Home Visits, Implicit Bias and Education Equity

How does PTHV -- a voluntary program that helps teachers and parents work together for student success -- simultaneously build the cultural capacity of the teachers, families and students involved, break down implicit bias and support equity in education?

A Parent Teacher Home Visit brings the family and the teacher together as colleagues, away from the institutional power of the school. This grassroots effort, started by parents and community organizers, did not begin as a way to close the opportunity gap or end implicit bias in public education. The point was to get families and teachers on the same team so that kids could learn better. However, as the use of our model has successfully spread to hundreds of other school communities in low-income neighborhoods from rural to urban, we’ve learned that implicit bias and other socio-economic dynamics keep well-intentioned people apart, and our program’s success is largely due to how it helps educators and families hurdle these barriers in order to get improved outcomes for students.

Despite the rapidly changing demographics in the US, where the majority of teachers are white and middle class, and the majority of public school students are children of color in low-income neighborhoods, teacher credential programs do not equip educators for the infinite variety of home cultures of their students, nor for the dynamics of race and class that have been proven to result in significant inequity in public education, most notably in discipline and academic achievement. PTHV offers a framework that creates community and school transformation.

On the same team for students
Getting the most important people in a child’s life - family and educators - on the same team seems simple. But unconscious assumptions, in a context of institutional bias, keep well-meaning people apart. Home visits replace assumptions with communication. trust and respect.

Active practice = Transformation
Parent Teacher Home Visits are an ongoing practice in addition to a one-time training. Educators doing home visits reflect upon their assumptions, identify the strengths of the family, and bring new knowledge back to the classroom.

Everyone benefits
Evaluations show multi-directional impacts, such as improved school climate, higher attendance and test scores, increased family leadership, increased capacity and job satisfaction for teachers, and a shift in mindset for both educators and family members.

PTHV Home Visits build empathy and skills in educators, families and students by replacing unconscious bias with relationships, and supporting academic and developmental success for all children. To learn more, please visit www.pthvp.org.