Teaching and Leading for Inclusion, Equity, and Excellence
Questions to Consider

GIVEN ALL OF OUR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE EDUCATIONAL EQUITY:

- Why so long?

- What's in the way?

- What will it take?
Inclusion:

Students and employees feel welcomed, seen, respected, understood, cared for, and safe.

Equity:

Educational disparities based on race, economics, and other dimensions of difference are reduced and eliminated. Positive school outcomes are distributed equitably across all demographic and identity groups. Negative outcomes are reduced for all groups.

Excellence:

We keep the bar high in all we do. We educate students for life and for reflective citizenship. We empower students and employees in the preservation of their identity and culture. Substance, depth, and critical thinking are more important than either compliance or test scores.
Phases and Objectives of the Work

Phase One: Tone and Trust
- Forming a community of engaged adult learners
- Building a climate of constructive collaboration
- Overcoming past resistance to “diversity” work
- Transcending the rhetoric of shame and blame

Phase Two: Personal Culture and Personal Journey
- Acknowledging each person’s unique cultural narrative
- Providing a functional definition of cultural competence
- Clarifying the process of growth toward cultural competence
- Connecting adult cultural competence with student outcomes

Phase Three: From Social Dominance to Social Justice
- Exploring issues of privilege, power, and difference
- Understanding the dynamics of social dominance
- Linking issues of dominance to current educational inequities
- Creating strategies for moving from dominance to social justice

Phase Four: Classroom Implications and Applications
- Reinforcing adult–student relationships as the key to achievement
- Acknowledging classroom successes, challenges, and roadblocks
- Applying the Seven Principles for Culturally Responsive Teaching
- Implementing action research for inclusion and equity

Phase Five: Systemic Transformation and Planning for Change
- Identifying organizational barriers to equity and inclusion
- Applying a three-stage model for organizational transformation
- Creating a holistic integrated approach to school improvement
- Assessing outcomes related to the professional development process

For a discussion of this work in actual school settings, see Gary Howard’s article, *As Diversity Grows, So Must We*, in the Selected Articles section of the manual.
Levels of Engagement

- Societal/Structural
- Organizational
- Professional
- Personal
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Which lens of difference has been the greatest challenge for you in your life?

1. Share a story from your own experience that illustrates how one of these dimensions of difference has created a challenge for you.

or

2. In what ways do you see students or adults in your school experiencing challenges related to their lenses of difference?

3. Are there other lenses of difference you would like to add to this list?
The will and the ability
to form authentic and effective relationships
across differences

Pair-and-Share Conversation:

1. Share your responses to this definition of Cultural Competence.

2. In what ways were authentic relationship and Cultural Competence either missing or present in the Lenses of Difference challenges you discussed earlier?
The more culturally competent and culturally responsive we are as adults, the less our students have to play “give it up” in our schools.

The less pressure they feel not to be who they are, the more energy they have available to engage and learn.

Gary R. Howard
Tracking Deep Equity Outcomes

Level 1: Shift in the tone and depth of adult conversations
- More trust/more honesty
- Take on difficult topics
- Clearer leadership focus on equity

Level 2: Improvement in the climate of inclusion for students
- Increased belongingness/connectedness
- Reduced incidents of bullying and harassment
- More positive student-adult relationships
- Students empowered to speak their truth

Level 3: Broad implementation of Culturally Responsive Practices
- The 7 Principles of CRT are embedded
- Critical thinking about complex socio-political topics
- Support staff engaged in cultural competence work
- “Leading for Equity” guides all decisions

Level 4: Significant reduction in educational disparities
- Discipline and Special Education referrals
- Achievement levels
- Access to higher level courses
- Graduation and college attendance rates
Deep Equity Key Components

· Equity Leadership for Administrators
  One-day session for central office leaders and principals

· School Teams CRT Facilitator Training
  Four non-consecutive days for school teams in year 1, two or three additional follow-up days in year 2

· Systemic Multi-Year CRT PD in Buildings
  Led by principals and teacher leaders using Gary Howard’s manual and videos

· Youth Equity Stewardship: YES!
  Five non-consecutive days with teams of youth ambassadors from district high schools and/or middle schools

· Evaluation Design
  Tracking professional growth and student outcome data
Cultural Competence and Courageous Practice:
Working Together for Inclusion, Equity, and Excellence

Some Suggested Personal Action Commitments

1. Apply an equity and inclusion lens to everything I do.

2. Pay attention and complement the ways that my colleagues and students are breaking through cultural barriers in their personal relationships.

3. Create opportunities to talk with and get to know colleagues and students I don’t usually interact with.

4. Look for examples of inclusion or exclusion happening in my classroom, school, and workplace.

5. Invite my colleagues and students to share their cultural background, experiences, stories, and diverse perspectives.

6. Listen to the concerns, struggles, and challenges that my colleagues and students are having related to equity and inclusion, and collaborate with them in finding solutions.

7. Invite parents and community members into the equity discussion, and include their points of view in the way I do my work.

8. Examine my curriculum materials for bias, stereotyping, or exclusion of diverse perspectives.

9. Challenge and re-examine some of the assumptions I make about people who are different from me.

10. Visit a cultural celebration or event that highlights one of the cultures that our students come from.

11. Speak up at work or in family gatherings when someone makes negative or stereotypical comments about a group of people.

12. Attend a religious service that is different from mine.

13. Hold myself accountable for continuing my own growth related to cultural competence.

Circle one of the above personal action commitments that you will work on over the next few months, or write your own action commitment here:
Leadership for Systemic Equity:
Working Together for Inclusion, Equity, and Excellence

Suggested Action Commitments

1. Hold myself accountable for continuing my own growth related to cultural competence, culturally responsive practice, and equity leadership.

2. Apply an equity lens to every decision I make.

3. Put support structures and procedures in place to assure that my leadership team and my staff have access to ongoing quality professional development for Equity.

4. Align our Equity work with all other school district and building-based initiatives.

5. Position the Equity and Culturally Responsive Practice (CRP) work as an integrative strategy for all we do, rather than “one more thing” we have to do.

6. Build CRP indicators into all look-for and walk-through rubrics and instruments.

7. Include Equity and Culturally Responsive Practice indicators in all teacher evaluations.

8. Highlight the creative Equity strategies that staff members are using in their work.

9. Create opportunities for staff members to share their cultural background, experiences, stories, and diverse perspectives.

10. Listen to the concerns, struggles, and challenges my staff members are having related to the Equity work, and collaborate with them in finding solutions.

11. Build Equity outcomes and CRP into all School Improvement Plans.

12. Empower a team of Youth Equity Leaders as full partners in supporting adult Equity PD, engaging other students, and improving school climate.

13. Implement a comprehensive evaluation design to track outcomes and continually improve practices related to the Equity work.

14. Implement PD for Equity and Culturally Responsive Practice with all of my support staff.

15. Invite parents and the community into the Equity discussion, and include them in professional development activities.

16. Other leadership action commitments………. 
Our primary leadership action commitments:

• **Informing** people about the educational disparities that exist in our schools.

• **Igniting** people with a sense of urgency and passion for the work.

• **Inspiring** our colleagues with a vision of the possible – We *can* do this.

• **Modeling** this vision in our own work.

• **Supporting and Sustaining** them in their work.
Stewardship:

expands the notion of leadership to include actions that arise from the caring for our collective home and restoring the balance and integrity of our natural and cultural communities. Stewardship is about having shared power among others rather than dominance over others. Stewards of youth equity see their accountability in the quality of their own educational experience and civic participation as well as in the academic success of others.

youthequitystewardship.com
(206) 909-7917
Youth Equity Stewardship Series

Presenters: Benjie Howard & Wade Antonio-Colwell

Format: Interactive Student Workshops, “Listen Up” Community Presentation, Strategy Planning

Description:

The Youth Equity Stewardship Series is up to five gatherings designed to prepare middle and high school youth along with adult advocates from across a district to be powerful change agents in building inclusive, inspired school climates. The content combines live musical performance, structured dialogue, creative expression activities, and experiential learning. The arts-based curriculum is designed to build deeper relationships and connections across the spectrum of identities including (but not limited to) culture, race, gender identity, ability, age, belief, economics, learning preferences and academic history. All participants engage with the YES! workbook for processing their ideas and insights as they move through phases of the Youth Equity Stewardship Series curriculum. The series concludes with a culminating “Listen Up” community presentation of youth voices, and is followed by a strategic planning session with teachers to transfer the learning from the series into existing school improvement efforts.

“Listen Up” Community Engagement

After completion of the sessions, YES! participants join Wade and Benjie in a culminating performance on-stage to share their experiences, their stories and their creative expression with peers, teachers, administrators, parents and community members. Listen Up is a multi-media collaboration combining youth voice, adult testimony, spoken word, movement, visual art gallery, video, and the original hip hop & folk music used in the five sessions from Wade & Benjie’s album Borderless. The experience is an opportunity for the broader community to witness and learn from the participants, and for the participants to share their passion and their plans for taking real action in their school community. Listen Up also serves as a starting point for other teachers and administrators to join as advocates with the powerful youth equity stewards in multi-generational collaboration for the purpose of supporting positive change in their schools.

YES! Phases

1. Personal Culture / Personal Journey
2. Social Dominance to Social Justice
3. Creative Expression / Creative Resistance
4. Community Awareness/ Community Action
5. Stewardship in Motion/ “Listen Up” Community Engagement

Intended Outcomes

Shift in the tone and depth of youth and adult conversations

- New informed cross-cultural relationships
- Greater cultural awareness and empathy through stories
- An empowered sense of leadership and positive influence

Improvement in the climate of inclusion for students

- Students gain skills for active stewardship of inclusive climate
- More positive student-adult relationships
- Students build soulful, inspired, brave, dialogue spaces

Broad implementation of Equity Stewardship

- Students present and lead professional development session
- Students lead dialogue and activities with peers and younger students
- Equity Stewardship as part of school culture

Youth contribution to larger equity work

- Students gain a critical lens for recognizing and eliminating educational disparities
- Youth teams partner with adult Equity teams at building level
- Youth perspective informs shifts in educational practice

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