



Building
Equitable
Learning
Environments
Network

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Building Equitable Learning Environments in Crisis Mode

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BELE NETWORK COLLABORATORS OR PARTNERS





WHAT WE DO

We are reimagining public education to ensure every student receives a quality education.

Through our collective work, we're rethinking everything from curriculum, how teachers give feedback, and what disciplinary methods are used, and how schools are resourced to create equitable, anti-racist learning environments that are supportive of each and every student.





THE WHY BEHIND OUR WORK

Unlocking the full potential of every student requires a commitment to centering their needs and aspirations in each facet of the education system.

COVID-19 and the recent protests around the deep-rooted systemic racism in this country has awakened a demand to build more equity into our systems. Reimagining our schools is a start, and we are committed to rebuilding our education system into one that truly serves each student, rejecting the old system that didn't work for every student.

WHAT IS AN EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT?

What outcomes does it produce for every student?

- Intellectual curiosity and strong academic skills
- A sense of agency and optimism for the future
- Self-love, self-acceptance, pride in one's identities
- Understanding of one's own and others' cultural histories and contributions
- Empathy for and meaningful connections with others

What experiences cultivate those outcomes?

What policies and practices produce those experiences?



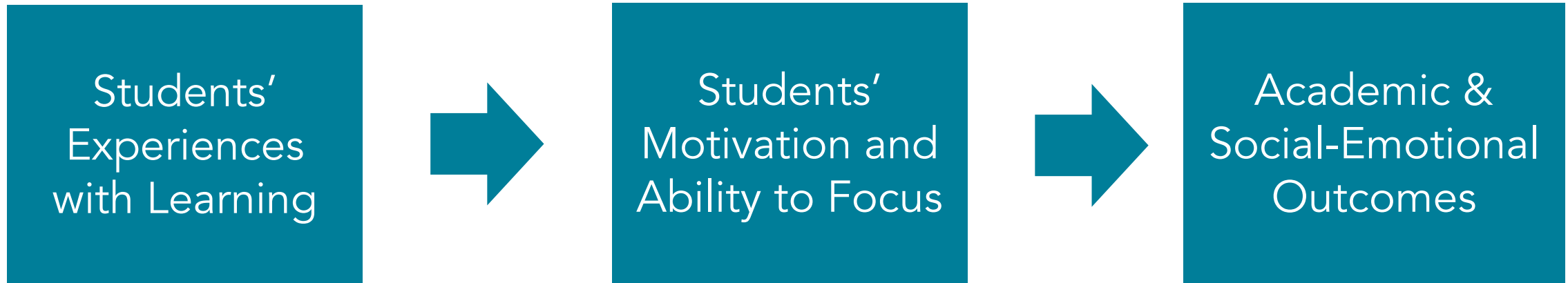
Practices & Policies

Experiences

Outcomes

EXPERIENCE IS CENTRAL TO LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Students are more engaged, and learning outcomes are more equitable when every student has affirming developmental experiences—like psychological safety, caring relationships, personally relevant content, and a sense of agency.



EXPERIENCES THAT SUPPORT EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT & LEARNING



Affirming Cultural Identity

"I've learned new things about my culture and/or community."



Meaningful Work

"I learned skills that will help me succeed later in life."



Classroom Belonging

"I had the opportunity to get to know my classmates better."



Student Voice

"I felt like an idea I shared was taken seriously by my teacher."



Feedback for Growth

"I got specific suggestions about how to improve my skills."



Teacher Caring

"I feel like my teacher is glad that I am in their class."

IS YOUR CULTURE AFFIRMED IN SCHOOL?

“Learning about the Chicano revolution in the 1960s made me feel as though my concerns, my issues, my humanity were legitimate.”

“I felt more enthused and I was having more conversations, because I knew that my people were just as smart as anyone else... Having that understanding revamped my perception of who I was as a person and as an intellectual being.”



Isaac Nieblas

WHEN CULTURE & BELONGING ARE AFFIRMED



Ethnic Studies in 9th Grade

Attendance +21% points

GPA +1.4 points

(Dee & Penner, 2016)



Kingmakers of Oakland

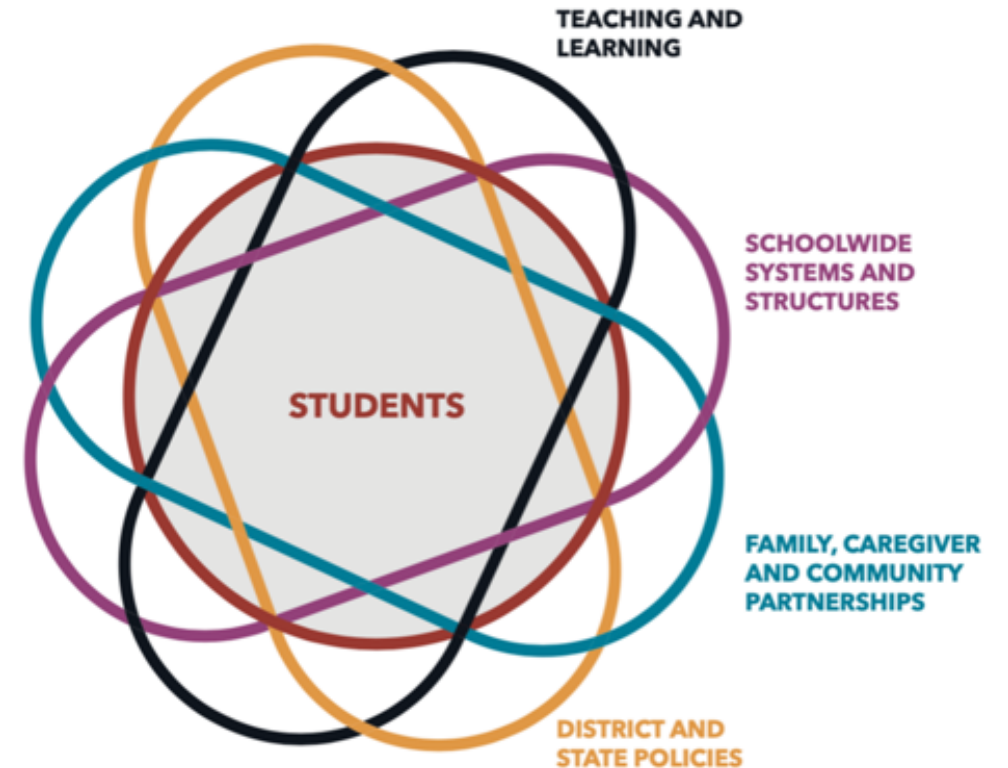
Reduced dropout by 43% among
Black male students (intended beneficiaries)

(Dee & Penner, 2019)

THE BELE NETWORK FRAMEWORK

The BELE Framework is a guide for transforming student experiences and learning outcomes.

It can be used to help create experiences that yield positive results.





THE BELE NETWORK FRAMEWORK

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Research demonstrates that how young people experience their learning – what, how, and where they are taught – **substantially impacts their ability to learn and grow**. This domain focuses on creating meaningful relationships and learning experiences as the central work of an equitable school.

SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

Equitable, high-quality schools are **organized** to ensure that people, resources, and opportunities are **prioritized and aligned** to support the core work of Teaching & Learning.

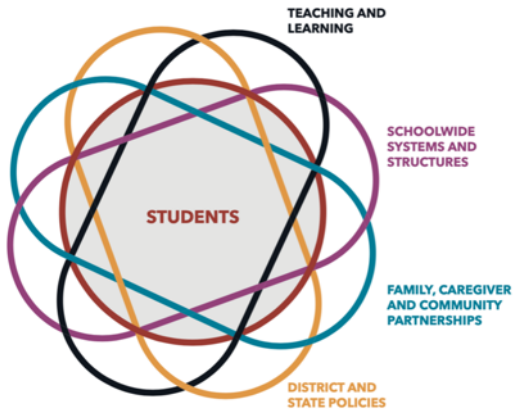
FAMILY, CAREGIVER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Schools belong to families and communities in service of nurturing their children's learning and development. Research proves that **trusting relationships, a shared vision, and authentic collaboration** are at the heart of equitable schools.

DISTRICT AND STATE POLICIES

Districts and states must **set the conditions and expectations and provide the resources** to ensure that school communities can fulfill the core commitments in the first three domains.

THE BELE NETWORK FRAMEWORK



COMMITMENTS

Facilitate community building, routines, and rituals that reduce stress, address trauma, promote healing and belonging, and prepare the brain for learning

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

- Demonstrate care and interest through opening and closing routines to begin and end lessons
 - *Build Community With Classroom Circles*
 - *Get to Know Students as People*
- Use *Collaborative Classroom Structures*, e.g., jigsaw work groups, dyads/pair shares, Liberating Structures, to ensure learning engagement and equity of voice
- Build culturally sustaining and responsive learning environments, e.g., *Make Lessons More Culturally Responsive*
- Engage students in the *Value Affirmation Activity*
- Provide guided breathing and moving breaks
- Engage in *Healing-Centered Practices*, also known as trauma informed practices



How can I stay involved if I want to keep learning?

- Find the BELE Framework & resources at equitablelearning.org
- Elevate student voice & experience with the free BELE tool: perts.net/elevate
- Read stories about our work in action medium.com/@BELENetwork
- For general BELE inquiries: info@belenetwork.org



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THANK YOU

www.belenetwork.org