

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a silver, mesh-covered microphone. The hand is positioned on the right side of the frame, with the microphone head pointing towards the center. The background is solid black, which makes the hand and the metallic texture of the microphone stand out.

Empowered Educators



Educator Activist Guide

A collection of resources for
active participation in
transforming education.

Introduction

What does it mean to be a teacher activist?
As David Chura says, "Being a teacher,
almost by definition, means being an
activist." You can read his HuffPo article,
The Many Faces of Teacher Activism, [here](#).

Use this resource guide to help you:

1. Know the facts about education
2. Understand the experience of students
and educators
3. Continue to learn, grow and advocate

Need more ideas? Check out Jessica
Cuthbertson's EdWeek article, How to
Become a Teacher Advocate, [here](#).



Organizations

These are some organizations doing great work in advocacy and activism in the education world. You can check them out, get involved, and/or use their resources.

Teacher Activist Groups

<http://www.teacheractivistgroups.org/>

The Network of Teacher Activist Groups (TAG) is a national coalition of grassroots teacher organizing groups. Together, they engage in shared political education and relationship building in order to work for educational justice both nationally and in local communities.

Education for Liberation Network

<http://www.edliberation.org/>

The Education for Liberation Network is a national coalition of teachers, community activists, researchers, youth and parents who believe a good education should teach people how to understand and challenge the injustices their communities face.

Rethinking Schools

<http://rethinkingschools.org/index.shtml>

Rethinking Schools began as a local effort to address problems such as basal readers, standardized testing, and textbook-dominated curriculum. It remains firmly committed to equity and to the vision that public education is central to the creation of a humane, caring, multiracial democracy.

Badass Teachers Association

<http://www.badassteacher.org/>

The BATs give teachers a stronger voice by issuing statements and petitions against unethical policy, participating in demonstrations, and lending support to other pro-teacher movements.

The People's Education Movement

<http://peoplesed.weebly.com/>

The organization recognizes miseducation as a vehicle of oppression because schooling was created to colonize and dehumanize communities. They work to create a critical educational approach that is culturally-responsive and linguistically validating.

Fair Test

<http://www.fairtest.org/>

FairTest promotes fair, open, valid and educationally beneficial evaluations of students, teachers and schools and works to end the misuses and flaws of testing practices that impede those goals. Their site contains resources for taking action, connecting with other activists, and learning about the issues.

Books

A brief list of thought-provoking books and reports on issues facing education today.

More Than a Score: The New Uprising Against High-Stakes Testing

Jesse Hagopian, editor

A collection of essays, poems, speeches, and interviews—accounts of personal courage and trenchant insights—from frontline fighters who are defying the corporate education reformers, often at great personal and professional risk, and fueling a national movement to reclaim and transform public education.

Crossing Over to Canaan: The Journey of New Teachers in Diverse Classrooms

Gloria Ladson-Billings

This book shows how teachers can succeed in diverse classrooms. Educating teachers to work well in multicultural classrooms has become an all-important educational priority in today's schools. The author details the real-life stories of eight novice teachers in their struggles and triumphs as they confront challenges in the classroom and respond with innovative strategies that turn cultural strengths into academic assets.

The Educator and the Oligarch: A Teacher Challenges the Gates Foundation

Anthony Cody

From the Common Core to test-based teacher evaluation systems cropping up around the country, to the rapid expansion of semi-private charter schools, the Gates Foundation has had a huge, largely invisible influence on public education in 21st century America. Can a teacher challenge the wealthiest man in the world? Anthony Cody, who spent 24 years working in the high poverty schools of Oakland, California, has done so here.

Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom

Lisa Delpit

This radical analysis of contemporary classrooms develops ideas about ways teachers can be better “cultural transmitters” in the classroom, where prejudice, stereotypes, and cultural assumptions breed ineffective education. Many academic problems attributed to children of color are actually the result of miscommunication, as primarily white teachers and “other people’s children” struggle with the imbalance of power.

Class Action: A Teacher Activist's Handbook

https://www.jacobinmag.com/supplements/ctu_booklet_final_web.pdf

This booklet is meant to be useful to those engaged in struggle — used for tabling and flyering, fuel for reading groups and public debate. The vast majority is written by current or former educators from Chicago, New York, and elsewhere.

Reign of Error: The Hoax of the Privatization Movement and the Danger to America's Public Schools

Diane Ravitch

An incisive, comprehensive look at today's American school system that argues against those who claim it is broken and beyond repair; an impassioned but reasoned call to stop the privatization movement that is draining students and funding from our public schools.

A Chronicle of Echoes: Who's Who in the Implosion of American Public Education

Mercedes K. Schneider

Where American public education is a democratic institution, its destruction is being choreographed by a few wealthy, well-positioned individuals and organizations. This book investigates and exposes the handful of people and institutions that are often working together to become the driving force behind destroying the community public school.

The Benefits of Place-Based Education

http://promiseofplace.org/research_attachments/PEEC2007BenefitsOfPBWeb.pdf

This report reviews studies on place-based education involving over 100 schools and 2,750 surveys of teachers and students. It found that place-based education fosters students' connection to place, creates vibrant partnerships between schools and communities, boosts student achievement, and improves environmental, social, and economic vitality. Place-based education immerses students in local heritage, culture, landscapes, opportunities, and experiences as a foundation for learning.

Blogs

A short compilation of thought leaders in education and activism.

Teaching Tolerance

<http://www.tolerance.org/category/blogs-and-articles/activism>

Teaching Tolerance provides educational materials—from articles that make you think to presentations you can share. These resources are designed to help teachers improve their practice and turn K-12 schools into strong communities that welcome diversity.

Jose Vilson

<http://thejosevilson.com/>

José Luis Vilson is a math educator for a middle school in New York, NY. He is the founder of **EduColor**, an coalition of teachers, parents, and other concerned citizens dedicated to the uplift of people of color in education. He's also a committed writer, activist, web designer, and father.

Feminist Teacher

<https://feministteacher.com/>

Ileana Jiménez has been a leader in the field of feminist and social justice education. In an effort to inspire teachers to bring intersectional feminism to the K-12 classroom, she launched her blog, Feminist Teacher, in 2009. She is also the creator of the #HSfeminism and #K12feminism hashtags.

Activist Teacher

<http://activistteacher.blogspot.com/>

Dr. Denis Rancourt provides articles and commentary about activist teaching and radical pedagogy.

Embrace Race

<https://medium.com/embrace-race>

Raising happy, healthy kids in a world where race matters. Resources for teachers and parents, curated by Andrew Grant-Thomas.

Diane Ravitch

<https://dianeravitch.net/>

Education historian and NYU education professor Ravitch provides news and commentary about developments in education reform.

Ready for More?

Like and follow the Empowered Educators Facebook page for tips, resources, and articles to help you empower students and be the best teacher you can be!

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