a variety of perspectives that enrich the education experience for students and teachers. The materials can help teachers ensure that their curricula fairly represent the diversity of students. Materials can be evaluated ahead of time for bias and adapted when necessary. Numerous curricula have been developed over the years that are equitable in terms of gender, race, and ethnicity. (See resources section.)

**Beyond the Classroom**

Teachers often need to be sensitive about students' family concerns. Encouraging young women to become academic achievers can conflict with some families' values and beliefs, notes Cruz-Janzen. To suggest that girls might do more than take care of the family can be seen as an affront to the culture, she says. For example, she works closely with Latino fathers to develop their understanding of the potential of their daughters. "To have a strong family unit you need to support the education of daughters," she says.

In a recent visit to an elementary school, Cruz-Janzen noticed a kindergarten teacher working closely with Haitian and Latino parents who resisted efforts to engage boys in nontraditional activities. When you keep parents "constantly in the loop," you can come to a point of common understanding, she says. "I don't know of any parent who doesn't want the best for their children." In her preservice classes she works with her students on deepening their cultural understandings and sensitivities.

The Omaha South High School uses its extracurricular summer computer camp to cultivate interest in computer sciences among girls and students of color. Follow-up to the camp includes encouragement to enroll in computer, math, and science classes during the school year. Many schools offer activities such as science clubs for girls and after school activities to open up new interests. Engaging students, as well as parents' support, in extracurricular activities can help bring girls into the classroom focused on new areas of study, and foster an environment of equity based on participation from both genders.

Many approaches to introducing equity into the classroom are effective. Tools to infuse equity have been developed over the past thirty years, and many are listed in the resources section of this digest. The WEEA Equity Resource Center has staff available to assist teachers, administrators, parents, and others interested in equity in education (800-225-3088). ♦

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# Gender Equitable Schools Benefit Everyone

By Sundra Flansburg, WEEA Equity Resource Center at Education Development Center, Inc.

In recent years, much of the coverage of gender equity in the news media tends to frame the issue in terms of “girls versus boys,” or to assume that improvements in girls’ educational achievement come at the expense of boys’. These arguments are often rooted in misconceptions about the work of those who promote gender equity in education.

Gender equity has never been about benefiting females more than males. When advocates and practitioners first began to work toward educational equity in the 1970s, they focused on girls and women because females experienced more discrimination than males in terms of access to educational resources and benefits. For instance, females were being shut out of or concentrated in certain classes (vocational education was especially sex-segregated), received substandard funding and opportunities in athletics, endured sexual harassment, faced quotas of maximum enrollments in professional schools, and so on. All of these barriers kept young women as a group—especially young women of color, poor women, and women with disabilities—from reaching their potential and being able to contribute fully to society.

Few people today deny publicly that this discrimination existed, or that the situation was blatantly unfair not only to females but also to society as a whole. However, some now state that in the 30 years since Title IX (the principal federal legislation guaranteeing educational equity) was passed, discrimination against girls has ended.

Therefore, they argue, work aimed at girls is not only unnecessary but also thwarts boys’ achievement.

Although the opposition group numbers are small, their skilled handling of the media has often garnered more attention for their opinions than what their numbers justify. While leaders opposing gender equity often seek media outlets and public recognition, this mode of work has not often been preferred by equity advocates and practitioners. Much has been written about the mass media’s love of reporting “gender wars” or “battles of the sexes,”<sup>1</sup> but most gender equity supporters shy away from this approach.

## Gender Equity Is about Males and Females

For decades, a number of gender equity advocates have been working in areas in which boys and men are disadvantaged. Both male and female researchers have identified the need to look at issues such as why African American boys are over represented in special education classes, why boys as a group do not perform as well as girls on verbal skills assessments, and why inappropriate expressions of anger and violence are concentrated disproportionately in the male population. Most equity advocates feel that many of the disadvantages boys face are the result of sex-role stereotyping and other related factors, and thus feel the issue of masculinity needs to be examined and challenged, just as notions of femininity have been.

*Gender equity has never been about benefiting females more than males.*

*Continued p. 10, “Gender Equitable Schools”*

## Introducing Equity . . . continued

### Notes

1. J. R. Campbell, C. M. Hombo, and J. Mazzeo, “NAEP 1999 Trends in Academic Progress: Three Decades of Student Performance” (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 2000) (NCES 2000-469).
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- that Endure and Change” (Madison, Wisc.: National Institute of Science Education, 2000); [www.wcer.wisc.edu/nise/News\\_Activities/Forums/Oakespaper.htm](http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/nise/News_Activities/Forums/Oakespaper.htm).
6. P. B. Campbell, E. Jolly, L. Hoey, and L. K. Perlman, “Upping the Numbers: Using Research-based Decision Making to Increase Diversity in the Quantitative Disciplines” (Fairfield, Conn.: GE Fund, 2002), 5.
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8. F. Cummings, “Thinking of Each and Every One: Topics: Equity: Framing the Context” (Eisenhower National Clearinghouse: Jan. 3, 2002); [www.enc.org/topics/equity/context](http://www.enc.org/topics/equity/context).
9. Grayson and Martin.

*Gender Equitable Schools . . . continued***Equity work to improve girls' achievement has positively affected boys' achievement as well.**

Much work is already being done to address male issues with a gender equity focus. More is needed. Many specialists and researchers have called for greater attention to these problems. This reflects an evolution in gender equity work and theory, as would be expected as the field matures.

A number of researchers have pointed out that more than three decades of work have led us to see that gender equity is more complex than many people first imagined. For instance, Barbara Bank reflects that

*as far as schooling is concerned, there is considerable evidence to support the conclusion that girls not only have absorbed the message that they should achieve but also have been successful in doing so. . . . Despite their good grades and other educational achievements, girls and women have not been able to win the status and other rewards that are consistent with their educational credentials.<sup>2</sup>*

Patricia Campbell and Nancy Kreinberg have noted the shift from seeing “access and treatment at the core of accountability” to recognizing “outcomes at the core of accountability.”<sup>3</sup> So while we should celebrate the advances made in terms of narrowing the gaps between young women’s and men’s achievement in a number of areas, we have found that this does not automatically ensure equitable outcomes. For one, women are still paid less than men with similar educational levels in similar jobs. In other words, helping females achieve economic self-sufficiency has proved to be much more complicated than simply removing discriminatory barriers to equitable education.

We have also found that equity work to improve girls’ achievement has positively affected boys’ achievement. Susan McGee Bailey and Patricia Campbell state that

*we must get past the idea that education is a zero sum game where a step forward for girls is automatically a step backward for boys. . . . Teachers know that when something works for girls, it often works for boys as well. For example, providing students with hands-on experiments reflecting the ways science relates to daily life has proven helpful in involving girls in science. This approach works for boys, too. Not allowing student “put-downs” makes many girls feel more comfortable in class, and boys find they also learn better when they don’t have to worry about being teased or insulted.<sup>4</sup>*

For instance, the teacher professional development program Generating Expectations for Student Achievement (GESA) was originally developed to address gender disparities in teacher-student interactions but was later reshaped to focus on race and ethnicity as well. Not only did GESA reduce the disparities between teacher interactions with males and females, but students in GESA classrooms also significantly improved achievement in both reading and mathematics. Not just girls, but all student groups. These results and other data show that focusing on gender equity in education often helps all students.<sup>5</sup>

We cannot talk of excellence in schools without speaking of equity. By definition, high-performing schools must be equitable schools, since excellence has not been attained if there are achievement and outcome gaps by gender, race/ethnicity, class, or other factors. This connection between excellence and equity was the focus of several sessions at recent Improving America’s Schools conferences sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education.

**Why We Must Continue to Work**

Work in gender equity aims to eliminate disparities in outcomes between females and males to benefit all students. It is about opening up our educational system to support expanded opportunities and achievement for both sexes—not just removing arbitrary and systemic barriers but also creating an environment in which all young people feel respected and challenged to reach their full potential. As a recent WEEA publication confirms:

*Gender equity means creating an educational climate that encourages females and males equally to develop, achieve, and learn—without setting any limits on our expectations based on gender, race, ethnicity, or disability. Gender equity is inclusive. It supports the education of boys and is integral to the achievement of students of color, students with disabilities, and students from poor households . . .<sup>6</sup>*

When we achieve gender equity, our education system will provide an equal chance for females and males to learn. There will be open options for females and males to learn subjects and prepare for future education, jobs, physical activity, careers, and family responsibilities, with no limits on expectations due to gender. There will be equal encouragement for both genders to develop, achieve, and learn, and equitable treatment of male and female students.<sup>7</sup>

*Continued p. 11, “Gender Equitable Schools”*

## Online Course for Teachers: Engaging Middle School Girls in Math and Science

Studies show that starting in middle school, girls are less likely than boys to take elective courses in math and science. This decline in participation is especially severe among low-income girls, girls with learning disabilities, and girls who are learning English as a new language.

*Engaging Middle School Girls in Math and Science*, an online course developed by the WEEA Equity Resource Center and the New England Comprehensive Assistance Center, brings teachers together to explore how they can make a difference at this critical stage in girls' academic careers. The

course is designed for teachers to build on what they already know about good instructional practice, and work toward developing classrooms that support equitable learning for boys and girls. This course runs for nine weeks (including a one-week tutorial) and fits easily into every budget and schedule. Professional development points are available as well as undergraduate or graduate course credit. Enrollment is limited to 25 students. Register at the center's website: [www.edc.org/WomensEquity](http://www.edc.org/WomensEquity).

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### *Gender Equitable Schools . . . continued*

Recognizing and working on the issues that disadvantage boys and young men is vital. This does not mean, however, that work with girls and young women can or should end. In spite of hard-won gains, women continue to face greater obstacles than men in such areas as becoming economically self-sufficient, balancing the multiple demands of productive and reproductive roles, and so on.

Ignoring or failing to fully take into account these facts as we work in education would be unconscionable and irresponsible. Knowing this, our work with girls and women continues to be of utmost importance, especially research and practice that benefit females of color, females with disabilities, and poor females. Work to improve educational opportunities for women and girls who face barriers due not only to gender but also to other factors has been at the core of the Women's Educational Equity Act Program's work for many years.

Advances have been made, which is reassuring for females and for society because this shows that it is possible to improve women's status in their communities. Many gains have been made, but with these gains comes the realization that many more inequities exist. For instance, while access and outcomes have improved for white, middle-class females in general, gains have been minimal for poor females and females of color. This points to the continuing need to collect data disaggregated by gender, race/ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic class, and other factors so that we can identify problems that may affect different groups in different ways. Interventions also need to focus on specific groups of girls and women, for example, females with disabilities.

As many have noted, gender equity work seems to get more complicated rather than less. With successes comes increased scrutiny, and we have found that it was easier to win support for the struggles against the blatant discriminatory policies of the past than against the current lingering effects of sex-role stereotyping or unconscious bias. But we cannot fall back on simple answers or sound bites. We have learned that good teaching engages all students, with no disparities by gender, race, ethnicity, class, or disability. This is what the great number of practitioners and advocates continue to strive for. ♦

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***We can identify problems that may affect different groups in different ways.***

### Notes

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2. B. J. Bank, "Introduction: Some Paradoxes of Gender Equity in Schooling" in *Gender, Equity, and Schooling: Policy and Practice*, edited by B. J. Bank and P. M. Hall (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997): 10-11.
3. P. B. Campbell and N. Kreinberg, "Moving into the Mainstream: From 'Equity a Separate Concept' to 'High Quality Includes All'" (1998); [www.campbell-kibler.com/Moving\\_to\\_Mainstream.htm](http://www.campbell-kibler.com/Moving_to_Mainstream.htm).
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5. D. A. Grayson, *The Equity Principal: An Inclusive Approach to Excellence: Administrator Handbook* (Canyon Lake, Calif.: GrayMill, 1988).
6. WEEA Equity Resource Center, *Raising the Grade: A Title IX Curriculum* (Newton, Mass.: WEEA Equity Resource Center at EDC, 1998): 3.
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# WEEA Resources for Teachers

Need help selecting a resource on gender equity? Call the WEEA Equity Resource Center's hotline at **800-225-3088** to speak with a technical assistance specialist, or send us an email at **WEEActr@edc.org**. We look forward to hearing from you!

## A Gender Equity Curriculum for Grades 6–12 "A-Gay-Yah"

An exciting multicultural curriculum, *A-Gay-Yah* emphasizes critical thinking and cooperative learning.

- Offers insight into Native American history and culture
- Increases gender equity and cultural awareness for middle and high school students
- Increases students' knowledge of U.S. history and social studies

*A-Gay-Yah* affirms a long and vital Native American cultural history while helping all students discuss gender issues relating to traditional and modern culture. An outstanding addition to social studies and history classrooms. (178 pp.) • By Wathene Young, American Indian Resource Center 1992 • #2735 • \$30.00

## Assessment FAQ Packet

Provides basic information about education assessment. Offers practical ideas and resources to examine the assessment process used in your school, and outlines steps you can take to ensure that assessment practices are equitable. (16 pp.) • WEEA Equity Resource Center 2001 • #2819 • \$5.00

## Boys' Equity FAQ Packet

Educators, parents, and guidance counselors need practical materials to inspire boys to reach their full potential in education and in society. This packet provides basic information to help you strive for gender equity in education and increase options for boys. (35pp.) • WEEA Equity Resource Center 2001 • #2820 • \$5.00

## Creating Sex-fair Family Day Care

### A Guide for Trainers

Education to reduce gender-role stereotyping and to create a nonsexist environment needs to begin with children at an early age. *Creating Sex-Fair Family Day Care* offers guidance in developing non-stereotyped activities that will communicate positive messages to children of both genders. (130 pp.) • By Bonnie Raines, CHOICE (Concern for Health Options: Information, Care, and Education) 1991 • #2733 • \$13.50

## Disability FAQ Packet

Provides educators with information and practical tools for the classroom to ensure that gender equity is part of the curriculum for students with disabilities. Includes information on laws, data on education, answers to frequently asked questions, resources, and a *WEEA Digest*. (16 pp.) • WEEA Equity Resource Center 2000 • #2817 • \$5.00

## Encouraging Girls in Math and Science Series

Research shows the gender gap widening in math, science, and engineering. These pamphlets offer practical suggestions and concrete action steps to encourage girls. (8 pp. each) • By Dr. Patricia B. Campbell, Campbell-Kibler Associates 1992 • Sold in packets of 25, or as a sampler set (one each of the four titles):

- #2736 (sampler) • \$6.00
- #2737 *Working Together. Making Changes* • \$18.00
- #2738 *Math, Science, and Your Daughter* • \$18.00
- #2739 *Nothing Can Stop Us Now* • \$18.00
- #2740 *What Works and What Doesn't?* • \$18.00
- #2748 *Las matemáticas, las ciencias y su hija* • \$18.00

## Equity in Education Series

This series offers proven approaches to meet the needs of all students in today's diverse classrooms. Each booklet in the series helps educators, parents, and community members understand their crucial roles in furthering equity in schools and in society; helps users identify bias and respond to it; and offers activities and other hands-on tools to use in K–12 classrooms.

WEEA Equity Resource Center 1995 • Sold individually or as a set; Spanish translation of first book also available.

- #2761 (set of 4 booklets) • \$16.00
- #2762 • *Gender Equity for Educators, Parents, and Community* (26 pp.) • \$5.00
- #2800 • *La Igualdad de género para educadores, padres y la comunidad* (Spanish translation of *Gender Equity for Educators . . .*) (26 pp.) • \$5.00
- #2763 • *Gender Stereotypes: The Links to Violence* (25 pp.) • \$5.00
- #2764 • *School-to-Work: Equitable Outcomes* (26 pp.) • \$5.00
- #2765 • *Gender-fair Math* (22 pp.) • \$5.00

## ESL

### The Whole Person Approach

An innovative approach for K–12 bilingual teachers that introduces a holistic, humanistic method of bilingual education. Fully integrates bilingual education with gender equity concepts to improve Latino/a students' English proficiency and remove gender bias from multicultural curricula. (145 pp.) • Cynthia Ramsey and Trinidad Lopez, National Institute for Multicultural Education 1989 #2699 • \$18.50

## Going Places

### An Enrichment Program to Empower Students

Dropout prevention begins by helping students deal with self-esteem issues early in their school careers. *Going Places* targets those middle school students most at-risk of dropping out. The eighteen-week curriculum helps students build up their self-esteem, believe they can succeed in school, and work toward positive self-image and high school graduation. (433 pp.) • By San Diego City Schools 1991 • #2713 • \$50.00

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WEEA Resources . . . continued

### Lifting the Barriers

**600 Strategies that Really Work to Increase Girls' Participation in Science, Mathematics, and Computers**  
Teachers share their ingenious strategies that caused dramatic changes in their classrooms: Girls' enrollment in advanced courses and after-school clubs doubled or even tripled in one year. In one school, girls signed up for physics for the first time in twelve years. This book contains hundreds of teacher-friendly and teacher-tested strategies for successfully involving girls in math, science, and technology. Based on the experiences of 200 K-12 educators from every state in the country. (112 pp.) • By Jo Sanders, Gender Equity Program, Center for Advanced Study in Education, City University of New York Graduate Center 1994 • #2809 • \$14.95

### Math and Science for the Co-ed Classroom

How do we ensure that all students—girls and boys—are engaged learners in math and science classes? This informative pamphlet set from a national expert in the field of equity in mathematics, science, and engineering offers practical tools to help assess the school and classroom climate and create change. These pamphlets are especially appropriate for distribution at workshops and conferences and are sold in packets of 25, as well as in a sampler set (one each of the four titles). (8 pp. each) • By Dr. Patricia B. Campbell and Jennifer N. Storo, Campbell-Kibler Associates 1996

#2767 (sampler) • \$6.00

#2768 *Teacher Strategies that Work for Girls and Boys* (packet of 25) • \$18.00

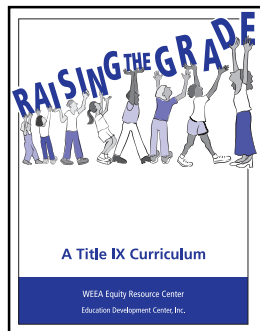
#2769 *Girls Are . . . Boys Are . . . : Myths, Stereotypes, and Gender Differences* (packet of 25) • \$18.00

#2770 *Whose Responsibility Is It? The Role of Administrators and Counselors* (packet of 25) • \$18.00

#2771 *Why Me? Why My Classroom? Equity in Co-ed Math and Science Classes* (packet of 25) • \$18.00

### Raising the Grade A Title IX Curriculum

Building an effective classroom for all girls and boys is the first step toward increasing student achievement. *Raising the Grade* is a collection of fun and interesting activities that will strengthen kindergartner through twelfth graders' abilities to work together effectively across the diversity of gender, race, national origin, and disability. Designed to be used throughout the learning period, on its own, as part of a thematic unit, or across the curriculum, *Raising the Grade* will help students recognize that they can take action to make gender equity a reality in all areas of their lives. (174 pp.) • WEEA Equity Resource Center 1998 • #2810 • \$17.00



### Join the Online Conversation

**EdEquity—The WEEA Center's Online Discussion Forum**  
Join EdEquity to keep up on the latest educational equity issues and talk with others working in this area. Take part in EdEquity's quarterly Dialogues with the Experts, an issue-oriented online discussion series featuring distinguished panels of experts who engage forum participants in weeklong conversations around current topics in educational equity. Upcoming dialogues address teachers' issues and the relationship between gender, community service, and service learning. To link to past discussions and view future topics, go to [www.edc.org/WomensEquity/service/listserv.htm](http://www.edc.org/WomensEquity/service/listserv.htm). For instructions on how to subscribe to EdEquity, see page 16.



### Science EQUALS Success

*Science EQUALS Success* builds on the "fun" of science, motivating girls and students of color during middle and secondary school—a critical period when many lose interest in math and science. Activities are designed to supplement existing programs, so teachers may pick and choose the activities that are most appropriate to integrate into their science classes. Each activity can also stand alone. (115 pp.) • By Dr. Catherine R. Conwell, Charlotte EQUALS 1990 • #2711 • \$25.00

### Science FAQ Packet

Educators, classroom teachers, and teacher trainers need practical materials to inspire students to become strong technically so that they can, as graduates, replenish and enhance the technological workforce. To help you work toward that goal, this packet is designed to provide basic information about gender equity in science education. (20 pp.) • WEEA Equity Resource Center 2000 • #2818 • \$5.00

### Teaching Mathematics Effectively and Equitably to Females

This resource discusses achievement history and trends, higher education experience, and gender research. It looks at student gender differences, and explores learning styles and classroom behaviors, attitudes toward mathematics learning, mathematics course taking, and social expectations. The coverage moves from research to practical recommendations for creating an environment that encourages the mathematics development of both females and males. (37 pp.) • By Katherine Hanson, WEEA Equity Resource Center 1992 • #2744 • \$6.00

### Women's Journeys, Women's Stories In Search of Our Multicultural Future

This exciting middle and high school women's history curriculum picks up where other history texts leave off. It presents a contemporary multicultural view, telling stories that fill critical gaps in our nation's history and move women and their experience into every classroom. A welcome addition to classrooms of new and experienced teachers alike. (*Teacher* 130 pp.; *Student* 308 pp.) • By Linda Shevitz, Maryland State Department of Education; Susan Shaffer, Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium 1997 • #2805 • \$40.00 (Set of *Teacher Guide* and *Student Manual*)

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# Additional Resources for Teachers

*Use the provided contact information to order these materials.*

## Answering Back

### Girls, Boys, and Feminism in Schools

This book examines what happens to individual Australian schools, with their unique demographics and local cultures, when gender equity programs are implemented. Drawing on a thorough knowledge of gender issues in schools and of feminist theories, policies, and practices, this collection exposes the volatility of gender reform programs currently in practice through conversations with everyone from old-guard teachers and principals to radical educators, from class clowns to teachers' pets. (256 pp.) • By Jane Kenway and Sue Willis 1998 • Routledge, 29 West 35th Street, New York, NY 10001 • 800-634-7064 • ISBN: 0415181917 • www.routledge-ny.com

## Beyond the "Gender Wars"

### A Conversation about Girls, Boys, and Education

This American Association of University Women (AAUW) Educational Foundation report offers key insights presented during a Foundation symposium of scholars who study both girls' and boys' experiences in and out of school. While sharing their perspectives on gender identity and difference, challenging popular views of girls' and boys' behavior, and exploring the meaning of equitable education for the twenty-first century, symposium participants also tackle the tough question—is there a classroom battle of the sexes that girls win only if boys lose and vice versa? • By American Association of University Women (2001) • AAUW Educational Foundation Research, 1111 Sixteenth Street NW, Washington, DC 20036 • 202-728-7602 • www.aauw.org

## Creating the Nonsexist Classroom

### A Multicultural Approach

This book challenges restrictions on the growth of gender equity while supplying educators with both theoretical and practical guidelines for implementing nonsexist education in the classroom. It also provides an overview of the historical and current problems of sexism and sex discrimination in society, focusing on the microculture of the schools. (168 pp.) • By Theresa Mickey McCormick (1994) • Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027 • 800-575-6566 • ISBN 0807733474 • www.teacherscollegepress.com

## The Essential Profession

### American Education at the Crossroads

According to this recent Recruiting New Teachers report, the American public believes that a qualified teacher is the most important element in a quality education. This report also gauges public concern on the issues of teaching, educational opportunity, and school reform. The full text of the report is available at [www.recruitingteachers.org/news/nationalpdf.pdf](http://www.recruitingteachers.org/news/nationalpdf.pdf) (53 pp.) • By David Haselkorn and Louis Harris (2001) • Recruiting New Teachers, Inc., 385 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA 02478 • 617-489-6000 • www.rnt.org

## Gender Equity Right from the Start

### Instructional Activities for Teacher Educators in Mathematics, Science, and Technology

This guide is ideal for professors of education and professional development specialists looking to inspire new and in-service teachers to work for gender equitable classrooms and schools. Grounded in a constructivist approach to teaching and learning, the book includes almost 200 easy-to-use teaching activities focused on real-world problems and solutions. (135 pp.) • By Jo Sanders, Janice Koch, and Josephine Urso 1997 • Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 10 Industrial Avenue, Mahwah, NJ 07430-2262 • 800-9-BOOKS-9 • ISBN: 0805823379 • www.erlbaum.com

## Gender Gaps

### Where Schools Still Fail Our Children

Drawing on 1,000 research studies, this AAUW report reviews issues of historic concern for girls—math and science enrollment, high-stakes standardized testing, extracurricular activities, and health and development risks—and new areas such as technology and school-to-work programs. The findings acknowledge some gains in girls' achievement, point to others areas where boys-not girls-lag, and highlight some areas, such as technology, where needs have not yet been addressed. Also included are thirty-five recommendations for action by states, local school districts, educators, and researchers in order to reach high educational achievement through gender equity. (144 pp.) • By American Association of University Women 1998 • AAUW Educational Foundation Research, 1111 Sixteenth Street NW, Washington, DC 20036 • 202-728-7602 • ISBN: 1569246653 • www.aauw.org

## Gender In/forms the Curriculum

### From Enrichment to Transformation

Developed by nationally recognized equity experts, this collection of essays examines various disciplines and maintains that gender blindness is not synonymous with gender equity, especially in science and technology. The book analyzes the inequities present in many educational arenas—from vocational education to art programs. (312 pp.) • Edited by Jane Gaskell and John Willinsky 1995 • Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027 • 800-575-6566 • ISBN: 0807734012 • www.teacherscollegepress.com

## Generating Expectations for Student

### Achievement (GESA)

#### An Equitable Approach to Educational Excellence—Teacher Handbook

This invaluable handbook identifies five major areas of classroom disparity and offers research-based strategies to counter inequities. It will help teachers, administrators, parents, and community groups look at the impact of gender, race, and ethnic biases, and become more aware of how they influence children. (250+ pp.) • By Dolores A. Grayson and Mary D. Martin (1997) • GrayMill, 25101 Bear Valley Road—PMB 130, Tehachapi, CA 93561-8311 • 800-218-GESA (4372) • www.graymill.com

*Continued p. 15, "Additional Resources"*

*Additional Resources . . . continued***Infusing Equity into Education**

This guide for school districts and equity coordinators employs the Infusion Process Model, a method that uses existing organizational structures and communication systems to generate broad-based advocacy for educational equity while infusing equity concepts into all levels of school district operation. • By Dolores A. Grayson (39 pp.) 1996 • GrayMill, 25101 Bear Valley Road—PMB 130, Tehachapi, CA 93561-8311 • 800-218-GESA (4372) • www.graymill.com

**Open Minds to Equality****A Sourcebook of Learning Activities to Affirm Diversity and Promote Equality**

This practical publication enables teachers to understand and see interconnections between many forms of diversity. It provides background information and activities about how inequality based on race, gender, class, age, language, sexual orientation, religion, and physical/mental ability are manifested in school and society. (387 pp.) • By Nancy Schniedewind and Ellen Davidson (1998) • Allyn & Bacon, 75 Arlington Street, Suite 300, Boston, MA 02116 • 617-848-6000 • ISBN: 020516109X • www.ablongman.com

**Power and Promise****Helping Schoolgirls Hold onto Their Dreams**

An in-depth analysis from a middle school gifted and talented teacher, this book explores the decline in girls' physical and emotional health, the decreased career expectations and the waning academic achievements that often accompany adolescence. The book also confronts the biased attitudes about females that abound in the culture, the persistent inequities that still infect our institutions, and the unconscious biases and stereotypes we perpetuate. (260 pp.) • By Tim Flinders and Carol Lee Flinders, Ph.D. (1999) • Two Rock Publications, P.O. Box 2773, Petaluma, CA 94953 • ISBN: 0967617308 • www.tworock.org

**Rethinking Our Classrooms**

This two-volume set offers hands-on strategies for bringing values of community, justice, and equality into the classroom. This set includes from-the-classroom articles, curriculum ideas, lesson plans, poetry, reproducible handouts, and resource lists. • Edited by Bill Bigelow, Linda Christensen, Stan Karp, Barbara Miner, and Bob Peterson (208 pp. and 248 pp.) 1994 and 2001 • Rethinking Schools Ltd., 1001 E. Keefe Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53212 • 800-669-4192 • ISBN: 0942961188 and 0942961277 • www.rethinkingschools.org

**School Enrollment in the United States****Social and Economic Characteristics of Students**

This U.S. Census Bureau report found that over one-fourth of the U.S. population was enrolled in school in October 1999, creating a situation of extreme overcrowding in our nation's classrooms. The report provides extensive documentation of enrollment statistics for all grade levels, describes demographic shifts in public schools, and the challenges for non-English speaking students. (12 pp.) • By Amie Jamieson, Andrea Curry, and Gladys Martinez 2001 • U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233 • 301-763-4636 • www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/p20-533.pdf

**Teachers, Schools, and Society, Fifth Edition**

Ever since its first edition, education professors have relied on the Sadkers for their comprehensive coverage of all aspects of American education. From the underlying principles of teaching and schooling to the operation of schools, the fifth edition retains that same great coverage. But it also builds on this foundation. Now fully updated, with more exciting new material than ever, *Teachers, Schools, and Society, Fifth Edition* offers a structure unsurpassed in breadth. Written in an informal and highly engaging style that appeals to students, *Teachers, Schools, and Society* is punctuated throughout with interesting features and sidebars. • By David Sadker and Myra Sadker (2000) • The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027 • 800-575-6566 • ISBN: 0807737399 • www.teacherscollegepress.com

**Teaching Transformed****Achieving Excellence, Fairness, Inclusion, and Harmony**

A key resource for educators aiming to reach four educational goals—fairness, excellence, inclusion, and harmony—this book advocates for five standards of effective pedagogy, including teachers and students producing together; the development of language and literacy across the curriculum; making meaning by connecting school to students' lives; teaching complex thinking; and teaching through sustained "instructional conversations." • By Roland G. Tharp, Peggy Estrada, Stephanie Stoll Dalton, and Lois A. Yamauchi (274 pp.) 2000 • Westview Press, 5500 Central Avenue, Boulder, CO 80301 • 800-386-5656 • ISBN: 0813322693 • www.westviewpress.com

**Uncommon Caring****Learning From Men Who Teach Young Children**

Why do so few men choose to teach young children? And who are the men that do so? The author and a group of male primary grade teachers discuss a wide range of issues, including discipline, classroom talk, curriculum, physical contact with the children, relationships with other (female) teachers, and issues about sexual orientation that all of them—both gay and straight—must deal with. • By James R. King (160 pp.) 1998 • Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027 • 800-575-6566 • ISBN: 0807737399 • www.teacherscollegepress.com

**We Can't Teach What We Don't Know****White Teacher, Multiracial Schools**

Drawing on his twenty-five years of experience as a multicultural educator, this author examines his own racial identity to stake out the relationship between culturally competent White teachers and the culturally diverse schools they work in. The book offers a hopeful vision for the future of multicultural education. • By Gary Howard (160 pp.) 1999 • Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027 • 800-575-6566 • ISBN: 080773800X • www.teacherscollegepress.com

*Use the provided contact information to order these materials.*



# WEEA Services and Resources

**For resources and assistance call the center at 800-225-3088.**

## Practical Tools and Support for Gender-Fair Learning

The WEEA Equity Resource Center at EDC can help you find the tools you need to create gender-fair multicultural learning environments.

Call the center's hotline at **800-225-3088** or **TTY 800-354-6798** for resources and referrals.

The center's website is full of exciting information and tools, from fun facts about the history of equality to a list of practical curricula designed to help make any subject gender-fair. The center's website is designed to be accessible to users with disabilities.

[www.edc.org/WomensEquity](http://www.edc.org/WomensEquity)

EDEQUITY (the Educational Equity Discussion List) is designed to support practitioners and engage them in discussion about educational theory and practice. To subscribe, send email to <Majordomo@mail.edc.org>. The subject should be left blank and the body of the message should read:

**subscribe edequity**

The WEEA Equity Resource Center, a project of Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC), is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Women's Educational Equity Act Program to promote gender equitable education for all students. The WEEA Center offers products, services, and referrals to schools, school boards, colleges and universities, community organizations, businesses, parents, and students throughout the country. These practical tools include curricula, books, working papers, digests, and online courses that support equity and excellence regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, class, language, and disability.

## WEEA Catalog

Our catalog lists over 100 products that offer concrete ways to implement gender equitable education in classrooms, from preschool to college, and in adult education. Whether you are beginning the process or are an experienced gender equity specialist, we specialize in resources that help you understand the current issues in gender equity and how these relate to your classroom or workplace. Call the center for a free copy (800-225-3088).

## Help for Teachers, Administrators, Parents

Our staff includes a team of technical assistance specialists available to answer questions regarding issues on gender equity, and its intersection with disability, race, ethnicity, and class, suggest materials, make referrals, and locate speakers for conferences or activities. Contact us to ask questions.

*"WEEA Resources" listed on page 12*

**WEEA Equity Resource Center**  
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 U.S. Postage  
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 Boston, MA  
 Permit No. 58241

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The *WEEA Digest* is published by WEEA Equity Resource Center, a project at Education Development Center, Inc., under contract #ED-98-CO-0008 from the U.S. Department of Education. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position of the U.S. Department of Education and no official endorsement should be inferred.

WEEA is the Women's Educational Equity Act: federal legislation to promote educational equity for girls and women.

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