WISE-COMPASSIONATE FRAMEWORK: A LEADERSHIP GUIDE TO EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

Felipe Mercado
California State University, Fresno

AUTHOR NOTE

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Felipe Mercado, Kremen School of Education & Human Development, California State University, Fresno. Tel: 559-278-0215. E-mail: felipemercado1@mail.fresnostate.edu

ABSTRACT

A Wise-Compassionate Framework (WCF) was designed to offer educational leaders a recognizable and comprehensive approach that embodies critical race theory as a guide to the academic, social-emotional, health, cultural, and behavioral needs of all students. The WCF complements and builds upon Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and the Whole School, Whole Community (WSCC) model by infusing compassionate research and social-psychological approaches called wise interventions. The design of the WCF was developed during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The WCF is an educational model that seeks to increase systemic compassion through wise interventions and best practices, both in person and in online settings. Trauma-informed practices, social justice responsibility, and evidence-based research are embodied throughout the tiers of the WCF. This article provides an overview of how the WCF can be utilized in an educational environment. A compassionate approach anchored in evidence-based research can support schools to heal through the COVID-19 pandemic and realize the racial tension amplified from witnessing the murder of George Floyd by a police officer.

Keywords: *wise interventions, compassion, covid-19, multi-tiered systems of support, wise-compassionate-framework*

Wise Interventions Infused with Compassion

Bradshaw et al. (2012) suggest that transferring knowledge rooted in neurological, cognitive, and emotional regulatory factors in the educational field can lead to effective preventative programs which also support learning. However, the absence of preventative approaches in the educational field confounds the growth of theory as well as the advancement of educational practices (Anderson et al., 2016). Strengthening theoretical practice through clinical

preventative programs can enrich experiences for all students in all educational settings (Duckworth & Yeager, 2015). Social-psychology research has revealed that the practice of "wise" interventions can offset the negative educational and societal effects of students who remain underprivileged and underserved (Wilson, 2011). Through wise interventions, well-crafted psychological theory can pinpoint and understand specific phenomena that target the individual's value system and specific psychological process in a real-world setting. (Walton, 2014).

When students are disconnected from their environment, specifically in school, it is essential for educational and social science researchers to generate innovative scientific interventions that eliminate the social-class achievement gaps that create achievement gaps in education (Stephens et al., 2014). A student's views on school in relation to their own skills or connectedness can have either a negative or positive emotional impact on their academic goals, motivation, and achievement (Dweck, 2006; Dweck et al., 2014; Farrington et al., 2012). Researchers have begun to use experimental designs to observe the effects of wise interventions within a social context coupled with distinct psychosomatic approaches, in order to determine how to inspire a human beings psychological process in any given environment. Wise interventions can also be used to offset trauma experienced from poverty, racism, or any other stimuli in an educational setting (Anderson et al., 2016; Aronson et al., 2002; Blackwell, et al., 2007; Good et al., 2003; Linnenbrink, 2005; Mercado, 2017; Mueller & Dweck, 1998; Walton & Cohen, 2011; Yeager & Walton, 2011). Wise interventions have been found to promote a sense of belonging in marginalized populations (Yeager & Walton, 2011). These interventions suggest improved adverse conditions within an individual for extended periods of time, making the present moments more pleasurable and easier to succeed and navigate through (Yeager & Walton, 2011). Although wise interventions are still in their infancy in the field of research, they intend to uncover the challenges of racial stigma and the many complex issues that impede on an individual's right to thrive. Those working in educational settings can benefit from the use of wise interventions as they can be essential for implementing a connection to the social and psychological constructs; which have historically hindered students of color from succeeding or reaching their fullest potential. Research suggests that wise interventions be explored for a thorough understanding about the interactions materializing within a person's social environment and not be focused solely on individual traits (Yeager & Walton, 2011). This analysis on the potential impact of a wise intervention draws on a core tenet of social-psychology, that every attitude and behavior exist in a complex field of forces—a tension system—in which some forces promote a behavior, whereas other forces restrain that behavior. It is the structure of a system that determines an individual's potential for change. Yeager and Walton (2011) explain, "...an intervention that increases students' motivation to learn or that removes barriers to learning will improve academic outcomes only when learning opportunities exist in the educational environment" (pp. 274-275).

Wise interventions are finding that they can have positive effects on populations of students and for individuals over long periods of time (Walton & Cohen, 2011). Approaches to interventions such a wise intervention are described as relating to that of the Lewinian mantra, which states that there is nothing as practical as a "good" theory (Walton, 2014). Drawing into this mantra through recurring cycles of action and reflection, academic researchers can gain the ability to address deep-rooted organizational and historical issues. The outcomes that result from using wise intervention approaches can create positive and long-lasting transformations in underserved, underprivileged populations. Walton (2014) theorized that these precise forms of intervention introduce recursive, or self-reinforcing dynamics, which can help to transform a student's mindset and reaction to unpleasant incidents throughout their life. Wise interventions focus on

psychological phenomena that elicit recursive dynamics which can optimize a participating individual's potential in school settings (Garcia & Cohen, 2012). More recently, wise interventions, which varied from just a few minutes to an hour, found that positive social-psychological interventions can improve non-cognitive skills and academic outcomes in ethnic minority populations and can last three years and even longer (Cohen et al., 2006; Garcia & Cohen, 2012; Kenthirarajah & Walton, 2013; Stephens et al., 2014; Walton & Cohen, 2011; Yeager & Walton, 2011).

Wise interventions were first introduced and designed to capture the anticipated worries of minority students in specific social contexts (Walton & Cohen, 2011). Wise interventions have the potential to provide all students with an alternative narrative to help them understand their adverse experiences and provide a sense of belonging to support these students reflect on the impact of how school, home, work, and life has changed and how it can be improved overtime. Walton and Cohen (2011) reported that reflection and learning about similarity and belonging in others through positive exercises lasting one hour increased the grades of African American college students for several years throughout their time on campus. In the same study, researchers reported asking students to keep a daily diary to establish a method of sharing and expressing any sense of belonging. Using this approach of reporting and reflecting, the researchers found that the racial achievement gap had been cut in half, primarily at the campus where the study had been performed. The outcome of the shared experience led to students reporting an increase satisfaction in health at the end of their college experience. This review suggests that wise interventions can foster methods for school systems to bridge the achievement gap in specific populations, especially post-COVID (Walton & Cohen, 2011). Wise interventions have the positive impact and improve negative outcomes for multiple years, while proving to be extremely cost effective (Walton, 2014). It is critical to contemplate how an intervention changes a specific instance, how the interventions' processes develop throughout time as well as to understand how the interventions' strategies generate positive results (Kenthirarajah & Walton, 2013).

Infusing Compassion Research with Critical Race Theory

Kristen Neff (2003b) defines compassion as a kind and caring emotional response to a perceived suffering that acknowledges the shared human experience of imperfection, and it involves an authentic desire to help. Compassion encompasses three components: (1) self-kindness, (2) common humanity, and (3) mindfulness (Neff, 2003a; Neff & Germer, 2013). The Harvard Business Review, in their 2018 May Leadership collection highlighted that compassion is one of the most foundational aspects of leadership in the 21st century (Hougaard et al., 2018). Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT) has recently been shown to reduce work-related burnout and interpersonal conflict, as well as increase mindfulness, compassion toward the self, and job satisfaction (Scarlet et al., 2017).

Interventions that promote self-compassion are proving to decrease shame, thought suppression, negative stress, and over-analyzing in individuals who partake in these precise forms of interventions (Neff & Lamb, 2009). In congruence, compassion cultivation interventions are also demonstrating increases in psychological wellbeing such as optimism, happiness, and life satisfaction (Mantelou & Karakasidou, 2017; Neff, 2009). Self-compassion interventions support adaptive communication behaviors in school settings—such as participating and asking questions in class, seeking help from instructors or classmates, and speaking with instructors outside of class (Long & Neff, 2018). Neuroscientists have revealed that having self-compassion lowers rates of depression, anxiety, and stress and increases rates of happiness and improves function (Doty,

2017). In a study on veterans, researchers found that people who had served in Iraq and Afghanistan, who scored higher on self-compassion interventions were less likely to develop PTSD or commit suicide (Hiraoka et al., 2015). BMC Medical Education conducted a study which found that medical students who underwent compassion training also reported that they were able to manage work stress and had more positive interactions with patients (Weingartner et al., 2019).

Wise interventions can be infused as a method of developing compassionate practices in educators and facilitators alike so that recursive contextual, positive shifts can occur and be learned and sustained in any setting (Walton & Cohen, 2011). A compassionate approach guides the Wise-Compassionate Framework (WCF) through rigorous cognitive and psychological practices which can help shed light on racial injustices and disproportionately in underserved communities. The philosophy behind a compassionate approach is to guide reflective conversations that focus on the individuals in their environment that create spaces to restore humanity for all children in schools; especially for students of color or that have been traditionally marginalized (Harris, 2018). Experts suggest that producing positive sustainable change depends on the leaders (those at the top of the hierarchy of decision and money distribution) ability to craft coherent context for change (Senge, 2006).

As tradition inclines to ignore past researchers' intellectual development of comparable notions, leaders in education fail to recognize that many popular approaches in K-12 education lack scientific inquiry (Anderson et al., 2016). Educational approaches have been created for centuries with the aim of transforming Eurocentric curriculums which continue to perpetuate and have upheld racism and discriminative acts in the United States because they lack the clinical approach necessary to support the individual in the environment (Love, 2019). The WCF is values-based approach that is anchored by the social-ecological perspective which honors an understanding of how individuals relate to themselves, the people and the social contexts they are surrounded by, how people influence their environmental sphere, and how individuals are influenced by their environment (CDC, 2018). Bettina Love (2019) suggests that by design schools are stuck in the mode of reporting on outcomes, rather than meeting the needs of all of their students. A wise-compassionate educational model calls for the development of a kind of 'abolitionist educator' to pursue educational freedom for all students and educators alike and to challenge the status quo of the educational system (Love, 2019). School closures and the coronavirus (COVID-19) continue to change the landscape of the education system in America. Many challenges remain that must be considered at all system levels. This phenomenon has presented people working in education with more challenges. There is an opportunity to reimagine an educational environment that represents a microcosm of what can be done for the future of all students. There is opportunity to offset the hurt, suffering, and discrimination which is derived from the disenfranchisement of education for students who live in poverty, students who come from marginalized backgrounds, and specifically for students of color (Love, 2019; Payne et al., 2006; Sanchez, 2016).

Suppers (1974) identified that knowledge has been built and recognized in the more established sciences such as physics and natural sciences. Yet the knowledge discovered in these established sciences do not solve or fix a problem, which contradicts the way education uses theory by separating the individual and their social context (Anderson et al., 2016). Rarely are theories "homegrown" in the field of education. Yet, there are scholars who label theories as "grand theories" that then become popularized in education as "fashion of the nonsense" (Niss, 2006, p. 4). These "grand theories" or ideas insult the field of education because these popularized notions do not effectively address the root of a problem experienced by many marginalized groups and

causes more unnecessary challenges and suffering for people. Research suggests that "most schools are functioning under a simply antiquated model" which no longer serves as a student's connection or sense of belonging within the school (McDonald & Farrell, 2010, p. 218). Compelling and innovative research from the rapidly growing field of positive psychology has implications about our understanding of student success in all educational domains, yet little of this knowledge has been rooted in evidence-based approaches within schools or codified through educational policy (Anderson et al., 2016). The lack of exploration into evidence-based approaches causes a barrier between what the research would recommend, what schools should do, and how educational policy aligns with social justice frameworks which can include both economic redistribution and cultural recognition (Eisenberg, 2006).

The WCF recognizes the sense of group consciousness and collective identity that serves as a resource aimed to advance an entire group identified as cultural capital (Franklin, 2002, p. 177). The WCF also proposes intersectionality as an academic and practical project, a tool for analyzing and implementing real-world interventions (Crenshaw, 2010). Focusing on the cultural capital of our students, school staff and community within an educational setting, can help leaders move beyond a dominant white, middle-class value system (Yosso, 2005). Critical race theory helps us begin to see students of color as assets and appreciation their strengths. Compassion cultivation techniques suggest that it can change an individual's physiology and raise an individual's capacity for introspection (Hougaard et al., 2018; Scarlet et al., 2017). The combination of critical race theory and compassion cultivation within WCF can support an educator in changing how they practice, what they value, how they look at policy. It can also be responsible for the individuals desire to create inclusive and safe environments for others with this new outlook and understanding.

Self-Reflexivity and the Conceptual Process as Method

Through the lens of the whole child framework designed in 2018, Felipe Mercado fused the whole child framework in his practice. This framework seeks to transform the dismal outcomes realized in education over the last century; particularly for students of color who live in poverty (Love, 2019; Mercado, 2018; Walker, 2019). In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Mercado began to redraft the Whole Child Framework with the needs of those students who often go unnoticed and who continue to be amplified with racial and global health concerns. Mercado was leading an elementary school that was once ranked in the top 10 for concentrated poverty (Cytron, 2009) during the time that COVID-19 began to emerge. Unearthing research, Mercado began to fuse concepts from wise interventions (Walton, 2014), compassion cultivation (Scarlet et al., 2017; Weingartner, et al., 2019), MTSS (CDE, n.d.) the Whole School, Whole Community (ASCD.org, n.d.), the Whole Child Model (Valois et al., 2011), as well as theological scientific practices (Mercado, 2018) into the development of a WCF. The concept of a WCF was created to help leaders in educational settings transform the history of racial injustices and systemic oppression perpetuated by centuries of repression and poverty (Yosso, 2005). WCF also considered the impact of COVID-19 on education pre and post COVID.

Over the last decade, there have been new discoveries which have revolutionized how scholars witness human learning within an educational setting. The methods to these findings can be explored and engineered within the public education system with the aim of elevation and advancement of all students (Anda et al., 2016). The whole child initiative developed by Gene R. Carter and the CDC emerged to support schools in meeting the needs of their students using a holistic approach. The "whole child model" has expanded to what is now known as the WSCC model (ASCD.org, n.d.). Inspired by the WSCC model, MTSS, the whole child framework, and

compassion-cultivation, Mercado created a WCF. The intention is to enhance educational stakeholders' awareness of how to combat social injustices and transform the suffering we have experienced from witnessing the murder of George Floyd. By elevating and enhancing educator's awareness and understanding, the field has the potential to attain equity in today's educational settings by providing wise and compassionate approaches that are research-based and generally not considered in traditional educational settings. Utilizing these concepts as a guide for educators to understand the complexity of what is needed to be responsive in today's educational climate, Mercado's intention was to expand practice by creating a recognizable and comprehensive approach that capture critical race theory, as well as the academic, social-emotional, health, cultural, and behavioral needs of a diverse range of students.

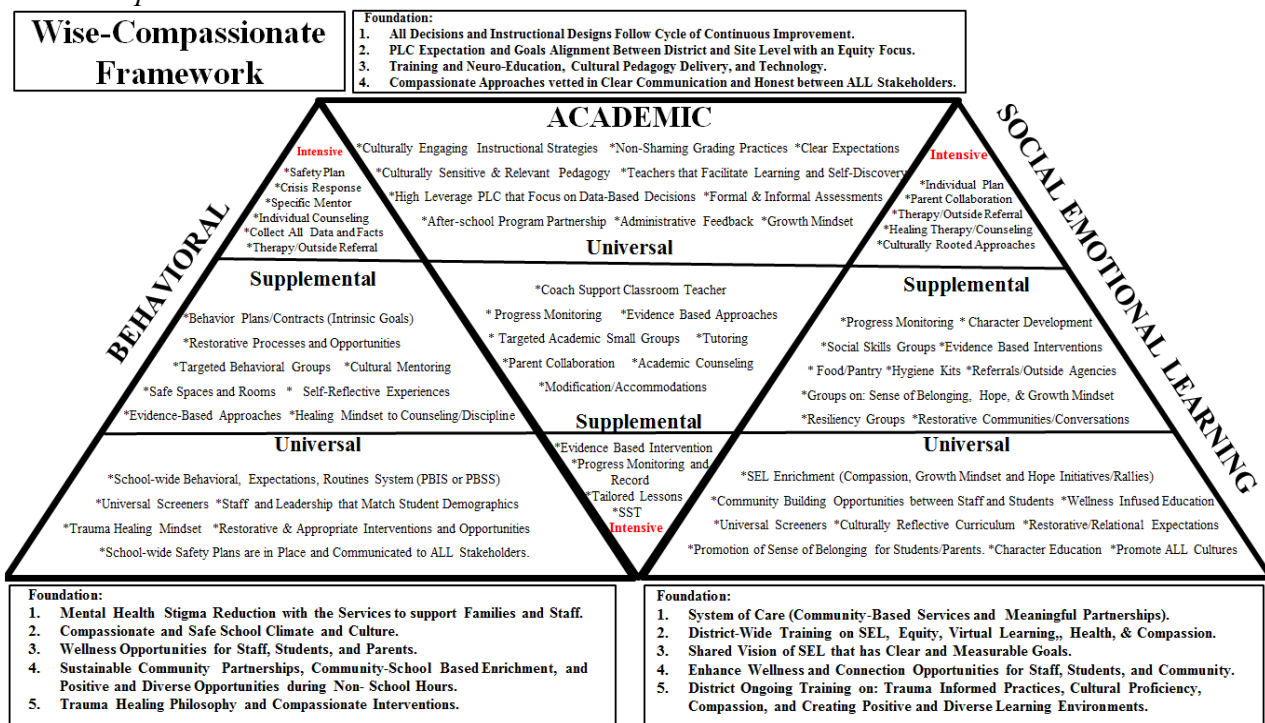### A Wise Compassionate Framework Design

The WCF can guide educational leaders who seek to increase cultural capital for underserved, underprivileged populations. It aims to support leaders in educational systems to become responsive to the adverse needs of all their students whether in-person or in a virtual setting. Creating an educational system as a place to cultivate a spectrum of effective, community-based services and resources can help build meaningful partnerships between the schools and families (Hong, 2019). Community partnerships allow for educational institutions to support and address cultural, health, and linguistic needs that are unique to a specific community. As students sit and wait for the education system to return post-COVID-19, there will be many distinct issues and concerns that will place tremendous impact on the educational systems traditional academic outcomes. The currents state of humanity has been adversely affected and people remain in trauma from witnessing the murder of George Floyd by a police officer. The ramifications of the pandemic are still unknown, and what we do know is that traumatic events impact an individual's entire physiology as well as their ability to learn and feel safe (Harris, 2018).

The philosophy behind a WCF is to distinguish the educational realm from the behavioral domain and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) domain, as they are often combined in a singular traditional model. The WCF intentionally separates the academic, behavioral, and SEL domains by tier: universal, supplemental, and intensive. The WCF honors evidence-based practices to behaviors and social-emotional learning which have not traditionally been taught or properly implemented in public educational environments. The academic, SEL, and behavioral construct, within its various tiers, include research-based approaches that support educational settings in achieving equity, helping to grow the whole person within their setting by infusing a wise-compassionate approach. Those working in educational environments must demand active participation, and there must also be vigilance to aid with the mental health disparities and create safe places for students and families. By establishing system-wide policies and expectations, a WCF can help create a critical focus on positive, safe, and culturally competent environments. Partnerships with community organizations and holistic health and wellness agencies who utilize a referral process can be indispensable to students' non-school needs (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). The following sections break down the WCF model by domain: academic, behavior, and SEL domains (see Model 1). Each domain is represented by three tiers: universal, supplemental, and intensive. Each of the WCF domains, tiers, and its foundation draw on compassion and precise forms of intervention utilizing scientific theory to elevate social justice in school settings.

A trapezium shape is used to illustrate the levels within the WCF and explain the need for advancement and evolution of educational approaches in today's current educational climate. The WCF was designed in a way where it creates a sense of familiarity to Multi-Tiered Systems of

Support (MTSS) for educators and facilitators alike. MTSS have often guided K-12 educational settings in discovering methods of increasing equitable practices and leverages the implementation of science, universal design, and the whole child approach to address issues of equity (California Department of Education, n.d.). The WCF lays out key fundamental elements which serves as the foundational starting point and lists the considerable factors necessary for implementing wise-compassionate approaches. The fundamental elements are non-negotiable items that will serve as the work to be commenced to reach success within each domain and throughout each tier. This is because this work is targeting the individuals' value system, rather than just strategies that may not reduce racial tension, embody compassion, or seek to repair the harm perpetrated by traumatic events.

Model 1
Wise-Compassionate Framework

Wise-Compassionate Framework

Foundation:
1. All Decisions and Instructional Designs Follow Cycle of Continuous Improvement.
2. PLC Expectation and Goals Alignment Between District and Site Level with an Equity Focus.
3. Training and Neuro-Education, Cultural Pedagogy Delivery, and Technology.
4. Compassionate Approaches vetted in Clear Communication and Honest between ALL Stakeholders.

ACADEMIC

Intensive
*Culturally Engaging Instructional Strategies *Non-Shaming Grading Practices *Clear Expectations
*Culturally Sensitive & Relevant Pedagogy *Teachers that Facilitate Learning and Self-Discovery
*High Leverage PLC that Focus on Data-Based Decisions *Formal & Informal Assessments
*After-school Program Partnership *Administrative Feedback *Growth Mindset

Universal

BEHAVIORAL

Intensive
*Safety Plan
*Crisis Response
*Specific Mentor
*Individual Counseling
*Collect All Data and Facts
*Therapy/Outside Referral

Supplemental
*Behavior Plans/Contracts (Intrinsic Goals)
*Restorative Processes and Opportunities
*Targeted Behavioral Groups *Cultural Mentoring
*Safe Spaces and Rooms * Self-Reflective Experiences
*Evidence-Based Approaches *Healing Mindset to Counseling/Discipline

Universal
*School-wide Behavioral, Expectations, Routines System (PBIS or PBSS)
*Universal Screeners *Staff and Leadership that Match Student Demographics
*Trauma Healing Mindset *Restorative & Appropriate Interventions and Opportunities
*School-wide Safety Plans are in Place and Communicated to ALL Stakeholders.

Supplemental
*Coach Support Classroom Teacher
* Progress Monitoring *Evidence Based Approaches
* Targeted Academic Small Groups *Tutoring
*Parent Collaboration *Academic Counseling
*Modification/Accommodations

Supplemental
*Evidence Based Intervention
*Progress Monitoring and Record
*Tailored Lessons
*SST
Intensive

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Intensive
*Individual Plan
*Parent Collaboration
*Therapy/Outside Referral
*Healing Therapy/Counseling
*Culturally Rooted Approaches

Supplemental
*Progress Monitoring * Character Development
*Social Skills Groups *Evidence Based Interventions
* Food/Pantry *Hygiene Kits *Referrals/Outside Agencies
*Groups on: Sense of Belonging, Hope, & Growth Mindset
*Resiliency Groups *Restorative Communities/Conversations

Universal
*SEL Enrichment (Compassion, Growth Mindset and Hope Initiatives/Rallies)
*Community Building Opportunities between Staff and Students *Wellness Infused Education
*Universal Screeners *Culturally Reflective Curriculum *Restorative/Relational Expectations
*Promotion of Sense of Belonging for Students/Parents. *Character Education *Promote ALL Cultures

Foundation:
1. Mental Health Stigma Reduction with the Services to support Families and Staff.
2. Compassionate and Safe School Climate and Culture.
3. Wellness Opportunities for Staff, Students, and Parents.
4. Sustainable Community Partnerships, Community-School Based Enrichment, and Positive and Diverse Opportunities during Non- School Hours.
5. Trauma Healing Philosophy and Compassionate Interventions.

Foundation:
1. System of Care (Community-Based Services and Meaningful Partnerships).
2. District-Wide Training on SEL, Equity, Virtual Learning,, Health, & Compassion.
3. Shared Vision of SEL that has Clear and Measurable Goals.
4. Enhance Wellness and Connection Opportunities for Staff, Students, and Community.
5. District Ongoing Training on: Trauma Informed Practices, Cultural Proficiency, Compassion, and Creating Positive and Diverse Learning Environments.

Inclusive Academic Domain

The academic domain presents itself in a capsized pyramid situated in the center of the SEL and behavioral domains (see Model 1). The purpose of a WCF is to show educators that SEL and behavior systems do not stand alone. In order to have robust academic programs, school systems must honor the needs of the whole child (Valois et al., 2011). A WCF uses familiar academic language and builds on practices that will support and provide equity, critical race theory, and compassion. There are four foundational principles listed which help to begin the work of the academic domain:

1. All Decisions and Instructional Designs Follow Cycle of Continuous Improvement.
2. PLC Expectation and Goals Alignment between District and Site Level with an Equity Focus.
3. Training and Neuro-Education, Cultural Pedagogy Delivery, and Technology.

4. Compassionate Academic Approaches vetted in Clear Communication and Honesty between ALL Stakeholders.

Universal-Tier I
- Culturally Relevant and Engaging Instructional Strategies for ALL Students
- Non-Shaming Grading Practices
- Health Accommodations
- Clear Expectations
- Culturally/Linguistically Sensitive & Relevant Pedagogy
- Facilitate Learning and Self-Discovery for Educators
- High Leverage PLC with Focus on Data-Based Decisions
- Formal & Informal Assessments
- After-school Program Partnership
- Administrative Feedback
- Growth Mindset

Supplemental-Tier II
- Academic Coach Support Classroom Teacher
- Progress Monitoring
- Evidence-Based Interventions
- Targeted Academic Small Groups
- Small-Group Tutoring
- Parent Collaboration
- Academic Counseling
- Modification/Accommodations

Intensive-Tier III
- Evidence-Based Academic Intervention (Culturally and Trauma Intelligent)
- Intentional and Specific Progress Monitor & Record
- Tailor Curriculum to Student's Learning Style using a Compassion Lens
- Student Success Team (SST)

Inclusive Behavior Domain

Schools have traditionally handled misbehavior by implementing suspension, expulsion, and other forms of punitive discipline. Discipline generally shames, reproduces trauma, and creates resentment and hate within an individual. This can generate negative stimulus to anything involving disciplinary action or punishment (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). John Hopkins University used the term "Neuroeducation" to combine learning, arts, and the brain. This approach to learning is providing researchers in education with new insights into how human beings process stimuli in academic settings (Mihalas et al., 2009). It is important to establish new frameworks in the educational system that refrains from punitive experiences for students by creating interventions that repair the quality of life for students now and as they progress into the future. The behavior domain uses a healing and cultural approach to serve students. This is because educators' implicit biases do not allow them the opportunity to shift mindsets about the new behavioral paradigm of teaching students, therefore "valuing" the traditional form of punishing

and disciplining students (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Mental health, safe environments, and cultural connections are suggested to help address a student's behavior. In more recent years, non-cognitive abilities such as compassion, growth mindset, hope, and resilience have been dominant forecasters of having positive effects that remain malleable throughout teenage years, ensuring healthy development and coping skills later in life for individuals with these specific types of attributes--under-served and under-privileged (Heckman & Kautz, 2014). A WCF focuses on treating the behavior of the student from a cultural and mental health standpoint, as research demonstrates that positive approaches can positively impact the student and the system (Shochet et al., 2006; Trickey et al., 2012). The WCF highlights five areas that can impact academic outcomes which traditionally are overlooked in education and can have the greatest impact on a student's holistic development now and in the future (Doty, 2017; Harris, 2018; Scarlet et al., 2017; Thorsborne, & Blood, 2013; Weingartner et al., 2019):

1. Mental Health Stigma Reduction with Services to Support Families and Staff.
2. Compassionate and Safe School Climate and Culture.
3. Wellness Opportunities for Staff, Students, and Parents.
4. Sustainable Community Partnerships, Community-School Based Enrichment, and Positive and Diverse Opportunities during Non-School Hours.
5. Trauma Healing Philosophy and Culturally Healing Wise Interventions.

Universal-Tier I
- School-wide Behavioral Expectations, Routines, and Practices rooted in Trauma-Informed Practices and Compassion
- Universal Screeners
- Classroom Management Plans
- Health Accommodations
- Attendance Policy/Initiative
- Trauma Healing Mindset
- Restorative and Appropriate Interventions and Opportunities
- School-wide Safety Plans are in Place and Communicated to ALL Stakeholders

Supplemental- Tier II
- Behavior Plans/Contracts (Intrinsic Goals)
- Restorative Processes and Opportunities
- Targeted Behavioral Groups /Evidence-Based Intervention
- Healing Mindset to Counseling/Discipline
- Safe Spaces, Clubs, Cultural Experiences, and Arts
- Self-Reflective and Restorative Experiences
- Cultural Mentoring

Intensive- Tier III
- Safety Plan/ Threat Assessment
- Crisis Response
- Collaborate with Experts
- Individual Counseling

- Collect all Data and Facts to form a Wise Intervention
- Therapy/Outside Referral
-

Inclusive Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Domain

      A WCF supports the idea that social and emotional variables have the most powerful influence on academic performance and achievement. The SEL domain is generally the most misunderstood and underdeveloped area in education. SEL is crucial in educating the whole child as it helps to ensure that the child holistically has the best chance to thrive now and into adulthood. Here is a guide to follow showing that SEL meets the needs of all students. Listed below are the five foundational elements that must be met to progress into and through each tier within the SEL domain.

1. System of Care (Community-based services and meaningful partnerships)
2. District-wide training on SEL, Equity, Virtual Learning, Health, and Compassion
3. Shared Vision of SEL that has Clear and Measurable Goals
4. Enhance wellness and Connection Opportunities for Staff, Students and Community
5. District ongoing Reflective Practices on: Trauma-Informed Practices, Cultural Proficiency, Compassion, and Creating Positive and Diverse Learning Environments

Universal- Tier I
- SEL Enrichment (Compassion Cultivation, cultural enrichment, and safe environments)
- Universal Screeners
- Real-life Content in Classroom
- Restorative/Relational Approach
- Community/Team Building Opportunities for Staff and Students
- Social-Emotional Content Infused into Academic Routine
- Health Accommodations
- Character Education
- Promotion of ALL Cultures

Supplemental- Tier II
- Character Development
- Social Skills Groups/ Evidence Based Interventions
- Food Pantry and Hygiene Kits
- Referrals to Outside Agencies
- Groups that infuse Sense of Belonging, Hope, & Growth Mindset
- Strength-Based Approach Supporting Others to Look at Whole Child

Intensive- Tier III
- Individualized Plan
- Parent Collaboration
- Healing Therapy/Counseling
- Therapy/Outside Referral
- Gather Facts and Data to form a Wise Intervention

Discussion and Implications

The knowledge and awareness of positive scientific one-hour wise interventions having long-term positive academic effects on disenfranchised students participating in precise forms of interventions are gaining popularity in academia (Garcia & Cohen, 2012; Stephens et al., 2015; Walton, 2014; Walton & Cohen, 2011; Yeager & Walton, 2011). A well-designed comprehensive system can positively impact the trajectory of all students' mental health and academic careers in addition to their life as a whole (Colorado Education Initiative, 2014). A WCF establishes wise-compassionate approaches to help educational leaders learn how to heal the trauma, the racial injustices, and disproportionate effects for which the educational system has been notorious for (Love, 2019). Infusing compassion and wise approaches into educational practices such as a WCF can help leaders become aware and more equipped with skills when developing equitable opportunities in education. It is necessary that educational systems recognize the strengths that all students bring to a specific campus and utilize those dynamics as a means for diversity, self-discovery, and culturally alert spaces in our 21st century (Fullan, 2013). As principals or any leader serving the education system, there are many challenges in the quest to promoting as well as implementing social and racial justice within K-12 education. The WCF provides systemic awareness to help all the stakeholders involved create compassionate and evidence-based approaches be used in educational systems collectively. This positive approach to interventions is critical for a student's success as it has been the norm for social-emotional, health, academics, and behavioral needs to become isolated within a school setting.

The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) (2020) estimated that 50.8 million students were enrolled in public education system in the U.S. in 2019. Now more than ever there remains a need for real, honest, and authentic approaches to education rooted in scientific research and cultural sensitivity, not those from conventional popular trends (Anderson et al., 2016). Compassion incorporates common humanity, mindfulness, and self-love (Neff, 2003a). Compassion cultivation is being further explored in research to observe how its approach to healing can transform the recursive effects of the racial trauma we continue to face in our nation. Wise interventions have challenged the racial stigma and the many complex issues that impede on an individual's right to thrive. Compassion cultivation and wise intervention approaches combined with MTSS and WSCC influenced the WCF. A WCF has promise to bring important stakeholders, resources, and scientific inquiry to support educational systems in becoming more responsive to equity and social justice in its totality. This WCF requires further exploration in school settings using fidelity to bring awareness to the exact impact it can have on education, educational leaders, and student outcomes. It should also be noted that the WCF must be a system wide commitment. This means that the district, school site, and surrounding community must all have a commitment to the WCF. Educational systems also must look at methods that target educators' value system through reflective practices (Artzt, Thomas, 2002; Margolis, 2002). This process can allow for the individual to change their overall appraisal of situations, rather than just gain knowledge or skills that have no direct impact on direct practice or human connection. Forming a collaborative can help gain the resources and create the synergy necessary to reimagine a educational system that is compassionate and rooted in humanity which the WCF suggest.

Conclusion

Leaders in education are now compelled to reimagine how their systems would serve their students and community with the various needs that are yet unknown post COVID-19. In the past century, schools had not been forced to shut down to a pandemic, as they did with COVID-19 in

March of 2020(CDC, 2020). As the landscape of education changes, educational leaders will be impacted by the practical challenges associated with the ripple effect of COVID-19 and its aftermath on society. The murder of George Floyd has observably intensified the conversations within the people of America who advocate and promote for educational leaders to reexamine the history of its educational practices and movements which continue to illuminate the mistreatment of people of color (Love, 2019). With the complex trauma that schools can and should become responsive too, a new approach must be considered. It is essential that we do not return to business as usual in the field of education, for that has generated learning gaps, disproportionality, and racial conflict for decades (Love, 2019). The education field must provide time for reflective practices, healing, and innovation. It must examine its structure, and ask what has been done, what has existed, and what needs to be done for change. The education field needs compassion to forgive itself for the past suffering it has caused and heal by helping others heal as well. The WCF supports leaders in accomplishing this by providing a comprehensive guide in attempting to address the complexities of the whole system and the traditions that maintain the status quo.

A WCF proposes that compassion cultivation, critical race theory, and wise interventions can be infused in education to transform the trauma associated with televised racial killings and the global pandemics (Harris, 2018). A wise-compassionate framework intends to chip away at the inequalities and disparities in educational settings by infusing mental health, neuroscience, and well-crafted compassionate approaches to transform how we deliver education at all system levels. Providing time for reflective practices can have an impact on an individual's value system, rather than professional development that generally has no impact on an educator's value system or how they carry out their practice day to day. The WCF has the potential to positively impact and enhance a MTSS philosophy by design, as it addresses the needs and disparities that are often not cultivated in success for underserved and underprivileged communities. The WCF unconditionally honors the differences that we all come with as strengths. Through this lens there is support for educators to create community cultural wealth and collective identity aimed at the advancement of an entire group. The WCF intentionally leverages compassion cultivation to support conversations and the process of change as a means to offset power and political dynamics that often impede progress and growth. Lastly, the WCF encourages all leaders to promote meaningful collaborations, reflective practices, honest communication, and feedback with all stakeholders. Leaders must understand that they must be the first involved with compassion cultivation, promoting cultural capital, and demanding wise approaches to meet the needs of their students if transformation in education will occur in a given system. The WCF is a purposeful scientific approach that educational leaders in school settings can implement to transform and heal the recursive effects of the racial trauma, poverty, and the negative experiences associated with COVID-19 pandemic.

REFERENCES

Anda, R., Martin, K., & Porter, L. (2016). Self-Healing Communities a Transformational Process Model for Improving Intergenerational Health. https://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/reports/2016/rwjf430225/subassets/rwjf4302 25_1

Anderson, C., Turner, A. C., Heath, R. D., & Payne, C. M. (2016). On the meaning of grit...and hope...and fate control...and alienation...and locus of control...and...Self-efficacy...and...Effort optimism...and.... *The Urban Review, 48*(2), 198-219.

Aronson, J., Fried, C. B., & Good, C. (2002). Reducing the effects of stereotype threat on African American college students by shaping theories of intelligence. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 38*(2), 113–125.

Artzt, A.F., & Amour-Thomas, E. (2002). *Becoming a reflective mathematics teacher: A guide for observation and self-assessment.* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (n.d.). *Whole school, whole community, whole child: A collaborative approach to learning health.* https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/wscc/WSCCmodel_update_508tagged.pdf

Blackwell, L. S., Trzesniewski, K. H., & Dweck, C. S. (2007). Implicit theories of intelligence predicts achievement across an adolescent transition: A longitudinal study and an intervention. *Child Development, 78*, 246-263

Bradshaw, C. P., Goldweber, A., Fishbein, D., & Greenberg, M. T. (2012). Infusing developmental neuroscience into school-based preventive interventions: Implications and future directions. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 51*(2, Suppl), S41-S47.

California Department of Education. (n.d.). Multi-Tiered System of Supports. https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/ri/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). *Coronavirus (COVID-19).* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018). *Models and frameworks for the practice of community engagement.* https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/pce_models.html

Cohen, G., Garcia, J., Apfel, N., & Master, A. (2006). Reducing the racial achievement gap: A social-psychological intervention. *Science, 313*(5791), 1307-1310. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/3846872

Colorado Education Initiative. (2014). *A guide to K-12 student behavioral health supports with a focus on prevention, early intervention, and intervention for students' social, emotional, and behavioral health needs.* http://www.coloradoedinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Colorado-Framework_VCS7small.pdf

Crenshaw, K.W. (2010). *Intersection of race and gender.* University of Wisconsin-Madison, Sociology Department FemSem. Madison, WI. 23 Oct. 2010.

Cytron, N. (2009, April). *The enduring challenge of concentrated poverty in America:* Case study of Fresno, California. https://www.frbsf.org/community-development/files/fresno_case_study.pdf

Doty, J. (2017). *Into the magic shop: A neurosurgeon's quest to discover the mysteries of the brain and the secrets of the heart.* Penguin Random House.

Duckworth, A. L., & Yeager, D. S. (2015). Measurement matters: Assessing personal qualities other than cognitive ability for educational purposes. *Educational Researcher, 44*(4), 237–251.

Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset.* New York, NY: Random House.

Dweck, C. S., Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2014). *Academic tenacity: Mindsets and skills that promote long-term learning.* Retrieved from https://ed.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/manual/dweck-walton-cohen-2014.pdf

Eisenberg, A. (2006). Education and the politics of difference: Iris Young and the politics of education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 38*(1), 7-23.

Farrington, C. A., Roderick, M., Allensworth, E., Nagoaka, J., Keyes, T. S., Johnson, D. W., & Beechum, N. O. (2012). *Teaching adolescents to become learners: The role of non-cognitive factors in shaping school performance: A critical literature review.* Retrieved from https://consortium.uchicago.edu/ sites/default/files/publications/Noncognitive%20Report.pdf

Franklin, V. P. (2002). Introduction: Cultural capital and African-American education. *The Journal of African-American History, 87*(2), 175–181.

Fullan, M. (2013). *Stratosphere: Integrating technology, pedagogy, and change knowledge.* Pearson.

Garcia, J., & Cohen, G. L. (2012). A social-psychological approach to educational intervention. In E. Shafir (Ed.), *Behavioral foundations of policy* (pp. 329-350). Princeton University Press.

Good, C., Aronson, J. A., & Inzlicht, M. (2003). Improving adolescents' standardized test performance: An intervention to reduce the effects of stereotype threat. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 24*(6), 645–662.

Harris, N. (2018). *The deepest well: Healing the long-term effects of childhood adversity.* Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Heckman, J. J., & Kautz, T. (2014). Fostering and measuring skills: Interventions that improve character and cognition. In J. J. Heckman, J. E. Humphries, & T. Kautz (Eds.), *The myth of achievement tests: The GED and the role of character education in American life* (pp. 341-430). The University of Chicago Press.

Hiraoka R., Meyer, E. C., Kimbrel, N. A., DeBeer, B. B., Gulliver, S.B., & Morissette, S. B. (2015). Self-compassion as a prospective predictor of PTSD symptom severity among trauma-exposed U.S. Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 28*(2),127-133.

Hong, S. (2019). *Natural allies: Hope and possibility in teacher-family partnerships.* Harvard Education Press

Hougaard, R., Carter, J., & Beck, J. (2018, May 15). Assessment: Are you a compassionate leader? *Harvard Business Review.* https://hbr.org/2018/05/assessment-are-you-a-compassionate-leader

Kenthirarajah, T., & Walton, G. M. (2013). *Movie interventions: A field-theory model of how brief social-psychological interventions cause enduring effects.* Manuscript submitted for publication.

Linnenbrink, E. A. (2005). The dilemma of performance-approach goals: The use of multiple goal contexts to promote students' motivation and learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 97* (2), 197–213.

Long, P., & Neff, K. D. (2018). Self-compassion is associated with reduced self- presentation concerns and increased student communication behavior. *Learning and Individual Differences, 67*(2018), 223-231.

Love, B. (2019). *We want to do more than survive: Abolitionist teaching and the pursuit of educational freedom.* Beacon Press.

Mantelou, A., & Karakasidou, E. (2017). The effectiveness of a brief self-compassion intervention program on self-compassion, positive and negative affect and life satisfaction. *Psychology, 8*, 590-610. https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2017.84038

Margolis, J. (2002). Re-form-ing reflection (and action) in English Edcuation. *English Education, 34(3)*, 136-214.

McDonald, D., & Farrell, T. (2010). Out of the mouths of babes: Early college high school students' transitional learning experiences. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 23*(3), 217-248.

Mercado, F. (2017). *An intervention that promotes a sense of belonging, grit, mindset, and hope in minority first-generation students*. (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global database. (UMI No. 10602997)

Mercado, F. (2018). Whole child framework: Supporting educators in their plight toward MTSS and equity. *CLEARvoz Journal, 4*(2), 82-95. https://journals.sfu.ca/cvj/index.php/cvj/issue/viewIssue/10/19

Mihalas, S., Morse, W. C., Allsopp, D. H., & McHatton, P. A. (2009). Cultivating caring relationships between teachers and secondary students with emotional and behavioral disorders: Implications for research and practice. *Remedial and Special Education,* 30(2), 108-125.

Mueller, C. M., & Dweck, C. S. (1998). Praise for intelligence can undermine children's motivation and performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75*(1), 33–52.

National Center for Educational Statistics. (2020). Fast Facts. https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=372

Neff, K. D. (2003a). The development and validation of a scale to measure self-compassion. *Self and Identity, 2*, 223-250. https://doi.org/10.1080/15298860309027

Neff, K. D. (2003b). Self-compassion: An alternative conceptualization of a healthy attitude toward oneself. *Self and Identity, 2*, 85-102. https://doi.org/10.1080/15298860309032

Neff, K. D. (2009). The role of self-compassion in development: A healthier way to relate to oneself. *Human Development, 52*, 211-214. https://doi.org/10.1159/000215071

Neff, K. D., & Germer, C. K. (2013). A pilot study and randomized controlled trial of the mindful self-compassion program. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 69*(1), 28-44. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.21923

Neff, K. D., & Lamb, L. M. (2009). Self-compassion. In S. Lopez (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of positive psychology* (pp. 864-867). Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Niss, M. (2006, September). *The concept and role of theory in mathematics Education.* Paper presented at Norma 05, Trondheim, Norway.

Payne, R. K., DeVol, P. E., & Smith, T. D. (2006). *Bridges out of poverty: Strategies for professionals and communities*. aha! Process.

Sanchez, H. (2016). *The education revolution*. Corwin

Scarlet, J., Altmeyer, N., Knier, S., & Harpin, R. E. (2017). The effects of Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT) on health-care workers. *Clinical Psychologist, 21*(2), 116-124. https://doi.org/10.1111/cp.12130

Senge, P. M. (2006). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization* (Revised and Updated Edition). Doubleday.

Shochet, I. M., Dadds, M. R., Ham, D., & Montague, R. (2006). School connectedness is an underemphasized parameter in adolescent mental health: Results of a community prediction study. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 35*(2), 170-179. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15374424jccp3502_1

Stephens, N. M., Hamedani, M. G., & Destin, M. (2014). Closing the social-class achievement gap: A difference-education intervention improves first-generation students' academic performance and all students' college transition. *Psychological Science, 25*, 943-953.

Stephens, N. M., Townsend, S. S. M., Hamedani, M. G., Destin, M., & Manzo, V. (2015). A difference-education intervention equips first-generation college students to thrive in the face of stressful college situations. *Psychological Science, 26*(10), 1556-1566.

Suppers, F. (1974). The place of theory in education research. *Educational Researcher*, *3,* 3-10.

Thorsborne, M., & Blood, P. (2013). *Implementing restorative practices in schools: A practical guide to transforming school communities.* Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Trickey, D., Siddaway A. P., Meiser-Stedman R., Serpell, L., & Field, A. P. (2012). A meta-analysis of risk factors for post-traumatic stress disorder in children and adolescents. *Clinical Psychological Review*, *32*(2), 122-138. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2011.12.001

Valois, F. R,. Slade, S., & Ashford, E. (2011). The healthy schools community model: Aligning health and education in the school setting. *ASCD*. http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/siteASCD/publications/Aligning-Health-Education.pdfhttp://

Walker, T. (2019, December 3). Pisa 2018: Slight US progress, but what do the results really tell Us? *NEAToday*. https://neatoday.org/2019/12/03/2018-pisa-results/

Walton, G. M. (2014). The new science of wise psychological interventions. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 23*, 73-82. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721413512856

Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2011). A brief social-belonging intervention improves academic and health outcomes of minority students. *Science, 331*, 1447-1451.

Weingartner, L. A., Sawning, S., Shaw, M. A., & Klein B. J. (2019). Compassion cultivation training promotes medical student wellness and enhanced clinical care. *BMC Med Educ, 19,* 139. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1546-6

Wilson, T. D. (2011). *Redirect: The surprising new science of psychological change.* Little, Brown and Company.

Yosso, T. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, *8*(1), 69-91. https://doi.org/10.1080/1361332052000341006

Yeager, D., & Walton, G. (2011). Social-psychological interventions in education: They're not magic. *Review of Educational Research, 81*(2), 267-301. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654311405999