



# Evaluating Equity to Drive District-Wide Action this School Year

A framework to evaluate equity through inclusive and responsive practices



BetterLesson®

# Today's Session

Will explore a framework for evaluating equity using key inclusive and responsive practices like SEL, culturally responsive learning, and DEI.



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**BetterLesson has  
been helping  
educators make the  
shift to student-  
centered learning for  
over a decade**



Community Website



Master Teacher Projects



1:1 Virtual Coaching



Virtual Professional Learning

# About BetterLesson

We partner with education organizations to provide flexible, results-oriented professional learning experiences that build teacher and leader capacity, and improve outcomes for all students.



## Virtual Workshops

Interactive small-group experience where expert coaches introduce key concepts, build community, and model best practices.



## 1:1 Virtual Coaching

Personalized, growth-oriented support from expert coaches to build and sustain skills through the Try-Measure-Learn method.



## Design Workshops

Action-oriented introduction to a curriculum or initiative, aligned to school, district, and educator needs.



## Learning Walks

Evidence-based classroom observations to analyze trends in teacher practice and create a plan to support them.





# Equity is at Our Core

We are committed to helping educators **develop cultural competence** so they are better prepared to design and sustain equitable learning environments that equip all students to succeed.

We are **equally committed** to fiercely pursuing an equitable and inclusive company by continuously developing our own critical consciousness, examining and confronting our individual biases, and building those values and skills into our team culture, practices, and policies.

# In this session participants will:

1

Identify practices that make how educational equity actionable.

2

Evaluate the tenets of equity - focused programming through Inclusive and Responsive practices.

3

Reflect on their current practice to determine areas of growth & action.

# Equity in Education

What is educational equity?

# What is Equity?





# Why Equity Matters



“What it means for schools to be fair has changed over the decades. At one point in history, it was deemed fair to exclude girls from science classes. It was once considered fair to segregate students based on their race or ethnicity. Today, we think of fair as being not just equal but equitable. That's an important distinction. Whereas equal means everyone gets the same treatment and services as everyone else, **equitable means students get what they need to succeed.**”

*Smith, Dominique. Building Equity: Policies and Practices to Empower All Learners*

# The Challenge of Equity

It's hard work to create equitable learning environments for all students.

*Why do most equity programs fail?*

# Common Inequities Found in Schools

Support for English Language learners

Access to excellent teaching

Support for students with special needs

Discipline disparities and bias

Access to technology and other resources

Fair and valid assessment practices

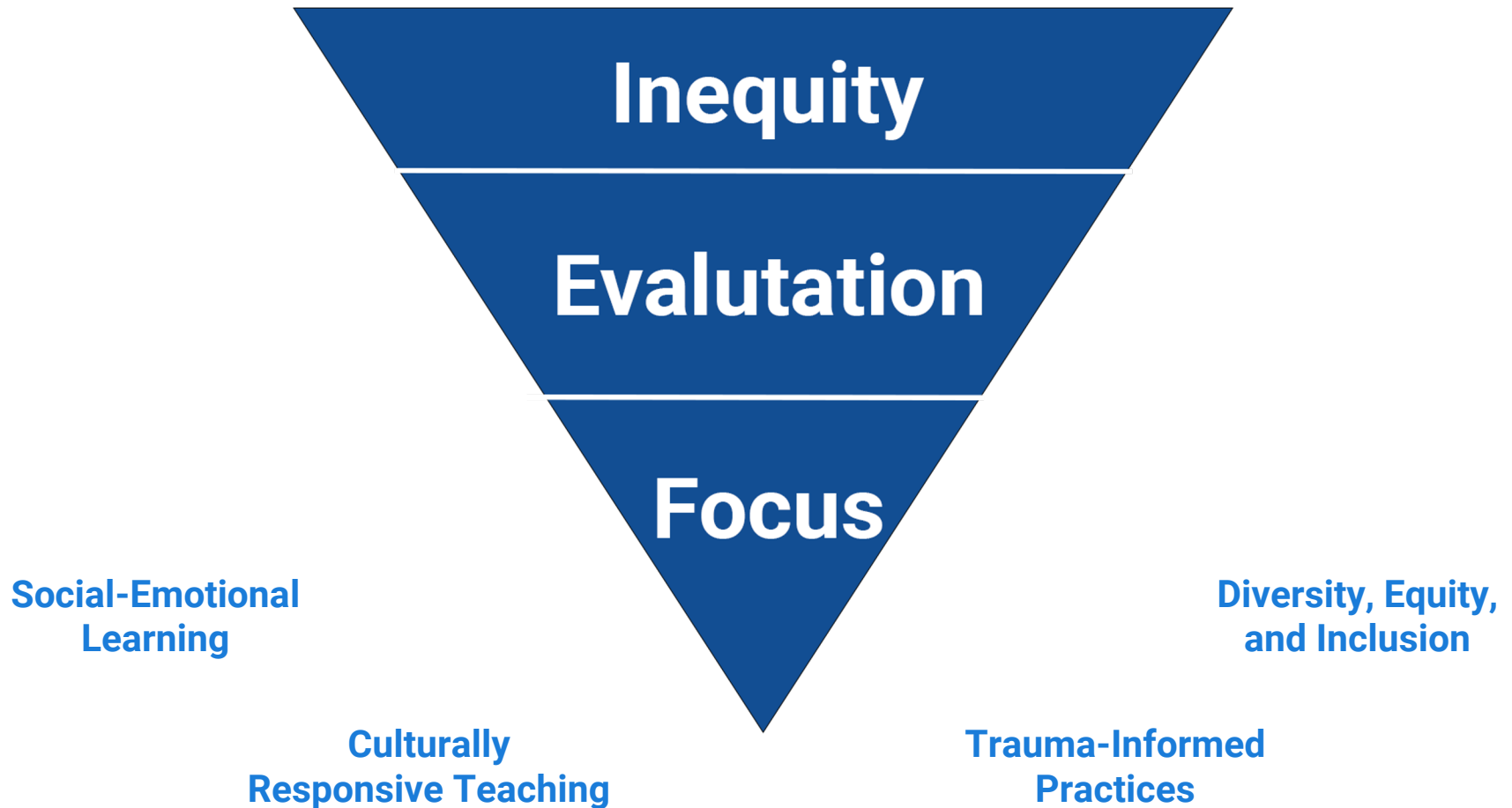
Achievement among groups of students  
(i.e. students of color, English Learners, etc)

Teacher support around inclusive practices

Family support and home life

Fiscal equity and resources to support students

# How Do We Make Equity Actionable?





# Responding to Inequities with Inclusive and Responsive Practices



To thrive in school and beyond, students must feel valued. Teachers create inclusive and responsive classrooms when they adapt to students' needs, build social-emotional skills, and honor diverse perspectives.



## **Social-Emotional Learning**

Prepare students with the self-awareness, relational, and decision-making skills needed to succeed in school and in life



## **Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning**

Create learning communities in which all students can be seen, heard, and valued



## **Trauma-Informed Practices**

Approach learning with an understanding of the impacts of trauma and adversity on students



## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Create inclusive educational ecosystems by examining structures, systems, and beliefs informed by race and identity



## **English Learners**

Support all English Learners to grow and thrive in their learning environments




## **Special Education**

Support students with disabilities to learn, grow, and thrive in their learning environments

# Inclusive and Responsive Practices

- Are essential to all students in today's education system because all students deserve **equitable** learning opportunities that lead to their success.
- Provide a **student-centered** approach to learning that fosters a sense of belonging and reminds us, as educators, to put students first.
- Refer to the **research-based methods** being used in each person's reality.

# Evaluation Through Self Assessment

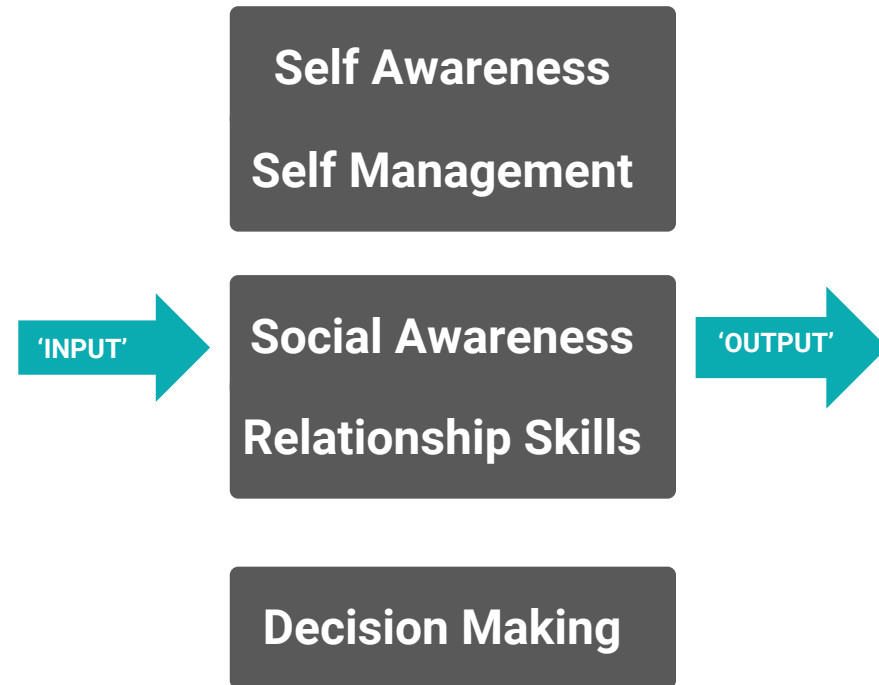
Focus Area	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>			Rating	Reflections
	Inconsistently	Sometimes	Consistently		
 <p><b>Trauma-Informed Practices</b></p>	<p>We can create safe spaces by reflecting on, addressing, and adjusting the daily practices we uphold in our classroom in order to meet the needs of all students.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Thresholding to Meet Students at the Door</a></p>				
	<p>We can define deescalation tactics and mindsets to develop next steps that we can feel comfortable, confident, and committed to pursuing.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Mindfulness Techniques</a></p>				
	<p>We can cultivate resilience and wellbeing by modeling how to respond to challenging individuals, tasks, or scenarios.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Positive News Boards</a></p>				
	<p>We can model trauma-informed practices and create systems to enable teachers to use trauma-informed practices in order to support student learning.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Using the Social Discipline Window</a></p>				

# Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Built upon decades of research by CASEL, we identify with five core competencies to **prepare students with the self-awareness, relational, and decision-making skills** needed to succeed in school and in life.

**Centering students' realities** is integral to shifting practices and developing the learning communities and experiences our students deserve.

*How do we make sure SEL is about the 'outputs' and not the 'inputs' for students?*





# Indicators of SEL



## **Self Management**

Self-discipline  
Self-motivation  
Perseverance



## **Self Awareness**

Confidence  
Self accountable  
Reflection



## **Social Awareness**

Empathy  
Appreciate diversity  
Respect for others



## **Meaningful Relationship**

Communication  
Working cooperatively  
Resolving conflicts



## **Decision Making**

Solving problems  
Evaluating  
Reflecting

# Impact of SEL

11% of students receiving comprehensive SEL instruction increased their achievement by 11 percentile points - CASEL

93% of PK-12th Grade teachers in a national survey believe that SEL is very or fairly important to the in school student experience - CASEL


Improved test scores, grades, and attendance

Decreased emotional distress

More positive attitudes toward oneself, others, and tasks including enhanced self-efficacy, confidence, persistence, empathy, connection and commitment to school, and a sense of purpose

# Assessing Your SEL Practices



Focus Area	Inconsistently	Sometimes	Consistently	Rating	Reflections
 <b>Social Emotional Learning</b>	<p>We can develop social emotional initiatives in my school that integrate the academic and social needs of my school community.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Building an Understanding of Social-Emotional Learning for Leaders</a></p>				
	<p>We can develop self-management and self-awareness in students by employing strategies aligned to the core competencies of social emotional learning.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategies:</b>  <a href="#">Self Regulation</a>  <a href="#">Self Awareness Moments</a></p>				
	<p>We can support the development of positive relationships and social awareness in students by building a collaborative and supportive learning community.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Circle Up: Community Conversations</a></p>				
	<p>We can define and incorporate responsible decision-making skills into our instruction to support students to analyze consequences, make decisions that promote collective wellbeing, and create a more just and equitable learning environment.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Developing a Growth Mindset</a></p>				

# Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning (CRTL) is a foundational approach to instruction based on the understanding that **culture is central to learning and leads to academic success.**

*How do we make sure Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning is tied to learning outcomes, and not just intellectual conversation?*



# Indicators of Culturally Responsive Teaching



## **Academic Achievement**

Maintaining high  
expectations for all  
students



## **Cultural Competence**

Teaching students who  
come from cultures  
other than our own



## **Sociopolitical Consciousness**

Analyzing the political,  
economic, and social  
forces shaping one's life

# Impact of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Strengthens students' sense of identity


Promotes equity and inclusivity in the classroom

Engages and motivates students in the course material

Supports critical thinking and problem solving skills

Promotes a sense of belonging and safety

# Assessing Your CRTL Practices

Focus Area	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>			Rating	Reflections
	Inconsistently	Sometimes	Consistently		
 <b>Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning</b>	We understand and internalize culturally responsive best practices to support all students, especially students from historically marginalized communities.				
	<b>Free supporting strategy:</b> <a href="#">Classroom Management Reconsidered</a>				
	We can identify gaps in equity and access for students and develop concrete steps to improve equity in the classroom.				
	<b>Free supporting strategy:</b> <a href="#">Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment</a>				
	We intentionally cultivate a culturally responsive classroom culture by recognizing, honoring, and including student identities, skills, experiences, and passions into all learning opportunities.				
	<b>Free supporting strategy:</b> <a href="#">I Wish My Teacher Knew</a>				
	We build family partnerships by inviting, investing, and valuing their contributions as partners in their students' learning process.				
	<b>Free supporting strategy:</b> <a href="#">Creating and Implementing a Family Partnership Plan</a>				
	We pursue equity by actively disrupting false narratives and systems of injustice that criminalize, stigmatize, or further marginalize students.				
	<b>Free supporting strategy:</b> <a href="#">Identifying and Addressing Implicit Bias</a>				

# Trauma-Informed Practices

Trauma-Informed practices approach learning with an understanding of the whole student, including **physiological, social, emotional, and academic impacts** of trauma and adversity.

*How do we 'scale' trauma informed supports at a time when students and educators have all experienced trauma?*

# Indicators of Trauma-Informed Practices



**Safety**



**Trustworthiness  
and  
Transparency**



**Peer Support**



**Collaboration  
and Mutuality**



**Voice and  
Choice**



**Cultural and  
Gender  
Acceptance**

# Impact of Trauma-Informed Practices

Increased positive academic outcomes


Support for student's personal experiences

Creates a positive learning environment for all students

Develops educator wellness and balance

Reduction in negative discipline outcomes

# Assessing Your Trauma-Informed Practices

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# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practices help uncover the systems and structures that perpetuate bias and discrimination. Unlike Culturally Responsive Teaching that focuses on learning pedagogy or SEL that focuses on student skills, DEI is about supporting our larger school communities to tackle inequity.

*How can we create the authentic spaces and action needed to address systemic challenges?*



# Indicators of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



## Diversity

Individual and social differences contributing to identity



## Equity

Fairness in practices, policies, and systems



## Inclusion

Intentionally creating an environment that honors differences

# Impact of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Students feel like their identity belongs in the learning environment


Educators from diverse backgrounds feel valued and seen

Students from underserved groups have new opportunities to learn

Families feel more invested and a part of the school community

Reduction in negative discipline outcomes

# Assessing Your DEI Practices

Focus Area	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>			Rating	Reflections
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 <p><b>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion</b></p>	<p>We can identify systems in our school, classroom, or in our daily instruction that perpetuate practices that further marginalize students that are often underrepresented.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Building Equity Awareness and Capacity</a></p>				
	<p>We can develop our collective self-awareness around our own and students' identities.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Cultivating Critical Consciousness by Exploring and Examining Lessons</a></p>				
	<p>We can address inequities in our classroom contexts consistently.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Culturally Relevant Implementation in Daily Lessons</a></p>				
	<p>We consistently audit our curriculum and content to examine areas for change, growth, and inclusion to provide equitable learning experiences for our students.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Integrating Inclusive Content</a></p>				
	<p>We value the importance of self-reflection by identifying what our biases and advantages are, and working to unpack them.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Teaching Social Justice in the Primary Classroom</a></p>				

# English Learners

To grow and thrive, English Learners (EL's) need differentiated support that **embraces their culture and prior knowledge** while supporting their understanding and use of English as they engage **in all classroom activities**. Some estimates suggest that 1 in 4 learners may be an English Learner by 2025.

*How can every educator develop the skills to support and celebrate our English Learners?*

# Indicators of English Learner Practice



**Differentiation**



**Scaffolding**



**Cultivate  
Relationships**



**Productive  
Language**




**Multiple  
Modalities**



**Language Skills  
and Standards**

# Assessing Your English Learners Practice

Focus Area	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>			Rating	Reflections
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 <b>English Learners</b>	<p>We can work with families as partners in the learning process so they feel welcome with translation and interpretive services as necessary.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategies:</b>  <a href="#">Bilingual and Multilingual Family Events</a>  <a href="#">Facilitating Effective Family-Teacher Conferences</a></p>				
	<p>We can use native language and culture validated to leverage as funds of knowledge.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Connecting with Student Communities Using Community Walks</a></p>				
	<p>We can communicate through listening, speaking, reading and writing and learn new language in a structured supportive way.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Developing Norms to Support Productive Group Work</a></p>				
	<p>We can use language for a reason and understanding the why behind the language practice (functional language approach).</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Accountable and Academic Talk Stems</a></p>				
	<p>We can practice language through various avenues (i.e. oral rehearsal, with a partner, etc.).</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategies:</b>  <a href="#">Controlled Speaking Activities for English Language Learners</a>  <a href="#">Supporting English Learners with Sensory, Graphic and Interactive Scaffolds</a></p>				
	<p>We can implement problem-based learning in order to support English Learners to build language skills.</p> <p><b>Free supporting strategy:</b>  <a href="#">Genius Hour</a></p>				

# Special Education

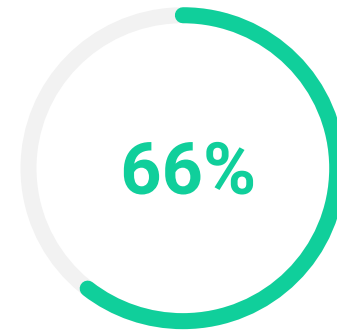
Special Education supports students with disabilities to **learn, grow, and thrive** in their inclusive learning environments using UDL as a guide. Students with academic, behavioral, health, physical, or other unique and special gifts deserve instruction, support, and services provided beyond those met by traditional educational techniques. COVID has exasperated the inequities these students are experiencing, and widened learning gaps.

*How do we build expertise for all educators in supporting students with disabilities?*

# Special Education



**14%** of all public school students received Special Education services, according to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#) in 2019-2020



**66%** of students with learning disabilities spend **80%** or more of their school day in general education classrooms according to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#) in 2017



# Indicators for Special Education



## **Student-Centered Teaching**

Special education **is** student-centered teaching.



## **Responsible for Success**

Teachers are responsible for the success of students with disabilities



## **Purposeful Accommodations**

Tiered approaches to instruction, to ensure that their curriculum is accessible to students with disabilities



## **Staff Collaboration**

School staff must work collaboratively with a wide range of people

# Impact of Special Education

Higher engagement for students with disabilities

Targeted and consistent teacher planning routines

Incorporation of assistive technology and resources

Deeper connections with families

Access to rigorous learning for all students

# Assessing Your Special Education Practice



1

2

3

Inconsistently

Sometimes

Consistently

Rating

Reflections



**Special  
Education**

We can engage students with disabilities by understanding their interests, offering appropriate challenge, and increasing motivation to learn.

**Free supporting strategies:**

[Interest Surveys](#)

[Explore Student-Centered Professional Learning](#)

We can implement technology in order to provide students with disabilities multiple means of engagement, representation, action, and expression.

**Free supporting strategy:**

[Visual Retelling](#)

We can utilize purposeful supports and scaffolds to ensure all students have equitable access to the learning environment, tasks, and content.

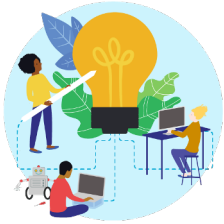
**Free supporting strategies:**

[Pre-Teaching to Support Content Mastery](#)

[Interactive Writing to Build Sentences](#)

# Why Educational Equity Matters ...

Achieving equity in education isn't just the right thing to do, it has a significant impact on local, state, and national issues. By improving education outcomes for underserved student groups, we can:



Close the opportunity gap



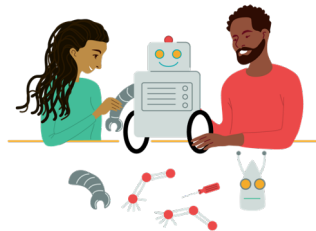
Improve academic results



Build strong relationships



Develop economic growth



Retain teaching talent



Increase life expectancy

# Identify a Focus Area to Create Your Strategic Plan



**Social-Emotional  
Learning**

**Diversity, Equity,  
and Inclusion**

**Culturally  
Responsive Teaching**

**Trauma-Informed  
Practices**

# Your Educators are Learners, too



**Aware**

Increase awareness



**Sensitive**

Grow in knowledge & skill



**Responsive**

Implement change



**Informed**

Integrate practices

*Focusing on a specific practice is step one! Planning for implementation will need communication and opportunities for both shared learning as a community and personalization to meet educators where they are.*

A young man with dark, curly hair and a light blue shirt is high-fiving a young woman with brown hair tied back, wearing a blue shirt. They are both smiling and looking at each other. In the background, a man with a beard is partially visible. The scene is set in a bright, modern classroom or office environment with large windows.

# Thank you!

Learn about flexible, job-embedded professional learning solutions  
at [BetterLesson.com](https://www.BetterLesson.com)