

Excellence Through Equity: Creating Conditions for Great Teaching and Learning

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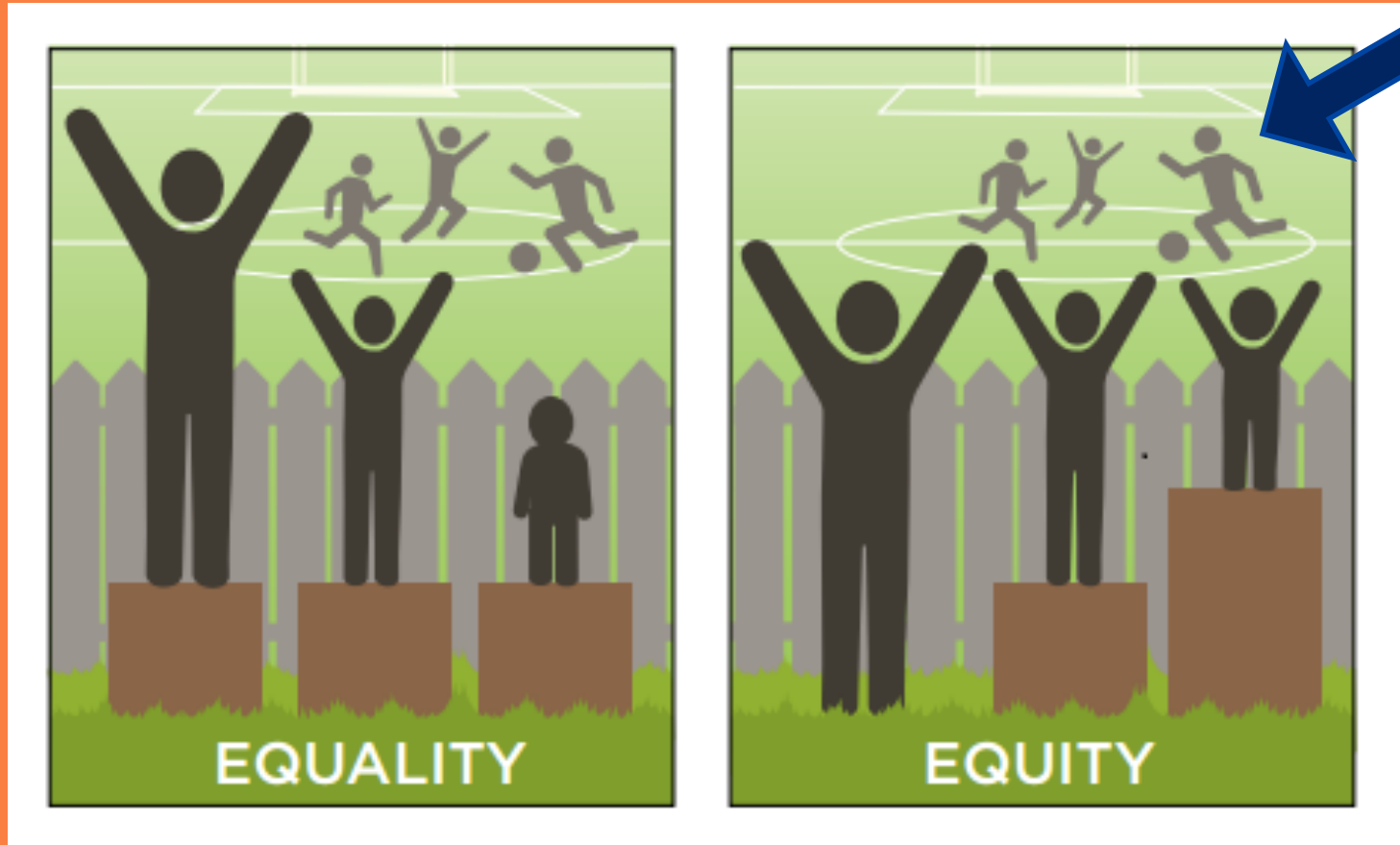


I. Making equity central

- Equity is:
 - Giving students what they need to be successful
 - Academic as well as social, material and emotional support
 - Recognizing that they learn in different ways and at different paces
- Pervasive inequality makes pursuit of equity difficult but essential – we must compensate for disadvantages
- We must stay focused on outcomes – academic and developmental

Equity

Freedom



Family time is equity time



Equity is not:

- Lowering standards or expectations
- Making excuses due to poverty or race
- An issue only schools serving poor children of color should be concerned about
- Choosing which students to serve – disadvantaged or affluent

Essential Conditions for Teaching and Learning

- Safety and order – byproduct of relationships
- Respect, positive relationships – culture
- Clarity of purpose, shared mission
- Support for “effective teaching”
- High morale
- Knowing our students to obtain buy-in

Pursuing excellence through equity requires us to understand:

- Child Development – A holistic approach to education and differentiated support
- Neuroscience – elasticity of brain makes it necessary to ensure that all students are stimulated and have access to deeper learning
- Context - Understanding and responding to the way students are influenced by their environment
 - Family – Peers – Community - Society

Building blocks for learning



Common Obstacles

- **Politics** – Lack of will to ensure that learning opportunities are available for *all* students
- **Traditions** – Practices that contribute to low achievement – punitive grading, ineffective discipline practices
- **Lack of capacity** – skills and resources aren't available.
- **Beliefs** – Race / class bias, normalization of patterns, complacency, lack of internal accountability

Schools improve when they focus on the five essential ingredients

- A coherent instructional guidance system – teachers plan together
- Ongoing development of the professional capacity of staff
- Strong parent-community-school ties
- A student-centered learning climate/culture
- Shared leadership to drive change

Reflection

- Rate how well is your school / district doing on each of the five essential ingredients using a 1 – 5 scale (1 being the lowest).
- What obstacles are preventing you from serving all students?

1. Coherent instructional guidance

- Students are empowered as learners
 - Class time is work time
 - Performance is assessed
- Teachers plan together to reach agreement on what students should learn
 - Analyze student work
 - Discuss challenges without incrimination

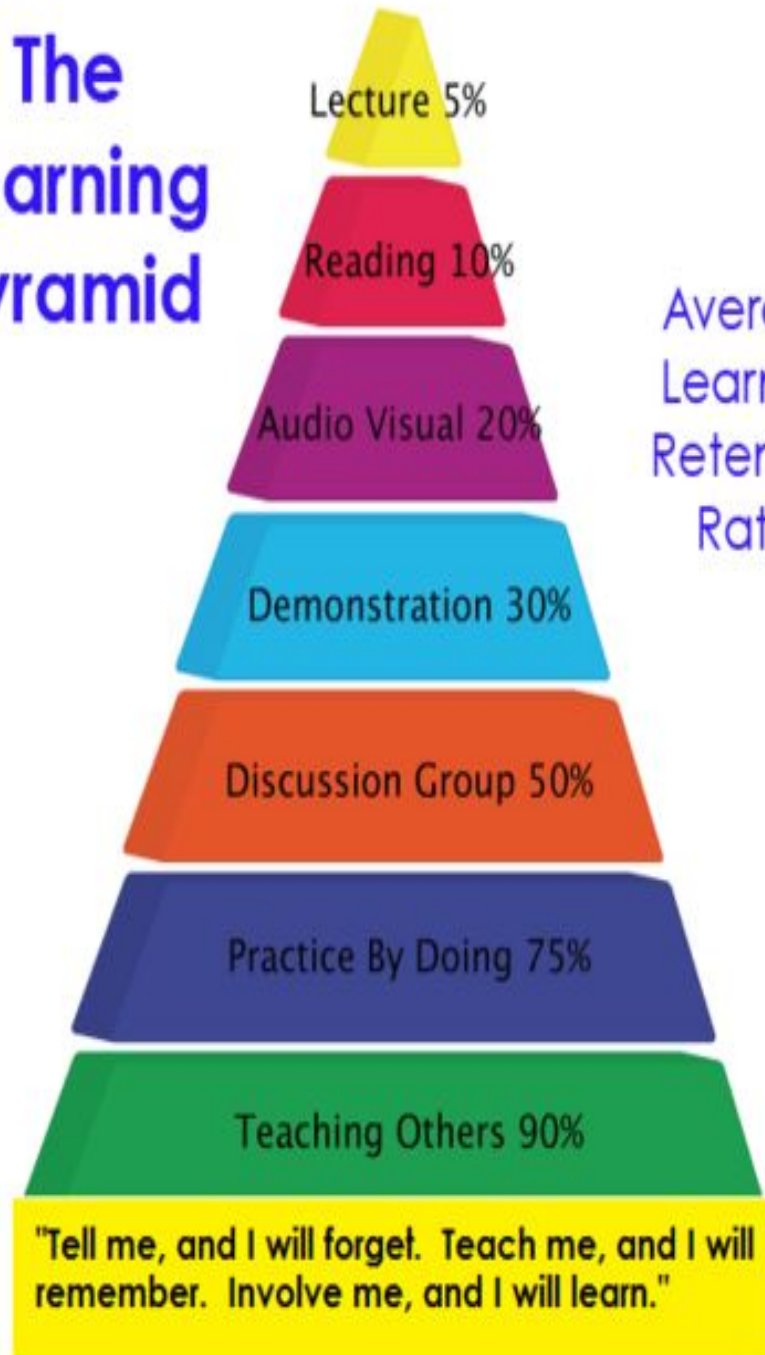
Students in control of learning at Hollenbeck Middle School, LA



Focus on Engagement

- Behavioral Engagement
 - Preparation
 - Persistence
 - Instrumental Help-seeking
- Cognitive Engagement
 - Deep Processing
 - Meta-cognition
- Affective Engagement
 - Interest
 - Value

The Learning Pyramid



Average Learning Retention Rates

Stay focused on evidence of learning

- Make expectations clear and standards explicit
- Model and expose students to high-quality work
- Utilize diagnostic tools to check for understanding
- Learn about their students' interests in order to make lessons culturally relevant
- Expect students to revise and resubmit work
- Solicit feedback and questions from students
- Analyze student work with a focus on evidence of competence and mastery, and with a willingness to reflect on efficacy of methods

Reflection:

- What is your school doing to motivate and engage students? What should it do?
- What is your school doing to support effective teaching?
- How do you address teaching across racial, cultural and socio-economic boundaries?

2. Building professional capacity

- The skills of the staff and resources available to schools must match the needs of students

Brockton scholarship winners 2016

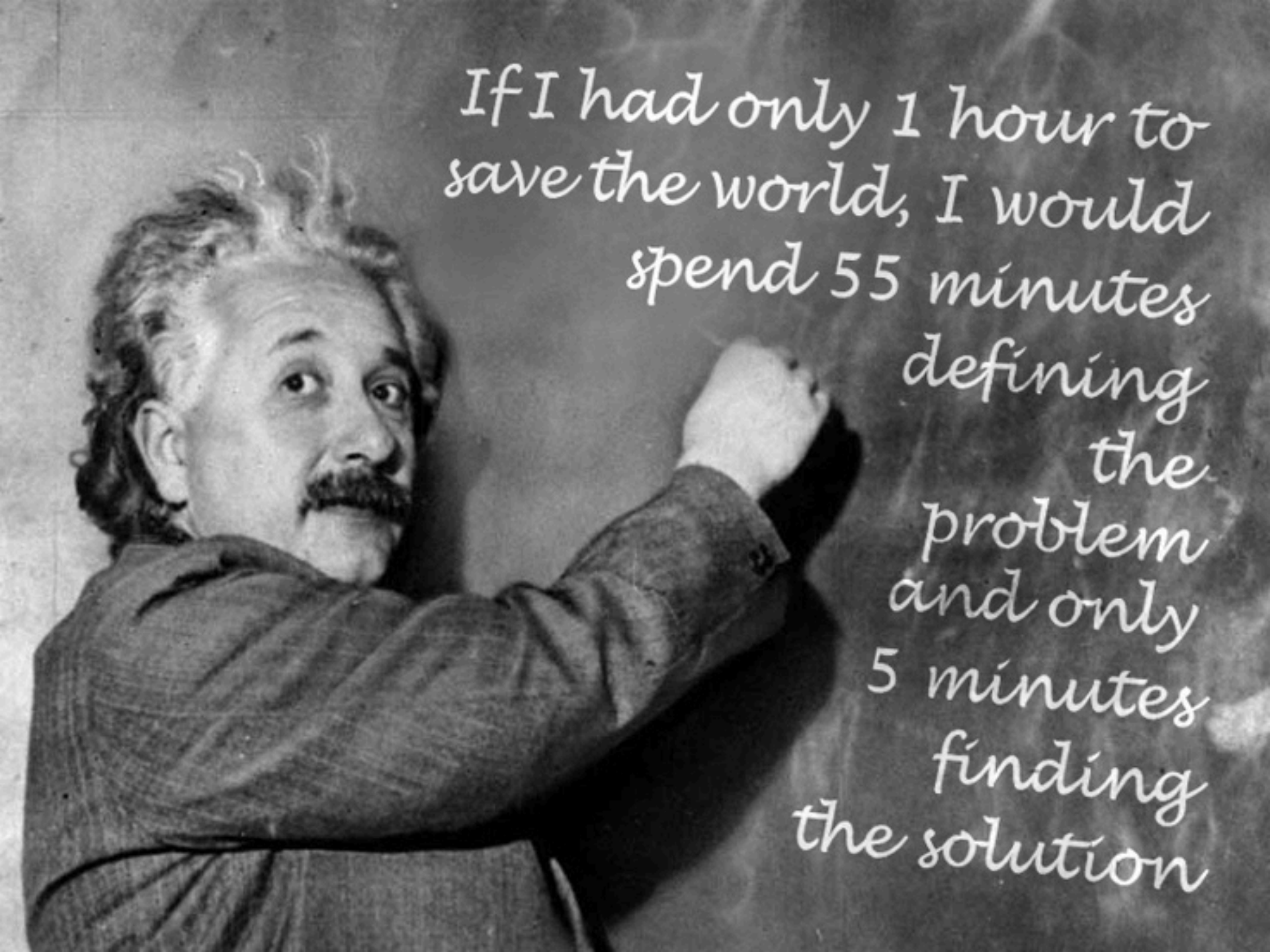


Key Elements of the Brockton Strategy

- Shared leadership
- Concerted effort to obtain buy-in around the strategy
- A coherent strategy focused on student needs
- Differentiated professional development
- Follow through, examining the evidence, sticking with it

Distinguishing between symptoms and causes

It's...	NOT...
uncovering the system causing the outcomes	trying to develop a theoretical framework
understanding users' felt needs	trying everyone's favorite solutions
identifying breakdowns in the system	identifying people as good apples or bad apples
Investigating the existing system	starting with a blank slate

A black and white photograph of Albert Einstein, with his characteristic wild hair and mustache, looking over his shoulder towards the camera while writing on a chalkboard. He is wearing a dark, textured jacket. The chalkboard is filled with a handwritten quote in white chalk.

If I had only 1 hour to
save the world, I would
spend 55 minutes

defining
the
problem
and only
5 minutes
finding
the solution

Turn Around at Brockton High

- *“Brockton High School has every excuse for failure, serving a city plagued by crime, poverty, housing foreclosures, and homelessness... But Brockton High, by far the state’s largest public high school with 4,200 students, has found a success in recent years that has eluded many of the state’s urban schools: MCAS scores are soaring, earning the school state recognition as a symbol of urban hope.”*
- James Vaznis, Boston Globe Oct 9, 2009.

Discussion

- What are the key problems / challenges confronting the district?
- What high leverage strategies / interventions should be pursued?

3. Parent and community ties

- Schools can't succeed on their own. Strong partnerships with parents and community reinforce learning and close the gap between home and school.

PS 28 obtains highest gains in literacy and math in Brooklyn -2012



Key Elements of PS 28 Strategy

- Instructional leadership
- Parental support
- Community partnerships
- Ongoing focus on building the capacity of teachers
- Individualized support for students

Creating Partnerships with Parents

- Recognition of shared interests makes it possible to overcome these differences
 - Parents want the best for their children
 - Schools want to see students succeed
 - Need to clarify roles, rights and responsibilities in the partnership
- Social closure - Coleman's research shows that students benefit most when parents and schools work together
 - Reinforcing the importance of education

Basic Requirements for Improving Relationships Between Parents and Schools

- Must be based on a recognition of mutual need, responsibility and respect
- Must be based on the recognition that all parents can help their children
- Must be based upon understanding and empathy for the situation confronting parents and families
- Schools need personnel who can communicate effectively with parents - language and cultural skills
- Are We Ready for Parental Involvement?
 - Are educators willing to engage in critical conversations about school quality?

Parents empowered to run the school



Reflection

- What more should your school do to develop partnerships with parents?
- Which community agencies should your school partner with

4. School culture

- The more you know about the children you serve the better you will be at creating a school that meets their needs and supports their success.

What do you know about your students? Beyond stereotypes. Key questions:

- What are their lives like outside of school?
- How do they learn outside of school?
- What motivates and interests them?
- What challenges do they and their parents face?
- What are their unmet needs that may impact learning?

■

David Banks – Founder of Eagle Academy



Extended Learning at Eagle Academy



Engaged learners at Eagle



Agency vs. Grit

Grit

- Individual attribute
- Ignores contextual barriers
- Hard to measure except after outcomes are achieved

Agency

- Based on critical thinking
- Can be individual or collective in form
- Recognizes barriers and strategizes to confront
- Measureable through observation of actions and attitudes

5. Shared leadership

- Leaders must generate a sense of urgency about addressing the needs of all students and improving outcomes

Five Principles of Courageous Leadership

- Courage to act
- Getting to your core
- Making organizational meaning
- Assuring constancy of purpose
- Building sustainable relationships

Need for a Paradigm Shift

■ Old Paradigm

- Intelligence is innate
- Schools can measure intelligence and sort accordingly
- Success is defined by grades and test scores
- Inequity in resource allocation
- Discipline used to weed out the “bad” kids

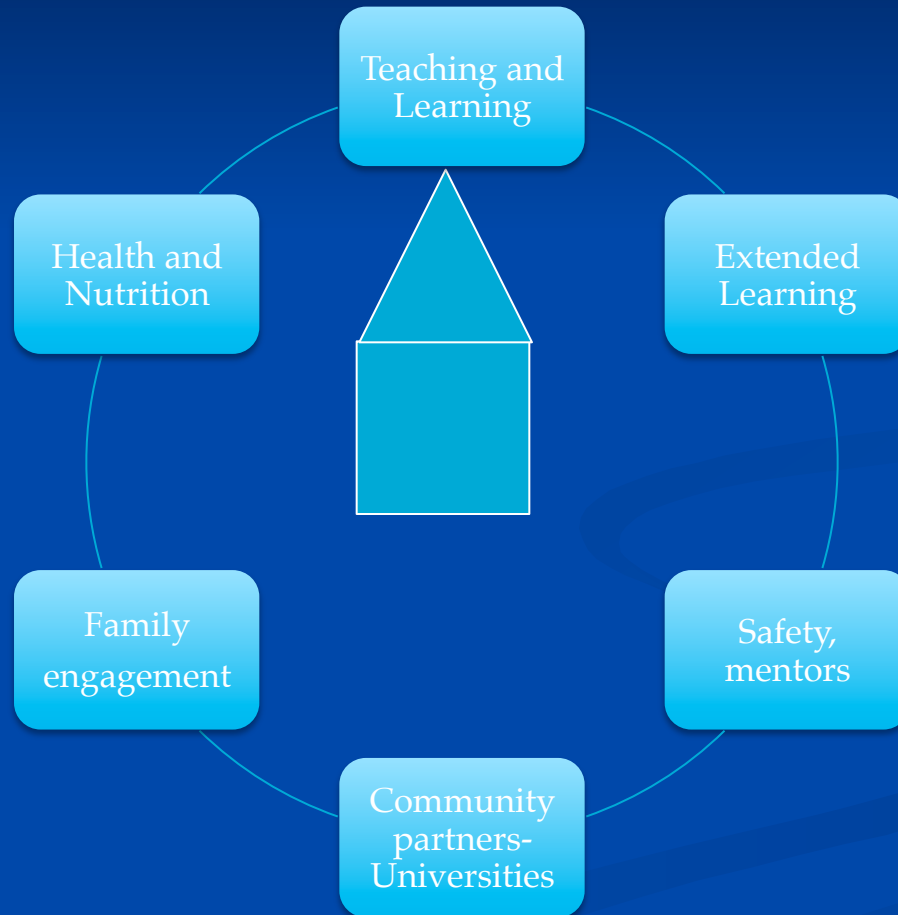
■ New Paradigm

- Intelligence and ability are influenced by opportunity
- Schools cultivate talent and ability among all students
- Success defined holistically
- Resources allocated based on student need
- Discipline used to reinforce school values and norms

Focus on the Right Questions:

- Instead of focusing on how to raise achievement we should ask: How can we get our students excited about learning?
- Instead of focusing on how to prepare our students for state exams we should ask: how do we prepare our students to be independent learners? What will they need to know to be successful in life?
- Instead of asking how to cover the curriculum we should ask: How will I make what I teach relevant and meaningful to students?

Embrace a vision for pursuing excellence through equity



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