

Education for Flourishing Summit: A Call to Rethink Education in Light of COVID-19 Pandemic August 6-7, 2020 (12:00-3:00 PM EST)

Keynote Speakers

Kwame Adams
Graduate 2020
Harvard Graduate School of Education



"Any education is, in its forms and methods, an outgrowth of the needs of the society in which it exists."

Matthew T. Lee
Human Flourishing Program
Harvard University



One of the most pressing needs of our 21st century society is the well-being of children and young adults. The current pandemic has further underscored the value of fostering resilience and flourishing in ways consistent with the phrase that students "can't Bloom until they Maslow." To address the ensuing well-being crisis, K-12 and post-secondary education will require a substantial paradigm shift.

As such, we will have to adopt a new framework that is comprehensive in nature to ensure the well-being of children and young adults. Schools, once centers of content learning, will equally need to become centers that promote individual and community flourishing.

Topics Include

- ◆ Teaching & Learning for Flourishing
 - ◆ Race and Flourishing in Education
 - ◆ Measurement and Evaluation of Flourishing in Schools
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Join an interdisciplinary and international group of researchers, administrators, practitioners, and thought-leaders in education, with parents and students, to exchange ideas on how to promote and support human flourishing in schools and communities. Listen and interact with speakers and panelists to collaborate, network, and create action plans.

This event is free of cost & open to public.

Registration Required. RSVP@: <https://forms.gle/ZQARwVtqaNZcaSZe6>

When: August 6-7; 12 – 3:00 PM EST

Where: Online –link will be emailed.

For queries contact: amrita.chaturvedi@slu.edu

Education for Flourishing Summit: August 6-7, 2020

A Call to Rethink Education in Light of the COVID-19 Pandemic

This summit aims to bring together an interdisciplinary group of researchers, administrators, practitioners, and thought-leaders in education, with parents and students, to exchange ideas on how to promote and support human flourishing in schools and communities

Context and Rationale

Human history is marked by significant events that have forced entire civilizations to pause, reflect, and rethink their futures; the current pandemic is asking us to do the same. On both individual and collective levels, we are realizing that we cannot return to life—including education—as it was before the pandemic.

Societies that flourish have a strong education system as their foundation. According to Dewey (1934), “any education is, in its forms and methods, an outgrowth of the needs of the society in which it exists.” Since more children and young adults now suffer from mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety, it is evident that one of the most pressing needs of our 21st century society is the well-being of these groups, and the well-being of those who serve them. This pandemic has further underscored the value of fostering resilience and flourishing in ways consistent with the phrase that students “can’t Bloom until they Maslow.”

In recent decades, teachers and leaders in education have made increasing efforts to support the complete well-being of children and young adults. Different models and approaches have appeared on the educational landscape, including resilience training, social emotional learning, restorative practices, social-relationship building, and trauma-informed education. Despite implementing these approaches and models, the well-being of our youth and the individuals who work with them has reached a crisis point; the pandemic has further revealed the underlying issues. As such, we must prepare the next generation to flourish in a world that is becoming increasingly unpredictable and unstable.

Flourishing as an Ultimate Goal

Flourishing as an “ultimate aim of education” (Van der Veen & Wolbert 2014) is not a new concept. Many education philosophers have proposed this in the past. Even though there is no agreed upon definition of flourishing, there is broad consensus that for an individual to flourish they must do well in the following five domains: (1) Mental and Physical Health (2) Meaning & Purpose (3) Close Social Relationships (4) Character & Virtue and (5) Happiness & Life Satisfaction (VanderWeele, 2017). Instead of addressing well-being issues after they arise, the pandemic has underscored the need for schools to implement curriculum and practices that promote flourishing before deficits in well-being arise.

To address the ensuing well-being crisis, K-12 and post-secondary education will require a substantial paradigm shift. As such, we will have to adopt a new framework that is comprehensive in nature to ensure the well-being of children and youth. Schools, once centers of content learning, will equally need to become centers that promote human flourishing.