

Project Title: Improving gender equity in Colorado schools

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Proposed activities

This project proposes a collaboration with students and educators in Colorado school districts to promote education and student-designed projects to improve gender equity in secondary schools. This will further disseminate the knowledge and expertise developed by Dr. Elizabeth J. Meyer on Title IX and gender equity in K-12 schools (Meyer, 2009; Meyer, 2020; Meyer & Quantz, 2021; Meyer, Quantz, et al., 2022; Meyer, Regan, et al., 2022; Meyer et al., 2018). Building on existing relationships with rural and front range school districts, Dr. Meyer and a graduate research assistant will develop and facilitate a series of workshops during the 2023-24 school year.

There are three elements to this project: a) launch workshops, b) monthly meetings with lead educators, and c) follow-up workshops. The first series of workshops will take place in-person early in 2024 (January and February). Workshops will include interactive presentations for students and educators on Title IX's history and goals to reduce sex discrimination in educational institutions. These workshops will also facilitate discussions with students to identify projects to improve the climate in their school community. Each school will have 1-2 lead educators who will advise and support the project ideas generated during the launch workshops. Dr. Meyer and the GRA will support the lead educators via monthly meetings on Zoom. The third component of this project will be follow-up workshops that will reflect upon the work started in the fall and add relevant information and research support to each specific project based on Title IX case law, guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, and research on best practices related to the chosen topic.

The workshops with students will happen during class time and/or extra-curricular club meetings. Depending on the preference of the district these workshops could happen during health, literacy, or social studies class, and/or in an extra-curricular club meeting. Many schools have student clubs in place that are addressing issues of social justice and equity. The lead educators identified for each school must attend at least one of the sessions offered to the students and commit to participating in the monthly educator meetings.

Dr. Meyer has existing relationships with several school districts on the Western Slope as well as the Front Range. This project is designed to provide technical support and education related to issues that have been identified as priorities by leaders (Superintendents, School Board Presidents, Title IX Coordinators) in these districts. These workshops will directly impact approximately 60-100 students and 3-6 educators in each of the four school districts. This means approximately 400 students and 24 educators will directly participate in this project. The potential impact of the project's outcomes is much greater, as it is designed to support student-led, sustainable projects that will improve the climate and experiences of all students, professionals, and their families in these school districts.

PTSP Council questions (May 2023 update)

Impact

The impacts of this project will be to improve gender equity in Colorado schools and will be focused on four areas: 1) student education in the launch and follow-up workshops (20-100 students per school x 6 schools = 120-600 students), 2) direct professional learning for teachers in the workshops and monthly meetings (6 educators), 3) impacts on the whole school community as a result of the action project led by the teachers with a subgroup of students (6 middle and high schools across Colorado) and 4) impacts on the climate of each school district (3 districts across Colorado).

The focus of the workshops will be on discussing content related to: sexual harassment, athletics participation, equitable access to sex-segregated facilities, consent and healthy relationships, and/or LGBTQ student protections. The specific content will be tailored to the age and course selected by the school and lead teacher and can be adapted to: English, Social Studies, Health, Physical Education, or sports teams and clubs (Gender and Sexuality Alliance, Feminism Club, sports teams, etc.)

Geographical Scope

The proposed partners in this project include four middle and high schools in one large front-range district: Boulder Valley School District; and two small districts on the Western Slope. Possible districts include: Durango, Ouray, Ridgway, Roaring Fork, or Summit School Districts. The rural districts will be selected once funding has been secured and interested lead teachers identified and approved following district partnership protocols.

Reasons to fund a Graduate Assistant

The budget for this project includes a .25 Graduate Assistant for four main reasons. First, I want to provide mentoring and relationship building opportunities for my graduate students. These experiences are an essential part of graduate education and this project will help support a first year PhD student learn more about collaborating with teachers and students in Colorado schools. Second, I want to ensure this project is culturally responsive and includes the voices, ideas, and experiences of bilingual students, immigrant students, and students of color. My graduate student is a bilingual, first generation, Latina woman who will help ensure this project's activities better connect with bilingual, first generation, and students of color in Colorado schools. Third, this Graduate Assistant has extensive experience working outside of K-12 contexts and needs to learn more about working in and with K-12 schools. Supporting the design and delivery of these workshops as well as the monthly meetings with educators will help her develop these skills. Finally, as ambassadors for the CU system, I believe it is important to highlight the diversity of our students and faculty as well as the kinds of experiences we offer to students in our programs. By connecting with Colorado schools as a team comprised of a faculty member and a graduate student we model and demonstrate our commitment to providing rich learning experiences beyond the classroom and across the state.

Final Budget

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| Salaries | |
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| GRA 25%, 4.5 months (including benefits & tuition) | \$11,000.00 |
| <i>PI summer salary removed</i> | |
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| Travel | |
| Rural district 1 (2 nights hotel, mileage, & per diem for 2 people) x2 | \$2,000.00 |
| Rural district 2 (2 nights hotel, mileage, & per diem for 2 people) x2 | \$2,000.00 |
| Front Range district school 1 (mileage) x2 | \$50.00 |
| Front Range district school 2 (mileage) x2 | \$50.00 |
| Front Range district school 3 (mileage) x2 | \$50.00 |
| Front Range district school 4 (mileage) x2 | \$50.00 |
| Workshop materials (books, office supplies, classroom materials) | \$500.00 |
| Lead Educator Stipends (6 x \$500) | \$3,000.00 |
| TOTAL | \$18,700.00 |

References

- Meyer, E. J. (2009). *Gender, bullying, and harassment: Strategies to end sexism and homophobia in schools*. Teachers College Press.
- Meyer, E. J. (2020). Gender and Bullying. In C. Mayo (Ed.), *Oxford Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality in Education*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Meyer, E. J., & Quantz, M. (2021). Who is (not) protected by Title IX? A critical review of 45 years of research. *Teachers College Record*, 123(2), -. <https://www.tcrecord.org> ID Number: 23585
- Meyer, E. J., Quantz, M., & Regan, P. (2022). Race as the Starting Place: Equity Directors Addressing Gender and Sexual Diversity in k-12 schools. *Sex Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2022.2068145>
- Meyer, E. J., Regan, P. V., & Jenkins, K. (2022). Transgender at school: Teaching, learning and socialization. In M. Mangin & M. I. Suarez (Eds.), *Trans Studies in K-12 Education: Creating an Agenda for Research and Practice*. Harvard University Press.
- Meyer, E. J., Somoza-Norton, A., Lovgren, N., Rubin, A., & Quantz, M. (2018). Title IX Coordinators as Street-Level Bureaucrats in U.S. Schools: Challenges Addressing Sex Discrimination in the #MeToo Era. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 26(68), 1-28.