

## Systems Thinking/Equity Vignette #5

A school building facility is shared by two elementary schools -- a district co-op school and a neighborhood school. The neighborhood school consists of 80% of students who qualify free and reduced priced lunch compared with about 15% of the students at the co-op school. On one occasion all of the classes across the building have Harvest celebrations. The third grade classes from both schools share space in a common area for their parties. The co-op class has a party with gifts for each student and an extravagant spread of food. One of the neighborhood school teachers points out to the co-op teacher that the neighborhood students may feel uncomfortable seeing what the co-op students have at their party. The co-op teacher responds, "This will give them an idea of what they could have. I think it's important that they see it." The neighborhood teacher replies, "The students have no control of what they have, and this display only reinforces what they don't have. They should not have to have that shoved in their faces at school." The celebrations continue as planned.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- As a teacher leader, what is your initial response to this situation?
- As a teacher leader, how might you respond to the co-op teacher?
- If you were the neighborhood teacher, what, if anything, would you say to your students about what they saw?
- What can teachers do when they see inequities within the system?
- What other sections of the framework might you lean on to help in this situation?

## Systems Thinking/Equity Vignette #6

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Thinking with an equity lens, why might Ann be uncomfortable?
- What biases and assumptions exist within this situation?
- What critical aspects of effective systems thinking and equity need to be explored, considered and questioned?
- How might Ann express her discomfort to the group?
- What might the group need to understand about the impact of their recommendations?

As a teacher leader and department lead, Ann is asked to sit on a district committee. The group meets once a month but includes teachers from various schools with different student populations and varying resources.

The group is responsible for recommending how discretionary funds are allocated across schools. Many of the people in the group feel each school should receive equal funding. The rationale is that this is the equitable thing to do. Ann is uncomfortable with this line of thinking as it would not address current inequities that exist.