

The below is a message that I wrote to all of the teachers and staff at Mission High School here in San Francisco, CA. This letter was sent to Mission High staff only, and was then forwarded to teachers throughout the SFUSD school district.

Below the letter, is the beginning of the lesson/ideas for conducting discussions in classrooms to help create safe spaces and places where we acknowledge what is happening in our country. Those interested in promoting the **objectives** written below were and are invited to utilize this as a resource. Also, when I sent this to the staff, I also included the link for the google document and let people know that I would be adding resources and materials to this document.

The media and many others have chosen to look at the letter that I wrote to staff, as well as the portion where I asked educators to allow students to speak their minds and be allowed to use whatever language they choose. However, if one reads the lessons carefully, I did say that teachers could set the norms and ask students not to swear.

Additional Resources about the Impact of this election on schools and students:

<https://www.splcenter.org/20160413/trump-effect-impact-presidential-campaign-our-nations-schools>

<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2016/11/schools-racism-trump-effect-harassment-bullying>

https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/splc_the_trump_effect.pdf

Letter to Staff:

Dear Staff,

Tomorrow, I hope that you will take the time to put all lessons aside and talk to our students about what has happened and how they feel. **Please, let them speak and be heard.** Let them say what is on their minds, this is crucial for our school and our community. Let us please not sidestep the fact that a racist and sexist man has become the president of our country by pandering to a huge racist and sexist base. (This is not about labeling, this is about facts, Paul Ryan even stated:

"Claiming a person can't do their job because of their race is sort of like the textbook definition of a racist comment," Ryan said at a press conference in Washington Tuesday to unveil a new anti-poverty plan.

<http://www.politico.com/story/2016/06/paul-ryan-trump-judge-223991>.

Lesson Plan/s:

Objectives:

- Students express their concerns and voice their thoughts/feelings
- Students speak about their lived experiences with racism, sexism and the phobias

- Students gain empowerment/hope through discussion
- Students feel safe and respected (**whether they are for or against Trump**)
- **Anti-Racist/Anti-Sexist/Anti-Islamophobic/Anti-Homophobic, ANTI-HATE (etc.,) teaching lenses** are magnified and put into full use tomorrow and students should come away with an understanding of this through discussions held in class/norms established
- Students gain a knowledge of the context of American racial violence, sexism etc.,
- Students will also learn about propaganda and see how Trump has been quoted saying things he has not said, but they have and will also see and discuss legitimate facts, ie what he has said and admitted saying through viewing the information provided on the *Last Week Tonight Show* by John Oliver.
- Students will gain a deeper understanding of what motivates Trump supporters through watching the *TrumpLand* documentary and participating in a discussion
- Feel free to add more objectives

Here are some recommendations for how to conduct a discussion:

1. Establish some norms if possible:
 - a. One Mic
 - b. Respect
 - c. Confidentiality
 - d. Step up Step Down
 - e. Speak your truth
 - f. Stay engaged
 - g. Add whatever the students want to add (**you can ask for them to limit or not use profanity here as well if that is important to you**)
 - h.
2. What has happened? Let the students speak one at a time. PLEASE VALIDATE STUDENTS FEELINGS. Example: "What you are saying is valid," or "I hear you," "I support you, I understand you." "you are right and this is unjust." Let them speak, guide the discussion, use a talking piece if necessary.

(I know that they might curse and swear, but you would too if you have suffered under the constructs of white supremacy or experienced sexism, or any isms or lack of privilege. You would especially do so if you have not yet developed all of the tools necessary to fight this oppression. It is our job to help them develop these tools, ie the language etc., **Let's not penalize and punish our youth for how they express themselves at this stage.**) (Hate mongering people see this as an invitation to use profanity, keep your hate to yourselves, our students are not hateful.)

3. **Offer hope, upliftment. EMPOWERMENT.** Offer them opportunities to do well in class, uplift themselves and their communities. Ask them what they would like to do or express. Can we come up with a plan to uplift our school community? To say that we will not let anyone reign over us or have the power to dictate what we consider our basic human rights? Make a list for a plan on how we can uplift ourselves/fight oppression here at school even if we cannot control the rest of the country.
4. **Tell them: We do not have to go anywhere,** not Canada, not 'back' to any place we came from. We also do not have to give in to brutality, police or otherwise, verbal or physical. Ever. We have rights and we **REFUSE TO BE DENIED. WE DEMAND JUSTICE AND EQUALITY. WE WILL KEEP ON FIGHTING. Please relate this to your**

students. Tomorrow and every day must be a day of **empowerment.** **This is not a Peer Resources philosophy, this is an Anti-Racist, anti-sexist, anti-islamophobic & anti-homophobic philosophy. This is a philosophy about upliftment, hope and justice.**

5. **DO NOT:** Tell them that we have LOST and that we have to accept this. We do not have to accept ANYTHING except that we must and will fight for justice against an unjust system and against unjust people. **(messages of empathy and uplifting our students are important).** **Accepting the legal process, and talking about our right to hold our president accountable)**

6. **(HOW TO GAIN ALLIES)** Finally, the vexing question: How to change the minds of so many in America who are so racist, sexist, etc etc., I think the following resources can help shape that discussion. **If you are not interested in the minds of others, especially in middle America, you can focus on the upliftment of ourselves and our own community here at MHS. Come up with a plan. (A simple 5 point plan).**

I hope that you will attempt any or all of this. Reach out to me if you need help.

Lesson plan for 11/9:

My Lesson 1:

1. Welcome
2. Norms
3. How are you feeling today? What are your thoughts, feelings, reactions to Trump's election.
4. Validation (validate students)
5. What are your greatest concerns about the current situation?
6. Create two posters: students will answer the questions with markers:
 - a. **Poster A: "If you could talk to Trump supporters, what would you say/ask?"** (This is prefaced with a conversation about what it means to humanize ourselves. How we will not engage in dehumanizing those who dehumanize us... i.e. profanity etc.,)
 - b. **Poster B: "Things we can do to uplift our community here at Mission High School"** (examples: conduct circles to talk about this issue, or any issues important to students, have an assembly, promote healthy environment through various channels etc., making t-shirts: "make America great for the first time.")
7. Collectively review all the comments that students wrote. Highlight what stands out the most. Students break into 2 groups to work on the issues they care about the most/take action/create a plan.
8. Carry out the plan (this looks different at every school).

RESOURCES for the above Lesson:

1. Michael Moore Documentary/Clip from Trumpland:
http://www.democracynow.org/2016/11/7/michael_moore_if_elected_donald_trump
Some scaffolding needed: key words: 1. Brexit 2. Orwellian 3. Right wing 4. Left wing
2. *Last Week Tonight*, By John Oliver: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rSDUsMwakI>

(Trump's policies @ 6:00, Media propaganda: 11:00min)

3. People disenfranchised and prevented from voting: **Eighty percent of Rikers Prisoners not convicted felons, yet not allowed to vote:**

Journalist Victoria Law breaks down misinformation about voting rights for NYC prisoners.

http://www.democracynow.org/2016/11/7/disenfranchised_by_misinformation_victoria_law_on

Across the country, almost 6 million people are prohibited from voting as a result of state felony disenfranchisement laws. Three-quarters of those now prevented from voting have been released from prison and are living in their communities either under probation, on parole or having completed their sentences. African Americans have been disproportionately impacted by the laws. Florida has the highest number of disenfranchised voters, where nearly one in four black adults cannot vote. Meanwhile, in Vermont and Maine, prisoners can vote from jail. How will this impact Tuesday's election?

4. **White Rage:** Book by Carol Andersen (I have the book, we can make copies of the introduction)

Here is the author being interviewed on Democracy Now:

http://www.democracynow.org/2016/11/1/professor_carol_anderson_on_police_killings

AMY GOODMAN: Your book is called *White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide*.

CAROL ANDERSON: Yes.

AMY GOODMAN: Talk about the white rage that you're witnessing today.

CAROL ANDERSON: That rage covers itself. So, when I talk about white rage, I don't actually mean the Klan and the cross burning, because that's simple. In this society, we know how to identify that. This is the much more subtle, the much more destructive type of racial violence. And it emanates out of Congress, out of the Supreme Court, out of state legislatures. And it's designed to, in fact, undercut black achievement, black aspirations and black advancement.

So we see that, for instance, with—when Trump, at the presidential debate, and they said, "Well, how would you handle issues of racial healing and the racial divide?" and he said, "I've got words that somebody refuses to say, and that's 'law and order,' and that's 'stop and frisk.'" That is a dog whistle. That is—those are policies that, in fact, undermined the

Civil Rights Act of '64 and the Voting Rights Act of '65, has led to mass disenfranchisement, so that you've got almost 8 percent of the black population unable to vote.

5. First Somali American Woman elected in minnesota:

<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2016/11/08/first-us-somali-lawmaker-ilhan-omar-elected-mn-house>

6. Donald Trump sets new tone in election night speech: 'Partnership, not conflict' - Los Angeles Times

<https://apple.news/AjcBN1OFzRWaAki7cZEawqw>

Social Science Department will probably be able to make use of these below more than other courses:

7. BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY, Speech by Malcolm X, I recommend reading it with students: link below

By **any means necessary** is a translation of a phrase used by the French intellectual Jean-Paul Sartre in his play Dirty Hands. It entered the popular civil rights culture through a **speech** given by **Malcolm X** at the Organization of Afro-American Unity Founding Rally on June 28, 1964.

<http://www.blackpast.org/1964-malcolm-x-s-speech-founding-rally-organization-afro-american-unity>

8. The Color line... WEB DUBOIS: <http://www.bartleby.com/114/2.html>

W.E.B. Du Bois said, on the launch of his groundbreaking 1903 treatise *The Souls of Black Folk*, **“for the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line”**—a prescient statement. **Setting out to show to the reader “the strange meaning of being black here in the dawning of the Twentieth Century,” Du Bois explains the meaning of the emancipation, and its effect, and his views on the role of the leaders of his race.**

“THE PROBLEM of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line,—the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea. It was a phase of this problem that caused the Civil War; and however much they who marched South and North in 1861 may have fixed on the technical points of union and local autonomy as a shibboleth, all nevertheless knew, as we know, that the question of Negro slavery was the real cause of the conflict. Curious it was, too, how this deeper question ever forced itself to the surface despite effort and disclaimer. No sooner had Northern armies touched Southern soil than this old question, newly guised, sprang from the earth,—What shall be done with Negroes? Peremptory military commands, this way and that, could not answer the query; the Emancipation Proclamation seemed but to broaden and intensify the difficulties; and the War Amendments made the Negro problems of to-day.”

9. Donald Trump sets new tone in election night speech: 'Partnership, not conflict' - Los Angeles Times

<https://apple.news/AjcBN1OFzRWaAki7cZEawqw>

10. Resources for the Day After the Election from: Teachers for Social Justice (San Francisco):

https://docs.google.com/document/u/1/d/173YRNe1euFhHI36C387s2xYZnZuvuGgAwyyPmh3_gPQ/mobilebasic

My Lesson 2: Trump's 100 Day Plan:

President-Elect Donald J. Trump's 100 Day Plan

Objective:

- Students read and think about what President-Elect Trump has proposed for his first 100 days.
- Students will underline what stands out to them, and what they think will have the most impact in our society and in their lives.
- Students will **devise a plan for action within our school.** So far students have proposed:
 - Empathy Wall (students write uplifting and encouraging thoughts)
 - Support groups/circles with undocumented and targeted students
 - Creating a video to send out our message about the 100 day plan and to Trump supporters (a call for compassion and understanding).

Step 1: Read/Understand

- **Underline** what stands out to you in the 100 day plan
- **Why does it stand out,** what would be the impact of what you underlined
- **Discussion:** ask students to discuss with one another
- **Share:** student will share what they highlighted with the class and discuss why.

Step 2: Read/Think Critically/Check Facts

- Use the fact-checking article and fact-check the points that stood out to you.
- Class discussion about these points
- Go through each point that students chose and talk about what our President-elect will be able to accomplish with his new administration and its impact on U.S. society and on lives of individual students.

Step 3: Action: Uplift School Environment

- Respond: What are your thoughts, what can you do here at school?

- Students continue to brainstorm and come up with ideas to implement here at school

Link to the article from National Public Radio (NPR):

<http://www.npr.org/2016/11/09/501451368/here-is-what-donald-trump-wants-to-do-in-his-first-100-days>

Fact checking link from National Public Radio (NPR):

<http://www.npr.org/2016/11/10/501597652/fact-check-donald-trumps-first-100-days-action-plan>

Key Terms: (will be adding more to this as we read and fact check)

1. **A sanctuary city** is a city in the United States or Canada that adopts local policies designed to not prosecute people solely for being an undocumented individual in the country in which they are currently living. These practices can be by law (de jure) or they can be in fact (de facto).
2. **The North American Free Trade Agreement** (NAFTA; Spanish: Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte, TLCAN; French: Accord de libre-échange nord-américain, ALÉNA) is an agreement signed by [Canada](#), [Mexico](#), and the [United States](#), creating a trilateral [trade bloc](#) in [North America](#). The agreement came into force on January 1, 1994.^[1] It superseded the [Canada–United States Free Trade Agreement](#) between the U.S. and Canada.^[1]
3. **“Drain the Swamp”** refers to draining the water out of a marsh in order to exterminate a population of mosquitoes spreading malaria, which is often used metaphorically in political contexts when promising the removal of undesirable elements from government.
4. **The Keystone Pipeline System** is an [oil pipeline](#) system in Canada and the United States, commissioned in 2010. It runs from the [Western Canadian Sedimentary Basin](#) in [Alberta](#) to refineries in [Illinois](#) and [Texas](#), and also to oil tank farms and an oil pipeline distribution center in [Cushing, Oklahoma](#).^[2] The pipeline came to a greater prominence of attention when a planned fourth phase, Keystone XL, attracting growing environmental protest, became a symbol of the battle over climate change and fossil fuels, and in 2015 was rejected by United States President [Barack Obama](#).

- **Additional Resources:**

- **Illinois Vow to Remain Migrant Sanctuary:**

<http://www.politico.com/states/illinois/story/2016/11/defying-trump-major-cities-vow-to-remain-immigrant-sanctuaries-107313>

- Surge in hate crimes since election day:

<https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2016/11/15/update-more-400-incidents-hateful-harassment-and-intimidation-election>