

Effective Teachers Allies: Adult Educators for Social Change

CATESOL CONFERENCE

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The Promise

*"Give me your tired, your
poor,
Your huddled masses
yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your
teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless,
tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the
golden door!"*



The Reality

- *Anti-Immigrant, anti-Muslim, and racist rhetoric*
- *Indiscriminate enforcement of immigration rules*
- *Nearly three times more anti-Muslim hate groups in just one year according to the SPL Center*
- *Five times more members in social media hate groups in August 2017 than there were a year earlier*

What is a Teacher Ally?

Allies...

“[are] partners in empowerment who speak out against injustice and support marginalized groups and individuals on their own terms.” **In this case, they speak to support immigrants.**

[recognize] oppression broadly and standing in solidarity with anyone who experiences oppression—whether or not the ally also belongs to a targeted group.

Allies...

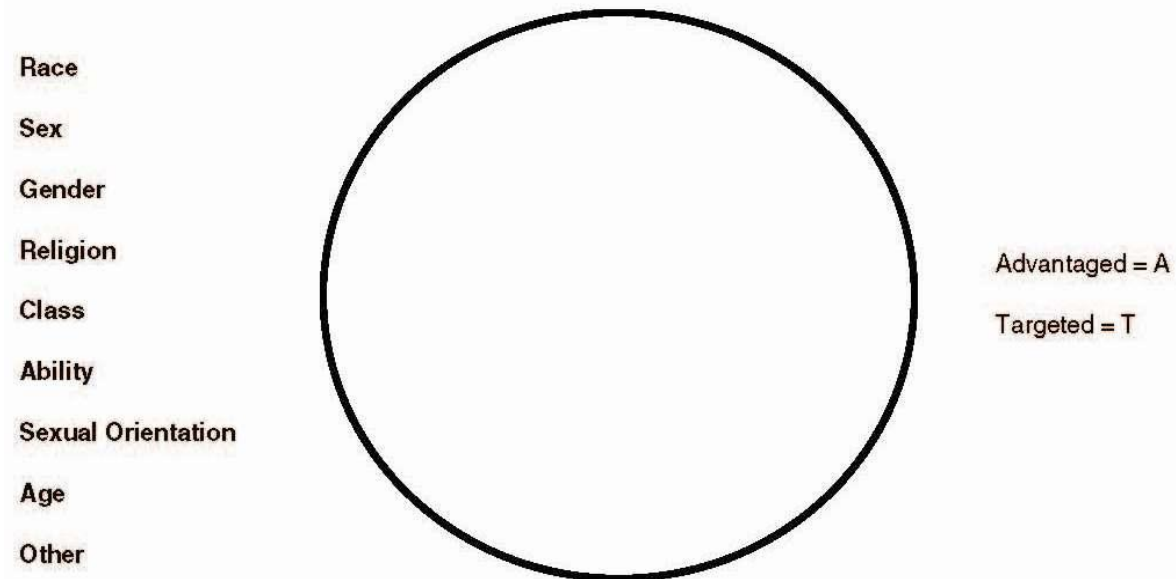
An ally is a member of the advantaged (**privileged**) social group who takes a stand against social injustice directed at targeted groups (Whites who speak out against racism, men who are anti-sexist). When a form of oppression has multiple targeted groups, as do racism, ableism, and heterosexism, targeted group members can be allies to other targeted groups they are not part of.

- Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, Appendix 6

The Challenge



Identity Mosaic: Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, Second Edition, Routledge, 2007



Create your identity wheel by indicating your targeted and advantaged social group memberships. Make the identity "slice" a size that reflects your awareness of that social group membership. Memberships that you are more aware of will be a bigger slice than those you are less aware of.

Student Identity

Students bring with them their own stories

Their own world views

Their own culturally determined perceptions and expectations

Different components of their social identity make them targets of discrimination

Student Identity

Consider your students in light of the identity mosaic:

What components of their social identity make them targets of anti-immigrant sentiments?

In what ways are your students targeted/discriminated?

In what ways –if any- are they Advantaged?

Teacher Identity

Consider yourself in light of the identity mosaic:

What is your story?

What parts of your identity make you **Target** of oppression?

In what ways –if any- are you **Advantaged**?

Allies

Must be comfortable in their own skin (social group membership or identity)

Acknowledge the problem and learn the *facts*






Be willing to be taught and to learn

Be willing to *listen* in order to understand the experience of the targeted group

Must be committed to making a difference

Understand that acting against social injustice is in their own self-interest

Allies

-  **Are aware of own social identities**
-  **Confront our own prejudices**
-  **Respond to biased comments in the classroom**
-  **Are open to some degree of personal disclosure
(our experience as an example)**
-  **Must deal with emotional intensity and fear of
losing control**

Teacher Allies

“...an ally takes responsibility for **learning about his/her own target group heritage, culture and experience**, and how oppression works in every day life. Allies listen to and respect the perspectives and experiences of targeted group members.”

Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, p. 529

The Action Continuum -

Frame Your Argument

What is a frame?

- A set of choices about how information is presented (what to emphasize, how to explain it, what to omit)

Examples:

- **Shared values:** Emphasize the need to treat others with compassion and respect
- **Shared prosperity:** Highlight immigrant contributions that benefit all Americans

1. Lead with Values

“This is about the kind of country we want to be, how we treat people, what it really means to be American.”

- Push conversations beyond specific legislation and ensure that they’re centered on our core beliefs and value system.
- Persuadable audiences can hear arguments for policy reform more clearly when we link it to these all-important values.

Source: The Opportunity Agenda

Lead with Moral Argument

Tips argument away from “them” and toward “us”

Gives audiences clear sense of what is at stake if we fail to enact immigration policy reform

- Reference our shared humanity
- Reference how current system doesn't recognize immigrants' humanity
- Connect reform to our ability to fulfill our moral obligation to others

Source: Marisa Gerstein Pineau, FrameWorks Institute

2. Talk Common Sense

Recent executive orders and proposed legislation reflect backward thinking and won't serve us into the future.

- Instead, we need a commonsense approach that takes into account our values, our economic needs and our future.
- Point out that vitriol, political division and a desire to exclude people shouldn't have any place in our approach to immigration policy.

Source: The Opportunity Agenda

3. It's About All of Us

Standing up for what's right is about more than immigrants' rights or workers or Latinos. Rejecting bad policies is the right thing to do for everyone.

4. Tell an Affirmative Story

There are a lot of misguided communications, skewed arguments and outright lies in current discourse. But too much focus on correcting wrong information can just reinforce it in audiences' minds. So resist the temptation to bust all the myths out there and just tell people what is true.

Don't Repeat (or retweet!) Myths

- Never repeat the myths when you're refuting them – always start with the facts.
- People tend to remember the myths as true, so myth busting is ineffective.
- Instead of saying, “Immigrants aren't taking our jobs,” say, “Immigrants ***create*** jobs.”

Source: Marisa Gerstein Pineau, FrameWorks Institute

5. Emphasize Contribution, Solution, Action

We have to reject policies that would make contribution and participation very difficult for some people. We all thrive when we all participate, gearing up our economic engine and moving us all forward together.

Be Solution-oriented

- **Be solution-oriented.** The immigration system is complex, so offer solutions to show that policy change is possible.

Discussion/Padlet

Consider the following questions:

What is an action you would like to see take place in your work context (related to immigrant/refugee students and their families) and that YOU are willing to take?

What support/help do you need in order to bring about the change you want to see?

Night

"We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy, national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant. Wherever men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must - at that moment - become the center of the universe."

Elie Wiesel



Resources

Adams, M., Bell, L. & Griffin, P. (2007). *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, Second Edition*. New York: Routledge.

- Appendices 3K, 6 G, 6H, 6I

Resources

http://unitedwedream.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/BeingAnEducatorActivist_2Pager_11102015.pdf

<http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-53-summer-2016/feature/anatomy-ally>

<http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-55-spring-2017/feature/immigrant-and-refugee-children-guide-educators-and-school-su>

<http://sandiego.adl.org/news/immigrants-and-refugees-a-jewish-call-to-action/>

http://mashable.com/2016/05/15/undocumented-immigrants-allies/#9z_0XibrImqR

http://www.aijustice.org/the_truth_on_immigration

Legal/Advocacy Resources

- National Immigration Law Center: www.nilc.org
- Catholic Immigration Network: cliniclegal.org
- United We Dream: www.unitedwedream.org
- Immigrant Legal Resource Center: www.ilrc.org
- National Immigrant Justice Center: www.immigrantjustice.org/
- American Immigration Council: americanimmigrationcouncil.org
- Immigration Advocates Network: immigrationadvocates.org