**Systemic Racism in the School Curriculum and Pedagogy**

**Challenge**  
  
The disparities in the academic performance of Black and Brown children in reading and mathematics in comparison to their white peers indicates that something is amiss with the school curriculum and pedagogy. A closer look at specific subject matter in history and science in elementary and secondary schools, and the literature included in secondary English courses reveals a story of Eurocentric domination and marginalizing of the history, culture, and accomplishments for people of color in the United States. Further examination of the decontextualized, linear, and segmented Eurocentric approaches to teaching early literacy, mathematics, and science reveal biased and exclusionary pedagogical practices. For example, synthetic and systematic phonics, the ultimate of Eurocentric approaches to early literacy, are now identified as “the science of reading.” Some researchers advocating for the science of reading claim that the process for learning to read is universal across all learners, cultures, and languages, including the hard of hearing; and languages codified as alphabetic, logographic (Arabic, Chinese), and syllabic. Children who fail in learning to read using synthetic or systematic phonics are considered learning disabled by many proponents of the science of reading. These biased and exclusionary practices are inconsistent with researched evidence and theories of learning indicating that teaching and learning are culturally derived products of socialization.

**Intervention**

The response to this challenge has been culturally relevant and culturally responsive pedagogy and multicultural education.

**Impact**

The impact has not fully achieved the intended outcome. Many individual teachers and a few elementary and secondary schools, and school districts achieve high academic performance for traditionally underserved students, but most do not.

**References**

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