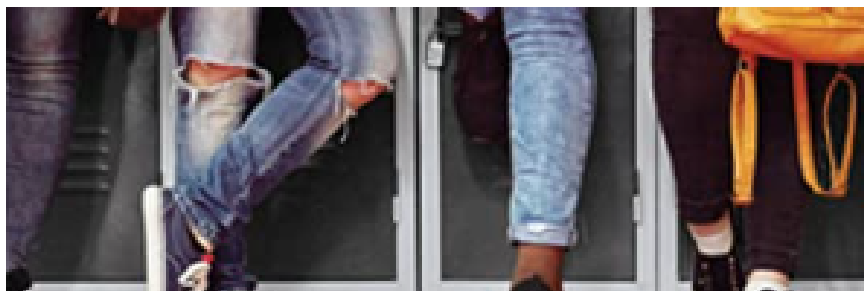


# Shane Safir

# Jamila Dugan

# Street Data



**Street Data challenges educators to radically reimagine our ways of being, learning, and doing (Safir & Dugan, 2021).**

Safir and Dugan (2021) defined street data as "the qualitative and experiential data that emerges at eye level and on lower frequencies when we train our brains to discern it" (p. 2). The authors' goal was to offer a next-generation model of deep learning and equity. When Safir entered education, No Child Left Behind and its kill and drill style of education in a high stakes testing environment was at the forefront of education (p. 3). When Safir became a principal, she began to focus on student-centred approaches rooted in holism and performance-based assessment. In this book, the authors focused not only on anti-racism and anti-bias, but offered ideas and plans to help move educators and school leaders forward towards a more equitable future.

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Connections and Next Steps

# About The Authors

## Jamila Dugan



Jamila, co-author, is a leadership coach, researcher, and learning facilitator whom implemented a successful International Baccalaureate program while teaching in Washington, DC. She has been nominated for Teacher of the Year and served as a coach for new teachers in Oakland. As a school-based administrator, Jamila championed equity-centred student services and parent empowerment and currently works as an equity-centred leadership development coach across various types of school systems. Jamila holds a bachelor's degree in psychology, master's in early childhood education, and a doctorate in education leadership for equity (p. xxii).

## Shane Safir



Shane, the lead author, has worked in education for over 25 years and is a champion for racial justice and deep learning. Shane taught in San Francisco and Oakland before becoming the founding principal of an equity-centred school modeled to help low-income students of colour beat the odds (p. xxi). Shane has spent over a decade leading equity-centred leadership coaching, transformational leadership support, and professional learning across North America. She writes for several major educational journals/magazines and authored the book, *The Listening Leader: Creating the Conditions for Equitable School Transformation*.

## Themes covered throughout the book

**HOLISM**

**AWARENESS**

**ANTIRACISM**

**DEEP LISTENING**

**AGENCY**

**COHERENCE**

**SYMMETRY**

**VULNERABILITY**

**WARM DEMANDER**

# Chapter 1: Leading for Equity

## Another World Is Possible

"What if, because of what we've deemed valid and reliable, we have been asking the wrong set of questions? What if the achievement gap itself is a mythology?" (Safir & Dugan, 2021, p. 15).

Students need to be at the centre of all work. Their voices should not only be heard, but used to reimagine how we do things in education. Reflection on our implicit bias is a crucial part of the process. Students will not be authentically heard without reflecting on our inherent racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, and all other internalized biases that we struggle to identify and accept as our own. Safir and Dugan (2021) posited that we need to dig up our deepest beliefs about education that have never served marginalized children (p. 11).

How can we create a system to shift the focus to the students at the margins and reimagine our beliefs about learning, knowledge, data, and success? We need to re-centre education with the students, particularly marginalized students, experiences to heal the wounds of racism and oppression in schools. Educators are getting to a place where we want to be part of the solution instead of the problem. Street Data roots equity, pedagogy, and school transformation in human experience. It moves away from standards, percentages, and metrics because there is overwhelming evidence that policies focused on these data have created larger achievement gaps rather than closing them.

### Are 'achievement gaps' a myth?

Historical views of achievement are entirely academic-based. If we approach achievement holistically, we would equally value students emotional, physical, spiritual, and cognitive development and growth.

Instead of further marginalizing students, street data offers three beliefs (p. 19):

- Can be humanizing
- Can be liberatory
- Can be healing

### Key Terms

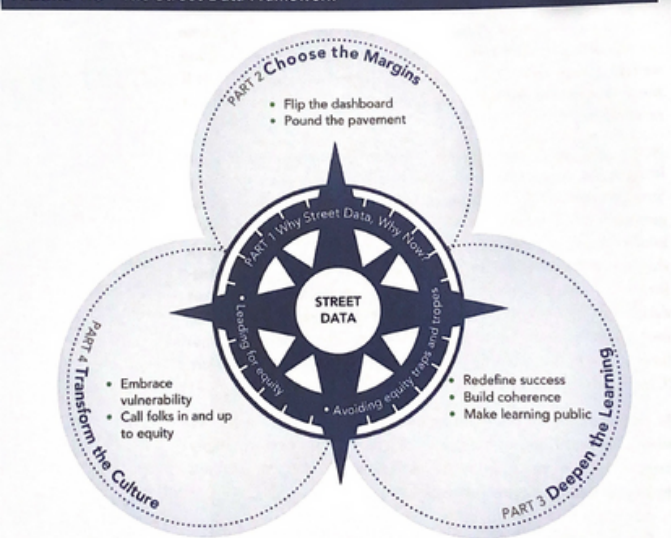
Community  
cultural wealth

systemic racism

Anti-black racism

Holism

FIGURE 1.3 The Street Data Framework



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Safir and Dugan (2021) referenced the First Nations Education Steering Committee's Principles of Learning (<https://www.fnesc.ca>) in chapter 1. The principles state that learning:

- Supports the well-being of self, family, community, land, spirits, and ancestors.
- Is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (connectedness).
- Recognizes consequences of actions.
- Involves generational roles and responsibilities and recognizes Indigenous knowledge.
- Is embedded in memory, history, and story.
- Involves patience, time, and exploration of identity

## Chapter 2: No Shortcut

### Avoiding Equity Traps and Tropes

"Becoming aware of the shortcomings of the oppressive system within which we work is the first step toward dismantling it" (Safir & Dugan, 2021, p. 28).

The theme of chapter 2 is awareness. Many educators likely don't believe in the inequitable systems of education they are a part of, but they lack the knowledge or the starting point for how to disrupt them. Safir and Dugan (2021) challenged us to imagine a world where success means we are developing students to have the self-concept, competence, and agency to make a difference in this world, a world where every student matters and belongs (p. 27). Equity has nothing to do with Western metrics and test scores. Traditional 'satellite data' serves to perpetuate the existing inequities facing marginalized students, so Safir and Dugan (2021) offered key reminders for authentically working towards equity with street data:

- o Acknowledge that our systems, practices, and narratives are designed to perpetuate disparities in outcomes for marginalized students
- o Deliberately identify barriers that predict success or failure and actively disrupt them
- o Consistently examine personal identity, bias, and both the personal and collective contributions to the creation and/or reproduction of inequitable practices
- o Allocate resources (tools, time, money, people, support) to ensure every child gets what they need to succeed to thrive socially, emotionally, and intellectually
- o Cultivate the unique gifts, talent, and interests that every person possesses (p. 29)

Safir and Dugan (2021) recognized that even when we intend to work toward equity, we often fall into what they call equity traps and tropes, which result in reverting back to deficit narratives and narrow definitions of success (p. 32).

In Table 2.1 (p. 32) They offered ten 'Traps and Tropes' that educators and school leaders need to be cognizant of.

Doing equity	Viewing equity as tools, strategies, and compliance tasks instead of holistic change processes
Siloing equity	Equity work done as a separate policy or team
Equity warrior	Relying on a single champion to carry the work forward
Spray and pray equity	Engaging "experts" to lead PD with no plan for capacity building
Navel-gazing equity	Failure to move beyond self-reflection or penetrate the instructional core/school system/structures
Structural equity	Shifting the system and structures without shifting the deep personal and interpersonal culture
Blanket equity	Investing in a program or curriculum rather than capacity building with your people to address challenges
Tokenizing equity	Asking leaders of colour to hold, drive, and symbolically represent equity without providing support and resources to thrive nor engaging the entire staff in the work
Superficial equity	Failing to build equity-centred knowledge and fluency, leading to behavioural shifts absent of understanding deep meaning or historical context
Boomerang equity	Investing time and resources to understand your equity challenges, but reverting back to recycled, status quo 'solutions'

#### Key Terms

Equity

White supremacy

Settler  
colonization

BIPOC

Intersectionality

Implicit Bias

Stereotype threat

**"Our intentions may be spot on, but if we aren't aware of our discourse, understanding, and moves we are making, we are liable to reinforce the system we seek to dismantle"**

(SAFIR & DUGAN, 2021, P. 44)

# Chapter 3: Flip the Dashboard

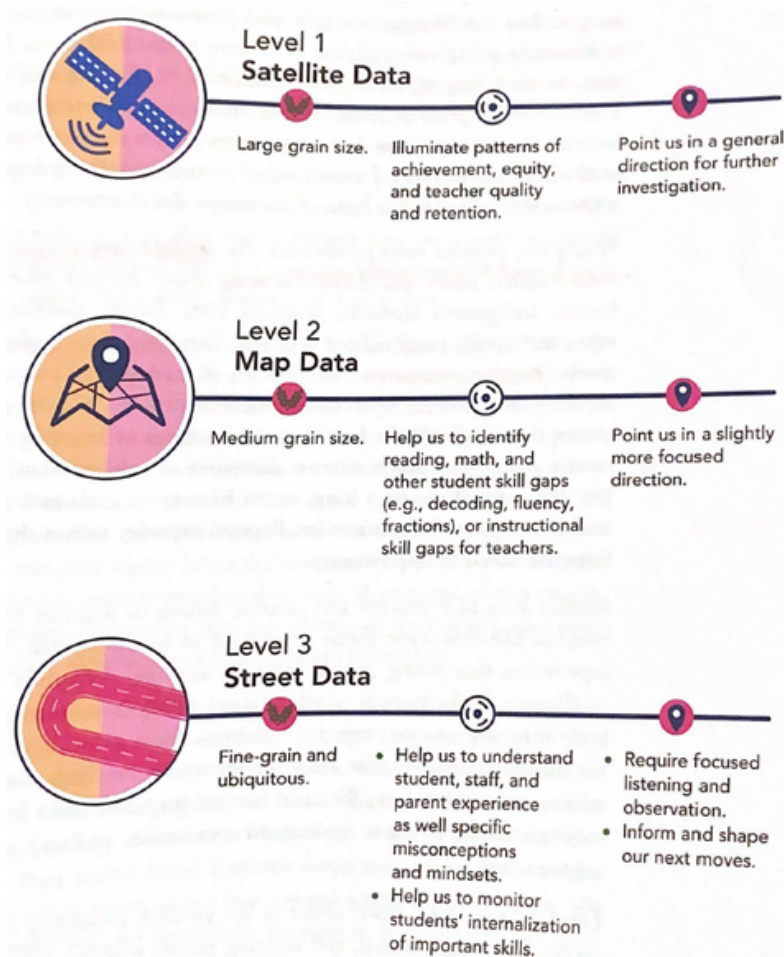
## Street Data Drives Equity

"By offering dashboard graphics without context, human story, or an explicitly anti-racist lens, we have done a disservice" (Safir & Dugan, 2021, p. 51).

**Satellite data** look at test scores, attendance patterns, grad rates and serve to reinforce implicit biases and deficit thinking. They project a single story about so-called 'under-performance' (p. 56).

**Map data** look closer at social-emotional, cultural, and learning trends in a school community and include school-based data including literacy, numeracy, and student/parent/staff satisfaction surveys. Map data offer more information than satellite data, but still lack the humanity required to shape equity-driven change processes.

**Street data** look at the experiences of stakeholders through observations, listening, and artifacts. Street data are qualitative and experiential asset-based data. They build on culturally responsive education by helping educators see what is right with students instead of seeking out what is wrong with them.



### Key Terms

Microaggressions

false generosity

Quantitative research

Qualitative research

Storientation

In education, we look at graphs of student achievement without actually knowing what is wrong, why it is wrong, or how to fix it. We do, however, fall into deficit narratives to explain away why 'negative' results are a certain way. It is crucial to add context through an anti-racist lens to uncover the root causes and barriers at play for marginalized students. The dashboard graphics analysis, or satellite data, promotes the notion that marginalized students 'need developing' and it is up to the school to fix them. Educators and leaders need to be "vulnerable enough to reject this racist lie and stare down the parts of our own practice that need to be fixed" (Safir & Dugan, 2021, p. 52). We can do this by authentically listening to student voices. One way to do this would be to interview students and teachers and observe classrooms to collect street data on student-teacher interactions, teach commentary/body language/tone, participation patterns among students, positive/negative student feedback ratios, and other low-inference data (p. 54). Simply, educators need to find out how students learn best.

### Ten Ways to Collect Street Data (pp. 61-64)

1. Audio feedback interviews
2. Listening campaigns
3. Equity participation tracker
4. Ethnographies
5. Fishbowls
6. Home visits
7. Shadow a student
8. Equity-focused classroom scan
9. Structured meeting observations
10. Student-led community walks

# Chapter 4: Pound the Pavement

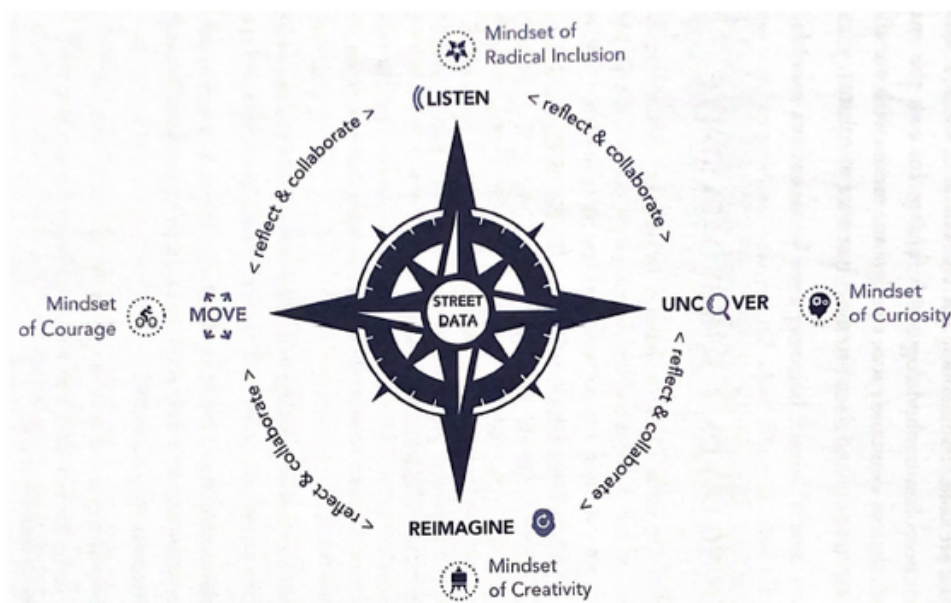
## Digging into Levels of Data

"We don't need improvement. We need an approach that fundamentally and radically transforms the experiences of children and families at the margins. This is the purpose of centering street data in a process of transformation" (Safir & Dugan, 2021, p. 75).

Chapter 4 discussed improvement science, or continuous improvement as being the dominant model in schools. Rather than using a plan-do-study-act model, Safir and Dugan (2021) suggested using deep listening to help us understand root causes instead of quick fixes (p. 71). Everyone wants to find solutions, but rarely do they consult with those most impacted, leading to continued inequitable power dynamics. In a street data framework, deep listening commits to two things. "The technology of skillful listening and an orientation to authentic, present, mindful engagement with stakeholders" (p. 71). Safir and Dugan (2021) offered tips for educators to deepen their listening to help flip the dashboard (p. 72):

1. Locate the margins of your community
2. Cultivate awareness of your personal biases
3. Find a culturally appropriate way to capture listening data
4. Pay close attention to nonverbal cues
5. Remember your purpose - healing plus understanding

The equity transformational cycle (Figure 4.1, p. 74) represents a shift from evaluating outcomes to valuing well-being. Safir and Dugan (2021) championed well-being as the ultimate goal because students and educators would "experience healing, agency, joy, and connection as they dismantle oppressive practices and structures and cultivate deep learning for all" (p. 76).



### Key Terms

Systemic oppression

Equity transformation cycle (ETC)

Emergence

Neuroception

Radical inclusion

Audacious hope

Safir and Dugan (2021) posited that street data collection is emergent, meaning that the data is complex and the outcome is unpredictable. Therefore, having a specific target or goal can be a limiting factor. Deep listening as the first step allows us to hear holistically what is said, what is not said, what is seen, what is felt in a dynamic exchange of humanity. Radical inclusion calls for us to offer a seat in decision making to those that have traditionally had unheard voices, but whose voices, experiences, and perspectives matter (p. 77). When listening, we need to avoid transactional listening that can further marginalize students. These may include not stating 'why' you are having the conversation, taking notes to the point of missing eye contact and nonverbal cues, conveying a lack of warmth through detached body language, or allowing ego to interfere with acceptance of hard feedback (p. 78).

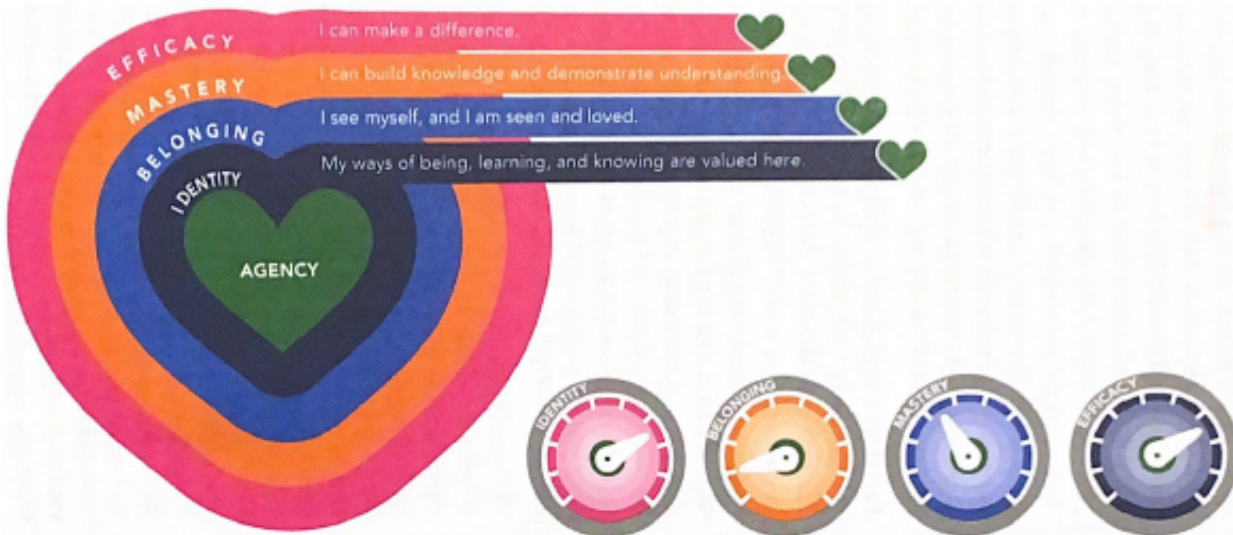
What does the street data reveal, and not reveal? Slow down, avoid defensiveness, and have collaborative discussions to uncover what is really going on beneath the surface (p. 87).

# Chapter 5: Redefine "Success"

## Street Data and the Pedagogy of Voice

"We have lost something intangible since testing overtook the educational psyche: our collective imagination" (Safir & Dugan, 2021, p. 99)

Chapter 5 challenged educators and leaders to seize the moment and transform our approaches to learning and teaching. Equity, as a pedagogy, says, "I see you. I believe in you. You are safe to grow and thrive here. I want to hear your voice" (p. 99). This statement can lead us to measure agency over test scores. Safir and Dugan (2021) offered an agency framework (Figure 5.1) that interconnects identity, belonging, mastery, and efficacy to result in a profound sense of agency (p. 101). In the classroom, agency is about connection to self, peers, and adults and power structure that distributed, diverse perspectives are championed, and children flourish both intellectually and emotionally (p. 102). Moving from test scores to agency allows students to question and challenge the status quo, engage in deep thinking and create counter-narratives about their own lived experiences. It focuses on dialogue and rich student work and de-focuses on compliance, grades, "answers," competition, and a culture of high stakes testing.



### Key Terms

Agency

Learning spirit

Spirit murdering

Critical pedagogy

Pedagogy of voice

Pedagogy of compliance

Banking model of education

Wise feedback

Safir and Dugan (2021) named six rules to move from compliance to a pedagogy of voice (pp. 108-118):

1. Talk less, smile more
2. Questions over answers
3. Ritualize reflection and revision
4. Make learning public
5. Circle up
6. Feedback over grades

### A Closer Look at Rule 6

Feedback is an effective assessment strategy. Safir and Dugan (2021) discussed "wise feedback" as a way to provide marginalized students with feedback free of stereotyping or bias using three key elements: Describing the nature of the feedback, emphasizing the high standards used to evaluate the work, and explicitly stating a belief that the student has the skills needed to meet the standards (p. 117).

# Chapter 6: Build Coherence

## Focus, Holism, and Well-being

"Start anywhere, but do it together" (Safir & Dugan, 2021, p. 144).

Chapter 6 queried the possibility of getting a whole school on board with a pedagogy of voice instead of only a passionate few by building coherence. Asking questions like: what really matters to us here and now? What is our equity imperative that names racism and inequity within our buildings? What is a vision and set of assessment principles we can stand behind (p. 122)? Coherence is crucial to change systems and well-being. Without it, educators will lack direction and struggle to develop agency (p. 123). Coherence and investing in sincere, honest, rich conversations about the nature of education, we can achieve focus, holism, and well-being. Focus is the ability to know the direction. Holism helps us account for the whole and the individual. Well-being encompasses holism as the integration of mind, body, spirit, and identity (p. 124).

Graduate Profiles were a prominent aspect of chapter 6 as well. A graduate profile is an accessible, succinct description of what graduates must know, do, understand. It should be holistic and value every part of a student's development. While it is called a graduate profile, it can be used for any grade. Combined with an authentic assessment system, a graduate profile can guide the collection of street data (p. 125). Figure 6.1 (p. 126) offers a sample graduate profile:



"A strong performance-based assessment system shifts our lens from breadth to depth" (p. 144)

### Key Terms

Coherence

Performance assessment

Defense of learning

If your school or division wants to develop their own graduate profile, consider these tips Safir and Dugan (2021) offered (p. 128):

**Keep it simple**

**Keep it visual**

**Keep it inclusive**

**Keep it student centred**

**Keep it authentic**

**Keep it equitable**

**Keep it actionable**

Once implemented, you can use the strategies of hallway/classroom walls artifacts scans, classroom observations, student interviews, and project exhibitions to see if the graduate profile is having a street-level impact (p. 129).



# Chapter 7: Make Learning Public

## Valuing Teacher Voices

"Adults, like students, must continually learn about themselves and systematically reflect on their growth and evolution" (Safir & Dugan, 2021, p. 152)

### Key Terms

Public learning

Adaptive experience

Routine experience

Default practices

Intentional practices

Chapter 7 introduced the concept of public learning. There is real value to bringing learning public, both for staff collaboration and in the classroom. If school leaders witness a reluctance for staff to ask questions or voice dilemmas they are having, leaders can dedicate time at each staff meeting to practice public learning. When done right, there is judgment-free critical questioning from colleagues about a staff member's dilemma. They might point out some biases shining through and offer feedback about ideas to make the situation better and more equitable.

In the classroom, Safir and Dugan (2021) critiqued district level PD plans as being stuck in satellite dashboard data instead of street data rooted in real-time experiences of learners. It all comes back to pedagogy of voice. By taking learning public, educators acknowledge complexity by accepting uncertainty and understanding; public learning can serve as a catalyst for professional culture change. Safir and Dugan (2021) posited that many educators are stuck inside a system that ignores the complexity of teaching and learning, and focuses only on routine (knowing best practices, following pacing guides, standardized testing). Public learning shifts from the satellite view back to ourselves with the focus being on reflection or growth and evolution. (pp. 150-152).

Safir and Dugan (2021) described five core elements of public learning (p. 157):

1. Begin with curiosity - focus on experience of learning and listening
2. Uncover student experiences: focus on the voice of the adult learner's understanding of the student through street data
3. Build space for sense-making and challenging bias: recognizes success as messy and centres the student's goals; accepts that bias will undoubtedly be present
4. Acknowledge that learning is social and emotional: urges collective reflection to deepen the learning
5. Value the learning at a systems level: fuels the motivation to continue learning while recognizing the challenging work of teaching

Safir and Dugan (2021) suggested the leaders can start the shift from a culture of compliance (based on satellite data) to a culture of public learning by looking closely at three things. Leaders can start with a time audit of collaborative time. Typically, educators will find they spend all their time planning, sharing, and tracking proficiency and zero time deepening their understanding of their learners. Next, leaders should provide teachers with a model of what public learning actually looks like. The leader will bring some types of street data to the collaborative time and work through a student learning dilemma (p. 161). Finally, the leader should make their own learning public and work through their own dilemma, with the staff offering insight, sharing their perspectives, and asking questions along the way.

Once the shift occurs, leaders need to be mindful of potential pitfalls that can stall public learning as a powerful tool that champions the pedagogy of voice. First, mindset is crucial. While public learning is a concrete method, staff need to believe in the process. Next, leaders need to ensure that staff do not feel like public learning is 'yet another thing' that is added to their plate. Third, public learning is not an accountability tool and it will not be a successful practice if staff are not comfortable sharing 'what they don't know, yet.' A fourth potential pitfall is that public learning may not be equally safe for everyone to participate in. Marginalized staff may feel that it is a risk to share something that could be perceived as incompetence. I also wonder about staff that are on temporary contracts feeling uncomfortable with this. Finally, leaders need to continually revisit the mindset, process, and feelings of staff to keep public learning 'on the rails' (pp. 160-164).

# Chapter 8: Embrace Vulnerability

## Moving Through Street Data Cycles

"Gathering street data is a practice of humanization and liberation, not a technical act done by "data-driven" educators" (Safir & Dugan, 2021, p. 170)

Chapter 8 focused on vulnerability and offers tools to put street data analysis into practice. Safir and Dugan (2021) asked us to consider our teachers' sense of shame or guilt that comes with not 'meeting standards' on satellite data and the connection this has to maintaining a white supremacy culture. Some aspects of this can be subtle, but it plays out in several explicit ways as well (tracking students into remedial classes, discipline policies, microaggressions). Table 8.1 offers antidotes to common components that uphold white supremacy culture (p. 173).

Safir and Dugan (2021) offered key advice for working through street data cycles, or formally equity transformation cycle (see page 6 of this book summary). They reminded us to move slowly, hold on to the mindset of creativity, focus on working with, not on, the students at the margins, be courageous, and continually reflect. Unsure of where to start? Consider a survey focused on patterns of inclusion/exclusion and equity/inequity with questions like "how much do you feel you belong in your school?" and "How confident are you that students at your school can have honest conversations with each other about race?" (p. 176).

PERFECTIONISM	
<b>Looks like</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little appreciation expressed among people for the work that others are doing</li> <li>Pointing out either how the person or work is inadequate or personalizing mistakes</li> <li>Little time, energy, or money put into reflection or identifying lessons learned</li> </ul>	<b>Antidotes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a culture of appreciation and a learning organization, where we expect to make and learn from mistakes</li> <li>When offering feedback, always speak to the what went well before offering criticism</li> <li>Ask people to offer specific suggestions for how to do things differently</li> </ul>
EITHER/OR THINKING	
<b>Looks like</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Things are either/or, good/bad, right/wrong, with us/against us</li> <li>Closely linked to perfectionism in making it difficult to learn from mistakes or conflict</li> <li>Results in trying to simplify complex things—for example believing that poverty is simply a result of lack of education</li> </ul>	<b>Antidotes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice when people use either/or language or oversimplify complex issues</li> <li>Push to come up with more than two alternatives</li> <li>Slow it down and encourage people to do a deeper analysis</li> </ul>
POWER HOARDING	
<b>Looks like</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little, if any, value around sharing power</li> <li>Power seen as a limited quantity</li> <li>Those with power feel threatened when anyone suggests organizational changes</li> </ul>	<b>Antidotes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include power sharing in your organization's values statement</li> <li>Calibrate what good leadership looks like and include the notion of sharing power</li> <li>Understand that challenges to your leadership can be healthy and productive</li> </ul>
DEFENSIVENESS	
<b>Looks like</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organization is structured to protect power as it exists, creating an oppressive culture</li> <li>People respond to new or challenging ideas with defensiveness, making it very difficult to raise these ideas</li> <li>A lot of energy in the organization is spent trying to make sure that people's feelings aren't getting hurt (white fragility)</li> </ul>	<b>Antidotes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the link between defensiveness and fear (of losing power, losing face, losing comfort, losing privilege)</li> <li>Work on your own defensiveness; name defensiveness as a problem when it is one</li> <li>Discuss the ways in which defensiveness or resistance to new ideas impedes the mission</li> </ul>

### Key Terms

Stereotype threat

White supremacy culture

Vulnerability

Safe-to-fail experiments

Regardless of where and how you start this work, remember these questions (p. 176):

1. What is the student (or adult) experience being revealed to you?
2. What are the student's (or adult's) strengths, assets, and sources of cultural wealth?
3. What is getting in the way of the learner's well-being, cognitive growth, and agency?
4. How might racism and white supremacy culture be at play here?

Safir and Dugan (2021) explained several strategies in chapter 8 that champion vulnerability and student voice. These include: empathy interviews, equity learning walks with students, student-informed curriculum building, student-driven PD, student design challenges, student-led conferences, and safe-to-fail experiments (pp. 177-193).

# Chapter 9: Calling Folks In and Up to Equity

## Street-Level Conversations

"Every moment is an equity moment" (Safir & Dugan, 2021, p. 197)

The warm demander leader expects a great deal of their colleagues, convinces them of their capacity to grow as anti-racist educators, and uses street data and adaptive coaching moves to shift mindsets and practices. The warm demander does not call folks out, but calls them "in and up to the work of equity" (p. 199). The four principles for becoming a warm demander are explained on pages 200-201:

1. Believe in the impossible
2. Build trust
3. Teach self-discipline
4. Embrace failure

Figure 9.2 displays a framework for the warm demander to help resist white fragility and dismantle systemic racism (p. 202). A real barrier in making ground in equity work is the feelings of discomfort or defensiveness when a white person (or non-marginalized person in a power position) is challenged about racial inequality and injustice (p. 204). The framework provides a map to ensure this is, at worst, only a temporary roadblock.

### Key Terms

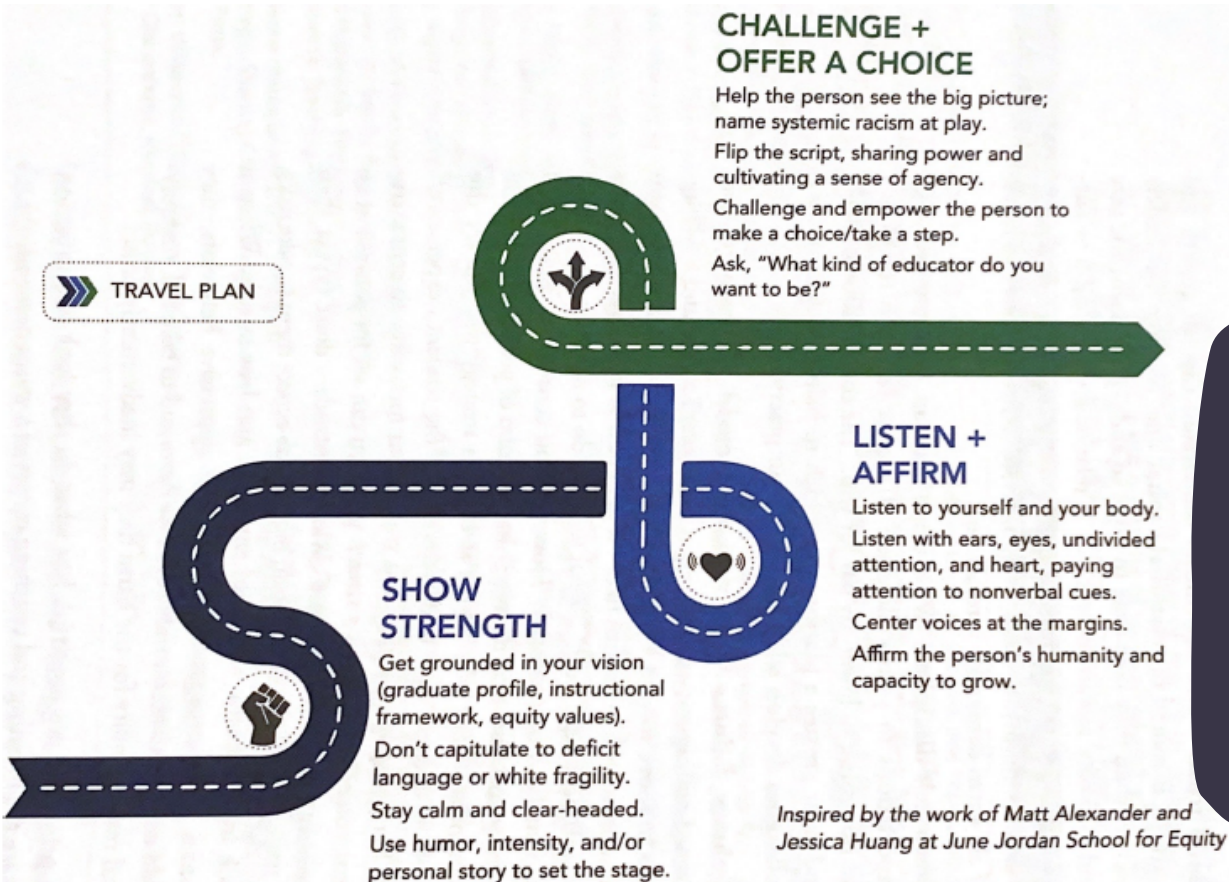
Showing strength

Fundamental attribution error

White fragility

Mature empathy

Strategic listening



Check out page 201, figure 9.1 for a list of twenty must-read racial literacy books

## Connections and Next Steps

"We can embrace a new way of being together. We must. If not now, when?" (Safir & Dugan, 2021, p. 216)

"Street Data" is a book that can serve many purposes for school leaders and teachers, regardless of where they are at in their journey as anti-racist, anti-oppressive educators. Safir and Dugan (2021) offered practical frameworks and maps for leaders to shift from satellite data to street data as the most valuable measure of school, leader, teacher, and student success. Each chapter provided real-world examples and case studies for the reader to realize that it is possible to move past the theory and put this into practice.

Anytime transformational change is the topic, the information seems daunting and there can be plenty of reasons for a leader to revert back to the status quo. In this book's case, the authors regularly warned the reader to avoid this. The equity traps and tropes discussed in chapter 2 were revisited throughout the book to ensure the reader stays focused and encouraged.

As a reader, I appreciated the authors' recognition of the counterarguments readers may make regarding many of the big ideas and implementation strategies they shared. Anytime that I was reading and became concerned about the resistance that could arise amongst staff, Safir and Dugan offered a solution or a re-focusing statement to bring back my positivity and hope. The best example of this is the common narratives of 'adding to teacher's already full plates' or 'just another new thing.' The authors accepted these concerns and offered ways leaders can frame the work as valuable and a path to really make a difference in our students' lives.

Safir, S. & Dugan, J. (2021). Street data: A next-generation model for equity, pedagogy, and School Transformation. Corwin.

