

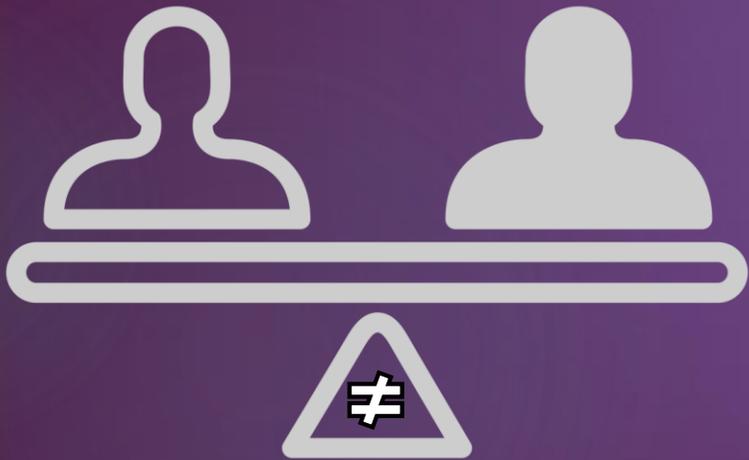


# DO YOU SEE ME: BECOMING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE EDUCATORS

Tamika P. La Salle, Ph.D.

University of Connecticut

# BACKGROUND: EDUCATOR-STUDENT RACIAL COMPOSITION



- ▶ **Students of color** comprise a **majority (55%)** of the **total school enrollment** in the U.S.A
- ▶ **82%** of the **teacher** workforce is White
  - ▶ 1988 (87%) to 2011 (82%)
- ▶ More than **80%** percent of **school principals** are White
- ▶ From 1988 to 2011:
  - ▶ **5% increase** in teachers of color
  - ▶ **2% increase** in school principals of color

# OUTCOMES OF MINORITIZED STUDENTS IN EDUCATION

## Students of color ...

- ▶ Continue to show **lower academic achievement** and **rates of graduation** in comparison to White counterparts
- ▶ Are **overrepresented** in **office referrals, suspensions**, and referrals to **special education**
  - ▶ 3 to 7 times more likely to be suspended

Mattison & Aber, 2007; McIntosh, Girvan, Horner, & Smolkowski, 2014

Bradshaw, Mitchell, O'Brennan, & Leaf, 2010

# BACKGROUND: EDUCATOR-STUDENT RACIAL COMPOSITION

- ▶ In approximately one out of every five schools (20.15%), there were at least 40% more minority students than minority teachers; in the school(s) with the largest discrepancy, there were 82.03% more minority students than minority teachers.
- ▶ This is in stark contrast to the seven schools (less than 2%) that had a ratio where minority teacher population was similar to or greater than minority student population.
- ▶ Put into context, in more than 98% of the schools in the study, Black students are in schools with disproportionately more White teachers.

Teacher composition will not change over night- neither will systems of supremacy- but what are some initial steps that can be taken?

# BACKGROUND: WHITE SUPREMACY?

Terms like “**White privilege**” and systems of “**White supremacy**” can be difficult absorb...

Avoiding the discussion results in **misunderstanding** of **critical concepts** that are part of our **socialization** and **actions** as **educators**.

# BACKGROUND: INHIBITING SYSTEMS IN EDUCATION?

## White Privilege

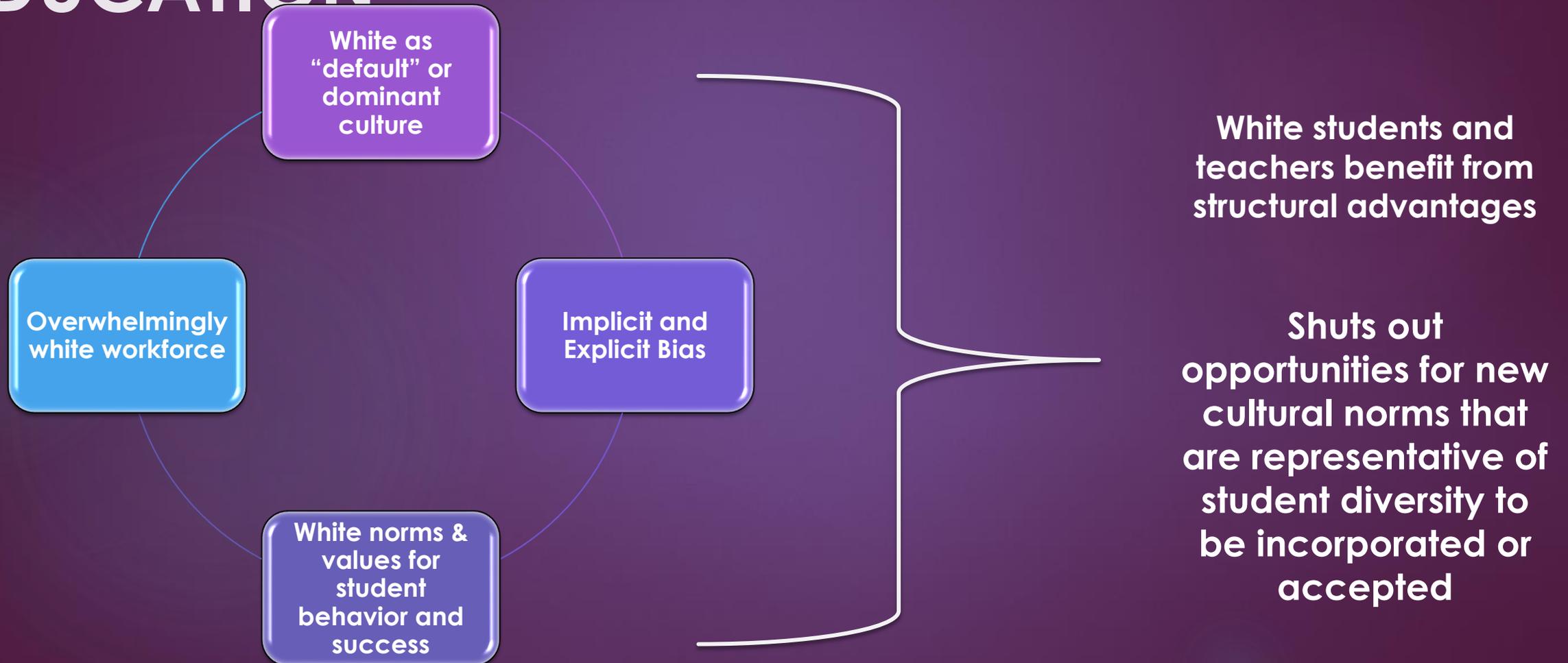
- The **benefit** from racism in favor of Whites
- Can only take place within systematic processes of domination across societal institutions (e.g. education system)

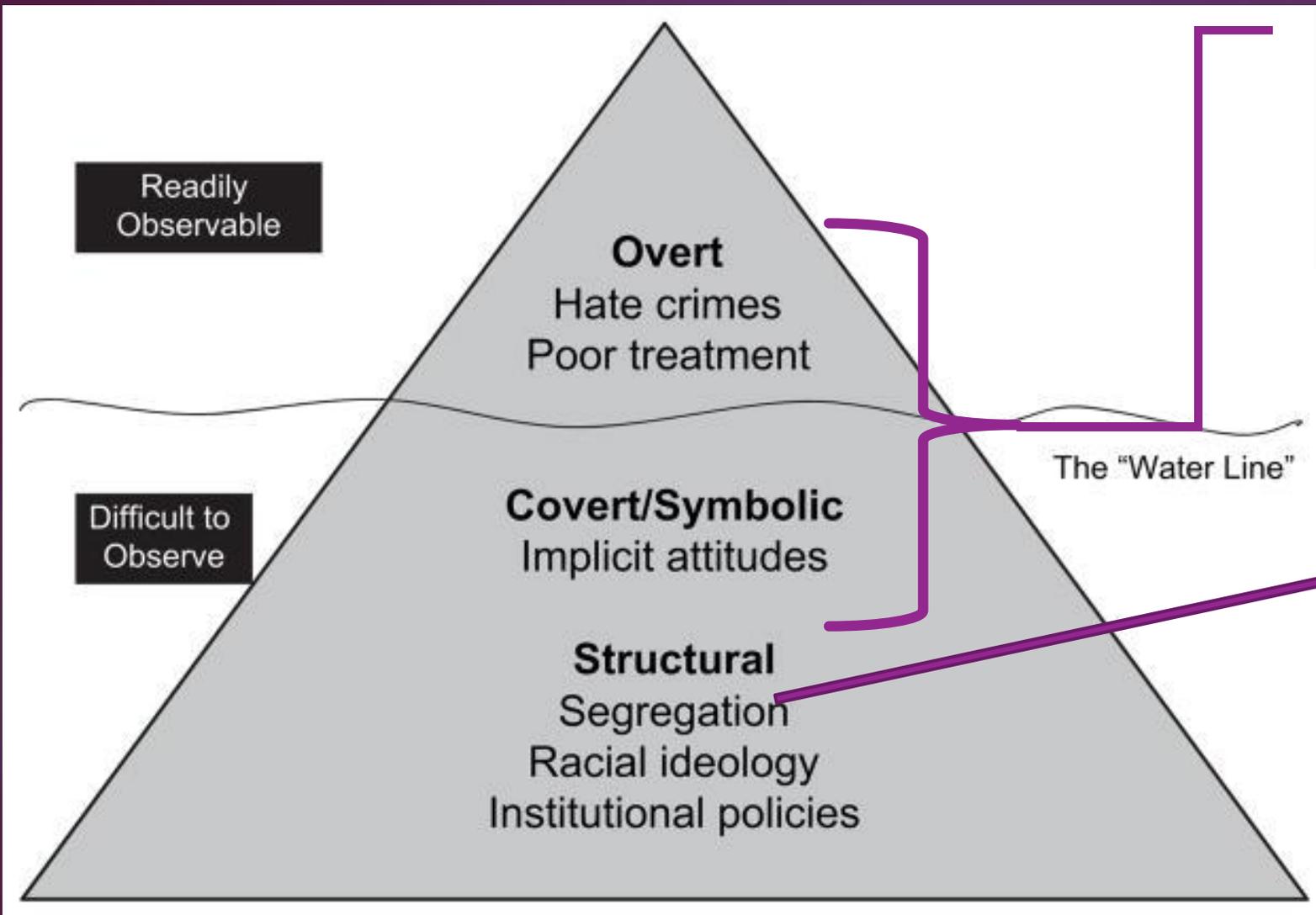


## [Systems of] White Supremacy

- Takes on **power** more centrally than privilege alone
- Focuses 'around direct processes that secure domination'
- result of repeated, accepted, and normalized acts of domination and dismissal at the systemic level

# BACKGROUND: SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION IN EDUCATION





## Interpersonal Racism in Education

- Direct Interpersonal Interactions
  - Discipline
  - Achievement Related Expectations



## Structural Racism in Education

- Structural Features within Diverse Schools
  - Access to Rigorous Coursework
  - Cultural Relevance of Curriculum
- Structural Features within Segregated Schools
  - Resources
  - Disciplinary Climate

*Culturally responsive teaching should first confront existing instructional presumptions and practices before it proceeds with the more regenerative aspects of reform” (Gay, 2000 pp. 46).*





***Culture is set of values, beliefs, or behaviors shared by a group of people based on race, geography, socioeconomic status, experiences, or other unifying denominators. Culture permeates throughout contexts and guides the ways that individuals assign meaning to, interact with, and adapt to their environments. Culture is ever evolving and results from intra-and interpersonal experiences, development, and growth***

# ACHIEVEMENT GAP VS. OPPORTUNITY GAP?

“Achievement gap” presumes that even if students of color (or students living in poverty) have access to rigorous instruction and nurturing educational environments, gaps will still exist.

Instead....

Dispel the myth of innate “inferiority” or characteristics that are “less than” or need to be “fixed”

How can we, as educators, facilitate an environment that creates access to quality schools and resources for students of color and students living in poverty

# OPPORTUNITY GAP

LAST UPDATED: 09.03.13

Closely related to [achievement gap](#) and [learning gap](#), the term **opportunity gap** refers to the ways in which race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, community wealth, familial situations, or other factors contribute to or perpetuate lower educational aspirations, achievement, and attainment for certain groups of students.

Generally speaking, *opportunity gap* refers to inputs—the unequal or inequitable distribution of resources and opportunities—while *achievement gap* refers to outputs—the unequal or inequitable distribution of educational results and benefits. *Learning gap* refers to relative performance of individual students—i.e., the disparity between what a student has actually learned and what students are expected to learn at a particular age or grade level.

# EDUCATIONAL EQUITY VS. EQUALITY



## EQUALITY

Giving all students the same

Assumes fairness, but it can only be achieved after equity is achieved (e.g., the playing field is leveled)



## EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

Providing *all* students with the support and resources they need to be successful

<sup>1</sup>Research shows that students living in poverty begin school knowing significantly fewer vocabulary words (some estimate between 250-500 words) than their counterparts. To create a learning environment where students have equitable learning opportunities, teachers may provide struggling students with more opportunities to learn key vocabulary words through:

### EXAMPLES

Class labeling (e.g., vocabulary words around classroom)

Asking open-ended questions to promote vocabulary usage

### NON-EXAMPLES

Same expectations for all students

Assuming all students have the same pre-knowledge

“one size fits all” approach to instruction

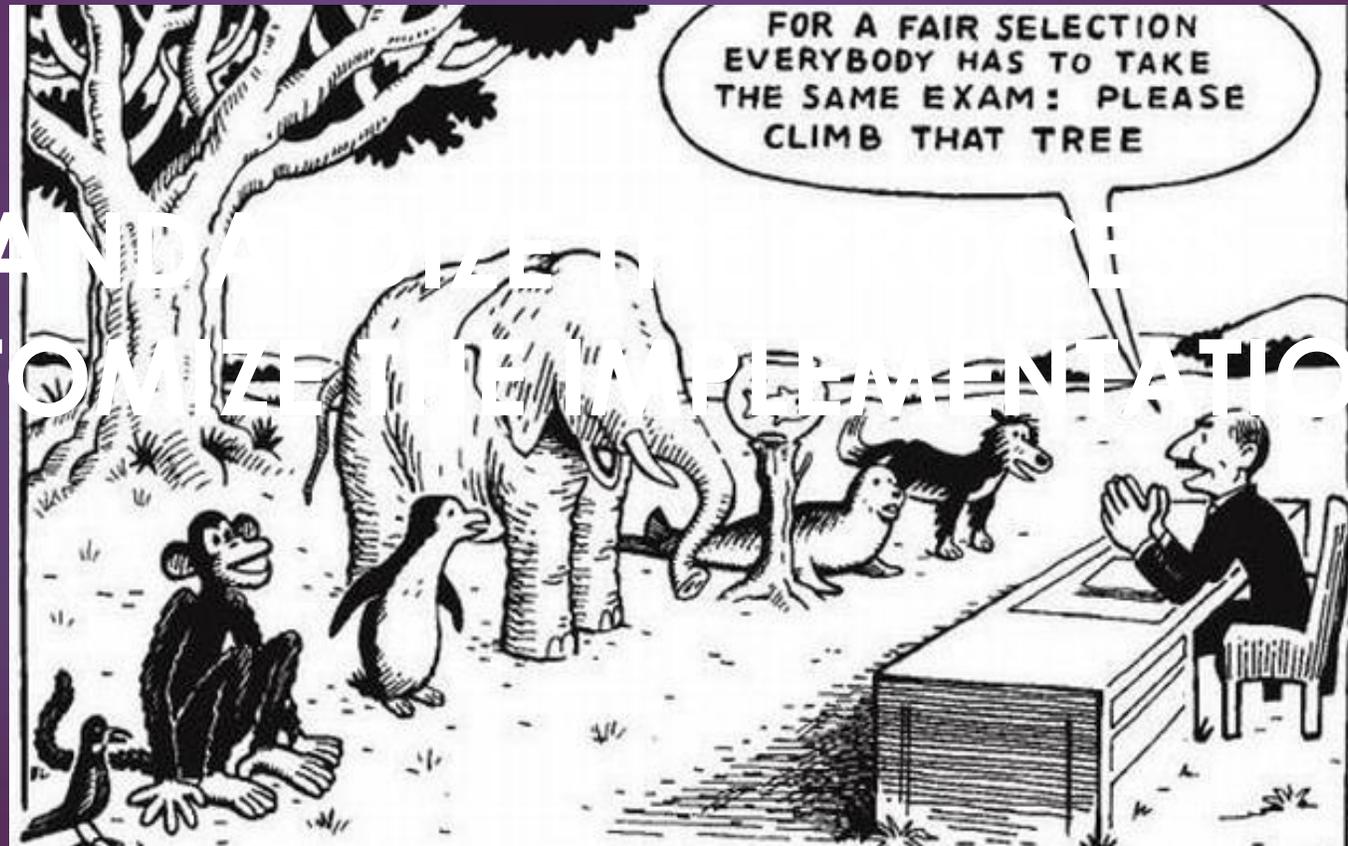
<sup>1</sup>Hemphill, L., & Tivnan, T. (2008). The importance of early vocabulary for literacy achievement in high-poverty schools. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 13(4), 426-451.

# EDUCATIONAL EQUITY VS. EQUALITY

Equality has become synonymous with “leveling the playing field.”  
So let’s make equity synonymous with “more for those who need it.”

The Education Trust

STANDARDIZATION  
CUSTOMIZED IMPLEMENTATION



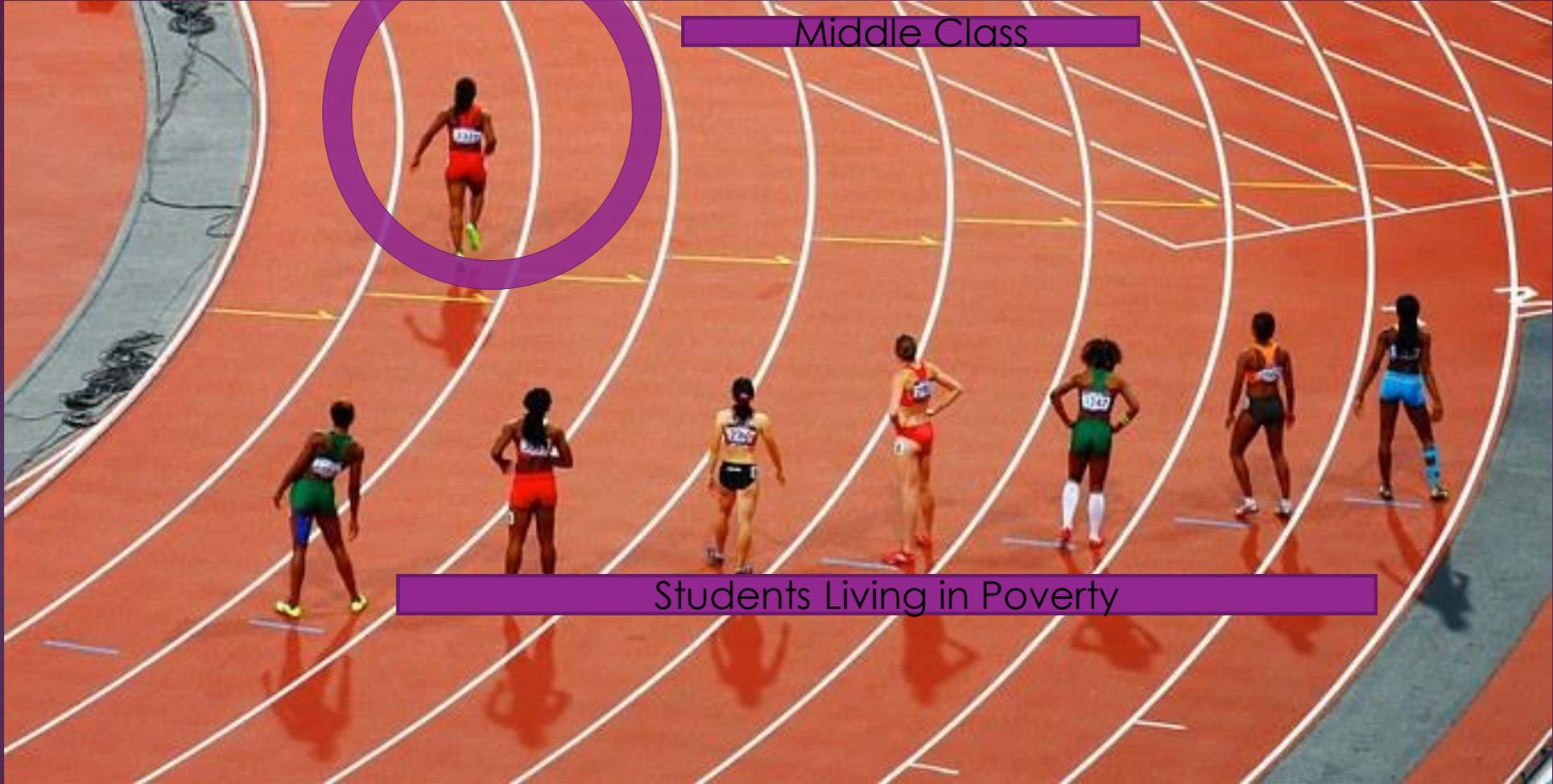


*“Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life thinking that it is stupid.”*

*Albert Einstein*



**"I think your test grading is biased in favor of students who answer the test questions correctly."**



Middle Class

Students Living in Poverty



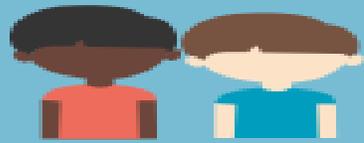
To **change the trajectory** of our nation's most vulnerable and growing population, **we must** be explicit in **addressing the problematic systems** that have maintained a culture of lower expectations, lack of student engagement, and inequitable treatment.

# Implicit Bias is...

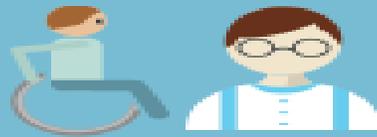


**Attitudes, Stereotypes, & Beliefs**  
that can affect how we treat others.

Implicit bias is not intentional, but it can still impact how we judge others based on factors, such as:



**Race**



**Ability**



**Gender**

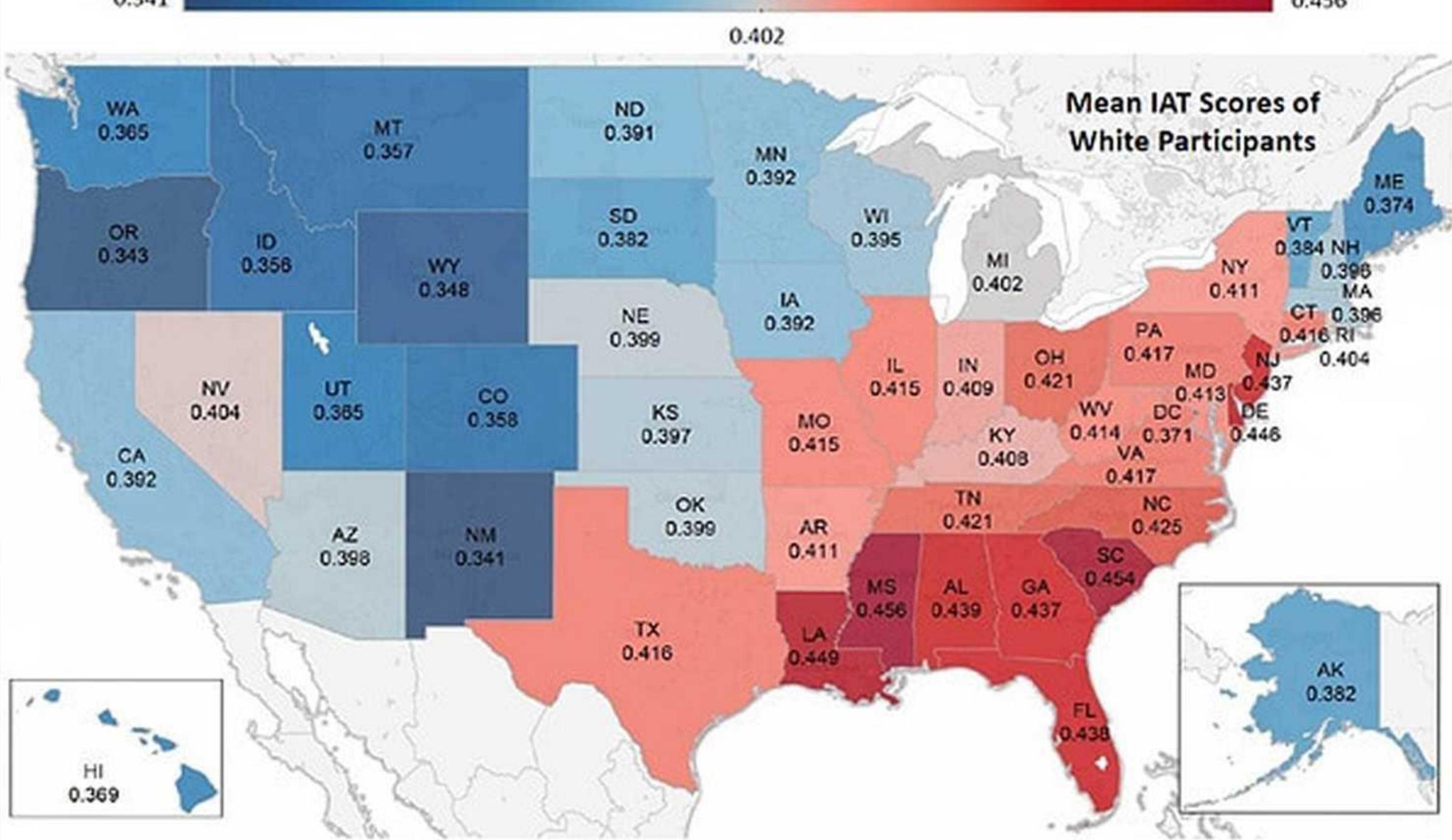


**Culture**



**Language**

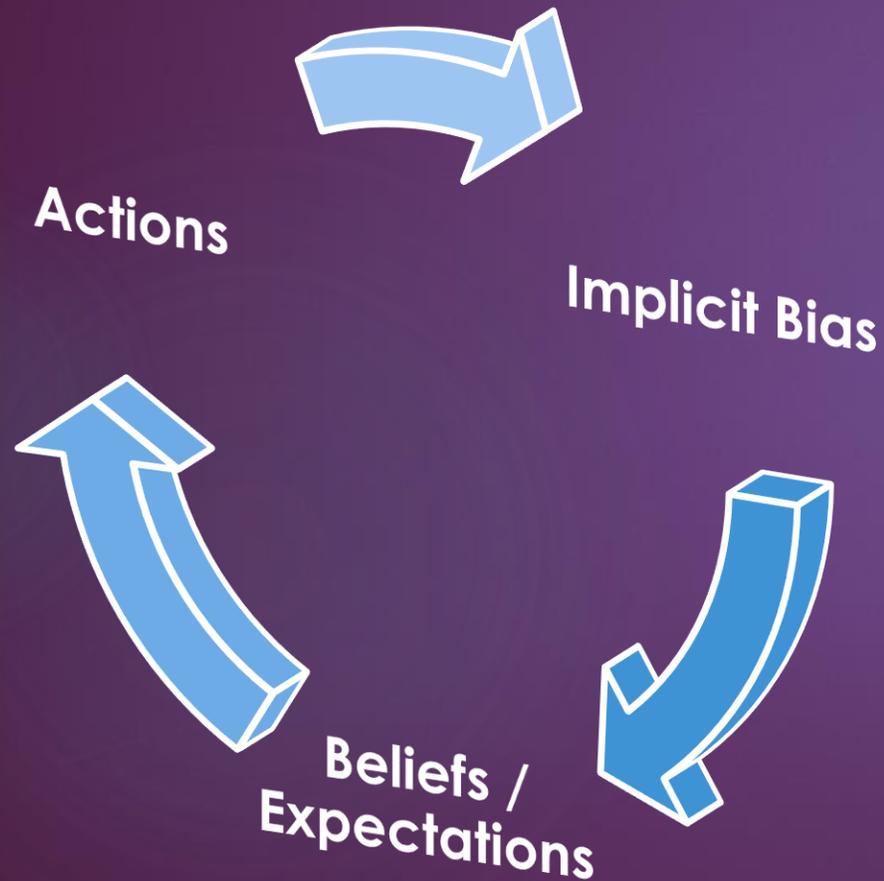
In early childhood settings, implicit biases can affect how providers perceive and respond to children, which can lead to unfair differences in the use of exclusionary discipline practices, such as suspension and expulsion.



St



# EDUCATOR BIAS: FROM IMPLICIT TO EXPLICIT



“Watch your thoughts, they become your **WORDS**;  
watch your words, they become your **ACTIONS**;  
watch your actions, they become your **HABITS**;  
watch your habits, they become your **CHARACTER**;  
watch your character, it becomes your **DESTINY.**”

-Lao Tzu



*"I have two mommies. I know where the apostrophe goes."*

# ACTIVITY: PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

Recall an incident that occurred early in your life in which you felt different from people around you or an incident where bias (implicit or explicit) had an impact on your interactions with someone.

1. What happened?

2. How did you feel?

3. How did this incident influence the choices you made or make about the future?

WORDS HAVE POWER

MANAGER LEADER KNOWLEDGE CHALLENGE  
PROGRESS LEADERSHIP ACTIVITY VALUES growth  
CONFORMITY ACTION SUCCESS education OPPORTUNITY STRATEGY MANAGEMENT  
TIME BUSINESS PROBLEM VISION motivation SOLUTION RISK FOCUS IDEA  
DECISION VISION TARGET GOAL INNOVATION DEVELOP IMPROVE RESISTANCE  
ORGANIZATION



Refugee

Low achiever

Poor

Immigrant

Those kids

Disadvantaged

Minority

# CONSIDERATIONS

## One size does not fit all!

- All behaviors are found in all cultural groups.
- Some behaviors are demonstrated more so in some cultures than in others

“anticipation of culture by race”

Students may display behavior that is common and accepted within their cultural group



“A difference” from the ways of the mainstream society promoted in the schools



NOT a “deficiency” or “disorder”

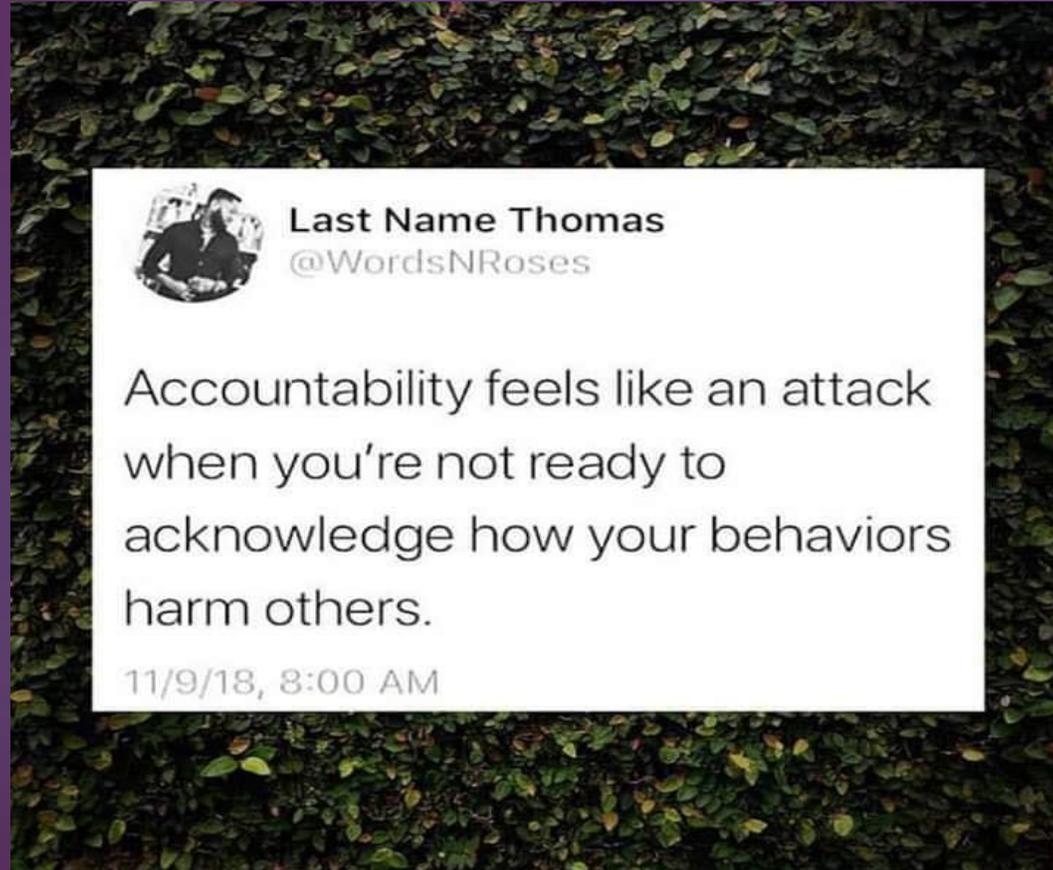
Individuals within a particular culture display the traditional traits and cultural markers of that group to varying degrees

extremely



not at all

# WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?



Last Name Thomas

@WordsNRoses

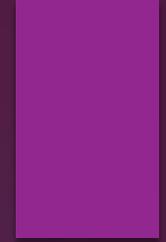
Accountability feels like an attack  
when you're not ready to  
acknowledge how your behaviors  
harm others.

11/9/18, 8:00 AM

# Cultural awareness: A Shift in Focus

- ▶ Less Focus on
  - ▶ Cultural deprivations
    - ▶ The disparities are not context specific- there is a national “crisis” in terms of the education allotted to White students in comparison to that of Black students
  - ▶ Culture as a deficit- “fixing the child” mentality
    - ▶ Think about culture as a resource. Integrate the cultural values, communication styles, goals into teaching, communication, and the curriculum so that students feel connected
  - ▶ Strict adherence to antiquated structures
    - ▶ Merge families and schools instead of creating a dichotomous situation where students may feel like they have to choose one or the other

# THE SCHOOL AS A SYSTEM



Educators must explicitly acknowledge the behaviors that have maintained an educational system predicated on White norms , values, and beliefs.

“ Asserting that minoritized parents do not value their children’s education, so they do not participate in school activities without acknowledging that there be many other reasons besides a parent’s lack of traditional involvement.



## Consider...

if parents from minoritized or low socioeconomic backgrounds cannot, for example, attend a parent-teacher meeting during the day because of work demands, the automatic assumption is that they do not care. However, is a middle class White parent is unable to attend because they may be a nurse, doctor, or attorney, teachers tend to give those parents an automatic pass.

# THE SCHOOL AS A SYSTEM

Educators must explicitly acknowledge the behaviors that have maintained an educational system predicated on White norms , values, and beliefs.



**Stereotypes that minoritized students are underachievers and cannot be good at math or science.**



## Consider...

A teacher asks an African American student who signed up for an advanced placement class if they were in the wrong class and automatically believe that they will not be able to keep up with the rigor of the course.

# CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE EDUCATION: FACILITATING LEARNING

Cultural inclusion and responsiveness does not and should not come at the expense of academic success.

Culturally responsive teaching...

- is explicitly focused on **improving student outcomes**.
- should incorporate “*culturally mediated cognition*,” appropriate social situations for learning, and culturally valued knowledge in curriculum content. (Hollins, 1996).
- can increase student engagement, effort, and understanding, which facilitate **better educational outcomes**.

*Culturally Mediated Instruction incorporates and integrates diverse ways of learning, understanding, and demonstrating knowledge. Culturally mediated instruction takes place in an environment where multicultural views are encouraged and includes knowledge that is relevant to students*

# CONFRONTING BIAS

## Scenario

**Students are laughing and talking loudly at lunch. Mr. Brown walks over to a table of students of color, and tells them to quiet down because their noise is more distracting than other students'.**

# CONFRONTING BIAS CONTD.

## Scenario

**Felicia, an African American student, completes half of her math assignments.**



# AN EXAMPLE: CHANGE IN ACTION

- ▶ PRIORITIES (YEAR 1)
  - ▶ Increasing school climate
    - ▶ School climate surveys
    - ▶ Student walkthroughs
    - ▶ Establishing feelings of connectedness between students and teachers
  - ▶ Establish equity for *all students*
    - ▶ *Tier 1- common language/common expectations*
  - ▶ *Establish school-wide norms*
  - ▶ *Systems of praise (for teachers and students)*

# CHANGE IN ACTION: CHARLTON STREET WAY



Charlton Street School  
Charlton Street Way  
LESSON PLANS

SETTING: Classroom (Whole group/Teacher instructed)

**LESSON PLAN PROCEDURES:**

- **Brainstorm and discuss:** What is the teacher trying to do? Is it important to keep quiet and listen? Is this a good time to use the bathroom?
- **Review Expectations:** Students and/or teachers model expectations. Teachers will demonstrate non-examples. Make sure you always end with a positive example.

Respect	Responsibility	Safety	Teacher Expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listening to the person speaking.</li> <li>Raise hand or use silent signal to ask/answer a question.</li> <li>Follow teacher directions.</li> <li>Speak kindly and respectfully to your teacher and peers.</li> </ul> <p>Example: Louise listens to the teacher as he models a new way to do a math problem.</p> <p>Non Example: Diana needs to use the bathroom so she walks out of the room.</p> <p>Example: Ms. Maisonet asks the students to tell her what 3+3 is. The whole group raises their hands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Putting away unneeded materials.</li> <li>Appropriately ask for help when needed.</li> <li>Stay on the task given.</li> <li>Quiet classroom voice.</li> </ul> <p>Example: Miguel has notebooks and books on his desk, he puts them away and takes out the reading packet.</p> <p>Non Example: Jada has a book that she is reading. She continues to read when the teacher is talking.</p> <p>Example: Chris doesn't understand the the math problem so he asks the teacher to repeat it again.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay seated.</li> <li>Keep chair pushed in.</li> <li>Keep hands and feet to self.</li> <li>Use materials/tool appropriately.</li> </ul> <p>Example: Faith notices her chair is blocking the walkway. She moves her chair in and sits up straight.</p> <p>Non Example: Layla walks around the room talking to her classmates because she doesn't understand the lesson.</p> <p>Example: Brittney stays in her seat during the teacher's lesson. She waits to ask to sharpen her pencil.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructional periods (carpet, whole class, groups) should last 15-20 minutes maximum</li> <li>Ask specific objective related questions</li> <li>Provide prompts or cues for upcoming transitions. Use a timer.</li> <li>Speak to students with respectful language and tone</li> <li>Exit tickets or checks for understanding</li> <li>Reinforce with behavior specific praise and CSS tickets</li> <li>Lessons should be 15-20 minutes long at a time</li> <li>Build in opportunities for success</li> <li>Develop list of nonverbal signals for students to use</li> </ul> <p>Example: Teacher says "we have 5 minutes left before the next center rotation."</p> <p>Example: Teacher teaches students that they have 5</p>



Charlton Street School  
Charlton Street Way  
LESSON PLANS

SETTING: Classroom (Small group/centers)

**LESSON PLAN PROCEDURES:**

- **Brainstorm and discuss:** Why is it important to work together? What do we do when we change groups? What does it look like when we finish with centers/groups?
- **Review Expectations:** Students and/or teachers model expectations. Teachers will demonstrate non-examples. Make sure you always end with a positive example.

Respect	Responsibility	Safety	Teacher Expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen to instructions</li> <li>Work nicely with partners.</li> <li>Use friendly tone- and Classroom volume voice.</li> <li>Use non-verbal signals to ask for help.</li> </ul> <p>Example: The teacher is giving directions and all groups are able to move to the centers they were assigned. (Can actually have students practice this)</p> <p>Non Example: Johanna doesn't like working with Kiara. Johanna says mean things to Kiara and refuses to work with her.</p> <p>Example: Jeremy was absent the day before and his group helps him get caught up on the math work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow classwork expectations.</li> <li>Take care of your materials.</li> <li>Tidy and clean your area.</li> <li>Complete all work with group members.</li> </ul> <p>Example: Tiara is working in blue group and they have to cut and paste words into the notebook. She makes sure to get all of her work done before the time is up.</p> <p>Non Example: Leon gets frustrated while doing his work and snaps his pencil in half.</p> <p>Example: Jerry notices paper and pencils on the blue group floor. He cleans up those materials so that others can use them later.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walk carefully when transitioning to the next center</li> <li>Push in your chair/ clean up materials/area</li> <li>Use materials appropriately.</li> </ul> <p>Example: The teacher calls the blue group to move to the computers. The blue group walks carefully and quietly to the computers.</p> <p>Non Example: The red group is called to work with the teacher. The students run to the next area and knock over some chairs.</p> <p>Example: When the bell rings all of the students in red group clean up their materials and push in their chairs and wait for instructions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain clear pathways between stations</li> <li>Warning cues prior to transitions (visible timer and verbally)</li> <li>Visible schedule of groups, stations, and rotations ("work board")</li> <li>Access to appropriate materials for the stations</li> <li>Reinforce with behavior specific praise and CSS tickets for appropriate transitions, on task behavior and cooperative work</li> <li>Honor students' confusion and attend to it</li> <li>Stations should be 15-20 minutes long at a time</li> <li>Provide clear directions for each station before breaking off into their respective groups. Also provide visual supports at each station.</li> </ul>

Charlton Street School  
Charlton Street Way  
LESSON PLANS

- TEACH**
- A. Overview of the lesson: "Today we are going to learn and practice the bathroom."
- B. Guided Discovery: "Could someone tell us what we are going to learn and practice the details of the expectations with students."
- C. Define how we demonstrate the Charlton Street Way in the bathroom: See above.

model the Teaching Poster of Expectations with pictures and walk through the expectations. Discuss the details of the expectations with students.

model the Teaching Poster of Expectations with pictures and walk through the expectations. Discuss the details of the expectations with students.

model the Teaching Poster of Expectations with pictures and walk through the expectations. Discuss the details of the expectations with students.

model the Teaching Poster of Expectations with pictures and walk through the expectations. Discuss the details of the expectations with students.

model the Teaching Poster of Expectations with pictures and walk through the expectations. Discuss the details of the expectations with students.

model the Teaching Poster of Expectations with pictures and walk through the expectations. Discuss the details of the expectations with students.

A. Overview of the plan  
B. Guided Discovery  
C. Define how we demonstrate the Charlton Street Way in the bathroom: See above.

A. Model the Teaching Poster of Expectations with pictures and walk through the expectations. Discuss the details of the expectations with students.

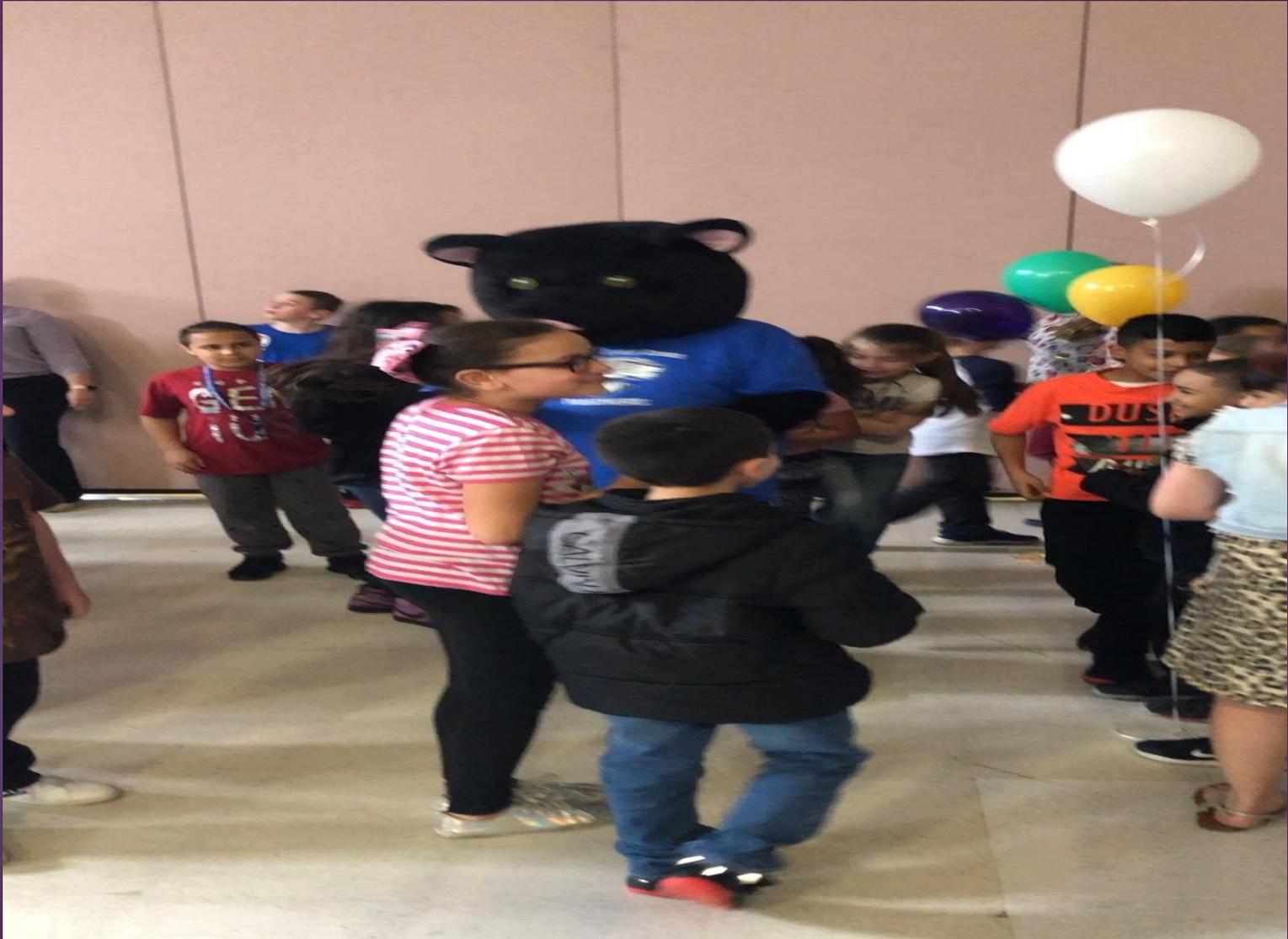
B. C

C. D Non

- F ask
- F bac
- S by f

D. E. and Ret res







The woods are lovely,  
dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
and miles to go before I sleep.

*-Robert Frost*

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ▶ What efforts has your school taken to acknowledge and be responsive to an increasingly diverse student population?
- ▶ What access do you have to professional development opportunities that are ongoing ?
- ▶ How are culturally responsive practices integrated within the PBIS framework AND NOT alongside it
- ▶ What resources do you need in order to be successful?
- ▶ How do attitudes and social norms play a role in advancing equity in schools?

# SUMMARY

- ▶ Systems of change take time...but “Now is the Time”
- ▶ You do not have to be a person of color to initiate change
- ▶ Change must happen at the systems level and then trickle down if they are to be maintained
  - ▶ PBIS
  - ▶ Systems-level
  - ▶ Establish a strong foundation before signaling out other groups
- ▶ Self-awareness and self-reflection should be standards of practice in education

# QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Tamika La Salle

Tamika.la\_salle@uconn.edu