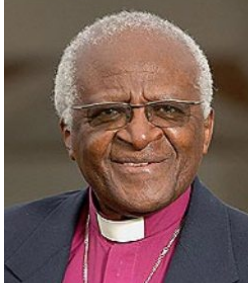


Peace Literacy Curriculum and Professional Development

Endorsements and Evaluations



“Peace Literacy has the capacity to repair our broken parts and create a nonviolent world anchored in dignity, meaning, purpose, and compassion for all. Given the crucial role that Peace Literacy can play, I support the recognition of education in Peace Literacy as a universal human right.” **Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (Nov. 2018)**
Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Recent Faculty Praise for Peace Literacy Professional Development Workshops

“Paul Chappell’s work on Peace Literacy is one of the single most inspiring, and most important professional learning opportunities I’ve participated in.” **Kevin Lopuck (Nov. 2018)** **President, Manitoba Social Studies Teachers Association**

“I’m a real critic of professional development workshops; my expectation is that I should be learning something new each time I engage in professional dialogue. I was thrilled with Paul’s workshop because he moved us beyond the rhetorical discourse associated with peace education—his ideas are innovative and thought-provoking. His content, philosophy, and approach provide significant material for Peace Literacy in schools and classrooms... Paul offers us a practical application of language, a way to be deliberate in our teaching the strategies for Peace Literacy.” **Mark Perry (Apr. 2018)** **New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood, Coordinator UNESCO Associated Schools Network**

“Staff left the workshop energized and enthused. Within a week we had revised a component of our student behavior response, and teachers were building new lesson plans to integrate Peace Literacy into their teaching. There was real hope and passion about how teaching skills of peace might transform our work with students and each other.” **Colleen Works (Aug. 2018)** **Assistant Principal, Corvallis High School, Corvallis, Oregon Teacher of the Year | 2011**

“[After the workshop] I came back to Maine feeling empowered to teach Peace Literacy in a way that is practical, that is grounded in fundamental truths of human behavior, and that is appropriate to a public school setting. Knowing, living, and teaching Peace Literacy is indeed the crucial work of our time...” **Kim Cowperthwaite (Aug. 2017)** **ELA Teacher, Freeport Middle School, Freeport, Maine**

Recent Teacher Assessments of Peace Literacy Curricula

“Peace Literacy provides a recipe for strong communities. Paul turns Maslow's hierarchy on its head, giving us a lens to understand how trauma effects our students and what results when their non-physical needs are not met. Peace Literacy gives us the tools and vocabulary to build trust within our school.” *Matt Boring (Aug. 2018) Principal, Corvallis High School, Corvallis, OR*

“For years our students have been told what they are not to do. [Peace Literacy], instead, [is] focused on what they can do to be more caring, more empathetic, more respectful, and kind to one another. This positive spin on the issue was so refreshing and spoke to our students in ways that rang true and allowed them to reflect on their own life and decisions.” *Eric Wright (Mar 2017) Principal, Alternative Education Program, College Hill High School, Corvallis, OR*

“I have been an educator for over 15 years and I have engaged in many different programs to address student behavior. Peace Literacy is one program that will positively impact our school and our community. I believe the skill set of Peace Literacy will not only transform our lives but the lives of those around us.” *Tony Mosely (Apr. 2018) M.Ed. Counselor, Alternative Education Program, College Hill High School, Corvallis, OR*

“In a nation that is full of division and polarization, learning how to implement the skills of listening and speaking with respect and empathy is invaluable. It is waging peace... In the Communities Program at **Oshkosh North High School**, the Waging Peace Curriculum was used with 150 students as a project-based learning unit for one month that integrated English, Social Studies and Leadership Standards. Anonymous Program Evaluation from staff and students in February 2017 included the following:

- Peace literacy curriculum moves people to turn their thinking toward themselves and consider why they react the way they do in moments of conflict - Teacher
- Young people studying the texts of Paul K. Chappell develop a greater sense of self and the ability to connect with other people; they are better armed to introspect, build relationships and cultivate empathy - Teacher
- If someone is bashing you, you want to talk back to protect yourself. But you can learn to use respect to protect yourself and not bash back at them - Student
- This was the most intriguing unit in our class. I have learned so much in the short time we were learning about peace literacy and waging peace - Student

Schools grasp the awareness that if we want to encourage an understanding of science, math, music or football, we need to promote skill development through small individualized steps with regular practice and reinforcement from teachers, parents and peers. This is how we need to think of peace literacy. In order to promote peace in our schools, families, communities and world, it is time to begin the steady practice of teaching peace.” *Trish Beckett (Aug. 2017) Special Education Teacher, Ret., Waging Peace Curricular Consultant, Oshkosh, Wisconsin*

Recent Teacher Assessments of Peace Literacy Curricula, continued

“I have been an English teacher in the public school sector for 30 years, as well as an adjunct professor at the University of Indianapolis... As our society has become increasingly more volatile..., my mission to teach students empathy has evolved to include teaching them how to actively work for peace. What may have started out as an idealistic mission has come to fruition with the incorporation in my teaching of the works of Paul K. Chappell. What struck me about Chappell’s 2017 book *Soldiers of Peace* was his epiphany: ‘When I realized that I would need to strengthen my empathy, conscience, and sense of purpose..., I realized that the education system had not given me a single hour of training to help me fully develop those qualities. In fact, much of what I learned in school taught me to suppress my empathy and conscience, and to view purpose in the narrow context of accumulating material wealth’ (*Soldiers of Peace*, 73-74). I have been teaching Chappell’s work to both college and high school students in order to help them get the education we never gave him. After using his work in my classes, I have observed improvements in my students with respect to:

- understanding the root causes of aggression in themselves and in others
- understanding the importance of listening and communication
- resolving conflict
- introspecting
- seeing the nuances in situations
- dialoguing in an authentic manner with others who do not share their beliefs

Using his books has also provided an entry point for teaching academic standards as well...

Chappell’s challenge for educators is this: ‘What if the education system had put as much effort toward cultivating my muscle of empathy as it did toward cultivating my muscle of language? What if I had learned as much about rage, conscience, and conflict resolution as I had about grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure (74).’ I couldn’t agree more.” ***Krista Hensley (Oct. 2017) High School and University English Teacher, Indianapolis, Indiana***

“As a classroom educator for the last 26 years, I recognize the importance of challenging students with meaningful, engaging material. ... As a result of using Paul Chappell’s writings, my students are having philosophical dialogues on complex material such as Plato’s Allegory of the Cave. They are comparing and contrasting aspects of Plato’s Cave Allegory with what they see and hear on television. They are applying the Cave Allegory to social situations at school, and they are discussing what they can do to get out of the metaphorical cave. My students are not just growing academically, they are evolving as human beings. Paul Chappell’s material encourages students to think critically about metaphors on persistence, leadership and world peace, thus allowing them to apply what they have learned to their own lives. His material is helping the students of today become the leaders of tomorrow.” ***Susan Radford (Aug. 2017) Middle School Teacher, Everett School District, WA***

Recent Professional Endorsements of the Peace Literacy Framework

“I was inspired by the message of Paul K. Chappell [whose] teaching provides unique insights into the human condition and the ways in which trauma subverts our basic human needs and leaves us susceptible to acting out violently and without empathy and how vital it is that we heed the call to peace literacy as a means of saving ourselves, our relationships, and our society.” **Ryan C. Van Wyk, PsyD, LP (Nov. 2016) Executive Director, Minnesota Trauma Project**

“In [Chappell’s] vision, the skills of peace literacy are integrated throughout all schools’ curricula from pre-K through adulthood, just as reading and math literacy skills are today. In this curricula, students learn to make conscious choices about their own behavior and their interactions with others based on skills such as empathy, compassion, creativity, and discipline. Students also learn to find healthy and productive ways to fulfill their basic needs of expression, belonging, meaning, and self-worth, particularly when those needs have been impacted by trauma. As a teacher and counselor educator, I can say the Peace Literacy curriculum created by Paul and his colleagues ...is the most comprehensive I have seen. I am committed to supporting Paul’s work and his vision for the future in any ways I can and I encourage, even implore, you too as well. His work is that vital. We will look back one day and know that Paul’s vision for the future, his path for our achieving it, and his prescription for us as a species were clearly inspired and prophetic.” **Nathalie Kees, PhD (Dec. 2018) School of Education, Emerita, Colorado State University**

“The series of events on Peace Literacy have been the highlight of my learning and professional development over this past year. Now, more than ever, students and employees are looking to offices such as mine to provide clear guidance and mentorship in response to an increasing number of conflicts and interpersonal challenges experienced in our community. Peace Literacy provides new insights on responding to conflict and how to heal relationships. This education and training should be increasingly made available to all staff, faculty, and students.” **Chris Lenn, MA (Jun. 2018) Equal Opportunity Coordinator, Office of Equal Opportunity and Access, Oregon State University**

“As a law enforcement professional for over three decades and having served as Chief of Police in a major city, I consistently seek insightful ways to impact communities. Paul K. Chappell has a unique perspective for all to hear on the intangible elements of creating safe, healthy communities that will enlighten and unburden the work of law enforcement officers and those on the front lines of community safety and well-being.” **Devon Clunis (Jan. 2020) Police Chief (Ret.) Winnipeg, Canada**

“What our youth become depends on what we provide, because development always builds upon itself. The Peace Literacy Program promotes healing of past trauma, provides a foundation for positive growth of the child’s mind, character and spirit, and helps to create a safe and nurturing environment.” **L. Alan Sroufe, PhD (Apr. 2019) Professor of Child Development, University of Minnesota**

Formal Assessment of Peace Literacy Curricula

Our curriculum has been developed by a diverse team of educational professionals and is being used by educators in K-12 and higher education classrooms across the US and Canada. In the previous pages, we have shared with you some of the **informal positive feedback** we have received from these educators about the benefits for students and teachers alike. We are now gathering **formal** assessment data on the effectiveness of our Peace Literacy curriculum.

We completed our first formal curricular assessment of student progress in basic Peace Literacy competency in Jan. 2020.

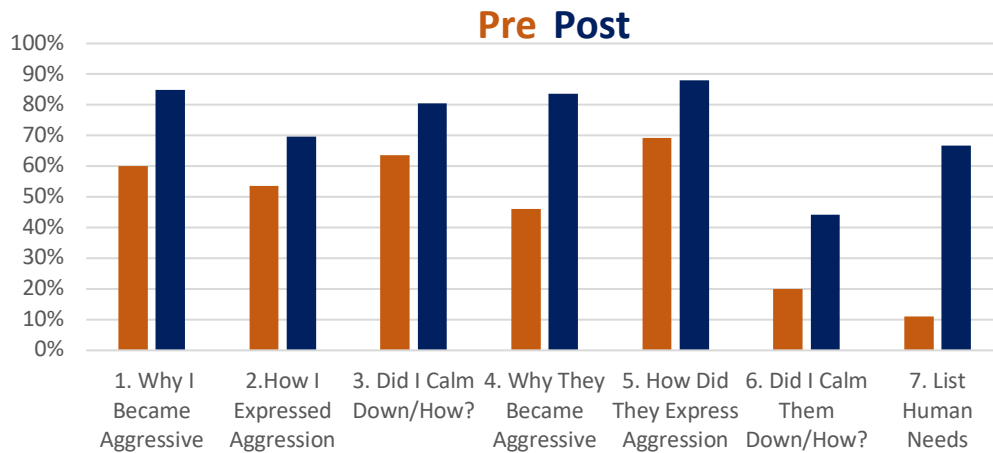
Methods:

- In April 2019, the instructional team for a mandatory 9th-grade health class in the Corvallis, Oregon school district chose Peace Literacy learning outcomes to focus on in the coming year.
- The instructional team is responsible for approximately 450 students across 16 health classes.
- We gave the instructional team a two-day “Train-the Trainers” workshop in Peace Literacy at the end of Sept. 2019, using material they had chosen in April that was focused primarily on aggression, its relationship to distress, and its anatomy.
- We developed a pre- and post-survey for their students under the supervision of the OSU Institutional Review Board.
- Our sample consisted of approximately 60 students from two of the health classes who took the survey both before and after they received 3.50 hours of Peace Literacy instruction from their teachers, focused on the aggression material from the workshop.
- Student respondents were asked in an anonymous, online, open-ended, survey format first to describe a time when they had behaved aggressively, then to describe a time when someone behaved aggressively towards them, followed by a set of questions for each description.
- Two researchers coded the responses independently, and without knowing whether the responses were from the pre- or post-condition.

Preliminary Results:

- The results of the survey were very positive across the board (see Figure 1).
- Sample from Q4: Why do you think they behaved aggressively?
 - Typical answers from the pre-survey that showed the threshold for competency in Peace Literacy had not been met included: “He was mad.” “He just wanted revenge.”
 - Typical answers from the post-survey that showed the threshold for competency in Peace Literacy had now been met included: “I think he was having a hard time at work.” “She was sad and frustrated.”

Figure 1.
 % of Students Who Met Threshold for Peace Literacy
 Competency | Corvallis 9th Grade Health Classes, Fall 2019



The health class curriculum on aggression was drawn from Peace Literacy Lesson Plan 1 (available at peaceliteracy.org). Respondents met the threshold for Peace Literacy competency (in either the pre or post condition) if their response to the survey questions had the following characteristics as outlined in the curriculum:

1. “Why Did You Become Aggressive?”

Response focused on their own distress, such as their physical discomfort, e.g., hunger, but especially emotional discomfort, (frustration, fear, embarrassment, or disrespect); rather than focusing on the behavior of other people, or some other external locus.

2. “How Did You Express Your Aggression?”

Response highlighted more systemic *categories* of behavior such as social, physical, passive, and/or posturing or warning aggression, rather than naming particular acts such as punching or kicking (particular acts of social aggression such as yelling counted).

3. “Were You Able to Calm Yourself Down? How? What Techniques Might You Use in the Future?”

Response reported genuine success, and/or suggestions for future successes involving elements such as listening with empathy, depersonalizing the conflict, giving the benefit of the doubt, and/or keeping things in perspective.

4. “Why Do You Think They Became Aggressive?”

Response focused on situational explanations that highlight the aggressor’s physical or emotional state of distress such as hunger, frustration, fear, embarrassment, or disrespect; rather than focusing on the aggressor’s personality or disposition.

5. “How Did They Express Their Aggression?”

Response highlighted more systemic *categories* of behavior such as social, physical, passive, and/or posturing or warning aggression, rather than naming particular acts such as punching or kicking (particular acts of social aggression such as yelling counted).

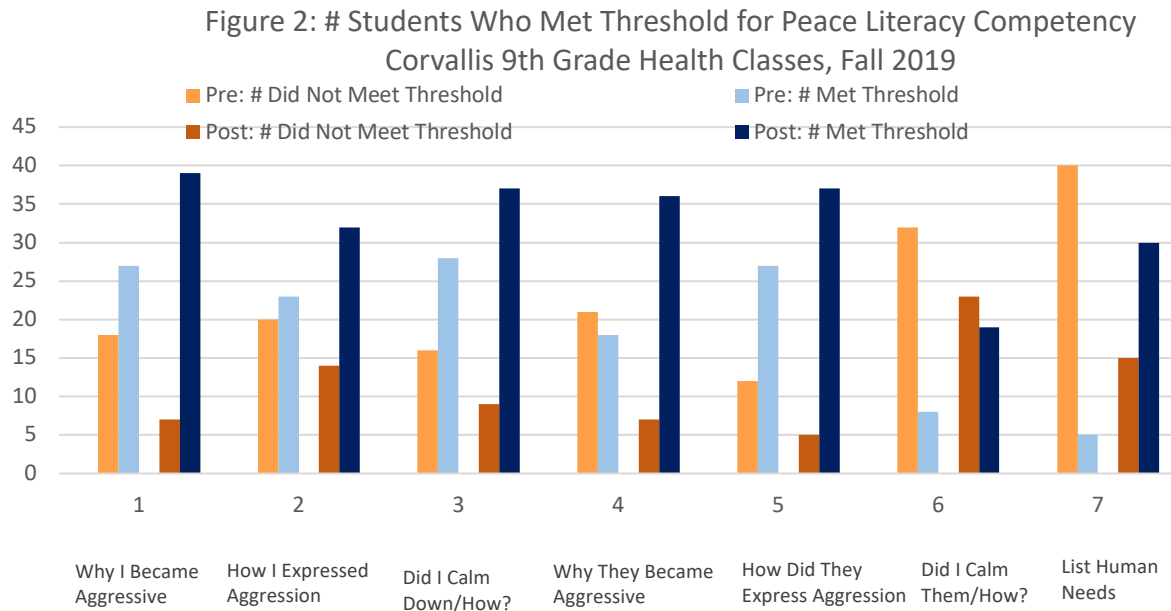
6. “Were You Able to Calm Them Down? How? What Techniques Might You Use in the Future?”

Response reported genuine success, and/or suggestions for future successes involving elements such as staying calm, listening and being respectful, and showing care and concern.

7. “What are Three Things Humans Need For Survival?”

Response listed two or more non-physical needs (e.g., purpose and meaning, belonging) rather than listing two or more physical needs (e.g., food, shelter).

Many of the students came in with some competency in Peace Literacy before they received any instruction, but as a group they all improved on every measure. **Figure 2** shows the changes in competency before and after the students received Peace Literacy instruction.



From Colleen Works, Assistant Principal at Corvallis High School:

“If we could get students and staff alike to recognize that aggression in themselves and others is first and foremost a response to distress, that would be huge.” These results show that we are headed in the right direction.

It’s worth reflecting on the challenges that make these preliminary results so promising:

- If we think peace is a literacy, then it is like math or reading and maybe even harder than math and reading.
- Students are likely to vary in their abilities with peace skills just as they do with their skills in math and reading.
- Unlike math and reading we often model for our kids the *opposite* of peace skills.
- The teachers only got 2 days of a workshop on Peace Literacy - an entirely new subject to most of them (imagine 2 days learning algebra!).
- The teachers presented the material to the students two months after the workshop.
- The students received only 3.5 hours of instruction.

This is just the first step of the analysis of the data from this one study and we also plan future assessments focused on longer-term attitudinal and behavioral changes. Stay-tuned!

Formal Assessment of Peace Literacy Curricula, continued

We expect any measures of Peace Literacy to correlate well with existing and very positive evaluative measures and outcomes associated with Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and our future assessment and research will focus on this association.

SEL is “the process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviors” (Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004, p. 4).

The methods, vocabulary, and content of Peace Literacy deepen and expand the SEL approach to our understanding of aggression, violence more generally, and peace, in six key ways.

Peace Literacy:

- 1) involves a new way of thinking about shared human needs that upends Maslow’s hierarchy and shows how non-physical needs such as belonging, purpose and meaning, and self-worth are shared human needs that we must meet if we are to get our basic physical needs met.
- 2) offers an account of the way that trauma, especially racialized trauma, childhood trauma, and war trauma can complicate the picture when those shared human needs aren't met.
- 3) uses this understanding of our shared human needs to address the root causes of suffering, rather than the symptoms.
- 4) reminds us how racism, sexism, and other forms of dominance and oppression keep us from seeing each other’s common humanity, serve as blocks to empathy, and keep us from seeing that we share basic human needs.
- 5) views peace not just as a goal, but as a skill-set or competency (hence “literacy”) that involves meeting these human needs - in ourselves and others - and handling ourselves effectively when those needs aren’t met.
- 6) is focused on students, but the life-changing perspectives and skills on offer also help teachers and administrators in their relationships with their colleagues, families, parents, and the broader community

Formal Assessment of Peace Literacy Curricula, continued

How do we evaluate and document the positive attitudinal and behavioral outcomes of Peace Literacy that we see in our students and ourselves? Based on research on SEL, once a critical mass of students and faculty have been exposed to and had some practice with Peace Literacy, we can expect positive changes in students in the following coarse-grained behavioral outcomes measured in quantitative terms:

- Numbers of complaints about bullying
- Numbers of school days missed due to fear of bullying
- Retention/Graduation rates
- Rates of civic engagement/volunteerism
- School Safety Climate Survey Scores

We are also interested in finer-grained positive changes in attitude and classroom behaviors that can be measured quantitatively with Likert-style surveys, as well as qualitatively with samples of student and faculty journaling, and short interviews:

- *Kinds* of complaints about bullying (use of Anatomy of Aggression as diagnostic tool)
- Cooperation (e.g. with lab partners in science classes)
- Aggression self-assessment/check
- *Kinds* of civic engagement/volunteerism
- Empathy/ Kindness (in students, teachers, administrators)
- Skill with navigating the epistemic and moral challenges of new technologies (AR/VR)

The Peace Literacy team at Oregon State University, led by Sharyn Clough, PhD, is working with higher education and K-12 schools from Corvallis, OR to Queens, NY to continue our development of assessment tools for use in pre- and post-test comparisons.

Our curriculum is available for free to educators via our webpage: www.peaceliteracy.org
Comments and questions welcome.

Contact **Sharyn Clough** at Sharyn.clough@oregonstate.edu.