

Neoliberalism 101

Ali



Objectives

- Identify key components of your vision of education
- Understand the current culture of “school”
- Identify current motivations behind major political education decisions
- Define neoliberalism
- Identify the impact of neoliberal policies within your school

Gallery Walk



Use the sticky notes to answer the following questions as you walk around the room:

1. What is the purpose of education?
2. Who do we serve as educators?
3. What is/are the key component(s) of your vision of education?

Watch the video and reflect on the following excerpts with a partner:

- “Increases chances of getting a job”
- “Your life will be a lot less stressful”
- “What are you studying for?”
- “As long as you follow the rules and pass the exams, you’re cool”
- “If you answer is something outside of the box, then you get a cross”
- “Memorize equations, facts and dates right down to the letter”
- “If you want a job working for someone else, then help yourself”

Reflect on your previous response from the Gallery Walk:
What is the purpose of education? Who do we serve as educators?

Suli Breaks: Why I Hate School But Love Education

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_ZmM7zPLyI

Who benefits the most from neoliberal policies?

Reflection:

- What is the purpose of education?
- Who do we serve as educators?
- Are your beliefs reflected in the videos?
- Do any of these ideas have merit? Why?

Betsy DeVos speaks at Conservative Political Action Conference

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Y61wjmh1KY>

Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos Confirmation Hearing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWucgJ0vYcw>

Harvard Graduate School of Education Commencement Address

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4GMVKH_M3HQ

Reflection:

- What is the purpose of education?
- What are the key components of your video of education?
- Are your beliefs reflected in the video?
- Does your school operate according to the ideas presented in this video?

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Neoliberal buzzwords:

Conformity

Instrumentalism

Evaluation

Discipline

Job training

High-stakes testing

Standardized

Local control

College and career readiness

Choice

Accountability

Freedom

Standards-based

Results-driven

Memorization

Performance Index

Achievement

Subgroups

With a partner, select & explain why you like one item from the list above
and select & explain why you do not like one item from the list above.

Finally, What is “Neoliberalism”?

Application of free-market capitalism:

- Commodification
- Monetization
- Privatization
- Deregulation
- Catastrophize

Three Minute Theory: Neoliberalism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzLv3rfnOVw>

Neoliberalism, Youth and Social Justice

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KW5FRuMkQ6g>

Use these
Neoliberal
buzzwords to
categorize
implications

Choice

Accountability

College and Career Readiness

Local Control

Efficiency

Standardized

Evaluation

A Day in Sean Spicer's Shoes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Dvo6EHEJQE>

- DECREASE spending on art & music programs
- DECREASE protections for bilingual education, religious protection and human rights
- DECREASE ability to compete for high-paying jobs
- DECREASE admission rates for students that are less likely to pass tests/graduate
- DECREASE teacher creativity and authenticity
- DECREASE achievement
- DECREASE teacher decision-making
- DECREASE skill of teaching force
- DECREASE expenditures
- INCREASE incarceration rates
- INCREASE ability to blame parents and students for their outcomes
- INCREASE dropout rates
- INCREASE stratified labor force
- INCREASE student loan debt
- INCREASE cost for liberal arts degrees
- INCREASE de facto segregation for low income, minority and disabled students
- INCREASE personalization of education

Consequences of Neoliberalism: What is Really Happening?

Ranking students and teachers (standardized tests, accountability, annual school report cards, common standards, evaluation, merit, performance, raises, job security)

Public effectiveness ratings of schools based upon various measures (SLOs, AYP, student subgroups, gap closing, etc) drives distrust of public education

Marketizing education for personalization (Pearson, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, College Board, American Institute for Research, McGraw-Hill, Kaplan, Educational Testing Service, Apple, Google)

Increase in College and Career Readiness focus aligned with market forces creates a stratified work force, increases student loan debt and proposes to increase/decrease federal support dependent upon needs of labor market by creating trained employees for jobs

Reducing public expenditures for social services (education, etc) by reducing costs associated with collective bargaining agreements with a shift toward increased class sizes and online learning

Increasing school choice (voucher programs, charter schools, STEM schools, online programs) increases ability to blame low SES families for making a poor choice

Accountability for student achievement measured through end of course testing increases dropout rate, decreases four year graduation rate, increases incarceration rate, decreases achievement and enforces test as curriculum instructional style

Emphasis on principal and teacher evaluation decrease skill of teaching force, decrease training rigor and decrease union protections

Personal Belief Statement



After considering a variety of political and educational ideologies, please develop a brief personal belief statement regarding what really matters in education and share it with a partner.

Exit Evaluation



Please use a sticky note to respond to the following items.

On a scale between one (strongly disagree) and five (strongly agree):

1. The information in this session changed my mind about current educational policies
2. The session was engaging
3. The presenter was knowledgeable about the subject area
4. The information presented in this session can be used to make meaningful change in my school

Thank You!

“A well-educated mind will always
have more questions than answers”

- Helen Keller

Please email me at
aclark83@kent.edu if you would
like a copy of today's
presentation and suggestions for
further reading & viewing
regarding this topic.

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