
Transformative Systems Through Equity

— Dr. Nikole Hollins-Sims —

Disclaimer

The following presentation, including the views, opinions, and information provided are solely those of the individual presenter and do not represent the PA Department of Education.

Who am I?



- She/her/hers
 - School Psychologist
 - Wife
 - Mother
 - Sister
 - “Only” Daughter
 - Family Member
 - Church Member
 - Virgo
 - Alumna
 - Millersville University
 - Indiana University of PA
-

How do we transform systems with an equity mindset?



Language Matters!

What is Equity?

Every student has **access** to the educational resources and rigor they need at the **right moment** in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, religion, language, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, family background and/or family income.

www.ccsso.org

www.aspeninstitute.org/education

In schools, how is this possible?

Equity is when every student has what they need to succeed.

EQUALITY

EQUITY

N A P E
National Alliance for
Partnerships in Equity
Education Foundation

National Alliance For Partnerships In Equity | www.napequity.org

What does the field say?

- “Equity does not apply to me...we are a rural district and don't have racial diversity...”
- “This is just a new buzz word....”
- “We aren't doing equity, we're focused on trauma and mental health...”
- “Here's one more thing, where can I get training to check this off....”

Educational Inequities

- Societal Inequity
- Socioeconomic Inequity
- Cultural Inequity
- Familial Inequity
- Programmatic Inequity
- Staffing Inequity
- Instructional Inequity
- Assessment Inequity
- Linguistic Inequity



Approximately 25% of all K-12 public school students did **not** have access to an Internet connection or an adequate device to access online materials at home (Kelley & Sisneros, 2020).

Historical Context

- Prior to the 1950's – Segregation
- The 1950s – Desegregation
- The 1960s – Integration for equal access and equal rights
- The 1970s – Equal benefits and multiculturalism
- The 1980s – Diversity
- The 1990s – Cultural Competence
- The 21st Century – Cultural Proficiency -- Are we there yet?

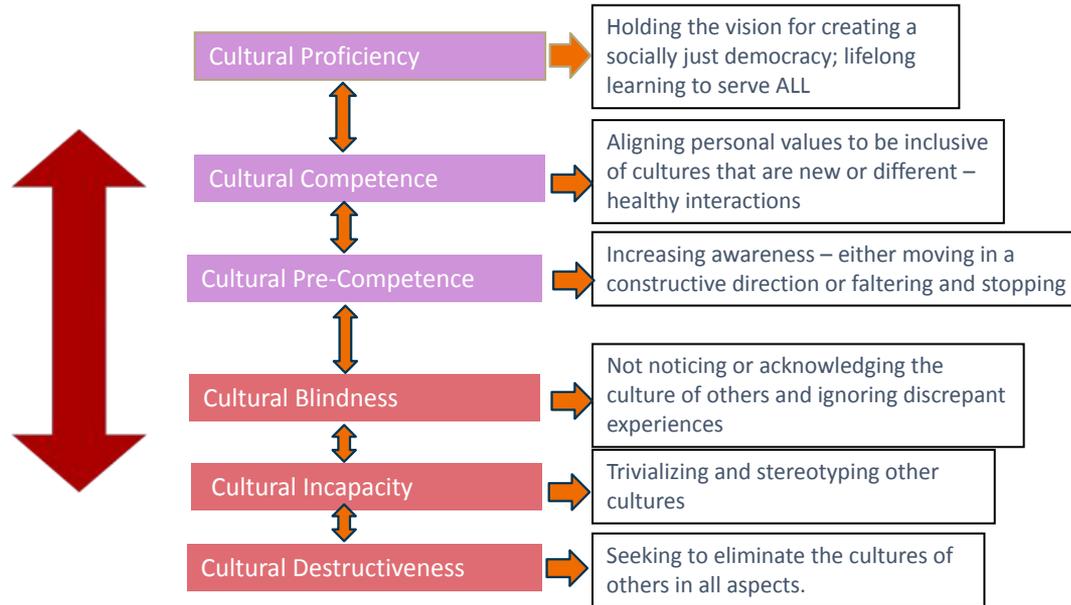
Why do we need to detect disproportionality?



Disproportionality Is Complex



The Cultural Proficiency Continuum



Adapted from: Cultural Proficiency for School Leadership by Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 2019

How does this sound in schools?

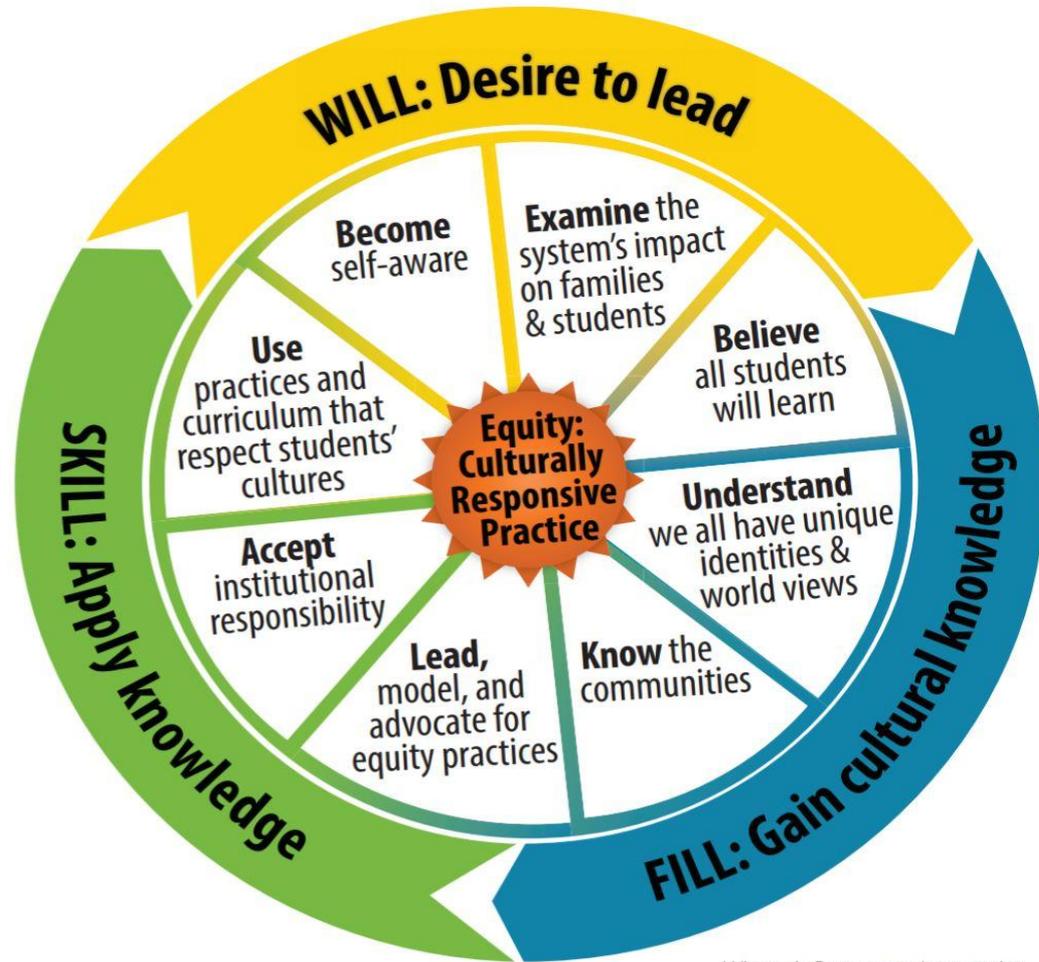
- “Their parents won’t come to parent conferences because they don’t care about the education of their children.”
- “Why try to help them? They will just end up in jail, just like their dad!”
- “Don’t put these kids in my class. I’m not a special ed teacher.”

Source: *Cultural Proficiency for School Leadership* by Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 2019

What is Belonging?

Experiencing appreciation, validation, acceptance, and fair treatment within an environment. When people feel that they belong, they aren't distracted and worried about being treated as a stereotype or a singular part of their multidimensional personhood.

Source: *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity*, Cobb & Krownapple, 2019



What is MTSS?

A multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) is a proactive and preventative framework that integrates data and instruction to maximize student achievement and support students social, emotional, and behavior needs from a strengths-based perspective.



Source: <https://mtss4success.org/essential-components>

Core MTSS Foundations

Equity is Tier 1

Standards-Aligned Core Instruction

Shared Ownership

Data-Based Decision Making

Professional Learning

Universal Screening

Family-Community Engagement

Moving from Systems to Classrooms

At the classroom level how do we ensure:

- Culturally relevant pedagogy
- Culturally responsive practices
- Equitable instruction (academically, behaviorally, & social-emotionally)
- Safe and positive learning environments for brave conversations.

Engaging Instruction to Increase Equity in Education

Chaparro, Nese, Mcintosh (2015)

Instructional Strategy	Purpose	Questions to Consider?
Use Explicit Instruction	Clarifies student learning expectations and teaching objectives	Did I lead students through doing it on their own?
Build and Prime Background Knowledge	Creates shared foundational schema to optimize student learning	Do I have a basic understanding of my students' cultures and how that might affect their background knowledge, participation, or understanding of new knowledge?
Increase Opportunities to Respond	Provides high-degree of student engagement and practice	Did I provide an equitable # of opportunities to respond for all student groups?
Provide Performance Feedback	Structures teacher knowledge of student progress and provides opportunities to correct misunderstandings	Am I providing performance feedback to students in multiple ways that are appropriate for their needs?

Equity in a Tiered Behavior Framework

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Honors student strengths through student voice• Staff engage in self-awareness• Use the values and norms of students, families, and communities when determining school-wide and classroom expectations.• Use equitable acknowledgement systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to Tier 2 interventions is consistent across student groups• Tier 2 increases instructional opportunities, feedback, and positive home-school communication with students' families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individualized and contextualized.• Meaningfully include students and families in goal-setting and intervention design.• Trust• Two-way communication• Limit assumptions about home life and family values

Foundational Elements

- Collect, Use, and Report Disaggregated Discipline Data
- Implement a Preventative, Multi-Tiered, Culturally-Responsive Behavior Framework
- Use Engaging Instruction to Reduce the Opportunity Gap
- Develop Policies with Accountability for Disciplinary Equity
- Teach Strategies for Neutralizing Implicit Bias In Discipline Decisions

How can you **TRANSFORM** your universe?



Put on your Infinity Gauntlets.....

Mind

- What's your/our "why?"
- What's the mission, vision, ultimate goals?



Space

- What are the conditions? Current landscape?
- What's the data story?
- How to establish the foundations and solid rock?



Audit Tools

Assess the health of the current system through an equity mindset.

- Who do we need to engage?
- How do we find & determine our priorities?
- What's our roadmap?

How can we be
data rich AND
information rich?

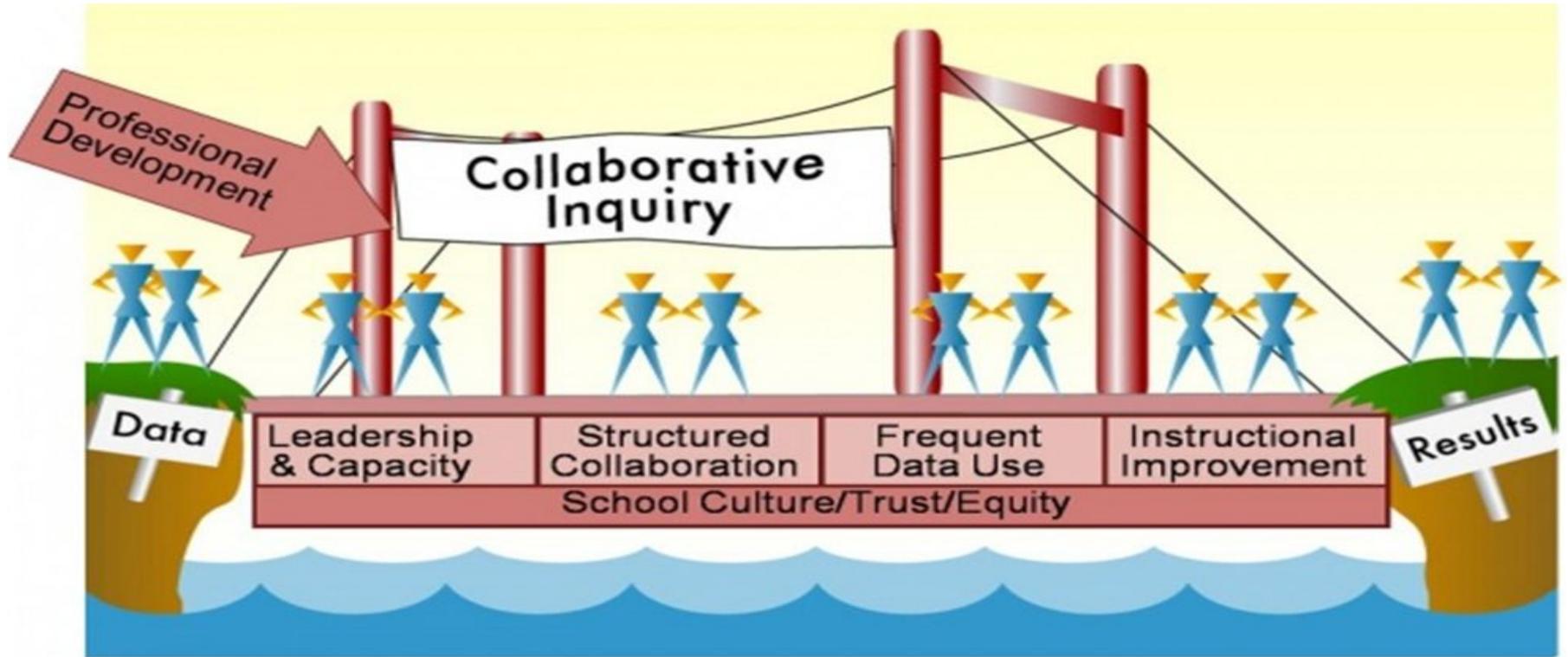
Equity is Access

Equity is Process

Equity is Outcomes

Batsche, 2021

What is our data story?



Power

- What is in our control?
- Who is our volunteer army?
- Who is our coalition of the willing?
- Do we share power?
- How do we intentionally seek buy-in/believe-in?



Building a Guiding Coalition

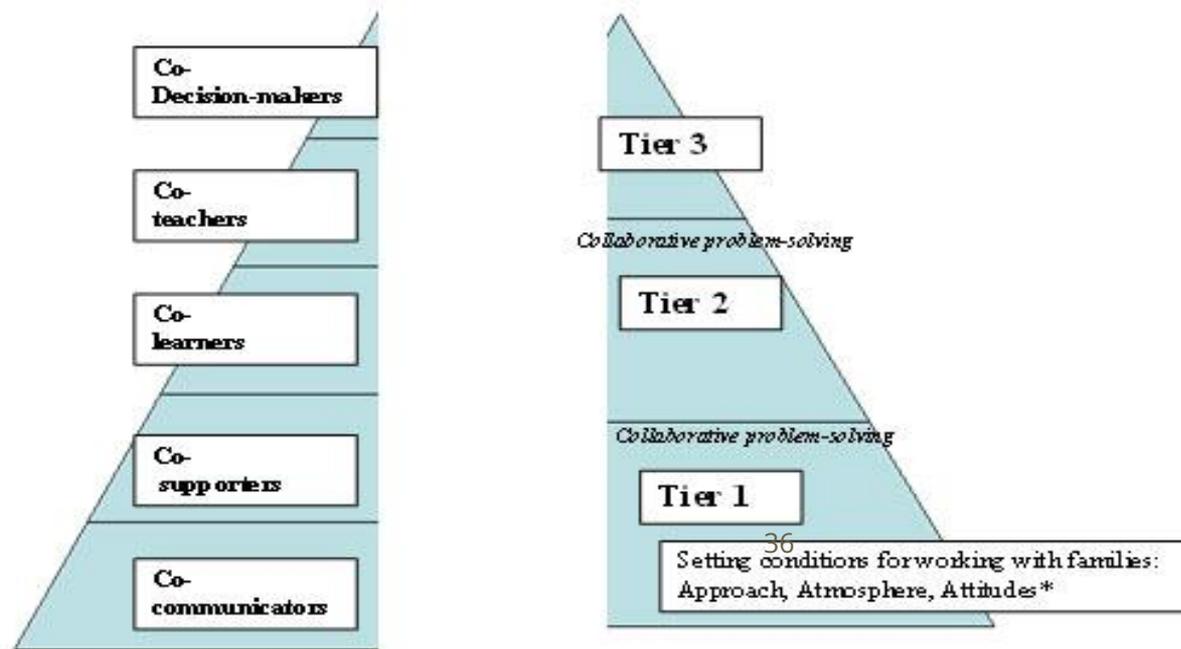
A volunteer army needs a coalition of effective people -- born of its own ranks -- to guide it, coordinate it, and communicate its activities.

Teams

- District MTSS Teams
- Core MTSS Teams
- Grade Level MTSS Teams
- Advanced Tiers Teams

Family-School Partnership in a MTSS Framework

Figure 1. Family-School Co-Roles and Partnerships in RfI



Moles (1993) Co-Roles

*Christenson & Sheridan, 2001

Definition

Family-School Partnership – “A child-focused approach wherein families and professionals **cooperate**, **coordinate**, and **collaborate** to enhance opportunities and success for children and adolescents across social, emotional, behavioral, and academic domains”

(Sheridan, Clarke, & Christenson, 2015, p. 440).

Best Practices – 4 A's

Approach

- Establishes the tone, method, and manner of the school-family relationship.

Attitude

- Underlying feelings, emotions, and positions held by family members and school personnel.

Atmosphere

- Physical & Affective climate that exists in educational communities.

Actions

- Strategies and practices used to work effectively with families to bring together all of the systems that support children.

Time

- What are our action steps?
- Sense of urgency?



Building a Plan through MTSS Teams

- Identifying your starting place
 - Has there been a root cause analysis in the last 2-3 years?
- Root cause process for identifying disproportionality
 - Qualitative and Quantitative Data
- Monitoring Equity Work
 - 3-5 years
- Progress Monitoring Tools
 - Monthly Data Calendar
(<https://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/implementation-calendar/?assignment=school&month=january>)

Reality

- What are your roadblocks?
- What needs adjusted?
- How are the youth and staff doing?



Soul

- Are we seeing the outcomes we value?
- Is our system shifting?
- What are the students saying?
- How are families/communities responding?
- Are we fulfilling our mission and vision?





Mind Time

Space Reality

Power Soul



Which power(s) does your system hold right now?

When these powers
come together, your
universe/system
can be transformed!
(Snap your fingers)



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