

A Framework of Educator Mindsets and Consequences

(Adapted by R. Filback and A. Green from work of: Bartolome, 2008; Hancock, 2011; Milner, 2010; Pollock, 2008)

Dimension	Mindset	Orientation	Explanation	Consequence
<i>Student demographics such as gender, ethnicity, race, age, disability</i>	BLIND (Stance of race-blind, color-blind, gender-blind, etc.)	1D. "Acknowledging the ethnic background of students might offend someone."	Educators see race or ethnicity as a taboo issue and avoid considering in educational decision-making.	Educators operate without considering how ethnically diverse students experience school.
		2D. "All students must be treated equally regardless of differences in gender, race, ethnicity..."	Educators do not recognize how race and gender manifest in the daily lives of teachers, students and families.	Instructional, curricular, and policy decisions do not address structural inequalities or power imbalances.
		3D. "We need to focus on instructional quality and not worry about ethnicity or gender."	Educators view student background and identity as unrelated to academic performance.	Student demographics are peripheral or ignored in understanding and supporting academic achievement.
	AWARE (Recognition of difference and role of race, ethnicity, gender, etc.)	1E. "I try to understand how the background of students and teachers influences teaching and learning."	Educators see ethnicity or gender as important factors and find ways to discuss them and consider in decisions.	Educators are able to understand the educational enterprise from multiple and varied perspectives.
		2E. "I seek to treat all students fairly while recognizing that students experience school differently."	Educators understand that race and gender impact daily experiences of teachers, students and families.	Instructional, curricular, and policy decisions reflect awareness of structural inequalities or power imbalances.
		3E. "We need to examine how all students are best served by our curriculum and instruction."	Educators are aware that student identity and background influence how they access and perform in school.	Student demographics are central in understanding and supporting student academic achievement.

<i>Culture, language, ethnic heritage</i>	DEFICIT (Deficit thinking, cultural deprivation, assimilationist)	4D. "All students must conform to traditional school culture and teaching approaches."	Educators privilege academic culture and view inconsistencies between home and school culture as student deficiencies.	Students from subjugated groups are disproportionately referred for disciplinary action or special ed.
		5D. "Students from some cultures are unable to experience academic success."	Educators hold narrow views of who can and can't learn based on the dominant cultural stereotypes.	Educators fail to recognize or build on the potential that each student brings into the classroom.
		6D. "Expecting high achievement from students from some cultures is simply setting them up for failure."	Educators do not see value in finding alternative ways to engage or challenge some students.	Culturally or linguistically diverse students experience curriculum that is less rigorous and emphasizes lower order thinking.
	ASSET (Asset-based view, appreciative inquiry, multi-cultural)	4E. "Successful teachers find ways to draw on students' home culture and language assets."	Disconnects between home and school cultures are recognized and addressed equitably.	The number of students from subjugated groups being referred for disciplinary action or special education is reduced.
		5E. "Students from every culture can be engaged in learning and experience academic success."	Educators hold an expansive view that all students are able to learn.	Educators recognize and build on the potential that each student brings into the classroom.
		6E. "All students can take on challenging tasks, especially students who have had to develop resilience."	Educators know how to motivate and challenge all students, including tapping into unique strengths and traits.	All students experience a curriculum that is challenging, focuses on meaningful work and encourages higher order thinking.

<i>Socio-economic status, educational level, career path</i>	EQUALITY (Pure meritocracy, individual agency, equal opportunity)	7D. "All people generally have equal opportunities to succeed with effort and sacrifice." 8D. "Academic achievement is unrelated to broader social realities or societal arrangements." 9D. "If students fail to perform academically, it is their responsibility."	Educators accept that people's achievements are based solely or mostly on ability and effort. Educators do not consider ways that a societal system disadvantages some groups while privileging others. Academic achievement is seen as independent of a student's circumstances outside of classroom.	Subjugated students receive lower quality education without additional support to achieve. Educators do not consider larger issues that may help address low student academic performance. Educators treat poor academic performance as a student problem with a "blame the victim" approach.
	EQUITY (Exceptions to meritocracy, systemic injustices, more equal outcomes)	7E. "Some students enjoy unearned privilege and some don't - and this distorts achievement and success." 8E. "Academic achievement must be viewed in relation to broader social realities." 9E. "If students fail to perform academically, it is everyone's responsibility."	Educators realize that multiple factors play into academic achievement and success. Educators consider ways that societal structures disadvantage some students and privilege others. Academic achievement is seen as a function of student background and circumstances.	Subjugated students get high quality education and/or multiple chances or additional support to achieve. Educators consider larger issues in a society to help address low student academic performance. Educators avoid "blaming the victim" and instead pursue solutions to address factors outside of students' control.

<i>Local social, cultural, political, etc. context</i>	A-CONTEXTUAL (Individual, technical, instrumental learning perspective)	10D. "Interactions that students have outside of school don't really matter when it comes to teaching and learning." 11D. "Educators don't need to understand parents and the community in order to educate children."	Educators see the classroom as a closed system and view interactions outside of school as inconsequential for learning. Educators deliver subject matter as isolated content irrelevant to surrounding community.	Educators ignore how everyday interactions with multiple people over time influence a student's educational experience. Educators miss opportunities to build partnerships and make curriculum meaningful for students.
	SOCIO-CULTURAL (Sociocultural learning perspective)	10E. "What happens daily outside of schools is directly linked to the learning experience inside."	Educators approach work with an appreciation for how realities outside of school impact student learning and performance.	Educators seek to build connections between the curriculum and the community to make content meaningful and relevant.
		11E. "Educators need to understand parents and members of the community in order to understand students and teach them well."	Educators understand that a student's academic achievement is the result of myriad interactions over time with adults inside and outside of the classroom.	Educators seek to understand and build on the home-school connection and to support interactions that promote student learning.

<i>Cultural identification, group membership</i>	CATEGORICAL (Static conception of groups, cultures, identity)	12D. "Most cultural groups have set beliefs about education and fairly predictable responses toward teachers and school." 13D. "It's easy to predict a student's academic performance once we know a little bit about them."	Educators reflect prevailing assumptions about a named group sharing certain school-related behaviors. Educators believe achievement or failure is inevitable depending on the "type" of learner, e.g. "language minority," "middle-class," "low-performing," "smart."	Educators operate using imprecise descriptions of group behaviors such as Group A "cares about education" or "motivates their children." Educators primarily think of racial-ethnic origin or socioeconomic class as "cultures" with practices that affect academic achievement.
	INTER-SECTIONAL (Multi-dimensional and dynamic conception of groups, cultures, identity)	12E. "Cultural groups are made up of individuals who think about and respond to school differently." 12E. "Each student is complex and a mixture of many types and layers of different cultures and influences."	Educators resist temptation to rely on prevailing assumptions about a named group exhibiting certain school-related behaviors. Educators recognize that individuals participate and identify with many types of groups and interactions that are consequential for educational achievement.	Educators pursue evidence-based explanations about specific observed school-related practices, within-group variation and across-group similarities. Educators focus on how individuals respond to specific situations and people, including how students may resist certain educators or systems, but not reject education or learning in broad sense.

References

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