

contactimprovblog.com

Teacher education in CI: What does teacher education have to do with safer dance spaces? (part 1 of 2) - Contact Improvisation Blog

Alexia Buono

29–37 minutes

Hi blog readers! I'm happy to introduce a new writer on my blog, [Alexia Buono](#). Alexia is CI dancer with a PhD in education who specializes in teacher education and dance pedagogy in particular. I invited her to write on my blog to share her perspectives on how teacher education (teaching teachers to teach) can be applied to CI! This is the first of two parts examining these topics. Enjoy!

– Richard

Introduction

At the end of a very long winter in Buffalo, New York, in March 2019, the Buffalo contact improvisation community and I tried something we had never done before: teacher education workshops. We were finally ending our year-and-a-half hiatus¹ and were re-launching the jam! We were shifting how our jam was organized, as well as prioritizing becoming a safer and more inclusive contact community. I facilitated our first-ever teacher education workshops with the belief that teacher education might be a way to create and sustain a culture of inclusivity, informed consent, and equity in Buffalo CI.





Alexia Buono. Photo: Jim Bush.

I've noticed that much conversation in the CI community these days focuses on building consent practices in CI spaces. I see dancers including Nicole Bindler and Sarah Gottlieb addressing that teachers (1) need to be conscious of power dynamics² among dancers and students, and (2) are responsible for supporting consent culture in their communities³. I've noticed that events for sharing ideas on how and why to build consent culture and social justice into CI spaces are only recently budding up.⁴ I have not witnessed the same attention given to implementing justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education in CI as a way to turn these ideas into action. This concerns me, since research indicates that teacher education can decrease injustice and inequity for underrepresented communities⁵ and dancers.

I argue that *justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education* is needed in CI. What do I mean by "justice-oriented"? I think of justice-oriented teacher education as teacher education that (1) helps educators to see injustice in their own practices and in educational systems and (2) empowers them to take action to dismantle systemic oppression in their teaching and communities.⁶

Also, by justice-oriented *pedagogical* teacher education, I mean teacher education that emphasizes pedagogical proficiency (how we teach), instead of focusing on subject-matter knowledge.

In general, many CI teachers don't have the pedagogical knowledge needed to successfully enact consent culture and social justice in our learning and dancing spaces. Some consequences of this that I've personally encountered are having many of my needs unmet as a CI student, experiencing unexpected teaching methods that I didn't consent to, and being inappropriately challenged (or not challenged enough) in CI classes. Justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education would be one way of providing CI teachers the pedagogical knowledge to further consent culture and social justice in CI.

As an educational researcher and teacher educator myself, I have had growing concerns about pedagogy, informed consent, and equity in CI. To actively address my concerns, last year I enacted teacher education workshops in Buffalo. In proposing CI teacher education, I'm *not* trying to create CI teacher certification, which could create an authority system that determines who is allowed to become a CI teacher or could provide an economic barrier to becoming a CI teacher. Rather, I believe community-organized CI teacher education will help teachers be more *inclusive, justice-oriented, and consent-conscious* for current and interested CI students.

In this article, I will *briefly* introduce teacher education and the approach to teacher education that I recommend: ***justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education***. In

the first major section, *Why justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education?*, I will describe why we need to focus on both justice orientation as well as pedagogical proficiency in teacher education and how this approach can foster social justice and informed consent in CI. In the second major section, *What might justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education look like in CI?*, I will discuss how I envision teacher education in CI occurring as community-oriented workshops, based on ideas of education scholar Christopher Emdin. Finally, I will share who I am to make these suggestions (*Who am I to suggest teacher education in CI?*), and how I base these suggestions on the workshops I facilitated in Buffalo (*What we tried in Buffalo*). A second article will describe the practical example of the teacher training project that occurred in Buffalo.

Let's start off with a *brief* introduction of what teacher education even is!

...

Why justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education?

What is teacher education?⁷

Here is a basic definition of teacher education: *The intentionally designed practices and procedures for teachers to gain "the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively."*⁸ Such tasks include improving students' learning and meeting students' needs. Teacher education is a continuous, ongoing process.

Teacher education often refers to teacher preparation programs in postsecondary education (universities and colleges). The term can also include teacher training in the form of professional consulting, peer-mentoring/coaching, or professional development workshops.

Educational scholar Linda Darling-Hammond writes that teacher education is a rigorous journey of investigating pathways for becoming a teacher, exploring teaching methods, and studying the effects of one's teaching on students.⁹

However, teacher education is *steeped* within a foundation of white supremacy,¹⁰ capitalism, neoliberalism, patriarchy, and other systems of oppression. Many, if not most teacher education programs, do not explicate, and therefore do not disrupt these systems and the bias, prejudice, and discrimination that go along with them.¹¹ I and educational scholars like Davena Jackson assert that being explicitly critically conscious¹² is necessary for justice-oriented teacher education.¹³

The need for justice-oriented teacher education

There's a lot we teachers of CI can learn from teacher education, but as mentioned before, teacher education has its own challenges. We in CI need to make *informed decisions* about what we adopt from the existing systems of teacher education so that we don't perpetuate those problems in CI!

In the U.S., teacher education programs fail to prioritize dismantling and

revolutionizing the existing system of education. Primarily, teacher education programs focus on methods courses (e.g., math, science, social studies methods) and practicum courses (e.g., student teaching), which prepare teachers to teach within the existing system, instead of justice-centered courses that might challenge the system. There are also “foundations” courses, which teach the history and philosophy of education by centering predominantly white men, instead of the women and people of color who have played a significant role in developing education. And many, if not most teacher education programs, have *maybe* one “diversity” course, that itself often perpetuates a “damage-centered” perspective¹⁴, rather than examining institutions and systems of oppression. As Robin DiAngelo writes “I can get through a teacher-education program without ever discussing racism.”¹⁵

This situation is not exclusive to the field of PreK-12 teacher education; it is also found within dance education.

Dance education scholar Crystal Davis writes about five ways that teaching (in teacher education and in classrooms) can promote systems of oppression in dance:

1. Language and terminology that stem from Whiteness
2. Constructing curriculum with white supremacist foundations
3. Adherence to White/Eurocentric pedagogies
4. Student evaluation based on hierarchy
5. Vertical and oppressive power dynamics among administrators and educators¹⁶

Davis writes that “white pedagogy” is seen as the norm in dance, without ever being named as “white,” and is not an inclusive or equitable teaching method. She cites dance cultural historian Brenda Dixon Gottschild who explains that white pedagogy in dance looks like the following:

...the students stand in lines facing the teacher; the teacher demonstrates; the student copies. Steps are broken down into small chunks and explained; the teacher corrects; the student emulates and incorporates...¹⁷

I do *not* want to enact and perpetuate in CI this kind of teacher education and teaching, an approach innately steeped in white supremacy and damage-centered perspectives! If our goals in CI are to build consent culture and social justice in our communities, then we need conscious, critical approaches to teacher education that *explicitly* center justice—that is, we need justice-oriented teacher education! Justice-oriented teacher education in CI is one way to empower teachers to disrupt patterns of systemic oppression in dance. This approach to teacher education can provide CI teachers with tools to design justice-oriented practices and procedures that can better meet diverse students’ needs. This could lead to CI spaces that are more equitable and inclusive for dancers.¹⁸

In order to create justice-oriented teacher education, I believe that teacher education also needs to focus on pedagogical proficiency.

The need for pedagogical proficiency in justice-oriented teacher education

I believe that building pedagogical proficiency is necessary to justice-oriented teacher education. Pedagogical proficiency is the “knowledge of learning, teaching methods, and curriculum.”¹⁹ Pedagogical proficiency is *how* to teach content in a responsive way to students’ needs. Scholar Darling-Hammond’s research finds that pedagogical proficiency has a bigger positive influence on students’ learning than a teacher’s subject-matter knowledge alone.²⁰

I notice that many CI teachers do not have the in-depth understanding of learning, curriculum building, and pedagogical proficiency that Darling-Hammond espouses. I’ve noticed this when I’ve talked with CI dancers and when I facilitated the teacher education workshops in Buffalo. I believe that if CI teachers have access to the tools of pedagogical proficiency (applied with a justice orientation), they can provide appropriate, safer, rigorous classes and dance spaces for diverse students, rather than simply teaching to a homogenous group.

Without critical *pedagogical* investigations that are justice-oriented, CI teachers may be perpetuating unintentional marginalization of some students’ learning interests, needs, and bodies (e.g., BIPOC/Mixed²¹, LGBTQ+²², neurodivergent²³, disabled, lower socio-economic status, etc.). If a teacher isn’t examining why they teach particular warm-up or “technique” structures, they may unintentionally make a student feel unseen or marginalize their identity and/or culture (and therefore, induce harm).

For example, there are situations where teachers can unknowingly cause harm to people living with an invisible disability²⁴. As a hypothetical, a teacher presenting a stamina-building exercise, such as continuously practicing crescent rolls across the floor, might say things like “I get upset when I see students sitting out of an activity, so push yourself to keep going.” This directive doesn’t consider the diverse experiences that students might have with stamina and fatigue, including invisible conditions such as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, asthma, or anemia. For someone with these conditions, continuous stamina exercises can lead to fatigue or worse. The teacher’s statement could set up someone with these invisible disabilities to fail to please or appease the teacher, and encourage shame or a harmful perspective of “laziness.” This teaching approach isn’t inclusive and induces harm. If we provide justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education, we can reduce the risk of that harm, as well as reduce the burden of marginalized folx to educate the teacher and fellow students.

Bernadette Castillo (a justice-oriented educational scholar), calls for teacher education to foster critical consciousness on systemic issues *while it also* develops teachers’ pedagogical proficiency and critical inquiry.²⁵ With a rigorous teacher education that is justice-oriented and focused on pedagogy, CI teachers can be better informed to meet the diverse interests and needs of their students, especially those whose needs are currently marginalized and/or underrepresented. We need CI teachers with informed and diverse approaches *that work* for students and dancers of contact improvisation!

How justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education helps CI

I have three major hopes about what can happen in CI if we implement justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education.

One: Students feel less marginalized and safer. Why? Because when teachers are critically conscious about pedagogy, they become more sensitive and responsive to the different types of students they serve and the systemic issues that intersect with those needs. Presumably, more groups would feel more included in CI, would feel increased agency to speak up, and would be given more consistent opportunities to give informed consent (for instance, through intentional check-ins).

Two: Students have better learning experiences generally. Why? Because when teachers gain pedagogical proficiency, they can serve their students better. They can enact appropriate teaching methods, build appropriate lesson plans, and build an inclusive and equitable curriculum.

Three: A broader cultural shift happens in CI. Why? Because the tools from justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education can lead towards a proactive cultural orientation towards consent and equity in CI. Teachers will develop pedagogical skills that aid their understanding of boundaries; they can then model respect for a student's boundaries. Teachers will design learning activities where everyone's integrity is upheld, and can lessen the risks of saying yes and no. If teachers overstep a student's boundary, they will know how to listen when receiving feedback. Teachers will take students' needs more seriously when they know how to preemptively ask about a community's history and needs. Accidents and mistakes will still happen. However a proactive culture of consent and equity maintained by educated teachers will provide space for apologies and accountability to repair the hurt right away, which then prevents harm—oppression, marginalization, transgressions.

What might justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education look like in CI?

I am not aware of any justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education that has occurred in CI. I have ideas about what it could look like based on how I implemented the Buffalo workshops, detailed further below. For starters, I suggest we follow the ideas of educational reform scholar Christopher Emdin regarding how to approach justice-oriented pedagogical proficiency for CI teachers.

A model for justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education

First, Emdin suggests that we support teachers to critically reflect upon, through rigorous investigations, three major aspects of their teaching:

1. Their own pedagogical practices (**how** are they teaching),
2. The individual and societal beliefs that underlie those practices (**why** are they teaching this way), and
3. The consequences of those teaching practices on their students (**how are** students being affected by my teaching)^{[26](#)}

For example, we might encourage CI teachers to examine how they organize their classes²⁷:

- What were their learning goals for the dancers?
- What teaching methods did they use to help students reach those goals, and why? What learning activities did they facilitate to reach those goals, and why?
- How did the dancers consent to those goals? How did they respond to the learning activities and how they were taught?

Here is how I could design and critically examine a class on breath support:

- I could name specific goals I have going into the class to help frame my teaching methods. One goal could be “each dancer will be aware of how they are breathing in a duet.” This goal would be informed by the knowledge and dialogue I would’ve shared with my community of dancers prior to class, to make this consensual and relevant.
- I would inwardly reflect upon my beliefs about breath support, and why I chose to design this learning goal from my dialogue with the dancers. For me, breath is a foundational pattern of total body connectivity.²⁸ I hold an awareness that self care and meditation are becoming popular buzzwords in society, which could make this learning goal of breath support be more accessible for my dancers due to cultural trends.
- I could identify that a somatic teaching approach would be appropriate to model and guide dancers to inwardly connect with their experience of breath. I could identify that beginning in solo practices followed by duets would be an appropriate learning sequence to prepare dancers to be aware of their breath when with a partner.
- I’d intentionally reflect during class by witnessing how the dancers responded to my pedagogy within the learning activity. Through reflection, I’d learn how effective my somatic approach was at guiding the dancers into and through the solo breath practices.
- By witnessing and communicating with the dancers during and after class, I’d learn about their personal experience of the solo and duet breath awareness exercise.
- My assessment of their reaching the stated goal of breath awareness in a duet would be informed by my teacher reflection and personal communication.
- This reflection, centered on the dancers’ experiences, the impact of my teaching, and societal beliefs, would affect my future planning. It would inform how I could better address the stated learning goals and experiences of my students with more informed consent and equity through more relevant pedagogy and learning activities.

In addition, Emdin advocates that teachers center the experiences and perceptions of their students *rather than* the content a teacher is intending to teach. I know there are CI teachers who already do this in their teaching (I have personally experienced it). But we could get more CI teachers on board and better informed about *how* to do this. When we teach CI teachers in our teacher education *how* to

center the needs and experiences of students, and *how* to directly respond to those needs, teachers can empower students/dancers *because students can trust that teachers are hearing them*. And by empowering students and demonstrating respect for their needs and boundaries rather telling them what they need, teachers help develop a collective culture of consent.

I have seen that CI teachers rarely access resources such as Emdin's ideas from the field of teacher education. We don't need to reinvent the wheel of teacher education. When I suggest teacher education for CI teachers, I encourage us to use these resources and to find approaches that best fit our form. CI has helped to expand definitions of "dance," and CI can also help to expand definitions of "education."

My proposal for justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education in CI

I propose that justice-oriented pedagogical teacher education in CI must emphasize pedagogical proficiency building. To me, it seems like many CI teachers know what to teach (i.e., subject-matter knowledge), however they don't know *how* to teach it effectively for a diverse range of dancers, and many haven't been supported enough to do so.²⁹ Let's build teacher education in CI that can equitably meet the diverse needs of students, dancers, and the CI community generally (local and global).

Here is what this could look like in CI:

- I envision CI teacher education as community-oriented workshops, where CI teachers first clarify (a) who they are as teachers and (b) how their teacher identity is in relationship *with* their community.
- I envision collaborative workshops where teachers receive guided support and practice composing CI curricula and lesson plans with their local and global CI communities in mind.
- I envision training and constructive feedback on the implementation of those lesson plans and teacher reflections that are guided by educational specialists who are also members of the CI community. I see these educational specialists as CI teachers whom a diverse cross-section of a community trusts *and* who also hold extensive training and education in learning and instruction. These folk may be hard to find right now, given the current norms of teaching in CI. However, by intentionally seeking them out and adequately compensating them, we can encourage the specialists who are in our midst to fill these roles. As more CI teachers participate in these workshops, we will grow more educational specialists over time.
- I envision that such educational specialists will provide CI teachers with relevant literature (books and articles) and other media (videos, podcasts, etc.) that would appropriately supplement their practical development in workshops and pedagogical training.

It is imperative that the teacher education itself is as inclusive, equitable, consent conscious, and justice oriented as the culture we are striving to build in CI generally. *The teachers are the students in teacher education.*

My proposal is *one* way of many for envisioning CI teacher education. The ideas presented here are based on my experiences facilitating such workshops and training with my local CI community in Buffalo, New York.

. . .

To conclude this article, I will share a bit about myself and introduce the teacher education workshops I facilitated in Buffalo.

Who am I to suggest teacher education in CI?

To position myself, I am a US born, white Italian, Puerto Rican, Mexican woman with Indigenous, colonial-settler, and erased ancestries. I grew up on the lands of the Haudenosaunee people, and am currently living as an uninvited guest on the unceded land of the Abenaki people. I experience unearned privileges and oppressions as a cis, abled, white, and Latina scholar, educator, and dancer. I am committed to interrogating my positionality to better understand the impact of my work as an educator, and to enact antiracist and decolonizing practices in my teaching. I am invested in redistributing power and equitable access of my privileges back to my communities. I participate in three antiracist coalitions that are committed to restorative and transformational change in higher education, dance education, and CI.

My introduction to CI began in my local hometown of Buffalo. I took my first CI class and jam in Buffalo while I was completing my Master's degree. I now hold a PhD in curriculum, instruction, and the science of learning with a research emphasis on pedagogy, and I teach early/elementary education and dance education in higher education. Basically, I teach teachers.

I teach to bring about educational transformation. I work towards empowering critically informed educators whom students trust because they feel seen and safe enough. I hope to build communities that are equitable and just. This, a portion of my teaching philosophy, informed how I designed and implemented teacher workshops in Buffalo as the jam was re-launching after a hiatus of about 1.5 years.

What we tried in Buffalo

I offered to facilitate the Buffalo CI community's first ever teacher training workshops in hopes of generating critically-informed and curious teachers upon our jam's "re-launch." We were rebuilding our jam after experiencing challenges within our community, such as predatory behaviors and a lack of consistent participation. We were attempting to build a jam that was safer, more inclusive, and sustainable.

Very few of our teachers had had previous teacher training that focused on pedagogical proficiency or justice orientation. With this knowledge of my community, I facilitated teacher workshops which led the teachers to develop a collective curriculum and individual lesson plans, which they later received feedback on from me as their teacher consultant.

In an [article to follow](#), I will describe in detail how I facilitated these workshops and the consequences for the Buffalo jam. This was my attempt at implementing practices and procedures that I hoped would help my community better integrate

consent building and social justice into its culture. ...Stay tuned.

Appendix

Here are some questions that I composed, based off the suggestions of Christopher Emdin's work, which I believe are pertinent first steps for CI teachers to investigate in teacher education:

- What are my interests, needs, beliefs, and practices as a CI teacher?
- What are my community members' interests and needs?
- (How) am I willing and able to meet the needs and interests of my community members as a teacher?
- (How) do my teaching practices and beliefs relate to my community's interests and needs?
- How can I/we build classes/curricula to better meet those interests and needs?
- What are the interests and needs of those community members who do *not* participate often, who are underrepresented, and/or who are leaving or missing from my community?
- (How) am I willing and able to meet those interests and needs in my pedagogy as a teacher

[Alexia Buono](#), PhD, is a dancer, teacher, and teacher educator, currently based in Vermont. She continues writing about these issues in part 2, Teacher education in CI: Experimenting with teacher education in Buffalo. If you have feedback or comments, please feel free to share below. Also, if you'd like to contact Alexia to discuss further or to hire her for consulting, you can reach out to her at <https://www.alexiabuono.com/>.

Footnotes

1. The Buffalo jam went on a pause from Winter 2017 to Fall 2019.
2. Nicole Bindler, *Beyond sex: Consent as liberation with Nicole Bindler* (Apr. 10, 2020), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IAbG_4l6J0Y.
3. Sarah Gottlieb, "[A Helpful Supplement to Myth #6: 'It's just not my thing' — addressing facilitator doubts \(Part 2 of 2\)](#)" > "[Who am I to say what's right or wrong?](#)"
4. Earthdance hosted its first [Consent Culture in Contact Improvisation Symposium](#) in April 2020.
5. Linda Darling-Hammond, *How teacher education matters*, Journal of Teacher Education, vol. 51, issue 3, 166–173 (2000), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487100051003002>.
6. I've defined justice-oriented teacher education this way by applying education researchers Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne's definition of a "justice-oriented person" to teacher education. Westheimer & Kahne define a justice-oriented person

as one who prioritizes addressing injustice by pursuing social justice. A justice-oriented person critically analyzes the structural and systemic nature of social issues (social, political, and economic). To address the roots of oppression and injustice, a justice-oriented person takes collective action with(in) their community. Joel Westheimer & Joseph Kahne, *What kind of citizen? The politics of educating for democracy*, American Educational Research Journal, vol. 41, no. 2, 237–269 (2004).

7. This information is positioned within the U.S. educational context, though it may hold relevance for educational contexts outside the U.S.
8. Definition retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teacher_education.
9. Darling-Hammond (2000).
10. Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility*, p. 8 (2018).
11. Crystal U. Davis, *Laying New Ground: Uprooting White Privilege and Planting Seeds of Equity and Inclusivity*, Journal of Dance Education, vol. 18, issue 3, 120–125 (Sept. 10, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2018.1481965>.
12. In his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire defines critical consciousness as ‘learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality.’” P. 17 (1970).
13. Davena Y. Jackson, Engaging in Critical Self-Reflection in the Teacher Education Classroom, paper presented at Thinking Beyond Damage-Centered Teaching: Enacting a Humanizing Pedagogy in Teacher Education, symposium conducted at the annual meeting of the American Education Research Association (April 4, 2019), https://convention2.allacademic.com/one/aera/aera19/index.php?cmd=Online+Program+View+Paper&selected_paper_id=1434445.
14. A damage-centered perspective is the intentional or unintentional way a teacher centers what marginalized communities are lacking, rather than centering the institutions and systems of oppression that put them there. Based on the work of: Dorina J. Carter Andrews, Tashal Brown, Bernadette M. Castillo, Davena Jackson, & Vivek Vellanki, *Beyond Damage-Centered Teacher Education: Humanizing Pedagogy for Teacher Educators and Preservice Teachers*, Teachers College Record, vol. 121, no. 6, pp. 1–28 (2019), <https://www.tcrecord.org/content.asp?contentid=22737>.
15. Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility*, p.8 (2018).
16. Davis (2018).
17. Brenda Dixon Gottschild, *The Black Dancing Body: A Geography from Coon to Cool* (2003).
18. See Davis (2018).
19. Darling-Hammond, p. 167 (2000).
20. Darling-Hammond, p. 167 (2000).
21. Black, Indigenous, Person of Color

22. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and other related groups. <https://ok2bme.ca/resources/kids-teens/what-does-lgbtq-mean/>.
23. Folx whose brains function differently from what is neurologically typical (e.g., autism, ADHD). <https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/building-on-strengths/neurodiversity-what-you-need-to-know>.
24. The Invisible Disability Association defines an invisible disability as “a physical, mental or neurological condition that is not visible from the outside, yet can limit or challenge a person’s movements, senses, or activities.” <https://invisibledisabilities.org/what-is-an-invisible-disability/>.
25. Bernadette Castillo, Enactment of Radical Honesty in the Teacher Education Classroom, paper presented at Thinking Beyond Damage-Centered Teaching: Enacting a Humanizing Pedagogy in Teacher Education, symposium conducted at the annual meeting of the American Education Research Association (April 4, 2019), https://convention2.allacademic.com/one/aera/aera19/index.php?cmd=Online+Program+View+Paper&selected_paper_id=1434444.
26. Christopher Emdin investigates and speaks on transformative, reality-based pedagogies as a way to reform how teachers relate to students. [Here is one of his TEDxTalks](#) on the importance for teachers to understand the consequences their reaching has on the lives of students.
27. In the Appendix, I composed a list of questions for CI teachers to investigate based on Emdin’s work. Many of these questions involve interdependent relationships among a teacher, students, and the community.
28. Peggy Hackney, *Making connections: Total body integration through Bartenieff Fundamentals* (2002).
29. The culture of the U.S. doesn’t provide adequate support to teachers in any genre or setting of education. For example, in K-12 schools in the U.S., there is a long-term national teacher shortage and a high teacher turnover rate (teachers leaving the schools and the profession). About two-thirds of teachers leave the profession for reasons other than retirement in the U.S., including a lack of support. See Desiree Carver-Thomas & Linda Darling-Hammond, *Teacher Turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it* (August 2017), https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Teacher_Turnover_REPORT.pdf.