

Social Justice Leadership Memory Aid Support tool

Description:

The goal of social justice leadership is to reduce inequality related to all possible forms of marginalization and inequity, whether this exists in attitudes and behaviours or in practices. In the school context, social justice leadership mobilizes and engages staff, families, and community members around a central objective: the educational success of all students, including those from disadvantaged communities.

This memory aid presents various dimensions of social justice leadership that place equity at the heart of all actions. Based on a positive vision of diversity and the conviction that everyone can succeed, the practice of this leadership is consistent with one of the orientations of the Commitment-To-Success Plan and the educational projects, namely ensuring equity among different groups of students by supporting success, particularly for students from disadvantaged communities.

Based on research data and recognized best practices in disadvantaged areas, this tool will guide your actions in exercising social justice leadership on a daily basis. Doing so will have an impact on all school staff and will allow you ensure that your school organization is fairer or more just.

Aims:

- To present dimensions of social justice leadership and illustrate them with examples of practices specific to disadvantaged areas.
- To facilitate conscious leadership focused on helping all students to reach their full potential

Personnel involved:

School service centre and school board administrators, school principals, resource personnel involved with supporting disadvantaged communities and education consultants supporting the schools.

For further reflection:

- Read the [Reference Guide for Intervention in Disadvantaged Areas – One School: Success for All](#).
- Watch the [video](#) in which researcher Marie-Odile Magnan of the Université de Montréal briefly explains the concept of social justice or inclusive leadership.
- Consider your own practices:
 - Which ones are in line with social justice leadership?
 - Which ones need to be improved or refined?

Impact of social justice leadership:

According to I. Sballil (2015), “The actions of social justice leaders contribute to the resolution of inequities and injustices, which should be carried out in the spirit of sharing, collaboration, and mobilization of the entire school community focused on the educational success of all students.” [Translation]



Goal: Reduce inequality related to all possible forms of marginalization and inequity, whether this exists in attitudes and behaviours or in practices.

Objective: Ensure the success and development of all students.

DIMENSIONS	EXAMPLES OF PRACTICES	CONCRETE ILLUSTRATIONS
Developing behaviours to promote fairness	<i>Creating a positive and caring climate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During work meetings and exchanges, the social justice leader demonstrates active listening, openness to new ideas, respect and understanding for differences. During group and individual meetings, they encourage the sharing of ideas, collaborative work and the participation of all. They opt for shared leadership. During activities, the leader fosters a sense of belonging and the development of trust and recognition between students and teachers.
	<i>Adopting organizational and administrative practices that support fairness and inclusion</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During back-to-school planning, the social justice leader promotes consideration of the needs of all students. The leader ensures that pedagogical practices and school activities are inclusive and responsive to student needs. (“What resources do we have to help this student?”) The school's educational project is based on fair practices.
Believing that all students can be educated	<i>Providing all students with access to competency development and to education without discrimination</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complementary educational services are distributed equitably throughout the school. For example, remedial education services are provided on the basis of need, not on an equal basis. Budget distribution is discussed transparently with the school team, who is told that equity is the basis for budgetary choices. In the spirit of equity, a social justice leader provides access to specific school programs for students based on their interests, not on academic achievement or ability to pay.
	<i>Maintaining high expectations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school offers realistic challenges that are within the students' reach. The social justice leader explains their expectations of the school team and students. In the school, the focus is on students' abilities, not on their deficits.
Adopting a vision focused on learning	<i>Promoting pedagogical and educational practices that are inclusive, diverse, fair and just</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues of disadvantage, including inequality, are discussed with the aim of ensuring that practices do not impede students' learning. The content offered to students takes diversity and inclusion into account. The social justice leader works to raise awareness of false beliefs, attitudes and prejudices among school team members.
Developing an inclusive and collaborative culture	<i>Developing collaboration between school, family and community</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The social justice leader opens the doors of the school to families and provides them with positive experiences. Although some families may seem reluctant to collaborate, their contribution is recognized and valued. Family participation is encouraged and is open to all families. The social justice leader works with community organizations in the neighbourhood. The social justice leader consults with families from marginalized groups.

References:

Archambault, J. and Harnois, L. (2010). *La justice sociale en éducation : les faits saillants tirés de la littérature scientifique et professionnelle*. Université de Montréal.

Sballil, I. (2015). *Le leadership en matière de justice sociale : cas d'une direction d'école primaire francophone de milieu défavorisé de Montréal* [Master's thesis, Université de Montréal].

Larochelle-Audet, J., Magnan, M.-O., Potvin, M., Doré, E., Amboulé-Abath, A., Gélinas Proulx, A., Howard, P. S. S., and St-Vincent, L.-A. (2019). *Synthèse du rapport « Les compétences des directions en matière d'équité et de diversité : pistes pour les cadres de référence et la formation » du Groupe de travail sur les compétences et la formation des directions en matière d'équité et de diversité*. Observatoire sur la formation à la diversité et à l'équité.

