

## V is 4 Vision

“To educate as the practice of freedom is a way of teaching that anyone can learn. That learning process comes easiest to those of us who teach who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students...teachers must be actively committed to a process of self-actualization that promotes their own well-being if they are to teach in a manner that empowers students.” – Bell Hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as a practice of freedom* (1994)

We are teachers who believe in ‘education for liberation’. We are committed to operating with an open heart and mind at all times. We aspire to be anti-racist, anti-classist, and anti-oppressive. We see the classroom through the eyes of our students and teach them like the kings and queens they have always been. We are constantly using an indigenous perspective to understand and work against educational inequity. We know that it is essential to our work to know the psychological effect of colonization on the consciousness of disenfranchised communities and what that means in regards to implementing a liberatory education in our urban schools. We are aware that our students deserve to be taught in ways that help make visible the ecological, social, and community issues that will shape their lives and futures. We believe in order to urgently provide the type of education our students deserve we must be fully engaged participants in the cultural practices of the communities in which we serve. We know our students, families, and communities are not blank slates. We understand they are Teach For America’s most intimate and knowledgeable partners in our fight for ‘one day’.

We are conscious that in order to witness transformational change we must first liberate ourselves. Throughout the year we will be focusing on who are, who we have been, and how we will walk the path of reflection and critical self-analysis in order to be who our students need us to be. In addition, our cohort will: 1.) Deeply explore the many cultural assets that contribute to the vitality and robustness of people native to New Orleans, 2.) learn and apply the tenants of Culturally Responsive Teaching – an aspiration and perspective on education that places a student’s cultural and social identities at the center of an educational process meant to holistically develop a child (academically, culturally, and critically), and 3.) Use asset based thinking to analyze how the problems facing our students can be more effectively remedied w/ cultural capital both in and outside our classrooms.

The disheartening colonial conditioning of students of color is crystal clear. A large amount of our youth in urban communities: 1.) Internalize different levels of cultural self-hate, 2.) participate in divide and conquer, and 3.) are immobilized in collective false consciousness. Our cohort along with our community partners will call on the spirit of our ancestors to create a curriculum that teaches the following: Self-love, solidarity, & self-determination in and beyond designated grade levels and subject areas.

Our hope is that together these tenants will decolonize and provide critical pedagogy in order to better provide holistic learning opportunities for dispossessed youth of color to respond to the dehumanizing conditions on their communities and the world.

## **Our Cohort Roles + Expectations:**

“Don't be in a hurry to condemn because he doesn't do what you do or think as you think or as fast. There was a time when you didn't know what you know today.” – *Malcolm X*

**We want STUDENTS who can read both the word and the world, and can break down barriers in order to ensure they cease to exist for the next generation.**

- Possess undeniable, dramatic academic achievement that opens doors in their lives
- Have a healthy and strong sense of sociocultural self that ensures they walk through those doors knowing who they are
- Own a critical consciousness that allows them to deconstruct the world around them and re-construct it in ways that are more just and equitable in order to tear down doors that pose barriers for those people coming up behind them.

**We want TEACHERS who can see the classroom through the eyes of their students and their students' families, and teach their students like the kings and queens they are.**

- Hold well-developed dispositions for culturally responsive teaching (defined in the book Educating Culturally Responsive Teachers) that are refined over time through critical reflection.
- Engage students with a rigorous curriculum that responds to their needs
- Use constructivist and responsive teaching methods that treats students as active knowledge creators, rather than passive knowledge consumers
- Build affirming and responsive relationships with students, their families, and the broader community in which they teach

**We want an IN-THE-FIELD MTL + MENTORS who hold a culturally responsive perspective and can effectively coach teachers' skills and dispositions.**

- Analyze classrooms and teacher practice through a culturally responsive lens.
- Develop skills and knowledge that pushes teachers to create a culturally responsive curriculum that is taught through culturally responsive methods
- Nurture the dispositions and mindsets for cultural responsive teaching in culturally competent and no-nonsense ways

## Teachers 4 Liberation Cohort Outcomes:

100% of Teachers 4 Liberation will study & apply the tenants of *Teaching to transgress* – as a practice of freedom while simultaneously working with communities & not on/for them.



**Watch:** “The radicals w/ the most logical ideas” – *Dr. Samori Camara*

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=OpwK73CUvpw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=OpwK73CUvpw)

**Read:**

“A vision is offered of culturally responsive teachers that can serve as the starting point for conversations among teacher educators in this process. In this vision, culturally responsive teachers (a) are socioculturally conscious, (b) have affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds, (c) see themselves as responsible for and capable of bringing about change to make schools more equitable, (d) understand how learners construct knowledge and are capable of promoting knowledge construction, (e) know about the lives of their students, and (f) design instruction that builds on what their students already know while stretching them beyond the familiar.” - *Ana María Villegas & Tamara Lucas*

[http://culturallyresponsiveteaching.weebly.com/uploads/1/8/1/5/18153535/villegas\\_and\\_lucas.pdf](http://culturallyresponsiveteaching.weebly.com/uploads/1/8/1/5/18153535/villegas_and_lucas.pdf)

**Read:**

“We cannot continue to have conversations devoid of the people impacted by our decisions. When we master this concept we will be well on our way.” – *Stevona Rogers*

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stevona-elementary-rogers/education-the-civil-right\\_b\\_2807393.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stevona-elementary-rogers/education-the-civil-right_b_2807393.html)

**Read:** “Education Reform starts w/ community reform.” – *Dr. Andre Perry*

<http://www.good.is/posts/education-reform-starts-with-community-reform>

100% of Teachers 4 Liberation will create a rigorous, joyful, & holistic social justice vision that places their student's cultural and social identities at the center of their educational process.



**Watch:** “What social context are my student in? What is valued in this context? What is the ideal context? How can I marry these two?” – *Jay Henry*

<http://vimeo.com/45727741>

**Read:** “The fourth tool is perhaps the most potent: instilling the belief that one’s “Blackness” is not a monolith and educational achievement not a natural enemy of Black identity.” - *Jay Henry* (Vision)

<http://www.northcarolina.edu/ntsp/resources/2012ch2/july30-ch2-1.pdf> (pg. 12-14)

Teachers 4 Liberation will achieve rigorous academic goals living a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (as defined in vision).

- 80% BA 1st yrs.

- 95% BA 2nd yrs.



**Watch:** “I don’t have to be what you want me to be. I’m free. I be who I want to me.” – *Darnel Fine*

*Classroom\**

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=6Itt8ltHbFA&noredirect=1](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=6Itt8ltHbFA&noredirect=1)

**Read:** “The pedagogical excellence I have studied is good teaching, but it is much more than that.” – *Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings*


[http://culturallyresponsiveteaching.weebly.com/uploads/1/8/1/5/18153535/ladson-billings\\_1995.pdf](http://culturallyresponsiveteaching.weebly.com/uploads/1/8/1/5/18153535/ladson-billings_1995.pdf)

100% of Teachers 4 Liberation will deeply explore the cultural assets/capital of New Orleans as radical allies + advocates for their students’ & communities.



**Read:** *Whose culture has capital? A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth* – “This article conceptualizes community cultural wealth as a critical

race theory (CRT) challenge to traditional interpretations of cultural capital. **CRT shifts the research lens away from a deficit view of Communities of Color as places full of cultural poverty disadvantages, and instead focuses on and learns from the array of cultural knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed by socially marginalized groups that often go unrecognized and unacknowledged.** Various forms of capital nurtured through cultural wealth include aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial and resistant capital. These forms of capital draw on the knowledge’s Students of Color bring with them from their homes

	<p>and communities into the classroom. <b>This CRT approach to education involves a commitment to develop schools that acknowledge the multiple strengths of Communities of Color in order to serve a larger purpose of struggle toward social and racial justice.</b> – Dr. Tara J. Yosso</p> <p><b>Watch:</b> “She used her white privileged...she made the statement, she pointed out the injustice...that’s what you can do, every single day.” – <i>Dr. Joy DeGruy</i> <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wf9QBnPK6Yg">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wf9QBnPK6Yg</a></p>
<p>90% of Teachers 4 Liberation will be political participants in our state voting process in New Orleans, LA.</p> 	<p><b>Watch:</b> “How can we put policy into place or support policy that ensures that all children across this state have access to a quality education.” – <i>Kira Orange Jones</i> <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dA0VWRzzVCs">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dA0VWRzzVCs</a> <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZoyLAgmU4ls">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZoyLAgmU4ls</a></p> <p><b>Read:</b> “Because someone elected those wrong-headed policy-makers--and someone can elect new ones. Hope springs eternal.” – <i>Nancy</i> <a href="http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teacher_in_a_strange_land/2012/08/i_voted_and_im_going_to_vote_again.html">http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teacher_in_a_strange_land/2012/08/i_voted_and_im_going_to_vote_again.html</a></p>
<p>100% of Teachers 4 Liberation will deeply believe this quote in regards to their children, each other, &amp; themselves, “At the risk of seeming ridiculous, let me say that the true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of love. It is impossible to think of a genuine revolutionary lacking this quality.” – Che Guevara</p>	<p><b>Watch:</b> “My Umi says shine your light on the world.” – <i>Mos Def</i> <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CsihHoyqwWY">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CsihHoyqwWY</a></p> 