Educating Students in Poverty: Building Equity and Capacity with a Holistic Framework and Community School Model

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Abstract

Educators are often blamed for the achievement gap between low-income and higher income students. We propose to replace the divisive “blame game” with a holistic framework for collaborative action between schools, families, and communities. This 5H Holistic Framework (5HHF) is composed of the 5H protective factors (Health, Hands, Heart, Head, Home). These protective factors holistically address the educational needs and capacities of all students—especially students in poverty—for physical/mental health (Health), safety/security (Hands), social-emotional care (Heart), cognitive development (Head), and family/community support (Home). The 5HHF is used to identify and organize best educational practices and to recommend the community school model to reduce the income-based achievement gap and promote student well-being. The 5HHF of best practices and community school model expands the collective capacity of schools, families, and communities to meet equitably the educational needs of students in poverty and to enhance their opportunities for a quality education. Furthermore, we show how the 5HHF and community school model are aligned with and supported by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Recommended Citation


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