

MATH AS ADVOCACY

**HOW WHOLE GROUP DISCUSSION CAN
MOVE THE NEEDLE ON EQUITY**

A LITTLE ABOUT ME

- 12 year teacher of students in math
- Same middle school, taught all grades
- I write
- I tweet
- #EduColor
- ... that's about it

THE WORK OF GOOD TEACHERS

- Teachers lesson plan with intention
- Teachers differentiate for students
- Teachers have a beginning, middle, and end
- Teachers engage in professional learning communities
- Teachers have quiet and hard-working classrooms
- Teachers are well-organized
- Teachers give homework every night
- Teachers have pretty binders with a plethora of data to share

I AM A BAD TEACHER



I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOING

- I don't lesson plan daily (sometimes, not at all)
- I know I have to give a quiz weekly ... but that's about it
- I know where things are, but I couldn't tell you how I organize things
- I have a Do Now, and a lesson that flows from it, and classwork ... and that's about it
- I don't know, I don't know, I don't ...

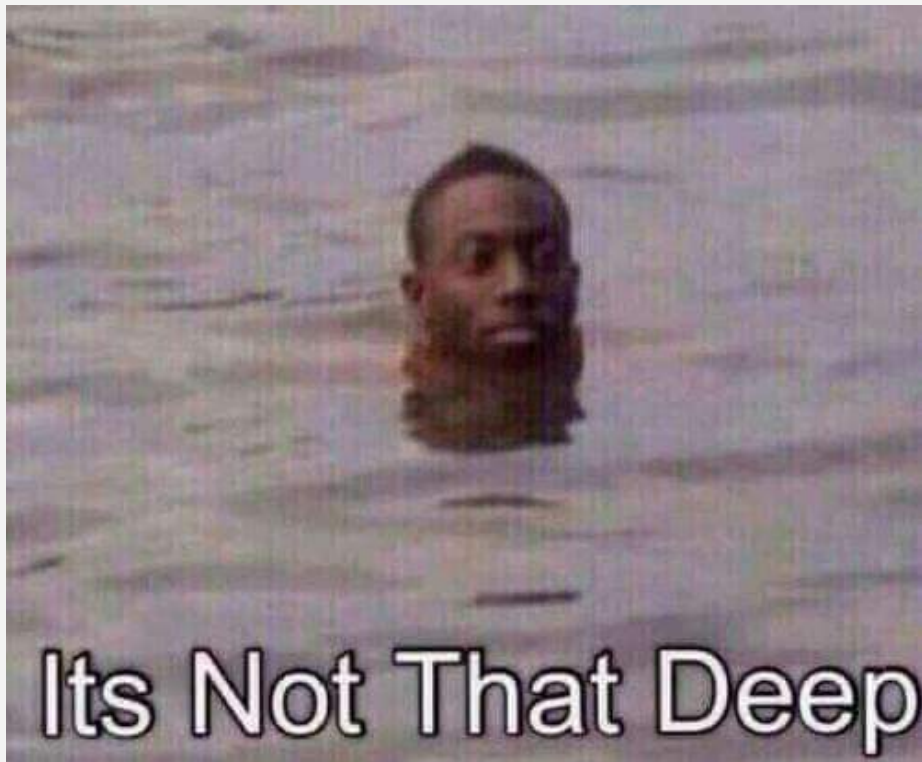


WHAT'S IT LIKE TO NOT KNOW?

- Too many people come in with a stance of knowing it all
- Too many people need to be the authority in the room ... or else
- Too many administrators want to cut down on margins of error, so they standardize
- Too many people pretend to want to hear students, but only want to hear how adult voices in the way students speak

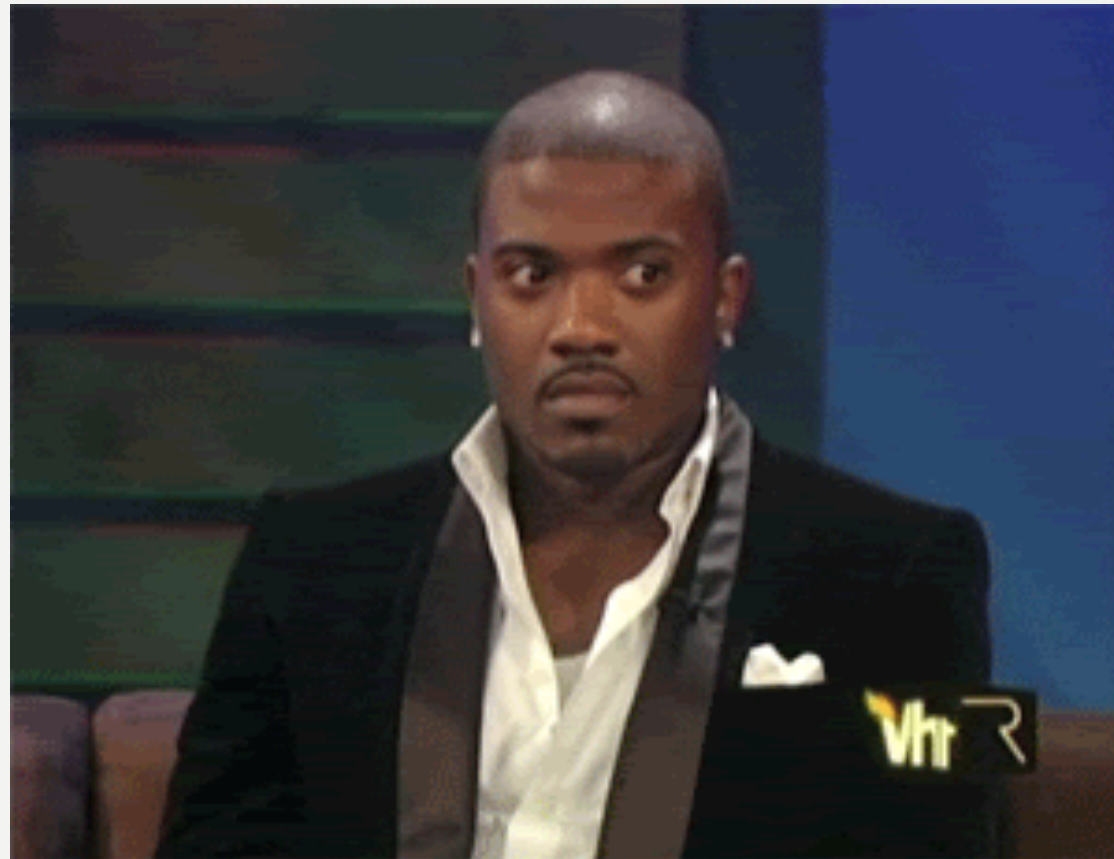


MY PROCESS



- I have a warm-up activity I'd like to start with
- I think about it over morning coffee
- I think about how each student is bound to respond
- I let my lesson flow from the warm-up
- I do my best to stop being in front of the classroom after 15 minutes
- I let them work

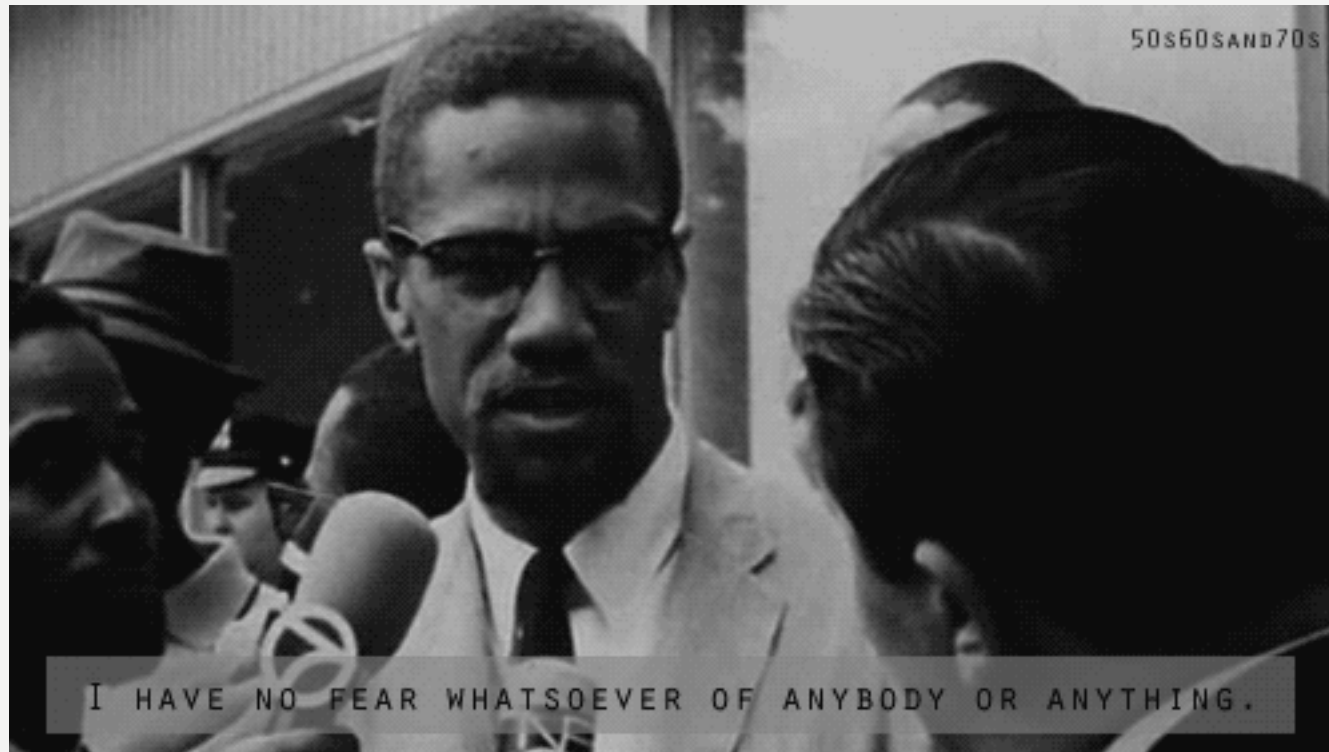
WHAT DOES IT HAVE TO DO WITH WHOLE CLASS DISCUSSION?



PEEP MY SUBVERSION

- One of my working principles: “I don’t know, you tell me”
- I might go through a whole day without once affirming whether someone got the correct answer or not
- On the surface, it *looks* like I’m following what everyone else is doing (mainly for survival)
- Active listening means pulling yourself (the adult) back and responding to the claims only when necessary
- Underneath, I’m actively moving the power away from myself

SCHOOLS AS ANTI-FASCIST INSTITUTIONS



WHOLE CLASS DISCUSSIONS

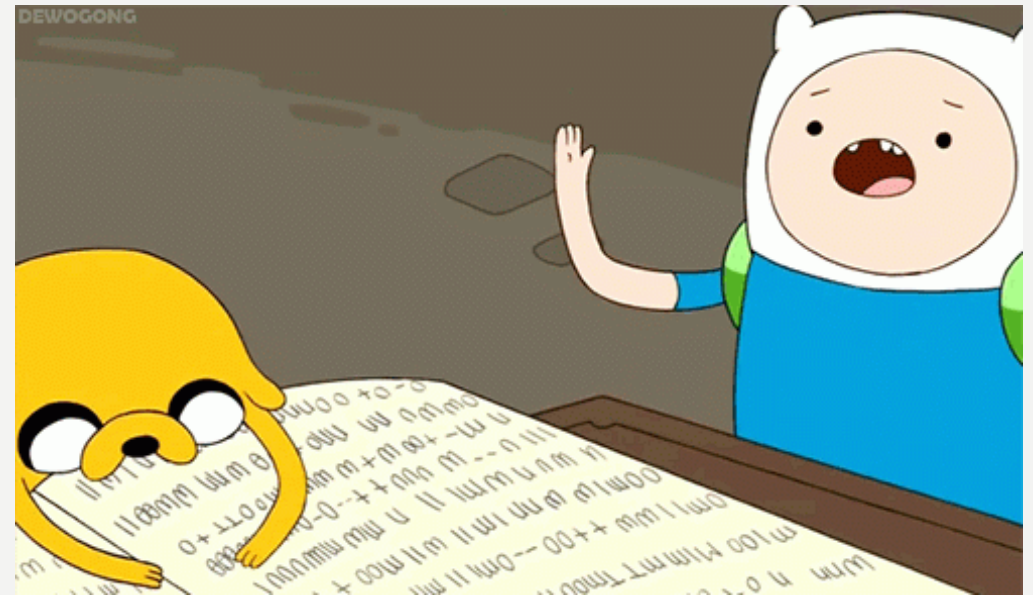
- Our students must learn to not be denied
- Our students must be prepared for adults that don't like them
- Our students must respond effectively to the tension in their relationships
- Our students must know how to ask better questions
- Our students must tap into the source of power

AND!

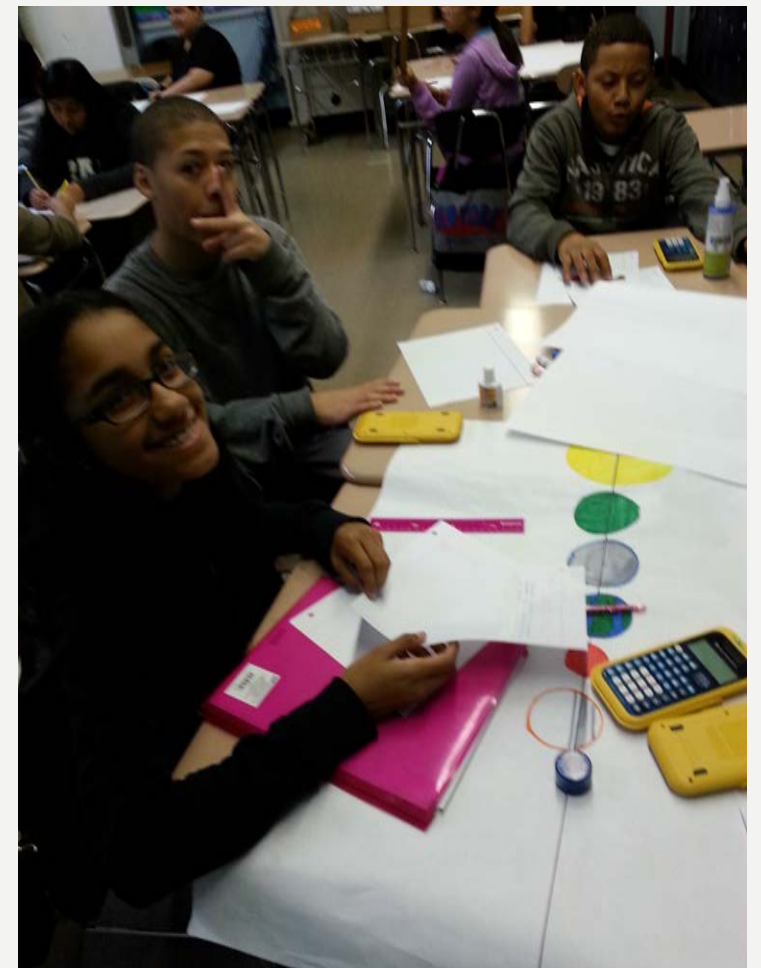
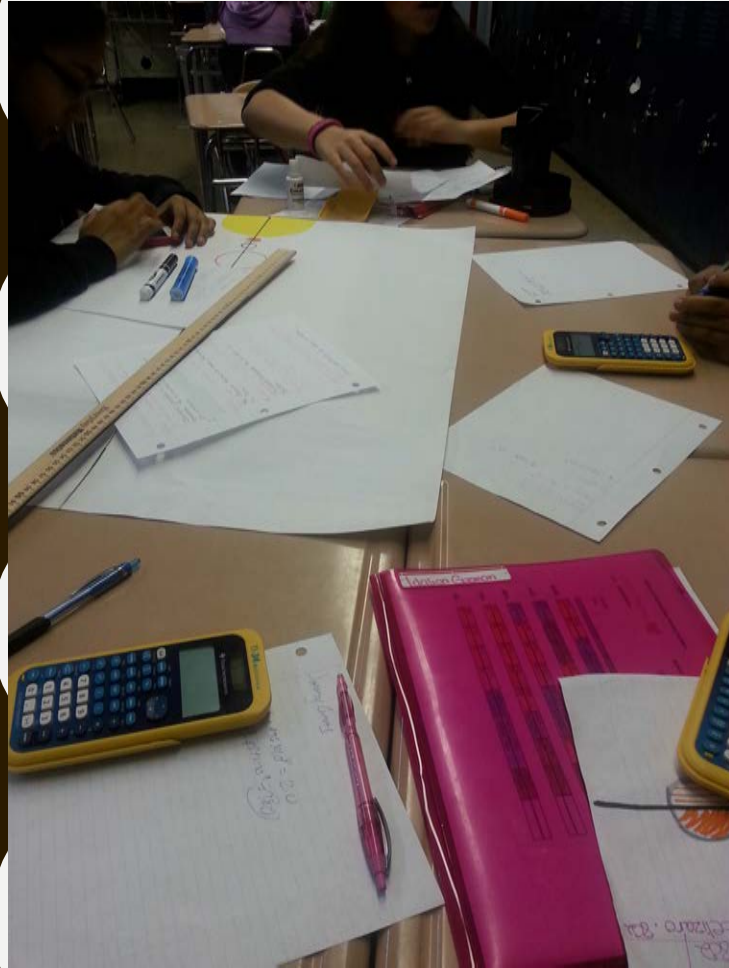
- Sometimes, it won't look like what you want
- Sometimes, they will be frustrated
- Sometimes, they'll stay silent
- Sometimes, we as adults will react against our intentions, too
- Sometimes, our biases show up when we're not reflective
- Learning is not linear

CARROTS AND STICKS

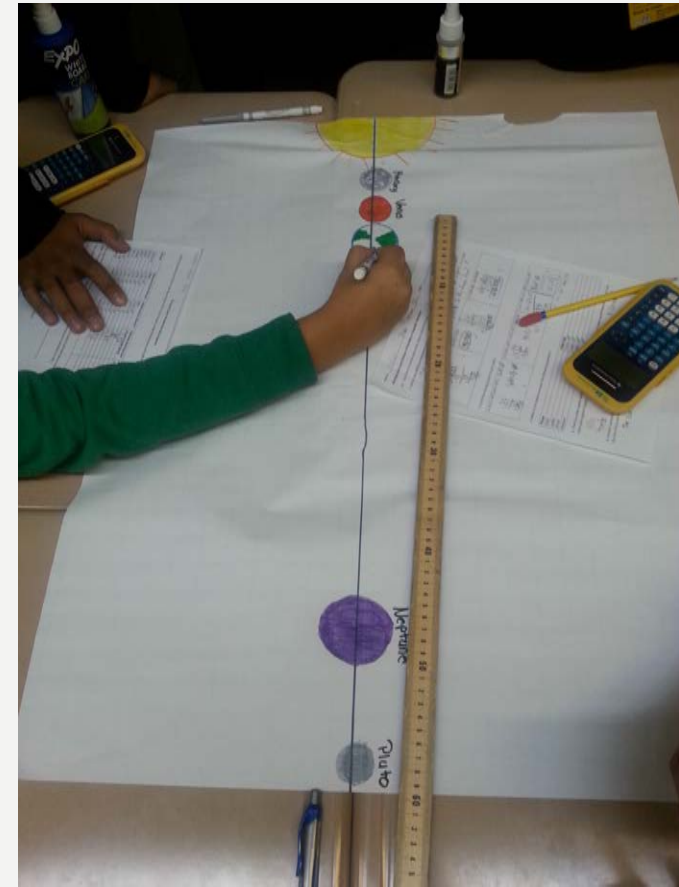
- Carrots and sticks like “participation points” still favors the extroverted if we don’t have an internal rubric for what participation means
- How we react to our students’ voices often dictates whether they’ll say something the next day
- Teach like a champion, but who’s winning?



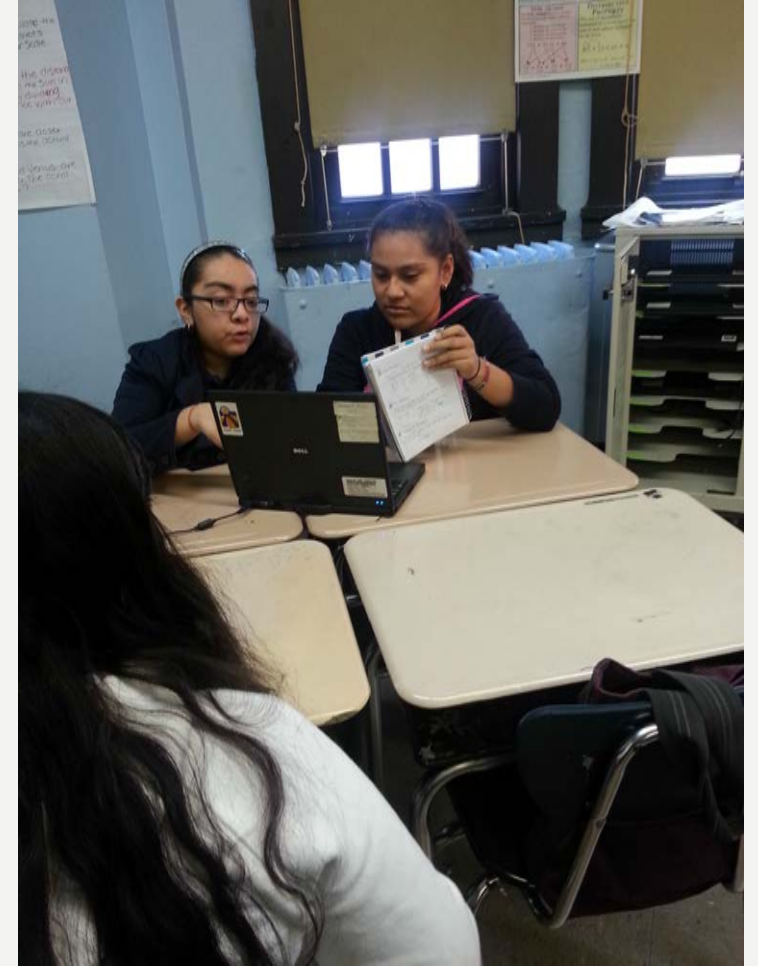
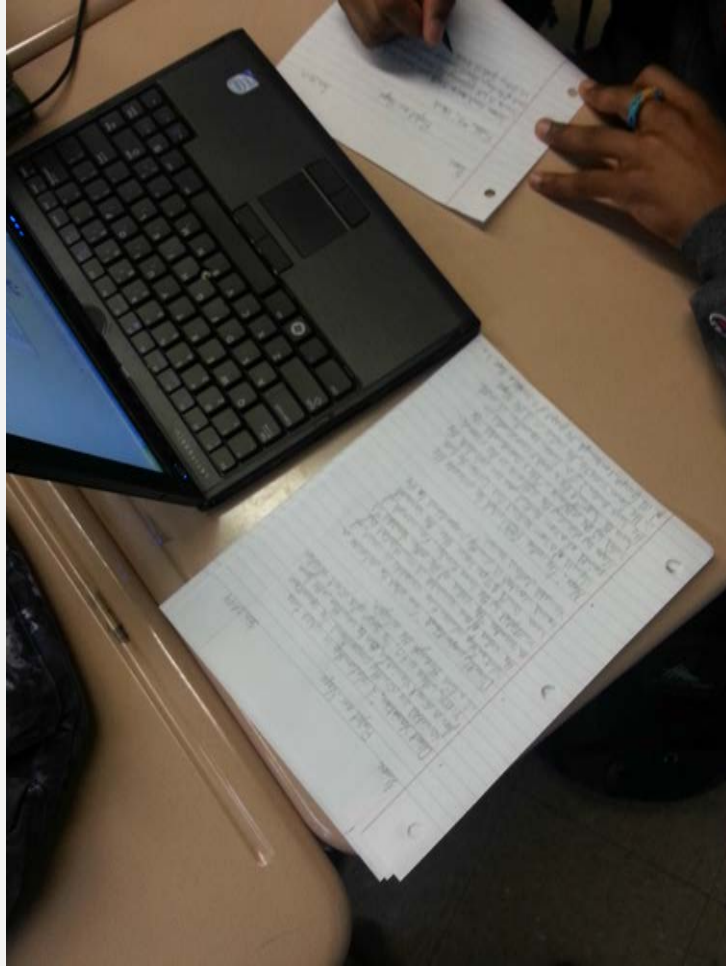
THE SOLAR SYSTEM PROJECT



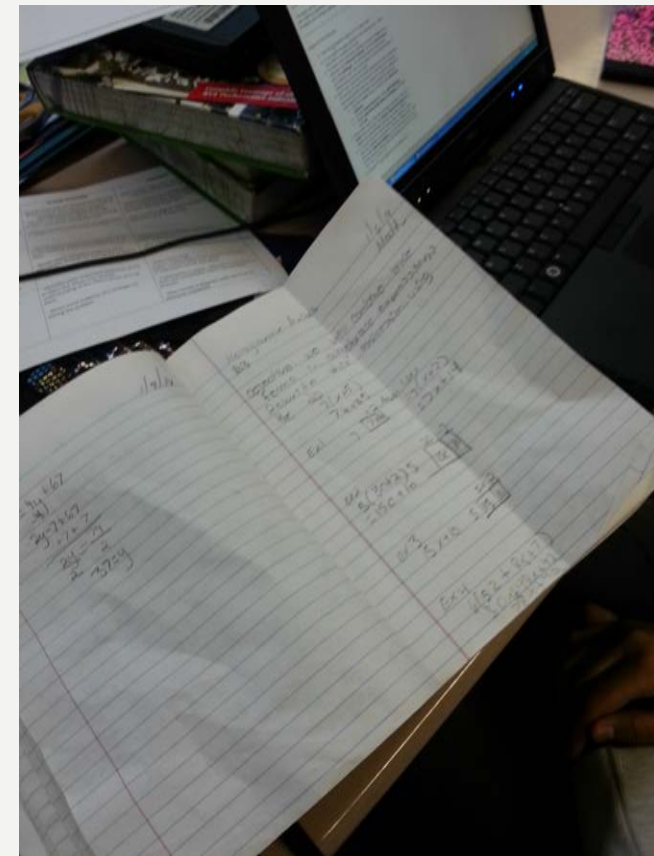
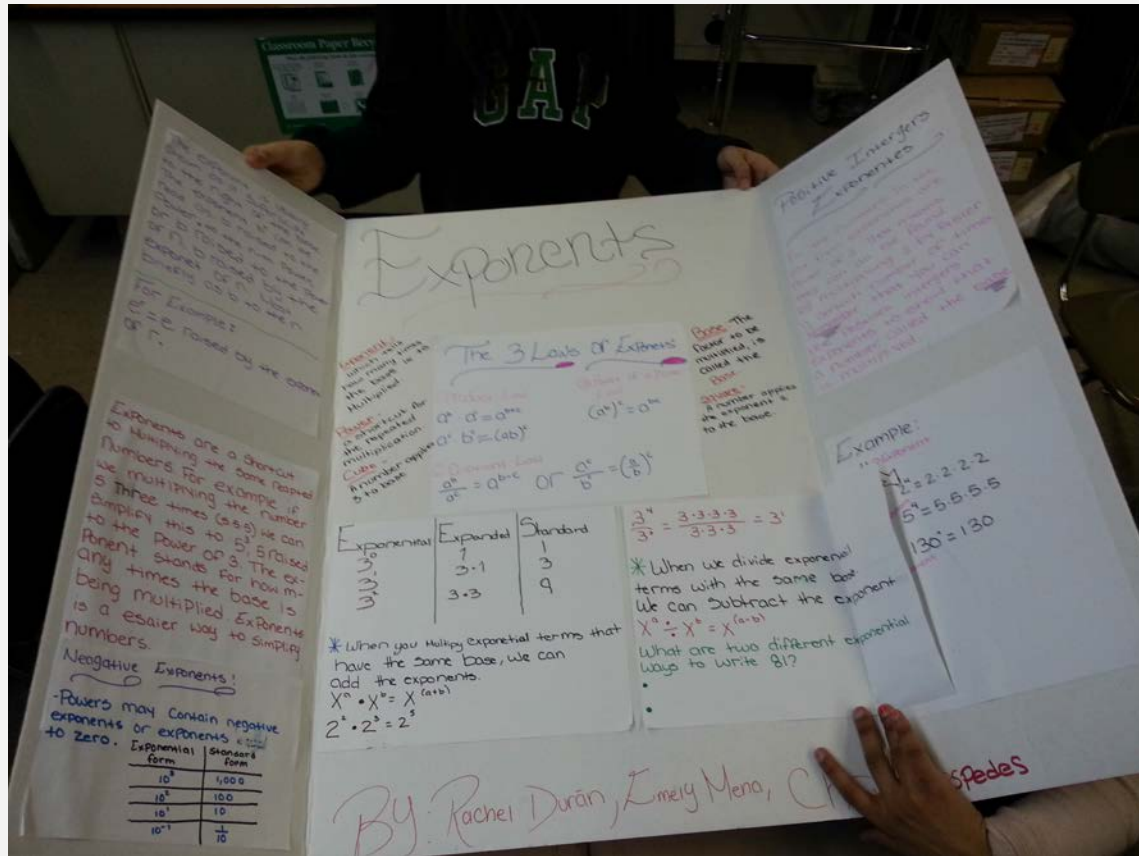
THE SOLAR SYSTEM PROJECT (CONT.)



LESSON PLANS



LESSON PLANS (CONT.)



A BIG DISCLAIMER

- I'm not special because I'm the only one who can do this
- I am consistently insecure that my students know this material
- But I'll have to trust them, even when we're both wrong
- I've done this for 12 years, and I'm still learning
- I'm still doing this under a regime that's still hyper-constricting

THE WORK

- Imagine anti-fascist classrooms
- We must work from the spaces where our students are most vulnerable and reimagine from there
- We have an obligation towards deeper self-reflection
- We must do better to have equitable conversations with parents, students, and our colleagues across racial and gender lines



THANK YOU!

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- #EduColor

