

THE EQUITY LENS

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED • HAPPY VETERANS DAY



REGULAR FEATURES

COACH'S CORNER

NEWS FROM TONY LAING, PH.D.

"THE HAN-ESTY BOX"

STAFF SHOUTOUTS

CLICK
HERE

CALENDAR OF HOLIDAYS

I HAVE AN OFFICE AT LOKER!

Room 19 (Curriculum Office)

Phone: 358-8607



NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Welcome to the 2nd issue of *The Equity Lens*! Along with updating readers on diversity and equity-related happenings, the mission of this monthly journal is to provide interesting, relevant content that you can apply to your work with students. I hope that the newsletter helps to keep equity in the foreground of our conversations.

A few highlights: In the advice column, I respond to *actual* teacher letters about Yom Kippur and a parent-teacher conference that went downhill. One of my favorite tasks was reading the Staff Shoutouts. We are in a giving profession, and it's important to keep our own tanks filled. **Research shows that schools with healthy school cultures are places where faculty work together well and support each other.** Taking a moment to acknowledge a colleague is an act of kindness. Staff Shoutouts will appear in every issue.

November is Native American Heritage Month! Please take a look at the Google Doc I created for classroom use and deeper learning. I looked through dozens of websites and teacher resources so that you wouldn't have to. **The Google Doc is a collection of my top picks. Please acknowledge this month with your students in some form. Help to make visible the existence, histories and diversity of peoples who are rendered invisible in this country.** See page 7 for the link.

Enjoy!

Caroline

**COACH'S
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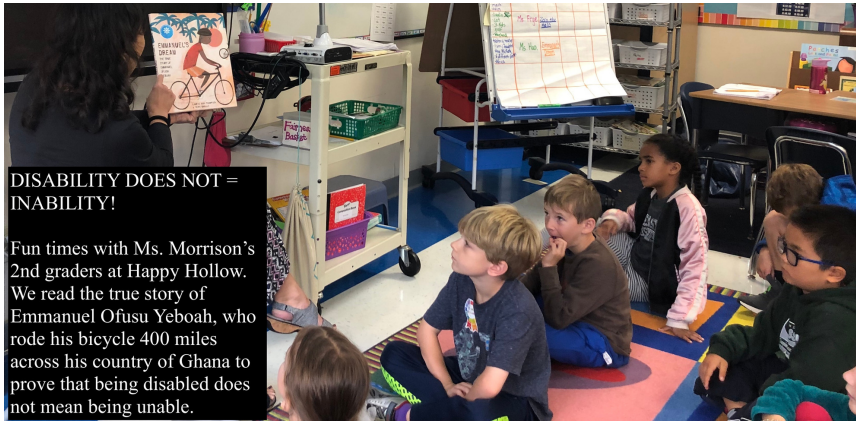


Ken Rideout, Science Department Head, wanted some help tracking student participation in an Honors Physics section. Ratio of males to females is 3:2, same for White and non-White students. I tried to learn about velocity and x, y axes and track participation at the same time. Given the pace, I was relieved whenever a student was able to get the teacher off topic (later, Ken shared that he allows for these moments to build community - pro teacher skills!). Later, Ken responded to my feedback with interest and reflection and came up with **a few strategies to increase the participation of his female and Asian-American students**. Ask ken_rideout@wayland.k12.ma.us if you want to hear how it went.

Are you interested in engaging more student voices in your class? TRY THE PROGRESSIVE STACK! It is a method that **ensures that students in marginalized groups are heard by calling on them first**.

How does it work? The teacher ask(s) a question. Students reflect solo or in pairs). **Wait** (sufficient wait time is critical). As you take volunteers, write down (or mentally note) names in the order that you will call on them --> marginalized groups get called on 1st (e.g., Boston students, females, LGBTQ, EL, students with disabilities, and so forth...). This technique does NOT silence members of the dominant group. As educational policy studies professor Nolan Cabrera explains: **“When privilege is normal in your life, equity feels like oppression. White males are still going to be able to talk in class, we just need them to talk a little less and to listen a little more.”** Try it once and let me know how it goes!

You may want to check out these articles on classroom equity strategies & student engagement.
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ThbBb3dxN621dWbdoQKnZpBNxxTaiaQn/view?usp=sharing>
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AueJWUUUSFRFJFXreQqLxFjdSzwik5i/view?usp=sharing>



DISABILITY DOES NOT = INABILITY!
 Fun times with Ms. Morrison's 2nd graders at Happy Hollow. We read the true story of Emmanuel Ofusu Yeboah, who rode his bicycle 400 miles across his country of Ghana to prove that being disabled does not mean being unable.



An **affinity group** is a place where people with a shared identity come together and support each other. Especially helpful in predominantly white institutions (PWIs), affinity groups can increase a student of color's sense of belonging. Students in any stage of their **racial identity development** have a space of **affirmation** and **empowerment**. Elementary students in the METCO program as well as some Black Wayland resident students participate in weekly affinity groups, facilitated by Ms. Downes and Mr. Cooper!



Ms Cohen's Morning Meeting **woke me up** with all of the positive energy and active participation in the room! These exuberant 3rd graders loved telling their teacher what punctuation "errors" she had made in her wacky sentences.



Ms Dunkelberg's 6th grade Science class thought that the poster project on circuits was **LIT!!!** And so did I!

NEWS FROM TONY LAING, PH.D.

Greetings everyone,

I have lots of exciting news to share about Wayland METCO! I have been meeting with my team, Boston resident students, and parents. The goals of these meetings are:

- 1) To work with and build rapport with students and parents; and
- 2) To troubleshoot problems that our students encounter inside and outside of school.

Here are some of our regular meetings facilitated by METCO staff:

- **Latoya Downes** convenes weekly affinity group meetings with our Boston elementary resident students and some Wayland resident students of color. Affinity groups provide a safe space to connect as students of color, do structured activities, play games, and share feelings and experiences.
- **JaNae Hood** meets with middle school students during their flex time and/or lunch hour to discuss missing work and check in about any issues that may be affecting students academically, socially or emotionally.
- **Mark Liddell** meets with high school students as part of the Cultural Identity Group Seminar (CIGS) classes that meet by grade level. The seminar covers topics related to African-American Studies and the college application process.
- **Caroline Han**, our Academic Dean, has been visiting classes, K-5 affinity groups, high school CIGS seminars, and having "Leadership Lunches" on a regular basis with MS students. She works closely with our Academic Coordinators and me to support our students academically, socially and emotionally.

Student News: The following Wayland High School students participated in The Calculus Project at Boston University, which was mentioned in the last issue of *The Equity Lens* newsletter: Shawn Bernier and Adianez Cabral were scholarship awardees and took part with Cassandra Cardoso and Lauren Grant-Lubin; and Khalia Hamilton and Jayden Saint-Felix held leadership roles by serving as pre-calculus tutors. Additionally Cassandra Cardoso completed a two week writing program at Smith College.

Click on the turkey (or anywhere around it to be taken to the registration page.



The 5th Annual Arredondo Family Foundation Turkey Giveaway is approaching! Veterans, Active Duty, and Military families in need can register below to receive a turkey:

[Register Here](#)

SAVE THE DATE: Martin Luther King, Jr. Program & Dinner • Monday 1/20/2020

Theme: "Season of Change"

Start and End Time: 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Location: Thelma Burns ABCD Building; 575 Warren Street, Boston
Keynote Speaker: Pastor Matthew K. Thompson of Jubilee Church & Wayland METCO alumnus (Class of '90)

Bus Transportation from Wayland to Boston for Wayland families and interested faculty/staff/ students. FREE.

Ticket Price: \$20 Adults; \$15 Children. Proceeds go to scholarships for Wayland METCO students.

Entertainment:

- Gordon Michaels – Founder of the Boston Gospel Brunch at the original House of Blues in Harvard Square
- Elementary students will recite the "I Have a Dream."
- Middle School students will perform musical numbers and display original artwork.
- High School students will serve as emcees, and perform musical selections.

There will also be a **tribute** to the Class of 2020. 13 Boston resident students will graduate in June!

For more info, contact Tony_Laing@wayland.k12.ma.us

WELCOME NEW STAFF! I am ecstatic to share that METCO Wayland alumnus (Class of 2010), **DeVaughn Cooper**, joins the METCO staff as the second Elementary METCO Coordinator. He will work with Happy Hollow and Loker students and staff. Latoya Downes will work with Claypit Hill students and staff. **Caroline Han** also joins the staff as Academic Dean. She will work with Boston resident students at the middle and high school.

Professional Development. On October 12th, METCO staff attended two professional development workshops led by educator activist Jane Elliott at the Strand Theatre in Boston, along with hundreds of other educators committed to diversity work and building effective coalitions across educational sectors.

I look forward to providing future updates on the METCO Program, students, and staff!

- Tony Laing, Ph.D., METCO Director

ADVICE COLUMN #2 - HELP WITH THE HOLIDAYS

Dear HAN-esty Box,

I am an observant Jew. I don't know how to respond when teachers say, "Happy Yom Kippur" or "Have a great holiday." I don't want to make them feel bad, and I appreciate that they are making an effort. A part of me also feels like we should all know that Yom Kippur is a solemn holiday for Jews because we have Jewish students in our classes. I need some help figuring out what to say because this kind of thing happens every year. I end up saying nothing then stew about it later.

~ Help with the Holidays

Dear Help with the Holidays,

It sounds like you're in a tough spot. **When minor or major offenses occur, it's very common for the person in the marginalized group to worry about the feelings of the person who unconsciously committed an offense.** The outcome is less than ideal as you described so well! You are left feeling upset, and your colleague likely has no clue! A few thoughts:

1. On the **institutional** level: An annual reminder (usually from the principal) before the High Holidays can be very helpful. It's proactive and takes the burden off of members of the target group to do the teaching. For example, this year, Betsy Gavron wrote to her staff: "In keeping with past practice we ask that you not assign any homework over these Jewish high holy days or plan any assessments for the day that follows each." A link to religious holidays was included with a reminder that we strive to "not put any student in any conflict between his/her religious observance and schoolwork." Link: <https://dos.cornell.edu/cornell-united-religious-work/how-can-we-serve-you/religious-holidays>. To learn about Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, here's a link: <http://www.jewfaq.org/holiday.htm>
2. On the **interpersonal** level: Learning about cultures different from one's own seems like an important part of being an educator. We are all learners. This lens is foundational for our personal and professional growth as anti-racist educators.

So when a coworker "steps in it," it really does represent an opportunity to learn. Here's a possible response to "Happy Yom Kippur": "Thanks for thinking of me. Can I offer a different phrase?" Let's assume they say yes: "YK is a solemn holiday. On YK, you can say, 'Have a good fast' or 'Have an easy fast.'" In the unlikely event they take offense, keep in mind that their response is not your responsibility or burden.

Sincerely,
the HAN-esty Box

Readers, would you be offended if someone corrected you in a similar situation? Let me know @ caroline_han@wayland.k12.ma.us.



Do you have questions for The Han-esty Box? Submit them to caroline_han@wayland.k12.ma.us.

ADVICE COLUMN #3 - CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Dear HAN-esty,

Recently I had the misfortune to be part of a meeting when a mother was attacking her own son for failing a few tests. I have never been in a meeting before where I wish the parent had been attacking me! I felt so bad for the student and tried to say calming things and redirect the conversation but eventually I just had to call the meeting to a close because she was wondering aloud in front of him if he was stupid or lying. The mother, a Chinese immigrant, accused me several times of not understanding her when really I was too shocked to respond to her questions. I know there was a cultural gap and I am wondering if you have any advice on how to deal with such a situation?

- Caught in the Middle

Dear Caught in the Middle,

Thanks for reaching out. There's a lot to unpack here -- in no particular order.

1. We aren't in the parenting business, but we can and should intervene when any parent speaks to their child in a manner that violates our core values. Ending the meeting was an appropriate step when the mom refused to cease and desist. The only additional action step I might suggest (if this unfortunate event were to reoccur) is to find their guidance counselor.

2. Asians are the fastest growing racial group in the country, including the town of Wayland. Between 2010-2018, the number of Asians residents doubled in Wayland.

3. There *are* cultural differences in the parenting styles of East Asian immigrants and White, middle-class Americans. I'm specifying, "East Asians" because you wrote that the mom is Chinese. "Asia" refers to a HUGE range of ethnicities, languages and religions. India alone has 22 official languages!

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4. Given #2 & 3, knowledge of the cultural context that contributed to this mom's intense emotional reaction would be helpful. More generally, we are better able to support culturally and linguistically diverse students and engage with their families the more we know about their cultural backgrounds.

5. It's easy to label grade-obsessed Asian parents as "Tiger Moms" (or worse!). It's helpful to pause and consider that they love their children just as much as western parents do. However, they define and demonstrate parental affection, support and nurturance differently from the dominant culture of parenting in this country.

[If you click anywhere on this column or right here, it will take you to an article that provides a useful introduction to the cultural influences of and parenting styles of Asian immigrant and Asian-American families \(1st generation children typically adopt western values\).](#) To learn even more, a quick Google search, "what educators need to know about parenting styles of _____" [insert racial or ethnic group] will generate hundreds of results.

My parents immigrated to this country from Korea when they were young adults. Like many immigrants, they defined their success through the achievements of their children.

Although they were strict and expected my brother, sister and me to do well in school, they would never have embarrassed or berated us in front of our teachers. **East Asian cultures, traditions and values do not cause parents to verbally assault their children. This mom's behavior cannot be justified in the name of culture.**

The academic pressure that many students feel is real and serious. Thank you for writing in and giving our readers and me an opportunity to explore this important topic.

Sincerely,
The HAN-esty Box



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Often our idea of cultural competence is understanding families so we can change them, so they are more like us, and that's not what cultural competence is all about. . . .

Cultural competence is the ability to understand the effect of culture on child rearing and family relationships, and the ability to tailor my behavior accordingly."

—Blanca Almonte in *Developing Caring Relationships Among Parents, Children, Schools & Communities*



STAFF SHOUT OUTS

CATHLEEN HOLMES (Loker): Thank you for going above and beyond to help your colleagues at Loker. Many afternoons you stay well after contractual hours because you stop everything you are doing (and need to get done) to help others. We love being cheerfully greeted when we walk into the office and truly appreciate all that you do!

ROBBIN ROSSI (Claypit): In an effort to strengthen our METCO program, the Diversity Team, led by Robbin, in 1987-88, established the Claypit Hill Mentor Program, to provide each Boston resident student with an adult to be their trusted advisor and friend. Since 1987-88, teachers, Teaching Assistants, Nurses, Principals and Counselors, and more have served as mentors. Robbin has led this group since the beginning.

KATHERINE DELIMA (MS): Whenever we are making new materials that involve pictures or choosing people to highlight in our curriculum, Kathy always goes out of her way to ensure we are choosing images that represent a wide variety of races, ethnicities, genders, gender roles etc. She is mindful that students are able to see themselves reflected in the images we choose.

RACHEL SCOTT (Claypit): Rachel has been such a huge support to me so far. I appreciate her caring nature towards teachers and students. She's working so hard and doing such a great job!

JANAE HOOD (MS): JaNae is there for the students. When one young man needed her support, she found coverage to pick up her own daughter while she waited at the middle school with him for his dad to pick him up. She is always there for students and their families!

DEEDE BERGERON (Happy Hollow): Always makes herself available after school to students who ride the bus to Boston so they have the same opportunities to attend evening events at school or in the district with their peers

BRIAN KEANEY (HS): Always humorous, always keeps us cheery and together as a community of English teachers.

RUTH ROJAS (MS): Ruth is so helpful and always willing (and able!) to find a solution to your tech problems. She is generous with her time, focuses on detail, knowledgeable, and is a great help to enabling the school to run smoothly.

KELLY LOPEZ (MS): Kelly has built a drama program that amplifies students' voices and stories. Her recent productions of "Esperanza Rising" and "The Rememberer" challenge students to embody roles of those whose voices often go unheard.



Jamie Woods' (Claypit) 4th grade class created their own work of art titled after the book that was the source of inspiration.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO SUBMITTED AN ENTRY!

[CLICK HERE TO "SHOUT OUT" A COLLEAGUE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE](#)



Check out these amazing ofrendas, or altars, created by 8th grade Spanish students. Classes learned about the holiday, Dia de Muertos (the Day of the Dead), and how it is celebrated in Mexico and the significance of the ofrendas. October 31 - November 2, 2019

Religious & Cultural Holidays for Nov & Dec

Please click on this link for the calendar (space-saving measure!).

I had trouble opening the link on Firefox. If you do, use Chrome. If it still doesn't open, e-mail me, and I'll send you a link.



My Top Picks for Classroom Resources for Native American Heritage Month

Please click on this link to access this resource!



The Media Center at the high school has a display in honor of Native American Heritage Month. Go check it out!