International School Anti-Discrimination Taskforce (ISADTF)

Humanising Pedagogy Guidance Document

October 2024

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ANTI-DISCRIMINATION TASK FORCE

AIELOC   ecIS   Ecolint   ib International Baccalaureate

Overarching Statement

A humanising pedagogy intentionally emphasises the importance of recognising and respecting each person's humanity, acknowledging the experiences and knowledge we all carry and bring. It promotes awareness and action regarding social justice issues by creating a learning and teaching environment that advocates for individuals to fully realise their potential. It empowers each person, through the knowledge they acquire, to seek positive change in themselves and the world.

Introduction to the Humanising Pedagogy Commitments

"we need a new social contract for education that can repair injustices while transforming the future... This new social contract must be grounded in human rights and based on principles of non-discrimination, social justice, respect for life, human dignity and cultural diversity. It must encompass an ethic of care, reciprocity, and solidarity. It must strengthen education as a public endeavour and a common good."

UNESCO, 2021.

International education is crucial to shaping more just and sustainable futures. To support learning communities with the transformative work needed to determine a new social contract that humanises, decolonises and indigenises international education two sets of research-informed Humanising Pedagogy Commitments are presented here for schools to reflect on and adopt. By providing guidance for both educators and institutions, the Humanising Pedagogy Committee aspires to renew international education to become culturally sustaining spaces where every learner's dignity is upheld and identity can flourish.

While each of the following Educator and Institution-wide Commitments are worthy of individual attention, the power of engaging with both commitments is undeniable. Building educators' skills positively impacts teaching practice and learning, and depends on supportive school systems and structures to inspire collective teacher efficacy. Similarly, the development of institution-wide learning ecosystems that humanise pedagogy highlights the importance of shared school-wide commitments, cultures of accountability and productive systems that support sustainable learning and teaching practices. However, learners only feel the impact of these commitments when educators have the mindsets and skills to pursue these aspirations in their classrooms.

Therefore, the Humanising Pedagogy Committee presents both Educator and Institution-wide Commitments to support holistic transformation that each international school is strongly encouraged to contextualise by:
- establishing one's purpose, renewed mission and commitment to Humanising Pedagogy,
- adopting this guidance to meet the needs of your school's culture and localised context,
- and prioritising one's growth and development in this area by engaging in reflexive practice that asks: Where am I now? Where do I want to go? What are my next steps?

Humanising Pedagogy Educator Commitments

The 7 Humanising Pedagogy Educator Commitments guide teachers to reflect on their practice in a clear progression: building relationships in the classroom, creating inclusive spaces, raising awareness of power dynamics, exploring diverse perspectives, and helping students apply their learning to make a positive difference.

The 7 Educator Commitments

Commitments	A humanising pedagogy means that educators commit to:
Incorporate and value lived experiences	• Incorporating and leveraging the learner´s lived experiences and intersectional identities to support and sustain personal and social transformation.
Challenge dominant paradigms	• Challenging dominant paradigms by introducing multiple perspectives as well as integrating and restoring diverse ways of knowing, understanding, doing and being.
Co-construct learning through reflective and responsive practice	• Empowering students to collaborate in shaping their learning experience.
Promote resilience and embrace unresolved complexities	• Helping students exercise non-closure (recognizing that some problems are beyond foreseeable resolution) and building resilience.
Foster joy and diversity in community	• Fostering joy and wellbeing by building inclusive communities within and beyond the classroom.
Support visionary change through inclusive partnerships	• Igniting visionary change through supportive and inclusive partnerships, both local and global.
Integrate environment and indigenous knowledge for equity	• Using the (natural) environment to support the work and resource learners, by evaluating indigenous knowledge, skills and approaches to decolonise curricula for greater equity, and environmental, social and economic sustainability.

To support educators with putting these commitments into practice, the committee has created a **Humanising Pedagogy: Educator Self-Assessment Tool**. This tool's structure includes the main commitments, sub-commitments, and classroom attributes mirrors this progression, reinforcing the idea that humanising pedagogy starts with personal transformation and relationships and ultimately inspires lasting, positive change.

To that end, engage with the self-assessment tool on a personal level. Use it to consider where you are now and how you can begin to enrich your teaching practice. You may find the following steps helpful in your process:

Self-Assessment
Reflect on each commitment and how every sub-commitment contributes to empowering learners in your classroom. For each sub-commitment, consider the descriptive attribute of a classroom reflecting this commitment. Based on these descriptions, think about where your practice lies on the continuum. Are you just beginning to recognize the importance of this sub-commitment, or are you self-critiquing the ways in which you are using this practice in your classroom?

Collaborative Assessment
To deepen your understanding, consider working with a partner or in a small support group to unpack each commitment. Share examples and perspectives to develop your understanding of each topic and how your practice connects.

Identifying Growth Areas
Use your self-assessment and group discussions to pinpoint specific areas where you'd like to develop further. Working together could help you identify resources in your community to support your growth.

Accessing Research
The document provides a range of academic references and resources. Use these to deepen your understanding of your selected growth areas and to inform your development with evidence-based practices.

Collaborative Growth
Work with a trusted colleague to set concrete goals for growth in a specific domain. Regular check-ins with this colleague can provide mutual feedback, encouragement, and accountability as you continue to refine your practice.

Humanising Pedagogy Institution-wide Commitments

The 7 Humanising Pedagogy Institution-wide Commitments guide schools to examine their organisational structures and systems. They raise awareness on how best to renew learning and teaching by embedding humanising pedagogical leadership into all aspects of schooling.

> *"It is by actively engaging in the dialogue and practice to build a new social contract for education that we can renew education to make just, equitable and sustainable futures possible."*
>
> UNESCO, 2021.

Each commitment is an important cornerstone that supports organisational transformation and when prioritised as a set of institution-wide practices, they have the power to sustain ongoing professional learning and dialogue to continuously enhance a school's service to students.

The 7 Institution-wide Commitments

Commitments	A humanising pedagogy means that institutions commit to:
Foundational Learning	- fostering a professional learning culture that focuses on internalising ideology to shift understandings into sustainable, professional practice - providing ongoing professional learning to build foundational knowledge, concepts and skills that furthers humanising, decolonising, and indigenizing approaches to learning design - providing comprehensive support and differentiated professional learning to humanise pedagogical practices.
Understand Educator Commitments	- unpacking the humanising educator commitments and related continua as a learning community. - articulating what success would look like in one's culture and context, and establish ways to monitor and document growth.
Reflexive Practice	- recognising one's institutional origins and the cultural norms that either sustain or hinder implementation of humanising pedagogical practices. - reflecting critically on socio-political factors that are reflected in school. - conducting self-assessments to make research-informed decisions to promote enhancement of practices. - engaging educators in self-reflection to recognise individual power and positionality that can be leveraged to address marginalisation and foster cultural sustainability.

Shared Community Engagement	● gain governance and leadership buy-in and support to prioritise and resource learning design transformation. ● garner commitment from a critical mass of the learning community to transform learning design
Shared Responsibility	● cultivating shared responsibility and ownership to humanise pedagogy. ● empowering shared leadership to promote inclusive decision making. ● collectively safeguarding the learning community from identity-based harm.
Agency	● create a learning culture that promotes equitable decision-making where agency, voice and ownership is valued. ● include representation of voice/s from all school constituents, eg. students, teachers, families, leadership, board, administrators, support staff, etc., that reflects the school demographic.
Accountability	● upholding personal & collective accountability via strategically planned intentions for humanising pedagogy that results in meaningful action. ● collaborating for whole-school strategy implementation that manages change and elevates teachers' collective capacity to humanise pedagogy. ● implementing accountability systems that support individuals and one's learning institution with upholding their commitments to humanise pedagogy.

To support school leadership and governance with actualising these Institution–wide Commitments, the Humanising Pedagogy Committee has created an **Institution–wide Self-reflection Tool** that brings these commitments to life. Each commitment has been articulated with ***actions*** you can take, guiding ***questions*** for institutional inquiry and ***considerations*** to pay attention to and address so that change processes can be accelerated. An example of a learning story illustrates how each commitment is important through a common scenario of '***what happens'***, the '***so what'*** implications that show the significance of each institution-wide commitment and how taking action on the commitment can support '***now what'*** thinking to bring an institution forward.

These commitments are not meant to be followed in a linear fashion but are part of a recursive, reflective process. Schools are encouraged to revisit these commitments continually to refine their approaches, adapt to changing contexts, and deepen their understanding of humanising pedagogical practices.

You may find the following steps helpful in your process of using the [Institution-wide Self-reflection Tool](#):

Self-Assessment
Consider each commitment and their descriptors and your hunches about how your institution practises these principles. Identify your own power and positionality to influence change and the actions you can take to initiate and make progress in these areas across your community.

Collaborative Assessment
Reflect together on each commitment and their descriptors to empower educator collaboration in your school. For each commitment, think about the reflexive processes (and data gathering) needed for your institution to self-critique the cultural norms that are being upheld in your institution.

Identifying Growth Areas
Use the institution-wide guidance to support planning and collaborative dialogues so that specific areas of growth and development can be pinpointed. Be sure to include and value diverse perspectives to inform decision-making that will serve all members of one's learning community.

Accessing Research
Explore the range of academic references and resources listed under each commitment. Use these as a starting point to deepen your understanding of each area of possible growth to inform decision-making that establishes sustainable systems.

Collaborative Growth
Recognise that all educators are also learners in a school and that every person has leadership capabilities. Subsequently, shared leadership approaches that make transparent reasons for decisions and that bring clarity to the actions educators can take contributes to how agentic we feel towards achieving our communal goal of humanising pedagogy.

Conclusion
To promote anti-discrimination through inclusion, equity and social justice it is essential for schools to use this guidance in combination with guidance from other ISADTF committees. Nurturing all aspects of a school's learning ecosystem will create inclusive cultures for humanising pedagogy to thrive.

Invitation to Share Your Learning Story

Change is challenging, especially when systems of power aim to remain in control. It takes courage to try new methods and navigate the resistance that often accompanies growth in a school environment. Your real-world examples of humanising pedagogy in action can inspire others.

As you reflect on the Institution and Educator Commitments, consider contributing a learning story that addresses one of these areas. You can follow the **What Happened, So What, Now What** framework to guide your reflection:

- **What Happened**: Describe the situation or practice you implemented.
- **So What**: Explain the impact or significance of this practice. How did it affect students or the school environment?
- **Now What**: Reflect on lessons learned and your next steps or adaptations.

When contributing, please maintain the anonymity of students and staff. You can present your insights creatively—through pictures, audio clips, visuals, or other formats that can inspire a diverse group of educators.

By sharing your experience, you help foster a richer, more diverse community of practice, where educators can learn from and support one another.

Visit our **Humanising Pedagogy resources microsite** to learn more about how you can contribute and to access communities of practice.

Glossary

To support learning communities' understanding of key concepts related to humanising pedagogy, the committee has created a **Glossary** to support learning of foundational knowledge. Care was taken to collate key terms, and depending on your learning community's collective efficacy more terms may require explanations. We invite you to submit glossary entries via our **resources microsite**.

Acknowledgement of Contributors

Co-Facilitators:

Angeline Aow   International Educator – Council of International Schools & Berlin International School

Beth Dagitses   Director of Teaching & Learning – AIS Vienna

David García Fernández   DEIJB Lead & Spanish Teacher – American International School of Budapest

Michael Neumann   DEIJ Coordinator – St George's International School, Luxembourg

Nayoung Kim-Weaver   Cultural Wealth and Lifelong Learning Practitioner – AIELOC

Rachael Thrash   CEO – Belong Hub

Raisa Romer   Teacher – Shanghai American School

Rama Ndiaye   Cultural Wealth and Lifelong Learning Practitioner – AIELOC

Committee Contributors:

Alexandra Francesconi   IB PYP Curriculum Manager – IBO

Angad Singh Thethi   Student – ACS Egham International School

Chantal Achraf Sobhy Naguib   Former IB student and Pharmacist

Danielle van Rooyen   Contributor – ADISA

Dzenana Ceman   Educator – Vienna International School

Elizabeth Palathra   Primary School Teacher – Zurich International School

Elizabeth Solomon   IB Teacher – The ISF Academy

Emily Bernstein   Teacher and Researcher – University of Birmingham

Isabelle Pigeard de Gurbert   DP Coordinator – International School Strasbourg

Jacob Huckle   Head of Multilingual Learning – Dulwich College Suzhou

Jaya Sharma   IB Continuum Coordinator – Pathways World School, Gurgaon

Juliana Maria Lazari   IB DP coordinator/ Visual Arts Teacher – Positivo International School

La Mór   Deputy Head of School – Bavarian International School

Maggie Magowan   Homeroom Teacher – United Nations International School of Hanoi

Marina Kalinichev   Secondary Assistant Principal of Academics – Berlin International School

Nicola Holloway   Director and Founder – Leaderbly

Njambi Ikua   Assistant Principal – International School of Geneva

Rachel Cannon   Inclusion & Belonging Coordinator – American International School of Lagos

Réna L. Barlow   Teacher Librarian – International School of Panama

Ruchika Sachdev   PYP Coordinator – Dubai International Academy

Sarah Galea-Hubbard   Curriculum Manager, PYP – International Baccalaureate

Scott Jackson   Head of Campus – International School of Stuttgart, Sindelfingen Campus

Yasmine Aslam-Hashmi   Educator – Independent DEIJ Consultant

Representatives from the ISADTF co-founders:

Fidelis Nthenge   Director of Curriculum Development – International Baccalaureate Organization

Roser Amigó Garcia   Curriculum Manager – International Baccalaureate Organization

References

Freire, P. (1972). Pedagogy of the oppressed.

hooks, b. (2014). Teaching to transgress. Routledge.

HP Webinar Series - Webinars - Learning & Teaching. (n.d.).
https://lt.mandela.ac.za/Humanising-Pedagogy/Humanising-Pedagogy-Webinar-Series-2020-21/HP-Webinar-Series-Webinars

UNESCO, 2021. Reimagining Our Futures Together: A new social contract for education (p.3)

UNESCO, 2021. Reimagining Our Futures Together: A new social contract for education (p.142)

References used to develop the Educator & Institution-wide Commitments can be accessed via the supporting resources

Appendix

Supporting Resources

Sustaining Humanising Pedagogy as a school's leading pedagogical practice requires a multifaceted approach over time. The following resources and tools have been designed by the Humanising Pedagogy Committee to support international schools with putting this guidance, and principles within, into practice:

- ★ **Humanising Pedagogy Microsite**: a central hub for the Humanising Pedagogy commitments and supporting materials.
  https://sites.google.com/view/isadtf/home

- ★ **Humanising Pedagogy: Educator Self-Assessment Tool**
  - ○ PDF version
  - ○ Googledoc version
- ★ **Humanising Pedagogy: Institution-wide Self-Assessment Tool**
  - ○ PDF version
  - ○ CANVA version
- ★ **Glossary**
  - ○ online viewing
  - ○ copy our glossary

International School Implementation & Impact

Evidence your implementation of these commitments through our microsite platform:
- ★ Share Your Learning Story here