

Cultural Competency & Beyond *for* Educational Leaders

Missouri Learning Forward Conference

Designed & Facilitated by Andrea Dixon-Seahorn, Ed. D.
Executive Director of Elementary Education
Liberty Public Schools

Today's Professional Learning Goals:

- **Define cultural competency** within the context of a school organization.
 - **Reflect** on one's own Cultural Frame of Reference...
 - **Assess** your own school organization's level of cultural competence.
 - **Discuss** how district policies and school-wide practices might inhibit cultural competence across the organization.
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Today's Agenda...

- ❖ Overview of Cultural Competency & Beyond...
 - ❖ Cultural Frame of Reference Exercise
 - ❖ Cultural Proficiency Continuum “*Mix & Match*” Activity
 - ❖ Tabletop Discussion: The impact of educator bias on underserved student groups
 - ❖ Wrap-Up/ Concluding Remarks
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How do we define **Cultural Competency**?

Cultural Competence- a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system...and enable that system [school organization]...to work effectively in “cross-cultural” situations.

Source: Cross, et al. 1989



How do we define **Cultural Competency**?

Culture implies the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values and institutions of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group.

Competence means having the capacity to function effectively.

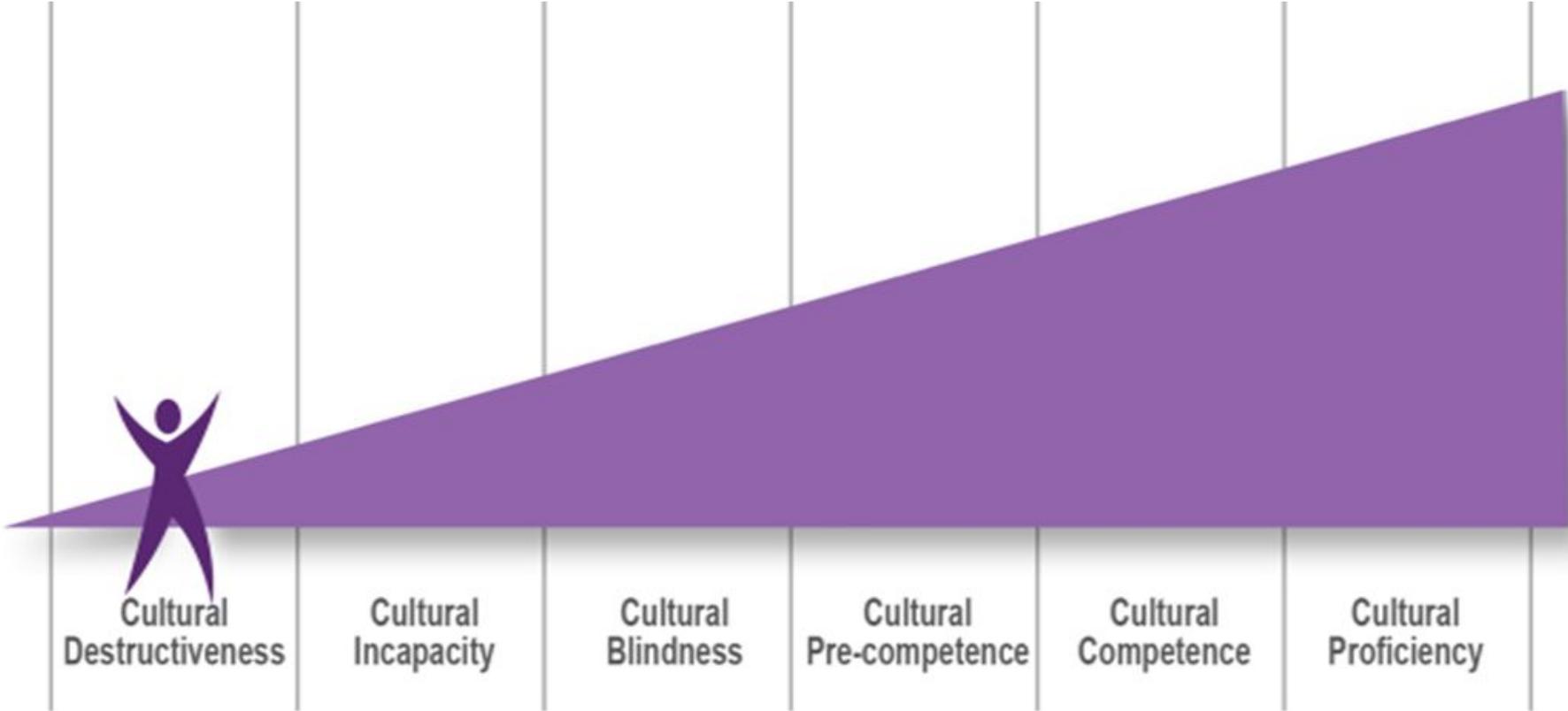
Source: Cross, et al. 1989



Understanding One's Own *Cultural Frame of Reference:*

Personal Reflection Exercise-
[Who Am I?: *Identity, Exposure, Isolation, Bias...*]

Cultural Proficiency Continuum- *Dr. Terry Cross & Associates* National Center for Cultural Competence- Georgetown University



Cultural Destructiveness-

“See the difference; stomp it out”

Central Theme- Using one’s power to eliminate or eradicate the culture of another.

Examples- genocide or ethnocide; exclusion laws; avoiding or excluding certain topics, historical events, or other aspects of the curriculum.



Cultural Incapacity-

“See the difference; make it wrong”

Central Theme- Asserting the superiority of one’s own culture, and behaving in ways that disrespect/devalue other cultures.

Examples- disproportionate allocation of valuable resources to certain groups, and not others; lowered expectations; expecting “others” to assimilate or change.



Cultural Blindness-

“See the difference; act like you don’t”

Central Theme- Acting as if cultural differences do not matter, or as if there are not differences among or between cultures.

Examples- discomfort in noting differences; beliefs or actions that assume the world is fair and achievement is based on merit.



Cultural Pre-Competence

“See the difference; respond to it inappropriately”

Central Theme- Recognizing the limitations of the organization’s practices or one’s own skillset to meet the needs of a diverse student population or workforce.

Examples- delegation of “diversity work” to others rather than taking collective responsibility; implementing quick-fix, packaged short-term programs; unclear district-wide expectations for diversity, equity, & inclusion



Cultural Competence

“See the difference; value it”

Central Theme- Communicating or behaving in ways that meet the needs of others before meeting one’s own needs (employing learner-centered approaches).

Examples- student advocacy; on-going education about oneself (self-awareness) and others (sensitivity); support and modeling, and taking risks to achieve organizational/school-wide goals.



Cultural Proficiency

“See the difference; respond to it positively. Engage & adapt.”

Central Theme- Enacting organizational policies that lead to effective “*cross-cultural communication*” and interactions that close educational opportunity gaps.

Examples- interdependence; personal reflection & critical examination that leads to transformation; advocacy for and alliance with cultural groups other than one’s own; congruence of **policies & practices** (organizational level); alignment of **values, beliefs, & behaviors** (personal level).

Examining the School Organization's Levels of Cultural Competence...

Organizational Assessment Tool

Cultural Proficiency Continuum- "Mix & Match" Activity

Cultural Competence: Understanding Our Biases

Bias is defined as prejudice in favor of *or* against one thing, a person, or a group as compared with another usually in a way that is considered to be unfair. Biases may be held by an individual, group, or institution, and can have negative or positive consequences.

Source: UCSF- Office of Diversity & Outreach



Cultural Competence: Understanding Our Biases...

[beliefs, feelings, attitudes, values...]

- ❖ **Explicit/Conscious Bias**- A person is very clear about his or her feelings and attitudes, and related behaviors are conducted with intent.
- ❖ **Implicit/Unconscious Bias**- Bias that operates outside the person's awareness and can be in direct contradiction to espoused beliefs and values.

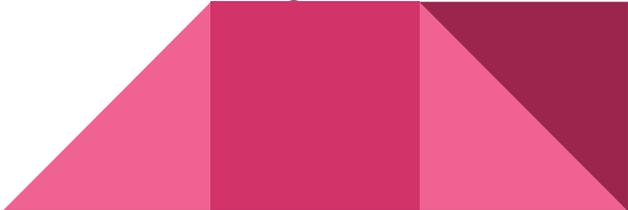
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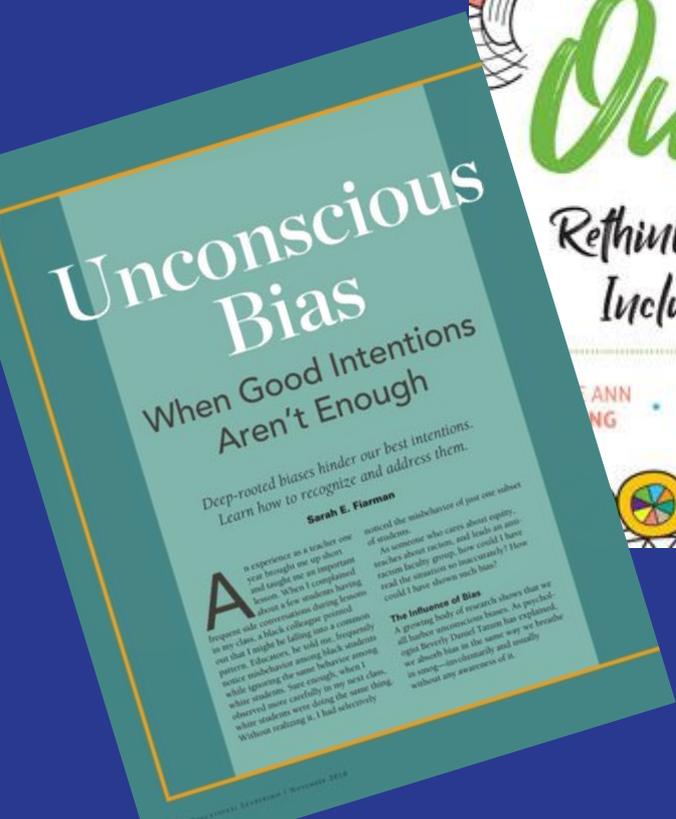
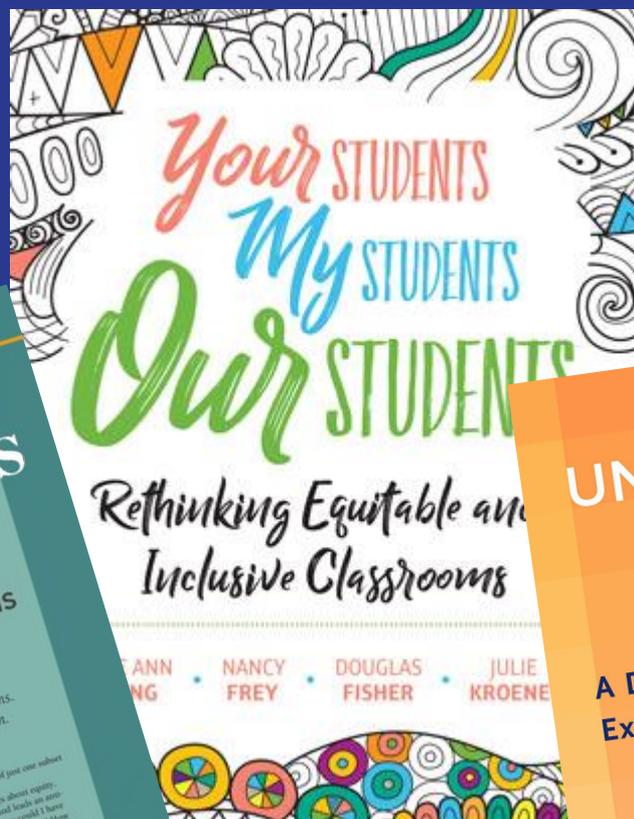
5 INTENTIONAL Ways to Address Bias in Schools:

- ❖ **Increase Awareness-** learn about bias in a supportive school culture.
- ❖ **Name It-** Recognize bias in yourself/others through courageous conversations.
- ❖ **Anticipate It-** Understand that bias exists; seek to intentionally reduce it.
- ❖ **Build Empathy-** Replace negative attitudes/assumptions about students and their families with positive experiences and interactions.
- ❖ **Be Accountable-** Collect data to reveal school-wide patterns of bias.

Fiarman, S. (2016), *Unconscious Bias: When Good Intentions Aren't Enough*, Educational Leadership, p. 10-15.



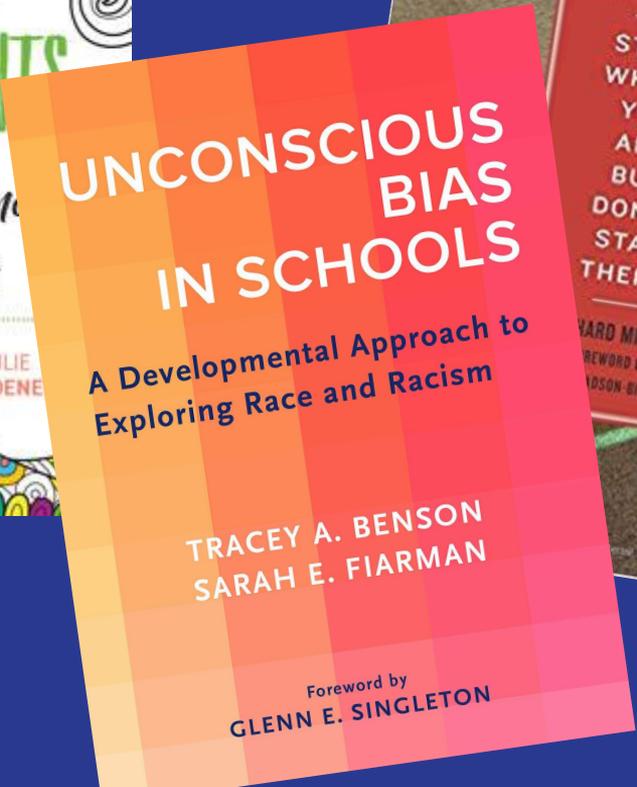
Resources



An experience as a teacher one year brought me up short and taught me an important lesson. When I complained about a few students having frequent side conversations during lessons in my class, a black colleague pointed out that I might be falling into a common pattern. Educators, he told me, frequently notice misbehavior among black students while ignoring the same behavior among white students. Sure enough, when I observed more carefully in my next class, white students were doing the same thing. Without realizing it, I had selectively noticed the misbehavior of just one subset of students.

As someone who cares about equity, teachers about racism, and leads an anti-racism faculty group, how could I have read that situation so inaccurately? How could I have shown such bias?

The Influence of Bias
A growing body of research shows that we all harbor unconscious bias. As psychologist Beverly Daniel Tatum has explained, we develop bias in the same way we breathe air—unintentionally and usually without any awareness of it.



UNCONSCIOUS BIAS IN SCHOOLS

A Developmental Approach to Exploring Race and Racism

TRACEY A. BENSON
SARAH E. FIARMAN

Foreword by
GLENN E. SINGLETON

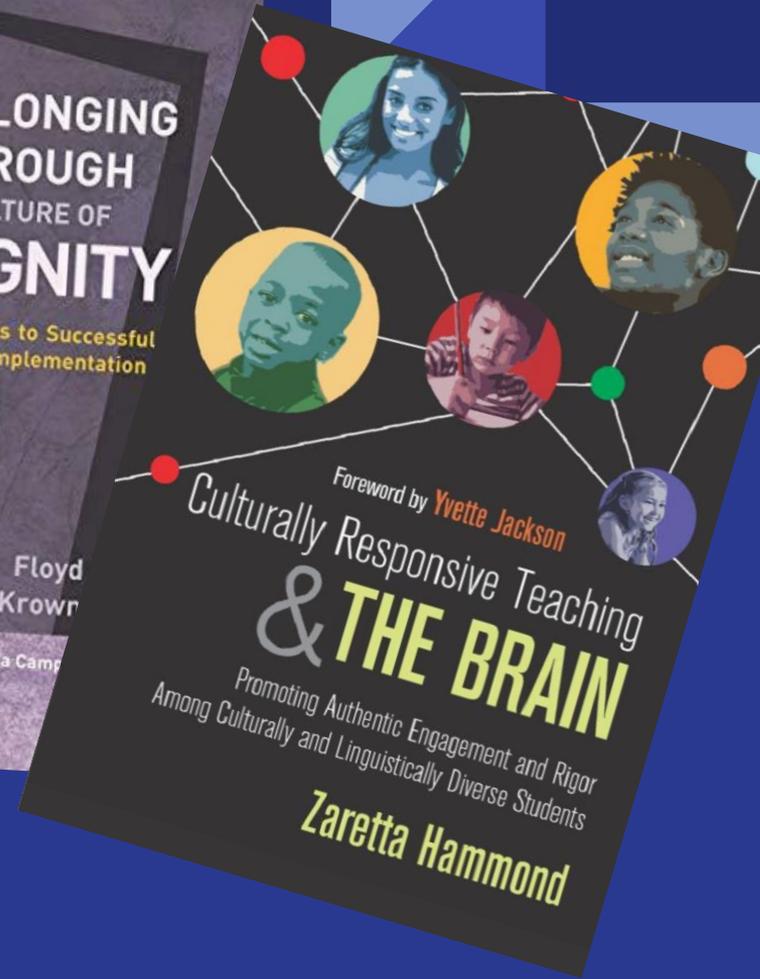
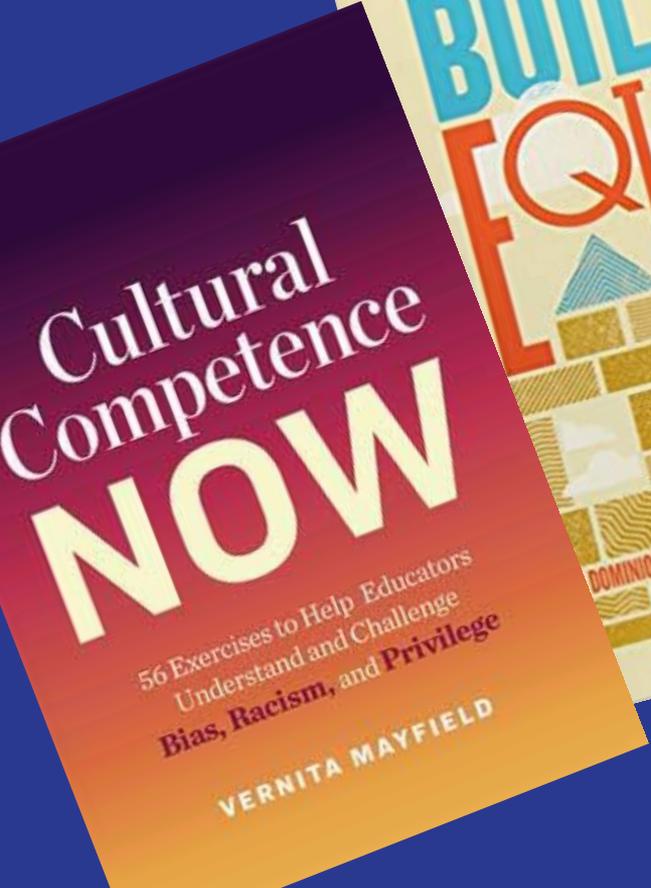


UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY,
OPPORTUNITY GAPS,
AND TEACHING IN
TODAY'S CLASSROOMS

START
WHERE
YOU
ARE,
BUT
DON'T
STAY
THERE

BY
TRACY A. BENSON
AND
SARAH E. FIARMAN
FOREWORD BY
GLENN E. SINGLETON

Resources



THANK YOU!

Contact Information:

Andrea Dixon-Seahorn, Ed. D.

andrea.dixonseahorn@lps53.org

816.736.7098