# Chapter 53
# Towards an Understanding of Social Justice in Our Schools: Globalization, Inclusive Leadership and the Transformation of Schooling

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## Introduction

This article attempts to view schooling through the lens of social justice and offers some small considerations regarding how the educational system can be made more equitable for all students. The term “schooling” refers to the process of education provided by an educational institution, whereas “education” does not necessarily take place only within schools. As has been suggested by more than one pundit, education has become reduced to schooling and schooling has become reduced to a measurement of outcomes. Now, this is only problematic if one believes that a fundamental purpose of schooling is to get an education that not only prepares a student for work but for life as well. It is the purpose of this article to describe and discuss possible models and strategies that may be adopted in order to assist schools to become places where issues relating to schooling and social justice can be engaged with, explored and enacted.

## Globalization and Schooling

Because it has long been known that schools assist in the replication of dominant culture values (Barlow & Robertson, 1994; Cummins, 1995; Wortham, 1995; Young, 1995), it is vitally important that educators become cognizant of shifting patterns in world societies. Now, more than ever before, societies around the world

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are becoming connected through technology. But why has this become such an issue in the world of education today? As a result of the proliferation and advancement of technologies that some say has heralded in the postmodern era, time and distance have fallen softly dead as globalization has overseen a process of amalgamation of disparate world economies in the form of global trading blocs. Due to the ramping up of competition between competing economies, there has been a perceived need on the part of governments worldwide for economies to become ever more vibrant. In fact, corporations exist within the world that have the ability to not only topple governments but also to make the notion of "country" an obsolete term (Castells, 2000). Globalization isn't just about turning services into commodities for trade or about "harmonizing" in a race for the bottom in jobs and social services, it is also about turning the purpose of schools to the values of the market, as shown in the Asia Pacific Economic Consortium's (APEC) education agenda for schools to become more open to business initiatives (Keuhn, 1997). It is also about fostering the idea of a competitive marketplace and training a labor force geared to reaching the economic goals imposed by industry and business groups. As a result, there is growing pressure to make the perceived needs of business and industry the primary goals of schooling in order to increase profit margins and the accumulation of capital rather than to address imbalances in the lives of minority groups (Fernandez-Balboa, 1993) and individuals through positive social justice initiatives.

While there may be many positive outcomes to globalized societies, the problem is that, as a result of educational policies emanating from issues relating to increasingly globalized societies, schooling is becoming increasingly standardized not only in terms of assessment and evaluation but also in terms of processes, policies and procedures. As world cultures, pushed by superimposed technological imperatives, succumb to homogeneity; as transnational companies, dependent on constantly expanding markets, gain greater control over government decision-making processes worldwide; and as the division between the rich and the poor of the planet widens, it is crucial to reconsider what we expect our students to inherit and become part of (Bates, 2001). Therefore, it is of vital importance that administrators, teachers, students and other stakeholders in the school system become even more involved as designers of our social futures (Barrell, 1997), especially as schools experience ever-increasing diversity and difference (Bates) around the globe.

Although education is seen as having transformative potential for society through its relation to the "knowledge economy," administrative thinking and action can still be informed by considerations of curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation, within the context of concerns over difference, social justice and democratic development for students not just locally, but nationally and internationally as well.

If corporations are able to superimpose their own values or the values of the marketplace on the educational system, then, in effect, it is the corporations themselves which are assisting not only in the reproduction of dominant culture values but in the creation and replication of new marketplace values. Differences in associations of ideas and ideologies between educators and their counterparts in the corporate world may indicate that opportunities exist for corporate interests to manipulate school culture, to exert influence over teaching and testing, and to

encourage their own brand of dominant culture values (Barlow & Robertson, 1994; Boyles, 1998; Winner, 1997; Wortham, 1995). At issue is the question of the role of social justice within competing notions of greater order and control over the process of schooling.

Lack of information on the part of teachers regarding corporate involvement in education may represent a sort of hegemony (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Giroux, 1983) which may serve to marginalize students who do not have cultural capital similar to their classmates (Livingstone, 1999; Wortham, 1995), who therefore cannot gain access to the dominant culture, and who will continue to be a powerless, voiceless and oppressed underclass within the society in which they live (Corson, 1995). As an issue of social justice, which has implications for us all, it is vital that educators, specifically administrators and teachers, understand whose interests educational policies are really serving, as well as who the major beneficiaries of these policies are.

## Social Justice and Schooling

As education becomes commodified around the world, students are being forced to become more competitive. As a result, some students may experience greater levels of anxiety, social and physical disorders that can result in student (and teacher) burnout, disengagement and hopelessness while others, who have the necessary capitals to succeed under such circumstances, thrive. Such circumstances breed an inequitable society, a society that is meritocratic rather than socially just.

Social justice is generally considered to relate to the creation of a society based on principles of equity and equality, of understanding and valuing human rights, and recognizes the dignity of every individual. For purposes of discussion, social justice is considered to be an ideal condition in which society members have the same rights, security, opportunities, obligations, social benefits and fair treatment (Garner, 2004). The emergence of concepts relating to social justice occurred mainly in the latter part of the twentieth century and serves to distinguish between those who are more privileged in society and those who are not. It has long been maintained that if the society were truly equitable, all people would be equal. By the same token, if everyone within a given society were truly equal, then there would be no need for such a term as social justice. Unfortunately, such terms and such conditions do exist within societies around the globe, and, consequently, “social justice” can devolve to nothing more than a politically correct term that really only identifies those who are excluded, as if those who are marginalized require further marginalization in order for false prophets to introduce personal agendas that have been referred to as “social justice for me.”

Because schools represent, to some extent, microcosms of society and because schools are one of the last bastions where large numbers of impressionable children congregate, these institutions are positioned to be able to promote dominant culture values, values that are being drawn increasingly in line with market place and consumer values. On the obverse side of the coin, schools are also in a position to

become more proactive in terms of attempting to create a more inclusive society that has, at its core, a valuing of social justice. Although schooling tends to promote dominant culture values, the challenge is for schooling to become proactive rather than reactive. Our schools need to become ever more inclusive and socially just in order to engage minorities, if we are to survive as a society. As Bauman (2002) notes, we need to sacrifice in order to subscribe. In this case, we need to sacrifice our prejudices in order to belong to a society our children would want to inherit. Consequently, individuals, groups of individuals and minorities must be able to “fit in” without fear of assimilation and destruction to the cultures that they have brought with them and which continue to be a valuable and valued part of their heritage.

## Deinstitutionalizing Schooling

What follows are suggestions that may help to situate schools as places of education. Hopefully these ideas will help to forge a middle ground or provide a point of balance in the face of encroaching globalization on the one hand and the time warp that schools find themselves in terms of attempting to apply outdated ideas and processes in an era of increasing demands and conflicting notions about what “good” schooling looks like.

The first concept that appeals to us is the idea of schools as places of safety for students and educators (Cooper & White, 2004). Building a community is a term that can frequently be heard around schools, but what does this look like in action? First of all, the school must commit itself to creating a safe haven for all. This can be agreed upon at a general staff meeting, but it is up to each individual teacher and the administration to keep the profile sharp. Modeling respectful behavior goes a long way in assisting students to feel that they can bring forth issues, engage with learning in a meaningful way, and live and work in a kind and supportive atmosphere. It won’t happen overnight but, if teachers and administrators take the time to get to know their students and their students’ needs and wants and model respectful behavior, educators will be better equipped to deal with interpersonal issues and will be able to plan lessons that take student needs into consideration. This is the first step towards differentiated learning and a more socially just school system.

Fullan (2001), however, suggests that achieving lasting change is elusive because of the isolation faced by teachers and the competing pressures of the reality of schooling in these global times. Ainscow and Sandill’s (2010) article on inclusive leadership in education looks at creating an inclusive and, therefore, a socially just culture within a school that helps to eliminate social exclusion stemming from negative responses to diversity in race, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender and ability. These authors believe that education represents a basic human right and is the foundation for a more just society. However, within any school:

> The development of inclusive practice is not…about adopting new technologies of the sort as described in a fair amount of existing literature.… [I]t involves social learning within a given workplace that influences people’s actions and the thinking that informs those actions…. The implication is that a methodology for developing inclusive practices must

> take into account social processes of learning that go on within particular contexts. It requires a group of stakeholders within a particular context to look for a common agenda to guide their decisions of practice and, at much the same time, a series of struggles to establish ways of working that enable them to collect and find meaning in different kinds of information. (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010, 403)

Ainscow and Sandill conceptualize the school as "a community of practice" defined as "a social group engaged in the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise" (2010, 403) and is seen by these authors as a way to negotiate meaning through social action. Angelides, Antoniou, and Charalambous (2010) provide conditions for success in inclusive and socially just education through a case study of a school in Cyprus. In such a school, difference is welcomed as a learning opportunity, rather than as a predicament, a problem to be fearful of, or an issue to be dealt with. A socially just school is an ideal to be striven towards and it depends upon attitude, energy and time. When we believe that everyone has been included and that we have met everyone's needs, it is time to begin again, for we have surely ignored someone, or needs have changed, or we have only been partially successful in meeting existing needs. Angelides et al. address this in terms of inclusive school cultures:

> The development of inclusive cultures in schools creates a community which is characterized by safety, acceptance, and collaboration. In this type of community, all are valued, and this forms the basis for higher achievement by all students. The principles that emerge out of inclusive cultures guide decisions about policies and the everyday practices of school so that the learning of all is supported through a continuous process of school development. (Angelides et al., 2010, 322)

Three basic conditions contributed to the success of this school in developing a socially just environment; children felt loved and cared for in the school environment; the school provided opportunities for acceptance, appreciation and success of all children, and also helped to provide the parents with support and guidance. This was accomplished through the involvement of teachers and co-teaching within a collaborative culture premised upon love, care, acceptance and involvement of children and the involvement of parents and the community (Angelides et al., 2010). While it is a well-known fact that collaboration between schools and families lead to more inclusive and socially just environments on both sides, it is still a "project in the making" for many schools to become used to the idea that parents are important and necessary members of the school community. In addition to encouraging familial support, school leaders may benefit from becoming more aware of patterns of globalization so that they may be able to lead their schools in a more socially just manner.

## A Perspective for School Leaders

Many leadership styles allow for some form of democratic interaction. The entry of critical approaches into the leadership arena has provided valuable alternatives for those interested in pursuing issues of social justice (Ryan, 1998) through shared power concepts (Capper, 1993) such as emancipatory leadership (Corson, 1998)

and critical leadership strategies (Ryan) which reunite facts with values (Foster, 1986). Key to the understanding of education as an extension of social justice is the view that race, culture and ethnicity (Reyes, Velez, & Pena, 1993), not to mention issues of gender (Sears, 1993) and disabled students (Bishop, Foster, & Jubala, 1993), must be relocated to the heart of democracy. School as a moral institution holds the public school administrator legally, professionally and morally obligated to be responsible for the processes and outcomes of schooling (Greenfield, 1993). Artful leadership must be built on an aesthetic interest above that of the business mode by pledging itself to the conscious and critical reconstruction of an ever-changing culture (Maxcy, 1998).

Although research in educational leadership does not always develop practical aspects relating to the valuable issues addressed, Specht and Young (2010) outline a collaborative process in schools that may help children reach their highest personal achievement in all spheres of education: (1) The first days of schools are instrumental in building class climate; (2) staff should develop positive support structures and behaviors; (3) student success is as unique as the individual child; (4) expectations for students should remain consistent depending on the school context, consistency is key; (5) administration should encourage staff to be respectful, caring and compassionate as teachers by providing an environment that emulates those qualities; (6) engage the entire community, ask students and parents for their input; (7) recognize the need for socialization as a key part of education, growth and development for all students; (8) differentiate instruction and engage all students to be challenged in curricular material to feel successful; and (9) engage families in the schooling process, be it directly or uniquely, to ensure familial support (Specht & Young, 2010). The authors encourage educational leaders and engage the reader in understanding the need for all educational stakeholders to work collaboratively to optimize the classroom environment.

Angelides et al. (2010) highlight the importance of distributive leadership as key to inclusive practice and a more socially just education. The authors state that inclusive leadership should include the collective mentality of the entire community, encourage the diffusion of barriers and demonstrate more inclusive social practices through modeling appropriate behavior. These authors emphasize the value of school culture in creating a school climate supportive of democratic and socially just practices. Five themes – the involvement of teachers, co-teaching, a collaborative school culture, an ethic of caring, acceptance and involvement of children, and the involvement of parents and the community – represent a collaborative effort on the part of the educational leaders, staff and community to foster a supportive educative environment for all.

Raffo and Gunter (2008) describe a variety of leadership frameworks that encourage a socially just school environment to flourish. The researchers examine plausible policy and procedures of social inclusion and discuss the importance of engaging staff in developing a socially inclusive and just environment. The authors examine functional and socially critical perspectives in implementing school policy that addresses economic and cultural diversity. Delivery, localization and democratizing are three policy initiatives highlighted. Raffo and Gunter further note that

implementation of policy is equally as much a process of carrying out government policy, as it is an effort to reduce social exclusion in our schools. Through creating examples or engaging in theory, this article encourages school leaders and educators to examine their practices and to become more cognizant of their own educational practices regarding social justice. The next two sections deal with examples of policy issues that can benefit from further examination by educational leaders in the pursuit of a more equitable system of schooling.

## At Issue: "Zero Tolerance" Policies

Unfortunately, as a result of educational policies emanating from issues relating to increasingly globalized societies, disciplinary policies in many schools have begun to shift toward treating children in ways that closely resemble a version of the adult criminal justice system (Daniel & Bondy, 2008). Consequently, many North American schools appear to have adopted a "legalistic" view of school management that puts children in untenable positions. This is exemplified in a very controversial and not very well-debated topic known as the "Zero Tolerance Policy."

Zero tolerance policies are school district policies that specify predetermined consequences for particular violations (Sughrue, 2003). Such policies were originally designed to punish those engaging in acts that potentially put themselves and/or others at risk of harm or danger. Over time, zero tolerance policies have come to include many types of punishable behavior, ranging from possession of drugs, licit or otherwise, to real or symbolic weaponry such as toy guns. Insubordination and classroom disruptions (Schwartz & Rieser, 2001) have also come to be included in this "catch-all" policy, even though many of these items pose little threat to school safety (Dunbar & Villarruel, 2002, 2004; Henault, 2001; Sughrue, 2003; Villarruel & Dunbar, 2006).

This policy, implemented in schools over the past number of years to address a perceived increase in violence and to provide a safe environment for our children, has received mixed reviews from many different school boards throughout Canada and the United States. Ambiguity concerning what constitutes expulsionable or even suspendable offenses has led to growing confusion and disgruntlement from various factions of the school communities about what exactly zero tolerance is and who it is intended to serve.

In order to explain public discourse around issues of school violence, the original impetus for zero tolerance, Devine (1996) claims that public perception frames two diametrically opposed views – a "right-wing discourse" which views schools as being out of control and a "mainstream liberal discourse," which views school violence as "a result of student alienation" (21). The view of schools from right-wingers is that schools are in moral and behavioral decay. This view blames the victims, the students. The opposing view suggests that if children are absorbed in learning, behavior problems will disappear. Zero tolerance policies have met with criticism from stakeholders and from the media. Some critics suggest that

the policy and the way it has been implemented leave too much discretion in the hands of those who exercise it, while others view the policy and its trappings as inflexible and intolerant. While some claim the policy is not enforced uniformly, others claim it is enforced inappropriately. Some advocates request less discretion on the part of the implementers, while others request more flexibility to deal with issues on a case-by-case basis.

It is evident that there exist varied views on zero tolerance policy that include its intent and its viability to address the perceived problem of school violence. Further to this, according to McNeal and Dunbar (2010), urban school principals tended to align themselves with the perception that schools are in a chaotic state. Rural school principals, however, saw the policy as an irrelevant intrusion that bore little relationship to the communities they served. By these examples of urban and rural school administrators views, a zero tolerance policy constrains administrators simply because it does not allow for recognition of differences or individual situations (Ableser, 2002). Accordingly, Merrow (2004) suggests that physical, emotional and intellectual safeties are necessary to maintain a socially responsible school. While a zero tolerance policy is intended to maintain a strict policy of safety for its students, such "inclusive" policies mandate standard operating procedures for all offenders, even for the first offense. As a result, written policies tend to become iron clad and this may not serve the best interests of students. Consequently, if the policy is not for the benefit of all students, then it is not good policy (Cooper & White, 2004). As MacNeal and Dunbar (2010) imply, are we merely symbolically and practically replicating an unloving society as we teach our children to design a single set of guidelines to be used for all types of unacceptable behavior ranging from verbal threats and physical violence to dress code violations? This relates to the equity versus equality issue because zero tolerance policies offer up a standardization argument in that all students are treated equally, whether they are all the same or not – and we know that they are not.

A further finding from the study by McNeal and Dunbar (2010) notes that a disproportionate number of minority groups are negatively affected by zero tolerance policies, rendering such policies socially unjust. In theory, zero tolerance policies were intended to preserve safe school environments. However, suspensions and expulsions began to increase to alarming proportions particularly for minority students (Skiba & Leone, 2001). In discussing suspensions from school as remedial practices, Ableser (2002) feels that zero tolerance policies create a false sense of security because suspension merely displaces the problem from our schools to the society in general, negating valuable opportunities for the development of appropriate behaviors and validating a cycle of failure culminating in higher dropout rates.

Circumstances leading to suspension of students need to be investigated on an individual basis. The intent of the student accused of violation is an area of concern that is often ignored. Alternatives to suspension may be considered to suit the violation. If and when students are suspended for serious incidents, they may be automatically referred to outside counseling and law enforcement agencies. Suspension should be used sparingly and with extreme caution. Less serious violations may be dealt with in conjunction with peer mentoring programs in order to develop and

maintain lines of communication within and outside of the school environment. Curwin and Mendler (1999) suggest that "zero tolerance is another example of the road to hell paved with good intentions" (119). While zero tolerance policies send a powerful message to students, staff and parents that violent, aggressive behavior is not acceptable in our schools, it also succeeds in clouding important distinctions between victim and aggressor, thus making equity and, therefore, socially just schools increasingly elusive.

As such, zero tolerance policies represent an effort to apply a morality of authority that demands respect and fear. In this sense, it is fascist in that it fails to provide students with the ability to think critically about authority relating to democratic moralism (Ableser, 2002) and, as such, it is anti-democratic. The positive correlation between suspensions and future dropout rates implies that these students are marginalized by the very system that has promised to protect them. Issues of fairness come into question when we talk about extreme consequences of discipline that have little to do with school safety or the improvement of student behavior. In any case, what appears to be conspicuously absent is the voices of those who are most often directly affected by such policies, the students themselves.

McNeal and Dunbar (2010) address this issue of the suspension of minority students in practical terms by interviewing a group of urban high school students who are directly affected by the zero policy. They found that students and other stakeholders could benefit by being brought into the discussion, rather than having a "sudden death" policy that harms rather than guides students. Skiba (2000) concurs and goes on to suggest that we need more graduated policies that match offenses with consequences, as each new outbreak in school violence appears to yield increasingly severe punishment in terms of school discipline. In short, we appear to be creating new problems in dealing with existing issues. As it stands currently, zero tolerance policies serve to recreate the very symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979) that they are employed to eradicate. According to Daniel and Bondy (2008), such disciplinary policies must not criminalize our youth but should rather engage them in a problem-solving process. Given our current efforts to manage change and control our school environment, we seem to have defaulted to using a model that is strikingly similar to that being used in penitentiaries. Even such penal terms such as "lock down" and "color codes" have been implemented in schools. However, there is no penitentiary in the world that is truly rehabilitary, as they all use various forms of symbolic or concrete incarceration. With the importation of such a paradigm firmly in place, how socially just can our schools really be, not only for students but for teachers as well? In fact, Jull (2000) suggests that teachers are directed to implement, support and enforce school codes of conduct whether they agree with them or not, representing a symbolic violence against teachers. If left unexamined, teachers may, themselves, become perpetrators even while considering themselves to be upholders of the tenets of social justice.

Zero tolerance policies represent a type of binary thinking and, as such, they do not recognize subtleties, but rely on equality of consequence without considering equity of intent. Equity must come first in order to achieve true equality. More consideration needs to be directed toward the individual social contexts of conflict and

uneven distribution of social power relations that are part of each school's social climate (Jull, 2000, 5). Zero tolerance policies typically represent a kind of "triage" model that merely has a nice ring to it. Such policies have not been proven to effectively reduce youth violence and serve only to temporarily displace the issue by returning it to the larger society (Jull). This procrusteanization of policy serves the "factory" model of education very well but it does little to advance transformative practices within schools. Such transformative practices represent a form of social justice that is much needed within the school edifice.

## At Issue: "Inclusive" Education

The term "inclusion" is an interesting word in its own right. It is often construed, in educational jargon, to refer exclusively to special education. Thus, its connotation, how the term is used, differs from its denotation, what the word actually means. Theoharis and Causton-Theoharis (2008) expand the meaning of inclusion to embrace all marginalized students – not just special education. For the authors of this piece, inclusion is taken to refer to inclusivity in a general sense and thus, this notion of "true" inclusion may be twinned with notions of social justice and equity. Armed with a broader understanding of what it means to be inclusive, school leaders advocate for *all* marginalized groups within their school community. This broader definition for inclusion helps to eliminate social exclusion in response to diversity (Rice, 2006).

Increasing diversity of school-aged population in tandem with demands for educational reform and accountability poses enormous challenges for school leaders on a worldwide basis. Inclusive education was originally considered as an approach to educating children with disabilities within regular school settings. Internationally, however, it is being increasingly seen more broadly as a reform that supports and welcomes diversity among *all* learners. In fact, inclusive education has emerged in many school districts as the norm rather than the exception, the expectation rather than the ideal, and has been mandated in a growing number of locations. Consequently, it no longer is debated whether or not inclusion *should* occur, but rather *how* to implement it.

In an effort to create "systemic, sustained and differentiated professional development for social justice" (4), Kose (2007) recommends three categories of professional development: professional development for the whole staff, professional development for specific groups within a staff, and professional development based on specific needs of individual teachers. In order to bring "suburban and urban students together, cultivating individual talents and needs, and developing students as global citizens and environmental stewards in an interdisciplinary school" (4), Kose maintains that all professional development, such as differentiating instruction, diversity discussions and critiquing curricula through a multicultural lens, be focused on achieving these goals. Teachers require opportunities to meet as core teams, subject area teams and mentor groups to focus on curricular

requirements and on acquiring knowledge and creating PD activities for individuals and groups (Kose). This works in conjunction with a school-wide focus on disrupting current marginalizing conditions in the school. Such a framework allows for teacher learning on three different levels: school-wide learning, group planning and individual professional development needs. This organizational framework constituted of diverse groupings allows teachers to implement programs at their discretion and promotes "sustained and systemic professional learning" (Kose, 3). Theoharis (2010) exemplifies this approach in an article describing the strategies employed by six social justice leaders to counteract school structures that marginalize, segregate and impede achievement, a deprofessionalized teaching staff, a school climate that needed to be more welcome for marginalized families, and low student achievement.

While "full" inclusion has the benefit of allowing all students to receive the same *level* of education by eliminating pullout programs and "special" classrooms, it may not serve the purposes of students who cannot benefit from being mainstreamed into regular classes. These students may be physically incorporated into regular classes, but the *quality* of their education may suffer as a result of not having access to specialized equipment and/or instruction. While it is agreed that mainstreaming students allows the marginalized students who would ordinarily be segregated in smaller instructional groupings to learn more about the mainstream culture of the regular classrooms and that "regular" students can benefit enormously from learning about students with specific and general disabilities, the key word becomes "balance." Any policy that requires all students to fit into a particular mold without consideration given to unique characteristics is not a policy that tends to operate in all students' favor. As such, it is a policy that tends to exclude and marginalize even as it draws students together.

## Inclusion as a Form of Social Justice

Salisbury (2006) posits that although administrators and schools may differ in their definition and stages of progression toward fully inclusive and socially just programming, similarities can be found in administrative qualities that are conducive for promoting these practices. These include committing to social justice, nurturing the staff's attitude and core beliefs to embrace diversity, using language that supports the inclusion philosophy, and soliciting support from parents and community. Salisbury notes that the principal is key in developing inclusive and socially just schooling. Given this point of view, Edmunds, Macmillan, Specht, Nowicki, and Edmunds (2009) note the importance of the principal's role in developing and maintaining an inclusive school environment. To this end, the assessment of professional development needs is of major importance for principals. Through the use of action research methodology, principals can become more aware of conditions necessary for the support and sustenance of inclusive practices within their schools. Such an endeavor begins with careful scrutiny of current relevant literature. Principals must

have access to the most current information about inclusive practices, as it is they who are ultimately responsible for implementing truly inclusive practices, policies and procedures within their schools. Once the administrators are knowledgeable concerning inclusive practices, professional development opportunities can be implemented in order to address all aspects of inclusion.

However, principal knowledge of inclusion is not a satisfactory prerequisite on its own, as teachers and support staff must also "buy in" to a more inclusive model. Because teachers and support staff often feel inadequately prepared, it is critical that principals address the needs of teachers and support staff within their schools. Otherwise, by avoiding proper professional development, there are risks that teachers' "perceptions of inclusion will swing from positive to negative as their frustration with its implementation grows" (Edmunds et al., 2009, 18), because avoiding such necessary professional development fosters a climate of resistance to change (Rice, 2006).

As noted by Angelides et al. (2010), special education teachers can become a resource to classroom teachers and educational assistants by providing knowledge on inclusive practices. Such specific, timely and appropriate professional development establishes "harmonious and synchronized interactions of all school staff" (Edmunds et al., 2009, 19). Thus, the special education teacher, in collaboration with classroom teachers, can instigate positive social change within their sphere of influence by involving teachers in co-teaching and by providing examples of what an inclusive culture looks, feels and sounds like. Rice (2006) refers to the special education teacher as the "cornerstone" to developing a collegial climate throughout the school, and, as such, special education teachers may be key allies in supporting inclusive leadership strategies. Subsequently, three administrative tasks as identified by Riehl (2000) include being supportive of creating inclusive schools, encouraging new understandings of diversity, nurturing inclusive school cultures and building relationships between school and community can help to promote a more inclusive atmosphere for students, staff and the surrounding community.

Another suggestion for supporting inclusive socially just schooling is for the leader to maintain a vision of what a truly socially just school looks like. This is an ideal for which to strive. When we believe that all perspectives, voices and ways of being have been included, it is time to begin again to ensure that no one has been left out and that all concerns are not only being heard and listened to but also attended to. In the words of Gwendolyn MacEwan (2007), "…the moment when it seems most plain is the moment when you must begin again" (92).

Community support is also an important attribute of inclusive schooling. Salisbury (2006) states, "The most frequently mentioned barrier identified by respondents was the negative attitude of teachers and parents" (71). Of course, the task here is to change negative attitudes into more accepting attitudes. This is a daunting task for anyone, seasoned and novice school leaders alike. However, the prize is well worth winning. Riehl (2000) advises principals to coordinate services among stakeholders and for the school to become the focal point of the inclusion movement:

> Schools are viewed as the most logical choice to be the anchor or hub of services, since children interact with schools on a continuous basis and problems can be detected and addressed as they arise. (Riehl, 2000, 67)

Riehl (2000) also raises some unsettling issues, including how principals "reproduce, sometimes unwittingly, conditions of hierarchy and oppression, in particular by fostering compliant thinking rather than critical reflection" (59). Managerial types of leadership tend to foster this, whereas many other types of leadership – for example, emancipatory, distributive and critical, to identify just a few styles of leadership – hold inclusion central to their system of values. Further to this, Riehl introduces another troubling notion that, if school leaders truly become aware of how much marginalization exists within any given school system which the system is actually causing, they would choose not to work there:

> A genuine commitment to diversity would require administrators to attend to the fundamental inequities of schooling, to disavow the institutions which they purportedly lead, and to work toward larger projects of social and institutional transformation. (Riehl, 2000, 58)

However, for those who are committed to truly inclusive practices, this is viewed as an opportunity. Issues with the educational system marginalizing students are often the result of policies delivered by non-practitioners who, incidentally, rarely avail themselves of current research on matters educational. Thus, by influencing and shaping our fully inclusive schools rather than by advocating for "full inclusion," are we not already working toward developing lasting change of a more socially just nature?

Teachers who have little background in inclusive practices require not only opportunities to learn effective instruction methods to meet the needs of all students but also the time to discuss the results of their efforts. Unfortunately, according to Edmunds et al. (2009), not all principals have a complete understanding of inclusive practices, themselves, and their active participation is essential in assisting them with discovering strengths and weaknesses related to inclusive practices that exist within their own schools. In short, we need to concentrate on leadership as well as teaching. Oluwole (2009) chronicles one principal's struggle between continuing with full inclusion at his school and doing what is best for a particular student. Ultimately, as a result of a legal and ethical dilemma, the principal tendered his resignation because the inclusive education program was benefiting the special needs population in his school less that the thoughtful accommodations that were already in place. Ironically, the so-called inclusive education program was less inclusive than the program it replaced! Experiences such as these beg the question of how effective "full" inclusion is, as it may not work in every instance. In short, full inclusion as it is frequently practiced has its own set of limitations because, like zero tolerance policies, full inclusion does little to advance true inclusionary practices within schools. One may begin to forge a way forward by questioning one's own beliefs about such policies and the system that reinforces them.

Furthermore, as educators, we strive to practice what we preach. While this is increasingly important as an administrator, ofttimes our leaders experience conflicts that result in contradictions and conflicts in the treatment not only of students but of staff members as well. This brings to light the idea that we must question ourselves throughout our careers and change and adapt our beliefs as different policies such as zero tolerance and full inclusion are implemented.

Inclusive leadership is quickly gaining traction in schools and school systems in any area where significant diversity exists. Since every student is unique in his or her own way, it can be argued that diversity exists in every educational landscape, and, therefore, inclusive leadership is and will become one of the most important issues facing administrators. Such inclusive leaders adopt and live a set of values – including self-esteem, respect for others, values beyond self-interest and restraint in the exercise of power – that place relationships at the focal point of educational policies, practices and procedures. Those values define schooling in ways that standardized test scores can never do. Such responsibility for inclusive leadership in creating supportive, inclusive schools will need to be found not only within the school's administration team but also among teachers, parents and support staff members (Mayrowetz & Weinstein, 1999). All staff members and, indeed, all stakeholders, including the students themselves, must strive in concert to meet the needs of every student. In this way, truly inclusive educational practices will be possible within the school edifice.

## Conclusion

As a result of educational policies emanating from issues relating to increasingly globalized societies, schooling is becoming increasingly standardized, not only in terms of assessment and evaluation but also in terms of processes, policies and procedures. Thus, due to the exigencies of globalization, schools and their leaders are being held more and more accountable for implementing blanket policies for their school populations and this is, unfortunately, often detrimental to marginalized students. For example, as standardized testing gains increasing value, disadvantaged, minority and disenfranchised groups suffer. In some schools, minority and disabled students are exonerated from taking standardized tests, but even this serves to marginalize them in the face of other students. There are fewer and fewer avenues available for such students to be involved, included and accepted.

"Full inclusion" and zero tolerance policies represent but two postmodern puzzles that serve to exclude students by "one size fits all" policies. By supporting flawed policies such as zero tolerance and notions of full inclusion regardless of the student's ability to subscribe to the mainstream, educators are not serving the student but are responding to convenient policy measures that support order and control – policies which do little to further citizenship and socialization skills among our future leaders and populace. This is an unattractive alternative that may only serve to reproduce the "inmate ethic" and can serve to increase dropout rates and increased crime among disenchanted youth who have not been successful within a system in which they feel that they neither belong to nor are supported by.

This article advocates the deinstitutionalizing of schools in order to gain greater clarity about what some of the advantages are for creating more socially just schools. At issue is the question of where social justice should fit within competing notions of greater order and control over the process of schooling. In short, part of the answer to this question might be inclusive leadership.

As many studies regarding inclusive leadership suggest, it is important to distribute leadership not only among administrators but among teachers as well if in fact socially just schools are to be made possible. In this regard, school leaders can benefit immensely from listening to the voices of students, by motivating staff members, and by becoming more aware of the communities within which our students are living. Once these conditions are met, truly inclusive and socially just education can help all students achieve success in terms of each student's personal best. This represents the "trickle-down effect," where all educational stakeholders can feel supported by their educational community and conversely, they can begin to support others. A truly inclusive school provides an excellent example of democracy in action. Sharing leadership is, by its very nature, inclusive. Therefore, truly inclusive schools, by their very nature, are democratic and it takes inclusive educational leaders to forge the way.

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