WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT TEACHING?

1. Teaching is powerful.
TEACHING EFFECTS

COMPOUND EFFECTS

- Teacher sequence can affect student achievement by up to 50 percentile points after only three years.
- Low achieving students have the most to gain from an effective teacher.
- The top quintile of teachers facilitate appropriate to excellent gains for students of all achievement levels.

Sanders & Rivers (1996)

VARIATION IN TEACHER QUALITY

- The most important in-school factor affecting student learning is the teacher.
- There is wide variation in effectiveness among teachers.

Wright, Horn, & Sanders (1997)

LONG-TERM IMPACT

- Children who do not read proficiently by the end of third grade are four times more likely to drop out.
- Workers with a bachelor’s degree or more earned almost twice as much as workers with only a high school diploma.

Fiester (2013)

DISCIPLINE

- Latinx, Black, and Native/Indigenous students are punished more often and more harshly than other groups.
- Black girls are disproportionately subjected to exclusionary discipline practices.
- Students with disabilities are punished more often and more harshly than other groups.
- Discipline disparities for Black students, boys, and students with disabilities are observed as early as pre-K.

Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera (2010)
Skiba, Horn, Chung, Rausch, May, & Tobin (2011)
Blake, Butler, Lewis, & Daresbourough (2011)
Morris (2016)
Noltemeyer & Moloughlin (2010)

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COMPOND EFFECTS
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- The top quintile of teachers facilitate appropriate to excellent gains for students of all achievement levels.

VARIATION IN TEACHER QUALITY
- The most important in-school factor affecting student learning is the teacher.
- There is wide variation in effectiveness among teachers.

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Fiester (2013)

Sanders & Rivers (1996)
WHAT MORE DO WE KNOW ABOUT TEACHING?

2. Teaching involves enormous discretion.

3. How that discretion is exercised can either reproduce oppression and inequity—or it can disrupt it.
What number does the orange arrow point to?
Explain how you figured it out.
ANIYAH AND TONI

ANIYAH

TONI
VIDEO: ANIYAH AND TONI

This video and additional supporting materials are available online here.
Teacher: Who would like to try explaining what you think the answer is? And show us your reasoning by coming up to the board. 
Student 1: I think the answer is 10. 
Student 2: I think the answer is 20. 
Teacher: Great! Let's see if we can figure it out together. 
(Teacher writes 10 and 20 on the board)

Teacher: Now, let's think about the problem. It's about finding the number of shirts. 
(Students start discussing)

Teacher: Okay, let's see if we can figure it out. 
(Teacher writes 10 and 20 on the board again)

Teacher: Who wants to try explaining their reasoning?
Teacher: Who would like to try to explain what you think the answer is? And show us your reasoning by coming up to the board.

Student: Okay, okay?

Teacher: Okay. Anybody?

Student: Playing with hair. Laying on arms.

Teacher: When someone's presenting at the board, what should you be doing?

Student: Looking at them. Listening at that person. What did they write? You want me to write it?

Teacher: You're trying to make what you think the number is and explain how you figured it out.

Teacher: Listen closely and see what you think about her reasoning and her answer. (Unpack writes 1/9 by the orange one.)

Teacher: I put one seventh because there's 7.

Student: Eight is the top line annotated?

Teacher: Dante to Ted. Yeah. (Continues to write) Because there's seven equal parts, like one, two, three, four, five, six, and then seven. Use the number to count the parts in the number line.

Teacher: Before you agree or disagree, I want you to ask questions if you think it's something you don't understand about what one did. No agreeing and disagreeing. Just ask any questions. Who has a question for her?

Teacher: Okay. Toni, what's your question for her?

Teacher: Did you write?

Student: Why did? (laughs at another student who says something to her from across the room)

Teacher: Go ahead. It's your turn.

Teacher: Why did you pick one-seventh?

Student: You did not.

Teacher: Who listed to her answer? That was a very good question.
TEACHING IS DENSE WITH “DISCRETIONARY SPACES”
VIDEO: RE-VIEW AND RE-LISTEN TO THESE DISCRETIONARY SPACES

These videos and additional supporting materials are available online [here](#).
IN THIS MOMENT, A MOVE CAN REPRODUCE PATTERNS OF MARGINALIZATION OF BLACK GIRLS AND OF REDUCTIONIST VIEWS OF MATH

NORMALIZED NEXT MOVES

- “Can someone help Aniyah out and show what we call the whole on the number line?”

- “Thumbs up if you agree with Aniyah; thumbs down if you disagree.”

- “What do others think?”

RESULTS

- Aniyah’s answer is signaled to be incorrect and she is positioned as not having contributed to the work.

- Aniyah’s solution is “voted” on by her classmates.

- Aniyah is excluded and her mathematical point is sidelined.
IN THIS MOMENT, TOO

NORMALIZED NEXT MOVES

- “Toni, when you’re ready to participate appropriately by not playing with your hair and laughing, and have a question to ask, I will come back to you.”

- “You need to be a better listener, Toni. Aniyah already explained why she picked one-seventh. Who else has a real question for Aniyah?”

- “What do others think?”

RESULTS

- Toni is publicly excluded from the discussion.

- Toni is judged to not be listening, her question is judged as not good, and she is excluded from the discussion.

- Toni is excluded and her mathematical point is sidelined.
WHAT REGULARLY FILLS THE DISCRETIONARY SPACES IN TEACHING?

Lortie (1975), Banks, Grant and Koskela, Moll
Anyon (1981), Heath, Martin, Tuck
Ball (2018)
WHAT REGULARLY FILLS THE DISCRETIONARY SPACES IN TEACHING?

1. Teachers’ experiences in a society filled with racism and oppression.

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WHAT REGULARLY FILLS THE DISCRETIONARY SPACES IN TEACHING?

1. Teachers’ experiences in a society filled with racism and oppression.

Professional education does not effectively intervene on these.

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WHAT REGULARLY FILLS THE DISCRETIONARY SPACES IN TEACHING?

1. Teachers’ experiences in a society filled with racism and oppression.
2. Normalized practices in schools that institutionalize dominant values and habits.

Professional education does not effectively intervene on these.

Lortie (1975), Banks, Grant and Koskela, Moll
Anyon (1981), Heath, Martin, Tuck
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WHAT REGULARLY FILLS THE DISCRETIONARY SPACES IN TEACHING?

1. Teachers’ experiences in a society filled with racism and oppression.

2. Normalized practices in schools that institutionalize dominant values and habits.

Professional education and teaching experience often teach these.

Professional education does not effectively intervene on these.

Lortie (1975), Banks, Grant and Koskela, Moll
Anyon (1981), Heath, Martin, Tuck
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WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO DISRUPT THESE PATTERNS?

- Seeing Aniyah’s solution and Toni’s question as mathematically sophisticated and key to the class’s work
- Taking as axiomatic the brilliance of Black girls, and thus Aniyah and Toni
- ... And having something different to do

(Gholson & Martin, 2014; Joseph, Viesca, Bianco, 2016; Martin, 2012; Leonard & Martin, 2013)
SO WHAT ABOUT TEACHER EDUCATION?

4. It’s necessary. Managing the personal and the professional in practice is not natural. It is most likely to reproduce oppression.

5. Teacher education can be a force to shape the just exercise of professional discretion—or it can reproduce normalized practice.
HOW DO WE GET THERE?

6. The work to make teacher education a force for justice is collective work of our profession, across contexts and settings. This, too, is not the norm:

- *What* to work on and support beginning teachers to learn and to learn to DO
- *How*: Our own pedagogy—the teaching of teaching
THE IMPERATIVE FOR TEACHER EDUCATION TO ADVANCE EQUITY

1. Teaching is powerful.
2. Teaching involves enormous discretion.
3. How that discretion is exercised can either reproduce oppression and inequity—or it can disrupt it.
4. Teacher education is necessary. Managing the personal and the professional in practice is not natural. It is most likely to reproduce oppression.
5. Teacher education can be a force to shape the just exercise of professional discretion—or it can reproduce normalized practice.
6. The work to make teacher education a force for justice is collective work of our profession, across contexts and settings. This, too, is not the norm.
TEACHINGWORKS: WE ARE WORKING TO FULFILL THIS IMPERATIVE

TACKLING PERSISTENT PROBLEMS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

1. A focus on knowledge, which is necessary but insufficient to unlearn habits that reproduce patterns of inequity or to use content in practice.

2. Work on “equity” and “social justice” is often fragmented from work on teaching content and developing positive classroom learning environments (or “classroom management”).
TEACHINGWORKS:
WE ARE WORKING TO FULFILL THIS IMPERATIVE

OUR KEY RESOURCES

- High-leverage practices of teaching
- Knowledge of content for teaching
- Deliberate approaches to disrupt patterns that reproduce inequity
- Teacher education pedagogies

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2. Work on “equity” and “social justice” is often fragmented from work on teaching content and developing positive classroom learning environments (or “classroom management”).
ADDRESSING THE PROBLEMS DIRECTLY

Intertwining in concrete instructional activities —

- specific aspects of HLP decomposition(s) with
- intentional ways to disrupt patterns of racism and oppression in specific cases and
- particular content understanding
AND WORKING WITH OTHERS TO FULFILL THIS IMPERATIVE

“Teaching is a revolutionary act.”

Dr. Marcelle Haddix

Reaching for the possibilities and the power must be our collective work.
THANK YOU!
dball@umich.edu
Slides will be available on my website
https://deborahloewenbergball.com/
(“Google” Deborah Ball)
CREDITS

Image on slide 32:
Photo of Marcelle Haddix. Retrieved from
http://soe.syr.edu/about/member.aspx?fac=4