

Advancing District-Wide Racial Equity: The Importance of Theories of Change

Equity Officers Retreat
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www.leadforequity.com

Dr. Terrance L. Green
University of Texas
Associate Professor



@terrancelgreen

Dr. Decoteau Irby
University of Illinois Chicago
Associate Professor



@Decoteaulrby

Dr. Ann Ishimaru
University of Washington
Associate Professor



@prof_ishimaru

Thank You



STUCK IMPROVING

Racial Equity and
School Leadership

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DECOTEAU BLACK



Thank you
@decoteauirby

Our Leaders

Our Members

Our Mission, Vision and Values

Our History

Our Publications

- NEA Today Magazine
- NEA Today for NEA-Retired Members
- NEA Today for Future Educators
 - 2016 – Present
 - 2006 – 2015
- NEA Today Go!
- Higher Education Advocates

How I Knew I Was a Teacher

My science lessons changed a life.

By Terrance Green



My first year teaching was rough. There were many times when I felt inadequate, and asked myself, "Why am I doing this?"

There was the honors class full of eager learners that I lost control of. I wanted so much for them to like me that I failed to create the right tone and build the professional teacher-student relationship.

Even honors students will run all over you if you let them.

Welcome to Racially Just Schools

If you care about the educational experiences of Black youth and you're ready to build racially just and radically humanizing schools, welcome home, friend. This space is built for you.

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Racially Just School

Dr. Terrance L. Green

Education

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SEP 4, 2021

Staying Focused on What M

#003 - Special guest, Dr. Pedro Noguera, the Rossier School of Education at the University of California, Los Angeles, is the podcast. Professor Green asks Dr.

▶ PLAY 22 min

Presentation Aims

Understand Change
Theories + Theories of
Change

Consider why each
matters for Equity
Officer Practice

Key Concepts

Change theories refer to theoretical & empirically grounded **knowledge about how change occurs beyond any one project**. They explain conditions and events that catalyze change.

Reinholz & Andrews, 2020

Theories of Change are project-specific and related to evaluation that **makes the underlying rationale of a project explicit**, which supports planning, implementation & assessment of the project.

How We Came To This Work



Contemporary Societal Conditions



A Tragically Unique Window

- School districts have been **forced to confront their racial oppression and systemic inequity**
- A growing number of districts are taking up equity work in several ways especially **hiring district-level equity officers/directors**

Study Phase 1: What Do Equity Directors Do?

- 13 Equity Directors/Officers from urban & suburban districts in the Midwest, West, Southwest & Eastern Regions of the U.S.
- 8 identified as women, 5 as men
- 9 identified as Black, 1 as Asian, 2 Latinx, 1 biracial (Pacific Islander and white)
- Conducted semi-structured interviews (60-90 minutes)

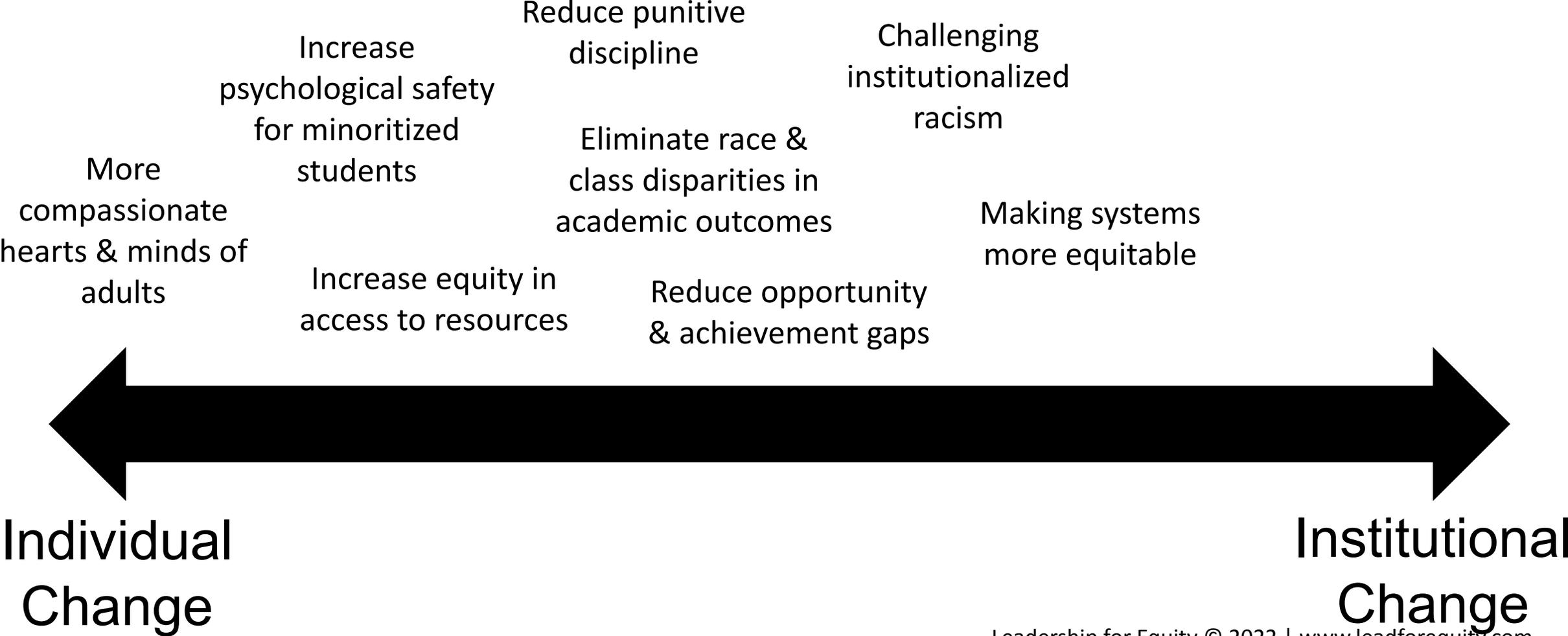
Our Curiosities

What do equity directors focus on as **key priorities** in their work?

What **practices do equity directors apply** to address these priorities?

What **theories of change** do they rely on as evidenced by their practices?

Findings: Key Priorities



Findings: Equity Directors' Practices



Findings: Theories of Change

- Technical-rational approach to change
- “Change hearts-and-minds first”
- Educational equity reform

NOTE: See Ishimaru & Galloway, 2021

Why This Matters For Your Work

- It's essential for equity officers to make their **underlying assumptions of racial equity change explicit**
- Without explicit theories of change, districts can **engage in “emulation-based racial equity change”**
- Explicit theories of change support **planning, enactment, and assessment** of racial equity work
- Explicit theories of change can create pathways for people to understand & participate in **what is being done and why** towards racial equity

Questions

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