



BEYOND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Mary Joyce Laqui , Committee Chair
Teaneck Board of Education Meeting
June 12, 2019

GRATITUDE & HONORING

- Land acknowledgment
- Create humanizing space
- Collective effort

BEYOND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

WHO ARE WE?

Students:

Remi Adeoti
Moniah Dailey
Ruby Ha
Sukainah Khan
Yusra Subhani
Khari Wilkins

Parents/Community Members:

Vanessa Bing
Lisa Dash-Grimes
Jonathan Foy
Danielle Gee
Michael Goodwin
Russell Marsh
Melynda Murphy-Bowie
Dwight Threepersons

Teachers/Administrators/Staff:

Antoinette Bush
Nicole Cooper
Daisy Diaz
Joanna Ebert
Lillian Garcia
Amber Halpern
Margot Mack
Christine Mayers
Natasha Pitt



BEYOND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

WHO ARE WE?

- Intergenerational committee of stakeholders (parents, teachers, students, administrators, community members)
- Teaneck alumni
- Five meetings: November, December, January, March, April

BEYOND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOCUS QUESTION

How well does our current school system work to provide all students and staff with equitable access to an education that embodies the mission and goals of Teaneck Public Schools?



BEYOND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE EXPECTATIONS

- Examine ideals set forth in District Mission Statements and Board Goals
- Review findings of the 2006 Achievement Gap Study
- Review current district demographics and other relevant data that impact student achievement
- Discuss how systems have the power to shape outcomes and perpetuate institutional oppression

LET'S GO "BEYOND DIVERSITY"

- Diversity is a catch-all term
- Celebrating diversity is often conflated with equity
- Must move beyond the vague notion of diversity toward intersectional social justice

GROUNDING OUR WORK

- Antiracist organizing principles
- Group agreement (no hierarchy, struggle together, no quick fix)
- Action research process

GROUNDING OUR WORK

Group Agreement

Listen to learn No quick-fix
Respect Remember self-care
Struggle together "I" perspective
Participate (step up/step back)
Growing edge Self-determined participation
Liberated zone Ouch & educate
No hierarchy Accept non-closure



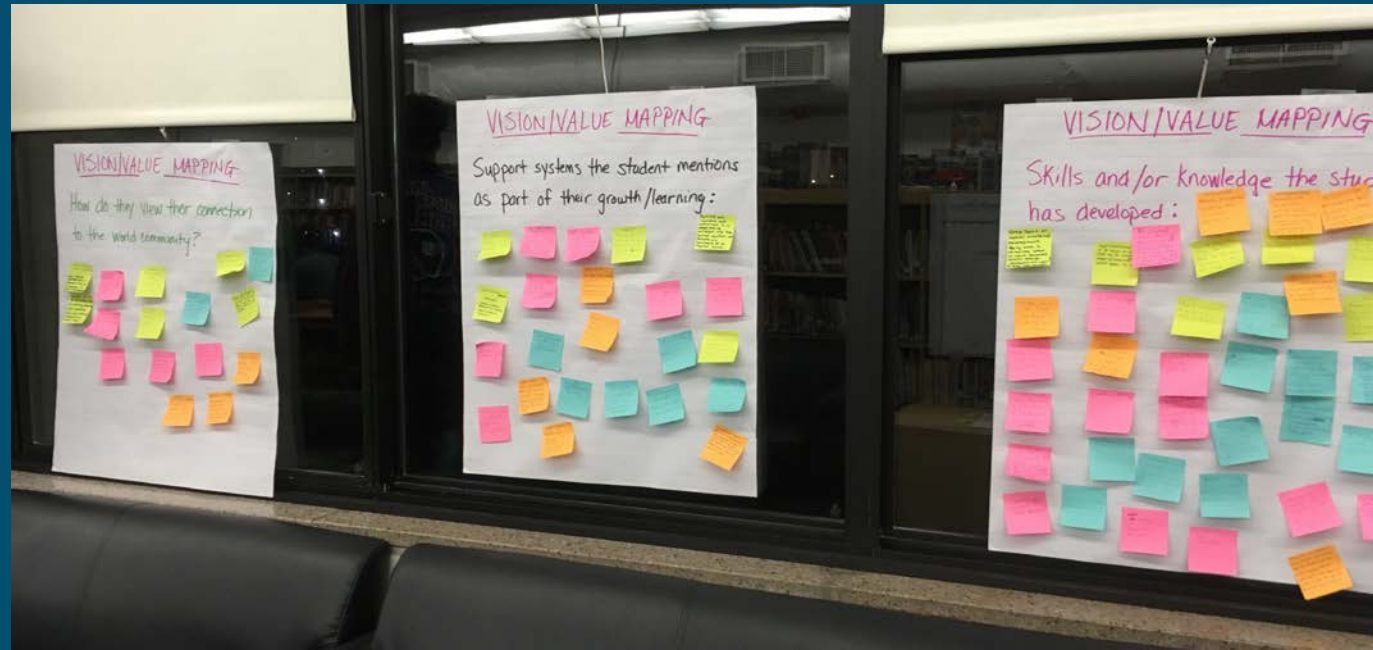
Action Research

~ a process of inquiry ~

- Select a focus
- Clarify theories
- identify research questions
- collect data
- analyze data
- report results
- take informed action

OUR COMMITTEE'S VISION & VALUES

- What is our shared vision for Teaneck Public Schools?
- Reflective prompt for creating a school vision



INTERSECTION OF VISION & VALUES

Board Goals

- Acquire critical thinking skills
- Become successful global citizens
- Develop knowledge necessary to support students
- Create safe & inclusive environment for students and adults
- Utilize support services of the greater Teaneck community

INTERSECTION OF VISION & VALUES

Mission Statements

- Become lifelong learners
- Become effective citizens in a globalized society
- Engaging curriculum in nurturing environment
- All students have potential to be successful learners
- Develop the whole person – spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically

ARE WE PRACTICING WHAT WE SAY WE VALUE?

- What does the data tell us?
- How do we analyze outcomes?
- How reliable is the data?
- Some outcomes are not quantifiable

THEN & NOW

Noguera Study (2005-2006)

District enrollment: 5500 students

Black 49%

Latino 21%

White 19%

Asian 11%

Native Americans 0.3%

Free and Reduced Lunch 19%

2018-2019

District enrollment: 3500 students

Black 37%

Latino 37%

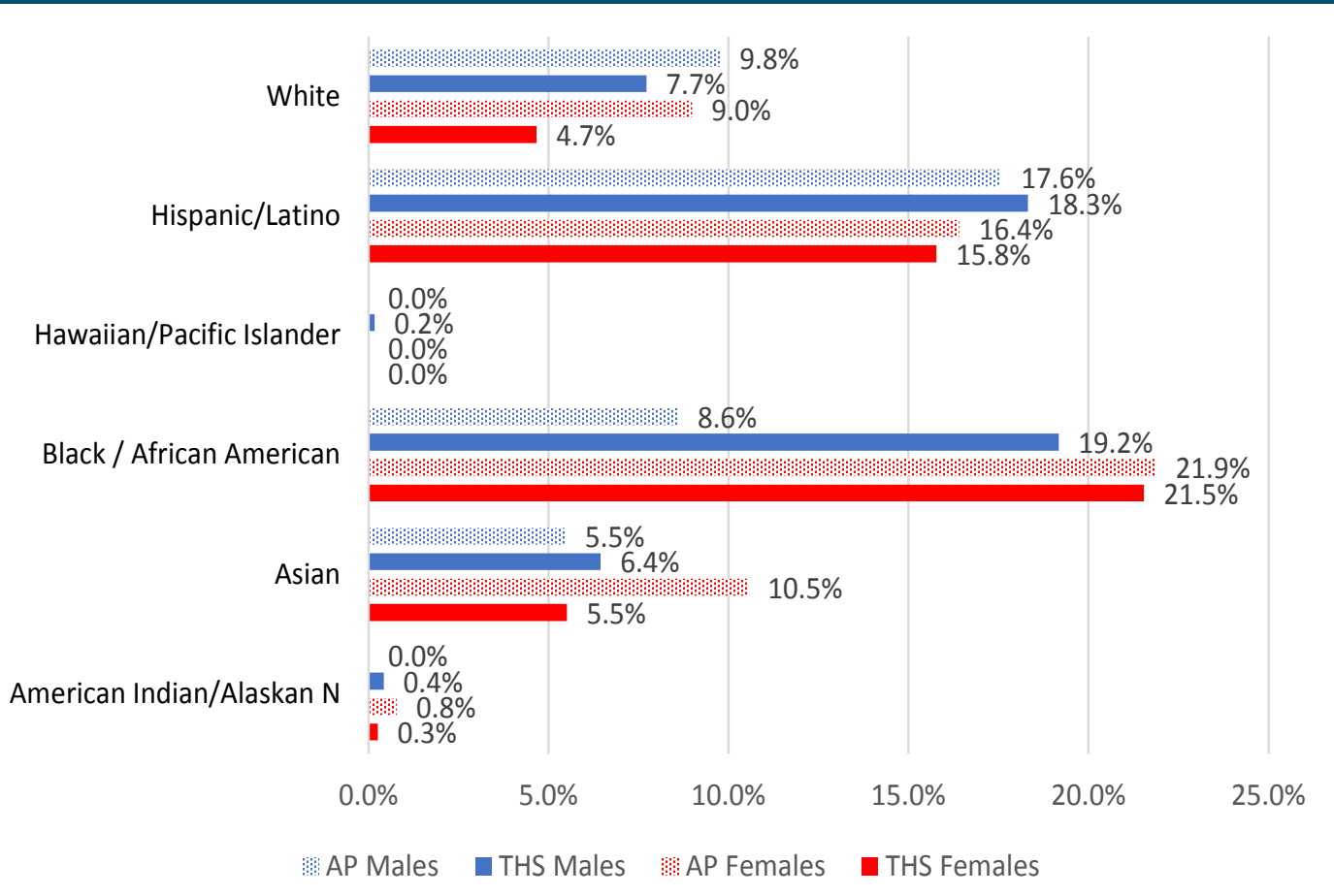
White 14%

Asian 12%

Native Americans <1%

Free and Reduced Lunch 38%

ARE WE PRACTICING WHAT WE SAY WE VALUE?



AP Enrollment vs.
General Teaneck High
School Enrollment

ARE WE PRACTICING WHAT WE SAY WE VALUE?

	Student Population		Teaching/ Support Staff	
Gender	48% female	52% male	74% female	26% male
Black	37%		20%	
Hispanic	37%		8% (other Hispanic)	
White	14%		59%	
Asian	12%		6%	
American Indian	< 1%			
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	< 1%		< 1%	
Cuban			3%	
Puerto Rican			4%	

Student Population
vs. Teacher/Staff
Population

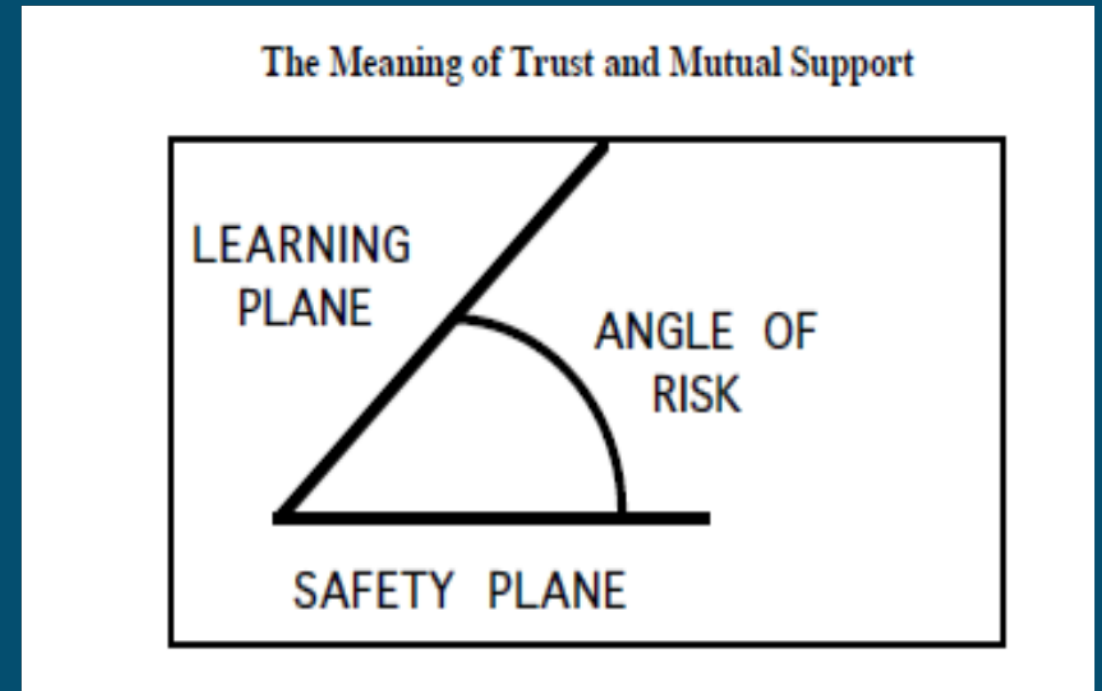
ARE WE PRACTICING WHAT WE SAY WE VALUE?

Data collection:

- Student/Staff/Administrator demographics
- Suspensions
- THS Saturday Detention – extra pay
- AP/Honors/TAG data
- Sign-out (THS)
- Special Education Study 2018
- Achievement Gap Study 2006
- Implicit Bias Training Survey
- PARCC achievement

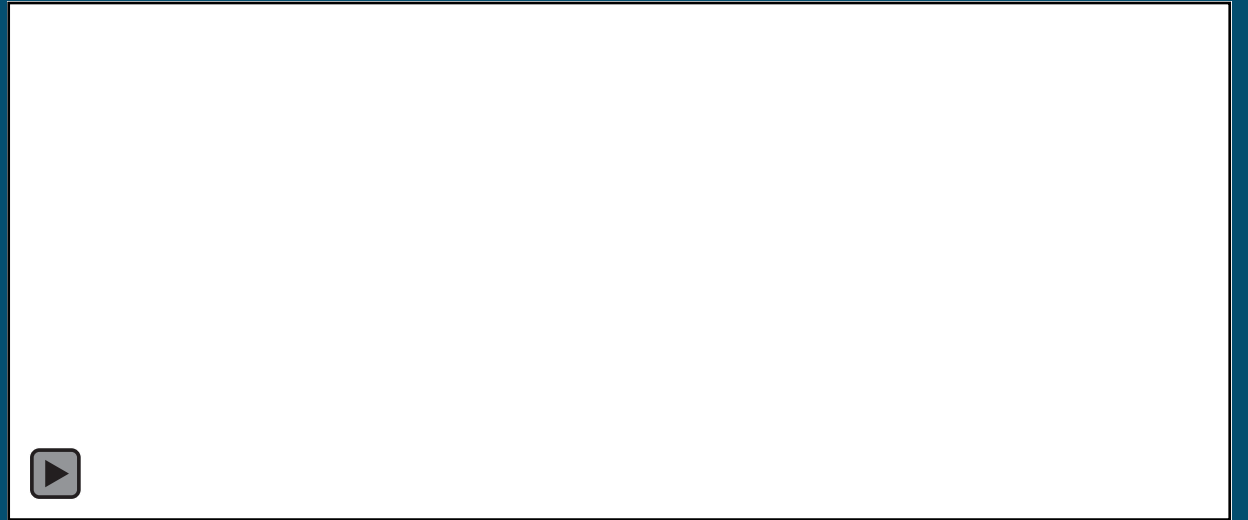
WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

- Were schools ever really designed for liberation?
- Can we challenge ourselves to expand how we think about teaching, learning, outcomes, organizational structure and institutional power?

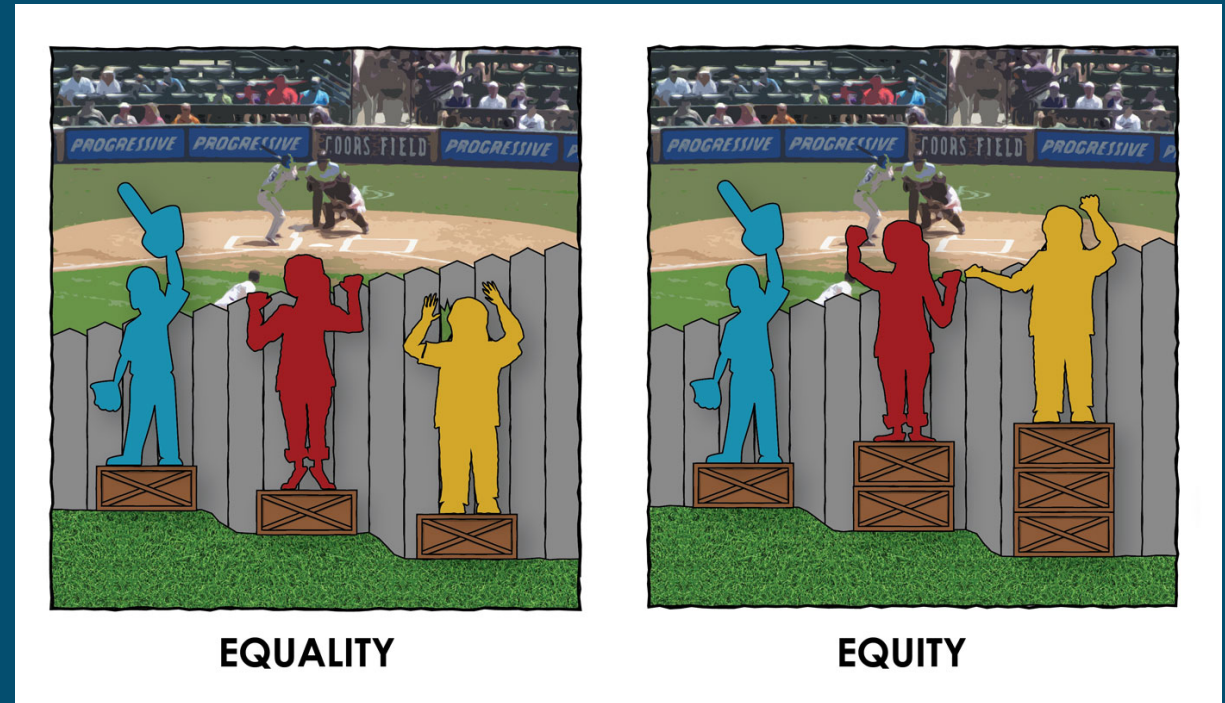
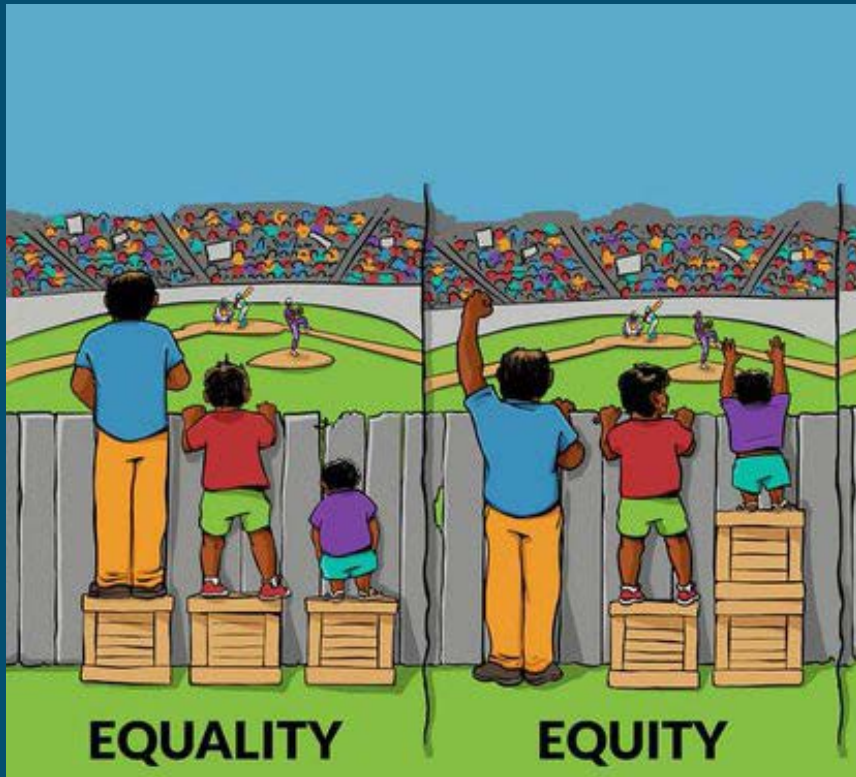


WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

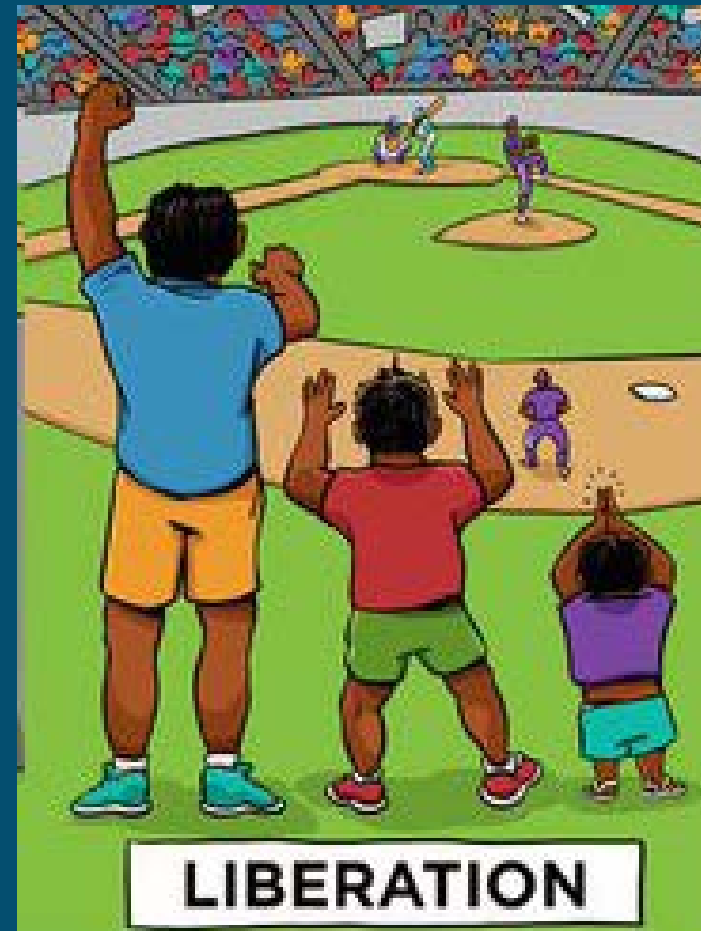
- social stratification
- dominant groups
- minoritized groups
- identify factors that contribute to disparate outcomes



FROM SYMPTOMS TO ROOT CAUSES



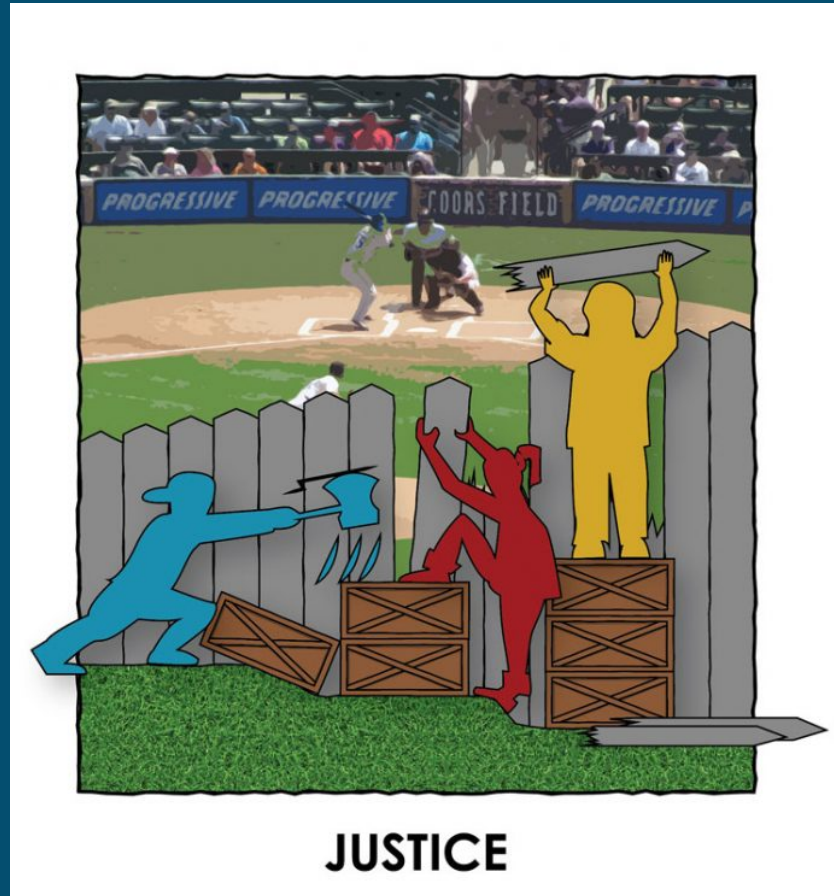
FROM SYMPTOMS TO ROOT CAUSES



FROM SYMPTOMS TO ROOT CAUSES

In order to realize our collective vision we must hold ongoing intergenerational courageous conversations which lead to action.

- colorblindness
- meritocracy
- politics of respectability
- interrupt patterns of institutional oppression



BEYOND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS



Create an Office of/ Advocate for Equity, Access, Justice & Liberation

Timeline: June 2020

- Ongoing, sustained, deliberate effort to build capacity
- Develop equity literacy, shared language & analysis of race, power and oppression (-"isms")
- Community organizing, conscious engagement
- Comprehensive Equity Plan
- Develop metrics for equity self-audit
- Data collection & analysis – all aspects of institutional life
- Form "Justice Leagues" in each building – equity teams
- Understanding disempowerment is a prerequisite for talking about empowerment vs. deficit theory

Create an Office of/ Advocate for Equity, Access, Justice & Liberation

Timeline: June 2020

Montclair Public Schools

- Student Equity Advocate
- Department of Equity, Curriculum & Instruction

NJ School Boards Association

- Equity Council

Stevens Cooperative School

- Director of Equity & Student Services
- Equity Coordinator

Dwight Englewood

- Director of Equity & Diversity Engagement

Horace Mann

- Office for Identity, Culture and Institutional Equity
- Director of Diversity

Little Red/Elizabeth Irwin

- Director of Equity & Community

Brooklyn Friends

- Service & Justice Coordinator

New York City Public Schools

- School Diversity Advisory Group



Redesign Teacher/Staff Evaluation

Timeline: June 2020

- Traditional evaluation method is time consuming for administrators/supervisors with no demonstrable benefit for students
- Need valid summative evaluations to facilitate employment decisions AND
- Need formative evaluation for improving the professional work of teachers/staff
- ACTION RESEARCH – document evidence of professional growth & learning
- Connect to Professional Development Plan
- Co-create a more authentic evaluation system that reprofessionalizes the profession
- Center the reality/needs of those we serve
- How can you evaluate us if you don't value us?
- How are supervisors/administrators evaluated?



Reimagine Lesson Plan Protocol

Timeline: December 2019

- Curriculum guides/ pacing calendars
- Inertia of the bureaucracy
- Teacher as Researcher
- Co-create a more authentic lesson plan protocol that supports a culture of professionalism, collaboration and inquiry
- Center the reality/needs of those we serve
- Improved student achievement, teachers/staff efficacy will follow

Reconceptualize Foundations Program

Timeline: December 2019

- Incubator for professional development, culturally-relevant pedagogy, liberation pedagogy
- Professional Learning Communities – teachers, staff, students, parents, administrators (affinity groups)
- Patterns of injustice are reproduced by established systems and structures of oppression

Reexamine Relationship with Law Enforcement in Schools

Timeline: June 2020

- School-to-Prison Pipeline
- Overreliance on punishment
- Zero tolerance policies
- Model policies to fight criminalization
- Training and support to prevent and resolve conflicts
- Schools are safer with therapists, counselors, social workers, teachers
- Restorative justice



Reexamine District Hiring Practices

Timeline: June 2020

- Standard operating procedures
- Equitable protocol for organizing interview committees
- Include parents and students in interview process
- Incorporate a set of standardized questions that reflect the core values of the district
- Hire candidates of diverse backgrounds who are also highly qualified
- Employment outreach – post in venues where candidates of diverse backgrounds are more likely to look
- Cambridge Public Schools – Dynamic Diversity Development Initiative, Employee Resource Groups



Special Education Corrective Action Plan

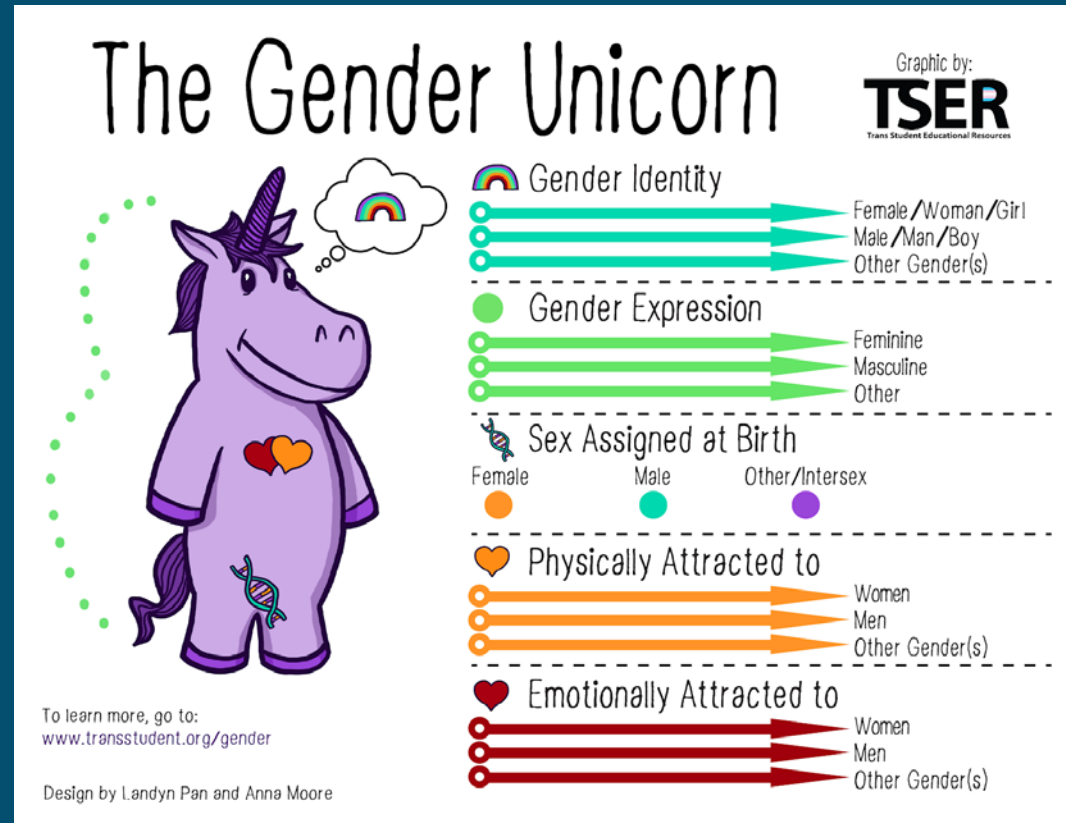
Timeline: June 2020

- Collaboration between special education leadership and teachers/staff/parents
- At least ten different supervisors over the past 20 years
- Rebuild team dynamic between case managers and students, teachers, staff
- Scheduling/class placement
- Students classified with disabilities who likely do not deserve it
- SWDs representation: 16% NJ but 28% TPS
- Over-encouraging SWD classification – larger caseloads
- Student who should be identified as having disability vs. student who needs intervention to access instruction appropriately
- I&RS and CST processes not being adhered to with fidelity, lacking accountability

Adopt Inclusive Curricula

Timeline: sustained, ongoing, collective effort

- LGBTQ and People with Disabilities Inclusive Curriculum
- Ongoing Textbook/Curriculum Review
- Career and Technical Education
- Amistad Curriculum
- Gender/Ethnic Studies
- Identity Development
- Participatory Education
- Update Health Curriculum:
consent, Me too, nutrition
- Environmental Justice
- Historical analysis of institutional power



Build Mentoring Partnerships

Timeline: ongoing, sustained, collective effort

- Partnerships with community
- Community service/ senior service relationships
- Professional networking/mentoring
- Affinity groups
- STAR groups – relationships with students

Repurpose Use of Faculty Meeting Time

Timeline: Immediate

- Elementary vs. Middle vs. High School
- Common Planning Time
- Articulation Meetings
- Professional Learning Communities
- Action Research Data Analysis
- Capacity-Building

Feedback / Questions

Beyond Diversity Committee 2018-2019

