

DITCHING DEFICIT

Deficit thinking can negatively impact how we view and interact with students, focusing on perceived weaknesses rather than strengths. Reflect on deficit language you've encountered and explore how reframing these ideas can foster a more supportive and understanding environment. By ditching deficit ideology, we strengthen relationships and build a foundation for equity in education.

DEFICIT THINKING

What deficit words or ideas about students have you heard?

REFRAMING FOR EQUITY

How could you reframe those words or ideas in ways that build understanding and strengthen relationships?

Reframe these common phrases rooted in deficit Ideology toward a more structural ideology.

DEFICIT IDEOLOGY	STRUCTURAL IDEOLOGY
Achievement Gap →	Opportunity Gap
Drop Out →	Pushout
Generational Poverty →	Generational Inequity
At-risk Students →	
Underperforming Schools →	
Limited potential →	
Homeless →	
Underachiever →	
Failure to thrive →	
Scarcity mindset →	
Food desert →	
Lack of role models →	
Disengaged →	
Dysregulated →	
Struggling reader →	
Low income →	
Disadvantaged background →	
Broken home →	
Slow processor →	
Dysfunctional home →	
Unhealthy behaviors →	
Your example: →	
Your example: →	

PHRASE 1

Choose one of the phrases from the left column on the previous page and identify how it is **steeped in stereotypes and biases**.

Selected Phrase:

Your critique:

PHRASE 2

Choose another phrase from the left column on the previous page and identify how it **ignores barriers, challenges and inequities**.

Selected Phrase:

Your critique:

PHRASE 3

Choose a 3rd phrase from the left column on the previous page and identify how it **justifies perpetuation of privilege**.

Selected Phrase:

Your critique:

PHRASE 4

Choose a 4th phrase from the left column on the previous page and identify how it **blames the victim**.

Selected Phrase:

Your critique:

What is one particularly harmful example of deficit ideology in your sphere of influence? What will you do to help bridge people to a structural/equity view?