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MAKING WAY FOR EQUITY: ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS' INTERPRETATIONS
OF EQUITY (139 pp.)

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Treating education as a socially transformative and morally conscious enterprise calls for educators to expose and improve social conditions related to oppression. These beliefs herald a different kind of practice for teachers and administrators in public schools, a practice that deals directly with dilemmas of equity and pluralism. Limited understanding of what happens in the interest of achieving equity in our schools warrants investigation into the experience of the school principals who lead and live this charge. The purpose of this study was to find out how elementary school principals interpret and address issues of equity in their practices.

Complicated questions related to social mechanisms and human experience call for a framework that accounts for human agency and variability, rather than eliminating them (English, 2006). This investigation sought the idiographic, contingent, and situated knowledge with which elementary school principals make sense of the charge for equity. Grounded theory method was used for this research.

Three categories emerged from the data. Principals used an internal process to build recognition of equity; they made external efforts to educate others and engage them in equity work, and they addressed equity issues across procedural contexts of class placement, discipline, scheduling, and curriculum. *Reconceptualizing gaps, witnessing*

and *repositioning* played substantive roles in addressing equity at school sites. The educators were aware that crucial breakthroughs in consciousness had as much to do with improving equity as did mandates and policies. They saw that sustaining changes for equity required attention to the operational structures of the school, and to the structures of consciousness by which those operations were conceived.