

No Child Left Invisible: The  
Creation of a High School  
Environment that Supports the  
Academic, Social & Emotional  
Growth of All Students.



Equity for All NJDOE Conference  
July 31, 2019

**INVISIBLE  
CHILDREN**

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Dr. Kwame R. Morton, Sr & Ms. Allison Staffin

# Welcome & Introductions!

Dr. Kwame R. Morton, Sr.

– Principal Cherry Hill High School West, Cherry Hill, NJ

Miss Allison Staffin

– Assistant Principal Cherry Hill High School West, Cherry Hill, NJ



# Reflection

What word or phrase comes to mind when you hear Pomp & Circumstance played?

Wordle Activity: To join our Poll Everywhere  
You must text your answer to the above question to:  
**ALLISONSTAFF857** once to **37607** to join your session.

# Session Outcomes

- Compare and contrast the concepts of equity versus equality while gaining an insight into the operational definition of each.
- Explore key elements necessary to create a whole school culture that supports the academic and socio-emotional growth of all students.

# Educational Philosophy

## Pair-Share Discussion

- What is your educational philosophy?
- What shaped the development of your educational philosophy?
- Think of an educator who helped foster your educational philosophy. What did he/she do?

# “Why Would You Leave Me With People Who Don’t Love Me?”



**Question to Ponder...**



**How do effective teachers,  
administrators, and school  
personnel express love for  
students?**

# Mental Health in Schools

1 in 5 young people ages 13-18 live with a mental health condition.

Suicide is the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death for youth ages 10-24.

Approximately 50% of students ages 14 and older with a mental illness drop out of high school.

90% of those who completed suicide had an underlying mental illness.

**National Alliance on  
Mental Illness**

**2019**

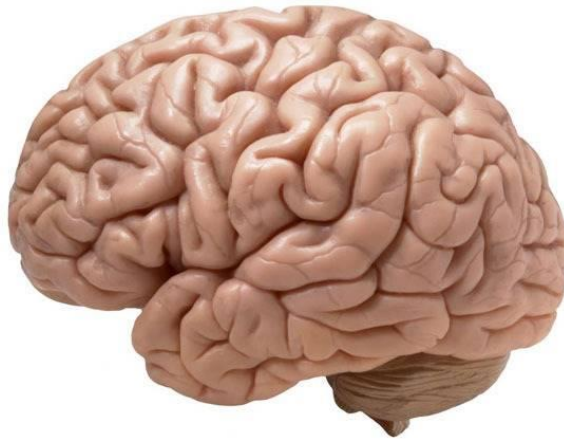




# Cortisol vs. Oxytocin

- What is its impact on student achievement?
- What does brain research tell us?

**Cortisol**



**Oxytocin**





# Cortisol

- Feeling of stress and anxiety.
- Alerts the brain of the need to protect oneself.
- Adrenaline rush – not designed to gather in our systems.

## Cortisol (continued)



- First stage of fight or flight
  - Creates paranoia
  - Shuts off other body systems (i.e. growth, immune)
    - Diabetes, cancer, heart disease
  - Inhibits the release of Oxytocin.
    - Less empathetic
    - Less caring

# Oxytocin

- Chemical release in the brain that produces the feelings of love, trust, and friendship.
- The intense feeling of safety that someone has your back.
  - Boosts one's immune system
  - Increases creativity and problem solving
  - Reduces depression
  - Increases generosity
  - Is easy to get



# Oxytocin (continued)



- How does one get Oxytocin?
  1. Acts of generosity
    - a) Giving one's time to another.
    - b) Doing kind things for others without looking for anything in return.
    - c) Witnessing acts of generosity/kindness done by others.
  2. Physical contact (i.e. hugging, handshake, pat on the back).

# What Our Students Need Most...





# Overview of CHHS West





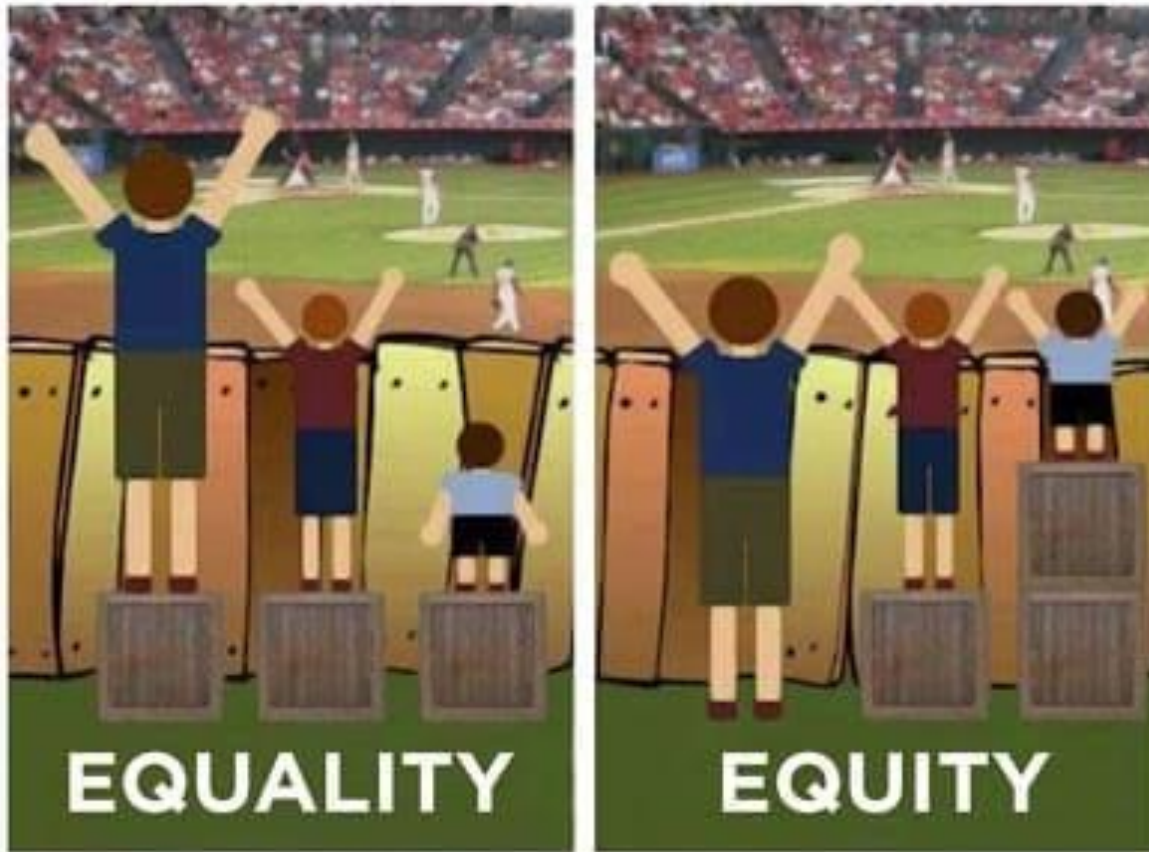
# We Are West!

- **Suburban**
- **1,319 Students**
- **Title I SWP**
- **Gender - 48% Female, 52% Male**
- **Race/Ethnicity**
  - White – 53%
  - Black – 12%
  - Latino – 18%
  - Asian – 12%
  - Multiple Categories 5%

# **Our Story**

- **Legacy of high achievement**
- **Shifting demographics**
- **Inter-district comparisons**
- **Open enrollment**
- **Title I High School**

# Equity vs Equality



# Access, Opportunity, Outcomes



# No Child Left Invisible

**A systematic approach to ensure that all students experience academic success (i.e. obtain an A or B in a course) or be met with a corresponding system of supports to ensure that they succeed.**

# 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Transition

- Smaller learning community, the Ninth Grade Pride
- Incoming freshmen are connected to a select team of caring staff members utilizing best practices to support our students.

# 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Transition Continued

- Staff work in a collaborative environment
- Developmental guidance lessons hone personal and academic skills and focus on academic and career pathways that will define the students' high school experiences.
- Peer leaders guide student sessions to improve the students' understanding of and transition to High School West.

# 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Transition Continued 3

- ["Ninth Grade at West" Video](#)



# Student Success Process (Intervention & Referral Services)

- Focus on student success
- Identify barriers to success
- Student Success Teams
- Grade Coherence Protocols
- Focus on student outcomes

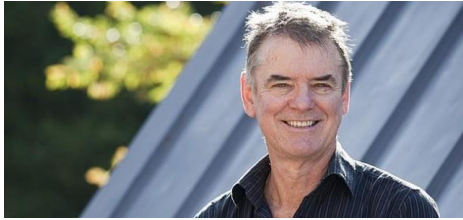
# West PD Academy

- In-House
- Relevant, Applicable
- Research based
- Content Specific
- Focused on student learning
- Reflective of instructional needs determined  
by the data

# A Quick Activity

## Match the Image with the Researcher

1.



2.



3.



4.



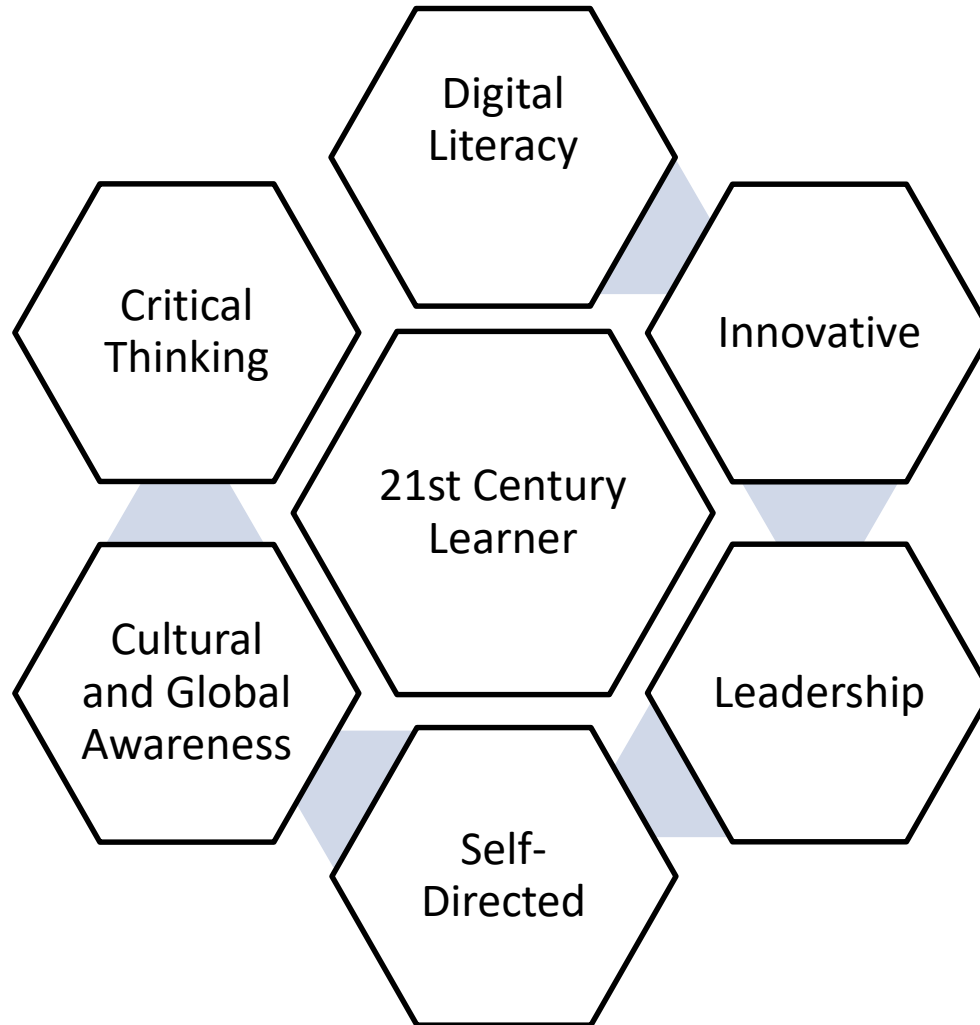
5.



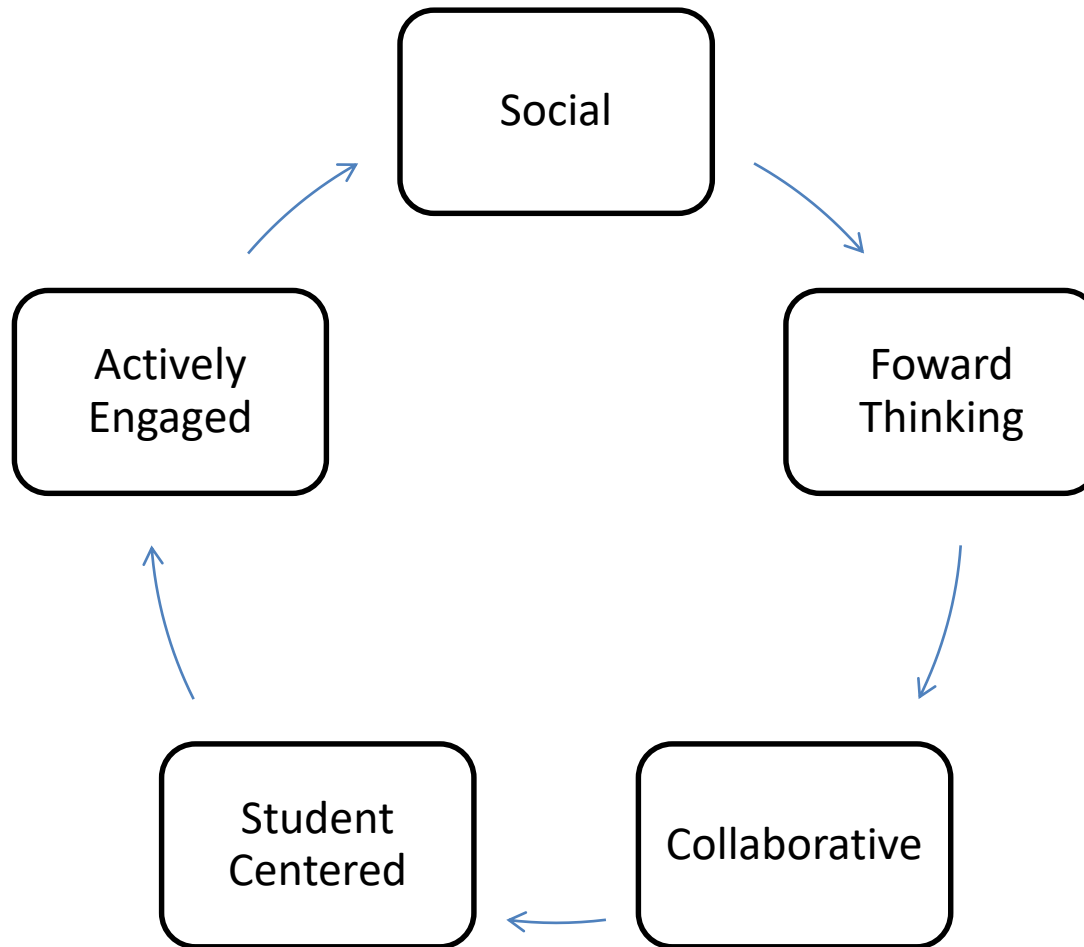
# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teaching/Learning

- Adaptive Problem Solving
  - Versatile individuals who approach problems in creative ways.
- Collaborative Communication
  - Global thinkers who and work with people all over the world.
- Digital Fluency
  - Tech-savvy workers

# The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner



# The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Educator



# Distributive Leadership

- Deep collaboration with teachers
- Shared philosophy and vision
- Teachers as leaders
- PLC Coordinators
- Teacher Focus Groups

# Next Steps

- Focus on Social Emotional Learning & Student Well Being
  - Restorative Practices



# Your Goals

- What story does your data tell you about your students, teachers, and school?
- How is student success defined at your school?
- How do you ensure that students attain success?
- Are there institutional systems in place to support this work?
- What are your next steps?