A Collective Curricular Praxis:

For Racial & Social Justice Teaching in Urban Schools

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Abstract

U.S. elementary and secondary public education is amidst an era of political backlash with federal policy aimed at social justice educators and equity-oriented schools. In response to the ongoing attacks on public education and to critical educators' well-being, a teacher-activist inquiry group (TIG), for educators of Color, sustained and enhanced their members' ability to engage in *collective curricular praxis* through pedagogical dialogue and reflection, that resulted in teachers developing inquiry-based and action-orientated curriculum and instruction in urban secondary schools. The study will highlight how the TIG supported a first-year teacher to design a 12th-grade civic engagement and gentrification unit.

Keywords: *teacher inquiry groups, teacher activism, critical pedagogy, healing justice, urban schools, social studies education*

Introduction

U.S. elementary and secondary public education is amidst an era of political backlash with federal policy aimed at social justice educators and equity-oriented schools (Hannah-Jones, 2021). Shortly after taking office in 2025, Donald Trump's executive orders have aggressively attacked: diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, training and funding (Exec. Order No. 14151, 2025); K-12 educators' ability to teach about critical issues (Exec. Order No. 14190, 2025); and targeted mixed status and undocumented youth (Exec. Order No. 14165, 2025). Back in 2020, Trump's executive order 13950 set in motion 500 K-12 educational measures, proposing bans on: classroom teaching, curricular content, equity and diversity policy, and training at the federal, state, and local level (Alexander et al., 2023; Alexander, 2023). While these attacks are recent, it is important to note that federal policy over the past decades has brought us to this moment (Love, 2023). Standardized curriculum and high-stakes testing (Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Milner, 2013) have led to teacher demoralization (Santoro, 2011), decreased opportunities for culturally responsive teaching (Sleeter, 2012), and have critical educators teaching in a state of fear (Picower, 2012). At the same time, teachers of Color who combat racism in schools endure racial battle fatigue from their peers and administrators, which impacts their social-emotional well-being and

desire to stay in the classroom (Pizarro & Kohli, 2018; Pour-Khorshid, 2018).

In response to the attacks on K-12 curriculum, instruction, professional development, and to the social-emotional wellness of critical educators of Color, a teacher activist organization, the People's Education Movement housed a teacher inquiry group (TIG). This paper will focus on how the TIG sustained and enhanced educators' ability to engage in collective curricular praxis in urban secondary schools. Collective curricular praxis brought educators in the TIG together to have pedagogical dialogue and reflection that resulted in teachers developing inquiry-based and action-orientated curriculum and instruction in urban secondary schools. The study will provide an in-depth example of collective curricular praxis, highlighting how the TIG supported a first-year teacher in teaching a 12th-grade civic engagement and gentrification unit.

This study draws from *teacher inquiry group*, *praxis-oriented*, and *healing justice* principles to examine the way a teacher activist learning-space supported and sustained K-12 educators' ability to teach for racial and social justice. Teacher inquiry groups, also known as critical inquiry groups, have been identified as a space of refuge for critical educators to reflect on their practice, read and discuss theory, heal, and develop lessons for social change within a nurturing environment (Duncan-Andrade, 2005; Nieto, et al., 2002; Picower, 2007). The "critical" in critical inquiry groups draws on the Freirean tradition of bringing educators together to engage in a praxis of reflection, dialogue, and action (Duncan-Andrade, 2004; Freire, 2003). Paulo Freire's (2003) conceptualization of praxis is central to this study. He identifies praxis as the collective process of reflection and action towards liberation.

Research on critical inquiry groups highlights how these spaces disrupt teacher alienation and isolation, providing solidarity for teacher activists to develop anti-colonial teaching practices (Martinez et al., 2016). Critical inquiry groups have also been conceptualized as critical professional development that meets the needs of social justice educators through cooperation, unity, shared power, and cultural synthesis (Kohli et al., 2015) and support the holistic needs of teachers of Color (Kohli et al., 2022).[1] Moreover, these spaces also provide a place for critical educators of Color to engage in collective vulnerability and liberatory teacher-learning (Pour-Khorshid et al., 2022).

Scholars have argued that well-being, holistic, and healing-informed practices are intrinsically connected to educators' ability to engage in self and social transformation (Ginwright, 2016; Owen, 2021; Patel & Berggreen-Clausen, 2023). Teacher activist spaces have been identified as locations for healing justice, where educators address trauma in schools and interpersonal relationships, build hope, and collectively heal (Ginwright, 2016). This study builds on the literature mentioned above. It examines the following research question: How does a teacher activist learning-space support and sustain K-12 educators to engage in collective curricular praxis in urban schools?

A Teacher Activist Learning-Space

The People's Education Movement (People's) is a teacher activist organization that centers communities of Color from an anti-colonial framework. The People's began in Los Angeles, California, and spread to the Bay Area (Northern California) and Chicago. Each chapter is guided by the vision "to create sustainable liberatory spaces inside and beyond the classroom to promote growth, healing, and transformation" (People's Education Movement, n.d.), yet operates

[1] While the scholarship may identify the abovementioned space as a "critical inquiry group," the educators in this study identified with the term teacher inquiry group. I will use "teacher inquiry group" for the remainder of the paper as an umbrella term for teacher inquiry and critical inquiry groups.

independently to meet the needs of their local context. For this article, I will be referring to the Los Angeles chapter. The People's (Los Angeles) priorities include wellness, political education, community outreach, a teacher inquiry group, a summer freedom school, and an educational conference. At the organization's center was the teacher inquiry group, commonly known as the TIG. The TIG was a space for educators to align their political activism with their pedagogy and classroom practice (Martinez, 2017; Navarro, 2020).

I am a founding member of the People's and a former high school teacher in South Central Los Angeles. I taught in the same district and schools as my fellow TIG members. I joined the TIG after it was formed. As a teacher, I participated in another activist-led TIG. I found TIGs to be healing and sustainable spaces for critical educators. As a result, I wanted to learn how the People's was operating as an authentic learning-space for educators committed to racial and social justice. Shortly afterwards, I met with the People's Council and TIG members to present a research proposal to investigate the way the TIG develop and sustained teachers' ability to engage in critical and culturally responsive pedagogies (Freire, 2003; Love, 2019; Muhammad, 2020; Paris & Alim, 2017), which they approved.

The TIG used a horizontal and shared leadership model that had members co-lead and co-facilitate the space. TIG meetings were held monthly on Saturdays for two hours during the academic school year. During TIG meetings, members engaged in three interrelated activities: 1) developing personal and collective goals, 2) reading discussions that focused on critical theories, pedagogies, and practices, and 3) curricular presentations to inspire social justice teaching. In a prior study, I discussed in detail how the abovementioned elements validated and inspired TIG members to teach for social justice through a *community of transformative praxis* (CTP) (see Navarro, 2018). In this article, I build from CTP to illuminate how educators implemented the TIG's collective knowledge into their classrooms, which I conceptualize as a collective curricular praxis. To provide context, I will briefly describe the elements of CTP that were integral to the teachers' engagement in collective curricular praxis.

The People's Teacher Inquiry Group: A Space for Pedagogical Dialogue & Reflection[2]

Collective & Individual Pedagogical Goals

During the study, the People's Education Movement was guided by Decolonizing Pedagogy, as described by Tejeda et al. (2003)[3]. The TIG collectively focused on including this framework in their teaching and classroom practice. At the beginning of every meeting, a member would read the question aloud: "How do we develop a decolonizing pedagogy?" In addition, at the first meeting of the academic year, members developed individual inquiry questions to guide their practice throughout the year. For example, a TIG member's personal goal was to include a feminist and queer perspective into their teaching. Throughout the year, TIG members would meet to check in on their individual goals. However, most of the TIG meeting time was focused on the reading discussion and curriculum presentation.

Critical Readings & Discussions

TIG members deepened their analysis of schooling, examined theoretical and pedagogical frameworks, and reflected on their teaching and classroom practice through critical text and

[2] As previously mentioned, a more detailed description of CTP can be found in Navarro (2018).

[3] It is important to note that scholars, Tuck and Yang (2012), critique of Tejeda, et al. (2003) framing of decolonizing pedagogy. In short, Tuck and Yang state that Tejeda, et al. lack a focus on indigenous sovereignty and land. In agreement with Tuck and Yang, the People's later shifted from a "decolonizing" to an "anti-colonial" framework.

dialogue. At the start of the academic school year, TIG members collectively chose reading topics to engage in critical and culturally sustaining pedagogies. They listed their suggestions on poster paper, collectively discussed the options, and selected the following topics:

- Decolonizing Pedagogy,
- Ethnic Studies,
- Critical Race Theory,
- Queer Pedagogy,
- Black and Chicana Feminism,
- Critical Pedagogy, and
- Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR).

Throughout the year, they read 1-2 articles on the topics above that would provide theoretical and practical applications to their teaching. At the beginning of meetings, members would discuss the text(s) main ideas and themes, and generate questions for discussion that would allow them to apply the frameworks in their classrooms. In the findings section, I will describe how a teacher from the TIG, created a unit on civic engagement and gentrification based on readings of youth participatory action research.

Social Justice Curriculum Presentations

During the second half of each meeting, a TIG member would present a teaching segment to enhance their practice and showcase the possibilities of social justice teaching to their peers. The presentations led to an intergenerational dialogue between novice and veteran educators across academic disciplines and expertise.

TIG members volunteered (the prior meeting) to present on a unit of study that they had taught or planned to introduce. The presentations had a feedback protocol (see below) adapted from the *National School Reform Faculty*.

- Description of the unit (15 minutes): The presenter would provide an overview of the lessons and share curricular resources, such as media, readings, and handouts. The presenter would also ask for specific curricular feedback from the audience, such as, “How can I better align the unit’s focus to content standards?”
- Clarifying questions (5 minutes): The participants would ask the presenter questions to get more information about the unit before providing feedback.
- Feedback (15 minutes): The audience would comment in response to the participants' desired feedback. The presenter would listen to feedback and take notes.
- Reflection (5 minutes): The presenter would provide a closing reflection in response to the feedback, discuss their next steps, or comment on the process.

Curriculum presentations throughout the year included a book analysis of *Always Running* by Luis Rodriguez, an oral history on migration and immigration in a Spanish class, merging Third World Feminism, Gender Studies, & Queer Theory in an Ethnic Studies Course, a Youth Participatory Action Research project at a continuation school, and brainstorming a citizenship and gentrification project in a government class, which will be described in depth in the findings section.

Research Design & Participants

I utilized a qualitative case study methodology (Yin, 2012) and critical inquiry group design (Duncan-Andrade, 2007; Nieto et al., 2002) to examine how a teacher activist learning-space supports and sustains K-12 educators to engage in

collective curricular praxis in urban schools. The case in the study was the TIG. I focused on six secondary teachers from the twenty-five participants within the TIG. Data collection occurred over an academic school year, approximately ten months. Data included participant observations during TIG meetings and in six urban secondary classrooms, semi-structured interviews, teacher-created materials, and student work (Tisdell et al., 2025). More specifically, I was a participant-observer in TIG monthly meetings and examined TIG-created documents, images, and materials throughout the year. After observing four meetings, I selected six TIG members to interview, observe their teaching, and examine teacher-created materials and student work. I interviewed each of the six participants three times for a total of 20 hours. I spent one to two weeks in each teacher's classroom for a total of 10 weeks and analyzed over 300 documents.

The six participants included two first-year teachers, two teachers in their 3rd year, and two teachers in their 7th and 9th year of teaching. All the teachers were selected because they attended more than half of the TIG meetings, taught in urban public schools throughout Los Angeles, California, and displayed elements of social justice teaching[4]. Below is the demographic information of the participants, which I will refer to as TIG core members.

Table 1:
TIG Core Members[5]

Participant	Race/ Ethnicity	Year of Teaching	School Level	Content Subject
Dan Tran	Asian American	1st	High School	English
Mika Yildirim	Asian & Turkish	1st	High School	Social Studies
Lucia Montejano	Salvadoran American	3rd	High School	Spanish
Omara Zavala	Mexican American	3rd	High School	English
Clyde Jenkins	White	7th	Middle School	Art & Literacy
Robert Morales	Chicano	9th	High School	Ethnic Studies

Findings: Collective Curricular Praxis

Collective curricular praxis is rooted in Freire's (2003) notion of praxis: the collective process of reflection and action towards liberation. More specifically, collective curricular praxis draws from a cooperative of educators committed to racial and social justice. In this study, educators participating in the TIG engaged in *pedagogical dialogue and reflection,* which resulted in teachers developing inquiry-based and action-orientated *curriculum and instruction* in urban secondary schools. In the background, I described how the TIG engaged participants in pedagogical dialogue and reflection, which is vital to the lessons they developed and taught. The paper's findings will focus on how teachers built from the TIG space to plan and teach for racial and social justice in urban schools, specifically, to have students investigate societal problems and take action.

[4] In designing the study, I conceptualized social justice teaching to include: a culturally caring classroom environment (Gay, 2000; Ware, 2006), merges academic and critical pedagogies (Ayers et al., 2009; Greene, 1998; Hackman, 2005), and opportunities for students to engage in activism (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Picower, 2012).

[5] Participants' names include a pseudonym and their race/ethnic identities were self-reported.

Collective Curricular Praxis in Urban Secondary Schools

The TIG core members intentionally developed curriculum and instruction that had students examine aspects of their identity, their community, and societal issues for social change. Veteran and novice teachers provided opportunities for their students to analyze research or conduct their own inquiry. For example, Robert, a ninth-year Ethnic Studies teacher, had students investigate institutional racism by reviewing U.S. Census data. In his class, they examined high school graduation rates by race/ethnicity and other research reports to understand and advocate ways to improve the educational trajectory of Black and Brown youth. When I asked him, "Why did you have students review those documents?" he said, "We always need students to be able to practice analyzing data and data points." Inquiry was a central component of his Ethnic Studies curriculum.

In another example, Dan, a first-year English teacher, had students create a social media advocacy campaign. Students read the book, *The Perks of a Wallflower,* by Stephen Chbosky (1999). They then chose one of the book's prevalent topics for their campaign: LGBTQ acceptance, depression, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, dating violence, teen sex, teen pregnancy, suicide, post-traumatic stress disorder, or child molestation. The students researched one of the social issues, gathered educational resources to share with young people susceptible to the abovementioned issues, and created a social media post, hashtags, or site. Dan stated that the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement impacted his decision to create the campaign. He said:

> With [the recent BLM protest] going on, I was thinking about me and my own group of friends, how do we spread knowledge and build knowledge and ideas? And a lot of it's through social media. And so, I was thinking how can I get my students to emulate that and do that because I know they use social media … I just wanted to introduce them to the idea that social media is … also about sharing information like this. Hashtags can definitely inspire movements and build collective knowledge about the subject.

As a first-year teacher, Dan created a unit of study that had students analyze contemporary issues raised in their course reading, connect to youth popular culture, and devise innovative social change campaigns.

While all core members engaged students in inquiry and action-oriented lessons within their respective disciplines, their participation in the TIG and their meetings' focus on Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) further enhanced their ability to develop praxis-oriented lessons. For example, Lucia said, "We're reading about YPAR, and that makes me excited, and I think about how I can reshape some of my projects to look like that." YPAR is an extension of Freirean critical pedagogy (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008) that has young people collectively research a problem, draw from experiential and local knowledge, and take action that is informed through their inquiry (McIntyre, 2000). In the TIG, YPAR became a prevalent theme throughout the year. Towards the end of the school year, the TIG members unanimously voted to spend additional meetings focused on YPAR to better inform their practice. As a result, they read articles, discussed, and had a teacher present on a YPAR project housed at a continuation school. In the following section, an in-depth example of how a core member drew from the TIG pedagogical dialogue and reflection to develop lessons and teach a civic engagement and gentrification unit, as an example of collective curricular praxis.

Collective Curricular Praxis Example: Citizenship & Gentrification Unit

Mika was in her first year of teaching at a large comprehensive high school and completing her Master of Teaching at a local university. While her teacher education program had a social justice theme, she strived for a more critical approach, which led her to the TIG. She was drawn to the TIG's focus on political development and the opportunity to read within a community of critical educators. She also valued learning from veteran and novice teachers, such as hearing their teaching anecdotes, observing their lessons, and receiving resources from their K-12 classrooms.

At the time, she was teaching 12th-grade U.S. Government & Economics and embarking on a new unit focused on citizenship. She taught in a neighborhood heavily impacted by gentrification and was considering how to incorporate this into her instruction. Many of her students had been uprooted from their neighborhood and forced to move to more affordable locations outside their school boundaries. However, the displaced students deliberately chose to finish their K-12 trajectory in their (former) neighborhood high school, even though it required them to spend countless hours commuting via personal and public transportation. Ironically, many students who moved into other parts of the city were also experiencing gentrification in their new neighborhoods. This made the issue even more urgent. It provided the opportunity for students to learn about the phenomenon and respond to their displacement. Mika's participation in the TIG supported the creation of a new project. Below, she explains the impact of the TIG's reading, discussion, and witnessing a TIG member's curriculum presentation on YPAR, on her future unit:

> Weeks before, I was thinking that I wanted to do a unit on gentrification. Just hearing and reading about YPAR and that specific reading. [It] gave actual teacher examples … it looks freaking awesome ... But to see how a teacher's done that [in the curriculum presentation] really got me to think how do I start taking this outside the classroom, or how do I start building student inquiry that is action-oriented?

As stated above, the TIG provided her with the theoretical, pedagogical, and practical application of YPAR in a classroom setting. Throughout the TIG meetings, they had read and discussed several YPAR texts and observed a curriculum presentation in which a teacher shared how they utilized YPAR at a local school site. This encouraged her to design a unit on citizenship and gentrification. She volunteered to present it at the next TIG meeting before teaching it to her class.

During the curriculum presentation, Mika provided an overview of potential lessons, readings, activities, and resources for her students. She told the TIG she had concerns about the multiple standards she is required to teach in the last months of the school year. Mika also asked whether she should focus on gentrification or more traditional government content. During the feedback, a TIG member encouraged her to "take a risk and focus on participatory government," especially since the unit will be taught after state testing, which provided her some additional autonomy. Another TIG member encouraged her to use pre-existing data or have students conduct community surveys to connect with YPAR. Overwhelmingly, TIG members suggested that she be bold and focus on gentrification. After receiving feedback from the TIG, Mika said, "This is all really helpful and gives me resources." She later said that presenting at the TIG solidified her decision to center the issue of gentrification and use civic engagement as a bridge to have students engage in action. The following unit displays how Mika was supported by the teacher activist space to engage in collective curricular praxis.

Citizenship & Gentrification Project: Unit Overview

The citizenship and gentrification unit was aligned with California History-Social Studies Standard 12.7 and included the following essential question: "How does gentrification affect people and their environment?" The project positioned students and their neighbors as community experts and challenged them to take the role of an activist. Below is the project description that Mika presented to students (see Figure 1).

"We engage in the term citizenship optimistically, in the sense of both feeling included and "at home", not defined by arbitrary geographic boundaries. Citizenship = being recognized as a decision maker and as an agent of change. To be counted. It is a critical process for engaging the public, across generations, in community governance and change" (Cammarota & Fine, 2008).

In order to learn citizenship, we must practice it. For your last project, you will choose a neighborhood in Los Angles and play the role of one activist group. You must research and provide accurate data on your neighborhood as well as present a convincing and thought-provoking testimony. Because collaboration is key to this project, you must be in a team with a minimum of 3 people and maximum of 5. Below are your requirements:

- 1 page manifesto/testimony
- Research Report: Research 3 current articles on gentrification in your neighborhood. Write a 1-page summary on each article, highlighting 3 main points, 2 connections, and 1 question. Articles must be relevant, valid, only 1 blog post or opinion article allowed.
- Poster with data: Highlights the characteristics of the neighborhood and identifies areas of gentrification
    - Name of neighborhood
    - Map of neighborhood
    - Demographics: Race, Class, Income, Changes in Neighborhood
    - Resource:
        - http://maps.latimes.com/
        - La.curbed.com
- Extra Credit: protest poster or protest media for presentation

Figure 1
Citizenship & Gentrification Project Description

The project description provides an overview of the unit that students embarked on. It is important to note that the quote at the top of the project description is from the TIG reading (Cammarota & Fine, 2008) on YPAR. When I asked Mika why she included the reference in her project description, she said it helped her tie the themes of citizenship and activism. More specifically, she said it helps them, "discuss what it means to be a citizen and why [we're] doing this project on gentrification? So, I think [the YPAR reference] helped me build my own theory in the class." The unit broadened the course's focus on citizenship by integrating civic engagement, specifically activism. Mika said, "The main purpose is … trying to teach them activism, but literally and very much mentally, taking on the role of an activist," using research.

As the project description states, "you will choose a neighborhood in Los Angeles and play the role of one activist group. You must research and provide accurate data on our neighborhood as well as present a convincing and thought-provoking testimony." Students were asked to include research through three articles, census data, and other resources to create a three-part project, consisting of a research report, poster board, and testimonial. The testimonial brought together all project components in a first-person narrative. Mika said she wanted students to "speak about the changes that were going on in their neighborhood as not only a resident living there but as someone who wants to make other people aware of the things going on and acting as an activist in that neighborhood."

Citizenship & Gentrification Project: Sequence of Lessons & Student Presentations

Students examined U.S. Census reports and research articles during the project's first days. Then students transitioned to putting together their posters and presentation materials. At the beginning of every class, Mika had a list of "Tasks for Today" posted, which provided daily expectations and online resources. She also invited a local community activist to speak to the class so that students could see someone organizing in the neighborhood around similar issues.

Mika explained that she intentionally wanted students to take ownership of the project while researching and reflecting on their neighborhood. She explains:

> I wanted the students to do research on their own, where I wasn't giving them sources or sites to start looking at. And really, for them to get the information, build the information (on the posters) for what they were going to do later, which would be their testimony, where they would have to talk about how gentrification is affecting them and how their neighborhood is changing.

As a result, the project was student-centered and led. Students were in charge of delegating portions of the project to their classmates. I often heard students telling their peers to go to the library and print out documents or to find more information online. In the background, another student would be rehearsing their testimonial.

Mika also wanted the project to have students analyze data directly related to their community while addressing state standards. Mika stated that as students analyzed census data and research-based articles, they met the Common Core Standards focus on interpreting informational texts. In an interview, she said:

> I wanted to see how well they were able to gather information from the articles and interpret the information in the articles, as well as the data that they researched to create a first-person narrative and a call to action about what's happening in their neighborhood.

The merging of academic skills, content knowledge, data analysis, and advocacy was evident throughout the process of students creating their projects.

The project culminated with the presentation of posters, testimonials, and a class discussion. Presentations occurred through a gallery walk. Students displayed their posters around the classroom and presented them to their peers. After the gallery walk, each group had a student representative read a testimonial. Following the presentations, there was a brief discussion on distinct and similar themes across the cities represented in the projects. Below is an example of a student poster (see Figure 2). The poster documents a part of the city's move towards gentrification, displaying how race/ethnicity, unemployment rates, home values, etc., have changed over the years.

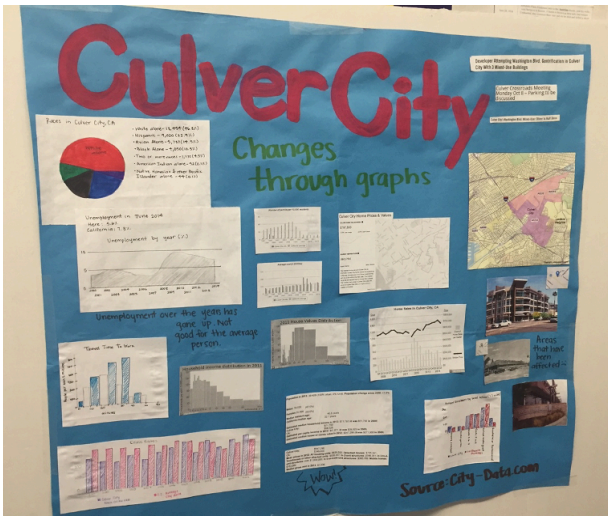

Figure 2
Student Citizenship & Gentrification Poster

Students used the poster to explain how the city has become Whiter, more affluent, and less affordable to purchase a home, pushing people of Color and low-income people out of their neighborhoods. Students also provided pictures of local buildings with city maps to illustrate how neighborhoods were altered. Similarly, other groups compared decades of census data and images of the neighborhood to document the evident and unnoticeable changes over decades. For example, some students displayed the before and aftereffects of a sports stadium being constructed, to illuminate how families were displaced.

During the testimonials, the students shared their research and infused their personal experience with gentrification. Several of the student testimonials mentioned that they witnessed: many of their Latino neighbors disappearing with landlords raising rent, and local stores and buildings being replaced with large corporations and trendy stores. Another student explained how gentrification has created a two-tiered society for her neighborhood. She said,

> "I'm thankful to live in a nice environment … (however) certain luxuries I don't get … because I live in low-income housing … we don't get a parking spot … we have traffic … renovations … trains … trams … everything is being renovated, it's not the same … everything is pricey.

As the city has undergone changes, the student and her neighbors have lost access to the physical space and the ability to buy affordable local goods. In short, the student emphasized that her community has been priced out of the so-called "luxuries" that gentrification brings, yet are now available to the new residents.

During the post-presentation discussion, a student provided a call to action that resonated with their classmates. They said: "Just because these buildings have been put up doesn't mean we have to leave … we need to rise up against." The students nodded in agreement and cheered. The following day, the teacher had the students reflect on the process of creating the project. Mika said they would continue their activism and enact change for the last weeks of school. Students could choose a topic of their choice and create a public comment or contact a public figure. Most students decided to continue with the issue of gentrification. For example, students used their research to create a meme, social media posts, or record a podcast with a local community member documenting their lived experiences. In addition, the students organized a town hall to speak to their local school board members, representatives, and community members about the damaging effects of displacement.

In conclusion, the citizenship and gentrification project displayed how students used data and their lived experience to address the unit's essential question: how does gentrification affect people and their environment? Moreover, students were also motivated to engage in activism beyond the classroom. The teaching examples throughout the findings describe how core members are involved in collective curricular praxis with the support of the TIG's structure, membership, and reflective community.

Closing Thoughts

This paper builds on a prior study (Navarro, 2018) that examined how the TIG sustained and enhanced educators' ability to teach for social justice. That paper stated, "We can't do this alone." This manuscript agrees and adds that engaging in collective curricular praxis is best done through a contingent of critical educators committed to racial and social justice. While Mika's teaching could be understood as an individual undertaking, done in isolation. The findings state that her teaching was informed by the TIG's pedagogical dialogue and reflective community. The TIG provided a space for educators to develop inquiry and action-oriented projects within their academic discipline to create a meaningful learning experience for young people.

Teacher activist learning-spaces, such as the TIG, serve as sites of fugitive learning (Patel, 2016; 2019) and a place to heal collectively, amidst the attacks on critical race theory, ethnic studies education, LGBTQIA, & DEI efforts (Alexander et al., 2023; Hannah-Jones, 2021; Love, 2023) for collective curricular praxis. The study has implications for scholars, policymakers, and educators to rethink the purpose, practice, and

possibilities of teacher learning spaces, curricula, and instruction (Love, 2019).

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