

Standards for Peace Education and a Case for Support to Teachers in Facilitation

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Abstract: The need for policy support and guidelines for teachers to provide contextually responsive instruction with competencies of conflict management and peace building has increased with escalating instances of regional and global conflicts. Across the United States, the lack of supports for such teaching has led to increased harm in response to conflicts that students must learn to manage and transform. There is an evident desire for peace education, which has found expression in several states in the U.S. where teachers do provide such instruction. Teachers, however, need training and a responsive administration to do that. Yet, there has been scanty support for peace education in teacher education programmes. Such programmes adhere to policies, research recommendations, and guidelines that contain instructional standards but do not include plans for a responsive pedagogy. This paper addresses that issue and provides a response to it. Educational researchers from different parts of the world who have identified the lack of standards for peace education in various regions collaborated in the production of this needed resource. Their research and development of interdependent components of student learning, teacher preparation, and school administration that influence peace-oriented education have helped formulate standards for students, teachers, teacher-educators, and school administrators. This discussion includes the standards that those researchers prescribed for teachers of peace education. Policy makers and school administrators can use those standards to facilitate instruction in the competencies of peace development.

Keywords: teacher, instruction, standards, policy, peace education, school administration

Teachers need support to facilitate peace education, as much as they have had for instruction in the major disciplines. Still there has been a lack of that needed sustenance. Policy and curriculum guidelines have occasionally supported peace education in recent and ongoing contexts of violence. Nevertheless, the perception of peace education as a temporary intervention in response to violence fails to see how learning about peace in the past, present, and future prepares students for sustaining and building those essential conditions for human development and planetary well-being. Instruction in peace education in secular schools started from a recognition of the need for student knowledge, skills, and dispositions that

supported personal, relational, societal, and global peace. Teachers, like this author, sought and created curricula for their students that included several aspects of peace, especially those related to local needs and contexts, as well as the avoidance of violence in response to conflict. Without the inclusion of peace education in the teacher-preparation programs or policies for that instruction in the schools where they taught, teaching about and for peace has been considered professionally risky and not been uniform (Bender-Slack, 2010). Typically, in the absence of policy and curriculum guidelines, there has been a lack of approval and support for peace education from school administrations. The neoliberal initiative of government standards for instruction to control what was included in the curriculum, was a response to the instructional freedom that initial peace educators had enjoyed. Standards for instruction, which focused on the disciplines, proliferated and became the rationale for prescriptive teaching. That movement, which started in the global north and then spread to other regions, did not support peace education unless the required standards included competencies of peace education. With lack of rationale in standard-based instruction for peace education, motivated teachers have included peace competencies, where they could, in the standards-based lessons that they provided. Support in standards and policy has been a requirement for education about and for peace.

Governments have developed standards for education in their states to equip students with knowledge, skills, and values through the prescription of curriculum content. Such prescriptions have usually oriented students towards political participation and rationalised armed 'defence' of the state using military force. With that orientation, governments have promoted reification of violence, and thereby its normalisation, as a means of national defence using standards that omitted peace her/history and the strategies that states and their members enabled without harm in response to political conflict (Boulding, 2000; Reardon, 2001). Government standards are incomplete if they do not include the knowledge, skills, and dispositions found through research to be a means of peace development. A critical perspective of most government-created standards would reveal an agenda to reproduce existing relations within and between nations. While no set of standards may completely address all domains of education and teacher preparation, the lack of any specific inclusion of peace as a learning goal reveal states' failure to promote peace-building competencies. Concerned educators worldwide identified these shortcomings and began producing auxiliary recommendations for instruction, teacher preparation, and school administration (Smith & Neill, 2006).

Initiatives to include guidelines for peace education in the curricula have occurred globally since the 1990s. They have produced a variety of peace-oriented content as educational recommendations. For example, UNESCO's Decade on a Culture of Peace provided declarations by the United Nations, such as the Convention on the Rights of the

Child (1989), for the identification of educational content. The United Nations Plan of Action for the UN Decade for

Human Rights Education (1995-2004) was a corollary to standards that the state governments were producing. There were isolated directives from states, such as the instructional theme, Education for Mutual Understanding in Northern Ireland, and standards for diversity education (Smith, 2003; Smith & Robinson, 1996). Non-governmental organisations started promoting strands of peace education in policy and for use by schools. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning has infused the strand of peace education that they promote into schools globally (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, 2021). Other non-governmental organisations have provided guidelines and standards for culturally responsive pedagogy (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998). Organisations focused on peace education have also generated standards. The Peace Education Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association spent years collaboratively writing the Standards for Peace Education, incorporating findings from their research (Carter, 20015). Inserting guidelines or standards for peace education into the existing education structures has been a continual method to include peace components as curriculum content. Conflict occurs as a result of limits to learning specifically about peace strategies and possibilities.

Educators have tried to resist government mandates for instruction that limit what students are allowed to learn (Beaumont, 2009; Coulson, 2009). These educators desire sustenance of peace-oriented pedagogy that is, as Johan Galtung describes it, responsive in form and content (Galtung, 2012). The form is communicatively cooperative while the content is relevant to students' lives. A core component of education for peace is recognizing students' personal and professional goals for learning and the unique knowledge, perspectives, and abilities they bring to their learning context. A responsive curriculum for peace education has the particular interests and needs of the students as components of their learning (Harris & Morrison, 2013; Lederach, 2005; Salomon & Nevo, 2002). In the observations of this educational researcher and teacher, students who are not afflicted with poor mental health that resulted from their experiences with violence typically express a desire to improve the conditions of the world. Efforts to build a better world are situation-responsive; thus, varied as peace pedagogy should responsively be (Canfield et al. 2005; Shapiro, 2010).

Recommendations for peace education exist in multiple forms. Some are specific to peace and use descriptors such as 'standards' or 'guidelines'; others include components of a broad range of peace-oriented knowledge, skills, and dispositions. The development of peace for finding harm-free solutions to conflicts and the sustenance of peace requires all types of knowledge bases. Hence, documentation of oral traditions in peace development, such as indigenous restoration methods, is essential for formulating educational recommendations. Inclusiveness of cultures, perspectives, and ideas for responding to a conflict are significant

considerations in bringing about and maintaining peace (Carter, 2010a, 2021). Praxis, the engagement in a transformational process, is a goal in education for peace (O'Sullivan, Morrell & O'Conner, 2002). The work of Paolo Freire (2003) to address structural change through education generated the concept of praxis and critical pedagogy. Critical peace education mainly focuses on the development of praxis (Bajaj, 2012). The pursuit of equitable peace requires learning criticism to occur to identify inequalities and respond to them (Galtung & Udayakumar, 2013). Peace as a state of being and the processes that facilitate it are widely varied.

Culture determines the construal of peace and what evidences it. Differences across cultures in the expression of values are sources of conflict during contesting interactions, and they determine more than the notion of peace in society. Their enactment affects perceptions of situations, especially whether or not the condition of peace exists. Consequently, education for peace enables communication in several modes, including language, arts, interspecies interactions, and spiritual practices, that express values (Carter & Benza Guerra, 2022; Carter & Pickett, 2014; Bender-Slack, 2010). Demonstrating values that support peaceful interactions, such as compassionate communication that focuses on feelings and needs, is a skill that students learn through modelling by school staff. One teacher of primary students, Simone Shirvell, models *ahimsa* with the value of interconnectedness and praxis with the value of agency. She integrates caring for nature and humans in forest excursions with her students and their families and while participating in public actions for peace (Joshee & Shirvell, 2021). Her modelling demonstrates Gandhian values in formal education at school and informal instruction through public praxis. That instruction has a foundation of Mohandas Gandhi's precepts in his pursuit of peace. Facilitating peace has been predicated on explicit expressions of visions and missions with that goal.

Peacemakers throughout her/history communicated their vision of well-being before a following ensued for the enactment of those visions. Infusion of peace-building through school interactions, the informal curriculum, and instruction in the formal curriculum is a visionary approach to peace education. Schools form mission statements and develop corresponding goals for vision enactment. The vision and mission statements are policy documents for influencing the functions and culture of a school. The knowledge that teachers have of their school's mission and related policies influence its culture (Jurasaitė-Harbison & Rex, 2010). If compassionate communication is a component of a school's vision, mission, and policy, teachers have clear indicators for their professional development and success. School leaders know that teachers need support in professional development when policies require the demonstration of different interactions and instructional skills. Educational administration uses the goals generated by the new policies to provide resources for the professional development in situ of the teachers. Government grants designated for professional development and curriculum enhancement are needed support that school

leaders and faculty seek, along with the resources of non-governmental organizations specialising in the desired area of development. The Standards for Peace Education (Carter, 2015) were created by international members of a non-governmental organisation as a resource for professional development and guidance in practice for teachers. They were written in collaboration across nations in support of teachers everywhere. Where teachers have lacked policy and resource support for peace education, the pedagogy occurs sporadically.

Educators with motivation for teaching components of peace education had sought and found rationale, resources, and scarce training for the pedagogy, even when their school districts and governments had no policy for that instruction. Writings in the 20th century about teaching for peace provided rationale for its provision (Montessori, 1972; Reardon, 1988). Awareness of peace initiatives in the public and several types of conflict-responsive organizations inspired instruction about peace in schools. The words and strategies of non-violent activists fed the imaginations of educators who envisioned curricula about peace efforts, skills, and accomplishments. Non-violent actions for the transformation of structural conflicts and the words of leaders such as Mohandas Gandhi during that century were resources for curriculum redesign (Johnson, 2006). Teachers individually modified the curriculum across subject areas and collaborated to produce publications for instructors who sought resources for transformative education (Rethinking Schools, 2021). Global and national organisations created special interest groups for peace education that researched and shared information about different initiatives worldwide (Elias et al. 2003; Peace Education Commission, 2021). Publishers subsequently sold literature with such research reportage.

With resources for peace education increasing, training became available from a few organisations worldwide. The United Nations have produced several documents that served as a foundation for peace education (Mukhopadhyay, 2005; Ssebunya&Nampewo, 2016; United Nations, 1989). Additionally, it sponsored research on and education for instruction about peace. The University for Peace, established in 1980, has been a resource for higher education, offering a Master's degree in peace education. Yet, teacher training in peace education has been very limited in the universities, except in the graduate classes. Where exceptions to this situation were evident in zones of direct violence, teacher education for peace has been provided but rarely sustained (De Paul, 2010). This situation does not support teachers who recognise the need for curriculum and instruction that prepares students for peace-building (Horner, 2015). It also widens the divide between educators who have and do not have motivation for transformative instruction (Lauritzen, 2016). There is a great need for teacher preparation for transformative curriculum design and instruction prior to their

professional practice (Carter & Vandeyar, 2009; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Setalvad, 2010). While ecological sustainability has received increasing attention and emphasis, the cultural aspects of obtaining and sustaining peace for everyone needs much more inclusion in teacher preparation (Wenden, 2004).

The Standards for Peace Education have multiple guidelines, including recommendations for teacher educators, school administrators, teachers, and students. The breadth of the guidelines highlights the interdependence of school members in the advancement of optimal learning. Due to the influence of teacher educators, there were also guidelines written for them (Deveci, Yilmaz & Karadag, 2008; McGowan, Christenson & Muccio, 2021; Staples, 2010). Continual requests for those guidelines from institutions that prepare teachers have evidenced the need that the standards addressed. Ongoing research by this author has revealed the continued lack of peace as a term or topic in standards used for evaluating teacher preparation programs. That oversight contributes to the lack of instruction that supports peace-building. It is important to keep this context in mind while reading the guidelines written for teachers. The recommendations for teachers do not reveal the breadth of the interdependent components in the Standards for Peace Education. The focus of the component described herein is the teacher's role as the facilitator of learning in the classroom. The standards for students lay out the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are the aims of their learning, whereas the standards for school administrators identify strategies for peace-building processes throughout the school.

Strategies for peace-building instruction by teachers include the facilitation of culturally and contextually responsive, collaborative, and constructive learning through their modelling, along with the integration of peace contents in the curriculum. Culturally responsive instruction includes concepts and interaction norms of the students' cultures. That diversity enrichment of curriculum and instruction adds its relevancy, conveys positive regard, enhances inter-cultural understanding, and expands cross-cultural skills in a course (Gay, 2013; Ragoonaden & Mueller, 2017). Contextual responsiveness, which is a foundation of peace education, also increases curriculum relevancy with experiential learning about the current matters in the lives of the learners (Haavelsrud & Stenberg, 2012; Nasser & Wong, 2013; Torres-Harding et al. 2018). Collaborative learning, with the course instructor, peers, campus and community members, as well as distant partners in inquiry and praxis strengthens crucial relationships for peace-building, enhances the collective influence of the participants in praxis, and establishes cooperation as a mode of civic engagement (Jones et al., 2014). Constructive learning occurs through sharing, examining, adapting, and applying ideas that learners assimilate. Communication in multiple modalities, including spiritual and physical interactions and multiple languages and arts, characterises transformative education and conveys the values of peace-building (Brantmeier, Lin &

Miller, 2010; Vettraino, Linds & Goulet, 2013). Non-violent communication, for example, exemplifies the value of caring through modelling compassion (Rosenberg, 2003).

Teachers encourage disposition development through value-based instruction. Modelling is the informal teaching by all staff on campus and its teachers. Hence, there are standards for peace education that help school administrators guide such influential interactions. Unconditional caring for students is part of modelling the disposition of concern. Peace education encourages the enactment of a campus-wide ethic of care for all of its members (Chang & Bai, 2016; Noddings, 2008). In that vein, the peace education standards for students include acceptance, respect, mutuality, concern, empathy, commitment, involvement, and service as dispositions for their development. The standards also identify courage, optimism, patience, and humility as dispositions that support their interactions with themselves and others. Teachers expressing these dispositions aloud exemplify modelling instruction in disposition development, for example, when a teacher says, *"I feel angry and I need to take some deep breaths and wait a while before I can respond to this information. Then I can think of a caring way to communicate about it."* While nonviolence can be encouraged as a value, the standards for students that guide instruction list 'analysis of violence' as a learning 'skill'. Teachers use multiple types of curricula such as literature, arts, media, and interviews about peace her/history, as well as praxis opportunities, for learning about alternatives to violence (Carter & Pickett, 2014; Morrison, 2015). The sense of environmental stewardship that the standards list as a student skill can also be characterised as a disposition. There are many opportunities to indirectly and directly foster stewardship with raised awareness about changes in the earth's environment that humans can impact. The following list of Standards for Teachers demonstrates the breadth of influence teachers can have during their formal and informal instruction.

Standards for Teachers

Teachers demonstrate the following skills:

1. Facilitate student construction from their collective experiences and new information, their concepts of peace, and positive processes for increasing it.
2. Integrate positive contact with and information about diverse cultures in the local region and afar to overcome ignorance, misinformation, and stereotypes.
- 3 Accommodate cultural norms of students, including their diverse learning styles.

4. Engage in cross-cultural communication with multicultural school participants, including families, thereby modelling acceptance, accommodation, and celebration of diversity through pluralism.
5. Demonstrate positive regard for all students, regardless of their misbehaviours, to convey unconditional care and respect for them as valuable people.
6. Use compassionate and equitable communication in dialogic facilitation of classroom management.
7. Train students through modelling of dispositions and skills that develop peace, including the practice of non-violence before and during conflicts.
8. Create a nurturing 'school-home' environment that nourishes and provides a safe place for communication about concerns related to violence.
9. Listen to families about how peace can be developed in the classroom and school and then collaborate to facilitate their suggestions.
10. Use strategies that support peaceful interaction with the self and all people, including restorative practices in post-conflict situations.
11. Model action for peace development on and beyond the campus, demonstrating a community norm of social justice and environmental stewardship.
12. Cultivate and support students' responsibility for their own peaceful-problem solving while the teacher stays aware of and responsive to their needs.
13. Integrate information about past, present and future peace developments and strategies across multiple subject areas.
14. Create and support venues for expressing current and future peace development.

15. Show appreciation for all student achievements in and aspirations for peace.
16. Attend to and teach ecological care of the physical environment, including the sustainable use of its resources.
17. Teach about socially and environmentally responsible consumerism and the conflicts which result from the exploitation of producers and labourers.
18. Teach about power relations in current events as well as history to help students recognise sources of structural violence.
19. Facilitate student examination of militarism and its impact on the social order.
20. Teach students to critically evaluate sources, perspectives, and evidence provided in the information they have access to while enabling them to recognise the types of information they do not have, but need, to develop a clear understanding of spoken and written presentations.
21. Enable students' discussions of controversy and unresolved problems locally and globally, thereby cultivating their intellectual and communicative skills for comprehending and analysing conflicts.

Conclusion

Teacher facilitation of peace education has been inconsistent. Lack of support in education policies, teacher-preparation programmes, school administration, and curriculum resources dissuade and hinder the provision of education for and about peace. Educational standards can address those needs when their guidelines articulate peace-building competencies and interactions across the contexts that influence instruction and learning. The Standards for Peace Education that educational researchers collaboratively articulated embody support for the needed provision of peace education. With continuation and even

escalation of inequalities, along with many other types of conflicts that affect the condition of peace, teachers need support for instruction that equips learners for solving those problems without harm. As long as standards for education influence teaching and learning, the Standards for Peace Education guidelines continue to be a crucial resource for instruction that equips learners for developing, building up, and sustaining the condition of peace.

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