

Viewpoints

Making Book Fairs Accessible to All Students



In transforming the traditional book fair into a more inclusive and equitable “True Book Fair,” educators like Julia Stivers are redefining how schools foster literacy and community engagement. By ensuring every student, regardless of economic background, leaves with a free book, these events not only promote reading but also dismantle barriers that can marginalize economically disadvantaged families. Such initiatives resonate deeply with the principles of equity in education, recognizing that access to books shouldn’t depend on financial means.

This shift isn’t just about charity; it’s about reframing the educational experience to nurture a love for reading among all students. As Susan Neuman emphasizes, access alone isn’t enough; genuine engagement with books requires personal connection and community support. By creating environments where every child can build their own home library, educators are empowering students and fostering a lifelong appreciation for learning. Moving forward, the challenge lies in expanding these models nationwide, ensuring that every



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school can provide such enriching experiences that truly benefit all students, regardless of economic circumstances.

You can read the full article at:

Gorski—who is the founder of Equity Literacy Institute, an organization that provides professional development and training around equity—said in researching his book on erasing the opportunity gap, he held focus groups of students and families to learn what everyday things at school may unintentionally humiliate low-income students and their families. For elementary parents, it was book fairs.

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