

# ***The White Labor Collective Education Justice Glossary***

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Education Justice Squad  
with The #DoneForDiDi White Labor  
Collective***



# *The White Labor Collective Education Glossary*

## • Abolitionist Teaching •

“Abolitionist Teaching is built on the creativity, imagination, boldness, ingenuity, and rebellious spirit and methods of abolitionists to demand and fight for an educational system where all students are thriving, not simply surviving.”

“Abolitionist teaching is the practice of working in solidarity with communities of color while drawing on the imagination, creativity, refusal, (re)membering, visionary thinking, healing, rebellious spirit, boldness, determination, and subversiveness of abolitionists to eradicate injustice in and outside of schools.”

**Source:** *We Want to Do More Than Survive (p.2)*  
by Bettina Love

## • Agitation Literacies •

Agitation literacies are “ways of reading, writing, thinking, and speaking that are connected to the intention and action to upset, disturb, disquiet, and unhinge systemic oppression.”

**Source:** *“Protest, power, and possibilities: The need for agitation literacies”*  
by Gholdy Muhammad

## • Apartheid School •

“[W]here Black and Brown students are going to schools where less than 1 percent of students are white.”

**Source:** Bettina Love, Q&A



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## ● Asian Critical Race Theory ●

Asian CRT “examines immigration policies and the use of the ‘model minority’ stereotype as a form of anti-Blackness.”

**Source:** *We Want to Do More Than Survive (p.137)*, by Bettina Love

## ● “At Risk” ●

“At-Risk” has been “used to label Black and Brown youth” in a harmful and derogatory way. What are they at risk of? Poor instruction? Racism? Instruction disconnected to their identities and histories? A skills-only curriculum?”

**Source:**  
*Cultivating Genius (p.88)*,  
by Gholdy Muhamad

## ● Belief Gap ●

Belief gap is the “gap between what their teachers believe they can achieve and what students can actually achieve.”

**Source:** *Unschooling: The Educational Movement More Black Parents Are Joining* by Tomi Akitunde



## ● Charter School Movement ●

Charter schools “perpetuate inequalities, pulling high-achieving students from traditional public schools...[S]uccessful charter schools push low-income dark families out of their own neighborhoods.” Many charter schools maintain a “ ‘no excuses’ teaching approach... that popularize[s] aggressive, paternalistic, and racist ideological teaching practices on dark bodies.”

**Source:** *We Want to Do More Than Survive (p.30)*, by Bettina Love

## • Counselors Not Cops •

“Campaigns to remove school police and fund supportive staff in schools – like community intervention workers, mental health counselors, restorative coordinators and others.”

“Systemic racial disparities persist in school discipline, as Black and Brown students are still being suspended and arrested at higher rates, and denied access to the services and support they need. School districts continue to invest in school policing, while denying that resources are available for counseling, mental health services and meaningful implementation of restorative justice and social-emotional supports.”

**Source:** “Give at the Grassroots: an End of Year Message from our New Program Director, Ruth Idakula!” by Ruth Idakula



## Criminalization

“[T]he issuance of summonses and/or arrests appear to be justified by students' display of 'irate,' 'insubordinate,' 'disrespectful,' 'uncooperative,' or 'uncontrollable' behavior. These labels underscore the use of discipline, punishment, and the juvenile justice system to regulate identity and social status.”

- **Monique W. Morris**  
*Pushout (p.11)*

## • Criticality •

Criticality “helps teachers understand and explain inequities in education and is a step toward teaching anti-oppression.” Some critical theories “that are helpful for educators include critical race theory, Black feminist theory, and LatCrit.” These theories “help teachers develop a critical lens on the world and on their teaching.”

**Source:** *Cultivating Genius (p.117)* by Gholdy Muhammad

## • Critical Race Theory •

CRT “works to understand the centrality of racism—meaning that racism is permanent and understanding it is fundamental to understanding how all structures are organized in the US.” CRT “challenges color-blindness, meritocracy, and neutrality...[and also] centers knowledge that derives from dark peoples’ experiences with racism by using counter-stories, which challenge the normalization of the White worldview of knowledge while affirming the personal and family histories of dark people. CRT pushes to the forefront dark people’s intimate knowledge of racism as a tool to challenge it and as a space of collective power and resistance.”

**Source:** *We Want to Do More Than Survive* (p.136) by Bettina Love

## • Culturally-Relevant Education •

Culturally-relevant education is a “theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement, but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate.”

**Source:** *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* by Gloria Ladson-Billings



## Culturally-Responsive Teaching

Culturally-responsive teaching is “using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively.”

- Geneva Gay, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*



## • Danger of the Single-Story •

“When we frame the stories of people of color as narratives steeped in pain or even smallness, this becomes the dominant or sole representation.” Schools “often frame Black people’s stories with false interpretations, or begin the story with chattel slavery... Rarely do young children learn about multiple figures in history who also contributed to excellence.”

**Source:** *Cultivating Genius (p.21)*, by Gholdy Muhamad

## • “Defiant” •

“Defiant” is part of “Deficit Language” and is a term used when “youth have resisted curriculum and instruction that lacked equity, access, and cultural relevance.”

**Source:** *Cultivating Genius (p.46)*, by Gholdy Muhamad



## • Deficit Language •

Language that surrounds Black and brown students such as “at risk, defiant, and disadvantaged.” These labels have “harmful consequences...for youth and their lives.”

**Source:** *Cultivating Genius (p.41)*, by Gholdy Muhamad

## ● Danger of the Single-Story ●

“Permanently closing the digital divide is a fundamental matter of equity—specifically, minimizing learning inequities that result in lower academic performance, which leads to lifetime losses in earnings.”

“The divide disproportionately affects Black, Latinx, and Native American students (who make up about 55% of disconnected students while representing about 40% of total students). It also disproportionately affects students in lower-income families: About 50% of disconnected students come from families with annual incomes less than \$50,000.”

**Source:** *LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD: What it will take to permanently close the K–12 digital divide* by **Titilayo Tinubu Ali**, Southern Education Foundation • **Sumit Chandra**, BCG • **Sujith Cherukumilli**, Southern Education Foundation • **Amina Fazlullah**, Common Sense • **Elizabeth Galicia**, Common Sense • **Hannah Hill**, BCG • **Neil McAlpine**, BCG • **Lane McBride**, BCG • **Nithya Vaduganathan**, BCG • **Danny Weiss**, Common Sense • **Matthew Wu**, BCG

## ● Dis/ability Critical Race Theory ●

Dis/ability CRT “examines how dark students are overrepresented in special education, overrepresented among those labeled emotionally disturbed, and overrepresented among those labeled learning disabled, and criminalized for being dis/abled.”

**Source:** *We Want to Do More Than Survive (p.137)*  
by Bettina Love



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## Dress Code

"Dress codes in the United States are arbitrary, and in general they are sexist and reinforce the practice of slut shaming. They can also reinforce internalized oppression about the quality of natural hairstyles on people of African descent."

- **Monique W. Morris**  
*Pushout (p.92)*

## Feminist Critical Race Theory

Feminist CRT "investigates the gendered oppression dark people experience."

**Source:** *We Want to Do More Than Survive (p.143)* by Bettina Love

## Dysconscious Racism

Dysconscious racism is "practiced by teachers who want to celebrate diversity with holidays, food, and cultural artifacts but never challenge their assumptions about dark people and how Whiteness is reproduced for their advantage."

**Source:** *We Want to Do More Than Survive (p.143)* by Bettina Love



## Explicit Bias

" 'Explicit bias' refers to the attitudes and beliefs we have about a person or group on a conscious level."

"As an African American educator in California community colleges for over 25 years, I have been mostly wounded and hurt by explicit racism and discrimination by white folks who were intentional and knew very well what they were doing, the power they had to do it, and the protection they receive from the system."

**Source:** *Explicit Bias*, by Jessica Ayo Alabi



## • Higher Education •

“Our institutions of higher education not only contain the same basic bigotries as the rest of society; they have also been the place where many of those prejudices were legitimized through deliberately biased study.”

“Trump and others on the right want to make sure that working-class white men don’t want to go to college and distrust those who do, and conservative educators want to make sure that people from marginalized communities don’t want to go either. All of this works by design. It is to ensure that enough of us keep our heads down, focus on surviving our nine-to-five jobs, don’t ask questions, and don’t demand more from a system that owes us a lot. The death of American higher education will harm the most vulnerable of us first, but its goal is not to harm or oppress only us-that work is fully implanted in all our systems. Its goal is to continue to oppress and exploit white supremacy’s most powerful tool: the angry white working-class man.”

**Source: *Mediocre* (p.97 & p.121) by Ijeoma Oluo**



## High Stakes Testing, Part I

“The No Child Left Behind Act, the 2001 legislation that reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), ushered in an era that prioritized high-stakes testing and established an educational climate that linked assessment of student achievement to the single measure of performance on these tests. According to the National Center for Fair and Open Testing, which has voiced an open critique of the growing reliance on standardized tests, youths of color are disproportionately affected by grade retention (being held back) as a result of this practice.”

**- Monique W. Morris *Pushout* (p.33)**

## High Stakes Testing, Part II

High-stakes tests serve as “gatekeepers” where “Youth may be labeled, shaped, and controlled by one test score.” These tests “reflect the test creators’ ‘White bias’ and feature prompts that bear little resemblance to the lives of children who are underserved in schools.”

- Gholdy Muhammad  
*Cultivating Genius (p. 106-107)*

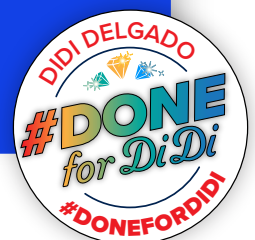
## Historically Responsive Literacy Framework

HRL addresses students’ “Identities, Skills, Intellect, and Criticality...[and] responds to the limitations of traditional school curricula, urging us to recognize and embrace the exalted literary legacy...of our students of color.”

HRL is when “teaching, learning, and leadership beliefs and practices authentically respond to:

1. Students’ cultural (and other) identities
2. The cultural (and other) identities of others
3. The social times (historical and current)”

**Source:** *Cultivating Genius (p.13, 48)*, by Gholdy Muhammad



## • Homework / Homework Divide •

Historically known as the homework gap, students without high-speed internet and an e-learning device were unable to complete assignments that required digital access. Analysis shows that the homework gap has contributed to those students' lower academic achievement.

**Source:** *LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD: What it will take to permanently close the K–12 digital divide* by **Titilayo Tinubu Ali**, Southern Education Foundation • **Sumit Chandra**, BCG • **Sujith Cherukumilli**, Southern Education Foundation • **Amina Fazlullah**, Common Sense • **Elizabeth Galicia**, Common Sense • **Hannah Hill**, BCG • **Neil McAlpine**, BCG • **Lane McBride**, BCG • **Nithya Vaduganathan**, BCG • **Danny Weiss**, Common Sense • **Matthew Wu**, BCG



## • IQ tests •

IQ tests “sought to create inferiority among Black people...[they] became a mechanism for tracking students, predicting their academic success, or marginalizing them.” In this way, IQ tests “contributed to false narratives related to the achievement gap that often compared Black and White students...[I]n their minds, White is always the standard.”

**Source:** *Cultivating Genius (p. 105)* by Gholdy Muhammad

## Latinx Critical Race Theory

Latinx CRT “provides an analysis of how racism functions in relation to immigration status, language, and culture.”

- **Bettina Love** *We Want to Do More Than Survive (p. 137)*

## ● Privatization ●

“School choice policies and the movement to privatize education have become the currently preferred school reform methods on both the state and federal levels under the guise they will provide equal educational opportunities and access for all students.” “...the push for school choice and privatizing public education in North Carolina demonstrates a broader, recurring problem in American public schools—creating progressive education laws and policies appearing to promote educational equity and opportunity and then regressing to policies supporting White privilege while maintaining the status quo of inequitable educational opportunities for historically underserved and minoritized students.”

**Source:** From *Desegregation to Privatization: A Critical Race Policy Analysis of School Choice and Educational Opportunity in North Carolina* by Dana N. Thompson Dorsey & Gwen D. Roulhac

## ● Othering ●

“Othering” occurs when “some educators do not teach diverse students as their own and...this notion of ‘othering’ marginalizes them.” “Othering” also shows up in the “current curriculum and standards [that] are not typically written with our students’ identities in mind, especially Black and Brown children.”

**Source:** *Cultivating Genius* (p.65-66), by Gholdy Muhamad



## Racial Literacy

Racial Literacy is the “capability of seeing, naming, and interpreting the world with a Critical lens, where one is keenly aware of race...Due to a history of being apathologized and relegated based on social constructions of race and racism, it is critical for young people to be racially literate.”

**Source:** *Cultivating Genius* (p.123-124) by Gholdy Muhammad

## • Redlining •

“Today, more insidious forms of housing discrimination exist, such as the widespread practice of landlords illegally refusing to accept housing assistance vouchers as a form of rental payment. This contributes to the trend of Black residents remaining clustered in highly segregated neighborhoods, regardless of their incomes; even when accounting for socioeconomic status, Black families live in neighborhoods with the highest prevalence of violence and the lowest income levels, and tend to remain in such neighborhoods over intergenerational periods.”

**Sources:** “*Vacancies to Fill: Considering Desire in the Past and Future of Chicago’s vacant schools*”, by Eve L. Ewing

Page 191 of *Teaching For Black Lives*

## • Re-Segregation •

“But while segregation as it is practiced today may be different than it was 60 years ago, it is no less pernicious: in Tuscaloosa and elsewhere, it involves the removal and isolation of poor Black and Latino students, in particular, from everyone else. In Tuscaloosa today, nearly one in three Black students attends a school that looks as if *Brown v. Board of Education* never happened.”

**Source:** “*Segregation Now*” by Nikole Hannah-Jones





## • Restorative Practices/Justice •

“Being a warrior and healer in the context of school-based restorative justice practice means practicing with heightened and active awareness of our own bias, implicit or explicit, and of systemic factors in our schools that perpetuate harm. A few of the many such factors include financing disparities for schools in communities of color, tracking and special education placements, the school-to-prison pipeline, and racial disparities in discipline. It also means creating school cultures of care, connectivity, and healing.”

**Source:** “*How Schools Are Using Restorative Justice to Remedy Racial Disparities In Discipline*” by Fania E. Davis

## • School Pushout •

“When Black girls engage in acts that are deemed ‘ghetto’ - often a euphemism for actions that deviate from social norms tied to a narrow White middle-class definition of femininity - they are frequently labeled as nonconforming and thereby subjected to criminalizing responses.”

**Source:** *Pushout (p.10)* by Monique W. Morris



## School to Prison Pipeline

“The cage is the unequal educational opportunities these children are provided at a very early age coupled with the constant police surveillance they're likely to encounter, making it very likely that they're going to serve time and be caught for committing the various types of minor crimes - particularly drug crimes - that occur with roughly equal frequency in middle-class white communities but go largely ignored.”

- **Michelle Alexander**

*"Schools and the New Jim Crow"  
Teaching for Black Lives (p. 239)*

## • School-to-Confinement Pathways •

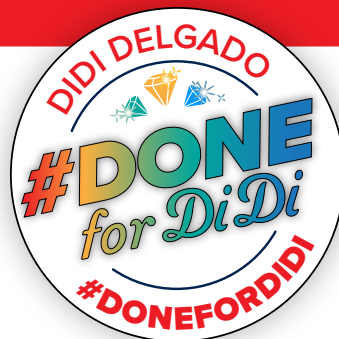
“[M]ost Black girls experience forms of confinement and carceral experiences beyond simply going to jail or prison. Broadening the scope to include detention centers, house arrest, electronic monitoring, and other forms of social exclusion allows us to see Black girls in trouble where they might otherwise be hidden.”

**Source:** *Pushout (p.12)*, by Monique W. Morris

## • Socio-cultural Reading •

Socio-cultural reading is the ability for students to “read social contexts and environments exceptionally well...[Students] become very skilled at reading people, expressions and dispositions.” While socio-cultural reading is not often a skill held in high esteem in the traditional educational complex, it “shouldn’t go unacknowledged, especially since...[it has] historically counted as reading among Black people.”

**Source:** *Cultivating Genius (p.41-42)*, by Gholdy Muhamad



## • SROs (School Resource Officers) •

“SROs were defined as ‘law enforcement officers who engage in community-oriented policing activities and who are assigned to work in collaboration with schools and community-based organizations.’ Under the best circumstances, says a Congressional Research Service report, SROs help develop community justice initiatives for students and train them in conflict resolution, restorative justice, awareness of crime, and problem-solving with regard to criminal activity.”

“Research on the impact of SROs has found that the presence of SROs in schools has contributed to the formal processing of youth into the justice system. ...SROs record more crimes that involve weapons and drugs, but they also report more non serious crimes to law enforcement - thereby expanding the reach of the criminal justice system, a practice that is referred to as ‘net-widening’...”

**Source:** *Pushout* (p. 75-76), Monique W. Morris



## Unschooling

“While homeschooling is defined as parent-led home-based education, unschooling (also known as self-directed learning) lets children direct their learning. Rather than following a set curriculum, unschoolers are led by their interests, and those interests inform how and what they learn—with parents and surrounding community members there to provide kids with the resources they need.”

**- Tomi Akitunde**

*Unschooling: The Educational Movement More Black Parents Are Joining*

## ● White Critical Race Theory ●

White CRT “examines race, racism, racial identity, and the workings of White privilege.”

**Source:** *We Want to Do More Than Survive (p.137)*, by Bettina Love

## ● Zero Tolerance, Part I ●

“The 1994 Gun Free Schools Act (GFSA) instituted zero-tolerance policies associated with students possessing weapons on school campuses. In fact, possessing a gun in school became grounds for immediate expulsion for at least one year. Though initially faced with legal challenges, the law set in motion a hyper-punitive tone to school discipline, via “zero tolerance” policies, that provided little to no room for school administrators to design tailored responses to problematic student behavior. In 1995, the U.S. Secretary of Education praised the effectiveness of zero tolerance policies, but by 2008, research began to show how harmful these policies actually were.

In the 20 years that the GFSA has been in effect, Black girls have become the fastest growing population to experience suspensions and expulsions, making them clear targets of punitive school discipline. According to the U.S. Department of Education, and as discussed in a recent report by the National Women’s Law Center and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Black girls are 17 percent of all female students, 31 percent of girls referred to law enforcement and about 43 percent of girls with a school-related arrest.”

**Source:** “*Black Girls and 20 Years of ‘Zero-Tolerance’ Policies*” by Monique W. Morris



## ● Zero Tolerance, Part II ●

“Zero-tolerance policies are rules and practices that emerged from the 'broken windows' policing theory.... It suggests that small criminal acts are indicative of more severe, negative behavior that may later manifest. The idea is that by not tolerating any infractions, they are mitigating future, possibly worse offenses.”

**Source:** *Pushout* (p.66-67) by Monique W. Morris

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