



The Family Leadership Design Collaborative

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Who we are. We are a group of 40 family members, community leaders, educators, and researchers from across the United States, whose work centers racial equity in family engagement. The collaborative reflects a wide range of our cultural, ethnic, racial, gender, sexual orientations, ages, religions, and social class identities. We belong to and lead early childhood, K-12, and higher education institutions as well as community programs, cultural organizations, organizing groups, and national networks.

What we're addressing.

- Systemic racism that disempowers and diminishes communities, families, and students of color.
- Schools that limit the types of knowledge and learning that are valued and disregard histories of oppression as well as community-based wisdom and practices.
- Conventional research and practice *on* communities of color, as distinct from with communities of color, to understand problems of inequity.

What we're after.

- Thriving families and communities - in all their varied forms - where children grow to be healthy, stay rooted in their culture and traditions, and reach their desired futures.
- Educational justice - both in and out of schools - that halts the reproduction of inequities and ensures community self-determination, thriving and individuals chosen success.
- Research and practice *with* communities and families as thinkers, doers, and leaders to re-imagine and co-create education that affirms students' cultures and learning potential.

What we're doing.

- Convening collaborative members to co-develop a new agenda to shift our research and practice with families and communities toward realizing racial equity.
- Partnering with collaborative members and local communities to share experiences and codesign new practices, tools, and measures for achieving our individual and collective goals.
- Collectively learning how to build politicized trust and solidarities across multiple geographies, critical histories, communities, disciplines and roles. This includes honoring and recognizing Indigenous peoples and lands which we all live in.
- Building a strategic network to influence policy in order to sustain equity-centric educational transformation.

Our Core Values

Cultivating Family & Community Wellbeing and Educational Justice

- We aim for whole, healthy children within healthy families & communities who know and practice their culture, are in right relations with lands and waters, understand power, and can determine their own future
- We engage relational, communal, and collective understandings as central to ensuring the wellbeing of children & families
- Community well-being and educational justice are inseparable and must be engaged as such
- We seek to foster a more just democracy in which institutions, policy, and practice support children, families, and communities in thriving.

Beginning with Family & Community Ecologies

- We build from and with the knowledge, priorities, and agendas of nondominant families & communities and our histories of resistance and transformation rather than the agenda and priorities of schools or other institutions
- We recognize a diversity of familial relations that include children, youth, and adults, including and beyond parents, as well as their cultural ecologies and repertoires of practice
- We encompass racial, ethnic and other communities that are dynamic and historically informed with both relational and geographic dimensions
- We approach education as a domain of learning and development that intersects and goes beyond the institution of schooling

Creating On-Going Transformative Possibilities

- We recognize that historically inflected accumulations of power shape current contexts and challenges, particularly for families and communities of color.
- We aim to design new possibilities that transform the historical and ongoing asymmetric power relationships between communities and schools that are central to the reproduction of racial and other inequities
- We engage in transdisciplinary pursuits that draw upon critical race theories, decolonizing frameworks, sociological theories, democratic theories, and theories of learning, culture, and development
- We work to identify, name, and evolve new language towards educational justice

Building Solidarities with Collective Action

- We intentionally ask “how can we” instead of “how do they” to envision beyond our existing systems and structures
- We recognize the need for multi-directional daily and systemic acts of educational justice by those with normative power and privilege as well as those without
- We enact and actively build solidarities within and across disciplines and communities and across geographies and histories
- We build alliances and networks to link education to other systemic inequities