Evaluations  Regularly evaluate and assess teachers, staff, administrators based on criteria related to their knowledge of and understanding about the issues surrounding students from poverty, and their ability to work with these students.

Field Trips  Increase student’s exposure to possibilities by taking them on field trips, bring in outside speakers, and providing other experiential learning opportunities. Ensure opportunities for extracurricular activities at no cost.

Generational Poverty  Broaden the definitions of “multicultural” and “cultural competency” to include generational poverty or social class. This can be called, “socio-cultural” competency to encompass socio-economic factors affecting the educational process.

High Clear Expectations  Expect all kids to learn. Students from generational poverty report an overwhelming sense that teachers do not believe in them. Make sure this can’t be said of your school or your teachers.

Involvement  Create family involvement by focusing on common ground (i.e. we love your child, you love your child, what can you tell us about your child, here’s what we

educators have learned about your child, etc.). When the focus is on education, parents may have little or no positive experiences to connect and relate with educators.

Judgment and Assumptions  Suspend judgment and assumptions about families to promote educational success.

Know the Students  Ensure low teacher, staff, and administrator turnover to allow for relationship development. As much as possible, use staff or administrators who “KNOW” the students as substitutes to avoid interrupting their learning.

Literacy  Employ literacy approaches that include understanding of Oral Culture. They will be most effective with students from poverty. Oral culture is linked to poverty across race lines. People in poverty get their primary information from other people, not books. This shapes how they think and trains the brain to operate in very special ways.

Motivation  Recognize that motivation differs between social classes. Motivation to achieve in education is generally based on the assumption that there is a “value” in education. Most people living in poverty have never had a meaningful relationship with someone who has benefited from the educational system. But that relationship for one of your students and share with them the value that education has given you and that can be available to them.
**Novelty**  Include entertainment in your curriculum and activities. Entertainment is often used as a way to escape the harsh world of poverty. Novelty should be part of the entertainment. Include unusual, touchable materials, such as toothpicks, marshmallows, and play dough to increase focus and interest.

**Open Doors of Opportunity**  Create successful mentor programs by encouraging mentors to use their network and social capital to open doors of opportunity for their students and to help the students create their own network of support.

**Professional Development**  Include knowledge and best practices on educating students from generational poverty in your professional development activities. Provide immersion opportunities such as home visits.

**Quality Student-to-Student Relationships**  Create opportunities in the classroom for the development of student-to-student relationships to build better understanding of the experiences of the different social classes.

**Relationships**  Change the lives for students from generational poverty by building caring, nurturing relationships with them. Learn to be bi-cultural; meaning that you are comfortable maneuvering middle-class systems.

**School Culture and Climate**  Develop a school culture/climate in which learning can occur with the principal playing the key leadership role and modeling socio-culturally competent behavior.

**Teaching and Communication Styles**  Provide a variety of teaching and communication styles including concrete, experiential, and oral culture styles.

**Understanding**  Create the expectations that all staff, administrators, and teachers have an understanding of the structural causes of poverty, an understanding of what the experiences of generational poverty area like, knowledge of current best practices for educating across generational poverty barriers, and zero tolerance for low expectations and judgments of students living in poverty.

**Vision**  Create a shared vision with students from generational poverty about what education can mean.

**Wider Community**  Include the wider community in efforts to educate students from generational poverty. School staff, teachers and administrators need “full resource backpacks.”

**eXamine and Define Poverty**  Discuss poverty openly in the school and in the classroom to reduce class/status issues between students. Educational efforts to raise consciousness about race issues can serve as a model for increasing awareness about poverty related barriers in the educational environment.

**Youth Matters**  Do everything you can to keep class size low and be able to focus on the young people in the classroom. Assign specialty teachers to the classrooms, bring in community help, use administrator expertise, Title I funds, etc. Be creative.

**Zero Gaps**  Ensure smooth transitions between assignments, classes, and grades. Maintain as many connections as possible and link students to new mentors who can help them in their new endeavor.
I find myself more late with every crisis
more angry with every injustice
more greedy with every deprivation
more rude with every judgement
more negative with every untreated illness
more unstable with every insecurity
I find myself more civil with every bite
more respectful with every kindness
more hopeful with every chance
more grateful with every opportunity
more ready to learn when I am safe
more motivated when there is hope
more happy when I am valued

I find myself like 37 million people in poverty
responding in very human ways to my environment.

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