MOVING FROM TOLERANCE TO INCLUSION: A MATTER OF JUSTICE

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Is your school a place of tolerance or inclusion?

Answer

a. Yes
b. No
c. Tolerance
d. Inclusion
Moving from tolerance to inclusion is a bold—yet apt—ambition of the Jesuit school system, an institution fundamentally committed to providing a just education to all students.
A CALL TO JUSTICE FOR JESUIT EDUCATION

- Personal and professional experience.
- 2006 – 2010: Jesuit high schools were struggling with social justice issues internally, race, sexual and gender identity.
- Since 2008 (JSN Symposium, Colloquium NYK Province Colloquium - engaged over 30 schools)
- Fortuitous timing - same sex marriage SCOTUS ruling, Black Lives Matter movement.
ASSUMPTIONS

- Jesuit Schools are called to be communities of justice.
- Students come from extreme socio-economic backgrounds, of all races and ethnicities. Some are gay, some are straight.
- Jesuits schools are (or aspire to be) diverse communities of men and women for others.
Examined how Jesuit high schools in the USA have developed, the role of the school’s leadership, and the formation experience of the faculty.

Focused on the experience of Black, Latino, and LGBT students in Jesuit high schools.

Case studied two schools with national reputations for being at the forefront in the field of equity and inclusion.
Jesuit schools are in very different places along road from tolerance to inclusion.

Achievement gap between White students and those who are Black or Latino is significant.

The LGBT community remains marginalized in many of our schools.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR JESUIT HIGH SCHOOLS

- Adult formation and education for school leaders, faculty, and parents in the areas of diversity and inclusion.
- Renewed commitment to educating students justly.
Research Findings

What is the difference between tolerance and inclusion?
Figure 1. Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity: 1990 through 2011 in U.S. high schools (Aud, et al., 2013)
A 1997 study found “a significantly higher number of African American males were dropping out of Jesuit high schools than their White counterparts. Furthermore, 90% of the dropouts transferred to other Catholic schools…African American males found Jesuit schools hostile and unwelcoming places”.

The Profile of African American Males in Jesuit High schools (Franklin, Fordham University, 1997)
JSEA 50 JESUIT HIGH SCHOOLS SAT RESULTS - STUDENTS WHO WERE COLLEGE BOUND ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN 2012.
CULTURAL BIAS IN STANDARDIZED TESTS

✗ SAT ‘culturally biased’ - accessible only to those who can afford the excessive cost of private tuition.
✗ 2010 research paper published in the Harvard Review claimed that the ‘cultural bias continued’ the college board disputed the evidence.
✗ How have Jesuit high schools addressed this?
Independent research by the national organization Gay Lesbian Student Education Network (GLSEN) shows that gay and lesbian students between the ages of 13 and 20 are significantly at risk of underachievement. “The Safe Schools Climate Survey” (Kosciw et al., 2011) shows that LGBT students are truant and underachieve because of fear or intimidation in their school environments.
29.8% of students skipped a class at least once in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.

31.8% missed at least one entire day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.

Students who experienced higher levels of victimization because of their sexual orientation were three times as likely to have missed school in the past month as those who experienced lower levels of victimization (57.9% v. 19.6%, respectively).

What is the climate in YOUR school? Have you asked?

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LGBT DATA - GLSEN
WHO OR WHAT HAS THE GREATEST EFFECT ON STUDENT SUCCESS IN HIGH SCHOOL?

- Rank in order of importance...
- Teachers
- Parents
- Peers
- Socioeconomics
- Role models
- School leaders

POLL
Teachers and role models... ‘Students gain higher levels of achievement and better personal relationships when they have close relationships with their teachers’ (Rimm-Kaufman, S. (2014). Improving students relationships with teachers to provide essential supports for student learning. Richmond: American Psychological Association).

‘The mentor relationship has been found to be significant in several national studies, often resulting in “less at risk types of behavior, high self esteem, better peer interaction and higher grades in school 'Herrera, C., DuBois, D., & Grossman, J. (2013). The role of risk: Mentoring experiences and outcomes for youth with varying risk profiles.'
Systemic belief from politicians, to school boards and faculty rooms is that the most significant influence on a student’s success is their teacher. ‘Teacher effectiveness – the most important factor for schools in improving student achievement’ continued...
Most low-income minority students who overcome all the obstacles associated with their socioeconomic and racial backgrounds and achieve high levels of academic success do so as a result of a pivotal encounter with an educator who took the initiative to reach out to them and provide concrete academic guidance beyond their formal roles and responsibilities.

Someone like me?

As African American adolescents become more aware of the hostility in society and are frustrated by inequalities in their educational experience, many seek empathy from their African American peers, and despite the willingness of a White friend or teacher to understand, the truth is that unless one has fully experienced a bias, one cannot understand the depth of the pain it causes. (continued...)
In high school, positive relationships with teachers can be more of a challenge for students of color and members of the LGBT community. ‘Adolescents at the key stage of their personal and moral development are more inclined to feel comfortable with an adult they identify with, and will often seek out those who are like them and/or have similar interests or life experiences’ (Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? Beverly Daniel-Tatum, 1997).
Who or what has the most impact on a teacher’s educational practice inside and outside of the classroom?

- Principal or school leader
- Personal belief system
- College or university
- Parent
- Peers
IMPLICATIONS FOR JESUIT HIGH SCHOOLS?

- Consider the demographics of your school.
- What is the racial identity of your faculty, administration and staff?
- Do you have members of the LGBT community who are open and out?
- Do under-represented members of the student body have adequate role models?
ROLE MODELS IN JESUIT HIGH SCHOOLS

Faculty
- 2.1% African American
- 7.6% Latino
- 13.94% Total underrepresented groups (JSEA, 2013).

Students
- 7.8% African American
- 13.3% Latino
- 30.16% Total Underrepresented groups
‘This combination of a very hostile message and the lack of positive role models will undoubtedly have a negative impact on the LGBT student community.’


Regrettably, there appears to be few Jesuit schools that do not discriminate against members of the LGBT community in their hiring policies and daily practices.

‘Don’t ask don’t tell’
ARE WE COMPANIONS FOR ALL OF OUR STUDENTS?

Welcome Pope Francis!
“It was frustrating for me to see and hear about being men and women for others for four years and see students going off to “save the world” when there were people who needed saving right in front of them. The same students who visited service sites made jokes in class the next day about how they had met my Mama the week before. I doubted it, she works in a bank in the city as a VP for marketing but they assumed we were poor, undereducated, and homeless. My parents both have Master’s degrees and executive jobs and people would joke about my Dad being the janitor. It never stopped. Service in our school meant nothing and it made no difference, it was just rich white kids making themselves feel better. “
“Our primary goal as Arrupe said is to create men and women who are for others, we strive to do that through service in everything we do.” Faculty

“The school is all about being men for others; they talk about that A LOT. And kids get it; we see the opportunity for service, to be a man for others when we graduate and to keep it going. It doesn’t always happen in the classroom though, it just doesn’t occur to us”. Student
※ The most common sentiment we heard and read regarding the concept of service was about service to the external community. Faculty and administrators who mentioned service said that “the students are required to participate in service,” or “we do a lot of service”. What we heard infrequently and observed even less was service of others in the community.
TOLERATE

✓ Heroes & Holidays
✓ Authors in literature/curricula review
✓ History/Social Studies
✓ Affinity Groups
✓ Employees/Role models
✓ Invited to the ‘Party’
✓ Affirming stereotypes
✓ No discussion of LGBT issues

INCLUDE

✓ Throughout the year
✓ Representation of Women, LGBTQ & People of Color
✓ Racism is not a ‘past’ issue
✓ Student Government
✓ Identity of Employees
✓ Invited to ‘Dance’
✓ Same sex ‘dates’ at Prom, & other public events

TOLERATE OR INCLUDE?
The Thirty-Second General Council of the Society of Jesus (1975) called for Jesuits and lay collaborators to live a life of faith and justice. The Society of Jesus recognized that much work still needed to be done in their commitment to social justice.

The Thirty Fourth General Congregation (1995) recommitted the Jesuits to social justice as an integral part of their mission. Over 30 years since the original decree of the Thirty Second General Council (1975),

The Thirty Fifth Council (2008) once again described justice at the heart of mission.
A desire for change that leads a person to a place where they truly desire and are able to act and love justly, a personal conversion (metanoia) so that freed from self-interest we will be able to be critical of social and religious structures that have oppressed people and made them less human and less able to call God their Father. (McDermott, E. J. (1976). Faith and justice. *Foundations*. Jesuit Secondary Education)
Two Spheres, One Outcome: Top-to-Bottom Cultural Proficiency

**Academics Side**
- Admissions
- Curriculum
- Recruitment
- Retention
- Hiring
- Professional Development & Support
- Parent Support & Education
- Diversity Programs & Events
- Community Outreach
- Co-curricular Programs
- Campus Ministry/ Spirituality
- Counseling
- Financial Assistance
- Magis

**Development Side**
- Recruitment,
- Appointment,
- Orientation and PD for
  - Trustees, Regents, Parent Clubs
- Alumni Outreach and Support
- Public Relations and Marketing
- Development and Alumni Office
  - Recruitment, Hiring, Support, and PD
Conversion of hearts

Adult Education – how do we react to a comment, a joke, every element of prejudice?

Embrace inclusion as central to the mission

Don’t see diversity as a recruitment tool

Everyone’s responsibility – not just a few

Check bias at the door

Courageous Conversations

One brave soldier!

Curriculum

Inclusive Language

Affinity groups that are integrated

Cultural Competency

Every space is a ‘safe space’

Recognize “tolerance and diversity” is NOT “equity and inclusion”
EXAMPLES OF INCLUSION

Learning Support → Academic Resource Centre
Diversity Clubs/Activities → Student Council/Government
Anglo Saxon Literature → Inclusive Curriculum
Director of Diversity → Director of Equity and Inclusion
Over 45 Jesuits have been killed since the 32nd General Congregation in 1975, because of their radical commitment to justice. The lay men and women who work in Jesuit schools have no less of a calling to be radically committed to justice.

Pope Francis has made social justice and service to the poor a focus of his ministry. ‘Any Church community, if it thinks it can comfortably go its own way without creative concern and effective cooperation in helping the poor to live with dignity and reaching out to everyone, will also risk breaking down’ (Apostolic Exhortation On the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World. *Evangelii Gaudium*. 2013)
Want to know more?

- Resources and references available:

- Bleasdale Educational Research

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