School’s Out Washington

Bridge Conference

Looking Back, Facing Forward

OCT 2019

www.nationalequityproject.org
Sawubona!
Sikhona!
“Who Are You?”
In order to see where we are going, we not only must remember where we have been, but we must understand where we have been.

Ella Baker
We have historical guides...
We have historical guides...
We have historical guides...
Education History in Seattle, WA

Public Protest
Seattle, WA 1972
Education History in Seattle, WA

Wilson Middle School
Seattle, WA 1972
History is Today

John Muir Elementary
Seattle, WA 2016
Who We Are

The National Equity Project is a leadership and systems change organization committed to increasing the capacity of people to achieve thriving, self-determining, educated, and just communities.

@equityproject
Core Belief

Creating more just, equitable and liberatory systems is possible.

Making progress on equity requires us to have honest conversations about race and systemic oppression, not to lay blame, but to design more equitable systems.
The Leadership We Need Now
What does it mean for YOU to take leadership in these times, given your identity, experience and/or role?
Leading for equity means taking responsibility for what matters to you.

Julian Weissglass
Author, Ripples of Hope
Leading in Uncertain Times

We are living in challenging times and we are all a part of complex systems that our past experiences and training may not have sufficiently prepared us to understand and respond to in our role as equity leaders.
Turbulent Times Call for New Ways of Knowing, Being & Acting

Rebel Leadership Required
Those who practice leadership for equity must confront, disappoint, and dismantle and at the same time energize, inspire, and empower.

Sharon Daloz Parks
Author & Scholar, Executive Leadership Program & School of Theology & Ministry, Seattle University
There is another way.
Noun

A person who rises in opposition or armed resistance against an established government or ruler.
"Rebels are people who break rules that should be broken. They break rules that hold them and others back, and their way of rule breaking is constructive rather than destructive. It creates positive change."
What did you see?
What did you hear?
What did you notice?
There are no bystanders. In this time of astonishing moral crisis, silence is complicity. Because in the palm of our hand we have the ability to respond – to speak, to post, to organize, to act, online and on the ground, and in the voting booth.

Speak, even if your voice trembles.

Valarie Kaur
# 1 | Rebel Leaders...

OPERATE & LEAD FROM THE "INSIDE - OUT"
All meaningful and lasting change begins on the inside.

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Use a Mirror and a Window Approach

LOOKING IN ON A MIRROR
Insight into myself – my beliefs, identity, experiences, strengths, fears

LOOKING OUT OF A WINDOW
Insight into my context – my students, families, colleagues, schools, organization, community
Sometimes just being yourself is a radical act.

When you occupy space in systems that weren’t for you, your authenticity is your activism.

Elaine Welteroth
#2 | Rebel Leaders...

CO-CONSTRUCT A VISION FOR A FUTURE IN WHICH EVERYONE BELONGS
The pain of the world is a cry for belonging.

john a. powell
Parkrose High School, OR

Keanon Lowe
Angel Granados-Diaz
I wish all my teachers knew that I never had anyone to go to, to share the guilt and shame I felt for being different than everyone in my school.

Xiao “Lin” Mei
East Asian American Student Leader
NEP MidWest District Network
If the young are not initiated into the tribe, they will burn down the village just to feel its warmth.

*African Proverb*
EXCLUSION

INCLUSION

BELONGING

Adapted from john powell
Think about your own experience in school...

In what ways did you experience a sense of belonging (or not) in school? How did that feel?
#3 | Rebel Leaders...

ENGAGE AS HOSTS NOT HEROES
What if you listened to others so deeply that they felt loved, accepted, and safe in your presence, no matter what they had to say?
The tongue has no bones, but it has the power to break hearts. Words have power. So, use them wisely and with care.

Shirley Maya Tan
*The Art of Fearless Living*
Attributes

Discourse I
- Singular truths
- Answers & technical fixes
- Improving what exists
- Externalizing & blame (look out the window)
- Limited time & ability

Discourse II
- Multiple stories
- Inquiry & adaptive challenges
- Addressing root causes
- Internal reflection (look in the mirror)
- Getting started anyway
Equity Leadership & Discourse

**Recognize** reproductive discourse and the contributing factors

**Interrupt** reproductive discourse you see and hear productively through raising awareness

**Shift** by intentionally engaging in a different discourse, modeling possibilities, creating conditions & structures
Rebel Leaders Exercise

POWER WITH,
POWER IN,
As Opposed to *Power Over*.
Leaders-as-hosts invest in meaningful conversations among people from many parts of the system as the most productive way to engender new insights and possibilities for action. They trust that people are willing to contribute, and that most people yearn to find meaning and possibility in their lives and work. And these leaders know that hosting others is the only way to get complex, intractable problems solved.

Margaret Wheatley & Debbie Frieze
Leadership in the Age of Complexity: From HERO to HOST
#4 | Rebel Leaders...

SEE THE SYSTEM & UNDERSTAND HOW OPPRESSION MANIFESTS
All systems produce what they are designed to produce.
Situatedness

We are all situated, but not evenly, within opportunity structures.

These structures interact in ways that produce racialized outcomes.
Systems of Advantage

Some people ride the up escalator to opportunity.

Others have to run up the down escalator to get there.
One does not understand structures or systems by looking at intent.

Instead, we have to examine what they actually do—how they operate and what the outcomes are.

Certainly a system or structure could be established for the purpose of excluding or discriminating.

However, most structures produce racialized outcomes without intent.

john a.powell
UC Berkeley, Haas Institute for a Fair & Inclusive Society
Rebel Leaders NOTICE AND ADDRESS how oppression manifests and is maintained in systems.
Oppression is the water we swim in.

Oppression is a system built into our daily lives, beyond individual acts.
Assumptions about Oppression

- Oppression impacts learning, teaching, leading and decision-making.

- Oppression exists at every level of institutions – harmful policies, practices, interactions, and behaviors.

- Addressing oppression and bias raises strong emotions – we all need to heal from the effects of oppression.
“We need leaders who can bring...

“a systems analysis that can unravel the massive entanglement that white supremacy is in every aspect of how we think, feel, dream and act towards ourselves and others - based on our perception of their place in the social order.”

Angel Kyodo Williams, Author and Zen priest
Core Belief

The function of rebel leadership is to make inequity visible; disrupt harmful discourse, practices and policies; and reimagine ways to engage and co-design with our communities so that each child learns, thrives and experiences a sense of belonging.
What has or could YOUR Rebel Leadership look like?

What are the possibilities and risks for you to shift your leadership given who you are?
You must find a way to get in the way and get in good trouble, necessary trouble.

...You have a moral obligation, a mission and a mandate, when you leave here, to go out and seek justice for all. You can do it. You must do it.

United States Representative John R. Lewis
Join our equity leadership movement

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