Community Circle Script #2: Equity vs. Equality

**Objective(s):**

* To understand what equality (or “fairness”) means.
* To understand what equity means.
* To understand the difference between equity and equality to understand how these terms apply to our classroom.

**Time:** 30-45 minutes

**Materials:** board or paper/white board to write on (optional), writing utensil

**Other Preparation:** creating space for students to sit in a circle

**Core Activity:** Discussing Equity vs. Equality

**Opening:** Today we’re going to talk about fairness.

*For grades K – 3:*

I’m going to divide you into 4 groups. We will count off by 4s. 1s stand in this corner, 2s in this corner, 3s in this corner and 4s in this corner of the room.

Let’s imagine everyone in Group 1 fell and scraped their knee. What could I give them to help? [Ask for student responses] A band-aid! Here you go [Give a band-aid to each child in Group 1].

Now imagine that everyone in Group 2 has a stomach ache. Everyone in Group 1 got a band-aid. So that things are fair, I’m going to give you all a band-aid too. [Hand a band-aid out to each child in Group 2]

Imagine that everyone in Group 3 stepped off the curb and sprained their ankle. So that things are fair/equal, I’m going to give you all a band-aid. [Give a band-aid to each child in Group 3]

Lastly, everyone in Group 4 is fine. They did not hurt anything. But to keep things fair, I’m going to give you all a band-aid. [Give a band-aid to each child in Group 4]

**Learning Questions:**

* Did everyone get the same thing? That’s fairness, That’s equality.
* Will the band-aid help Group 1? How about Group 2, 3 or 4? Why not? What do these other groups need? What would be helpful for them? What would have been a better solution?
* So giving people what they need, even if it’s different from others, is equity.

**Reflection Prompts:** *The following prompts can be used to extend your conversation or guide conversations in future community circles.*

* Prompt 1: Let’s think of another example [give a couple examples before having the students generate them - so that there is repetition in learning the concepts. Keep repeating the definitions of fair/equal vs equality]
* Raise your hand if you wear glasses! Should I give everyone glasses? Why not? That would be fair/equal, but not helpful. But just given them to students who need them, that’s equality - giving people what they need to be successful.
* Do we have anyone who is left handed? Have you ever tried to cut with scissors? It’s really difficult for left-handed people to use right handed scissors, so we give them left handed scissors. [For effect, you could demonstrate with two students what happens when lefties use righty scissors and vise-versa]
* Are there other examples you can think of where not everyone in our class will need the same thing?
* Prompt 2: Can you think of any examples of when different students might need different things?
* EXAMPLES: when some people need a break and others don’t, when some people need a snack and others don’t, when some people need to work by themselves and some people need to work in a group, when some people get motivators and others don’t, when some people need medicine and others don’t
* Prompt 3: Remember how we’ve had previous community circle time where we talked about our similarities and differences? Are we all the same? Might we have differences in our learning styles that need different supports? So if I give one student something that is different from what you got, what could you think to yourself?
* Should we say “That’s not fair!”? or should we think “We all need different things to help us succeed?”
* If you’d like to talk to me about what someone else received, I'm happy to do that but please rather than saying “That’s not fair” I would like you to say “Mx. X, can I ask you a question about what you gave to my friend?”
* What do you think we learned today about fairness?

*For grades 4 and 5:*

**Opening:**

* What does it mean to be fair? What do you think of when I say the word “fair”?
* What are some examples in your life of being fair?
* How does it feel when things are fair?
* What are examples in your life of being unfair?
* How does it feel when things are not fair?
* What do you do when things feel unfair?

**Reflection Prompt:**

Fairness is important sometimes, but other times it doesn’t make sense. Let’s think about an example. Let’s say that one of the students in our classroom gets too cold during class and needs to get their jacket. If I am being fair, everyone would get their jacket so that everyone has the same thing. But what if another student is too hot? Having them wear a jacket doesn’t make any sense for what they need; maybe a fan would be better. In this example, being fair by giving everyone the same thing does help everyone get what they need.

**Learning Questions:**

* What other examples can you think of where people might need different things?
* What do you think we learned today about fairness?
* What are some ways that you can help make sure everyone gets what they need in our classroom community?
* How do we learn or know when someone needs support with something (e.g., academically, socially, emotionally)? How might we advocate for them?
* What can you do if you feel you need extra support with something? Who might you talk to?

**Closing:** Thank you for sharing in the circle today. What’s one word for how you felt about our circle today?