

Equity – summary of discussion held at the CBMS Council Meeting on December 4, 2020

Online instruction and the greatly increased visibility of the Black Lives Matter movement have accentuated the need to deal with issues of equity. How do we ensure that those from under-resourced or otherwise challenged communities continue to have access to quality education and the supports needed to realize their full potential? We may address both equity for students as well as equity for professionals (junior researchers, women, bipoc¹) who have been particularly implicated by the COVID crisis.

The two Equity groups covered a lot of territory: the need to engage all students in reasoning and critical thinking, the importance of messaging—especially for first generation college students, engaging all students in metacognitive conversations, promoting growth mindset, and providing role models that look like the students (see especially the website of Latinxs and Hispanics in the mathematical sciences, lathisms.org).

NCSM has its recent position statement on the importance of detracking, [Closing the Opportunity Gap: A Call for Detracking Mathematics](#). The group also expressed a desire that any student could repeat any course and replace the old grade with the new one without stigma. The was connected to promotion of mastery learning and meaningful assessments

The emphasis, especially in the first group, was on helping people become aware of hidden biases and take action. Many of the CBMS societies are facilitating such discussions:

- MAA has initiated a series of webinars, [Conversations for the math community](#), to spur discussion of issues of equity. The first three are on “The Definition of a Mathematician,” “Mind the Microaggressions,” and “Be an Active Bystander.”
- One of the AMTE’s [Teaching Mathematics Teaching podcasts](#) dealt with the book [High School Mathematics Lessons to Explore, Understand, and Respond to Social Injustice](#) by Berry, Conway, Lawler, and Staley.²
- TODOS has organized conversations around the NCTM book [Rehumanizing Mathematics for Black, Indigenous, and Latinx Students](#).
- NCSM and AMATYC organized conversations around the book [White Fragility](#).

Other books and resources that were mentioned in the group included:

- NCTM’s [The Impact of Identity in K–8 Mathematics: Rethinking Equity-Based Practices](#)
- NCTM’s [Strengths-Based Teaching and Learning in Mathematics: 5 Teaching Turnarounds for Grades K-6](#)
- NCTM’s [Catalyzing Change](#)
- [Math for Human Flourishing](#) by Francis Su
- [Tears We Cannot Stop](#) by Michael Eric Dyson
- [How to be an Antiracist](#) by Ibram X. Kendi

The question arose of how to leverage the existing book discussions to do something more.

¹ Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

² Podcast at <https://www.teachingmathteachingpodcast.com/21>