

## CDF Freedom Schools® Annotated Bibliography

The *CDF Freedom Schools* program has impacted the lives of thousands of scholars and educators around the country. Our work has been studied by countless scholars interested in child development and education policy. This research guide lists some scholarly publications that have engaged with our program. The literature is thematically divided into the following themes: History, Reading and Literacy, Social Justice, Student Development and Teaching Practice.

### History

Agosto, V. (2008). Intertexturealities: The Poetics of the Freedom Schools. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 77(2), 168-179. Retrieved September 30, 2020, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25608679>

This article looks at how students in 1964 Freedom Schools drove the program's curriculum. According to the author, students used poetry, which was not formally in the curriculum, to showcase the intersections between their experiences and the Freedom Schools project.

Chilcoat, G.W. & Ligon, J.A. (1994) Developing Democratic Citizens: The Mississippi Freedom Schools as a Model for Social Studies Instruction. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, vol 22(2), 128-175. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.1994.10505719>

This article expands on the history of the Mississippi Freedom Schools and their inner workings. The author looked at how 5 schools implemented their curriculum and used this history as a useful model for current instruction, especially as it relates to goals, curriculum, pedagogy, evaluation and classroom management.

Clemons, K. M. (2014). I've got to do something for my people: Black women teachers of the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools. *The Western Journal of Black Studies*, 38(3), 141-154.

This article revisits the life stories of two teachers who participated in the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools movement. Using a qualitative approach that reserves space for narrative inquiry, the author studies the subjects' teaching experiences, specifically as it relates to anger, fear, pride, community involvement, activist education, and collective memory.

Emery, K. (2007). The Lessons of Freedom Summer. *Race, Poverty & the Environment*, 14(2), 20-22. Retrieved September 30, 2020, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41554548>

This article places the 1960s Mississippi Freedom Schools in the context of alternative education reform to praise its curriculum and guide positive schooling practices. The author argues that schools today should follow the Freedom Schools' example by: employing teachers who are part of the community in which they

teach, including school reform in social reform movements, and clarifying and constantly advocating for the community's goals.

Hale, J. (2011). "The Student as a Force for Social Change": The Mississippi Freedom Schools and Student Engagement. *The Journal of African American History*, 96(3), 325-347. doi:10.5323/jafriamerhist.96.3.0325

This article studies the history of the Freedom School movement in 1964 Mississippi. The author seeks to understand the relationship between the Freedom School movement, the Civil Rights Movement and student empowerment. The author found that the program promoted student engagement through student organizing tools and other practices to ignite social change.

Hale, J. N. (2012). The struggle begins early: Head Start and the Mississippi Freedom Movement. *History of Education Quarterly*, 52(4), 506-534. doi:10.1111/j.1748-5959.2012.00418.x

This article reviews the history of the Freedom Schools movement in the 60s through the lenses of Head Start Centers in Mississippi. The author chose to focus on these centers because they exemplify how locals incorporate equitable education access to the Civil Rights Movement and use federal programs to address social issues. Additionally, this study demonstrates how the New Right arose in repose to the notion of a racialized Welfare State.

Jackson, T. (2010). Children's defense fund. In K. Lomotey (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of African American education* (pp. 140-143). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781412971966.n53

This entry delves into the history of CDF and its mission. The author dedicates substantial space to Ms. Edelman's history and her path to funding CDF. The entry provides short descriptions of the CDF's signature programs, including *CDF Freedom Schools*.

Odekon, M. (2015). Children's defense fund. In *The SAGE encyclopedia of world poverty* (Vol. 1, pp. 226-227). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc doi: 10.4135/9781483345727.n122

This entry briefly explains the history of the Children's Defense Fund, Ms. Edelman, and some programs offered by the fund. The author offers a short description of the *CDF Freedom Schools* program and cites articles that study its effectiveness.

Sturkey, W. (2010). "I Want to Become a Part of History": Freedom Summer, Freedom Schools, and The Freedom News. *The Journal of African American History*, 95(3-4), 348-368. doi:10.5323/jafriamerhist.95.3-4.0348

This article expands on the history of 1964 Freedom Schools. The author focuses on how this movement provided young black Mississippians with independence and autonomy by connecting the program to the larger social movement, providing a comprehensive curriculum and empowering students to write their own newspapers.

## Reading and Literacy

Dunkerly, J. M. (2013). Reading the world in the word: The possibilities for literacy instruction framed within human rights education. *Language & Literacy*, 15(2), 40-55. doi:10.20360/G2T019

This dissertation investigates the experience of SLIs and scholars with the IRC's literacy component around human rights education. The author conducted interviews, reviewed projects and codified classroom discussions to analyze the perceptions of 2 SLIs and 16 scholars. The goal was to understand how the *CDF Freedom Schools* build notions of freedom, knowledge, rights and power, and how these notions impact literacy in the program. The author found that the program builds perceptions around literacy as power, construction of rights, construction of identity and advocacy in the world.

Howard, T. C. (2016). Why Black Lives (and Minds) Matter: Race, Freedom Schools & the Quest for Educational Equity. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 85(2), 101-113. doi:10.7709/jnegroeducation.85.2.0101

Faced with challenges regarding the level of police presence in schools with majority non-white student bodies, the author presents *CDF Freedom Schools* as an alternative that: creates supportive, caring and nurturing spaces; embraces racial and cultural identities; and avoids policing and criminalization. By conducting surveys and focus groups, the author found that scholars demonstrated an increased willingness to read and an improvement in reading level.

Lara-Cinisomo, S., Taylor, D. B., & Medina, A. L. (2019;2020;). Summer reading program with benefits for at-risk children: Results from a freedom school program. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 36(3), 1-14. doi:10.1080/10573569.2019.1627968

This study aims at determining whether the CDF Freedom Schools program helps maintain or improve the reading levels of its scholars. By exposing 414 scholars (K-8) to the BRI the researchers found improvement for scholars in the Independent and Frustration levels. Furthermore, the findings show that those student with a history of grade repetition saw more improvement than others. Finally, the study found that scholars in higher levels demonstrate more improvement than those at lower levels.

## Social Justice

Cobb, C., J.R. (2011, Jul). Freedom's struggle and Freedom Schools. *Monthly Review*, 63, 104-113. doi: 10.14452/MR-063-03-2011-07\_12

The article goes through the "freedom struggles" in the US since the 1960s Freedom Schools. By comparing the 1960s with today, the authors suggest several resources for the African American community that attempt to bridge the gap. *CDF Freedom Schools* is among these resources.

Green, D. (2014). Freedom Schools for the Twenty-First Century. *Western Journal of Black Studies*, 38(3), 163–176.

In this article, the author explores the promotion of cultural wealth in *CDF Freedom Schools* by using the community cultural wealth model as a guide. This article conducted interviews with 5 SLIs, 2 parents, and 5 scholars to determine which types of capital were present in the program and in what ways. The author found that aspirational capital, navigational capital, social capital, linguistic capital and resistance capital were all present at this site.

Jackson, T., & Boutte, G. (2009). Liberation Literature: Positive Cultural Messages in Children's and Young Adult Literature at Freedom Schools. *Language Arts*, 87(2), 108-116. Retrieved September 30, 2020, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41483549>

*CDF Freedom Schools* are presented as an example of programs that effectively aid in the education and engagement of young students of color. The authors argue that “amid the pervasive discussion and intimidation that African American students do not read or do not like to read, *CDF Freedom Schools* exists as a powerful, spirited, and refreshing counter narrative to this frequently espoused mantra” (109). *CDF Freedom Schools* receive praise for the use of liberation literature and African-center pedagogy.

Jackson, T. O., & Howard, T. C. (2014). The Continuing Legacy of Freedom Schools as Sites of Possibility for Equity and Social Justice for Black Students. *Western Journal of Black Studies*, 38(3), 155–162.

This article gives a review of the inequity and injustices for communities of color in the 60th anniversary of *Brown v Board of Education*. After highlighting some experiences that minority communities face in the education system, the authors present the *CDF Freedom Schools* model as an exemplary program that is “designed to interrupt the at large social framework of education where Black children are positioned as inferior and incapable” (156). The authors focus on teacher development in *CDF Freedom Schools* and its connection to the creation of a more positive environment for Black scholars.

Payne, C. M. (2003) More Than a Symbol of Freedom: Education for Liberation and Democracy. *Phi Delta Kappa*, 85(1), 22-28. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F003172170308500107>

This article advocates for education practices that stop the alienation of minority groups and aids in their future civic engagement. Among others, *CDF Freedom Schools* is presented as a potential alternative to present education systems.

Roehrig, A. D., Clemons, K. M., & Norris, K. (2017). The fierce urgency of now: CDF Freedom Schools and culturally relevant pedagogy. In E. Ortlieb, & E.H. Cheek Jr. (Eds.), *Addressing diversity in literacy instruction* (Literacy Research, Practice and Evaluation, Volume 8). (pp. 251-269). Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing.

This chapter explores the ways in which CDF Freedom Schools scholars experience culturally relevant texts, how CDF Freedom School sites act as vehicles for youth to become social change advocates and how they provide opportunities for community engagement. Obtained from the study of 38 scholars, the results show that most scholars identified with the characters in the books (via situations and characteristics) and that 74% of them maintained or gained their reading level. Furthermore, the researchers found that there was an increase of confidence in scholars regarding their ability to act “prosocially.” Finally, the Freedom Schools Way of classroom management, parental engagement and activism created opportunities for the Freedom Schools community to be engaged.

Sanders, M., Lewis-Watkins, K. & Cochrane, K. (2019) Bridging the Diversity Gap through Out-of-School Time Learning Activities: A Focus on African American Students. In *The Growing Out-of-School Time Field: Past, Present, and Future*. Information Age Publishing.

This chapter analyzes the diversity gap in US public schools and provides out-of-school time (OST) as a solution to bridge the gap. In that context, *CDF Freedom Schools* are presented as examples of effective OST that benefits from partnerships and maintains the OST standards of human relationships, indoor and outdoor facilities, activities, safety, health and administration.

Scott, L.M., LeCompte, K.N, Nesmith, S.M., & Johnsen, S.K. (2020). Community-Based Pedagogical Strategies with Students. In E. Kimonen & R. Nevalainen (Eds.) (2020) *Toward Community-Based Learning*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill. <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004424494>

This chapter examines how different organizations practices community-based pedagogical approaches for K-16 classrooms. *CDF Freedom Schools* is presented as the case study for the justice-oriented citizenship approach. The researchers argued that *CDF Freedom Schools* emphasizes the scholars' ability to identify causes and take action by encouraging inquiry-based lessons that facilitate action. From a survey, the researchers found that students felt more empowered after attending the *CDF Freedom Schools* program and that students continued to organize and advocate for social issues after their time in the program.

Watson, M. (2014). Freedom Schools Then and Now: A Transformative Approach to Learning. *The Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, 14, 170-190.

This article argues for the benefits of *CDF Freedom Schools* in connection to social justice and child development. By focusing on a historical overview of the resources available for African American communities, the author argues that we need this type of programs and resources to allow for the psychological and educational emancipation of African American students. Watson argues that "from its inception, Freedom Schools were designed to motivate students to have a political voice, going beyond what schools offer in traditional settings" (174) and cites quantitative studies that highlight the effectiveness of the program in improving BRI results and encouraging social improvements.

## Student Development

Ares, N., Smith, J., Wu, X. (2019) Community-based standards and community cultural wealth in Freedom Schools. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*. DOI: 10.1080/14681366.2019.1683597.

The authors conducted a 2-year case study aimed at understanding the nature of the relationship between Servant Leader Interns "standards" in terms of motivation, values and the creation of generational leadership, and the development of community cultural wealth (CCW). The findings show that SLIs were motivated by a willingness to relate with scholars by showing them strength through their personal experience, and to disrupt the miseducation that scholars receive in traditional schooling. The results showed that this site created CCW by focusing on activities and pedagogies that fomented aspirational, familial, linguistic and resistant capital.

Bethea, S. (2012) The Impact of Oakland Freedom School's Summer Youth Program on the Psychosocial Development of African American Youth. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 38(4), 442-454. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0095798411431982>

This study uses a pretest-posttest design with 79 scholars in an Oakland *CDF Freedom Schools* site to analyze the program's impact on Black youth by using an array of surveys and tests to determine the impact on reading, self-concept, social problem solving, racial identity and social action commitment. The results show that the *CDF Freedom Schools* program increased positive attitudes towards African American culture and social skills strategies and promoted social action values and the desire to participate in social action.

Clemons, K.M. Price, P.G. & Clemons, K.A. (2016). "Hold Up, wait a minute, let me put some freedom in it': Hip-hop based education and the freedom school experience". In G. Noblit & W. Pink (Eds.) *Second International Handbook of Urban Education*. pp. 853-873 Switzerland: Springer International Publisher.

This chapters considers Hip Hop culture as an educational toll in the success of African American students and evaluates the role of an HHBE (Hip Hop Based Education) as a culturally responsive framework and a social activism vehicle. By complementing the traditional *CDF Freedom Schools* Integrated Reading Curriculum with HHBE, the authors studied the experiences of scholars, staff and parents on a *CDF Freedom Schools* site. The results showed that the connection between Hip Hop and Black history facilitated learning, motivation, cultural understanding and critical thinking in scholars due to its ability to provide a free and fun environment as well as relate to the scholars' experiences.

Franklin, V.P. (2012), "Freedom Schools and Mastery Learning: Providing Alternatives to Failure in Urban Public Education in the United States." In Camp Yeakey, C. (Ed.) *Living on the Boundaries: Urban Marginality in National and International Contexts* (Advances in Education in Diverse Communities, Vol. 8), Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Bingley, pp. 159-177. [https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-358X\(2012\)0000008012](https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-358X(2012)0000008012)

This article provides a contrast between freedom school projects and the current education system, especially regarding the high stakes testing environment and test prep emphasis in the latter. In this context, the author argues that "freedom schools" are alternatives to traditional schools because: they motivate students; train students in arts, music and sports; address the academic failure in urban public schools; and fight the public school-to-prison pipeline. CDF Freedom Schools are presented as one of the freedom school projects.

Jackson, A. (2020). Freedom Schools as a Counternarrative Model: Understanding What African American Girls Need. UCLA. ProQuest ID: Jackson\_ucla\_0031D\_18979. Merritt ID: ark:/13030/m5ck3nk8. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5kb8f4v9>

This dissertation looks at the impact of *CDF Freedom Schools* and the IRC in the perceptions of racial identity and racial discrimination in African American girls. Using a mix method approach, the author studied the experiences of 62 scholars and 35 SLIs. The results show that the curriculum made a positive impact on girls' identities and that scholars felt that they had received strategies and tools to cope with discrimination.

LeCompte, K.N., Scott, L.M. & Blevins, B. (2017, April 29th) "iEngage" Freedom School: Affirming Community Cultural Wealth Through Advocacy and Action [Paper Presentation]. Educator Activism to Challenge Inequality and Construct Just Schools, San Antonio, Texas. DOI: 10.302/1186153

This paper focused on the collaboration between *CDF Freedom Schools* and iEngage Action Civics to analyze the impact of a civics curriculum on *CDF Freedom Schools*' scholars. Using surveys, interviews and other artifacts, the authors found that scholars developed a deeper understanding and awareness of civics and individual rights. Additionally, scholars reported that they felt more empowered and inspired to make a difference in their communities.

Piper, R. E. (2019). Navigating black identity development: The power of interactive multicultural read alouds with elementary-aged children. *Education Sciences*, 9(2), 141. doi:10.3390/educsci9020141

This article uses a multiple case study approach to understand how the literature in the *CDF Freedom Schools* curriculum affects the scholars' identity development as young people of color. The researcher studied the experiences of 8 parents, 1 SLI, and 7 elementary-aged scholars, and chose to focus on 3 of those scholars for this article. The findings show that the literature positively influenced the scholars' perception of their racial identity.

Stanford, M. (2017). Transfer of Instructional Practices from Freedom Schools to the Classroom. *Urban Review*, 49(1), 26–46. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-016-0380-y>



This study deals with the transfer of teaching practices and pedagogies from *CDF Freedom Schools* to regular schools. The author interviewed three participants who had extensive experience working for *CDF Freedom Schools* (as Servant Leader Interns, Site Coordinators and Ella Baker Trainers). Each of the participants showed different levels of transfer related to classroom management, relationships with students, room arrangement, conflict resolution and pedagogy techniques.

## Teaching Practice

Coffey, H. (2010). "They taught me": The benefits of early community-based field experiences in teacher education. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, 26(2), 335–342. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.09.014>

This article seeks to argue in favor of service-learning experiences as connectors between educational theory and practice by documenting the experiences of Servant Leader Interns in a *CDF Freedom Schools* site. The findings show that service learning components are valuable for the teacher in that they: bridge the gap between educational theory and practice, provide better understanding of how to communicate with students, encourage collaborative engagement with the community, create the opportunity for teachers to develop relationships outside their own environment, provide the opportunity to see how diverse populations interact and succeed and increase the likelihood of teachers developing more inclusive curricula.

Coffey, H., Ewell, S. & Clemons, K.M. (2011). "“Service is the rent we pay”: a tale of how Three Teacher Educators Studied Our Own Practice Through Engaging Pre-Service Teachers in a Multi-cultural Service-Learning Experience.” In N. Webster and T. Stewart (Eds.) *Exploring Cultural Dynamics and Tensions within Service-Learning*, (pp. 257-280). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

This study explored the how teaching according to a culturally relevant curriculum affected the way that MAT students thought about diversity and education. After being immersed in the *CDF Freedom Schools* program for several weeks, the MAT students found that the experience: helped break their social and racial pre-conceptions, changed expectations of schooling, changed classroom management notions and forced them to think about the effect our education system on “real” children.

Davis, J. H. (2010). Guide our feet: Teacher education and servant-leadership in a children's defense fund freedom school

This dissertation examines the potential for *CDF Freedom Schools*' SLIs to experience a change in their approach to life and work in such a way that they feel encouraged to enact positive change in society. By recounting the stories of pre-service teachers who worked as SLIs, the study found that SLIs have shared pre-dispositions and values and that they perceive their experiences as transformational and educational.

Jackson, T. (2006) Learning to teach in Freedom Schools: Developing practices and identities as educators and activists

This dissertation evaluates how SLIs learned to teach in a culturally responsive curriculum. By applying an ethnographic method, the author found that *CDF Freedom Schools* used induction in its social justice movement and SLIs' agency development to ensure quality teaching. The author presents *CDF Freedom Schools* as an ideal alternative model for teacher development.

Jackson, T. O. (2009). "Making the readings come to life": Expanding notions of language arts at freedom school. *The New Educator*, 5(4), 311-328. doi:10.1080/1547688X.2009.10399582

This article looks at how *CDF Freedom Schools* prepares SLIs to be culturally responsive teachers. By employing ethnographic techniques, the author studied the experiences of 6 SLIs, 1 SC and EBTs in Tennessee. The findings show that the SLIs' notions of language arts as vehicles of social awareness and actions changed during the *CDF Freedom Schools* experience, especially as it related to purpose, perspective, pedagogy and curriculum.

Jackson, T. O. (2009). Towards collective work and responsibility: Sources of support within a Freedom School teacher community. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, 25(8), 1141–1149. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.03.007>

This article explores how *CDF Freedom Schools* support Servant Leader Interns to become role models and powerful teachers by interviewing Servant Leader Interns, Site Coordinators and Ella Baker Trainers. The findings show that *CDF Freedom Schools* support Servant Leader Interns by: ensuring constant communication between them and Site Coordinators, securing the passing of knowledge from the experts to Servant Leader Interns, observing and guiding new Servant Leader Interns, hosting daily debriefing meetings and providing opportunities for peer mentoring and collaboration.

Jackson, T. (2011). Developing Sociopolitical consciousness at Freedom Schools: Implications for Culturally Responsive Teacher Preparation. *Teaching Education*, 22 (3), 277-290.

This article explores the methods that *CDF Freedom Schools* employs to develop culturally sensitive teaching practices, especially around creating socio-political awareness among staff. Using ethnographic methods, the author studied the practices of 6 Servant Leader Interns, 1 Site Coordinator and Ella Baker Trainers during National Training. The findings show that *CDF Freedom Schools* use historical knowledge, "We" discourse and lifelong commitment expectations.

Mickens, K. N. S. (2012). Cultivating servant leadership in high school students of African descent the Freedom Schools Way

This dissertation investigates how sites define and practice the Freedom School Way. The author examined how one site constructed their "Way" and how another site applied it. The results showed that the Freedom Schools Way was practiced by encouraging learning of black history and culture and forming chain mentorship.

Shimshon-Santo, A. (2018) 'Do our lives matter?' Music, poetry, and Freedom School. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 13(3), 256-267. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1746197918793057>

The author recounts her experience with the arts and argues for the need of art education being incorporated into school curricula. For one summer, the author incorporated her ideal arts education content in a *CDF Freedom Schools* site in Los Angeles. She found that the addition complemented the *CDF Freedom Schools* curriculum and affirmed the teachings being put forth at the site.

Smith, K. (2010). Fostering regimes of truth: understanding and reflecting on the Freedom School way. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 18(2), 191–209. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2010.488044>

The author explores the ways that *CDF Freedom Schools* create regimes of truth by acting in the "Freedom School Way." The author uses data from 20-hour Servant Leader Intern observations, surveys from 36 scholars and interviews with 3 scholars. The data shows that *CDF Freedom Schools* sites construct knowledge through perpetuating the *CDF Freedom Schools* ideology by using carefully selected titles (i.e. scholars), program activities (i.e. Harambee), and curricula (i.e. IRC).