

DEFINING COMMUNITY-BASED EPISTEMOLOGIES

WHAT IS COMMUNITY-BASED EPISTEMOLOGY?

Community-based epistemologies are ways that parents and students understand and interpret the world. By educators better understanding communities' perspectives, community interests can be placed at the center of all education decisions and reform.



COMMUNITY-BASED EPISTEMOLOGIES ARE NOT THE NORM IN SCHOOL

Community-based epistemologies/perceptions have often been historically different from (and marginalized by) school-based epistemologies. This has been a long-running problem for schools and an even bigger problem for students, families and communities. This is because school-based epistemologies have been normalized, causing community-based epistemologies to be ignored.



For many community members, schools are "official" institutions, which represent the interests of local or national government, not their communities.

Often, school leaders do not understand that minoritized community members, who have been historically oppressed, see schools differently than teachers, administrators, and other staff.



HOW CAN SCHOOL LEADERS HONOR COMMUNITY-BASED EPISTEMOLOGIES?

School leaders must structure school in ways that not only accommodate but also incorporate and celebrate aspects of community. However, instead of doing this, many schools disparage or blame certain communities or cultural behaviors.

