Ensuring Safe and Inclusive School Cultures and Climate: Leadership Practices for Advancing Educational Equity

Session Three

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Recalling our commitments for engaging in courageous conversations

- Stay engaged
- Speak your truth
- Experience discomfort
- Expect and accept non-closure

(Singleton & Linton, p. 18, 2006)
Session Three Objectives

- Reflect on the concept of White Fragility
- Deconstruct the cultural nature of learning & examine the role leaders play in transformative change towards equity
- Describe the components of inclusive and critical practice
- Discuss key practices for leading and supporting critical discourse
Creating Safe & Inclusive School Cultures & Climate: Foundations of Equity-Oriented Leadership Practices
Race Matters!
Transformative change towards equity is **persistent systemic change** that **disrupts and dismantles** historical legacies of **normative assumptions**, **beliefs**, and **practices** about individual characteristics and cultural identities that marginalize and disenfranchise people and groups of people (Great Lakes Equity Center, 2012).
Possessing Critical Consciousness

Commitment to Inclusive & Critical Practice

Equity-Oriented Leader
Lead Transformative Change Towards Equity with the Cultural Nature of Learning in Mind!
The Cultural Nature of Learning

- **Cultural Histories**: What people bring with them.
- **Created Cultures**: The work people do together; the cultural norms, practices created together.
- **Institutional Cultures**: What’s already there; cultural norms and practices that exist in education.
Having Courageous Conversations: Reflecting on Pre-Reading

Individually (5min)

• Review pre-work on Dr. Robin DiAngelo's concept of White Fragility.

In Pairs (5min)

• Share which assignment you chose (article or video).
• Discuss the concepts and your reflections of the article/video using page 2 in your pre-work.

Whole Group (10min)

• What impressions did you have about the reading? Why?
Two minute Journal Entry
A set of dominant locations that are historically, socially, politically, and culturally produced.

Rights, values, beliefs, and experiences purported to be commonly shared by all but which are actually only consistently afforded to White persons.

A constellation of processes and practices rather than skin color alone.

A dynamic, relational, phenomena that operates all the time on a myriad of levels.

(DeAngelo, 2011, p. 56).
Dr. Robin DiAngelo on White Fragility
Factors that Inculcate White Fragility

Segregation

Universalism & Individualism

Entitlement to Racial Comfort

Racial Belonging

Psychic Freedom

Racial Arrogance

Constant Messages that White People are More Valuable – Through Representation in Everything
How Understanding White Fragility Aids in Developing Equity-Oriented Skills

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<th>Segregation</th>
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<td>Universalism &amp; Individualism</td>
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- Accepting that White racial privilege exists; Working to redress the association of White as “good” and non-White as “bad.”
- Embracing the myriad experiences of racial groups as unique and valuable.
- Expect and accept not having the familiarity, stamina, or tolerance for racial discomfort or race-based stress; viewing discomfort as learning and an opportunity.
- Recognize and critically consume the White dominance in history, media, imagery, religion, discourse, etc.
- Acknowledging White persons’ ability to live unmarked by race.
- Accepting that White persons’ economic, professional, and personal success is not disconnected from a legacy of power and domination.
- Understand that White persons cannot avoid internalizing the message of White superiority, as it is ubiquitous in mainstream culture (Tatum, 1997; Doane, 1997).
- Segregation
- Universalism & Individualism
- Entitlement to Racial Comfort
- Racial Belonging
- Psychic Freedom
- Racial Arrogance
- Constant Messages that White People are More Valuable – Through Representation in Everything
Two minute Journal Entry
Promoting Safe & Inclusive Schooling: Demonstrating a Commitment to Inclusive & Critical Practice
Transformative leadership for equity is defined as a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems. Transformative leadership creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of mobilizing efforts towards equity.
Possessing Critical Consciousness

Commitment to Inclusive & Critical Practice

Equity-Oriented Leader
Recall that equity-oriented leaders must possess critical consciousness by engaging in reflective practice.

- Critical Self Awareness and Self Examination
- Recognizing Implicit Bias
- Understanding Power and Privilege
Equity-oriented leaders extend critical consciousness to demonstrating a commitment to inclusive and critical practice!

Commitment to Inclusive & Critical Practice

Critical Language Awareness
(Briscoe, Arriaza, & Henze, 2009)

Critical Collaborative Inquiry
## Commitments to Inclusive & Critical Practice

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<th>Demonstrate Critical Language Awareness</th>
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<td>• an understanding of how language in written, physical, oral and digital forms silence, marginalize or oppress people with less power (Briscoe, Arriaza, &amp; Henze, 2009).</td>
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<th>Engage in Critical Collaborative Inquiry</th>
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<td>• Shared and on-going ways of being and doing that center the perspectives of historically marginalized groups in dialogue intended to (de)construct individual and collective knowledges, and use data to identify inequities, and co-create strategies or actions towards ensuring inclusive, educational practices (Rogoff, 2003; Waitoller &amp; Kozleski, 2013).</td>
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The Three D’s: Practices of Critical Language Awareness

Discern
Can I/we recognize if and why language is problematic?
(Individual and group reflection on how we use language.)

Decide
What are the approaches and supports that I/we can use to disrupt marginalizing language?
(Intentionally deciding on time, context, and approaches for disrupting.)

Disrupt
How will I disrupt?
(Implementing a thoughtful, relevant, and responsive approach to disrupting oppressive language practices.)

(Briscoe, Arriaza, & Henze, 2009, p. 31).
Critical language awareness seeks to:

• **Make visible** assumptions that normally go unexamined.
• **Recognize** how language encodes social relations.
• **Identify and challenge** prejudice embedded in ordinary, daily discourse practices.
• **Interrogate and redirect** the nature of questions asked about schooling.
• **Raise questions** that have not been asked.

(Briscoe, Arriaza, & Henze, 2009, p. 31).
“...[I]nterrupting people’s use of language in ways that shame or anger them will not help us accomplish our goals” (p. 39), we must work with as opposed to enforce on to “build greater awareness of the power of language” (p. 39) via three key principles:

(Briscoe, Arriaza, & Henze, 2009)
As you consider when, where, and how to interrupt, think about...

(Briscoe, Arriaza, & Henze, 2009, p. 31).
Observe-Think-Feel-Desire (OTFD): A Script for Disrupting Oppressive Language

Observe

and reflect concrete, objective, factual observations.

Think

-aloud thoughts based on observations (do not put the person on the defensive).

Feel

- Express your actual feelings/emotions you have as a result of the observation.

Desire

- A statement of desired outcome.

Rosenberg & Chopra, 2015
The Three D’s in Practice

Individually (20min)

- Read your assigned scenario.
- Discern what about the scenario is problematic.
- Decide what approach to take to intervene.
- Explain how you would disrupt. What would you say? Note when? where? why? Etc...

Rosenberg & Chopra, 2015
The Three D’s in Practice

In a team meeting, a White, Male First Grade teacher says to you:

“I always enjoy having ‘pow-wow time’ with my students; that is what we call morning meetings in my class.”

Rosenberg & Chopra, 2015
The Three D’s in Practice

Following a community meeting about race relations in the district, a White mother and fellow church member shared the following sentiment with you:

“I think it is the responsibility of parents to talk about race at home. I don’t think it’s the school’s job.”

Rosenberg & Chopra, 2015
The Three D’s in Practice

During a focus group about school climate, a White female student says:

“I think that most students are treated fairly, but the unruly kids are singled out. But they are probably unruly because of undiagnosed ADHD and the teacher doesn’t know how to respond to that.”

Rosenberg & Chopra, 2015
The Three D’s in Practice

In a leadership team meeting about bullying, harassment and intimidation, you hear a Black male administrator say:

“I think most students feel safe. Our community is more conservative. It is normal that some students may not fit in.”

Rosenberg & Chopra, 2015
The Three D’s in Practice

Individually (20min)

- Read your assigned scenario.
- Discern what about the scenario is problematic.
- Decide what approach to take to intervene.
- Explain how you would disrupt. What would you say? Note when? where? why? Etc...

In Pairs (10min)

- Discuss your Three D’s and summarize highlights to share with the whole group

Whole Group Share (10min)

Rosenberg & Chopra, 2015
Student & Community Member Interview Data Summary Preview
Wrap Up: 3 -2-1 Discussion

3 Key take-aways from this session

2 Immediate next steps to forward this work personally

1 Thing that you would like to cover next session
It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences. ~Audre Lorde, 1996
References


DiAngelo, Robin J. (2010a). Why Can’t We All Just Be Individuals?: Countering the Discourse of Individualism in Anti-racist Education. InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies, 6(1). Retrieved from http://escholarship.org/uc/item/5fm4h8wm


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McIntosh, P. (1988). White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondence through work in women’s studies. In M. Anderson, & P. Hill Collins (Eds.), Race, class, and gender: An anthology (pp. 94-105). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.


