Pillar 3, Middle School: Tilanka Chandrasekera & Jon Singer

Middle School   Strategies for Equity

Evidence

- **The Importance of Flexibility for Equity:**
  Adapt teaching to respect diverse perspectives, enabling students to incorporate their own cultural values and experiences into learning, which enhances engagement and representation in STEM.
- **Diverse Teachers as Leaders:**
  Utilize the insights of educators from diverse backgrounds to adapt curriculum and teaching methods, making learning more inclusive and effective for students of all backgrounds.
- **Centering Intersectional Identities:**
  Start by recognizing the complex identities students bring to their education, ensuring teaching strategies in STEM are inclusive and equitable for everyone

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Challenges

- **Diverse Group Funding Dilemma**
  Addressing the challenge of meeting funding requirements that specify support for a particular demographic, while serving a broader, diverse group of learners.
- **Inclusive Environment Design**
  Creating educational spaces that promote a sense of belonging and ownership for all students, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds.
- **Limitations of Demographic Data in Funding**
  The difficulty of using traditional demographic categories for funding decisions, which may not fully address or capture the complexities of inequity.

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Research

- **Mentoring and Role Models**

  Research supports the effectiveness of mentoring programs, including peer and near-peer mentoring, highlighting the importance of relatable role models in building student resilience and positive identity.

- **Diverse Representation in STEM Media**

  There is a need for ongoing research into the impact of diverse representations of scientists and engineers in media, showing students that success in STEM is achievable for everyone.

- **Community Advisory Committees**

  Community advisory committees play a critical role in setting values and principles that support diverse student identities, fostering a sense of belonging and resilience in STEM learning environments.