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ANTI-OPPRESSIVE EDUCATION WITH A "DIFFERENT KIND OF RIGOR": TEACHERS' AND ADMINSTRATORS' PERSPECTIVES OF A SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION PROGRAM AT AN AFFLUENT PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

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Dissertation Abstract

Anti-Oppressive Education with a "Different Kind of Rigor": Teachers' and Administrators' Perspectives of a Social Justice Education Program at an Affluent Public High School

Affluent youth often experience intense pressure to succeed academically, while conforming to narrow definitions of success that only serve to replicate the power and privilege of their own communities. Therefore, students schooled in affluent settings need to understand and problematize the roots and impact of their power and privilege, a process requiring awareness of and empathy with the experiences of others less fortunate. Social justice education is uniquely equipped to help students do exactly that.

Using a qualitative design, this case study of a social justice education program in an affluent public high school explored how teachers committed to this program enact anti-oppressive practices. Data collection included individual/focus group interviews with the six program teachers alongside document analysis of student work and individual interviews with administrators. Four major themes emerged. First, close teacher-student relationships lie at the core of the social justice program; otherwise, the program could not engage students in a transformative and democratic experience. Second, social justice education must prepare students in an affluent school to challenge their position of privilege. Third, teachers use critical pedagogy as a learning guide, enabling and encouraging student-student interaction, engagement, collaboration, and responsibility.

Fourth, to ensure program sustainability, more professional development is needed to support learning how to teach for social justice.

Overall, the very existence of the program shows how the teachers at the school counteract oppression through offering a challenge to the traditional approach to schooling. The students in the social justice program have become empowered to move beyond their culture of achievement to learn how to act and become agents of change.

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

Andrea Struve	7/24/19
Candidate	Date

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Susan Katz	7/24/19
Chairperson	
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Ursula Aldana	5/7/19

DEDICATION

To my grandparents, present and past, new and old. Thank you for shaping me into the person I am today. Helga's fierce persistence, Helmut's intense curiosity, Marilyn's unapologetic love of learning alongside the two Muriel's passions for social justice and grammar, I appreciate all you have given and inspired me to do. I love all of you. You have all made the world a better place, and I hope this dissertation makes you proud of who I have become.

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CHAPTER I: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

Lecture, homework, test. Lecture, homework, test. Project. Next class. Next semester. Next year. The curricular repetition of a school year is not hard to imagine. For most, this type of learning is familiar as it is the traditional model of schooling. Now, imagine this traditional model in an affluent, suburban and high achieving public high school where teachers stand at the front of the classroom while students are in desks, moving as the bell rings to their next class. The bell segments the day, and each bell signifies a change in subject, an end to further thought and engagement. In this school, students get to choose their courses, but their choice only gets them so far as not all courses are accessible to everyone. Students are usually grouped by ability, which often translates to race and class differences, as the students who can afford tutors enroll in higher level courses. The course offerings are robust; however, with an emphasis on weighted Grade Point Averages (GPA), honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses are seen as the norm and general education courses as the outlier. Furthermore, innovation is encouraged and initiatives are highly sought after for both students and teachers, but the strings and attachments that come with new programs, courses, and ideas have so many requirements that the creations are usually not heavily supported unless benefitting the majority. Since the 'majority' in the context of this school is the socioeconomic elite, they are the ones who ultimately benefit from the competition and standardization of curriculum.

This school, Greenship Academy (pseudonym), is one of the most well-funded and affluent schools in the country. Yet, the students engage in school with a traditional

model of learning, with pressure to earn high grades through memorizing, taking tests, and repetition. In contrast, critical thinking beyond a test and creativity outside of the arts programs on campus are not heavily emphasized amongst all subjects, students, and abilities. This style of learning is not questioned, as Greenship Academy has received repeated nationwide recognition for achievement and academic excellence with this traditional model. Therefore, the system and process of schooling becomes all about a limited notion of success, not about pushing the student beyond their comfort zone or beliefs about the world around them. The result is that the students' world is one of power and privilege, both widely unacknowledged at the school and in the larger community.

The Social Justice Program, a teacher-initiated and teacher-run program at Greenship Academy, attempts to change this narrative. It uses a democratized approach to education with a focus on student-centered, project-based learning and critical thinking over traditional schooling. In the process, the program attempts to challenge the status quo and seeks curriculum that interrogates the intricacies of systemic oppression, specifically the role of power and privilege in reproducing it, through having the students engage in conversations and recognize their own role in continuing the system.

Statement of the Problem

Unless students are challenged to uncover their power and privilege, they may be unaware of its true impact, an impact that can only be uncovered through understanding the experiences of others (Adams, Bell & Griffith, 2007; Bell, 2010). Unfortunately, members of an affluent community do not always seek out the experiences and needs of others outside of their community. This is due to the fact that well-intentioned

progressivists and parents in the students' lives tend to want what's best for their own child, a child who already has access to the best tutors, sports, and arts programs, and ability to attend college without batting an eye (Swalwell, 2013). However, what happens to be best for one student with power and privilege is most often not best for all students.

The Social Justice Program provides a sharp contrast to the potential narrative of oppression that the powerful elite within the community have ability to replicate. It moves students beyond their comfort zone, transforming the classroom from a general education curriculum to one situated in narratives of the oppressed (i.e. people marginalized for race, class, gender, sexual orientation), challenging students to question the system and their own lives within it. The students engage in the program with the understanding that it is entirely democratic; the students vote on the classes they will take, and the majority wins for the collective. For instance, last year, students voted to take California History instead of Foreign Policy and Sociology with the hope of understanding the development of the Bay Area from the Indigenous Ohlone tribes to the Gold Rush and the Gay Rights Movement.

This focus on the world outside of the small affluent suburban community where Greenship Academy is centered allows for the students, the school, and the community as a whole to be exposed to questions, perspectives, and ways of interpreting the world that would otherwise go unchallenged. Throughout this dissertation, I explore how teachers' implementation of democratic critical pedagogy through a social justice curriculum can challenge a traditional model and approach to schooling and combat the replication of power, privilege, and oppression inherent in affluent communities of the United States.

Background and Need

While the use of critical pedagogy to overturn systems of power in schooling is a common theme in educational literature, doing so in the context of an affluent school is rare and less examined. Swalwell (2013) notes that social justice programs are usually associated with low-income urban schools, but they are also essential in preparing privileged children to become citizens and community members who engage within a healthy democracy. Westheimer and Kahne (2004) further this claim as they conclude that educators make pedagogical choices to support the vision of a healthy democracy with community members who resemble responsible, participatory, and social justice-oriented citizens.

Social justice is the complete and equal participation of all groups within society; a society that is mutually shaped to meet all persons' needs with an equal (or preferably equitable) distribution of resources in which all members are independent with individual agency and also interdependent, maintaining a sense of social responsibility within the community (Adams, Bell & Griffith, 2007). To achieve social justice is not an easily completed objective, as it is the ultimate goal to be reached in order to reform an oppressive system.

This goal is aided through the guidance and support of social justice education as it enables people to develop the skills necessary to "understand oppression and their own socialization within oppressive systems" and to "develop a sense of agency to disrupt oppressive patterns" (Adams, Bell & Griffith, 2007, p. 2). Social justice education intends to combat the varying kinds of oppression that have withstood the test of time within the space of schooling. For instance, racism, sexism, internalized domination and

subordination, and hegemony represent long-lasting forms of oppression seen in society, and more importantly, reproduced through schooling. The identification of these forms of oppression through schooling is essential in uncovering how social justice education functions to rebuild perceptions, connections, and community.

The importance of comprehensive anti-oppression or social justice-based education to dismantle oppression in affluent contexts has become clear in recent studies conducted by Hagerman (2018) and Swalwell (2013) that explore the harm of unchallenged privilege in communities of affluence. Both studies focus on the impact of social justice-based curriculum on students' understanding or oppression. Although prior studies such as these have evaluated social justice curriculum in schools, few have considered these issues within the context of affluent schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore and evaluate the efforts of social justice education in an affluent public high school setting, examining the dynamic effects of the curriculum on the school community (i.e. learners and educators) from the teachers and administrators' perspectives. A small-scale case study approach was used, focusing on one affluent public school, Greenship Academy, with an extant social justice program. The program was in its fifth year with 120 students enrolled in this opt-in program. Beginning sophomore year, students learn the humanities from a social justice perspective with the same cohort of students for three years. The curriculum is created and guided by the six teachers who began and currently run the entire program with oversight and support from administration. Therefore, this study sought the stakeholders' (teachers and administrators) perceptions of the social justice program at the high school

through individual and focus group interviews, document analysis of student work, and observations.

Definition of Terms

Oppression. Teaching with a social justice lens requires an understanding of oppression, marginalized people, privilege, schooling, and education. According to Bell, Roberts, Irani and Murphy (2008), *oppression* is both a noun and a verb; it is pervasive, restrictive, hierarchical, complex, internalized, and shared amongst marginalized groups. It is the fusion of personal bias with institutional and systemic discrimination that plagues most aspects of society. Kumashiro (2000) expands this definition, arguing oppression as the creation and embodiment of the Other, causing privilege and marginalization within a community; the Other is traditionally a group outside of the norm not given power by the dominant group within society. The dominant group has primarily always been considered to be people of Western European descent, but often is grouped with other intersectional lenses, like affluence and gender (Powell, 2012).

Marginalized people are not just the racial Other or the non-white individuals; they are those who experience a perpetual denial of access to resources, opportunities, and experiences who have embodied consequences of their status via class, race, gender, amongst other identities (Adams, Bell & Griffith, 2007; Bell, Roberts, Irani & Murphy, 2008; Bell, 2010). As power and influence of the dominant group within society is cyclical, self-promoted, and communal, it leads towards barriers in opportunity, advancement, and achievement for the Other (Bell, 2010; Powell, 2012; Smith, 2006).

Privilege. Often, the dominant group is unaware of this pattern as it is created through their unearned privilege. As defined by Goodman (2000a; 2000b) and Hackman

(2005), *privilege* refers to individuals who lack consciousness of and have been taught to ignore their power within society, expecting all benefits from being of the dominant group without earning it. *Privilege* becomes essential to maintain a sense of superiority or entitlement that their needs are met, regardless of the cost to the Other and other members of society. Parents with access to privilege internalize this ideology, and however liberal or progressive they may be, end up making choices that maintain this privilege for their children out of fear of taking risks that could jeopardize it (Hagerman, 2018). This aligns with the discourse of privilege within social justice initiated by McIntosh (1990) who explores and deconstructs the ways in which dominant groups of privilege maintain and reproduce power at the expense of marginalized groups.

Schooling versus education. Kumashiro (2000) acknowledges that schools are often spaces of silencing where marginalized youth are treated harmfully via others' actions, assumptions and expectations; schools then become sites of this reproduction of power through the process of schooling. *Schooling*, or the curriculum focused on conformity to the political and economic elite or privileged, is differentiated from all forms of *education*, or the value of diversity and gain of knowledge to problem-solving for the group (Shantz & Rideout, 2003). Both are set with the purpose of educating youth, but only one has been built to reproduce harm. Therefore, education via schooling becomes the ultimate cultivator of hegemony.

Theoretical Rationale/ Conceptual Framework

This paper integrates the concepts of hegemony, counter-hegemony, and critical pedagogy into the theoretical rationale/conceptual framework for its research. Using hegemony to frame public schooling, I show how critical pedagogy inherent to social

justice and anti-oppression education can move schooling towards counter-hegemony and transformation for the students, teachers, and broader community (Figure 1).

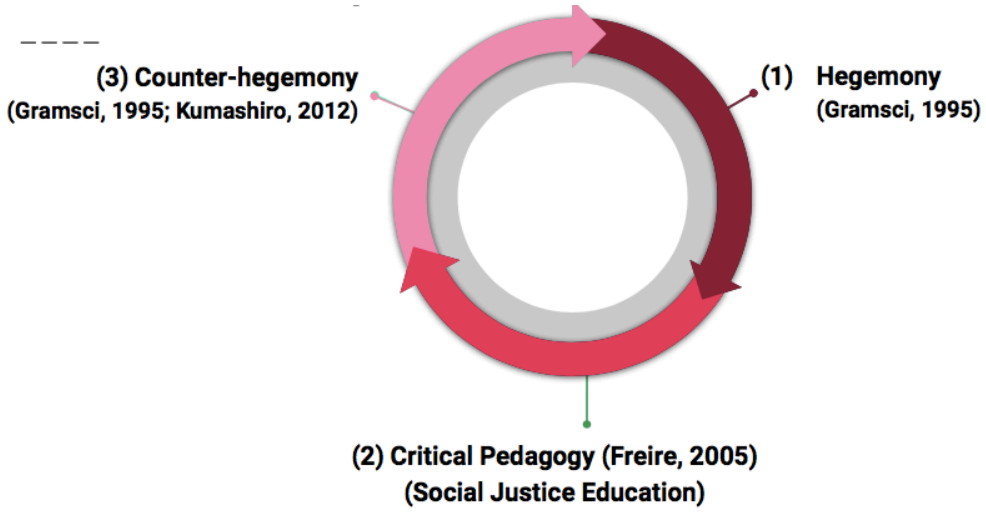

Figure 1. As a visual representation of the conceptual framework used throughout the dissertation, critical pedagogy will work to counteract hegemony, working towards counter-hegemony in a cycle.

Hegemony

Defined as the "social, cultural, or economic influence exerted by a dominant group over other groups," current scholars have explored the concept of hegemony through the writings of Antonio Gramsci, an Italian neo-Marxist theorist whose major work on this topic was written in the 1920-1930s (Levinson, Gross, Hands, Dadds, Kumasi & Link, 2012, p. 52). Gramsci (1995) used hegemony to define the bourgeoisie's rule over the proletariat, encompassing the entirety of culture and civil society. Gramsci (1995) noted that in order to maintain consistent order and domination, the ruling class must ensure that the working class either consents to or is coerced to accept its hegemony. Most often, the dominant group uses coercion, impacting culture and society without consent or agreement.

Gramsci (1995) argued that schools, built with the purpose of producing a future industrialized workforce, are sites of a racially-based political struggle as students each day consent to instruction. Therefore, schools become industrial settings, replicating the beliefs and the actions of those in power, giving them a complacent workforce for years to come; therefore, the schooling system itself is oppressive for all students. Today, this implicit hidden curriculum of capitalism and dominance shows up in everything from class schedules to student assessments and grades. This task-orientated thinking provides a reward for the job completed. While in the workforce this reward is a paycheck, in school settings the currency is grades, not money. Student assessments emphasize getting an "A" as the highest potential reward, thus fostering competition to be the best and obtain the greatest possible currency for success (Levinson et al., 2012; Lipman, 2011). When success is the name of the game and schools are the arena for where it is played, whose success is valued?

Hegemony, therefore, is the ideal lens for this study as the focus of this research is on affluent public schools, already situated in a culture of power based upon socioeconomic wealth. Hegemony has the potential not only to reveal how privilege and dominance interact with oppression in an affluent school, but also to show how students in this context experience the pedagogy of oppression, and through the social justice program, the pedagogy of liberation.

Critical pedagogy

Even though public schooling is rooted in and reproduces hegemony, action against oppression can start inside the classroom through the tool of critical pedagogy. Freire (2005) set the foundation of critical pedagogy, uncovering the relationships

between the oppressed and oppressor while looking at the dehumanization underlying the "banking concept" of education (p. 72). The "banking" model sets up the teacher to prepare the lesson and the student to then memorize the content; it is a one-way exchange of knowledge without critical reflection or questioning. Within this traditional approach to schooling, the student is oppressed as they cannot achieve knowledge, interact with culture, or invoke change.

Therefore, the lens of critical pedagogy is essential to my research since anti-oppression education involves "critical self-reflection of ideologies, power, and privilege" (Berila, 2016, p. 13). Kumashiro (2000) firmly argues that anti-oppression education is the model from which many others stem, including social justice education. For the purpose of this study, anti-oppression is synonymous with social justice. Education needs to be differentiated from pedagogy in the context of social justice. Education is the structures of schooling that incorporate social justice and the policies that directly influence the ability of schools and teachers to apply social justice; whereas, pedagogy is the practice and work of teachers with social justice within the classroom context (Swalwell, 2013). Thus, social justice education through the application of social justice pedagogy addresses internalized oppression and hegemonic structures, aiming to achieve an emancipatory classroom that engages both students and teachers.

Counter-hegemony

Giroux (1988/2004) asserts that the achievement of maintaining an emancipatory classroom through critical pedagogy allows the teacher to move beyond traditional forms of academic success that hegemony created (i.e. grades, attendance, high stakes test scores) to produce a consistent curricular message of empowerment for students to think

and act critically. Moving beyond what Freire (2005) called the "banking concept," the student in an emancipatory classroom receives knowledge about basic societal structures (economy, state, work place, mass culture) to provide the tools necessary to transform society (Giroux, 1988/2004). For transformation to be feasible, however, the teacher must expose the four domains of power: structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal, which Collins (2009) argues are the domains of power necessary for forms of oppression to exist. Working in unison, these domains are the means by which hegemony and oppression continue. Therefore, an educator must break, question, and/or engage one or all domains of power to help guide their students toward a more inclusive classroom, community and society- the ultimate purpose of social justice education (Bell, Roberts, Irani & Murphy, 2008).

As students develop agency and a common language to expose hegemony and create social justice, an emancipatory classroom begins; therefore, the emancipatory classroom is also counter-hegemonic. The question underlying this study is: How do teachers at an affluent public school engage in anti-oppressive education to work towards social justice for all? Counter-hegemony, therefore, is essential in understanding the intent behind social justice programs in affluent settings as well as teachers' actions to transform the classroom into a space where systemic inequalities and oppression are addressed through awareness and action.

Research Questions

How do teachers committed to social justice education enact counter-hegemonic and anti-oppressive practices in an affluent public school? This overarching question is grounded in three sub-questions: (1) What are the teachers' prior and current experiences

in social justice education? (2) What is each teacher's approach to pedagogy and curriculum? and (3) What are the teachers' and administrators' perspectives of the sustainability of the social justice program? These research questions are detailed below:

1. What are the teachers' prior experiences and current motivations for social justice education?
    a. Research question 1A: What life experiences led to the teachers' interest in teaching and in particular teaching social justice?
    b. Research question 1B: Why do teachers choose to use social justice pedagogy in an affluent public school?
2. What is each teacher's approach to pedagogy and curriculum?
    a. Research question 2A: How do social justice teachers in an affluent public school describe their pedagogical approach and curricular practices for the social justice program?
    b. Research question 2B: How do teachers in the social justice program understand and plan for their curriculum in comparison with the general education program?
3. What are the teachers' and administrators' perspectives of the sustainability of the social justice program?
    a. Research question 3: What are the conditions necessary for a social justice program to sustain itself, according to teachers and school administrators?

Delimitations

The focus of this study was on one school, Greenship Academy, an affluent school with an existing social justice program. The selection of this site aligned with the

purpose of the study to uncover the specific effects of social justice curriculum at an affluent public high school.

Limitations

The two main limitations to this study were that: (1) I was (and still am) a teacher at the school site, and (2) the timeframe of the study was only one academic year. Time constraints existed for me as the researcher as well as for the teachers and administrators as participants in the study. Since multiple perspectives were essential to uncover the needs, outlooks, and perceptions of the program, these time constraints were mitigated inside the data collection.

Educational Significance

Many previous studies have focused on the implementation of social justice curriculum and pedagogy within urban and predominantly low-income settings in education. However, little research has examined the impact of social justice education in an affluent public high school or considered the perspective of both teachers and administrators. Through conducting this study, I hoped to expand the scope of research literature on social justice education and to offer substantial conclusions that my participants (teachers and administrators) could use to inform, validate, and strengthen their practice. I was able to accomplish both goals by the end of the study.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter begins with a review of the scholarly literature on the current state of public education across the nation with attention to neoliberalism and then specifically focuses on affluent public schools. Affluent communities often face unique challenges closely linked to mental health concerns caused by a culture of success and wealth. The next section explores scholars' views of the need for anti-oppression education, followed by a discussion of how various types of anti-oppression educators (human rights, peace, and social justice) implement critical pedagogy and impact students. Notably, social justice education proponents, along with other equity reform advocates, aim to prove the efficacy of these approaches in contrast to traditional educators who do not carry this burden. Given this discrepancy, most published research related to anti-oppression reform, action, education or pedagogy is intended to compare actions and/or approaches with normative practices. For this reason, the conclusion of this chapter reviews empirical studies regarding social justice education with this frame in mind.

Current State of Public Schooling in the United States

As established in Chapter 1, industrialization resulted in schools becoming sites of preparation for future U.S. wage laborers, leading students to become dehumanized through hegemonic influences (Freire, 2005; Hantzopoulos, 2016; Lipman, 2011). While Hantzopoulos (2016) believes public schools are also sites of possibility, she thinks the prevailing policies of reform rooted in neoliberalism do not incorporate holistic strategies that truly benefit children. So then, what is neoliberalism? Lipman (2011) establishes that neoliberalism first developed following World War II as the thrust of the economy shifted toward private social reform over government social reform to allow for more

efficiency in the competitive capitalist market. Since then, the economic system has benefitted large corporate interests, assuming that what works in the private sector will work in the public sector and leading to the public sector subsidizing the private sector (Lipman, 2011). Through this process, the free market of capitalism becomes increasingly "free" for capitalists but less "free" for everyone else, as profits are moved into the hands of the elite wealthy owners of the system (Lipman, 2011).

To continue the reproduction of wealth and power - hegemony, Giroux (2004) argues that public pedagogy promotes devaluation of education and citizenship by "defining higher education primarily as a financial investment and learning as a form of training for the workforce" (p. 494). This public pedagogy reinforces the business agenda, inside of public schooling, through the use of choice, free markets, and deregulation of public schooling to fit capitalist interests (Giroux, 2004). Hantzopoulos (2016) concludes that accountability reform based on this public pedagogy is inevitably impossible to achieve, thereby leading to "failing" schools and paving the way for private and charter schools to develop, managed by private entities outside the federal government.

Klein (2015) notes how the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2002 exemplifies these accountability reforms. NCLB came through the legacy of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, which created a clear role of the federal government in public schools and provided federal money to help cover costs of educating disadvantaged students. While reconfigured multiple times, the largest act was NCLB (2002), which expanded the federal government's role in monitoring the progress of disadvantaged students with high stakes testing in reading and math across

elementary and secondary public schools, aiming for all schools to achieve proficiency by 2013-14. By 2015, Klein (2015) acknowledged that no state had reached 100% percent proficiency with NCLB. The United States Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (2018), however, claims that select schools and districts have recently made progress, but this academic success is not evident in a majority of the nation's public schools.

Hantzopoulos (2016) acknowledges how all public schools, including high performing ones, need to meet academic standards set through school reform (i.e. No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, Common Core State Standards) to benefit from federal and state government funding. According to the United States Department of Education (2017), the federal government contributes 8% of public schooling costs, mostly relating to programs that focus on economically disadvantaged students; the other 92% of funding for public school districts derives from local and state governments. Unfortunately, this gap causes many equity issues across public schooling, especially because local government funds usually come from property taxes. In particular, Walker (1984) establishes that in 1890, property taxes accounted for 67.9% of public-education funding in the U.S., but with increased urbanization and industrialization, regional equity grew as well, especially in public schooling. This pattern continues today with certain areas of the nation having less valuable land and less industry having less money for schools; conversely, areas of the nation with land in high demand and more industry have more money for schools (Walker, 1984).

This inequity has implications for student success outside of schooling contexts. The National Bureau of Economic Research through Jackson, Johnson and Persico's

(2016) study established that adequate funding of schools through reforms has a positive direct impact on student achievement in academic achievement and future opportunities. This study maintains that school funding has little impact on students from affluent backgrounds, but a sizable impact on students from low-income or impoverished backgrounds. Jackson, Johnson and Persico (2016) determined that a 20% increase in per-pupil spending a year for poor children can lead to an additional year of completed education, increased future earnings, and decreased poverty in adulthood. Therefore, schools in affluent areas are shown to have higher performing students with increased academic achievement regardless of funding.

In a review of the current climate of education, Klees (2017) found private education to be a $100 billion business with education as a whole totaling $4 trillion; the wealth opportunity is immense, especially as capital growth is estimated to increase to $70 trillion by 2030 in both infrastructure and curriculum. In fact, any rationale to support the continuation of privatization policies is used in order to deflect attention away from the blame on changes to the institution itself. Brunn-Bevel and Byrd (2015) claim that the success of all students depends on the level of support they receive in terms of district size, teacher-student ratio, school funding, and parental involvement. While affluent districts and school sites lobby for higher levels of support, this poses challenges for low-income and working-class families.

Regardless of these supports, Malone (2017) concludes that social and economic disadvantage impairs student performance, especially when students with these disadvantages are concentrated within one school - a common pitfall of privatization. Often students with wealth and past achievements are accepted into privatized schools

with continued and positive supports provided; therefore, students without these supports from the very start are usually grouped into the same under-funded schools. Rothstein (2015) establishes that low expectations decrease student achievement and motivation, inflaming the divide between the haves and have-nots and causing a decline of accessibility of equity in the education system.

Current climate of affluent public high schools

Despite having greater access to support through funding, communities of privilege have their own issues, which are predominately due to success-driven funding and wealth-catalyzed mental health concerns.

Funding

McKenna (2016) reports that certain organizations that exist specifically to provide additional funding for public schools. These include: (1) local affiliates of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), (2) booster clubs, which provide supports for specific programs or activities on campus, and/or (3) parent-run foundations that assist the school but operate independently from the district, receiving individual tax benefits from donations. These organizations are more common in affluent schools as parents need the time and social capital to organize fundraisers and establish the foundations. Therefore, fundraising "prowess" is seen within these wealthy community schools, earning the nickname "public privates" due to the sheer amount of resources of the school (McKenna, 2016). In their study, Nelson and Gazley (2014) found the number of parent-led groups raising at least $25,000 annually jumped from 3,500 in 1995 to 11,500 in 2010, totaling about $880 million raised in 2010.

In a more recent study on foundation and district leaders in California, Going (2018) established that foundation funding has become an essential and expected component of public education's financial landscape; this is due to a mindset that has developed at the state level that "the community will provide what the state cannot" (p. 55). However, this creates an equity divide as the community can only provide for certain schools and districts, and many constituents have been monetarily tapped to the tipping point. Reich (2013) illustrates this inequity in action with two examples of fundraising alongside the district standard per-pupil allocation in Hillsborough and Oakland, both in the San Francisco Bay Area. Hillsborough as a high affluent suburban area was able to raise a total of $2,300 per student above the allocation; whereas, Oakland as a predominately low socioeconomic urban center was only able to raise a total of $100 per student above the allocation (Reich, 2013).

This fundraising does not just impact the student, but also the community itself as all taxable donations go back into the community, enhancing student success while simultaneously increasing the donor's property value (Reich, 2013). Pinsker (2018) and Hagerman (2018) note that parents in donating money are aiding their children in what they think is best; however, Ledin (2014) asserts that these parent organizations often ask for additional resources to insure their own children can achieve success prior to others.

Mental health

This emphasis on success contributes to mental health pressures. A nationwide adolescent mental health survey completed by Merikangas et al. (2010) found one in five kids in the United States have a mental health disorder, showing anxiety, depression, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorders to be the most common. Unfortunately, untreated

mental health issues can lead to suicide, and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2013) in a nationwide survey found that only 26.4% of teens who had committed suicide were under treatment for a mental health disorder.

In working with suicide crisis counselors, Bailey et al. (2017) establishes the inhibitors of youth suicide to be religiosity, social cohesion and intact families that spend time together – all values of an affluent community. However, the very nature of affluence and expectation to maintain success is a bigger contributor to suicide and mental health issues amongst youth in wealthy areas. In fact, Wise (2008) points to evidence that suggests affluent areas engage "disproportionately in a range of strange pathologies, all of which are about control and domination either of others or even oneself," including higher rates of drug-induced deaths, binge drinking, and suicide (p. 154). This prevalence in privileged groups is recognized in study completed by Luthar (2003) and Levine (2008) found that these individuals have lower levels of happiness in comparison to their less affluent peers, becoming more prone to particular forms of anxiety, depression, and drug use as well.

Similarly, Luthar and Barkin (2012) look at East Coast suburban youth at the end of their senior year in high school and 11th and 12th graders in a Northwest suburb and East Coast city. Focusing on the Northwest sample revolving around an upper middle-class community with several suicide clusters, students showed a lack of coping abilities and resiliency when faced with internal and external challenges. Many of these challenges stemmed from the expectations of the community. Mueller and Abrutyn (2016) further this claim in their work with a "highly integrated community," showing high levels of integration and regulation with the purpose of academic achievement cause

intense "emotional reactions to the prospect of failure among adolescents and an unwillingness to seek psychological help for adolescents' mental health problems among both parents and youth" as the reactions are normalized to a social and cultural norm of success (p. 877). Despite these troubles, educational research tends to frame the education of privileged students as "successful," which leads to an unstated and dangerous norm that stays at an "unchanging and unproblematic location" (Bonnett, 1996, p. 146).

Affluent communities aspire to maintain this culture of success, but in doing so, this culture is one where not all students succeed. Luthar and Barkin (2012) found that teenagers faced intense pressure to succeed academically and conform to the very narrow and well-defined standards of success. In fact, according to Koplewicz, Gurian, and Williams (2009), this group of affluent youth is a "newly identified at-risk group" due to the formation of a phenomenon known as *affluenza*, a metaphorical illness presenting with a hyper-investment in material wealth among upper middle class and white-collar families (p. 2). Children of these families show a need for preventative intervention to allow for greater adjustment to challenges to which they are predisposed, like substance abuse, depression, and anxiety (Koplewicz, Gurian, & Williams, 2009; Levine, 2008; Luthar, 2003; Wise, 2008). To mitigate this tendency, Luthar and Barkin (2012) identify the need to find ways of support for students to "thrive despite the relentless pressures of upward mobility in the culture of affluence" (p. 17).

Anti-Oppression Education in Action

As Apple (2004) argues, since public schools have served to maintain power and control in the hands of the elite, the curriculum and reforms often legitimize the elite's

own knowledge by replicating achievement of a positive outcome and good test results for themselves. Ladson-Billings (2006) claims that these good results or successes for white and/or wealthy students are usually correlated with high standardized test scores, enrollment in honors and advanced placement courses, and acceptance rates to college or professional programs with high retention rates; however, in low-income settings, success usually translates to high school graduation alone.

Regardless of wealth, the pressure for achievement is so great that many schools alter their pedagogical model, in favor of a traditional approach to schooling to achieve positive results. This pedagogical change in urban low-income settings is often referred as Haberman's (1991) *pedagogy of poverty*, a teacher-centric style of learning with four assumptions made inside the school and within the classroom:

> (1) Teaching is what teachers do, learning is what students do. Therefore, students and teachers are engaged in different activities...
> (2) Teachers are in charge and responsible. Students are those who still need to develop appropriate behavior...
> (3) Students represent a wide range of individual differences... therefore ranking of some sort is inevitable.
> (4) Basic skills are a prerequisite for learning and living and students are not necessarily interested in these basic skills. Therefore, directive pedagogy must be used. (p. 83)

The purpose of these assumptions and approach to schooling is to match the expectation that students are not capable of achieving more, and instead, will become part of the future workforce, perpetuating cyclical oppression through hegemonic dominance and power (Haberman, 1991; Levinson et al., 2012).

This achievement narrative is also closely connected to teachers' sense of their own efficacy in promoting student learning. In one of the largest studies on teacher efficacy, Lee and Smith (1996) analyzed longitudinal data on 820 high schools across the

nation, totaling nearly 12,000 student and 10,000 teacher participants. The study found a statistically significant positive correlation between gains in student test scores (achievement) and teachers' sense of responsibility for students' academic success or failure in mathematics, reading, history and science. Additionally, race and socioeconomic gaps in achievement lessened when teachers took responsibility for student learning.

These conclusions are expanded in a study of 96 high schools from rural, suburban, and urban environments. Goddard, LoGerfo, and Hoy (2004) concluded that the collective efficacy – a group's belief in its capabilities to organize and execute courses of action to meet specific goals - of a school's faculty was the strongest predictor of student achievement. Hoy, Tarter, and Hoy (2006) built upon this point, examining the relationship between a school's *academic optimism* and student achievement. Academic optimism is a construct composed of a school's academic emphasis, collective faculty efficacy, and the faculty's trust in students' and parents' interest in learning.

Furthermore, teachers for anti-oppression education create learning communities that encourage academic and social cooperation amongst students. Darder, Baltodano, and Torres (2009) establish that when educators seek emancipatory ideals, they are practicing critical pedagogy. From changing the physical space to promoting positive student-teacher interactions and relationships, Breuning (2005) establishes that much can be - and should be - done by teachers to implement critical pedagogical approaches. Giroux (2004) adds that through the practice of critical pedagogy, schooling becomes democratic and engaged while the students begin to transform into critical democratized citizens.

Next, the literature addressing the theme of anti-oppression education in action is divided into three sections - human rights education, peace education, and social justice education. All three types of anti-oppression education are closely aligned with and integrate critical pedagogy into their overall purposes or goals. These goals have a commonality: counteract oppressive structures to promote a society where everyone has their rights given and maintained (human rights education) while violence ceases to exist (peace education) and there is a deeper understanding of the experiences of the Other and promotion of justice (social justice education). Additionally, all have been implemented within public schools and affluent areas and fit with the nature of this research.

Studies in human rights and peace education

According to well-documented studies in education, a school curriculum focused on critical analysis and personal growth offers students the best possible education. However, due to neoliberal education policy, school curricula that provide these components are often suppressed (Giroux, 2004; Lipman, 2011). Nevertheless, Katz and McEvoy Spero (2015) note that many teachers, whether or not they identify as human rights educators (HRE), contribute to HRE by engaging in models of teaching and learning that carry out its vison and values. Social justice education aligns with HRE in that it uses critical pedagogy to "engage students in critiquing economic, political, and social inequalities and aim[s] to amplify the voices of underrepresented minorities" (Katz & McEvoy Spero, 2015, p. 21). In fact, human rights and social justice are fundamentally linked through their ultimate goal of transforming current conditions through collective action and empowerment (Katz & McEvoy Spero, 2015). Grant and Gibson (2013) see a connection between the two frameworks in how they emphasize economic and social

rights. Each form of education has a method or model of teaching that allows for critical analysis and growth. Tibbitts (2017) establishes the transformational model of human rights education (HRE) as optimal for deepening the agency, experience, struggles, and beliefs of learners. Through implementing this model, any school is able to engage in critical pedagogy, moving both the teacher and the student to use their own lived experience as a catalyst of transformation in their own lives and beyond.

For example, the transformational model can be seen in Hantzopoulos' (2016) case study of City Prep (or Prep) in New York City, which implements HRE through a democratizing and humanizing lens in all aspects of space, curriculum, and philosophy. The three main tenets of the school provide its foundation: (1) the operation of the HRE framework to allow for guidance with communication, critical thinking, self-awareness, and activism as a way of working through complex environments, (2), the application of experiential knowledge to promote sustainable activism in unjust situations, and (3) using HRE as a critical tool to allows for students to experience social realms with ease and support life transitions with ease. HRE contributes to the culture of engagement that brings critical consciousness, effecting broader social change. Overall, Hantzopoulos (2016) shows how HRE realized in urban settings can serve as a counterpoint to current educational policy and oppressive schooling, leading to a vibrant style of teaching and learning that lasts long after the student leaves the classroom.

The impact of HRE can also be seen in other contexts. Covell, Howe and McNeil (2010) completed a teacher-focused study of a human rights program implemented within 13 schools across ages in Hampshire County, England. Teachers reported an increased enjoyment in teaching with growing self-efficacy when they used HRE. Additionally,

students had increased participation and engagement, leading to discipline issues decreasing in both instances of detention and expulsion across sites (Covell & Howe, 2008). The impact of the program was not just on the schools, but also on the broader community started experiencing empowerment (Covell, Howe & McNeil, 2010).

Several case studies have focused on teachers' use of critical pedagogy linked to HRE (Arduini, 2015; Padilla, 2015) and/or specific approaches to human rights-based curriculum (Sohcot, 2015) in the United States. Yet research on HRE is still in nascent form and continually evolving. Focused on elementary school environments, Yamasaki (2002) studied the influence of HRE programs on the student, while Wade (1992) looked at students' responses to the curriculum. By engaging with students through interviews, pre- and post-surveys, and questionnaires, Yamasaki (2002) found the curriculum influenced students' understanding of content and ability to engage with their lives outside of school. Similarly, Wade (1992) discovered that a focus on personal experiences and cultural backgrounds influenced students' ability to learn about human rights.

Recent studies of HRE have focused on its effectiveness in engaging students in urban high schools. Schiller (2013) discovered that HRE could actually provide newcomer high school students with opportunities to master the English language while developing the skills necessary to interrogate their lived experiences of oppression. Based in a community impacted by police violence, McEvoy Spero's (2012) study found that the use of performance arts to teach about human rights allowed students to provide a public testimony of their lived experiences that elevated their own as well as the community's knowledge and power.

Along with HRE, peace education can also serve as a way to heighten students' critical social consciousness and is similarly aligned with social justice teachings. In reviewing current approaches toward peace education, Bajaj and Hantzopoulos (2016) found that a range of educational settings have implemented peace education curriculum to address violence against students of color, multilingual students, and those with special needs. Critical peace education perspectives seek to "uncover subjugated knowledge, challenge normalized truths and illuminate wisdom from individuals and groups silenced" (Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, 2016, p. 7).

Furthermore, Dryden-Peterson and Sieborger (2006) show the positive implications of critical pedagogy in under-funded schools. They studied 16 schools in Cape Town, South Africa, using an ethnographic approach to uncover how testimony can serve as a pedagogical tool to address the history of apartheid. The authors found that the use of the teachers' oral histories and narratives enabled the students to critically discuss a very difficult and controversial topic. This democratic practice led to a new curriculum that allowed teachers to portray the collective value of democracy, the tenacity of humanity, and the atrocities of apartheid (Dryden-Peterson & Sieborger, 2006).

Studies in social justice education

As established earlier, affluent students' "success" is attributed primarily to the wealth of available resources and the larger community's expectations. Unfortunately, a critical understanding of class privilege and power in an affluent community is rarely included in the curriculum. As a result, Swalwell (2011) asserts privileged students are unlikely to enter classrooms with this kind of critical understanding of the world and should engage in social justice education as it uniquely addresses the needs of these

students. In agreement, Chubbuck and Zembylas (2008) call for educators and scholars to think about ways in which:

> All students, whether marginalized or from the dominant culture, need to learn and respond to the demands of both recognition and redistribution as expressions of justice… In socially just teaching, marginalized students who have been positioned as objects of societal injustice… are to be empowered to act as subjects who challenge inequitable status quo and work to create a better society [while]… those students who are part of the dominant culture also can learn of injustice and embrace their own role as allies in the creation of a more just society. (pp. 282-285)

Within a school engaged in social justice education, when some students are "struggling to find food and shelter while others are debating the merits of this advanced placement class over that one," a singular approach cannot be used (North, 2009, p. 1200). Furthermore, students with privilege need to do more than just "learn about" suffering, while marginalized students need more than test preparation to close the equity divide (North, 2009, p. 1200). Affluent students need to develop the "skills, knowledge and commitment required to tackle those injustices" (North, 2009, p. 1200); otherwise, change will never occur (Allen & Rossatto, 2009). Curry-Stevens (2007) calls for educators to act on five domains for the transformation of privileged students: spiritual, ideological, psychological, behavioral, and intellectual or cognitive changes. All domains work together towards reaching the goal of social justice education.

The ultimate goal of social justice education is creating democratic and engaged individuals who acknowledge and respect the people and experiences around them. The following section summarizes relevant research regarding the use of critical pedagogy to teach for social justice. Since empirical studies of social justice methodologies in affluent U.S. public high schools are scarce, this study intends to fill a gap in scholarly literature on this topic.

Curriculum strategies: Incorporating critical pedagogy in urban settings

Freire (2005) concludes that the solution to traditional oppressive schooling is problem-posing education, which builds a critical consciousness of the nature of society and oppression. Through this process, both the teacher and the student learn from each other and have a voice in the process; schooling becomes transformative and anti-oppressive as "problem-posing education does not and cannot serve the interests of the oppressor. No oppressive order could permit the oppressed to begin to question: why?" (Freire, 2005, p. 86). This question of "why" sets the tone for critical pedagogy and its emancipatory approach to go beyond the traditional "banking" method of schooling.

As schools have a role in "producing consensus and legitimizing knowledge," a hidden curriculum superimposes hegemony in the form of class schedules and classroom layout, thereby establishing the interconnectedness of school and the capitalist system (Levinson et al, 2012, p. 66). The liberation and overall disruptive discourse of social justice education counteracts this through transformative pedagogy,

> an activist pedagogy combining the elements of constructivist and critical pedagogy that empowers students to examine critically their beliefs, values, and knowledge with the goal of developing a reflective knowledge base, an appreciation for multiple perspectives, and a sense of critical consciousness and agency. (Ukpokodu, 2009, p. 43)

Leonardo (2009) discusses how transformative pedagogies seek to deconstruct and reconstruct ideas through questioning and focusing more on problem-posing than answering and solving the problem. They are synonymous with the approach of critical pedagogy, bringing awareness to the oppressed struggle, resisting oppression, and working towards change. Transformative pedagogies do not limit educators to just one approach or solution. Tied to personal experience, the struggle to confront the reality of

oppression alongside the possibility of lessening oppressive conditions in the future must use the language of transcendence or hope (Duncan-Andrade, 2009).

Miller (2010) found that teachers need to begin a student's education with forging a meaningful relationship within the classroom, within the community, and amongst the students – all acts embedded in transformative pedagogies. As Banks (1995) states, "If teachers are to increase learning opportunities for all students, they must be knowledgeable about the social and cultural contexts of teaching and learning" (p. 4). This knowledge builds a sense of community because it forms relationships that can make or break the classroom space (Pratt-Johnson, 2006).

Banks (1995) outlines the five main sources of knowledge: personal/cultural, popular, mainstream academic, transformative academic, school, showing that in having all five working together, an acceptance of all peoples is possible within an educational setting. Banks claims that education today has only framed curriculum using the mainstream academic and school knowledge, thereby causing a constant positive feedback loop where ideas are formed and created, as well as where and how students receive knowledge. Using transformative pedagogies, teachers engage in a new mindset and implement mindfulness and an arts-based curriculum, which disrupt that "mainstream" or dominant perspective.

Transformative pedagogy should be used in the classroom as a quality education involves questioning thought; therefore, it is the role of the teacher to critique the system. This questioning can take place within the frames of transformative or critical pedagogy, such as the following: (1) an organic intellectual teacher mindset, (2) mindfulness

practice in the classroom, (3) collaborative grouping, (4) storytelling experiences, and (5) integration of the arts through theatre.

Organic intellectual teacher mindset. Levinson et al. (2012) and Kumashiro (2012) identify an important link to ending hegemony within the classroom - calling for teachers to become organic intellectuals that challenge the system, unlike the traditional "good teachers" who follow the dominant class and structure of society. Many different organizations have already created curriculum to promote "bad teaching" that examines hegemony from the experiences of the oppressed. For the social sciences, some of these organizations, including Teaching Tolerance, Facing History and Ourselves, Equal Justice Initiative, and the Upstander Project, focus on creating tangible classroom lessons that move students and teachers towards a better understanding of the world outside the confines of hegemonic thought.

Zinn's (2003) authored *A People's History of the United States* with the purpose of disrupting the dominant approach towards learning history. The textbook itself was written from a multiculturalist perspective, having people of different beliefs, ideals, and appearances retell major historical events. As a result, the book contains an in-depth account of each historical time period, using those primary source accounts to enrich the historical narrative from the eyes of the people that experienced it. Zinn (2003) promotes the unheard perspectives and voice of history, allowing for students to question their beliefs and previous knowledge while creating a greater understanding of all peoples' roles in the making of the nation.

Mindfulness practice in the classroom. The classroom space is threatened through the historic oppression learned and experienced. Berila (2016) shows how using a

mindful or self-reflective approach in classroom activities can help students decipher the effects of the system of oppression and discern the face of the oppressor. Contemplating one's prior beliefs and experiences can result in deep emotional triggers. Ginwright (2015) offers a way to acknowledge these emotional reactions, arguing that these triggers may be necessary because they show a vulnerability and an opportunity for growth. Acknowledging emotional reactions leads to lasting change and impacts the community as a whole, mending and creating communal ties that will work to increase the strength of its bond (Ginwright, 2015). If mindfulness were integrated in classroom activities, a greater sense of community could engage and support the cohesion of its members, regardless of experience.

Collaborative grouping. Cohesion of the classroom can also come in the form of creating a cooperative learning environment through grouping strategies. In a quasi-experimental study of jigsaw type cooperative learning in eight high school science classes, Hanze and Berger (2007) found that although the grouping strategy did not impact content knowledge, students within these groups developed significantly higher "academic self-concepts," or confidence in academic abilities. This was in direct comparison to the control group receiving direct instruction. In contrast, Hanze and Berger (2007) found students preferred working in groups, achieving a higher level of intrinsic motivation, interest in the course, and self-confidence.

Storytelling experiences. Motivation and self-confidence correlate with addressing experiences that involve subjugation and oppression (Bell, 2010). For this reason, engaging in activities in a diverse space can be intimidating, especially when addressing structural inequities. Therefore, the inability to discuss oppression thoughtfully and

critically forces the lack of acknowledgement of overt oppression and the prevention of equity and equality from occurring in widespread contexts, causing a further divide in the classroom community. As such, the way in which race, class, gender, and sex are addressed becomes important for the implications it causes within society: the reproduction of dominance.

Bell (2010) states the ways in which oppression is addressed "provides a roadmap for tracing how people make sense of social reality, helping us to see where we connect with and where we differ from others in our reading of the world, and it defines the remedies that will be considered as appropriate and necessary" (p. 4). Using a pedagogical and conceptual model, the Storytelling Project Model is a potential approach for addressing race and other oppressions in a meaningful and engaging way within classroom settings. Through this model, four main story types - stock, concealed, resistance, and counter – are utilized in the curriculum to bring awareness, understanding, discussions, and discourse to challenge the hegemonic narrative in the classroom and outside community. Using narrative prevents the hegemonic singular story from being retold and reproduced; personal experience is not something that can be denied.

Integration of the arts: Theatre. Another way of retelling experience outside of written and oral expression involves theatre. Using theatre in promoting mental health and preventing systemic violence amongst young adolescents in middle and early high school has been proven to be effective. Dramatic performance provides the students with a forum theater technique, which uses an antagonist-protagonist approach in handling oppressive and stressful situations. With specific scenes being set for replay to discuss difficult situations that require a different outcome, Fredland (2010) enables the students

in the audience as well as the actors to reenact the scene, changing it to allow for the actor to get closer to the goal: equality and access for all peoples. First used by Augusto Boal (1992) in *Theatre of the Oppressed,* an open dialogue of societal issues and experiences through personal storytelling and theatre can serve as active resistance against accepting mainstream societal values. This dialogue helps students to form a relationship between the "sociological and abstract dimensions and the individually lived, personal dimensions on which racism [and dominance] functions" (Bell et al., 2008, p. 9).

Effect and impact of implementation

Researchers such as Lambert (2018), Kokka (2017), and Swalwell (2011/2013) have taken different approaches in reviewing the impact of critical pedagogy in social justice curriculum. Among empirical studies on social justice education since 2010, a majority are focused on principals or administrators, leadership roles across districts, librarian efficacy, and guidance counselor support for students. Following is a summary of these empirical studies completed in international and national contexts and across all grade levels.

As no specific social justice curriculum has been implemented in the United States, I provide an overview of studies in international contexts. Lambert (2018), examining the 2013 Ontario Social Studies curriculum for the degree to which it addressed social justice issues in Canada (racism, sexism, colonization of First Nations, and disability exclusion), concludes that bias and dominant viewpoints still remain to the extent of being "whitewashed." Addressing the impact of social justice, Drewery (2016) focuses specifically on the efficacy of social justice curriculum in New Zealand schools to improve learning outcomes for Maori students. Restorative justice practices (RJPs), an

inclusionary and democratic model of addressing issues usually related to discipline, are completed with respect and "transparency, [alongside] an acceptance of the right of each person present to put their perception of the story, and faith in the capacity of those present to come to a commonly agreed" outcome, solution, or resolution (Drewery, 2016, p. 194-195). Drewery (2016) establishes that RJPs are an "instrument of social development" as they build agency; however, using RJPs solely for behavior management limits their impact on the students they aim to serve as the notion of respect and equity become only valued in disciplinary contexts (p. 191).

In contrast to the above, most U.S. studies reveal barriers or challenges to the implementation and practice of social justice curriculum. In a qualitative case study conducted by Navarro (2016), six Los Angeles educators showed how they sustain and enhance social justice teaching in urban secondary schools through a critical inquiry group (CIG), created to discuss, implement, and engage students in critical pedagogy. CIG's goal is to promote student voice while critically exploring social issues relevant to the community. Navarro (2016) finds CIG helped to create a community of transformative praxis fostering positive collaboration through building trust, vulnerability, and accountability. Moreover, regardless of years of teaching experience, social justice teaching is a process - not a goal or system and requires consistent direction and framing (Navarro, 2016).

Dover (2010) offers a concrete framework for teaching social justice through studying how 24 high school English language arts teachers in Massachusetts develop curriculum and praxis of teaching for social justice. These teachers break down teaching for social justice into three categories: curriculum, pedagogy and social action. However,

teaching for social justice also requires facing the dual challenges of addressing state content standards as well as confronting sociopolitical contexts (Dover, 2010).

Robertson (2008) looks at these challenges through a qualitative case study of one teacher who implements a social justice curriculum in an elementary school social studies classroom. Robertson (2008) noted that the teacher is instrumental in implementing social justice and serves as a model for social justice. In other words, the teacher must set the context for social justice education to emerge, choosing to either address or ignore standardized curricula. This need to circumnavigate standards or circumvent them leads to Robertson's (2008) conclusion that the public elementary school setting may not adequately support social justice education as its implementation and action depends solely on the teacher. Similarly, in Sotropa's (2008) study of three Saskatchewan (Canada) teachers committed to teaching social justice in both middle and high school settings, the researcher found that each teacher varied in their interpretation of social justice and implementation of teaching for social justice, resulting in discrepancies and differences amongst classrooms.

Furthermore, teachers' own perceptions of social justice education can impact its implementation, as can be seen in research by both Malcolm (2010) and Kravatz (2007). Malcolm (2010) focused on 10th grade social studies teachers in Alberta, Canada, implementing a new social studies curriculum that involved critical pedagogy. The purpose of the new curriculum was to be entirely inquiry-focused, concept-based and informed by narratives from the Global South and marginalized members of the community. Malcolm (2010) discovered this intentional approach at inclusion magnified the comparison of global social structures with Canada, while creating a critical social

space focused on “stories of the culturally, economically and politically marginalized… to inform and elaborate social perspectives” of the students, teachers and broader community (pp. 302-303).

With the purpose of uncovering how social justice pedagogies can help to engage students in democracy and civil society, Kravatz (2007) used an ethnographic field method to observe and interview teachers and students at three diverse secondary schools (public, charter and private religious-affiliated) in California. All three schools were struggling to implement social justice pedagogies, such as critical pedagogy and social justice praxis. Social justice praxis is defined as imposing “critical consciousness, social responsibility, identity formation, and the questioning of power in society” with the purpose of “positioning and repositioning students and teachers in the power structure while identifying their particular responsibilities to social justice action” (Kravatz, 2007, p. xii). The data suggest that successful comprehensive social justice programs correlate with the degree to which critical pedagogy is implemented and students and/or teachers question their position in the power structure (Kravatz, 2007). Unfortunately, in the process of dismantling the power structure through critical pedagogy, barriers are created in the schooling system (Kravatz, 2007).

Vora (2007) expands on these barriers, focusing on beginning teachers and their quest to teach science for social justice in urban schools. Using a case study lens toward looking at five teacher participants, the findings showed that the teachers struggled with teaching culturally responsive teaching while trying to address “real” science. They often found teaching science for social justice was perceived as less rigorous than teaching a normal curriculum. This tension was often addressed by promoting teacher agency;

therefore, Vora (2007) was able to establish teacher agency is essential in understanding a teacher's relationship to social justice. Additionally, in order to deepen an educator's commitment to social justice practice within social studies classrooms, Good (2010) proposes two strategies: (1) teacher training must emphasize both social justice theory and practice and (2) networks of social studies teachers that support social justice need to be developed to allow the exchange of ideas that promote social justice. These practices could help to mitigate the fear that instruction about oppression, equity and activism will prove to be overly controversial or lacking in rigor.

For the most part, educators voluntarily choose to be involved in social justice programs. For example, Good (2010) completed research on why teachers become committed to social justice and how they conceptualize it within the secondary classroom setting. Using a life history design, Good (2010) conducted interviews with 13 secondary social studies teachers whose practice emphasized social justice concepts. The participants revealed how their experiences in childhood and/or adolescence shaped their identity by either bringing value to social justice or promoting the idea of resistance towards unjust practices. Having formative experiences impact future identity and knowledge suggests the importance of acknowledging the impact of social justice programs on students.

A mixed methods study by Rodriguez, Jones, Pang, and Park (2004) showed how positive outcomes are associated with a six-week social justice-oriented university outreach program. Students are required to apply for the program; therefore, they are predisposed for educational engagement, much like most social justice teachers. Within this specific program, staff explicitly address power differences, asking "who benefits

and who loses, by these conditions and acts?" (p. 47), helping students move towards "participation and involvement in school and society" (p. 48). The focus group quantitative data highlighted an increase in students' sense of academic achievement, while the qualitative data found academic belonging and appreciation for diversity to grow alongside measured achievement.

Cammarota (2007) found similar outcomes in evaluating a social justice curriculum at an Arizona high school. Students who chose to enroll in the Social Justice Education Project (SJEP) engaged in a sub-curriculum within a course titled "United States History through a Chicano Perspective," emphasizing critical theory and social justice-oriented participatory action research projects. During the students' participation in two years of weekly SJEP lessons, they engaged in a critical analysis of their own schooling. Cammarota (2007) concludes that the program "strongly suggest[s] that the challenging, socially relevant curriculum of the SJEP played a significant role" in unexpected and significant increases in high school graduation and college enrollment rates for SJEP students.

Implications for affluent settings

The choice to enroll in social justice programs has grown in popularity due to positive student outcomes. However, in more privileged settings, is this increase in enrollment due to sincere interest in social justice or a desire to become a stronger applicant for college? Ross (2018) asserts how the college admission process has become increasingly competitive and distinguishing oneself from other applicants has become more challenging. Consequently, many students seek experiences with community service or social justice to stand out as more desirable applicants. This trend possibly

began with what Heffernan and Wallace (2016) identify as a push by Ivy League schools, like Harvard and Yale, to focus less on high achievement in academics and more on authentic community engagement. If engaging in a social justice program seems to be associated with community engagement, Heffernan and Wallace (2016) question the motivations of the students and parents involved in a social justice program. Are they motivated by concern with college admissions or by genuine interest in the subject? Regardless of motivation, Heffernan and Wallace (2016) argue that community engagement leads to a powerful learning experience, social growth, and awareness.

This social growth and awareness requires different approaches depending upon the context. Kokka's (2017) study focuses on Social Justice Mathematics (SJM), a form of social justice education that aims to teach math while engaging students in critical pedagogy, in two sixth grade mathematics classrooms. One classroom is an elite private school, while the other is in an urban Title I public school. The purpose was to investigate how teachers' and students' backgrounds and experiences with privilege and/or marginalization influence their meaning making of SJM. Kokka (2017) found that teachers' and students' SJM goals were influenced by their lived experiences and the sociopolitical contexts of their schools. However, students' reactions to learned content differed depending on whether a student was learning about one's own experience or the experience of others. This suggests SJM in marginalized backgrounds is supported through individual teacher's critical consciousness and how they approach the material in their own classrooms. In contrast, SJM in privilege backgrounds requires a school-wide social justice focus as the impact has to be larger for awareness to occur (Kokka, 2017). This research implies that different social justice pedagogical approaches are needed in

an affluent setting from low income settings for an effective social justice program to be in practice.

The most common model of social justice is focused on students from marginalized backgrounds to feel empowered to understand, address inequities, and participate in social movements for change (Adams et. al, 1997; Apple & Beane, 2000). Swalwell (2011) asserts that well-intentioned social justice educators in privileged communities "applying a conventional model of social justice education designed with marginalized students in mind may unintentionally produce effects that counteract their original intentions" (p. 187). Following are the effects: creating a personal capitalization of the issue, romanticizing the challenges and/or experiences of the marginalized, maintaining deficit thinking in approaching the Other, paralyzing oneself under guilt, and believing "charity" is needed to relieve suffering in marginalized communities (Butin, 2007; Denis-McKay, 2007; Miel & Kiester, 1967; Sider et al., 2009).

O'Connell (2009) further establishes that conventional approaches would not work in all settings, calling for "political compassion" (p. 4). O'Connell's "political compassion" counteracts the hegemonic American values that supports a "privatization of compassion" or "compassion by proxy" by which people of affluence create categories of deserving and underserving people, looking into the experiences of the Other out of voyeurism and curiosity (pp. 20-21). In doing so, they ignore the structural causes of oppression, place negative connotations on vulnerability, trap their thinking solely on the cycles of charity, placing the entire onus for social change on those who suffer; the act of suffering, therefore, becomes an individual sin over collective concern (O'Connell, 2009). "Political compassion" moves against these destructive forms of compassion by

promoting an approach that is "able to see, interpret, and respond to the type of dehumanizing suffering that social disasters create" (O'Connell, 2009, p. 149). Privileged people should perceive, interpret, and respond to suffering, which are fundamental elements of social justice education. Within a social justice frame, Swalwell (2011/2013) adapts O'Connell's (2009) theory using Freire's (2005) work with oppression to call for "critical compassion." In doing so, Swalwell (2011/2013) broadens O'Connell's theory beyond the political and towards a multitude of ideological positions and experiences.

Swalwell (2011) confirms this "backfire effect" with the conventional model and the possibilities that existed within the "critical compassion" approach to social justice education in her study, focusing on two social justice programs in affluent public high school settings and their pedagogical approach through studying two teachers in two different high schools (p.198). One teacher, Vernon at West High, uses field trips for Urban History, while another teacher Liz at Kent Academy uses Community Action projects to engage with a common or conventional model of social justice. The field trips introduced students to "facts and figures about social issues from the perspective of marginalized peoples," while the Community Action sought to engage students in connecting what they were learning with their own lived experiences (p. 228). Vernon's field trips failed to highlight different strategies using both existing structures and collective action to form alliances with marginalized peoples. Instead, Vernon focused on students' emotional responses over engaging in intellectual dialogue due to an intense pressure to "move on" with his curriculum.

On the other hand, the Community Action approach failed to explicitly elicit student emotion, focusing too much on academic college preparatory interpretations; this

feed into the attitude of a few students who used the class to build their resume for college applications, showing community engagement in action, much like Heffernan and Wallace (2016) assert. Additionally, the Community Action approach was focused on learning from wisdom of allies, not the marginalized themselves; this aligned the curriculum with the viewpoint of the privileged not the oppressed.

Both programs maintain three distinct pedagogical choices: counter-hegemonic content, student-centered practices, and community connections. Swalwell (2011/2013) concluded that both programs created beneficial counter-hegemonic content that challenged students' idea of the Other while focusing on their own personal ways of knowing. However, they needed to explore how to further develop activism through an ally-ship approach committed to "critical compassion." In doing so, Swalwell (2011/2013) acknowledges, like many of the other studies, that constraints or barriers exist in the teacher's experience in the implementation of the program, pedagogy and curriculum; this makes sustaining the "critical compassion" model of social justice education difficult in affluent settings.

Summary

The current state of public schooling revolves around neoliberal reform. Affluent contexts also contend with stigmas of achievement, causing mental health concerns and affluenza to push the expectation of success even higher. It is this emphasis on 'success' that serves to reproduce oppression through the curriculum and, especially in affluent contexts, to establish a highly restrictive norm of achievement. Anti-oppression education in the form of critical pedagogy integrated with human rights, peace, and social justice education has the power to disrupt this cycle in all schooling environments regardless of

students' backgrounds. Social justice education, however, becomes specifically capable of disrupting oppression in affluent public schools in that it allows the students to become aware of injustice, feel more informed to address inequality, and choose to participate in social action in holistic ways using "critical compassion." However, limited research exists on the impact of social justice curriculum and pedagogy in an affluent public school, especially from the perspective of both teachers and administrators. This is the gap this study hopes to fill.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This study adds to previous research on social justice education in an affluent public high school setting by looking into the perspectives of teachers and administrators on its effect, implementation, and sustainability.

Research Design

This study used a qualitative design grounded in a case study of one affluent public high school with an extant social justice program. Data collection included individual and focus group interviews with six teachers alongside document analysis of student work and individual interviews with administrators in order to address the following research questions.

Research Questions

How do teachers committed to social justice education enact counter-hegemonic and anti-oppressive practices in an affluent public school? This overarching question is grounded in three sub-questions: (1) What are the teachers' prior and current experiences in social justice education? (2) What is each teacher's approach to pedagogy and curriculum? and (3) What are the teachers' and administrators' perspectives of the sustainability of the social justice program? These research questions are detailed below:

4. What are the teachers' prior experiences and current motivations for social justice education?
    a. Research question 1A: What life experiences led to the teachers' interest in teaching and in particular teaching social justice?
    b. Research question 1B: Why do teachers choose to use social justice pedagogy in an affluent public school?

5. What is each teacher's approach to pedagogy and curriculum?
    a. Research question 2A: How do social justice teachers in an affluent public school describe their pedagogical approach and curricular practices for the social justice program?
    b. Research question 2B: How do teachers in the social justice program understand and plan for their curriculum in comparison with the general education program?
6. What are the teachers' and administrators' perspectives of the sustainability of the social justice program?
    a. Research question 3: What are the conditions necessary for a social justice program to sustain itself, according to teachers and school administrators?

Research Setting

Community

The community surrounding the school site of this study is extremely affluent. In fact, Miller and Ramirez's (2016) study showed this community to be one of the most affluent in the nation, with the median income of $151,000 and home value of approximately $2.5 million with 34% of all home owners without a mortgage. Not all residents are wealthy though. According to the annual index report (2018) on Green City (pseudonym), all counties have experienced considerable economic growth and maintain an exorbitant amount of wealth, but a sizeable portion of the community struggles to find affordable housing and experiences economic challenges due to the high cost of necessities, such as food, clothing and childcare. In fact, the report (2018) notes one of every ten children in the area live in poverty and approximately one-third of the children

receive free or reduced-price lunch. Within the school site in particular, those numbers are considerably less; the SARC notes that 9% of the student body is considered socioeconomically disadvantaged with approximately 2,000 total number of students in attendance.

School site

Physical space

The campus itself reflects the culture of the affluent community. Situated in the heart of Northern California, the high school physically mirrors an elite university with the same architect designing both. With Spanish-style one-story buildings and large open quads, students frequently host volleyball pick-up games during lunch, brunch or after school. Students come and go freely, walking home, riding their bikes, or driving cars. Everything from the latest and greatest Audi or Tesla to a 1987 Ford Taurus can be seen leaving the small parking lot filled and mixed between teacher, staff and student cars. Students, teacher, and staff of all different ethnicities, genders, socioeconomic statuses, abilities, and identities attend the school each day. Some come in as early as 6 and stay as late as 8, while others leave as quickly as possible, leaving a coveted parking space (for bike or car) in its place.

The former church on campus, which has been remodeled to be a theatre space, is rented out; it is no longer needed as the newest theatre complex was built with a donation. This new building has nothing on the brand-new gymnasium though, which was also built with a sizeable donation. The largely donation-based remodeling allows for the school and district funds to go towards providing high quality resources for the students, instead of infrastructure improvement. This priority manifests itself in the

classroom space as they are filled with moveable and Dry-Erase friendly desks that fit into pairs, triplets, quads, and hexagons (circles), and maintain an impressive model of accessibility. Each room is equipped with three light levels, a Smartboard, Elmo/Document Camera, and an auditory system that projects sound across the room. It does not matter if a student is in the History, Math, Science, English, World Language, or Special Education buildings, each student appears to have the same opportunities for accommodations within the available classroom.

Teachers in every department have an office to prepare for classes as most share a classroom; some also share an office. Individual spaces seem limited for staff as the school has reached capacity each year. Despite this, it is rare to see teachers from different departments together. Each department is separated by a building or floor of a building, housing its own office spaces and lunchroom. The frequently of lunchroom use varies by the culture of each department, which is also true for the administrators. All work tirelessly through lunch to ensure the school is running efficiently across the year.

The culture of the school, however, is very food focused as a shopping center with many tasty restaurants sitting across the street from the high school. During lunch, students flock there, stopping traffic by intimidation and force to get their food and head back to class. Many students come back to class on time, but many mosey back late from the lunch rush with minimal consequences as attendance is not enforced and punitive policies are virtually nonexistent.

School programs

Achievement, or academic success, at the school is very high. According to the School Accountability Report Card (SARC), Greenship High School offers 20 Advanced

Placement (AP) courses with a majority being Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) focused. The SARC notes on average, the students earn an SAT score over 100 points higher than the national mean, with 93% of all students attending a two or four-year college and 82% going directly into a four-year collegiate university with few (9%) students dropping out. Additionally, the district website notes that wealth and emphasis of education within the community translates to donations and contributions of time through partnerships and volunteering. The average expense per student is high at approximately $12,000 and teacher salaries are higher than a majority of the area (SARC); this can be attributed to the location.

The funding has led to specialized course offering. In fact, the social justice program is not the only subject-specific program on campus or specialized curriculum as there are many specific interest courses and one additional pathway program supported by the school. According to the district's website, this can be attributed to the "rich tradition of educational excellence" and reputation of both the school and district as one of the highest ranked academic programs in both California and the United States as a whole.

Participants

Participants in this study included all six teachers involved in the social justice program and two administrators of academics at Greenship Academy. The administration at the school site consists of one principal and five assistant principals. All administrators are responsible for the efficacy of school systems and management, but several focus only on academics and programs on campus. The six teachers, who are the sole instructors in the social justice program, are responsible for its functioning and

curriculum, while the academic administrators oversee the program and its needs. Both roles provide important insight into the effect, implementation, and communal connections the program has been able to provide at the school and beyond.

The six participant teachers comprise the totality of the faculty on campus who teach in the social justice program. All have taught at Greenship Academy for at least five years; five teachers are European American, and one is Filipino American. To be a teacher in the program is prestigious as one must apply and commit to being a member for three years. Upon acceptance, teachers in the program are required to instruct both general education and social justice program courses, teaching a minimum of one general education class and a minimum of one social justice class per year. For their social justice classes, teachers engage in both critical and transformative pedagogy and aid students in becoming more active in their community through project-based, experiential learning, culminating in a capstone community-based action research project that seeks to enact social justice.

The social justice program is an elective pathway in which students have the option to enroll, beginning in sophomore year and moving through their senior year. Students are organized into cohorts of 30 each who enter and exit the program at the same time and keep their same English and Social Science teachers until they graduate. Currently, each grade level has approximately 60 students enrolled in the program. The students are still taking general education courses for the remainder of their studies (i.e. mathematics, science, physical education, visual and performing arts, etc.). Each course on campus, including the social justice program, meets for 90 minutes two to three times per week, depending on the rotating schedule. A distinctive difference in the social

justice program is that teach on "even" period days to ensure that the program cohorts can collaborate or go on field trips, work on projects together, or invite guest speakers without disruption to other courses on campus. In addition to the difference in scheduling, the teachers use mastery-based learning instead of grade-based teaching in order to lessen competition and increase learning to build skills for change.

Data Collection

Following district Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, the data collection took a four-pronged approach over two months (January to February): (1) teacher interviews and student work analysis, (2) classroom observations, (3) administrator interview(s), and (4) teacher focus group.

	Data source	**How many?**	**How long?**	**Which RQ will be addressed?**
1	Teacher interviews	6	30 - 45 min.	RQ 1, 2
2	Student Work	12 2 per teacher; 1 from general education and 1 from social justice program	n/a	RQ 1, 2
3	Classroom Observations	12 visits total 2 visits per teacher (1 in general education and 1 in social justice program)	15 min./ visit (30 min./ teacher)	RQ 1, 2
4	Administrator interview	1-2	30-45 min.	RQ 3
5	Teacher focus group	1	60 min.	RQ 1, 2, 3

Figure 2. Data sources and collection table.

Teacher interviews and student work analysis

The data collection process began in January 2019 with the intention of collecting 30-40-minute teacher interviews, using the same interview protocols for each teacher (Appendix B). In practice, these interviews lasted an average of 90 minutes each. The interviews focused on the first two research question themes: (1) teacher's approach to pedagogy and curriculum and (2) the teacher's prior and current experience in social justice education. However, the third theme (sustainability) was incorporated as teachers described their experiences.

During these interviews, teachers were asked to bring a piece of student work from both their general education class and their social justice education class. Also, the teachers were invited to choose an assignment from both classes that showed application of content deemed most important or best embodied the purpose of each class. The interview protocols prompted teachers to question and uncover the inherent similarities and/or differences between the two different classes, speaking further to the first research theme.

Classroom observations

The interviews informed the focal points of the classroom observations, which supplemented the information gained from the interviews in revisiting the first two research question themes. For each teacher participant, I completed two observations - one in their general education class and one in their social justice program class - that were scheduled after the teacher had been interviewed. The observations occurred for 15-minute segments of a 90-minute class period, totaling 30 minutes of observation per teacher. In other words, each teacher was observed for 15 minutes in a general education

class and 15 minutes in a social justice class with a total of three hours of observation among all six teachers.

The observational data collected was in the form of targeted notetaking on classroom set up, teacher location, student location and action, and the interaction between the two. The goal of having three modems of primary data collection was to achieve what Schwandt (2007) defined as triangulation of the data to manifest common themes from the interviews, student work analysis and observations.

Administrator interviews

While teacher interviews and observations were underway, I reached out to two administrators for the purpose of conducting 30-45 minute interviews with each one. In practice, the interviews were slightly shorter due to their time constraints and awareness of the program. I used an interview protocol (Appendix E) focused on the last research question theme of programmatic longevity, "What are the conditions necessary for a program like this to sustain itself?", prompting the administrator(s) to speak to the past, present, and future directions of the program since they oversee its scheduling and maintenance.

Teacher focus group

As the last step of data collection in mid-February 2019, I hosted an hour-long teacher focus group to evaluate, discuss, and analyze the themes identified in the research through the preliminary coding of the interviews (both teacher and administrator). The purpose of the focus group (Appendix C) was to validate the data and further answer the last research question theme on sustainability from the teachers' perspective. However, not all teacher participants could attend this particular date. The decision to continue the

focus group meeting on this day came after realizing that all proposed dates led to scheduling conflicts for teachers. As a result, five of the six teachers were present at the focus group; later the last teacher was granted a follow-up interview. The purpose of this follow-up interview was to continue the validation process and have a deeper understanding of the data with the most amount of participant feedback possible.

Data Analysis

Due to the time constraints, I conducted data analysis simultaneously with data collection. I used a four-pronged grounded approach in the data analysis (*Figure 3*). I first transcribed the interviews inform and guide the conversation within the focus group, which fell just over a month after the interviews began. Each interview was transcribed directly following its completion. After I completed all of the interviews, I transcribed and coded all participant responses answering the research questions and comparing them for like-themes; this comparison review occurred twice to confirm and validate the codes I found. I then analyzed and wrote the findings to be included in Chapter IV. I completed this process of interview transcription, coding and analysis for both teacher and administrator participant interviews.

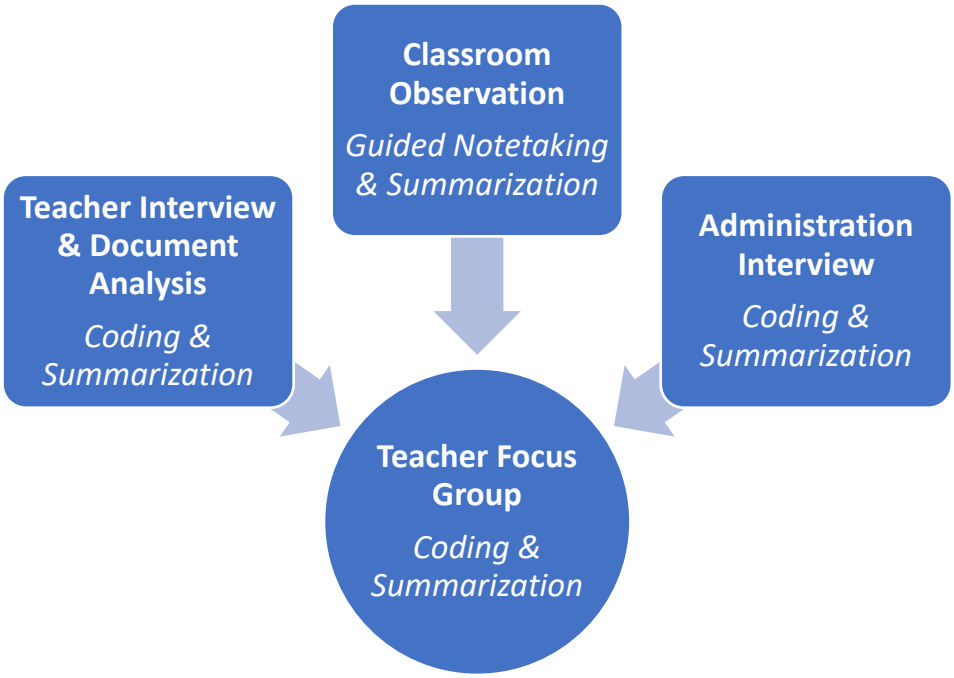

Figure 3. Data Collection and Analysis Process Map.

The teachers described the student work they chose from their general education and social justice courses in their interviews. The teachers spoke about why they designed the assignment, what made it unique to the course, and what the expected student outcomes were. I sensed it would have taken away from the authority and viewpoint of the teacher if I had further interpreted the student work since I was not the one who created or assigned it. For this reason, as I transcribed the interviews, I desegregated and coded all information pertaining to this student work with themes using the teachers' words as the analysis point. These words confirmed many of the themes found in other areas of the interviews. I created a visual representation (*Figure 4*) was created to show the findings.

Originally, I thought classroom observations would take place informed by the individual interviews and student work analyses. Since the interviews lasted much longer than expected, resulting in lengthy transcription, I devised a different plan to inform my

observations while looking into how teachers plan for and understand social justice teaching in an affluent public school. With this in mind, I decided to use guided note-taking to observe the classroom set up, teacher location, student location and action, and the interaction between the two - all pedagogical choices teachers make in the classroom. I coded the observation notes through reviewing like themes across those four data points, and subsequently, I wrote a memo to present the findings and incorporated them into the codes created in the interview analysis.

The focus group data were collected and analyzed last. The teachers used the preliminary codes from the interviews (project-based learning, new teacher onboarding, ongoing support needs and wishes or desires for the future) as talking points. I recorded, transcribed and coded the conversation to compare and contrast with the preliminary codes from the original interviews. The focus group confirmed and supported many of the findings already established in the other areas of data analysis.

However, I noticed that common language was used in the group which altered my wording in referencing concepts and codes. For instance, instead of "new teacher onboarding," the code now became "formalized new teacher support"; similarly, instead of "ongoing support needs," teachers established more specific categories and new themes emerged in "sheltered time" and an "intermediary between administrators and teachers."

Due to the copious amount of different kinds of data collected (observation notes, interview tapes and transcripts, and student work), participants expressed a desire to review the findings, not the data itself. The participants were given a full draft of the findings (Chapter IV), and provided feedback on their representation. Three participants

requested alterations based on small errors in pseudonyms referenced, wording used, or elaboration needed.

Ethical Considerations

My positionality

Initially, I had an interest in studying this affluent high school alongside social justice education, because I have directly seen how unrecognized privilege leads to misunderstanding the world and others who have been marginalized. I have seen this personally through my own schooling experiences in private school and professionally as a general education and advanced placement teacher at the school site, teaching United States History and Advanced Placement (AP) Research as part of the AP Capstone Program on campus.

I am a white, native English-speaking female from upper middle-class roots. While I have personally benefitted from the system of social reproduction Gramsci (1995) identified as maintaining power and privilege in society, I also strive to understand and disrupt oppression. I seek to help both students and myself develop a way of thinking and questioning that promotes positive societal transformation and awareness of social justice. I try to achieve this with varying forms of anti-oppression education linked to critical pedagogy; therefore, I am familiar with many of the concepts reviewed in the literature, such as the implementation of transformative pedagogies within human rights, peace, and social justice education.

I have worked in public schools for the past seven years in a variety of roles. I have seen the difference in educational quality between affluent and low-income settings and the student achievement that comes to fruition because of equity differences in

funding. I have witnessed students becoming aware of both their privilege and their marginalization, questioning social constructs meant to oppress, and seeking out transformative action to benefit themselves and their community. Most recently, I have seen these events unfold within a high school setting as I have been a high school history teacher for the past four years. I have a stake in the game so to speak, and I genuinely wanted to know how and why my colleagues do what they do within the social justice education program.

As a current teacher at Greenship Academy, although not in the Social Justice Program, I have a relationship with all of the participants. This personal knowledge impacted my study in both positive and potentially concerning ways. In my time at Greenship Academy, I have gotten to know the school site inside and out, the politics within it, and have developed relationships with teachers and administrators who will become study participants. These insights helped me to develop Foucault's *parrhesia*, or truth telling, within my methodology (Kuntz, 2015). As Kuntz (2015) explains, Foucault establishes relationality, risk, and citizenship as the three main elements of a critically engaged and responsible methodologist. It is the researcher's responsibility to understand the contexts of the research as "there's not much distance at between how we live, who we claim to be and how we come to know" (Kuntz, 2015, p.13). Therefore, data only interpreted through global lenses, absent of the understood relational necessities of the community, will not make sense or have as much meaning. Kuntz (2015) asserts that knowledge of context will provide more clarity in the research itself.

However, the clarity that comes from being an insider brings the risk of the Hawthorne Effect (behavioral changes that cause positive responses from the participants

due to their awareness of being observed) and bias within the analysis of data (Wickstrom & Bendix, 2000). Maintaining objectivity with an insider perspective was challenging; I needed to constantly reflect on whether I was acting as a responsible citizen and humble researcher throughout the process. I had to maintain ethical practices throughout my study to be critical not only of myself and my practice but also of the research process itself. For example, I consistently recognized that each department and teacher or staff member on campus was unique in how they engage in their practice; I did not have a one-size-fits-all approach in interpreting the words and actions of different teachers or administrators, because no two participants were the same. Additionally, I had to consider the location and politics of the school in the access, ability, and opportunities the teachers have in the classroom to engage with social justice curriculum.

Confidentiality

Since I was asked to maintain anonymity for the high school, keeping confidentiality in my school site location and participant identities to the best of my ability became a priority. This priority came alongside the need to be a researcher with retrievability, providing the necessary contexts for the study: background of the site, students, curriculum, and teachers themselves. For this reason, the school was given the pseudonym of Greenship Academy and as I wrote about the teacher participants, no personal identifying pronouns were used unless the teachers specified otherwise in their consent forms. All participants were referred to with a pseudonym of their choice. In referring to their role on campus, I did not identify any specific subject taught or administrative duty that could be recognized at Greenship Academy. I omitted specific

subjects or duties in favor of using English and/or social science teacher and administrator of academics as a reference point.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

Introduction

How do teachers committed to social justice education enact counter-hegemonic and anti-oppressive practices in an affluent public school? This overarching question is grounded in three sub-questions: (1) What are the teachers' prior and current experiences in social justice education? (2) What is each teacher's approach to pedagogy and curriculum? and (3) What are the teachers' and administrators' perspectives of the sustainability of the social justice program? These research questions are detailed below:

7. What are the teachers' prior experiences and current motivations for social justice education?
    a. Research question 1A: What life experiences led to the teachers' interest in teaching and in particular teaching social justice?
    b. Research question 1B: Why do teachers choose to use social justice pedagogy in an affluent public school?
8. What is each teacher's approach to pedagogy and curriculum?
    a. Research question 2A: How do social justice teachers in an affluent public school describe their pedagogical approach and curricular practices for the social justice program?
    b. Research question 2B: How do teachers in the social justice program understand and plan for their curriculum in comparison with the general education program?
9. What are the teachers' and administrators' perspectives of the sustainability of the social justice program?

a. Research question 3: What are the conditions necessary for a social justice program to sustain itself, according to teachers and school administrators?

Program Profile

Below I present background information on the program, educators and administrators involved within the program itself. Within *Figure 4* (below), the teachers are presented in groupings of two as these groupings are their cohort partnerships.

Name	Role	Race/ ethnicity	Years of teaching experience	Years of admin. experience
Cohort 1/4				
Robin	Teacher	White	16 years	
Bruce	Teacher	White	21 years	
Cohort 2/5				
Amy	Teacher	White	7 years	
Steve	Teacher	Asian	13 years	
Cohort 3				
Matthew	Teacher	White	21 years	
Neil	Teacher	White	23 years	
Jack	Administrator	White	10 years	10 years
Coach	Administrator	White	6 years	13 years

Figure 4. Teacher and Administration Profile Summaries.

Of note, the program is not at all diverse in that it has only two female teachers, and except for one Filipino teacher, all are white. However, based upon anecdotal evidence, the lack of racial and gender diversity seen within the program matches the general profile of educators at Greenship Academy. The 2,000 students generally fall into four ethnic or racial groups: 46.5% White, 35% Asian (both Filipino and non-Filipino), 10.3% Latino, 3.1% Black or African American. Students within the program, however, are largely white. This demographic was noted by four of the six teachers in the interviews, and I confirmed this in my observations. These same four teachers also acknowledged the need for more diversity in the program.

The collective teaching experience of all six pathway program teachers totals 101 years. If this were to include administration, the total teaching years would expand even further to 117 years. Thus, all teachers and administrators are considered veterans of the craft.

Since 2014, the program has had five cohorts or five years of the program running in total. Two cohorts (cohort 1 and 2) moved all the way through the three years of the program, which means two social justice cohorts with approximately 60 students or two classes in each have successfully graduated. Cohort 1 teachers, Robin and Bruce, and Cohort 2 teachers, Amy and Steve, elected to "loop" their roles as social justice program educators. They moved from sophomore to senior year with their cohorts; post-graduation of their cohort senior year, the teachers were rehired for the program, choosing to continue teaching with the new cohort.

With this in mind, Amy and Steve are currently teaching cohort 5 sophomores, Robin and Bruce are with cohort 4 juniors, and Matthew and Neil with cohort 3 seniors. Matthew and Neil decided not to "loop" and continue within the program. The two incoming teachers who have already been hired are both female. One is Asian and a veteran educator with experience at both the middle and high school levels, while the other teacher is white and fairly new to the craft, only having two years of full experience teaching. While the veteran teacher is experienced with project-based learning, both are coming into the program with an abundance of enthusiasm for social justice. Even with more teacher diversity coming into the program, as of now it is strongly skewed male and white and has a long way to go.

The current cohort (3, 4, 5) of teachers composes the focus of this dissertation study as they have experience teaching within the program. The following section explores how they became interested in the program and with social justice.

Research Question 1A: What Life Experiences Led to the Teachers' Interest in Teaching and in Social Justice?

To provide more in-depth profiles, each participant answered the first half of this question centered on their interest in teaching. The section then moves into a theme-based discussion to link their interest in teaching with social justice.

Robin

Since going into English as a technical field for writing was not something Robin was interested in, teaching was always on her radar since English was her favorite class and she was an English major. Robin ultimately chose teaching, because it has "variety, isn't boring" and she can "talk about books and read and have conversations about literature and its connections to the world and things." She has found success within her practical career choice. In fact, Robin is one of the founding members of the Social Justice Program on campus and has taught for 16 years in various different schools.

Bruce

> When I was a teenager, I worked at a summer camp as a nature counselor. As a function of that job I taught merit badge classes… they've got very clear [expectations]… so as a 16-year old, it was easy for me to understand, it was easy for me to do, and then, working with younger kids, it was fun, right. I think that's where I got the jam of teaching.

After obtaining his undergraduate degree, Bruce realized that teaching would be his career path, but he did not want to go to school anymore. He became an account representative for a company and found the repetition of "regular work life" monotonous,

missing the "open ended-ness" and "research" focus of school. Bruce returned back to his high school, Greenship Academy – hired by the same history teacher who taught him and inspired his approach to teaching. Bruce has stayed in the profession ever since, being a founding teaching of the social justice program on campus while teaching social science for 20 years.

Amy

"I've always been focused on education but I was really interested in what was happening on grass roots levels, in developing countries – how the United States and the funding resources can help what's happening in the developing world." Amy pursued this focus while teaching in the Peace Corps and living in Bangladesh. She later pursued a degree in international comparative education to further her passion of "supporting struggling groups of people" and worked in the international non-profit world for approximately eight years. Amy always knew she would go back to a formal classroom, but it was not until motherhood that the timing was perfect to pursue teacher training and her credential, seeking professional stability for the benefit of her family. Seven years and three sons later, she found a career that supports her being the activist and mother she aspires to be.

Steve

Gravitating to teaching throughout his childhood, Steve had always been on the pathway towards becoming a teacher; however, it was not until his senior capstone focused on tutoring high school students in journalism that he fell into the career. With 13 years now under his belt, he has discovered a passion.

Matthew

Although Matthew always had a passion for history and knew he "would eventually be a teacher," he explored multiple career paths after college prior to moving towards the teaching profession. After finishing his active duty service as an Army Officer, Matthew joined a long-time friend's start-up company, pursued financial services, and ran the local office at a hazardous waste company. Since his dissatisfaction with his job at the waste company was apparent, he had a conversation with his wife who encouraged his career shift towards teaching. Within his second year of the profession, he began teaching Advanced Placement (AP) United States History and has not looked back, teaching the course for close to 21 years.

Neil

"Looking back, becoming a teacher seems a little inevitable. I was always drawn to opportunities to lead involving kids." Neil worked as a summer camp counselor, religious school teacher, and college orientation counselor prior to deciding to pursue teaching as a career his senior year in college. His career has longevity on its side with challenges along the way, including fatherhood and writing a book. Having taught for 23 years in total, he is the most veteran teacher in the program.

Teaching as a career

All six teachers noted that teaching is not just a job, but also a career in which they have evolved over time. However, their interest in pursuing teaching as a career ranged between being inevitable, having a distinctive love of the subject, and turning to the career out of practical need(s).

Three participants described how their interests in teaching were peaked while still relatively young. Both Neil and Bruce worked as counselors while teenagers, while Steve worked as a tutor during his college years. Both Steve and Neil were similarly, in Neil's words "drawn to opportunities to lead involving kids," whereas Bruce craved the "open ended-ness," "research" focus of school and "clear expectations" that were easy for him to understand.

Interest in the career extends to all the teachers in being able to dive deeply into their love of the subject through involvement in education; this "love" ranged from an academic perspective to a personal passion. Robin, Neil, and Steve expressed passion for the subject of English at a young age (high school and college), using literacy to make connections in real world. Similarly, Matthew always enjoyed learning history in the general sense, while Bruce appreciates it for a different reason; once he gained information of the past he became more able to question or challenge the system. On the other hand, Amy was heavily involved in and passionate about grassroots international development; not until teacher credentialing did she focus specifically on social science as an academic subject. While all the teachers were able to continue their passions in the career, some turned to teaching to meet practical need(s).

The definition of *need* is teacher dependent. Robin entered into the profession with the hope of gaining "variety" that supported her adult life vision. This vision is something that Matthew also spoke about, not finding satisfaction in his other career pursuits. On the other hand, Amy's other career pursuits did not support her life as a mother in the way that teaching could.

Path to social justice

All of the teachers recounted a "path" they took towards understanding social justice. None were inherently born with this understanding nor had even developed the full meaning of the topic, concept, and view until college or beyond.

Although Amy and Neil always had a curiosity for social injustice through college, their post-graduate years were more influential in establishing their own ideas. Being involved in the Peace Corps and exposed to marked injustice in Bangladesh, Amy understood not only what was needed for social justice, but also how to work as an ally in grassroots organizations in order to spark positive social changes. For Neil, his actions came before defining the concept for himself. Neil had been a teacher for a while when he joined the "Teacher Union Reform Network," a union-led organization centered on promoting progressive reform leading to better learning for all students. There he became exposed to their three-pronged approach to unionism: labor issues, professional matters, and social justice. Seeing social justice work in action allowed Neil to become more aware and act in accordance with his new understanding.

Bruce and Amy started conceptualizing their ideas of social justice early on through exposure and conversation. According to Bruce, social justice was "part of [his] upbringing, part of [his] philosophy of life" through his practice of Catholicism. For Robin, however, social justice was not closely connected to religion, but rather location-oriented. She grew up in a small beach town on the Northern Pacific coast with a "variety of people and a lot of different ways of thinking and being" that promoted open mindedness. As she began to "watch the news and grow beyond her immediate community," she started to see people act towards others in a way that was markedly

disrespectful and against what she had always known. Despite being aware of conditions of social injustice, their college years and post-graduate studies helped both Bruce and Robin conceptualize the meaning of social justice.

The influence of higher education toward developing their understanding of social justice was congruent in Robin and Steve's stories. Both describe college as being their first big exposure to social justice as a concept, enlightening them to take action and combat injustice. Robin attended a liberal arts college focused on the Jesuit mission. While there, her learning was "explicitly about social justice, compassion and action, and that tolerance and acceptance is not enough, you must act." She began to pursue life experiences that highlighted action-based social justice work. Similarly, Steve describes experiencing anger with life the "more educated I was with diversity, women's rights, multicultural" issues throughout college. While was passionate about learning more about the struggles of different marginalized groups, Steve was not active in combatting the oppression those groups experienced until entering the social justice program.

The social justice program became essential in the development of one teacher's ideas. Matthew developed his own concept of "social justice" alongside his cohort during the first two weeks of their sophomore year. Prior to this point he was aware of injustice alongside the other teachers but had not yet conceptualized a specific definition. Regardless of the timeframe, all the teachers shared that creating a definition of social justice helped them to establish a conceptual framework for their actions both inside and outside of their involvement in the program.

Social justice is about power

All of the teachers provided a definition of social justice focused on power. For them, social justice is all about power, but with slight variations for all six educators. All definitions connect, build, and move in accordance with each other; none are at odds or contradictory. Three educators (Robin, Amy and Steve) define social justice focusing on power distribution, while the others (Neil, Matthew, and Bruce) define social justice emphasizing the experiences of and responses to power inequities.

Amy is most concerned with access or lack of access to power:

> My definition of Social Justice is looking at access to power. Who has access to power in a lot of different ways: money, justice, influence, marginaliz[ation], and the structures, that are set up specifically to keep people from access to power?

For Robin, this access is important, but she is also concerned about may happen once access to power is attained:

> social justice is about power- who has it, who doesn't have it, how it's distributed, and who accesses it and who doesn't access it. So, it's not just about having it, it's about wielding it and how you wield it. When we're talking about social justice, it's about looking at the equitable distribution or the lack of equitable distribution of power.

Steve expands upon Robin's and Amy's definition, focusing on the impact of how power is accessed and how it is used: "this idea of power, who has it, who doesn't have it, who doesn't have access to power and how its distributed, how it creates a system of inequities in which certain people benefit."

All six educators recognize that power is not equal throughout society, but three (Neil, Matthew, Bruce) focus their definitions on viewing the impact of power injustices and intervening with action. For example, Neil centers on the inherent impact of power and starting point for change:

> the benefits of society are not distributed equally [and] injustice is a fact of life for people, often based on various aspects of their identity, upbringing, experience, geography. Social justice is the idea that those things need to be recognized and remedied.

This recognition of change is something that Matthew's student cohort established in their common definition of social justice, which has become his own definition. They recognized that in order to achieve social justice a "broad-level notion of equality" needs to be gained; however, in order to enact change, the cause of injustice needs to be studied to initially "illuminate" the problems.

Bruce's definition builds on this need to illuminate and study social justice. His working definition of the concept is actually two-fold. First is what Bruce describes as his teaching definition: "bringing unheard voices to light" and internalizing these within one's own personal outlook. He believes that at "our core, we're actually quite good at finding those voices that are not always heard. Sometimes contrasting them with the voices that are heard." The next step moves beyond simply hearing and toward taking action, which leads into Bruce's second definition of social justice based on his own personal orientation that is "very Jesuit" and influenced by his Catholic upbringing. It is the idea that Bruce has an "obligation to serve others" that others should also embody. Bruce believes that the social justice program directly pushes both definitions forward and arms the students with the tools necessary not only to understand and consider others' experiences, but also to act against injustice in meaningful ways in the community.

Summary of research question 1A

In answering Research Question 1A: "What life experiences led to the teachers' interest in teaching and in social justice?", I identified three major themes. First, all the

educators perceived teaching as a career. While everyone is considered as a veteran of the craft and takes pride in their profession, their trajectories ranged from pursuing the career right out of college to establishing teaching as a second, third or fourth career. Second, in the same fashion that each educator arrived at the career of teaching, each had a different experience or path in coming to understand or being passionate about social justice. Lastly, regardless of how long it took to uncover social justice as a concept, the teachers firmly believe that social justice is shaped from a lens of power: how it is distributed and how it impacts those with and without it. Having this common vantage point, the teachers incorporate this view into their pedagogical practice at Greenship Academy.

Research Question 1B: Why do the teachers choose to use social justice pedagogy in an affluent public school?

The common reason why teachers joined the program was mostly that they wanted to challenge the system or experience the relationship-building inherent to the program itself. Their path towards becoming a social justice program teacher sometimes involved "an ask" rather than truly volunteering their own efforts. Although all teachers agreed to participate in the program, many did not have clear expectations about the program until they were already working within it.

Prior to delving into these themes, it is necessary to describe the roots of the program itself. It all started with Robin, who always had placed literature in the broader context of current social issues as a teacher of humanities both inside and outside of Greenship Academy. The idea of the program did not inherently stem from her though. The district had a "request for outside the box curriculum," and another teacher at the school came up with the idea of a pathway program specifically for social justice. The

program's objective of engaging students to achieve something beyond the "shiny objects" of a grade and pushing them with a different kind of rigor appealed to Robin. She was all in. After extensive research on other schools and how they approached social justice in their schools, the district awarded a grant to implement a method and curriculum with the guideline of "It can't be something that is happening now." This creative liberty amongst teachers and within the program is inherently counter-hegemonic. This freedom has largely evolved over time as the proposal for the program included many items that were not functional in practice.

For instance, while the program's cohort model originally had Spanish courses alongside English and social science, this plan never would have worked in reality. Certain students would have been excluded if they had chosen a different foreign language option (i.e. American Sign Language, Japanese, French, Mandarin Chinese) at the school. Since the program's philosophical foundation is based upon inclusiveness, offering only one world language option would have been contradictory. This point is discussed more in depth in the next research question (2A).

Challenging the system

Like Robin, many of the educators discovered in themselves a passion for challenging the system, which diverged in objectives. Bruce aspired to end the transaction of traditional schooling, Amy wanted a reaction from the students, and Steve and Neil sought to build the tools preparing the students to act.

For example, Bruce began to see school as representing a transaction amongst students, teachers, and grades through the evolution of his roles on campus over time. He started as a teacher, moved to an instructional supervisor role, and then obtained his

administrative credential. Due to his "antagonistic style towards management" with the purpose of being student-centered in regard to class size, hiring, and evaluation, he gained the "reputation of someone with strong opinions." For this reason, he struggled to change career paths to move into an administrative role in the district. Yet at the same time, Robin approached him to be a part of the social justice program on campus. Bruce wanted to disrupt the "transactional relationship with learning" that he kept confronting both with management and in his own professional roles. He sensed that the school and classroom focus on gaining points for assignments caused a strained relationship with his students in that "[he] had the points and [they] wanted the points, so [the students] had to figure out what to do to get them." Teenagers, according to Bruce, are

> shooting for the highest points, lowest effort, and in a traditional comprehensive high school like Greenship Academy, we have a relatively antiquated model where it is very much like that. Breaking away from that model of points and grades is something that's difficult.

For Bruce, the program became a problem-solving opportunity, figuring out how to work against a traditional approach to schooling alongside a social justice framework in a context that is "not necessarily a school of underserved individuals." While he acknowledges some "pockets of underserved," Bruce thinks that largely students need tools to "recognize that they have [privilege] and do something good about it." This ability to intentionally work against the system and in favor of change drew him in.

On the other hand, Amy had always worked for change through social mobilization and community organizing. Amy missed the "optimistic righteousness" that enlivened the students she taught in the non-profit world and prided herself on being able to "know enough to help them question" the world around them. Amy had already been integrating global social justice themes into her classroom for several years, teaching

Contemporary World History in hopes of inspiring students to question the world enough to respond. The social justice program offered a place that supported this effort and encouraged student empowerment, which the rest of the school did not necessarily do on a broad scale. Amy wanted to work with the students of the program to help create "impassioned kids who were just ready to take over the world."

This takeover is only possible if students are given the tools necessary to question the world. Steve firmly believes it is his duty as a teacher to provide the platform for students to become passionate about social justice and explore how "social structures in society create and perpetuate inequities" while simultaneously investigating how to defeat it. This investigation also intrigued Neil as well, who had already done countless hours of professional development with Facing History and Ourselves, leading various workshops and being involved in their social justice mission. Through these opportunities Neil actually had developed his own 10th grade level English course, called American Literature (Social Justice), at Greenship Academy with the same "skill set" as the regular English course for 10th grade. Yet the scope and sequence were modeled after Facing History curriculum with a more interdisciplinary approach. The class ran for "seven or eight years" up until Neil took a leave of absence to write a book - the same year the social justice program started on campus. The social justice program then became a way for him to implement many of the tools gained through his time with Facing History, giving the students the framework to critically analyze and challenge the world around them.

Teachers joined program only after being asked

Entry into the program did not just involve interest alone. In fact, the program teachers fall into two categories: pursuant and non-pursuant. Amy and Robin both wholeheartedly pursued the program, either in creating or adding to it. Bruce also can fit in this category as he pursued membership after "being asked" by Robin, subsequently becoming the second founding member and actively participating in the start-up phase and execution of the program. In contrast, the other three educators describe a non-pursuant entry into the program where they became involved as non-initial volunteers.

Steve, Neil, and Matthew mentioned that they were asked to join the program rather than enthusiastically volunteering as faculty members. Their reluctance to enter the program does not stem from a lesser commitment to social justice, but rather reflects a desire to fully execute the program demands that go above and beyond teaching in general education. For example, Neil had just come back from sabbatical and did not find it feasible to teach his stand alone 10th grade social justice-focused English class since the program had already begun and his class became redundant. Neil eventually saw there "was an opening. It seemed like a natural direction to go." While he liked the concept and the model of the social justice program from a curricular and interpersonal standpoint, he "didn't necessarily think that he wanted to be a part of it." It was not until the program needed "someone in the English department" that he expressed interest. Even then "it wasn't a hesitant interest, but wasn't an enthusiastic interest either." Neil more or less wanted to "just talk more" about social justice, but when it was evident that "no one [else] had expressed interest" in the English department, he agreed to be the next

cohort English teacher. Neil remained pensive about his entry, but was excited to talk about social justice.

On the other hand, Matthew did not think social justice necessarily had to be explicitly highlighted in the curriculum. He believed the themes of social justice "show up inherently" within teaching, and he had not thought of teaching in the program until "[Bruce] asked." It was Matthew's understanding that the program was beyond its "start-up phase" and that he was being brought in for a specific role – "to create a more critical river" with the purpose of evaluating and increasing the academic rigor of the program. Matthew believed it was his ability to question and critically analyze content in his AP course that led him to "being asked;" he was honored to jump into this role as a program teacher and at first provided feedback to the cohort groups. However, "at one point [his colleagues] stopped listening" to his questioning and analysis. Despite this, he remained a cohort teacher.

Being a cohort teacher is the very thing that at first put off Steve from the program. The chaotic process of "creating and crafting" caused Steve to find teaching to be a stressful profession. In fact, Steve strives for stability and a "boring, easy schedule" because he has had so many preps; this desire often conflicts with his inability to say "no." Steve feels inclined to always "help other people out," which is ultimately how he became a teacher in the social justice program:

> another teacher was telling me about how they're having a tough time finding a teacher to do [the program] … honestly the district really kind of scared me and just taking on something like this seemed like a huge commitment. But at the same time, I couldn't let my colleagues struggle. So I was like, okay I can help you out, you know, if you can't find anyone else. I really didn't want to because I felt like it was just like three years, the structure of the program meant new classes every year. It's so much work, which is a lot of stress, which impacts my personal life and all that stuff.

It actually took Steve several years to come to terms with entering the program; previously, he was engaged in the program only for another teacher – not for himself.

Building a relationship with students

While becoming a teacher in the social justice pathway was not something Steve enthusiastically chose, he began to find it one of the most rewarding experiences, as he found his place at the school and in the profession:

> When I got into the program, sophomore year was hell and I regretted my decision. And then Junior, not really, I, I enjoyed working with [Amy,] I love working with her, so that's what made it worth it. Junior and senior year all of a sudden became more cohesive; the students and I had a better relationship, and then it became home, and then that's what made [Greenship Academy] home. Because for the most part, when I first started teaching at [Greenship Academy,] I felt like I didn't belong. And then, it wasn't until that social justice cohort came together that I felt like, 'okay I can do this, I belong, I actually belong in this community.'

Similarly, the opportunity to build close relationships with a cohort of students across three years motivated other teachers to either pursue or agree to being part of the program. Amy's desire to be a program teacher skyrocketed: "among other things, I was excited about the social justice aspect, but also really excited about the idea of looping kids and getting to know them really well in having them for three years. I loved that idea, so I basically bullied my way in."

Furthermore, Matthew found teaching in the program to be a "perk" and "benefit," while Bruce, Steve, and Robin expressed similar sentiments in their reflective experiences. All three mentioned tales of positive growth over time for both themselves and the students due to those relationships. Bruce points out that "the idea that they are learning about us and we are learning about them is really essential." This allows the teachers to open up and the students to get to know themselves and their classmates while

deeply exploring issues of privilege and injustice – which students would not normally have the opportunity to do. This impact is immense for Steve:

> In social justice [program], of the teachers, I'm the only minority, only Filipino, brown, gay, so I can bring that into the classroom; I can bring that perspective. And I often tell the [students], I didn't grow up in a community like this, I don't know what life is like here? I was one of the few brown people in my neighborhood. Because of that, I think students can relate to me on that, and then it brings the different perspective of someone who felt like he was othered or an outsider… I feel like I can bring that perspective into the classroom.

At the same time, Steve moved through his cohort of students from sophomore to junior year without coming out as gay. But then the students came back

> senior year and I have a wedding ring on. And I stressed out about this for a while. I was like, what do I do? Do I tell them about it, is that appropriate, how are they going to react? … We did a summer [picture] slideshow: what did you do over summer? I had my cake topper in my picture… I had a picture of my husband and I in our suits, and the kids are just watching the slideshow, and then one student [notices], and you see him talk to another student, and then you see more and more students start talking, and then I'm like, all right guys, let's go outside, let's take a group picture. As everyone's getting ordered, "did you get married, [Mr. Steve]?" I'm like, I did. And they all just started clapping and stuff like that. I noticed that after that they related to me differently and they were so appreciative that I shared that part of my life with them, you know? But I felt like that was something earned. You know, It's the relationship.

This relationship building over time is powerful for all teachers. All six teachers mentioned that the three-year cohort model facilitates closer relationships with students. In this way, they can devote more time and energy to strengthening students' skills to promote change and action, which would be nearly impossible to achieve under the constraints of general education. The quality of relationships built in the program directly contrasts with the competitive climate in the school overall.

Summary of research question 1B

In answering Research Question 1B, "Why do teachers choose to use social justice pedagogy in an affluent public school?", three themes emerged. Many teachers

pursued entry into the social justice program to challenge the present system. Whether it is the academic structure at Greenship Academy that promotes learning as transactional or the systemic oppression present in society as a whole, teachers pursued the program to directly start or continue addressing those issues in the classroom. However, some teachers passionate about social justice did not actively pursue entry into the program due to their perception of extra time commitments; these teachers were asked to be a part of the program and over time agreed to enter. Regardless if a teacher was pursuant or non-pursuant the program, the teachers all felt strongly that the cohort model of teaching - moving through three grades with the same students - has offered them closer relationships with students and more access to in-depth approaches to the curriculum.

Research Question 2A: How Do Social Justice Teachers in an Affluent Public School Describe their Pedagogical Approach and Curricular Practices for the Social Justice Program?

Within Greenship Academy, there is often a passive culture of "sitting and getting" (Robin), as opposed to actively questioning privilege and its impact on life experiences, accomplishments, and opportunities. Using their own unique language, all six teachers recognize this and actively describe how their approach towards teaching in the program differs from general education. The consensus amongst the teachers is that students in the social justice program are responsible for learning how they achieve, uncovering the hidden perspectives and tackling real world problems. In Neil's words, the social justice program has the goal to "provide the learning experience for students that is an experience and not just a sequence of discrete learnings, but building something special and unique within the high school experience that provides a sense of purpose,

agency, and connection" through building agency and skills via a cohort model. The next section focuses on how teachers guide students to achieve this goal. Largely, their process has been reflective of teaching for student learning, project-focused, and iterative across looped years.

Reflective of teaching for student learning

Reflection is necessary for growth, which can be said for both students and teachers who participate in the social justice program. Understanding student growth across all three years of the program was a focus of all program teachers. Matthew was centered on student agency through choice and discrete skills, Neil on student advocacy in action, Robin on application of skills in writing, and Amy on teacher efficacy in an affluent school. As Amy states:

> I think that trying to teach kids a clear definition of social justice has been a lot harder than I thought it would be, especially in a privileged community. Who has access to power in a lot of different ways: money, justice, influence, who's marginalized and the social structures that are set up specifically to keep people from access to power. I think that concept for 15-year-olds is really hard… Our first cohort, we had a lot of conversations about the Social Justice issues or lack thereof around dress codes and ... the reality is most of these kids don't have a huge a lot, amount of experience with real, true Social Justice issues. We're not an inner-city school, we're not a school that's like marginalized in any way. We're the opposite so I think the real-life connections were a lot harder for a lot of kids, but I think by the end of the three years the kids get there. Their eyes are wider to what the reality of our society and world is, and part of it is maturity from experiences.

Those teacher-created experiences lead to further growth and skill-building amongst the students. Bruce and Steve reflect on skill-based student growth in different ways. Bruce believes that skills are ingrained over time:

> I'm not sure how successful I am at getting them to be truly reflective of their own privilege especially in the tenth grade… I think it's present and by the time they're seniors [their understanding has] very much evolved and sort of real for them.

Steve emphasizes this evolution over time as well, while initially he was unsure of the impact on students. After much conversation with the students themselves, Steve recognized that the clear progression that occurred:

> Definitely by senior year, students were actually able to have much more meaningful conversations, analyze systems [of power] and text much more meaningfully. As far as being able to talk about these complex issues, they grew a lot. I remember sophomore year whenever we had discussions, students would run out of the room crying because they took what people said personally as it was a personal attack, and they couldn't take it. By senior year, they wanted opposite opinions, they wanted people to challenge what they felt because that's how they felt like they learned. They felt when everyone agreed with the same perspective they weren't learning anything, so they all wanted the contrary views; they got so much stronger with that.

Part of the reflective process for all teachers has occurred in reviewing the curriculum. While all initially had different intentions, all three teachers agreed on the importance of removing bias. Neil "didn't want to indoctrinate… persuade students to think or feel something on the power of [his] personality through [his] convictions." Two other teachers, Steve and Robin, furthered this thought and mentioned throughout their interviews their effort to remove bias, being intentional to avoid imposing their beliefs onto the student. Instead, all three educators attempted to have the students formulate their own ideas. One way that student ideas came to fruition and addressed bias concerns amongst the teachers was to assess student learning through their student-directed projects.

Project focused

Being project focused means that all teachers I the social justice program incorporate projects into their curriculum to assess learning over time. This word *focus* is intentional, as not all teachers use projects in the same way. In fact, no teacher was the same when entering the program; while most were project-oriented, none were project-

based in their curriculum planning and execution. Initially there was no alignment across cohorts.

What large influenced four teachers (Amy, Steve, Robin and Bruce) to move in the same direction towards alignment was a professional learning conference with High Tech High, a school focused on project-based learning (PBL). All attended this professional learning at various different times and this experience shifted their curricular perspective from being project-oriented (or completing "dessert projects," which requested students to complete "reading and research to do a poster or presentation after having learned)." Instead they shifted toward being project-based where students would "learn while [they] do" (Bruce). In the latter, Bruce notes "learning happens as a result of the production of the project." Now project-based learning has become a profound part of the program, how it has become marketed, and how it is taught amongst a majority (four of six) of the program educators. The overarching intention of the program is to use project-based learning to link one year to the next, while students work towards showing mastery over skills necessary to combat and address social justice using the projects.

Currently, four educators (Amy, Steve, Robin, Bruce) use PBL to design their courses, while the other two (Matthew, Neil) have continued project-oriented learning throughout most of their curriculum. With a new focus on the alignment of the social justice program with PBL, the teachers incorporate it in the planning of their multi-year curriculum.

For this reason, it is important to note the specific language used and the PBL curriculum implemented. Robin uses "self-directed PBL" to refer to the specific overarching projects each grade level completes outside of units and coursework. She

describes those three self-directed PBL units as self-directed PBL 1.0 (sophomore year), self-directed PBL 2.0 (junior year) and self-directed PBL 3.0 or the capstone project (senior year). All are umbrella activities that span a semester or year. The self-directed units are based on a model of action-research, aiming to build towards senior year through learning the steps in the process: (1) collecting preliminary data, (2) creating an action to address the issue found, (3) implementing the action, and (4) measuring the efficacy of the action in order to make future recommendations.

An example of this self-directed PBL 1.0 is a proposal by a cohort 4 student, called "#MeToo: Combatting sexual violence through reformed K-12 education." The proposal is entirely student-driven with three areas of student inquiry: background information on the topic, a literature review, and research methods to address one research question. The student seeks to understand how the district "can combat the regressive mandate" of U.S. Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, to bolster the rights of the accused and "prevent sexual violence by reforming K-12 education." In the literature review, the student shows an emerging understanding of laws pertaining to Title IX, sexual harassment, and current district responses. With this knowledge, the student hopes to implement a needs assessment of the district curriculum on sexual harassment. The idea is that current high school students at Greenship Academy then would design a future curriculum based on their responses, with the student hoping to improve this curriculum over time. This example shows the student's thinking on how to collect data, address the findings, and implement an action. Ultimately, the student needs to demonstrate this understanding for the capstone requirement.

Even though not all teachers use PBL to design their curriculum, all do participate in PBL 3.0 or the capstone action research project as a requirement of the social justice program. All seniors complete this capstone project. They choose to study a social justice topic in the community, develop a literature review, and execute an original research project after receiving approval by the district's Institutional Review Board (IRB). From the findings, the student then creates an action plan to address the identified social justice issue while measuring its efficacy.

At the end of the academic year and prior to graduation, the program invites community members to sit on panels and assess the students' project presentations, how well they addressed the social justice issue, and identify what still needs to be done. To support students in creating this capstone project, the program has partnered with two general education courses on research design. Since this support has not always been sufficient, several program teachers developed self-directed projects, PBL 1.0 and 2.0, to supplement current program coursework and to scaffold the skills needed to execute action research for the capstone requirement of 3.0

Iterative process

In the social justice program, requirements develop over time and change with increased input and practice. In a sense, the program itself has become an *iterative process.* For the four teachers (Amy, Steve, Robin, Bruce) that are on their second cohorts, this theme is very relevant. Throughout their first cohort, all felt lost at some point, but "looping" has helped all four educators feel more secure in their curricular approach. Amy firmly states that "it no longer quite feels like we are trying to build an airplane while we are trying to fly it." To keep with the analogy, flying the plane looks

like teaching while simultaneously improving one's pedagogical and curricular approach using specific goals.

Both Amy and Steve's focus in 2019 has been on community building, which their initial cohorts lacked. Steve took this goal one step further and now is focused on community building to promote leadership amongst the cohort:

> We definitely get an opportunity to explore these ideas of power and power relationships, and looking at the systems of inequality and inequities in society… but another pillar of social justice is getting the students to be leaders, and to take action and (hopefully) fight back against [injustice]. I would say of the last cohort, cohort 3, I want to say maybe about 10-20% of the students actually took the social justice message to heart and really went out there and started looking for opportunities to become leaders, looking for opportunities to make a difference…I think this time around I want to try to get them to be leaders more often.

To address this issue Steve is providing more opportunities for leadership to occur in the cohort with Amy's support.

Speaking of support, Robin and Bruce are focused on vertical alignment and scaffolding PBL across grade levels to further support their current students as their previous students felt lost during the capstone project (self-directed PBL 3.0). Robin is determined to set the foundation for success earlier on. The students now build on their skills each year; this year as juniors "they were asked to do approximately half of what the requirements are or about 50% of what they are going to be asked to do as seniors next year" (Robin). According to both Bruce and Robin, these changes have already resulted in massive improvement in understanding how to conduct action research.

The hope is that continual improvements will be made to the curriculum over time, beyond being limited to specific cohorts or instructors. Robin believes

> Any time I have given Amy and Steve [the cohort after Robin and Bruce] anything, they make it way better. I make the rough draft, and they're going to

> polish it and make it magical, so I hope there is something of value in there for them, for their kids, and it helps us all make baby steps to improve.

This collaborative approach has also been seen amongst the "looped" teachers to more solidly establish foundational ideas beyond PBL and community building.

In the past, students had some misconceptions about social justice work, thinking it was related to saving the environment from straws (Amy) or mixed in with all community service (Robin). To address this misunderstanding, Bruce, Robin, and Amy have been developing the "social justice machine" (Bruce) or "flow chart" (Amy) by clearly defining social justice issues for students to understand and orient themselves towards the "service of others" (Bruce). Bruce believes the "capstone projects will get better as [teachers] raise up kids in this program" throughout the grade levels and acknowledges that this improvement has already happened. The ultimate goal is "make the world a better place," and every aspect of the evolution of the program has been focused on this:

> we started with this idea of tenth graders having a very, very local focus like even just the school wide focus that eleventh grade started to break out and then in the twelfth grade with the capstone it becomes "worldwide" but a broader focus of that. I don't think we've really sort of held onto that as much, except for in the sense of expectations of the kind of work that we wanted tenth graders, eleventh graders and twelfth graders. The idea of reiterative work within a project and between projects is so that kids are not only acquiring and perfecting skills, but then evaluating themselves and then thinking what can I do moving forward. I think that's very much been retained.

Bruce says the program as a whole is "focused on the very local in the sense of making a difference at [Greenship Academy]." The original goal of the program was to move from the school to the local community and then to the broader area or entire US, going from a more narrow to broader lens with the students across three years. However, in practice, the differences between the 10th and 11th grade curriculum were small and more

scaffolding was needed for students to understand both PBL and action-research. Additionally, as PBL was self-directed, students drove the emphasis of the curriculum. This impacted 12th graders as they chose their self-directed PBL by continuing a local and familiar focus from the lower grades, which is not how the teachers originally planned.

Summary of research question 2A

In answering Research Question 2A, "How do social justice teachers in an affluent public school describe their pedagogical approach and curricular practices for the social justice program?", three major themes emerged. All teachers seem to be reflective of their impact on student learning throughout the three years of a cohort, wanting an understanding of social justice to be reached and skills to be broadened. These skills push identifying and addressing issues with social justice. Teachers who have chosen to "loop" and take a new cohort tend to approach this reflection of student learning as an iterative process of collaboration with other teachers. While all program teachers maintain a project focus, four teachers (those who have chosen to "loop") explicitly use project-based learning to plan and implement their curriculum.

Research Question 2B: How Do Teachers in the Social Justice Program Understand and Plan for their Curriculum in Comparison with the General Education Program?

The teachers approach understanding and planning for their curriculum for both the social justice and general education programs with two different mindsets: teacher as expert or teacher as a learning guide. The teacher as a learning guide is quite distinct from the general education approach of the school. It allows for the program to engage in

a different kind of rigor, focusing more on learning the skills necessary to extend learning towards mastery rather than becoming proficient in vast amounts of content. The project-based approach described above is an example of this different rigor, focusing on skills over content while the teacher is a learning guide for the students' self-directed PBL projects. The next section presents data from the interviews, student work, and observations to detail this concept.

Expert teacher v. learning guide

Despite very different teaching styles, the way that the teachers approach their general education and social justice courses generally falls under one of two categories, being the *expert teacher* or being a *learning guide*. Based on the observations, five of the six teachers (Robin, Bruce, Neil, Steve, Matthew) approach their general education class with the *expert teacher* mentality, standing or sitting at the front of the room while espousing knowledge to the students. There is little to no student-student interaction within these classes. However, the other teacher, Amy, guides her general education and social justice program students similarly, providing the same scaffolds for student success to avoid failure. Four other teachers embrace and encourage failure in the classroom to promote student growth and development. In Steve's general education English class, he incentivizes exploring and trying out new ways of creating a thesis with *The Lord of the Flies* with points; his goal is to "push students to their limits" to extend those boundaries of learning. The same can be said for Neil, Robin and Bruce's social justice courses. As Robin states,

> [Bruce and I] are comfortable with a certain level of 'failure.' We're comfortable with students trying and not succeeding and having that not succeeding not be the end of the world for them, for the program, or for their grade.

These educators strive to set students up with the ability to take risks with scaffolds in place in order to understand what went wrong and to use the knowledge gained from failure to advance to the next step in the learning and applying process.

This trend of "expert" mentality in general education classes also shows up in the classroom set-up, student activities, and resources of the same five educators (with Amy again as the one exception). In the general education classroom, all six educators had their students seated for the duration of the observation. Only Matthew required student movement when individual students came up to the board to record their written responses for the class, subsequently returning to their seats to receive more information or confirmation of their shared knowledge through teacher-based feedback. In three of the five classes, the seats were facing the front of the room in either parliamentary style or in separated rows, with Robin and Steve's desks set in groupings of four (pairs facing each other). This means the focal point in 50% of the general education classes was the front of the board where the teachers were located. In all five classes, the observations revealed that student activities were either computer-based or written work, with the students completing assignment(s) individually without discussion. Any class discussion was completed with the purpose of teacher affirmation.

In the general education classes, the teachers provided all the resources for the students: videos (Neil), directions or tasks and steps (Robin, Bruce, Steve, Matthew), templates or examples (Robin, Bruce, Steve, Matthew). For instance, in Neil's class, students watched the third version of the film *Hamlet*. For Neil, the point of "watching videos is partially for plot/character comprehension, but mainly to emphasize the concept of interpretation through variation." The students are not assigned the original text but

instead use it “to validate or challenge what they glean from those other sources” (Neil). In many ways, the general education classrooms in my observations appeared similar to my own experiences in school - controlled with limited student-centered approaches.

This *teacher expert* mentality amongst most of the teachers in the general education classroom is in stark contrast to the experiences in the social justice classrooms. All but one teacher approached teaching as a *learning guide*; Neil remained to approach the social justice course as an expert. What does a *learning guide* look like in terms of the classroom set-up, student activities, and resources?

Since the students are not solely facing the front of the room and receiving knowledge, the classroom space becomes transformed. For example, in Matthew’s class, students pushed the desks aside and worked in groups on the floor, board, or wherever they chose to create posters together. Both Bruce and Amy’s courses moved their classroom set up over the course of the observation. Bruce’s class transformed as students gained release time to continue progressing on their group projects and looked very similar to Matthew’s, while Steve’s class made use of wheels on the desks to create a large discussion circle with all roles, both student and teacher, in the circle facing each other. On the other hand, Robin did not use desks, except to regroup the students and provide them next steps or debriefs from the activity. Amy’s activity centered around the desks as students were interpreting different sources, but students were largely engaged with each other in discussion, even when Amy tried to transition the class to a mini-lecture.

Of the five teachers acting as facilitators or *learning guides*, students were working on projects or engaged in discussion f for the majority of time observed in all

classes. The teacher had limited air time, interjecting only to provide additional instructions (Robin, Matthew, Amy) or to give students tools or scaffolds for success (Steve, Bruce). It is very evident that students in the social justice courses were much more willing to volunteer to discuss and work with each other than in the general education courses. The students seem more familiar and connected with each other, using names in discussion (classrooms of Robin, Steve, Amy, Neil), asking about lives outside of school (classrooms of Matthew, Neil, Amy), and being willing to engage without much prompting (all teachers).

In Steve's class, students needed no prompting to engage in a discussion on masculinity and heroism. They jumped into action to move the desks into a massive circle where all students could be included and all voices heard. Steve then joined them. Students seemed excited to summarize their findings and engage with each other. They came to class prepared with an article they found and read that was either conservative, moderate, or liberal. Identifying those political categories was something emphasized in Amy's lesson as well. Amy's students were wrapping up their unit on the Congo, attempting to answer one essential question: "What evidence are we given here for why Lumumba might have been assassinated?" The students received many sources, needing to identify their political bias, information incorporated, and the reliability of the source. The students worked in groups to read and discuss the articles before beginning a whole-class discussion.

The above examples show that resources used within the class were more focused on engagement as a collective, less on individual learning, undeniably promoting the student-student interaction. There were few laptops out in any of the five classes, and

students were expected to come prepared with a deliverable to use in the activity. Most of the deliverables and activities were ungraded, serving as formative assessments and learning for skill development.

Not less, but different rigor

Skill. This is an important word in the context of the differences between the general education and social justice education classes as all six educators expressed that the program courses were more focused more on skill over content. However, the teachers have the luxury to do this due to the three years the students spend in the cohort. In general education, dependent on the course, a teacher may only see a student for a semester or year, lacking the assurance that skills needed will be covered the next year or outside of the course. Instead the skills needed are determined by state content standards and federal common core standards.

By the end of a cohort in the social justice program, all students have been exposed to the necessary skills. This is far from the traditional approach to teaching that the educators had themselves been exposed as students or preservice teachers; therefore, all teachers expressed difficulty in their first cohort year (some beyond) in balancing the promotion of skill over content within the social justice program. Amy describes her experience in planning for the social justice courses as a process of “needing to let go a bit” after making sure common core and state standards had been covered over time. Bruce recounts similar struggles with this and how he overcomes this:

> one of the fears that I continue to get with my eleventh graders is 'are we going to learn enough US History?' Robin refers to me as content ambivalent... I am concerned that they are able to research American history, understand the larger narrative and be able to uncover that themselves." In speaking with a student about this very thing, Bruce "did a little visual metaphor of barbed wire, which is appropriate for western expansion. The barbed wire fence is this thin line that's

> going to go through the whole period, which I think is what a traditional US history course is, covering breadth and being a surveying course to go through and hit every major or major ideas but not in a lot of depth. In social justice, we are doing the posts. Those posts have a little wire on them and we might be able to say, 'Well how did we get from this post to this post,' but what we're really doing is going down deep into something... they end up getting a lot more contextual understanding and recognize that they could do that for anything.

In his barbed wire fence analogy, Bruce shows that the intention of the program is focused on skills to explore topics in depth. For this reason, Robin refers to the social justice program as having the "potential for mastery" rather than the "potential for proficiency" common in general education. This difference was also noted in interviews with two other educators (Steve and Amy).

Although the social justice program aligns with state and federal standards and addresses the same skills as general education, four teachers note (Bruce, Amy, Steve, Robin) how the students apply these skills in different ways, particularly in promoting mastery over proficiency. As Robin states, "It is a greater rigor in what [social justice students] are being tasked with. Their demonstration of synthesis is a much more challenging ask and a larger assignment to show the skill." Also, because the social justice students have elected to be part of the program, all six teachers agree that the students buy into learning more fully than in the general education classroom: “learning comes much easier when you are enjoying it and you want to do it; it is something interesting to you" (Bruce, interview). Additionally, the teachers using project-based learning note, in Bruce’s words, that the students are

> much more interested in having the freedom to pursue something deeply and... produce better work. I think that also ties in with the exhibition sort of mindset. When they know something is going to be presented to the wider school, they are a little bit more concerned about presenting what's best.

As project-based learning focuses on presenting the product to a broader audience, the students in the program all have access to pursue topics about which they are deeply passionate and present their findings as part of the capstone self-directed PBL. In contrast, general education students do not have access to these year-long courses on campus focused on research development. While these general education courses are designed with PBL in mind, they are elective – not core - courses. Robin teaches one of these courses as a way to support the capstone projects, adding in scaffolds for student success for both general education and social justice education students.

All educators agree that pre-scaffolds are needed for student success in both social justice education and general education. The social justice program is no different from general education in the sense that each classroom has students with varying abilities. In the program, Robin notes that some students "demonstrate exemplary capacities to interrogate and address" issues, while others struggle to acknowledge them. At the same time, the social justice program differentiates itself in how it presents the curriculum, moving away from "explicit sentence starters" and "content and skills picked [solely] by the teacher and instructor." The explicit sentence starters are seen in some of the educator courses sophomore year in the cohort but disappear once students have shown proficiency, moving towards mastery. Whereas, in general education courses, these scaffolds remain for the duration of the semester or year-long course.

As for course selection, general education students choose their courses based on school and A-G requirements (University of California [UC] and California State University [CSU] basic eligibility required courses) each spring for the following fall. In

contrast, the social justice students participate in course selection through a democratic vote, valuing the collective need over individual wants.

This democratic vote for course selection is a hallmark activity of the social justice student experience and something all program teachers have done with their cohorts, but in varying ways. For instance, in Amy and Steve's cohort, students complete democratic voting through a full cohort congressional-style vote their sophomore year. The students' sophomore vote extends through senior year, choosing all courses they will take for the remainder of their time (2 years) in the program in order to allow for teacher planning. This is different from Bruce and Robin who choose to have their students vote each year after students reflect on programmatic and personal needs as a cohort. This second approach is more similar to how Matthew and Bruce addressed the democratic vote for course selection in their cohort.

Once the teachers establish which course they will teach through democratic voting, they develop the curriculum and set the student schedules. To show how the schedules of social justice program students and general education students compare, I am displaying the current schedules of one senior in the program (*Figure 4)* and one senior in general education (*Figure 5)*.

Day 1	**Day 2**
Period 1 – Physics	Period 2 – AP Capstone: Research
Period 3 – AP Statistics	Period 4 – SJP Communications
Period 5 – AP Calculus AB	Period 6 – SJP Sociology
Period 7 – Prep (free period)	Tutorial (academic coursework help)

Figure 4. Social justice program (SJP) senior schedule.

Day 1	**Day 2**
Period 1 – Orchestra	Period 2 – AP Capstone: Research
Period 3 – AP Language & Composition	Period 4 – AP Macroeconomics
Period 5 – AP Calculus AB	Period 6 – AP Chemistry
Period 7 – Prep (free period)	Tutorial (academic coursework help)

Figure 5. General education senior schedule.

As seen in these schedules, the student in the social justice program has three Advanced Placement (AP) courses, while the student in general education has five AP courses. This dichotomy is typical. The democratic voting process for courses and program goals in SJP does not allow the opportunity for students to take as many AP courses, which is a trade-off that SJP students make upon entering the program.

In the interviews, all six teachers self-reported (*Figure 6*) concrete examples that they feel represent their general education and social justice education courses, bringing in sample assignments that students completed.

Teacher	General Education	Content Similarities	Social Justice
Robin [Upper Level] English	Students read *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* Reflective essay to tie back to the novel "presenting the themes and motifs" with literary analysis.	Both courses assigned an essay.	Self-directed project-based essay. Students chose action-research topic, research, and presentation.
Bruce American Government	Students completed an election project blog post assignment applying the skills.	Students are taught the CRAAP Test and annotation citations.	(For next cohort) students will complete this election project blog post assignment with more scaffolding and extensions. Will be provided a mastery grade.
Amy American Government	Completed a poster on a specific case following judicial branch unit, and presented in a museum gallery to their peers.	Students completed the election project blog post assignment.	Students extended their learning and entered into the CSPAN competition, creating 6-7 minute videos answering the question of "what does it mean to be an American?"
Steve English 10A	Argumentative essay with literary analysis to	Students read *Macbeth.*	Explanatory essay with two parts: (1) literary

	show character development.	Both courses required an essay written using literary analysis.	analysis for the first half and (2) an additional business letter advocating current day political activism from the perspective of the character using scholarly political sources.
Neil American Literature	Students read *Fences.*	Both assign plays by African American writers. Essay assignment uses both literary analysis and scholarly support for thematic claim.	Students read *A Raisin in the Sun.*
Matthew United States History	Student emphasized content and reported on a specific aspect of immigration. Not explicitly social justice themes (implicit).	Both learned about the Gilded Age. Both completed a group project, individual essay and took an end of unit exam.	Students applied the explicit social justice themes (i.e. power, identity, justice, race, etc.) established at the beginning of the year to present a "story" with evidence and examples showing social justice connections.

Figure 6. Teacher-reported General Education and Social Justice Student Work

Some assignments are more aligned with general education and social justice than others. Two teachers (Bruce and Amy) use a project-based learning assignment in both their social justice and general education courses - the Election Project, following a senatorial candidate through midterm elections. For this project, Amy notes, "it is almost identical amongst both classes." Similarly, Neil teaches the same courses in both social justice and general education to allow for common planning between the two, while Matthew plans his curriculum to have social justice "show up implicitly as opposed to a centerpiece," making minor changes for his social justice cohort to highlight social

justice in the projects. This also can be seen in Matthew's United States history course. In his Gilded Age unit, the general education students see social justice through the struggles of immigrants at that time, while the social justice cohort explicitly draws out social justice themes in projects spanning all issues of the age. In both courses, students complete final projects and have end-of unit exams.

By and large, all teachers seem to make a conscious split between the two courses with either the content covered or the discrete skills applied, requiring more rigor over time from their social justice students. This pattern is seen in varying ways: summative assessments (Bruce and Robin), interdisciplinary connections (Steve and Amy), and content (Neil). Steve's general education students are tasked with producing an argumentative essay backed by literary analysis to show character development. However, students in his social justice course are required to create an explanatory essay in two parts: a literary analysis and a business letter advocating a particular form of activism from the character's perspective. The latter is supported through research and political activism skills Amy provides the students. Students in both courses read *Macbeth* and create summative essays, but the social justice students are expected to show stronger analytical and writing style skills in their summative assessments.

Neil approaches this expectation differently; he made a conscious decision to choose a different text for his social justice education course than for his general education course. He decided that *A Raisin in the Sun* fit better for the social justice program as the protagonist in the play has the "sense that he's the victim of injustice driving a lot of his thinking. It becomes his rationalization for poor choices as a father and husband" (Neil). Neil was searching for a deeper conversation to have with his

students beyond the narrative of injustice portrayed in *Fences*. Students had those deeper conversations when creating their summative essays, exploring social justice issues in *A Raisin in the Sun*. One student noted the parallels between the women in the book and women today, reviewing wage gaps, maternity leave, male domination in STEM, and stigmas around family planning. While both are plays, *A Raisin in the Sun* promotes deeper conversation and analysis, an expectation Neil has for his social justice students.

This expectation can be seen in the social justice Fort Laramie Project, which Bruce details in his interview. This PBL unit requires the students to explore in depth the background of the Fort Laramie Treaty, tracing the pattern of indigenous rights in the United States throughout Westward Expansion. Most often, this unit is usually teacher-centric, not student-driven, and focuses more on breadth of time (pre-Civil War to 1880s) and multiple groups of people (farmers, government, indigenous). The social justice approach, in contrast, examines one single group in order to promote a deeper exploration.

For example, in the Fort Laramie Project, students created panels (Appendix F) for a museum exhibit on their learnings over the course of the unit. Each panel is part of the larger history to contextualize the Fort Laramie Treaty and understand the experiences of indigenous peoples at that time. In the process, the students became experts and museum curators, with this project functioning as their summative assessment. Robin notes that typically "in social justice, what the students are being asked to do for summative assessments needs to move beyond a vacuum. The students need to exhibit it and share it with a broader audience" in accordance with PBL. The Fort

Laramie Museum Exhibit is presented in the new library space for the entire school community to learn about, impacting broader awareness.

The requirement to exhibit or share with PBL means that students in the social justice program could complete the same assignment as the general education students. However, Robin notes the program students have "bigger fish to fry" and need to "create something that they can communicate to someone other than just me or their peers in the classroom." This communication is action-oriented and requires higher order thinking since the social justice students are constantly applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating.

Although general education students may gain access to these higher order thinking skills, I noticed in the teacher observations, student work analysis, and interviews that no teacher described general education students engaging in this type of analysis. Yet, five of the six teachers described social justice students doing so. Steve and Amy further note that in general education, students are not required to view their learnings with a specific lens. In social justice, however, students are expected to do so from "day one," as it is an expectation that they will take action and bring awareness to social and political issues. For this reason, Steve considers the purpose of curriculum across the two classes as unique:

> We want students to learn about and to have the lens to look at social justice - to be able to look at their community, look at their privilege, look at systematic injustices -, to be a lot more aware. Then, ultimately be able to start taking-action once we get there. We want students to have their English and history classes work together to do that. But we also want to create opportunities for them to be leaders and make a difference, and I think that's where the project-based learning comes in; where they can tackle projects that have real world implications. The goal is that the students feel like their work has a lot more weight to it, and has more meaning to it.

Maintaining the expectation that all student work will contribute to a greater purpose sets the understanding and planning for social justice curriculum apart from general education.

Summary of research question 2B

In answering Research Question 2B, "How do teachers in the social justice program understand and plan for their curriculum in comparison with the general education program?", two themes emerged. Teachers have two major ways of planning for and executing their curriculum in general education and social justice courses. Most teachers approach their general education courses with the teacher as expert mentality, being mostly teacher-centric in their classroom set-up, student activities, and use of resources. In contrast, most teachers approach their social justice courses with the teacher as a learning guide mentality, being student-centric and student-driven. This approach in the social justice courses supports the goal of the program to have the students gain skills and use them to act against systems of injustice. To be able to achieve this, all teachers engage their program students in a different kind of rigor, one that is more democratic and skills-based, extending learning over time with differing content choices, comprehensive summative assessments, and an action-oriented lens towards social justice.

Research Question 3: What Are the Conditions Necessary for a Social Justice Program to Sustain Itself, According to Teachers and Administrators?

In the fifth year of the program and fifth cohort of students, the teachers note that the program has evolved to be more realistic and functional than during its inception. In addition, student expectations have changed over time due to a greater understanding of

the program within the school community. Since this understanding is not always present amongst the teachers upon hire or the administrators in charge of the program, more clear expectations for students, ingrained supports for teachers, and increased administrative awareness are all needed to achieve sustainability. These themes are explored in the next section.

More clear expectations for students

Robin notes students enter the program on an "everyone is welcome" basis; there are "no barriers to enter." However, Amy identifies certain barriers, such as the lottery system for entry when too many students elect to enroll in the program during course selection. Over-enrollment has occurred when teacher names have been advertised well in advance of schedule selection. Five teachers (all but Matthew) mention that students seem to have a strong teacher bias (pro and con) when selecting courses. The students tend to sign-up more readily for courses with a teacher they like and avoid signing up for ones with teachers they don't. This pattern directly affects the social justice program; when teachers' names are not released (per administrator prerogative), more students drop out within the first two years of the cohort.

Robin believes students are drawn to the program for three major reasons: being "passionate about social justice," "what they perceive to be the differences in the class and the curriculum," "the notion of the cohort and want[ing] to be with their friends for three years." Amy and Steve agree that most entering students fall into the latter two categories, while Matthew and Neil believe students mostly fall into the first two categories. Each cohort, however, loses several students each year due to misconceptions that the program differs from general education in being less demanding or having more

field trips (Robin). All six educators point to misconceptions of the program as the major reason for student drops. In other words, students often enter the social justice program with the perception that it is "easier" and there are a lot of field trips. They learn that is not the case, and several students end up dropping out of the program early on.

One reason for the misconceptions is what actually makes the program so unique: creative liberty amongst their teachers. No two cohorts are ever the same as they do not have lock-step alignment in content and practice. What is aligned is the structure of the program itself; that is all. The teachers do not use one sole curriculum. Some, but not all, teachers collaborate on past cohort work to promote scaffolding. One example of this is the philosophy behind field trips. Bruce notes that field trips are an "opportunity to get out and into the world." Similarly, Robin, Amy, Steve, and Matthew note field trips are "about the brand" and broader experience, being more about skill than content (Matthew, interview). Since Matthew believes that field trips need to maintain a connection to the content, his cohort has only gone on one field trip during the past three years. Students do not always understand this lack of alignment and assume past experiences will repeat in their cohort. Consequently, many students drop from cohorts after experiencing something different than what they heard or was advertised from past cohorts. Bruce notes that

> we have most of our drops between 10th and 11th grade, because they very quickly realize it's not for them. There are always a few kids where they think it's way too much work for their idea of social justice; they thought it was going to be easier. "Oh, and English and history together." It's supposed to be easier. And when it doesn't turn out the way, then they're like, "Wait a minute ... we got sold a bag of goods." What's interesting, though, is that [Robin] and I have kind of looked in on some of the kids who have left the [program] to create other opportunities.

For 10th graders, those opportunities include wanting to take Advanced Placement United States history or to pursue other courses not offered in the combined English and history program. Bruce and Robin found "more often than not, they don't" end up taking these courses, "and if they do, they really struggle. The opportunities and the freedoms that they're looking for outside of the [program] aren't necessarily something that comes" (Bruce, interview).

Speaking of opportunity, four educators (Robin, Amy, Steve, Bruce) note that students seek out the program to provide a refuge from the traditional transactional schooling in other areas of Greenship Academy. The teachers concur that if the broader community did implement some of the unique qualities of the program school-wide,

> [I]t might go to alleviate some of the issues that have happened where students have been drawn to the program because they sort of perceive it as the last lifeboat off the Titanic where it's their only chance before pursuing private school or middle college for a small learning community…[The program] is their only chance. Then, they join it and they realize, 'oh no, that's not what I wanted.' (Robin, interview).

Implementing some of the unique qualities school wide would allow students to enter with clearer expectations on their end, rather than viewing the program as an escape from the oppressive learning environments in the remainder of the school.

Formalized new teacher onboarding

Throughout the interviews, most teachers described feeling lost in their first year (or years) of the program, because of the unique model of teaching required and not having had similar educational experiences themselves as either a student or a teacher. All but Robin mentioned this phenomenon. The teachers (Steve, Neil, Matthew) who were "asked to be part of the program" by and large felt this more than the teachers pursuant of entry into the program. Steve expressed feeling "more than overwhelmed."

Other teachers stepped in to try to support him, but he noted that mostly the help offered tended to take the form of sharing resources, and too many are not always helpful; the focus group of educators agreed with this perspective. To this point, Neil added that the volume of resources the program has now is a “little overwhelming,” and it can be hard to know where to start, especially as the goal is not to “imitate and copy.”

The only way to ensure support is through communication, but that is not always happening across the program and within cohort teacher pairs. Bruce notes that “it's not that we didn't collaborate. It was more informal, more episodic.” After asking many times and receiving no one-to-one continued aid, Matthew sought assistance outside of the program for his social justice courses, thinking "how do we bring social justice in?" He wanted to have more conversation amongst all members to figure out "scope and sequence, how to cover it, how much time to spend" and general support and conversation, especially for new hires. In their interviews, Neil, Amy and Steve raised similar needs while Bruce and Robin provide this support for each other.

In essence, the teachers desire the same kind of scaffolding for their own professional development that supports student learning in the program. They want a formalized new teacher on-boarding process for resource and communication development. This process would establish clear expectations and provide ongoing support for both new and old teachers in the program. This change would address the dual needs of training for inexperienced teachers upon entry and ongoing growth for veteran teachers.

Ingrained support

All six educators described entering into the social justice program as akin to fighting an uphill battle in the sense that they have to create something new and different while teaching with a model of instruction not well-supported by the school and district despite the initial call for innovation. Most teachers (Robin, Steve, Bruce, Amy, Matthew) referred to a common solution to address this issue: "institutionalization." Since I thought this word was rather hegemonic, *ingrained support* is the phrase I use in its place to refer to necessary structures needed to be implemented to maintain and improve the program. These common supports include having sheltered time, or time during the day specifically allocated for certain tasks, and an intermediary between administration and teachers.

The teachers agree the program needs to be "something that is owned not by any individual cult of personality teacher," but "by the student and faculty community alongside the broader community – the family community, district office administration, and site administration" (Robin, interview). If this does not occur, the program will fail when the main personality leaves or teachers stop supporting the programmatic needs. Right now, all needs are being addressed by the program teachers who are the ones responsible for all aspects of the program (money, curriculum, set up, communication, etc.). The teachers agree they all go above and beyond; Steve and Bruce equate work in the program being 150% to 200% more work than the average teacher due to those extra responsibilities like these. Since the larger institution is already "overburdened" (Robin), additional resources do not appear available to lessen the responsibilities for the teachers. According to Robin, when the system does intervene, it often "homogenizes" innovation

to the point of being lock step, which is antithetical to project-based learning and social justice teaching as a whole.

The focus group notes both implementing and continuing sheltered time could address this need. Sheltered time already exists in the scheduling of the program on the student end. Right now, the program is scheduled during 4th and 6th period (*Figure 7*) for all cohorts. According to Bruce, it is essential to "take big blocks of time" to support project-based curriculum and provide "flexibility to split a 90-minute period into two period and do something completely different without 'interrupting their day.'" Amy and Steve often use the time to execute joint interdisciplinary lessons while Robin and Bruce often find themselves bringing their students on field trips. This focus on "interruption" is because Greenship Academy is "hyper-achievement oriented and missing math or AP Chemistry is just not acceptable" (Bruce). The scheduling allows the program to "flourish a little bit but also creates the space for our kids to put on those social justice lenses when they come to our classes and leave the outside world out there" (Bruce).

Day 1	**Day 2**
Period 1 (90 minutes)	Period 2 (90 minutes)
Period 3 (90 minutes)	Period 4 (90 minutes)
Period 5 (90 minutes)	Period 6 (90 minutes)
Period 7 (90 minutes)	Tutorial (50 minutes)
[redacted]	Staff Meeting Time (30 minutes)

Figure 7. Greenship Academy schedule. Day 1 and Day 2 rotate on a continuous basis, having two to three class meetings each week for all classes. Please note, the times have been removed and day names have been changed to keep the school's anonymity intact.

This time is meaningful for teachers in planning their curriculum and students in their experience within the program. However, for teachers to effectively plan their curriculum and receive continued support, more collaboration time is necessary. This was a common "wish" amongst all educators in both the interview and focus group. Steve

notes that “every teaching pair works in a little bit of isolation” while others (Matthew, Amy, Neil) pointed out this is a direct result of not having planned time together.

This issue could be addressed by scheduling a common teacher prep period outside of the program course times. Right now, the only time all six teachers can collaborate during school hours is during a bi-monthly 30-minute meeting, which was not instituted until the end of the last school year - four years into the program. The reason is that staff meeting time (noted in *Figure 5)* is divided between meeting time for collaboration among like courses, all staff meetings, and required professional development. The teachers have no common time to coordinate, collaborate, and plan as a unit since all the teachers also general education teachers with many other responsibilities.

All six educators felt it would be beneficial to build their program as one single unit, but expressed the need for more time during the school day to do so. In the focus group, Robin and Steve raised the idea of a common prep period, and all teachers unanimously agreed. A common prep period or class period in which all cohort teachers are freed from teaching tasks would address the need for time during the school day. This time, however, would need to be sheltered, specifically allocated for programmatic meetings and development. This sheltered time could involve one-to-one meetings with individual cohort teams, or when needed, all program coordination, support and strategy time.

Part of the continued strategy is not just increased communication amongst the teachers, but also with administrators. The teachers retain all responsibilities for the everyday running of the program, not administrators. This means they have no active

intermediary between the teachers and administration, which five of the six educators noted as essential in ensuring not only smooth program scheduling but also administrative advocacy of programmatic needs. For administrative action to occur, awareness of the program's needs must be developed.

Administrative awareness

This theme introduces the two administrators involved in the study: Jack and Coach (*Figure 4*). Both are white males and academic administrators, being at the school and in administrative roles in the program since its inception.

Both administrators and many of the teachers noted that the resources and activities accompanying the program have served to benefit the entire school through bringing more spaces on campus for students to engage in community-building and complex conversations. Additionally, many teachers stated that the investigation of the district and school-site through action research capstone projects has directly provided awareness, and in some instances, positive changes towards a more just environment for all students and staff on campus. This peripheral impact of the program has been essential to its endurance, but more is needed in running the program for the long haul. The process starts with a conversation and a common definition of the purpose of the program: social justice.

The social justice program teachers all have a definition of social justice focused on power: who has it, who does not, and the impact of this power difference on the different groups experiencing it. The administrators (Jack and Coach), however, are more focused on access to a fair education on site within their own definitions of social justice. For Jack, to achieve social justice means to "ensure that students from all backgrounds

have equal footing, have an equal opportunity, equal access to the most rigorous education that they can get." This includes an education stemming from multiple perspectives and approaches to learning. Coach agrees with this definition and description, believing it is necessary to expose students to the "other extreme of social justice," seeing tough situations outside of the affluent area where Greenship Academy is located.

Both note that right now, not all students have access to a rigorous education at the Greenship Academy; this can be attributed to "obstacles" or "stumbling blocks" students have through their various different backgrounds (Jack, interview). Although it has now become a schoolwide goal to address this concerning fact, Jack mentions that social justice educators are able to use the "paradigm of actually knowing and caring about children and students through their entire situation" to make a difference and provide access to that rigorous education by allowing the students to explore, identify, and react to social justice issues. Even though not all lessons are focused on social justice issues, Jack's and Coach's understanding is that the social justice teachers are always looking through this lens of relationship-building in order to promote critical understanding and learning. Jack states that students who are in the program for three years can "hone those skills" over time, addressing their assumptions and coming to new conclusions about the meaning of justice. To be able to do this, Coach notes it is essential to maintain a high level of teaching with "common learning targets" that address common core standards, but teachers need to be free from constraints to achieve this.

According to Coach, to run the program effectively, "a teacher with drive, support from the administration, and teachers who can work together" is needed as "it is very

easy for a teacher to take their English class and just go with the standard curriculum, so it takes someone with drive to do something different and build the program from scratch." Luckily, Jack points out that Greenship Academy gives much autonomy to its teaching staff, and the program is self-sustaining due to the driven teachers that are part of the program. Jack states, "there's kind of a strong cadre of veteran teachers in there," and they are all delivering a "good curriculum" because he "knows their personalities."

Jack notes that the teachers still require administrative support and priority in regard to the scheduling of the courses mentioned in the theme above, while Coach is unsure of what supports the teachers might need to continue building the program. Both are willing to provide additional supports and in Coach's words are "impressed with what has been done" and the fact that the teachers are "going beyond the call of duty that a standard classroom teacher does on a daily basis."

Jack points out his limited involvement in the program, stating it is "fairly surface" and confined to "a couple of classroom visits." Similarly, Coach considers his involvement as being mostly through "socializing with the teachers." Coach furthers this statement and acknowledges that as a whole administration, "none of us are fully involved with the program, but part of it is because we have a strong core of teachers running the show and they're doing a good job." Jack wishes to "delve in more and look at the curriculum with the crew now that it's actually fleshed out and we have a nice cohort going now" and Coach exhibits similar wishes.

Both Jack and Coach have faith in the teachers' abilities, but the teachers themselves want more administrative awareness and support as seen in the remainder of this section above. Both administrators are able to speak about social justice as a concept,

but neither knows a lot about the program or the program's definition of social justice. They both trust in the program teachers and in their process, striving to be helpful to both the educators and the program. Part of this limited knowledge is due to the lack of contiguity amongst administrators across the site, leaving a gap in who has been responsible for the program as an administrator and requiring teachers to take a larger role; teachers speak to this point in the focus group, noting their program has passed five administrator desks in five years. Because administrators have minimal contact with the program right now, the program runs off of the teachers' drive, relying heavily on the additional time teachers give without pay and outside of school hours to continue the program.

Summary of research question 3

In answering Research Question 3, "What are the conditions necessary for a social justice program to sustain itself, according to teachers and school administrators?", three themes emerged. Although all students are welcome to enter the program, students are often unaware of the goals, purpose and strategies used to achieve them upon enrolling; therefore, the program sees student drops when expectations do not match the reality experienced. The student drops are most seen during their first years within a cohort; the same years that happen to be the toughest on new educator hires to the program. To address educator and programmatic needs for continued support, communication and collaboration, the teachers call for sheltered time in scheduling class and prep meeting time and access to an intermediary between administration and the program. Teachers hope to work more closely with administration to achieve programmatic longevity and success.

Summary of Findings

In this study, data were collected using interviews, observations, student work analysis, and a focus group in pursuit of answering one overarching research question: "How do teachers committed to social justice education enact counter-hegemonic and anti-oppressive practices in an affluent public school?" In order to respond fully to this question, five sub-questions were created and answered. The following section summarizes the results presented in this chapter to align with the purpose of the study.

Over the course of their lives, the teachers have developed an understanding of social justice, creating a conceptual framework for their actions both inside and outside of their involvement in the social justice program. This framework is centered on viewing social justice through a lens of power: how it is distributed and how it impacts those with and without it. This common vantage point of power is why teachers choose to teach social justice pedagogy in an affluent school. The teachers found passion in challenging the traditional system of schooling in an affluent school, wanting students to experience something other than a transaction of grades, to understand and react to social situations, and to gain the tools necessary to act in allyship for change. Even though all the teachers were passionate about challenging the system, not all actively pursued entry into the program. Once teachers, both pursuant and non-pursuant, realized the program offered the opportunity to build a relationship with a cohort of students across three years, they gained a more positive view of the program.

Teachers all found that the cohort model of the program allows them to devote more time, focus, and energy to use a different pedagogical approach and curriculum focused on skill building for change and action. Within the constraints of general

education, this was nearly impossible to achieve. The project-based learning in the program connects one year to the next while students develop the mastery of requisite skills to address social justice issues in the community through projects. Requirements of students in the program have changed over time with increased input and practice in the hands of the teachers. For this reason, teachers who have "looped" (beginning a second cohort of students) call the creation of curriculum an iterative process of continual improvement.

Within the social justice program lies an expectation that all skills learned and work completed will contribute to something greater; this distinguishes the understanding and planning for the curriculum in social justice from general education, whose primary goal is to meet school and college requirements. Students in the social justice program experience a curriculum aimed at mastery over proficiency, gaining skills over three years and in project-oriented ways not limited to one class, semester, test, or year. To support this, the program teachers act as a learning guide, in contrast to the general education view of a teacher as an expert aligned with the traditional transactional approach to schooling - a dominant perspective in the rest of the school. The program teachers seem to expose their social justice students to higher expectations through the program requirement to take action and raise awareness of social justice issues, an expectation not required of the general education students.

However, teachers require additional supports to be effective. The teachers all felt they needed more formalized ingrained support throughout the program because the pedagogical approach is so strikingly different than what they had experienced growing

up and/or learned in teacher training. This ingrained support requires further administrative awareness for implementation.

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Summary

After having presented emergent themes in the previous chapter, I now return to the overarching question: "How do teachers committed to social justice education enact counter-hegemonic and anti-oppressive practices in an affluent public school?" In this study, social justice education is an approach to schooling that combats oppression to rebuild perceptions, connections, and community. To answer this question, I explored teachers' and administrators' perspectives in a small-scale case study at one affluent school with an extant social justice education program.

Through the interviews, observations, student work analysis, and focus group, I conclude that the social justice education program does indeed challenge the traditional approach to schooling at Greenship Academy, using project-focused and student-centered learning as anti-oppressive pedagogies not evident in the school at large. The program's teachers directly address the privilege inherent to the affluent public school environment through their shared power-centric view of social justice. In other words, they directly address who has power and how do those with and without power experience the world. This outlook is embedded in the everyday curriculum, centered on skill-building for awareness and subsequent student-initiated action through project-oriented, and in most cases, project-based learning (PBL). The perception of the teacher as a learning guide supports the curricular approach and combats the traditional model of schooling, letting student voices take precedence over the teacher through democratic voting processes and scaffolds for skill development. This focus on mastery over proficiency requires teacher

communication and collaboration across the paired cohort teachers and the entire program. Nevertheless, no grouping of the educators receives any sheltered time specifically to address this need for increased collaboration.

Discussion

Relationships build access, depth, and interest

Building a relationship with a cohort of students across three years became an underlying rationale for teaching in the social justice program at Greenship Academy. Matthew found it to be a "perk" and "benefit," while Amy was "excited about the idea of looping kids and getting to know them really well in having them for three years." Bruce saw this relationship building as "essential" in creating scaffolds for social justice-focused curriculum, measuring student growth and sparking student interest in the topics.

Overall, building close relationships has had far reaching effects: Bruce, Steve and Robin mentioned tales of positive growth over time for both themselves and the students due to these relationships. The teachers were able to open up, and the students were able to get know themselves and their classmates. This knowledge of each other allowed a deeper dive into topics the students would not normally have access to in general education settings, such as privilege and injustice. It led teachers to intentionally choose skills and mastery over content and proficiency as the expectation was for students to become self-aware and action-oriented by the end of the program. Robin states, "It is a greater rigor in what [social justice students] are being tasked with. Their demonstration of synthesis is a much more challenging ask and a larger assignment to show the skill." The original intention of this action expectation was for students to address issues beyond the school community; however, students began selecting issues

geographically closer to them and inside the school, feeling compelled to engage in the "service of others" around them as opposed to the world outside of their community (Bruce). The focus of the program evolved to support this shift in student interest.

The results of this study are in line with prior research confirming the purpose of relationship-building in schools. Being an effective teacher (Banks, 1995) and having an effective classroom space (Pratt-Johnson, 2006) can only occur when a student's education becomes transformative through meaningful relationships within the classroom, inside the community, and amongst the students (Miller, 2010). The foundation of the social justice education program at Greenship Academy lies in these "essential" (Bruce) relationships. Without them, teachers cannot explore in-depth those topics related to power, privilege, and injustice; nor can they have the students engage in actions while seeking to address issues within the community beyond Greenship Academy. In other words, without relationships, the transformative experience would not exist.

The social justice program is to work in the "service of others" (Bruce). Students have to be critical of their own experience, engage with others to understand their needs, and address them through collective action. This process includes the participation of their cohort peers. Since community-building takes place over three years, the students grow to understand their peers' needs and then can engage in democratic processes. For example, in regard to course selection, the students choose courses that are beneficial to the entire program rather than approach this in a self-serving way. The program depends upon mutually beneficial relationships in order to exist. This example is congruent with Hantzoupoulous's (2016) findings that a transformative educational experience is built on

trusting relationships and engages in critical communal, democratic, and student-centered action.

Social justice in affluent public schooling settings is about power and privilege

All teachers provided a definition of social justice focused on power: how it is distributed, what is experienced based on this power, and what issues arise due to power inequities. This programmatic focus on power further engages the students and the teachers not only to raise awareness of power inequities inherent in an affluent public school but also to actively address them in the process. Teachers intentionally reflect on the specific needs of the students and the broader school as well as on the impact of their approach to the curriculum.

While the program's original foundation was built on the district's call for innovative curriculum, the founding teachers accomplished so much more. They designed a program that specifically challenged the dominant system of schooling at Greenship Academy. Several of the theoretical frameworks presented earlier in this study may help to address this design. The dominant approach to schooling at Greenship Academy uses the traditional hegemonic approach (Gramsci, 1995; Levinson, et al., 2012), focusing on fostering competition to obtain the greatest possible currency for success (Gramsci, 1995; Levinson et al., 2012; Lipman, 2011). Affluent communities place heightened stress on success, seeking achievement with a singular focus on the "shiny object" of a grade (Robin). Being "hyperachievement oriented," the students enter into the social justice program, experiencing an "interruption" in their day-to-day schedule and teacher expectations of them. This disruption counteracts systemic oppression of success by pushing for a different form of rigor. The teachers use project-based learning as a form of

critical pedagogy in order to build students' skills so that they can become aware of injustice, support the community through collective action, and develop as counter-hegemonic thinkers (Adams, Bell & Griffith, 2007; Bell, 2010; Berila, 2016; Freire, 2005; Giroux 1998/2004).

This approach of the social justice program at Greenship Academy challenges the intense pressure to succeed academically and to conform to the very narrow and well-defined standards of success. Luthar and Barkin (2012) describe these standards as common in affluent settings. Other researchers, such as Koplewicz, Gurian, & Williams, (2009), Levine (2008), Luthar (2003), and Wise (2008), have argued for preventative intervention to mitigate this tendency and to identify ways to support students to succeed (Luthar and Barkin, 2012). The social justice program has accomplished all of this. It advocates providing a space to counteract the experiences of affluence and supports student achievement through prioritizing building skills for action over memorizing content.

The program at Greenship Academy is unique in an affluent setting as it enacts social justice education through prioritizing skill building and mastery-based learning. The program calls for privileged students to develop the skills to tackle injustice with a different model of social justice education in that they are unlikely to enter classrooms with a critical understanding of the world in comparison to more marginalized counterparts (Allen & Rossatto, 2009; Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008; North, 2009; Swalwell, 2011).

This new and necessary model of social justice education maintains the same purpose regardless of setting. According to Curry-Stevens (2007), the ultimate goal of

social justice education is creating democratic and engaged individuals who acknowledge and respect the people and experiences around them. This goal is exactly what the social justice program at Greenship Academy aims to accomplish: to interrogate power relationships, to raise student awareness of power differences, and to develop skills promoting effective student action and civic engagement.

Other social justice programs in secondary school settings have implemented a range of approaches in executing their goals. In a study of high school English language arts teachers in Massachusetts, Dover (2010) found that educators teach social justice using three categories: curriculum, pedagogy, and social action. Similarly, Swalwell (2011/2013), whose research also focuses on affluent settings, concluded that teachers made three distinct pedagogical choices: they created counter-hegemonic content, exhibited student-centered practices, and built community connections. The social justice program at Greenship Academy combines these different approaches.

The teachers intentionally create curriculum with deeper critical content, use summative assessments focused on skill-building, and forge interdisciplinary connections. Their pedagogical approach is student-centered, based on seeing the teacher as a learning guide rather than as an expert (prevalent within the general education program). The former promotes student-directed thinking, discussion, and democratic practices, while the latter maintains a more traditional approach to schooling with the teacher at the front of the room depositing information into the minds of the students (Freire, 2005).

Lastly, the social justice program at Greenship Academy promotes community engagement and social action, as the students are expected by their senior year to execute

an action-based research project that addresses the needs of the local community. The intention of this action-based research project aligns to what Swalwell's (2011/2013) notes as an allyship approach, committed to "critical compassion" or being able to perceive, interpret, and respond to suffering or injustice. Executing an action-based research project requires student perception of an issue, interpreting the issue through executing a study, responding to the issue by designing and implementing a solution, and measuring the efficacy of the solution enacted.

Critical pedagogy is teaching as a learning guide

The teachers in both the social justice and general education program approach understanding and planning for their curriculum with one of two mindsets: teacher as a learning guide or teacher as expert. The social justice program differentiates itself from the rest of the school with its perspective of teacher as a learning guide. This approach enables and encourages student-student interaction, engagement, movement, collaboration, discovery, and responsibility, in contrast to individual learning, top down instruction with rote memorization of teacher knowledge seen within traditional schooling and inside Freire's (2005) work.

This approach based upon teacher as a learning guide resonates with the principles of critical pedagogy. From seeking emancipatory ideals (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2009) to changing the physical space and promoting positive student-teacher interactions and relationships (Breuning, 2005), teachers practice critical pedagogy to transform schooling to become more democratic, engaged, and critical of the world (Giroux, 2004). Freire (2005) notes that critical pedagogy through problem-posing

curriculum builds critical consciousness of the nature of society and oppression and combats traditional oppressive schooling.

Notably, none of the social justice teachers at Greenship Academy explicitly identified their approach as rooted in critical pedagogy. They did, however, describe their approach as a challenge to the system and disruption to "transactional learning" and "hyperachievement" (Bruce). Without using the language of anti-oppressive education or critical pedagogy, Greenship Academy social justice program teachers do intentionally create a transformative space and schooling experience through teaching as a learning guide. The teachers used social justice pedagogy to help the students become aware of injustice, feel more informed to address inequality, and choose to participate in social action in holistic ways using "critical compassion" (Swalwell 2011/2013) as seen in the section above. However, the teachers did not interpret social justice or execute the curriculum in exactly the same way, thereby locating themselves at different spots along a spectrum of social justice education.

Student engagement and consciousness of social justice increased in the program, since engaging in critical pedagogy supports this action-oriented thinking and causes students to become catalysts of transformation (Tibbitts, 2017). Within the social justice program, students were required to understand the structures of power while acting as catalysts for change inside of their community. This process has further implications as Yamasaki (2002) and Wade (1992) both found that understanding concepts of social justice inside of the community has a greater impact on learning and engagement. Additionally, Covell, Howe and McNeil (2010) note that this social justice pursuit results in increased self-efficacy and enjoyment in learning.

Teacher support is necessary for program sustainability

Over time the social justice program has evolved to be more realistic and functional in its requirements and expectations for students; yet the teachers still encounter challenges in their work since they are responsible for all aspects of the program. The teachers do not just offer curriculum, but also they raise funds, create field trips, execute interdisciplinary lessons, design classroom spaces, and scaffold project-based learning for student understanding and ability to take action.

Per Dover (2010) and Swalwell (2011/2013), teaching with a social justice frame requires more work to achieve social and community action. However, to achieve action requires a significant investment of time to be implemented effectively. The Greenship Academy administrators, Jack and Coach, note that the teachers are driven and spend intensive time working together to create curriculum that goes beyond general education standards. Teachers, such as Steve and Bruce, acknowledge this heavy investment of time, equating work in the program being 150% to 200% more than the average teacher.

Despite the increased demands on teachers in the social justice program, the teachers are still expected and required to maintain a high level of teaching with "common learning targets" (Coach) that address state and federal standards. Teachers, therefore, face the dual challenge of addressing content standards while confronting the collective context of their program (Dover, 2010; Swalwell 2011/2013). Swalwell (2011/2013) believed this dual challenge makes it difficult to sustain the "critical compassion" model of social justice education in affluent settings. However, the social justice teachers at Greenship Academy do not perceive this dual challenge as inhibiting

their progress towards achieving their goals; rather they see it as a mindset shift in planning curriculum.

For example, Amy describes her experience in planning for the social justice courses as a process of "needing to let go a bit" after making sure common core and state standards had been covered over time. Bruce further explains, equating his planning experience with that of building a barbed wire fence. In his general education classes, he focuses on creating the entire fence or line of reasoning through the content, "covering breadth and being a survey course." This is in contrast to his social justice courses which focus on building the "posts," going into depth on content to establish contextual understanding and build skills (Bruce). This focus on skills over content (Steve and Amy) promotes the "potential for mastery" (Robin) with the social justice program goals of understanding, awareness, and action.

As seen in Greenship Academy, teachers maintain an active role in implementing social justice (Robertson, 2008). Administration is neither heavily involved nor aware of program needs, since the larger institutional system is already "overburdened" (Robin) and does not have many resources to help an autonomous program. This lack of awareness and involvement has led to misalignment with project-based learning among the teachers; they do not have allocated time to plan, coordinate, collaborate and create as part of the program. The social justice program is not created as one single unit; therefore, variation among classrooms will remain since teachers will always interpret and practice social justice in different and complex ways (Sotropa, 2008).

Recommendations

For policy and practice

In the social justice program, the cohort model across three years profoundly contributed to creating the kind of teacher-student relationships necessary to dive deeply into anti-oppressive curriculum and to encourage students to take action. Similarly, the use of project-based learning built the skills of self-directed learning and thinking that are essential to promote action, moving towards mastery. This practice is not seen in the general education program on campus due to external constraints. Students were more equipped to achieve higher level thinking and become engaged learners inside the social justice education model of teaching and learning. With this in mind, I advocate for the implementation of cohort-model teaching and the use of project-based learning for all students.

For further teacher support

In order to integrate anti-oppressive pedagogy into classrooms, teachers need and deserve quality training and resources. All of the teachers noted how strikingly different this type of teaching was from their teacher training and their own classroom experiences. To address this contrast, professional development should be available to program teachers as part of their formalized on-boarding process as well as through ongoing support for all members. In addition, I suggest that all program teachers should attend these professional learning opportunities together, allowing for specific time to be allocated for collaboration, coordination, and planning. Both recommendations would address the support needed for ongoing professional learning and allocated collaboration time in a similar program.

For further research

This study focused on the perceptions and experiences of the teachers and administrators, hoping to seek their insight on the impact of the social justice education program. Further research could – and should – be conducted that explores other perspectives of the social justice program, particularly those of students. Teachers reported student learning outcomes through their own reflection on curricular practice and student work analysis in this study. To be true to the spirit of critical pedagogy, it would be essential to tap students' perspectives of the program through a three-year ethnography. Then, the students' insights could be compared with teacher perceptions to see how they matched up. A study of this nature would be essential to truly understand the dynamics of a similar program, finding out why students chose the program and how they experience its impact on their academic, social, and political development.

This study documented evidence that administrators need to be more aware of and involved in the program to assure its sustainability. To better understand the impact of a social justice program on an affluent public school, a longitudinal study of administrators would be valuable. In this way, administrators could learn about social justice education in order to lead more equitably, particularly important in an affluent setting.

Conclusion

While implementing social justice education in an affluent public high school is not unique, this study showed its powerful impact. Teachers exhibited an intentional approach to challenging the systemic oppression of traditional schooling present at Greenship Academy. While their approaches differed slightly and their understanding of social justice fell along a spectrum, they all specifically set out to combat the

transactional student-teacher relationship. The process and approach of the social justice educators were effective in reaching their goals, not only to combat oppression using anti-oppressive teaching, but also to provide students with the skills necessary to act toward justice.

From their moment of entry into the social justice program, students are tasked with "understanding how they fit in within the power structure" (Robin). The power structure of bells and schedules is disrupted alongside the traditional pedagogical approach. Limiting top down knowledge while celebrating creativity and self-efficacy, teachers and students learn from each other through project-based learning. This approach supports the expectation that all students graduate from the program with an understanding of the world around them, capable of raising awareness about current issues and addressing them head on. The teachers expect the students to act and lead the charge against injustice, inspiring change and transformation. The very existence of this program is evidence of how the teachers at the school counteract hegemony.

> In a high achieving high school, the fear of failure is so high that it causes people to not try to do things. They are afraid, thinking failure means failing the class, getting an F, not being able to go to Harvard, have a life and end up on the street. I want them to recognize that their actions can be complete failures but not doing anything is the biggest failure of all. (Bruce)

The teachers in the social justice program at Greenship Academy took a chance to act and build skills for enacting change. In doing so, their students have become empowered to move beyond the culture of achievement, marked by an obsession with success and failure, to learn how to act and become agents of change. This lesson will last long after they have left the classroom.

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Appendix A: Teacher Participant Consent Form

TEACHER PARTICIPANT: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Below is a description of the research procedures and an explanation of your rights as a research participant. You should read this information carefully. If you agree to participate, you will sign in the space provided to indicate that you have read and understand the information on this consent form. You are entitled to and will receive a copy of this form.

You have been asked to participate in a research study conducted by Andrea Struve, a graduate student in the Department of International and Multicultural Education at the University of San Francisco. This faculty supervisor for this study is Susan Katz, a Professor in the Department of International and Multicultural Education at the University of San Francisco.

WHAT THE STUDY IS ABOUT:

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to explore and evaluate the efforts of social justice education in an affluent public high school setting to determine the dynamic effects of the curriculum on the school community (i.e. learners and educators) from the educator perspective.

WHAT WE WILL ASK YOU TO DO:

During this study, you will be asked to…

- Be interviewed and engage in a discussion regarding your personal experiences of social justice curriculum and pedagogy in comparison to your personal experiences with general education curriculum and pedagogy.
- Select and bring a student-produced document/deliverable from one general education course and one social justice course to the interview.
- Select a time to be observed by the researcher teaching social justice curriculum.
- Select a time to be observed by the researcher teaching general education curriculum.
- Engage in a follow up focus group with all participant teachers.
- Be recorded using an audio-recording device for the formal interview and focus group.

AUDIORECORDINGS:

For all interviews and focus groups, an audio recording will be made using a recording device to allow for transcription of the interview/focus group. For all Teacher Participant Interviews (TPI), the labeling of all recordings will be "TPI_NAME." The labeling of all Teacher Participant Interview Transcription will be "TPIT_NAME." Similarly, for the Teacher Focus Group (TFG), the audio recording will be labeled "TFG," and the labeling for the Teacher Focus Group Transcription (TFGT) will be "TFGT." These recordings and transcriptions will be stored on the researcher's computer within the folder marked "Dissertation Data" on their desktop and will be backed up on an external hard drive, which is locked in a secure filing cabinet at the researcher's place of work. The recordings and transcriptions will be stored indefinitely on the external hard drive.

DURATION AND LOCATION OF THE STUDY:
Your participation in this study will involve one interview of approximately 30-45 minutes, two classroom observations of 15 minutes each, and one focus group of approximately one hour. The study will take place at Palo Alto High School.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
The research procedures described above may involve the following risks and/or discomforts for psychological and social discomfort. The participant will be recorded and will engage in conversation with the researcher as well as their colleagues (other research participants) on topics related to their workplace of an affluent high school setting. There are no foreseeable physical, economic, or legal risks that might be greater than those encountered in everyday life. If you wish, you may choose to withdraw your consent and discontinue your participation at any time during the study without penalty.

BENEFITS
You will receive refreshments during the interview and focus group. Hopefully, the results of this study will serve to inform you of the programmatic needs in order to sustain and continue the social justice program at the high school in the future.

The possible benefits to others outside of the school include broadening the depth of knowledge on the implementation, use, and impact of social justice curriculum in an affluent public school.

PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY:
Your privacy is important within this small-scale study and confidentiality will be maintained. Within research, confidentiality means that the researcher will have a record of who participated but the data will be kept private and you will select an alias to be used in place of your first name and any identifying factors will become generalized. Any data you provide in this study will be kept confidential unless disclosure is required by law. In any report published, no information will be included that will make it possible to identify you or any other individual participant. The researcher will only use your alias, including will all meetings with advisors and faculty engaged within the project. A master list that includes the participant's name and the alias will be created by hand and kept separately from the collected data on the researcher's computer and hard drive. The IRB requires the researcher to keep this consent form for 3 years; therefore, the consent

forms will also be kept with that master list. Both will be locked in a filing cabinet at the researcher's home. After this time frame, the researcher will destroy anyone's ability to link participants' data to identifying information and shred all sensitive information.

COMPENSATION/PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION:

There is no payment or other form of compensation for your participation in this study; however, food will be provided during each meeting session as token of appreciation.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF THE STUDY:

Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate without penalty. Furthermore, you may skip any questions or tasks that make you uncomfortable and may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. In addition, the researcher has the right to withdraw you from participation in the study at any time.

OFFER TO ANSWER QUESTIONS:

Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you should contact the researcher/principal investigator: Andrea Struve at 415-710-7997 or afstruve@dons.usfca.edu. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the University of San Francisco Institutional Review Board at IRBPHS@usfca.edu.

WITH THE ABOVE PRIVACY STATEMENT IN MIND, THE FIRST NAME ALIAS THAT I WOULD LIKE THE RESEARCHER TO USE IS _____.

THE GENDER PRONOUN I WOULD LIKE MY ALIAS TO BE REFERRED TO WITH IS HE/HIS/SHE/HER/THEY/THEM [CIRCLE THE ONE(S) YOU ARE COMFORTABLE WITH].

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE INFORMATION AND FILLED OUT ANY NECESSARY INFORMATION. ANY QUESTIONS I HAVE ASKED HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT AND I WILL RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM.

_____

PARTICIPANT'S PRINTED NAME *DATE*

_____

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE *DATE*

Appendix B: Teacher Participant Interview Protocol

The interview will begin with a general greeting and a review of the consent form (Appendix A). Once the teacher participants understand the nature of the study and have volunteered to be participants, signing the consent forms, the researcher will begin to record and commence the interview. The interview will take the form of a conversation; however, guiding interview questions aligned with each research question theme are below.

NOTE: The questions in bold are the questions of most importance to the study.

Theme: Teacher's approach to the pedagogy and curriculum

- What subject do you teach?
- What drew you to teach this subject?
- How long have you been teaching?
- How long have you been teaching at Greenship Academy?
- What is your educational background?
- Why did you choose to become a teacher?
- Who influenced your teaching style?
- How would you describe your style of teaching?
- **Generally speaking, how do you…**
    - Design your course?
    - Create your curriculum?
    - Set up your classroom?
- **What do you believe is the purpose of schooling? How might this be reflected in the way you teach?**
- **Do you approach general education courses differently than social justice program courses? If so, how?**
- ***Document Analysis***
    - What are the two documents you have chosen to bring?
    - What was the purpose of assigning each?
    - Did the student understand this educational purpose?
    - What makes them unique to general education and/or social justice?

Theme: Teacher's prior and current experience in social justice education

- **What does social justice mean to you?**
- When/How did you create this meaning?

- **What life experiences have impacted your definition or meaning of social justice?**
- In what capacity have you been involved in social justice organizations or educational programs? Can you describe some (recent) experiences you have had with these organizations or programs?
- How are you involved in the social justice program on campus?
- **How long have you been involved in this program?**
- **How does the social justice program on campus help to create your definition of social justice?**

Theme: Programmatic sustainability

- **What is the overarching purpose or goal of the social justice program on campus?**
- **In what ways do you feel the social justice program is meeting those goals?**
- **In what ways do you feel the social justice program is not meeting those goals?**
- **How does Greenship Academy or you support the achievement of these goals?**
- Have you seen any impacts on the broader school community through the implementation of the program? If so, how? If not, is there any impacts you would like to see?
- Is there anything else you would like to discuss or add about the social justice program on campus?

Following the interview, the researcher will stop the recording and thank the teacher participant. They will then provide the teacher participant with the option to review the transcription upon its completion prior to the focus group.

Appendix C: Teacher Participant Focus Group Protocol

The focus group will begin with a general greeting and a statement of purpose about the focus group: *the purpose of this group is to evaluate, discuss, and analyze the themes identified through the interviews, document analysis and observation phase of the study with the purpose of validating the data*.

The researcher will then revisit the consent form and explain the focus group will be recorded and involve two phases:

1. It will first take the form of a brief (5-10 minute) presentation of findings by the researcher.
2. This will be followed by a conversation with the teacher participants to evaluate, discuss, and analyze the themes identified in the research.

Following the implementation of these two phases, the researcher will conclude the focus group by reviewing any overarching feedback that arose on the spot and thank the teacher participants for their continued support and engagement in the research study.

Appendix D: Administration Participant Consent Form

ADMINISTRATOR PARTICIPANT: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Below is a description of the research procedures and an explanation of your rights as a research participant. You should read this information carefully. If you agree to participate, you will sign in the space provided to indicate that you have read and understand the information on this consent form. You are entitled to and will receive a copy of this form.

You have been asked to participate in a research study conducted by Andrea Struve, a graduate student in the Department of International and Multicultural Education at the University of San Francisco. This faculty supervisor for this study is Susan Katz, a Professor in the Department of International and Multicultural Education at the University of San Francisco.

WHAT THE STUDY IS ABOUT:

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to explore and evaluate the efforts of social justice education in an affluent public high school setting to determine the dynamic effects of the curriculum on the school community (i.e. learners and educators) from the educator perspective.

WHAT WE WILL ASK YOU TO DO:

During this study, you will be asked to…

- Be interviewed and engage in a discussion regarding your personal experiences of social justice curriculum and pedagogy in comparison to your personal experiences with general education curriculum and pedagogy. In addition to the curricular focus on these two areas, you will be invited to engage in a discussion on your experiences with the administration of both programs, and implications for the future to maintain both.
- Be recorded using an audio-recording device during the interview.

AUDIORECORDINGS:

For the interview, an audio recording will be made using a recording device to allow for transcription of the interview. The labeling of the Administrator Interview (AI) recordings will be "AI_NAME." The labeling of all Administrator Interview Transcription (AIT) will be "AIT_NAME." These recordings and transcriptions will be stored on the researcher's computer within the folder marked "Dissertation Data" on their

desktop and will be backed up on an external hard drive, which is locked in a secure filing cabinet at the researcher's place of work. The recordings and transcriptions will be stored indefinitely on the external hard drive.

DURATION AND LOCATION OF THE STUDY:
Your participation in this study will involve one interview of approximately 30-45 minutes. The study will take place at Palo Alto High School.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

The research procedures described above may involve the following risks and/or discomforts for psychological and social discomfort. The participant will be recorded and will engage in conversation with the researcher as well as their colleagues (other research participants) on topics related to their workplace of an affluent high school setting. There are no foreseeable physical, economic, or legal risks that might be greater than those encountered in everyday life. If you wish, you may choose to withdraw your consent and discontinue your participation at any time during the study without penalty.

BENEFITS

You will receive refreshments during the interview. Hopefully, the results of this study will serve to inform you of the programmatic needs in order to sustain and continue the social justice program at the high school in the future.

The possible benefits to others outside of the school include broadening the depth of knowledge on the implementation, use, and impact of social justice curriculum in an affluent public school.

PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY:

Your privacy is important within this small-scale study and confidentiality will be maintained. Within research, confidentiality means that the researcher will have a record of who participated but the data will be kept private and you will select an alias to be used in place of your first name and any identifying factors will become generalized. Any data you provide in this study will be kept confidential unless disclosure is required by law. In any report published, no information will be included that will make it possible to identify you or any other individual participant. The researcher will only use your alias, including will all meetings with advisors and faculty engaged within the project. A master list that includes the participant's name and the alias will be created by hand and kept separately from the collected data on the researcher's computer and hard drive. The IRB requires the researcher to keep this consent form for 3 years; therefore, the consent forms will also be kept with that master list. Both will be locked in a filing cabinet at the researcher's home. After this time frame, the researcher will destroy anyone's ability to link participants' data to identifying information and shred all sensitive information.

COMPENSATION/PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION:

There is no payment or other form of compensation for your participation in this study; however, food will be provided during each meeting session as token of appreciation.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF THE STUDY:

Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate without penalty. Furthermore, you may skip any questions or tasks that make you uncomfortable and may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. In addition, the researcher has the right to withdraw you from participation in the study at any time.

OFFER TO ANSWER QUESTIONS:

Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you should contact the researcher/principal investigator: Andrea Struve at 415-710-7997 or afstruve@dons.usfca.edu. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the University of San Francisco Institutional Review Board at IRBPHS@usfca.edu.

WITH THE ABOVE PRIVACY STATEMENT IN MIND, THE FIRST NAME ALIAS THAT I WOULD LIKE THE RESEARCHER TO USE IS _____.

THE GENDER PRONOUN I WOULD LIKE MY ALIAS TO BE REFERRED TO WITH IS HE/HIS/SHE/HER/THEY/THEM [CIRCLE THE ONE(S) YOU ARE COMFORTABLE WITH].

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE INFORMATION AND FILLED OUT ANY NECESSARY INFORMATION. ANY QUESTIONS I HAVE ASKED HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT AND I WILL RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM.

_____

PARTICIPANT'S PRINTED NAME *DATE*

_____

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE *DATE*

Appendix E: Administrator Participant Interview Protocol

The interview will begin with a general greeting and a review of the consent form (Appendix D). Once the administrator participant understands the nature of the study and has volunteered to be a participant, signing the consent form, the researcher will begin to record and commence the interview. The interview will take the form of a conversation; however, guiding interview questions relating to the research question theme of program sustainability are below.

- What does social justice mean to you?
- What life experiences have impacted your definition of social justice?
- How does the social justice program on campus help to create your definition of social justice?
- What is the overarching purpose or goal of the social justice program on campus?
- In what ways do you feel the social justice program is meeting those goals?
- In what ways do you feel the social justice program is not meeting those goals?
- How does Greenship Academy or you support the achievement of these goals?
- Have you seen any impacts on the broader school community through the implementation of the program? If so, how? If not, is there any impacts you would like to see?
- Is there anything else you would like to discuss or add about the social justice program on campus?

Following the interview, the researcher will stop the recording and thank the administrator participant. They will then provide the administrator participant with the option to review the transcription upon its completion.

Appendix F: Fort Laramie PBL Culminating Projects

Treaty of Fort Laramie

WESTERN EXPANSION

1803	1830	1848	1858	1862	1864

Louisiana Purchase 1803

In 1803, the United States of America bought approximately 827,000 square miles of land west of the Mississippi River for $15 million from France. This block of land doubled the size of the U.S. Stretching from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and From the Gulf of Mexico to Canada, it formed a total of 15 states. With the Louisiana Purchase's new land, many traveled across novel territories to the west, prompting Westward Expansion, the American Dream, and Manifest Destiny.

Indian Removal Act 1830

Within a few years, whites outnumbered Indians in the Louisiana Purchase Territory. The U.S. government established trading posts to create fair trade with American Indians and increased military presence. Unlike the French Creoles who had lived on the land previously, the U.S. settlers saw American Indian culture as foreign. They disregarded the items the American Indians had to trade, causing great tension between the two nations. By 1830, the federal government drafted a bill to the Senate that proposed the removal and relocation of Cherokee Indians from the Louisiana Purchase territory.

In December, President Andrew Jackson signed the bill and it was put into action. The government promised the Cherokees land which was west of the Mississippi River, on the new, unsettled territory if they would surrender their land in the already-formed states in the east. Many tribes resisted the relocation and as many as 4,000 American Indians died in what is now known as the "Trail of Tears," a long march the U.S. forced upon them.

California and Colorado Gold Rushes

1848

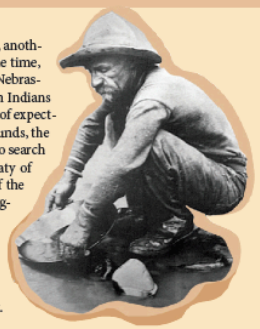
In 1884, a miller named James Marshall discovered gold in California. This discovery caused hundreds of thousands of people to flood towards Sutter's Mill in search of a better future. This spike in immigration troubled American Indians across the country as many settlers intruded upon Indian lands during their journeys to California.

Furthermore, most of the accessible gold was found on traditional American Indian hunting grounds, and many tribes were forced to relocate.

As gold miners, nicknamed Forty-Niners, sought out more and more land to mine, they transmitted new diseases to the Indians, which, along with hunger and violence from the gold miners, caused a great decline in population of the American Indians.

1858

After gold was discovered in Colorado in 1858, another wave of miners moved west in high hopes. At the time, Colorado was still considered part of the Kansas and Nebraska territory. Tension was high between the American Indians and the settlers, because as the passage of thousands of expectant gold miners flooded through Indian hunting grounds, the game was scared off and Indians found it necessary to search for better land. Soon, with the signing of the Treaty of Fort Wise, the government redefined the borders of the Indian reservation, which was now 1/13th of the original size. Many Cheyenne Indians, displeased by the treaty, disregarded the ruling and continued to venture past their borders. In addition, due to the military forts along the Bozeman Trail, small battles between troops stationed at the forts and some groups of violent American Indians were frequent.



Dakota War 1862

The Dakota tribes and the U.S. government had a series of agreements in which the government promised food and money in exchange for the Dakotas' land. However, when the U.S. government fell behind in payments due to debt from the Civil War, the Dakotas began to starve. In August of 1862, four enraged Dakota warriors killed five white men from a nearby village. Their leader, Little Crow, decided to declare war on the whites. They traveled through the Renville and Brown counties, capturing and killing civilians and government employees. Minnesotans were terrified of this news, and it spread quickly. Battles ensued in many different places, with the whites led by former governor Henry H. Sibley. Peace negotiations started in September, but the Dakotas did not surrender until their defeat at the Yellow Medicine River. Then, the Dakotas fled to the west.

Navajo Long Walk 1864

In response to violence between Navajos and settlers who were invading on their land, the federal government decided to relocate the Navajos. This forced relocation of approximately 8,500 Navajos in the middle of winter to the Bosque Redondo Reservation was long and deadly. It became known as the "Long Walk". Approximately 200 Navajos died along the 300+ mile walk from cold, exhaustion, and starvation. Upon arrival, they realized the reservation was not any better than their trek, because of its small size and lack of fertile soil. They survived for the four years that they were forced to live there until they came to another agreement with the federal government which allowed them to return to a portion of their native land, although their territory was never recovered.

Treaty of Fort Laramie

RESERVATION LIFE

What is a Reservation?

Reservations were pieces of land on which Native Americans were forced to live as white settlers took over and expanded west. The main goal of these reservations was to bring the tribes under the U.S. government's control, so as to minimize conflict between them and settlers. Reservations also forced Native Americans to "Americanize" and "take on the ways of the white man."

Daily Hardship

Day-to-day life on the reservations was harsh. It was difficult for the tribes to maintain their culture once they were deprived of their traditional wandering lifestyle. They were forced to become farmers on "throw-away territory," land that the white settlers had already passed over as unfit to live on. Starvation was common and disease spread easily. Feuding tribes were sometimes forced to live together, causing fighting to break out over already scarce resources.

Americanization

In addition to the lifestyle shifts inherent in living on a reservation, Native American children were forced to become more American, or more "civilized." Schools were built to teach Native American children English literacy. They were encouraged to wear different clothing as well as forced to change their names. Missionaries also tried to convert them to Christianity. These changes led to further divisions among the tribes, between those that accepted the American "assistance" and those that resisted it, causing further violence.

1830
Indian Removal Act
Tribes are forced to move West

1851
Indian Appropriations Act
Created the reservation system

1868
Treaty of Fort Laramie
Great Sioux Reservation Established

1887
The Dawes Act
See below for more information

1937
Removal of Dawes Act
Replaced with the Indian Reorganization Act in hopes of restoring culture and returning land to tribes

Maps of Native American Land

Dawes Act

The Dawes Act of 1887 allowed the U.S. government to divide reservations into smaller plots of land for families to own privately. Each family living on reservations was offered 160 acres of land to make a profit on. At first glance, this seemed like a fair offer, but the land was unsuitable for farming and could not be sold for 25 years. Congress hoped that the act would end native dependency on the U.S. government, but it was widely resisted by tribal leaders, as it would greatly reduce the territory they currently held.