



Learning in a Time of Division

School-University-Community Research in Education

Edited by

**R. Martin Reardon
Jack Leonard**

Current Perspectives on School/University/Community Research

Learning in a Time of Division

Current Perspectives on School/University/ Community Research

Series Editors

R. Martin Reardon, East Carolina University, USA

Jack Leonard, University of Massachusetts Boston (retired), USA

Bryk (2015) referred to the discrepancy between the achievements to which reforms aspire and their outcomes as a chasm. Bryk envisaged the confluence of knowledge and the empirical warrants that together constitute practice-based evidence as offering a viable approach to dealing with high-leverage problems in education. Cooper and Shewchuk (2015) referred to knowledge mobilization as iterative social processes involving interaction among two or more different groups or contexts (researchers, policymakers, practitioners, third party agencies, community members) in order to improve the broader education systems (p. 2).

This book series provides a platform for showcasing research on high-leverage problems in education. In particular, this series highlights research in which knowledge mobilization among all three stakeholder groups in education (practitioners, researchers, and community members) is salient.

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CONTENTS

About the Editors.....	vii
About the Contributors.....	ix
Introduction.....	1
<i>R. Martin Reardon and Jack Leonard</i>	
1 Guiding Urban Youth Across the High School/College Divide: Insights From a Community-Engaged Research Project.....	7
<i>Jie Park, Peter Weyler, Amber Pouliot and Kasandra Garcia</i>	
2 Lessons Learned from the Leading in Newcomer Communities and Schools Partnership Project	33
<i>Gloria E. Miller, Rashida Banerjee, Lydia Dumam, Savannah Hobbs, Grace C. Ilori and Clara Cuthbert</i>	
3 On Working Toward Equitable Learning Communities: Thinking Across National Borders.....	57
<i>Joanie Crandall and Paul H. L. Easterling</i>	
4 Bridging the Gap: Reforming Grading Practices for Improved Student Equity and Achievement	77
<i>Laura J. Link, Maureen P. Leeson and Joseph R. Anthes</i>	
5 Meeting the Needs and Expectations of Parents in a University-Community Partnership: Bridging the Town- Gown Division Through an After-School Tutoring Early Field Experience	103
<i>Meagan C. Arrastúa-Chisholm, Samantha Tackett, Kelly M. Torres and Carlos Hundley</i>	

vi ▪ Contents

6	Exploring the Weaponization of Professionalism: Implications for Educator Well-Being and Retention in Academic Spaces.....	121
	<i>Dyann C. Logwood, Heather Nicholson-Bester and Hannah Bollin</i>	
7	Evidence-Based Practices for Improving Science Education Learning Conditions in a Time of Division: Understanding the Knowledge and Opinions of Turkish Preservice Physics Teacher	145
	<i>Sevim Bezen</i>	
8	Partnerships and Collaborations: A Multifaceted Narrative.....	167
	<i>Marius Boboc, Xiongyi Liu, Elena Andrei, Mary Frances Buckley-Marudas, Grace Huang, Terri Purcell, Sharon Swan, Markita C. Warren and Anne Galletta</i>	
9	Exploring University and Community-Based Partnerships Within a Preservice Education Course	193
	<i>Curtis Mason, Elizabeth Coder and Cara Knox Gutzmer</i>	
10	Epistemic Authority and School-University Partnerships: Findings From a Collaborative Inquiry.....	217
	<i>Angela Vemic, Lincoln S. Smith, Sisi Xiao Feng and Danielle Denichaud</i>	
11	Navigating the Challenges of School, Community, and University Partnerships	243
	<i>Regina Garrett-Spruill</i>	

ABOUT THE EDITORS

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In 2016, stemming from his then 6 years as Chair of the School-University-Community Collaborative Research (SUCCR) Special Interest Group (SIG) of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), Reardon co-edited a book with two former Chairs of the SIG that focused on extending and exploring an earlier model of school-university collaboration to incorporate the crucial role of the community. In 2017, he embarked on an in-depth exploration of the SUCCR theme as the lead editor in an ongoing series—*Current Perspectives on School/University/Community Research*—in which this is the 11th volume.

Jack Leonard (EdD, Boston University) served the Boston Public Schools as a teacher, administrator, and then principal of an award-winning turn-around high school. After earning his EdD from Boston University in 2002, he joined the faculty at the University of Massachusetts Boston. As an associate professor in the leadership in urban schools program at UMass Boston, he directed the graduate programs and educational administration. Leonard retired from the university in 2017. His research focuses on school leadership, school partnerships, and educational history. In addition to his ongoing work with the *Current Perspectives in School/University/Community Research* series, he recently published two articles on a new performance assessment for principal licensure.

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ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Elena Andrei (EdD) received her EdD from University of Virginia after receiving MEd from Wake Forest University and MA from University of Bucharest, Romania. Dr. Andrei is currently an associate professor of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and TESOL and DREAM Program Coordinator at Cleveland State University. She teaches TESOL courses for preservice and in-service teachers. Her research is classroom-based focused on second language literacy, multilingual learners and multiliteracies, teacher education, multilingual educators like herself. Her previous professional experience includes being an English as a second language teacher (ESL) and ESL school coordinator in Charlotte, NC and English as a foreign language teacher in her native Romania. Previously to coming to Cleveland State University (CSU), Elena Andrei was an Assistant Professor of Literacy and Coordinator of the TESOL Graduate Certificate at Coastal Carolina University in Conway, SC. Since joining CSU, Dr. Andrei has secured multiple large grants to reform preservice teacher preparation programs.

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Marius Boboc (PhD) is a scholar-practitioner with close to three decades of experience in higher education. Over the years, his experience in teacher preparation positioned him well to assume various college- and university-level administrative positions that focused on institutional effectiveness, leadership and change management, community engagement, and the implementation of the university's mission as an anchor institution. He has led two consecutive campuswide efforts aimed at securing his university's 10-year reaffirmation of accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). He has also served as a peer evaluator for HLC over the past 17 years. His leadership, research, teaching, and service rely on principles of curriculum relevance, connections between formal and informal learning, grounding professional practice in community engagement, and integration of formal education into the realities of the labor market.

Hannah Bollin (MA) is a PhD student and Doctoral Fellow in the Educational Studies program at Eastern Michigan University. Her research interests include queer pedagogy, feminist mentorship, and afterschool programming. Hannah serves as Site Coordinator for the Project BIG Mentoring Program, planning committee member for the NEXT Scholars Program, student leader in The Workshop for Community+Collaboration, and committee member for the Annual Women of Color Symposium. As a first-generation high school graduate from rural Appalachia, Hannah's research and academic work is very personal to her and her passion for education stems from the many great educators who supported her along the way.

Mary Frances Buckley-Marudas (PhD) is an Associate Professor in the Levin College of Public Affairs & Education at Cleveland State University. She received her PhD in Reading/Writing/Literacy from the University of Pennsylvania in 2012. At CSU, Molly teaches in the literacy and English Education programs and is the director of the Adolescent/Young Adult English Education program. Since 2017, Molly has served as Professor-in-Residence at Campus International High School, a public high school in Cleveland where she developed a Youth Participatory Action Research project (YPAR) that is part of the 9th grade curriculum. Molly is engaged in several projects related to expanding school-based YPAR in Cleveland and across Ohio, including one funded by the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, another by the Institute of Education Sciences, and another by the Education Innovation and Research program. Molly is the co-founder and co-director of the Cleveland Teaching Collaborative (www.cleteaching.org), an award-winning network of PK-university educators in Northeast Ohio.

Elizabeth Coder (MA) is a PhD student in Education Policy, Organization, and Leadership at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, concentrating in Higher Education and Global Studies in Education. Elizabeth has 15 years of experience working in higher education, both in the United States and abroad, having facilitated service-learning, gap year, and study abroad programs in six different countries. Her research interests include community-based learning and international branch campuses.

Joanie Crandall (BA, Ottawa; BEd, Queens; MA, Toronto; PhD, Saskatchewan) is an Assistant Professor in the School of Education at the University of Northern British Columbia. She has experience as an instructional designer, teacher, principal, college director, lecturer, research assistant, multidisciplinary research center coordinator, instructional coach, consultant, Instructional Skills Workshop Facilitator and with nonprofit organizations and local, provincial, and national union initiatives. In her travels,

she has learned a little of many different Indigenous languages: Nêhiyawêwin, Inuktitut, Inuvialuktun, Gwich'in, Wolastoqey, Anishiniimowin, Dënesųłiné, Tłı̄chǫ, Mi'kmaq, Anishinaabemowin, Saukteaux, Michif, Dakelh, Kanien'kéha, Onödowá'ga:', Skarò-rǽ?, Onlayote'a, and Ktunaxa. She has published on decolonizing methodologies and pedagogies, Indigenous cultural books, Indigenous music, teacher agency, educational activism, and decolonizing outdoor education. Her research interests are in decolonizing education and context-responsive, culturally relevant, interdisciplinary, and social justice approaches to teaching and learning.

Clara Cuthbert is a practicing School Psychologist in the Cherry Creek School District and recent graduate from the School Psychology program in the Morgridge College of Education at the University of Denver. As a fluent Spanish speaker, after completing her undergraduate studies at the University of Colorado-Boulder she lived and worked internationally in Chile, Spain, and Costa Rica. Before returning to graduate school and upon her return to the US, she taught for three years at a charter high school in Denver, Colorado serving many dual-language students and their families. In her current role, she provides assets-based school mental health services to a diverse group of multilingual primary students and consultative support to their teachers and families. Her desire to further her understanding of culturally responsive home, school, and community collaboration was key to her participation as a research assistant on the Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) project.

Danielle Denichaud (MA) believes that the schools of tomorrow will be microcosms of regenerative sustainable living, where individuals are educated to become stewards for holistic health, nonviolent communication and earth guardianship. Her professional roots are grounded in an eight-year career as a contemporary dancer, followed by ten years as a holistic nutritionist, chronic disease recovery coach and rehabilitative postural trainer. A personal journey of descent into and recovery from holistic disease seeded her living belief in the power of education to ease and prevent degenerative suffering, catalyzing her acquisition of a BA in Child Studies, an MA in Social Justice Education and ongoing doctoral studies in holistic pedagogies, curriculum design, teacher education and policy development. Her work and research centre the terrain of mind-body-heart-spirit suffering as the salient entry point for cultivating languages of hope, possibility and kindness in teacher education and shared learning spaces.

Lydia Dumam has a background in education, patient advocacy, and fostering community well-being. Before arriving in the US as a refugee in 2011, she earned an associate degree in teaching and taught elementary school for four years in Eritrea. Before returning to study social work at

the Metropolitan State University of Denver, she worked as a community navigator at the Colorado African Organization, eventually becoming Program Manager and Co-Director of Programming. After the agency closed in 2020, she joined the Colorado Refugee Wellness Center as a community organizer and mental health navigator. Currently, she serves as Program Manager for the Older Adult Refugees and Friends program at the Denver Regional Council of Governments. A collaborator on the LINCS project, Lydia's work reflects her belief in education's transformative power and the importance of cultural sensitivity. She plans to pursue graduate studies while balancing motherhood and her commitment to community service.

Paul H. L. Easterling (BA, UNO; MA, SUNY Albany; MA, Rice University; PhD, Rice University) is the Vice President of Academic Affairs at Osiri University. He is a scholar of African American Religion and Philosophy at an emerging institution grounded in the philosophy of Ubuntu—"I am because we are." International experience includes study in Ghana, West Africa at the University of Ghana at Legon, the University of Cape Coast and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. Presently, at Osiri University he has designed a number of courses and worked to shape Humanities into a dynamic and diverse college within the institution. Dr. Easterling's research interests include: African American Religious Culture, History of African American Religion, 20th African American Islam, African American Religion and Popular Culture.

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Anne Galletta (PhD) collaborates with community-based organizations and public school systems in conducting research toward creating more humanizing and equitable educational practice and policies. As a social psychologist, her research focus includes the study of social relations and the structural arrangements influencing these relations. Through participatory methods, Dr. Galletta involves teacher candidates and doctoral students in engaging youth and their communities in locating resources and knowledge toward addressing serious local and regional issues. Research skills include a particular strength in qualitative approaches, such as ethnography, case study approach, and participatory action research, with the use of participant observation, semi-structured interviews, surveys, and oral history.

Kassandra Garcia (MA) holds a BA in Criminal Justice and Urban Studies from Worcester State University. In addition to this dual degree, Kassandra has earned her MA in School Counseling from Assumption University. Kassandra is currently in her fourth year as a guidance counselor with Worcester Public Schools. Understanding the importance of the interconnectedness between the school system and community resources and opportunities, Kassandra has taken on a wide array of roles that relate to early educational and vocational technical exposure and experiences for high school students. As a liaison for district-wide programs such as Early College Worcester and Innovation Career Pathways, Kassandra has worked hard to ensure students are familiar with and connected to the right supports to help ensure their success in high school and beyond.

Regina Garrett-Spruill (EdD) is a Career and Technical Education (CTE) Instructional Supervisor at a large urban school district in the Washington, DC area. She has been engaged in school partnerships in New York City working for a well-known community-based organization, and in school districts in the Washington, DC area for more than 25 years. Garrett-Spruill earned her doctorate in Educational Administration and Policy Studies at The George Washington University, Washington, DC.

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Dyann Logwood (PhD) is an Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at Eastern Michigan University. As part of her Mentoring Youth in Urban Spaces course, she offers undergraduate and graduate students the chance to mentor youth at a local middle school. Her work also includes developing a Black feminist mentorship curriculum, fostering a sense of belonging, implementing critical classroom practices, and providing faculty

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Curtis Mason (PhD) is a teaching associate professor in the Education Policy, Organization & Leadership department at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He is also the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs for the College of Education. Curtis has over twenty years of teaching experience in high school, middle school, and higher education. His main research areas are the history of secondary English in US schools, historical perspectives on alternative education programs, and higher education pedagogy.

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Heather Nicholson-Bester (PhD) works in the Office of Social Studies for Detroit Public Schools Community District, where she is passionate about developing accurate, inclusive, and antiracist social studies curriculum. She is also a social studies methods instructor at Oakland University. Further, she sits on the board of Thrive By Any Means Necessary, a nonprofit rooted in community service. Heather received a BA in Secondary Education from Eastern Michigan University, an MA in Social Justice from Marygrove College, and a PhD in Educational Studies from Eastern Michigan University. Her research focuses on antiracist, anti-oppression education and pedagogical practices.

Jie Park (PhD) is Associate Professor of Education, and interim director of the Community, Youth, and Education Studies program at Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts. She holds a BA and MA in English Literature from Stanford, and a PhD in Education from the University of Pennsylvania. A language and literacy scholar who uses community-engaged

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Amber Pouliot (MA) is a Biology teacher in Worcester Public Schools at Claremont Academy, a part-time faculty member of the Biology Department at Clark University, and serves on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Biology Assessment Development Committee. She holds a BS in Animal Science from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and an MA in Biology from Fitchburg State University. She is a licensed and Structured English Immersion (SEI) endorsed educator of Biology, English as a Second Language, and Health, Family & Consumer Sciences. She is a Thomas Jefferson Award recipient for service to the Claremont Academy community.

Terri Purcell (PhD) is an associate professor in literacy education at the Levin College of Education, Cleveland State University. She is deeply committed to advancing literacy education and promoting racial justice in teacher education. With a strong background in early literacy development, vocabulary acquisition, and instruction, Dr. Purcell actively engages in collaborative projects with various educational institutions and private preschool centers. Her expertise encompasses serving as a literacy consultant, professional development architect, and literacy improvement advisor.

In addition to her role on the Board of Directors for Starting Point and her contribution to several organizations and state-level committees, Dr. Purcell leads two influential grant projects. These include Project Urban Network for Innovation in Teacher Education (UNITE), an urban teaching residency program funded by the US Department of Education, and the Racial Justice in Teacher Education Networking Community (RJTE-NIC), a collaborative initiative aiming to remove roadblocks for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) teacher candidates and integrate racial justice in teacher preparation.

Lincoln S. Smith (MSEd) is an award-winning educator, researcher, and leader with nearly 20 years of experience advancing accessible, innovative teaching practices across K-12 and postsecondary education worldwide.

He serves as Innovation and Technology Coach at Upper Canada College in Toronto, and as a doctoral researcher (ABD) and sessional lecturer at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto. His work focuses on teacher-driven action research, educational technology (including GenAI integration), holistic approaches to professional learning, and universal design for learning. Lincoln holds active teaching certifications from New York State and the Ontario College of Teachers. He is also the Vice President and Program Chair of the Canadian Association of Action Research in Education (CAARE-ACRAÉ). His peer-reviewed research on accessible pedagogy, reflective practices, and holistic professional learning has been published in academic journals and presented at conferences nationally and internationally.

Sharon Swan (PhD), Visiting Professor of Practice in P-5 Education, is actively involved at CSU in promoting an integrated model for teacher preparation at Cleveland State University. Swan develops partnerships with local school districts where her teacher candidates engage in clinical teaching practices under her guidance as a professor who meets regularly with them to discuss their clinical practices and reflect on their experiences within a P-5 classroom. Swan strives to build relationships with school leaders and classroom teachers, where she paves the way to successful collaboration between university—school—community cohesiveness.

Samantha Tackett (PhD) is faculty at Florida State University where she serves as the Director of the Proactive Referral & Engagement (PRE) Program, and Assistant Director of the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) in the Division of Undergraduate Studies. Dr. Tackett uses her Doctorate in Educational Psychology and Master's in Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies to teach, provide support, and mentor research of both undergraduate and graduate students.

Kelly M. Torres (PhD) is the Department Chair of the Educational Psychology and Technology program at The Chicago School. She has taught numerous university-level courses in both online and face-to-face settings in content areas such as educational psychology, foundations of education, assessment, curriculum development, instructional design, linguistics, and culture. Dr. Torres's research interests are focused on the implementation of technology into educational settings to enhance student academic outcomes and on various aspects of the motivational influences that may impact second language learning and culture.

Angela Vemic (PhD) is a certified elementary teacher and award-winning assistant professor in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. She teaches courses

in the Master of Teaching degree program focused on teacher research, social studies and Indigenous education, and democratic citizenship education. As research coordinator of the program, she oversees teacher candidates' research program experience. Her research is focused on teachers' relationship to knowledge and the practice of epistemic reflexivity. In particular, she is interested in teachers' reflexive and pedagogical engagement with the politics of knowledge generation and with decolonial knowing practices. Her pedagogy and scholarship focus on integrated knowledge and curricula, research literacy, school-university partnerships, school-based inquiry, power analysis, and children's literature. Her interpretive practice is shaped by critical social science research, social epistemology, critical theory of democracy and education, and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

Markita C. Warren (PhD) is an Assistant Professor of Practice and Coordinator of Middle Childhood Education in the School of Education and Counseling at Cleveland State University. She is a co-director for the Justice in Teacher Education-Networked Improvement Community (JTE-NIC), a multi-institutional collaborative focused on equity in teacher preparation. Her research examines the experiences of urban students, curriculum and pedagogical diversification in P-12 settings, the linguistic needs of Black/African American students, and justice-oriented education. Prior to higher education, Dr. Warren worked for over 15 years as a practitioner, coach, and leader in various school districts and educational nonprofits.

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INTRODUCTION

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If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it. —Abraham Lincoln, Illinois Republican State Convention, Springfield, Illinois, June 16, 1858

In overviewing the recent *Values and Beliefs* survey in the United States conducted by Gallup (May 1–23, 2024, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/1681/moral-issues.aspx>), McCarthy (2024) noted that respondents were about equally likely to say that their views were conservative, moderate, or liberal on social issues (32%, 32%, and 33% respectively). McCarthy went on to point out that the current parity on social issues was the result of Republicans becoming more conservative over this time span but at a slower rate than Democrats were becoming more liberal. Based on the survey data, McCarthy went one step further to assert that “the overall increase in liberal views on both social and economic issues is driven exclusively by Democrats” (para. 13).

Embedded in McCarthy’s overview is the political analogue of Newton’s third law (for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction) with respect to economic issues. In 2010, 51% of Gallup respondents expressed conservative views (highest percentage since 1998) and as noted by Zernicke (2010), some 139 fiscally conservative “Tea Party” candidates swept into congress in the mid-term election (the reaction) at a time when President Obama considerably boosted federal stimulus and healthcare funding to stimulate a weak economy (the action).

THE DIVIDE IN EDUCATION

Jones (2024) reported that division among the U.S. population regarding key values had reached a new high with “between 74% and 83% of key gender, age, race, political and educational subgroups” (para. 4) acknowledging the current reality. It is small wonder that the prevailing political division has seeped into education. In the title of Langreo’s (2024) recent article, they characterized schools as becoming “political battlegrounds.” Hatfield’s (2023) synthesis of Pew Research Center data painted a picture of polarization among survey participants. There were deep divisions along political lines regarding the impact of schooling, the federal role in education in general, the U.S. Department of Education in particular, the role of principals, and regarding what should be taught in school—particularly about slavery, religion, diversity, and social-emotional learning.

Wessman (2023, 9:39–13:02) utilized a graphic in discussing polarization and how individuals’ basic identities play a major role in engendering our current time of division. Wessman proposed, as a generalization, that in some undefined former time individual’s religious, political, geographic, racial, and educational identities (adapting Wessman’s example to highlight these five) were largely unaligned (as shown on the left-hand side of Figure 1). In this hypothetical former time, there was undoubtedly some overlap of individuals’ identities (as indicated by the broken lines), but an individual’s educational background was largely independent of their other identities. Hence, an individual’s political perspective could be critiqued without immediately invoking their religious or racial identity. In more recent times, following Wessman’s characterization, much greater alignment has emerged (as shown on the right-hand side of Figure 1) and the overlap of identities has become much more pronounced and pervaded by individuals’ political identity. Consequently, debating educational issues has become fraught as divisions regarding educational issues insinuate divisions regarding other identities so that schools become the political battlegrounds that Langreo (2024) invoked.

RAISE THE BAR

At a time when identity alignment has underpinned polarization in education, Cardona, then U.S. Secretary of Education, issued a “Raise the Bar: Lead the World” call to action from the U.S. Department of Education in a December 14, 2023, interview hosted by *The Atlantic*. Cardona took part in a convening of activists, policy makers, industry leaders, and pioneers who were working to close multiple equity divisions across multiple indicators. While Cardona’s focus was on the situation in the United States, the list of

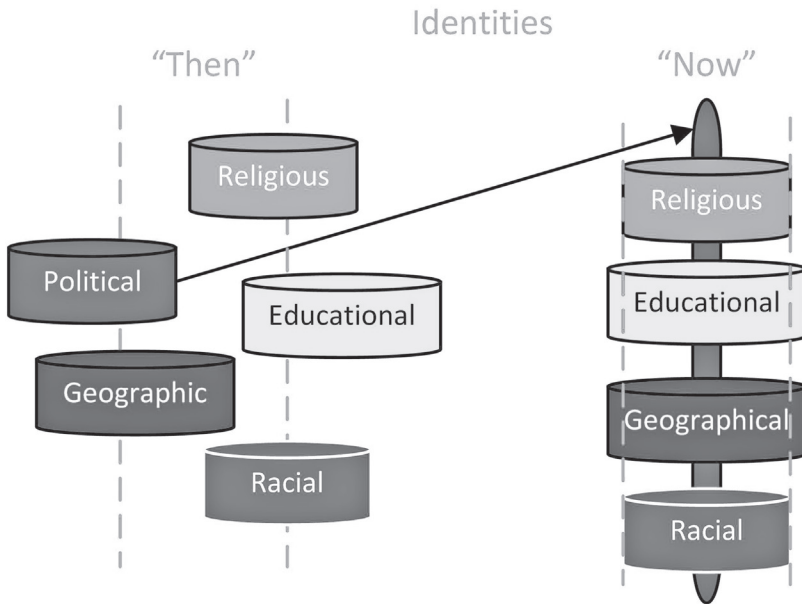


Figure 1. Overlapping identities and polarization. *Note:* Adapted from “Healing a Polarized World,” by [Wessman \(2023, 9:29–13:02\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnzmnXOf_zw) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnzmnXOf_zw

goals on the call-to-action webpage of the U.S. Department of Education resonate in international contexts in which dedicated educators are also keen to raise the bar and lead the world.

Such an ambitious call to action would be challenging during a time of consensus but our contemporary educational context both nationally and internationally is characterized by divisions of perspectives regarding the causes of and remedies for student achievement and discipline disparity, in addition to a raft of mental health and well-being issues. Further, there are unresolved concerns over who can teach what and to whom in the wake of legislative initiatives (e.g., “Parents’ Bill of Rights,” [Granados, 2023](#)). One could be excused for suggesting that, in the contemporary field of education, we are uncertain about where we are and where we are going, but there is no shortage of ideas about what to do next.

We invited the authors whose work is showcased in this volume to share the ways in which their practice as educators has enshrined viable ideas about how to bridge divisions and facilitate learning, thereby contributing to healing a polarized world.

LEARNING DESPITE THE DIVIDE

In Chapter 1, Park and colleagues open the first of two sections of this volume in which authors are focused on learners. They draw multiple contrasts between freedom and unfreedom—the latter playing out in the internal versus external context—with respect to the utilization of academic resources across the divide between high school and college. They advocate for a role for educators at both levels as navigators who help students to not only find the river of support but also to drink from it to the most advantageous extent.

In Chapter 2, focusing on one of the most divisive contemporary issues within the United States and in many other countries, Miller and colleagues share what they describe as a “foundational blueprint” for building collaborative relationships with linguistically diverse refugees, asylum-seekers, and immigrant families. One distinctive feature of their approach is the key role of cultural navigators who bring to the collaborative endeavor an appreciation for the culture, social norms, beliefs, and traditions of the newcomers.

From a Canadian perspective, Crandall and Easterling adopt a duoethnographic approach in Chapter 3 and leverage the affordances of critical race theory and the concept of brave space to explore the possibilities of positively reshaping classroom realities to create equitable learning communities. They highlight the pivotal role of school-university-community dialogue and research in attaining the multilingual and multicultural valuing of diverse knowledge that is the hallmark of an equitable learning environment.

The divide that Link and colleagues address in Chapter 4 is between the simple but unfair portrayal of a student’s educational attainment proffered by the single indicator under a conventional reporting protocol and a more comprehensive, easily understood, and fair portrayal of educational attainment proffered by a multiple grades reporting protocol. Their collaborative endeavor to initiate the change they sought resulted in the preservation of what was best in the old as they implemented the new.

In Chapter 5, Arrastía-Chisholm and colleagues chronicle an innovative approach to addressing the town-gown division. By bringing the academic expertise of their university students (the gown) to the town in which children attending a Title I school live, they facilitated learning on the part of all participants: their students gained valuable insights into the intricacies of applied pedagogy and the “townies” benefited from the homework assistance they needed.

Logwood and colleagues span K-12, afterschool programs, and teacher education environments in exploring the oppressive impact of the concept of professionalism in Chapter 7. They highlight the colonialist notions that

are inherent in the concept and how the imperative of conformity militates against the well-being of educators. Having drawn attention to the division, they propose recommendations for bridging it.

PRESERVICE TEACHERS

Bezen’s discussion of divisions related to the preparation of physics teachers in Turkey opens the second section of this volume in which the primary focus is on preservice teachers. As Bezen points out, the students who are intending to be physics teachers are highly capable academically but are only incidentally exposed to the implementation of evidence-based practices in physics education—although they are aware of the learning benefits of such practices. The preservice teachers’ openness to implementing evidence-based practices presents an opportunity to enhance the quality of physics education.

In Chapter 8, Boboc and colleagues draw attention to the critical need for augmenting the civic capacity of beginning teachers by engaging them with multi-stakeholder, collaborative, educational initiatives aimed at alleviating social issues. From their perspective in an urban-serving midwestern research university, they point out that such initiatives are consistent with expectations incorporated in American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education documentation but acknowledge there are institutional hurdles to be overcome before the benefits they highlight across six vignettes can be reaped.

In a similar vein to Arrastía-Chisholm and colleagues, in Chapter 9, Mason and colleagues focus on the challenges and opportunities associated with a service-learning course for preservice teachers—including integrating placement experiences with university courses, bridging the COVID-19 discontinuity, and encompassing emerging emphases on critical perspectives, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. The benefits that accrue to the preservice teachers will yield bountifully in their careers.

Vemic and colleagues rightly assign school-university partnerships the task of potentially bridging the divide between theory and practice in education in Chapter 10—a task that is made more difficult in practice by power differentials among the partners and the relational dynamics among them. They highlight the casting of doctoral candidates in key roles across triads including classroom teachers and pre-service teachers and explore the complexities of epistemic authority inherent in decisions regarding the identification of students’ needs and how to address them.

Spruill brings this volume to a close by mapping the landscape of partnerships between public schools and universities in Chapter 11—particularly the landscape of sustainability. Advantages that accrue to

partners may be in relation to human capital resources by partially offsetting personnel shortages or in relation to financial support and educational resources more broadly. Spruill's qualitative study drew on the perspectives of 23 partnership organizers to highlight how effective communication facilitated the endurance of the partnership with one school.

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CHAPTER 1

GUIDING URBAN YOUTH ACROSS THE HIGH SCHOOL/ COLLEGE DIVIDE: INSIGHTS FROM A COMMUNITY- ENGAGED RESEARCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

Authored by a university-based researcher and practitioners in an urban high school, the chapter highlights youths' perspectives on academic support systems in an Early College program through Sen's concepts of freedom

and unfreedom and Nussbaum's capabilities approach. Data from student questionnaires and focus group conversations suggest that students' choices on whether or not to utilize academic supports are influenced by external and internal *unfreedoms*. Their internal unfreedoms were: (a) their sense of belonging/not belonging in a college-environment; (b) fear of judgment; (c) social anxiety; (d) cultural scripts for what it means to ask for help and who asks for help; and e) a lack of meaningful connections with college-based people and places. The chapter grapples with the divide between high school and college; and between equity-centric programs and what students actually need to have the freedom to achieve in such programs.

Keywords: Academic support services; capabilities approach; community-engaged research; early college; student identity; university-school partnerships; urban youth

We begin our chapter with two vignettes, written by Kasandra and Amber, respectively.

KASANDRA

Synonyms for the term *challenge* include: problem, difficult task, test, trial, trouble, bother, obstacle... (Oxford Languages). The term often carries a negative connotation. I began to question when and how I use the word, challenge, when two students, Matt and Jonathan, approached me to discuss their Early College course. Matt and Jonathan (all names, including the name of the school, are pseudonyms) were friends, were taking the college-level course together, and shared similar concerns. The course was too challenging and the professor did not offer them any "breaks" such as extending deadlines or accepting revised coursework for a better grade. They were considering not taking the next course in the sequence the following semester. Both students were visibly upset, crying, and frustrated. I met with them a handful of times throughout the semester.

Matt and Jonathan are at the top of their class, earning mostly A's their entire high school career. Yet they found themselves in a tough spot. I inquired about the steps they had already taken. I asked whether they had utilized existing academic support services, such as the college's writing center, professor's office hours, and peer support. Admittedly, they reported they had not tapped into any resources at the time. They said they tended to work with and bounce ideas off each other, but that was the extent of their help-seeking. When I asked why they hadn't sought out other forms of support, they noted they didn't believe they would benefit from it. We spoke about life after high school, how college can be challenging, and how they are capable of learning from and overcoming challenges. I mentioned that tapping into academic support is a good practice