

# Eleven Things YOU Can Do to Bring Class Equity to School

1. Remember that there exists no set of teaching strategies that work for all, or even most, low-income students (or for any group that we define based on a single identity dimension). The range of ways in which low-income students prefer to learn is *exactly the same* as the range of ways in which wealthy students prefer to learn.
2. Fight to keep low-income students from being placed unfairly into lower academic tracks. Fight to get low-income students into gifted and talented programs. Or, better yet, fight to eliminate tracking altogether.
3. Teach about class and poverty both locally and globally. Teach about the lack of living wage jobs, the dissolution of labor unions, the growing wealth gap, hunger, and other topics related to class and poverty.
4. Teach, as well, about the important anti-poverty work and ideas of people whose activism in this area has been erased from mainstream history: Martin Luther King, Jr., Helen Keller, Mark Twain, the Black Panthers, and so on. Also teach about why their anti-poverty work has been erased from mainstream history.
5. Keep extra coats, school supplies, and snacks around for students who might need them. But distribute these resources quietly to avoid drawing unnecessary attention to low-income students.
6. Help make family involvement accessible to low-income families, who, due to a lack of living-wage jobs, often work multiple jobs (including evening and night hours), don't have paid leave, and may not be able to afford public transportation or childcare.
7. Keep in mind that many low-income students do not have easy access to computers and the Internet. Be thoughtful about the homework you assign.
8. Similarly, many of their families do not have easy access to computers and the Internet, either. Some might lack telephone service. Be thoughtful about how you communicate with families and how you make information available. Never make information available only in electronic (online) form.
9. Have high expectations for low-income students. Give them access to the types of higher-order thinking curricula and pedagogies usually reserved for their wealthier peers. Poverty is not a disability—it's a social condition.
10. Make sure curriculum content, illustrations, and examples are relevant to the lives of low-income students.
11. Continue reaching out to low-income families, even if you experience them as unresponsive. Remember that it can take more than a call or two to help low-income families trust a system that historically has been inequitable, or even hostile, to them.