



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



Transforming Culture and Curriculum to Affirm Identities

Parent Conference
November 5, 2022

Acknowledgement of Algonquin Territory

[Click here to view the Land Acknowledgement Script](#)



Spaces of engagement and exploration

- **Why** identity matters.
- **What** the data (stories and surveys) tells us
- **How** the OCDSB is fulfilling its commitment to transform its learning and workplace cultures (including curriculum) to affirm identities (equitable, inclusive, sense of belonging)





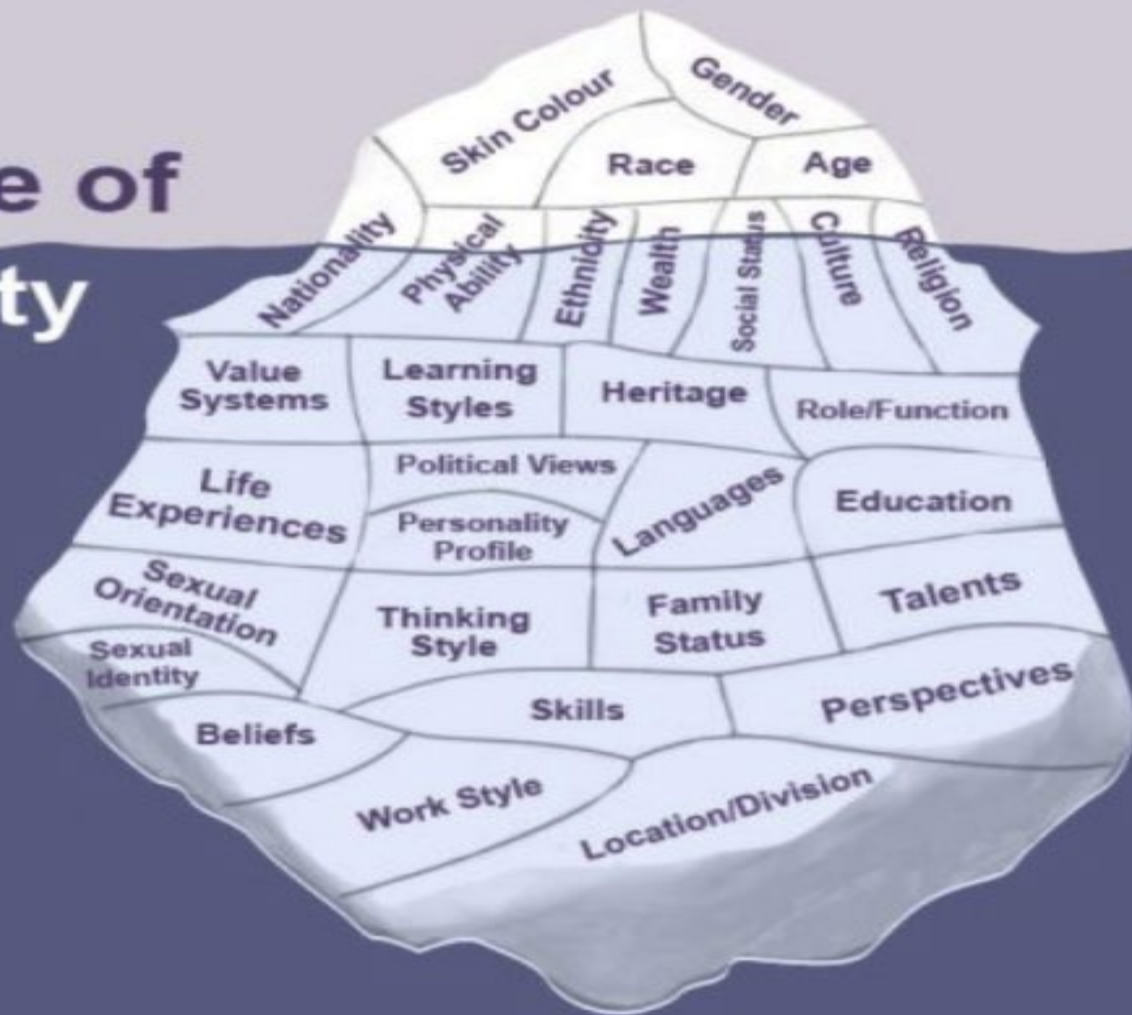
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Opening the Circle

Introductions/Who am I?

Waterline of Visibility



Identity Matters: Students & Families' Voice

Understanding identity is essential to our ability to build relationships to support student learning and well-being. This is complex work that must be done in partnership with the community.

(2019 Focus Group Consultations to develop Student Survey)

Research tells us that student achievement is influenced by many factors, including experiences relating to ethnic and cultural background, gender, socio-economics, parental education and engagement, safety, and sense of belonging.

OCDSB's 2019 Student Survey

What did the data tell us?

- **Demographics:** 300 ethnicities, 150 languages, 48% Indigenous and racialized students; Religion: 27%, Muslim 19.5%, Jewish 2%, Students with exceptionalities 9%, Q10 16% (G7-12)
- **Suspensions:** nearly 90% are discretionary; higher rates for Indigenous, Black, Students with Disabilities, Q10
- **Achievement rates:** Students who are *underrepresented to earn 16 credits by the end of grade 10 and to graduate within five years of starting high school* identified as Indigenous, Black, Middle Eastern, and/or Latino, Trans, disability(ies); *least represented* in FSI, *most represented* in applied mathematics



Our data tell us...

➤ **Identity matters**

➤ **BIAS AFFECTS SUCCESS & WELL-BEING**

Indigenous, racialized, ELL, gender diverse and students with disabilities are experiencing inequitable treatment and outcomes in our schools.



Identity Matters

“If teachers pretend not to see students’ racial and ethnic differences, they really do not see the students at all and are limited in their ability to meet their educational needs.”

- Gloria Ladson-Billings



Indigenous, Equity & Human Rights Roadmap



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- Securing Accountability
- Importance of Identity
- Building Staff Awareness and Capacity
- Increasing Representation
- Programming and Supports for Students

Roadmap's Focus on Culture Shift

All instruction is culturally responsive.

The question is: to which culture is it currently oriented?

Gloria Ladson-Billings



"This is not a journey to fix students; it's about fixing the system that does not serve all students.

Paul Gorski



Reimagine, Reset, Renew

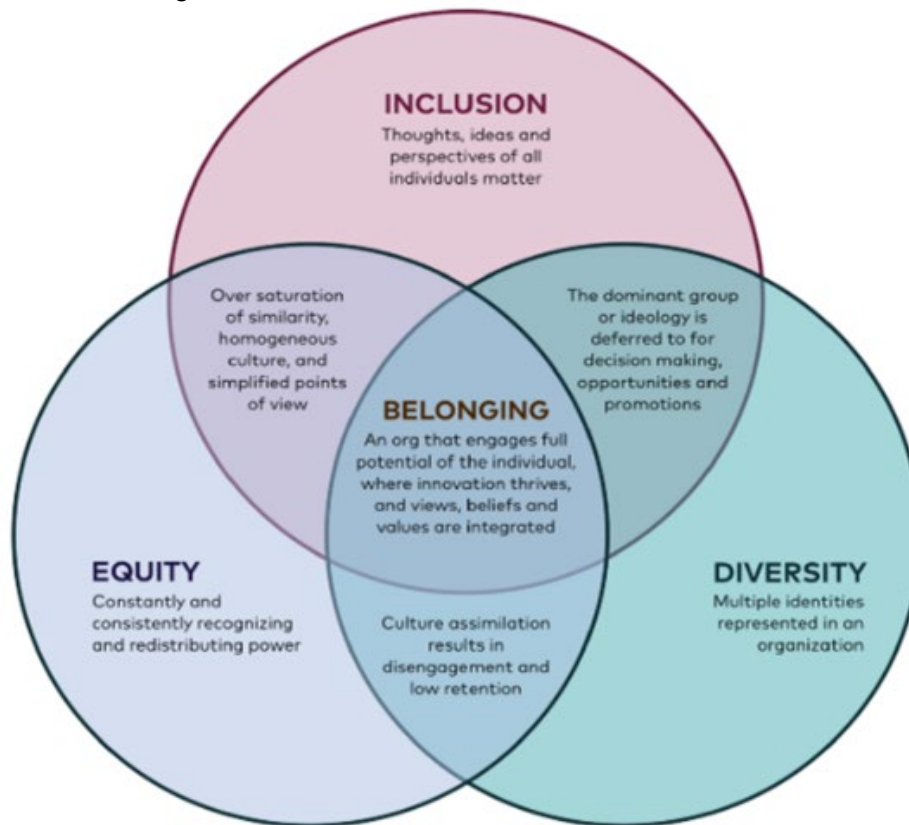
Engaging staff and system leaders to:

- Cultivate engaging and empowering relationships with students, staff and families
- Facilitate courageous conversations with staff/teams
- Decolonize knowledge and curriculum
- Identify and address systemic and structural barriers
- Decision making through an equity lens (policies, curriculum, practices, behaviours)



Building Awareness and Capacity to Transform Cultures and Curriculum

*Developed by Tana Turner Consulting



Securing Accountability

- Establish Indigneous, Equity and Human Rights Division
- Human Rights Policy
- Safe Schools Policy Review
- Gender Identity Gender Expression & Sexual Orientation Policy/Procedure
- Annual Orientation for Trustees
- Equity goals in Board and School Improvement Plans

Representation

- Equitable Hiring Policy
- Mentoring sessions for Indigenous and Racialized staff
- Employee Resources Groups (LADA, Hard Converstions Group, Black Educators Network, Q10/Rainbow Educators, Muslim Educators, BIPOC Network, Jewish Employees Group)

Saff Awareness & Capacity Building

P. I. E

We perceive the environment, people and our Interaction with them not only with our eyes but our minds.

Perception: Selective, Learned, Determined by Culture

Interpretation: Our mind needs to give meaning to what it perceives so that it may react. In doing so, it draws interpretation from pre-existing references; often without taking into account the different cultural context. This can lead to false attributions.

Evaluation: We decide whether or not what we perceived and interpreted is good or bad. In doing so, we generally use our own culture as the model of reference



Bias Awareness

Explicit bias – conscious preference (positive or negative) for a social category.

Implicit bias – preference for a social category that operates outside of awareness.

Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an ***unconscious manner***.

Bias is not neutral. We all have biases.



Building learning and trusting relationships rooted in equity

1. View relationship-building as a skillset to ***learn and practice***
2. Build self-awareness of the ***social identities and dynamics*** at play in student-teacher; school-family and community relationships
3. Approach each student with ***unconditional acceptance***
4. Build and maintain healthy boundaries
5. Develop critical awareness and equity literacy to understand the full context of individual and intersecting inequities impact underserved students (hurt, harm, trauma)



Sample Programming & Resources

- Indigenous and Black Graduation Coaches
- Summer reach ahead programs for Indigenous, Black, Q10 and ELL students
- Anti-racism course
- Black History Course
- NBE
- Enhance equity resources to supplement Curriculum





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Indigenous, Equity & Human Rights:

*Transforming Cultures For
Students, Staff & Families*

Wednesday, November 9, 2022

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

One Word



Impact of Home-School Partnerships and Family Engagement*

When parents and school staff work together to support learning, students:

- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Enroll in higher level programs
- Are promoted more and earn more credits
- Adapt better to school and attend more regularly
- Have better social skills and behaviour
- Graduate and go on to higher education

*Karen L. Mapp



Types of Unconscious Bias

- **Likeability bias:** People tend to hire, hang out connect with someone they feel comfortable with which stifles diversity.
- **Confirmation bias:** The tendency to seek out information that supports our preconceived notion about someone.
- **Attribution bias:** Determining someone is not a fit because of something unusual or unknown about them.
- **Conformity bias:** This can cause individuals to sway their opinion of a student or colleague to match the opinion of the majority, which may cause you to miss out on getting to know an excellent student or colleague.
- **The halo effect:** This is the tendency people have to place another person on a pedestal after learning something impressive about them.
- **The horns effect:** The tendency people have to view another person negatively after learning something unpleasant or negative about them.



Building Relational Trust*

The joining process:

- Welcoming
- Honouring
- Connecting



Welcoming

- Families are made to feel at home, comfortable, and a part of the school community



Honouring

- Family members are respected, validated and affirmed for any type of involvement or contribution they make.



Connecting

- School staff and families put children at the centre and connect on issues of common interest designed to improve educational opportunities for the children.



Respondents Racial Identity	JK-12 Students	Staff	Ottawa
Black (ie. African, African – Caribbean, African-Canadian descent)	8.3	4.0	6.6
East Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese descent)	10.1	2.0	5.1
Indigenous	2.2	2.0	2.5
Latino/Latina/Latinex (Latin America, Hispanic descent)	2.5	1.0	1.2
Middle Eastern (Arab, Persian, West Asian (i.e. Afgan, Egyptian, Iranian, Lebanese, Turkish, Kurdish)	14.3	4.0	5.5
South Asian (South Asian descent, e.g. East Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Indo-Caribbean, etc.)	7.9	3.0	4.2
Southeast Asian (Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Thai, Indonesian, other Southeast Asian descent)	3.6	1.0	2.6
Total Indigenous and Racialized Student Respondents	48.9	15	27.7
White Respondents	57.8	85	73.7

Bias

Explicit bias – conscious preference (positive or negative) for a social category.

Implicit bias – preference for a social category that operates outside of awareness.

Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an ***unconscious manner***.

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Perceptions, Interpretations, Evaluations

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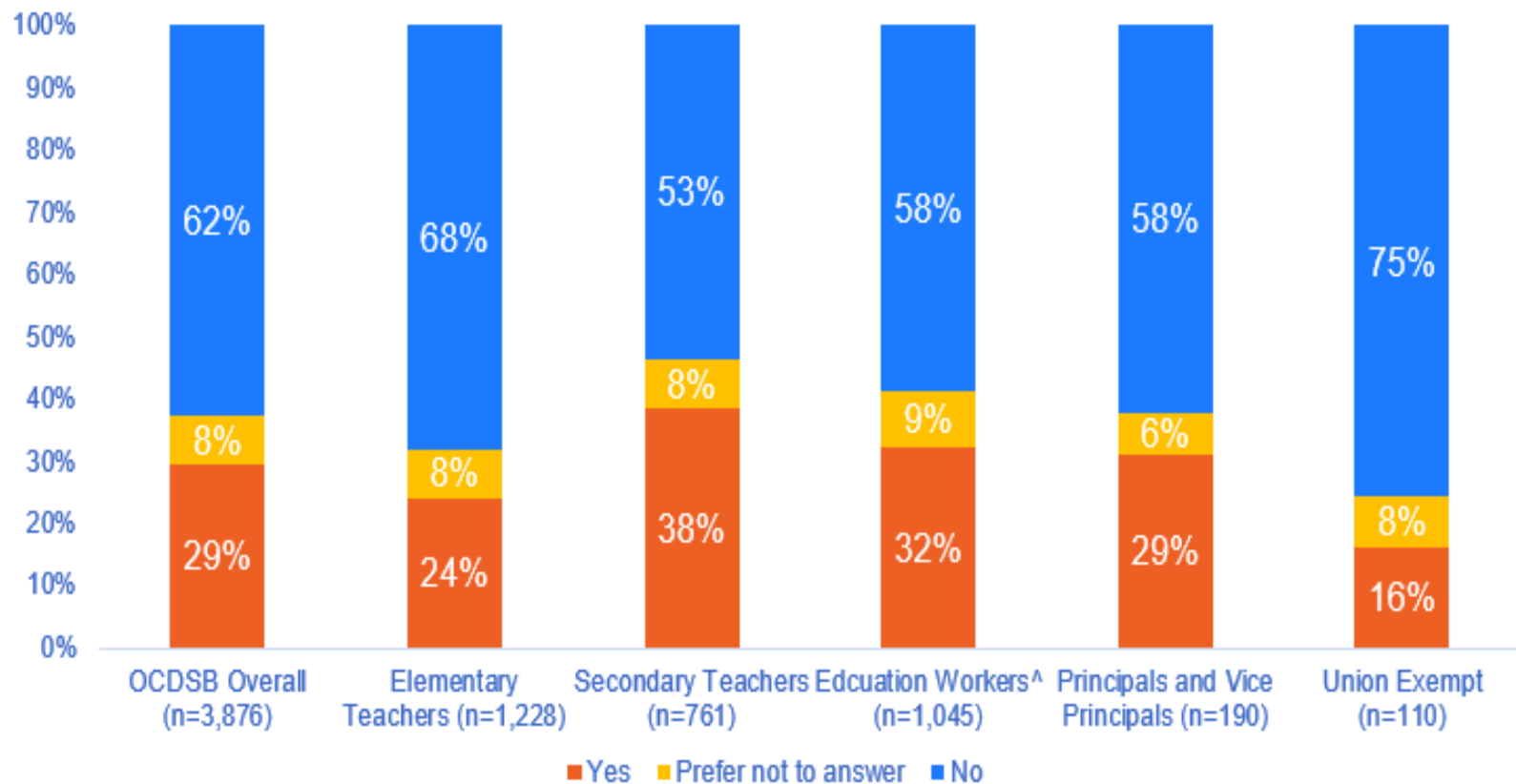
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Have you experienced racism, stereotyping, harassment or discrimination at your workplace?



[^] Education Workers includes ESP, PSSU, PSSP, SSP and PECCs

To realize our commitment...

Educators to demonstrate awareness of and action to:

- create a discrimination free learning and working environment - ***(Human Rights Code)***
- promote student achievement and well-being, a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils, and prevention of bullying ***(Education Act)***
- identify and address systemic barriers to enable access and equal outcomes by ensuring that our schools are welcoming places for all students to engage, belong, learn, grow, explore and discover ***(Strategic Plan)***
- transform systems and structures to identify and meet the needs of students ***(Indigenous, Human Rights and Equity Roadmap)***



To realize our commitment...

(what are you listening for?)

- Ability to **recognize** subtle biases, inequities, and oppressive ideologies
- Ability to **respond** to biases, inequities, and oppressive ideologies in the immediate term
- Ability to **redress** biases, inequities, and oppressive ideologies in the long term by addressing their root causes
- Ability to **actively cultivate** equitable, anti-oppressive ideologies and institutional cultures
- Ability to **sustain** bias-free, equitable, and anti-oppressive classrooms, schools, ideologies, and institutional cultures

Paul Gorski



To realize our commitment...

(where are you listening from?)

Principles & approaches that guide equitable and inclusive decision making

- **Diversity:** knowing and naming the unique mix of student and staff identities in schools and voices at the decision table;
- **Equality:** ensuring equal access to opportunities for students and staff
- **Equity:** identifying and addressing needs and systemic barriers that negatively impact access to opportunities
- **Inclusivity:** fostering a space of safety, welcome and belonging (dignifying unique needs and experiences)
- **Accessibility:** ensuring universal design, accommodations
- **Intersectionality:** being present to intersection of inequities such as racism and sexism
- Human Rights Centred Approach
- Anti-oppression & Equity framework
- Inclusive Design
- Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy / Practices

“No problem can
be solved from
the same level of
consciousness
that created it.”

***Albert
Einstein***

