Marvista 4 Year Culturally Responsive/Anti-Racist PD Plan

2015-2016 Focus - Understanding Implicit Bias and Belonging:

- Begin implementation of adult and student Social Emotional Learning Program RULER
- Begin to explore privilege, race and the impact on instruction and belonging through reading excerpts of Waking up White and articles and analyzing school data
- Analysis and revision of exclusionary policies, procedures and events like the in-school Halloween Costume Parade
- Summer reading of Waking Up White (Whole Staff and PTSA Board)

2016-2017 Focus - Understanding White Privilege, Microaggressions, and Systemic Racism:

- Whole staff discussions on Waking Up White
- PD on Unconscious Bias
- PD on Microaggressions
- PD on Systemic Racism and Oppression (Whole Staff View of film 13th and Race the Power of an Illusion)
- PD on White Fragility
- PD on Trauma Informed Practice by Sound Discipline
- PD on deepening RULER practice
- Write new school mission statement to include equity beliefs
- Staff reads Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain over summer

2017-2018 Focus – Applying What We Know to Change Practice:

- Book discussions on Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain
- Collaborative planning on implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain within the PBIS/RULER and instructional processes
- PD on Restorative Justice
- Continued implementation of RULER
- Begin engagement of parent focus group to help inform refinement to school events, procedures and opportunities
- Continue PD for staff with an emphasis on new staff and para educators related to racism, privilege, and bias content from previous years.
- Hold Affinity Group Parent Meetings/Networking Sessions
- Included goals related to Equity and Anti-Racist Practice in SIP/AAP

2018-2019 Focus – Applying What We Know to Further Refine Practice:

- Continued Implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain Strategies within the PBIS/RULER and instructional processes in our classrooms
- Refine implementation of RULER
- Continue implementation of Restorative and Trauma Informed Practices in the Classrooms
- Continue engagement of parent focus group to help inform changes to school events, procedures and opportunities
- Continue PD for staff with an emphasis on new staff related to racism, privilege, and bias.
- Begin teaching students about racism, privilege, and bias in developmental ways connected to the CCSS
- Build Bridge between Affinity Parent Groups and PTSA
MARVISTA FORMER STUDENT PANEL
Melissa Pointer

Introduction of Guests – Melissa (Principal)
- Shurki – Somali Program Specialist with District, Graduate of UW.
- Hamda – Recent UW Graduate, headed to Austria as a Fulbright Scholar, and will return to participate in a Rangle International Affairs Fellowship in DC before beginning her position as a Diplomat at the Embassy.

Interview Guests – Marianne (ELL Teacher & Literacy Coach)
While both of these ladies are highly accomplished, their journey wasn’t without difficulty. Today they will share a small piece of their story with us through an interview:
- Tell us about your elementary school experience in general as a newcomer (did you speak English at some level? Did you get ELL pullout then?):
  - Hamda:
    - Only black person in my class
    - Didn’t feel like I belonged
    - Explain two hurtful incidents which occurred at the school
- Besides those two incidents, were there other ways that the classroom environment or school environment were barriers to you feeling like you belonged?
  - Shukri:
    - Explain several hurtful incidents which occurred at the school
- Were there other specific moments where you were made to feel marginalized or made to feel like you weren’t valued or didn’t belong?
- What was the impact of that experience on you as a student?
- What was your middle school experience like in light of what occurred in elementary school?
- How did these incidents effect how your family feels about your elementary school?
- 10 Years later when you think back to that year of schooling, how do you feel?
- What could teachers, principals, recess staff, office staff etc. have done to help you feel more comfortable at school?

Transition – Melissa
Share with them that this experience they described took place here at our school! Assure them the related teachers are not in the room and have not been on staff for a long time.

Explain the point of this story was not to shame us or make us feel guilty but to help illuminate that these types of hugely impactful experiences can happen anywhere, even here, a place where we love all kids and are working very hard every day to be the best us we can be.

The reality is, if we were honest, we have all probably made similar mistakes at some point in time. Hamda and Shukri’s stories were designed to help set the stage for the critically important conversation we are going to begin today.
I encourage us all to consider her story this year and to ask ourselves, “are we giving anyone the impression, “no not you”? What might we say with good intention that could have an impact like this?

This is a journey, we will be on this journey together for many years as it isn’t a journey where we will ever probably “arrive.”

Today is an opportunity to learn, reflect, think critically, and commit to making some adjustments to our practices so that other kids don’t think back to their time here with the same sentiment that Hamda and her family have for so long.

**Content – Melissa**

Implicit Bias PD

**Closing – Melissa**

Hamda and Shukri were resilient and wired to be the kind of people that got mad and wanted to prove their elementary school wrong. Many students would have been crushed and internalized the messages they received.

While we have been talking primarily about race today, the reality is, as a staff we are very different than nearly half of our students in terms of socio-economic status too. As has been discussed today, similar issues are at play with biases and expectations for students living in poverty as well.

If we stop at our assumptions that we unconsciously make, if we lower expectations, or just stay in the place of blaming the family/the child/poverty/etc. kids that have the ability to do better won’t. Many kids don’t rebound from their negative experiences like Hamda and Shukri. Imagine if they would have shut down? We can’t allow this to continue.
Hello Families!

The Marvista staff is learning a lot about how to be more Culturally Competent. Part of this work means we are working to understand, appreciate, and interact with families from cultures and/or belief systems other than our own.

The teachers have expressed a strong interest in learning more about the Ethiopian culture! To help us in this area, we are asking you to be our teachers! On April 19th from 8:00-8:45 am we will be having a staff meeting where we would like for you to come and be a part of an Ethiopian Parent Panel.

We understand that within the Ethiopian culture there are many subcultures or things unique to different groups of Ethiopian people, so we know that what you share with us cannot possibly cover every detail about your entire culture, but we would love to learn as much as you are willing to share from your perspective.

Think of this as a powerful opportunity to tell us everything you wish we knew about your culture. I have asked teachers to submit questions that they would like you to respond to if you are willing during the discussion. Those questions are below.

If you are interested in being a part of this parent panel, please call or email me as soon as you can so we know how many of you will be able to join us. Please be sure to tell me if you would like us to have interpreters available for you.

You and your family are so important to us! We look forward to learning from you!

Sincerely,

Melissa Pointer
Principal

Questions for Ethiopian Parent Panel:

Note: Please do not feel you have to write out responses to these we are happy to just hear you speak about these things.

1. What do you love about our school? Are there specific things we do or provide for your children that you appreciate or enjoy?

2. What aspects of school life are troublesome/difficult for your children?

3. In general, what do you find most difficult or frustrating about white, middle class, American culture? Are there traditions/norms that are frustrating or difficult for you? If so, could you help us understand more?
4. For those of you that immigrated here, what were some American traditions you learned when you arrived that were difficult to get used to or that you found really interesting?

5. What aspect of white, middle class, American culture do you like most?

6. We would love to learn more about your religious practices. Can you highlight a few things in these categories?
   - Religious rules/practices
   - Food and dietary practices
   - Dress code
   - Art practices (music, visual art, etc.)
   - Important holidays
   - Other things you want us to understand about your religion

7. Are there things we should be careful not to say or do because it is perceived as inappropriate in your culture?

8. We know in some cultures it is not okay for a female to try and shake a man’s hand or for a male teacher to make eye contact with a mother, are there any rules in your culture like that we should know about?

9. When communicating with parents, should we call the parent Mr. ___ and Mrs. ___ or something else to show respect?

10. We say the “Pledge of Allegiance” each morning in class. Is this a conflict for you and if so, could you please explain why?

11. What is important to your family/community?

12. How does your family feel about education and school? What do you believe about the relationship or partnership between the parents and the teachers? Is parent participation at school typical in your culture?

13. Is there anything we can do to help you and your family feel more welcome and valued at our school?

14. What are your greatest hopes for your children while they are at Marvista?
ally
Describes someone who supports a group other than one's own (in terms of racial identity, gender, faith identity, sexual orientation, etc.) Allies acknowledge disadvantage and oppression of other groups than their own; take risks and supportive action on their behalf; commit to reducing their own complicity or collusion in oppression of those groups and invest in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression.

anti-racist
A general term describing a person, activity, event, policy or organization combating racism in any form.

bias
A positive or negative inclination towards a person, group or community which can lead to stereotyping

bigotry
Intolerant prejudice which glorifies one's own group and denigrates members of other groups.

collusion
When people act to perpetuate oppression or prevent others from working to eliminate oppression.

colorblind
Term used to describe person, group and institutional practices that do not consider race or ethnicity. The term emphasizes or ignores race and ethnicity as a large part of one's identity. The belief that everyone should be treated "equally" without respect to societal, economic, historical, racial or other difference. No differences are seen or acknowledged; everyone is the same.

cultural appropriation
Theft of cultural elements for one's own use, commodification, or profit — including symbols, art, language, customs, etc. — often without understanding, acknowledgement, or respect for its value in the original culture. Results from the assumption of a dominant culture's right to take other cultural elements.

cultural competence
Knowledge, awareness and interpersonal skills that allow individuals to increase their understanding, sensitivity, appreciation, and responsiveness to cultural differences and the interactions resulting from them. The particulars of acquiring cultural competency vary among different groups, and they involve ongoing relational process tending to inclusion and trust-building.

culture
A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors and styles of communication.

culturally relevant
Literature & instructional activities that connect with students' cultural experiences, ways of thinking, speaking, interacting and learning.

cultural responsiveness
Adjusting how we teach to the needs and experiences of students
Racial Prejudice + Power = Racism

It affects ALL of us individually, is built into our institutions and is woven into the fabric of our culture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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| Institutional / Systemic            | A system of social structures that provides, or denies access, safety, resources and power based on race categories and produces and reproduces race-based inequities. This includes policies and practices that perpetuate a cycle of racial inequity and are promoted overtly or subtly by institutions. | • Curriculum Selected  
• Teaching a White lens of history  
• Discipline practices  
• Hiring practices  
• Codes of conduct/Dress code  
• Voices considered in decision making  
• Gifted testing  
• Events and holidays celebrated  
• Extra-Curricular Access  
• Method for accessing school leadership  
• Tracking |
| Interpersonal                       | Verbal or nonverbal communication and/or actions by those with racial privilege (white people) that consciously or subconsciously harm, discriminate against, isolate and or minimize the experience of those with no historical/structural power (people of color). | • Asking someone to speak on behalf of their race  
• Biases based decisions  
• Reacting more harshly to groups of kids of color versus how one reacts to groups of white kids  
• Acting paternalistically for someone  
• Touching a POC’s hair or asking “where they are from” |
| Internalized White Supremacy        | Consciously or subconsciously believing that aspects of whiteness are superior and/or the norm.                                                                                                           | • Not seeing race (colorblind)  
• I don’t have a culture, I’m “normal”, everything else is “diverse” or “exotic”  
• Taking up physical space i.e. entitlement to speak in groups, dominating meetings, shaping agendas  
• Questioning the lived experience of POC  
• Seeing oneself as a “savior” of less fortunate  
• I’ve earned everything I’ve accomplished |
| Internalized Oppression of POC      | Occurs in a racist system when an oppressed racial group supports the supremacy and dominance of the dominant group by maintaining or participating in the set of attitudes, behaviors, social structures, etc. that reinforces the dominant groups power and privilege and limits opportunities for the oppressed. | • Questioning one’s ability/intelligence/self-worth/beauty (i.e. questioning belonging, believing one is inferior to whites, skin bleaching, etc.)  
• Thinking and/or acting as if aspect of one’s own racial group are inferior, deficient, not enough, not deserving and/or other.  
• Stereotype threat  
• Policing norms and expectations for POC  
• Anti-blackness and colorism |

Melissa Pointer  Melissa.pointer@highlineschools.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Pushback You May Get</th>
<th>Thoughtful Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Lives Matter</td>
<td>BLM does not mean only BLM but rather means that BLM, too. In a time when a black teenager carrying a bag of skittles home from the convenience store is regarded as suspicious and gunned down as he struggles to defend himself, then left dead on the sidewalk, unattended like litter, it is necessary to scream out BLM.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My students need to see their similarities and not focus on differences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want answers in English only I will not accept work in Spanish</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The parents of these kids are just not involved. They clearly don’t value education</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The values and believes shared by those in disadvantaged neighborhoods tend to go against school values and beliefs about what makes up a good education</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigrants don’t belong in our country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These kids are in America now they just need to get on board with what we are doing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is too much of a focus on them what about all the other kids?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My white child is going to feel guilty if you teach this. It’s not their fault they weren’t slave holders or segregationists.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My child doesn’t even notice race. Why you teaching this to them.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you just going to get rid of everything that makes our school special. Do we have to change every event?</td>
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Marvista Teacher Survey

1. Cultural differences in communication often result in students of color being penalized for the way in which they answer questions.
   - [ ] I agree
   - [ ] I disagree
   - [ ] I'm unsure

2. Teachers bring stereotypes that affect their views of students of color, which impact how they teach them.
   - [ ] I agree
   - [ ] I disagree
   - [ ] I'm unsure

3. Tougher disciplinary policies will not solve the disciplinary problems of Black or Latino students.
   - [ ] I agree
   - [ ] I disagree
   - [ ] I'm unsure

4. I try to ignore skin color to view minority students as individuals.
   - [ ] I agree
   - [ ] I disagree
   - [ ] I'm unsure

5. To teach effectively, I need to understand my own culture and values.
   - [ ] I agree
   - [ ] I disagree
   - [ ] I’m unsure

6. The things that were done to people of color in the past in this country were terrible, but I am not sure it is the school’s responsibility to make up for that.
   - [ ] I agree
   - [ ] I disagree
   - [ ] I’m unsure

7. It is rude when Latino students speak Spanish in the classroom.
   - [ ] I agree
   - [ ] I disagree
   - [ ] I’m unsure

8. Academically, Asian students do not have to work as hard as other students to get good grades.
   - [ ] I agree
   - [ ] I disagree
   - [ ] I’m unsure

9. Black students’ cultural attitudes and styles of speech make it hard for me to teach them.
   - [ ] I agree
   - [ ] I disagree
   - [ ] I’m unsure

Survey from Solving Disproportionality and Achieving Equity by Edward Fergus
10. Thinking or talking about race makes me feel uncomfortable.
   □ I agree                      □ I disagree                      □ I’m unsure

11. Trying to be culturally responsive all the time is nice in theory, but the reality is that a teacher does not have time to be all things to all students.
   □ I agree                      □ I disagree                      □ I’m unsure

12. I try to ignore skin color in order to view minority students as individuals.
    □ I agree                      □ I disagree                      □ I’m unsure

13. Sometimes I wonder why we can’t see each other as individuals instead of race always being an issue.
    □ I agree                      □ I disagree                      □ I’m unsure

14. I am sometimes suspicious of data showing racial disparities because data can be manipulated to say anything.
    □ I agree                      □ I disagree                      □ I’m unsure

15. I try not to notice a child’s race or skin color in the classroom setting.
    □ I agree                      □ I disagree                      □ I’m unsure

Survey from Solving Disproportionality and Achieving Equity by Edward Fergus
Waking Up White Discussion Questions

1. What are your general reactions to the book? What are some of your biggest take-aways or places in the text where you had a strong personal connection?

CHAPTERS: “What Wasn’t Said” (pp 3-6) and “Logos and Stereotypes” (pp. 86-91)
2. What stereotypes about people of various races, ethnicities, and religions have you heard? Think about ones you heard as a child, as an adolescent, and as an adult. Quickly jot them down under African-Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, Jews, Latinos, Muslims, Whites.

3. If you are white, what stereo-types did you record for Whites? Why do you think this is?

4. In what ways were you encouraged to question stereotypes in your family? In what ways were stereotypes reinforced?

5. What values did you learn in your family? Think about education, work, lifestyle, money, expression of emotions, etc. Now consider what conclusions you drew about people who did not appear to follow your family’s belief system. (Pg 12)

CHAPTERS: “Racial Categories” (pp. 38-41) and “White Superiority” (pp. 42-45)
6. How have you understood racial difference? In terms of biology? Culture? Have you given it much thought? Why or why not?

7. What is your reaction to this chapter which explains there is no science linking race to intrinsic traits such as intelligence or music or physical abilities or that ones’ race may change depending on where they are in the world?

8. If there is no science linking race to intelligence, how do we explain the achievement gaps between white students and students of color in our building that are consistent with the national trends?

CHAPTER: “Headwinds and Tailwinds” (pp. 54-60)
9. This chapter gives examples of systemic racism. Discuss 1-2 of the examples:
- the made-up example of the “garbage system” at the Irving household
- the Canadian hockey team system of the age cutoff for acceptance in the competitive league
- the mall developers who intentionally limited access from a black neighborhood to their mall.

10. In what ways did these examples help you understand the term systemic racism better?

11. Discuss our country’s history upon which many of these benefits and barriers began. How has that history influenced persons of color today?

CHAPTER: “The Melting Pot” (pp. 46-53)
12. Discuss 1-2 of the experiences related in this chapter of the following people or groups:
- Native Americans in the late 1800’s
- Hawaiian businessman Takao Ozawa’s fight for citizenship
• Bhagat Singh Thind’s fight for citizenship
• Japanese-Americans who were sent to internment camps in 1941

13. On page 59, discussing her views as she grew up, Debby says: “I developed an unshakable faith in the idea that anyone could make it with hard work, in the freedom that comes with choice… the sense of trust in American institutions...” How does your belief system align with this one Debby grew up with? Or how is you belief system different from this one?

14. Meritocracy is defined as the belief that everyone succeeds or fails on their own merits. What are your beliefs about meritocracy?

15. How do those beliefs impact your beliefs about school achievement?

CHAPTER: “Invisibility” pp. 69-74
16. Skim the list of “invisible” privileges enjoyed by white people and not afforded to people of color. Consider the following quotes from pp 71 & 73:

• “Privilege is a strange thing in that you notice it least when you have it the most. I’m never more grateful for the privilege of good health, for instance than when I’m sick” (pg. 71).

• “It’s hard to imagine something you don’t experience firsthand, especially when it is so counter to your own experiences” (pg. 73). Segregation enables avoidance, which enables denial, which creates the illusion that white privilege doesn’t exist. But just because I didn’t see my skin color advantage didn’t mean it didn’t exist.”

CHAPTERS: “Everyone is Different; Everyone Belongs (pp 130-135) and “Belonging” (pp 136—142).
17. In what specific ways did your family feel entitled to direct how school would go for you or a family member? In what ways might families be made to feel they do not belong in an institution or school?

18. On pages 138-140 Debby describes a controversy about the annual Halloween Parade at her school. Students who couldn’t participate were sent to the library to engage in an alternate activity. Some parents explained they felt pressured to try and have their children participate by purchasing them costumes even though it made them feel uncomfortable and went against their cultural norms. What traditions at our school may inadvertently be leaving students out or creating conflicts for families who do not want their children to participate but don’t want them left out?

19. On page 136 Debby talks about an “involvement gap”: “All across America white parents, disproportionately able to drop off and pick up their children, gain an edge in the community-bonding department...I had no idea that the more white parents like me...bonded and took over, the more uncomfortable the school culture became for families of color.” In what ways may White parents feel more entitled to have a say in the school than families of color?

CHAPTER: “Intent and Impact” (pp 159-165)
20. (From page 159 speaking about her husband) “The way I meant it and the way he heard it, were miles apart. Race adds an especially challenging layer. Cultural difference combined with pent-up emotions can lead to complex and charged intent-versus-impact upset.” Some examples of people’s intent vs. their impact:
• P. 38 Debby’s father said, “Look at how those Negroes jump!” “Look how those Negroes keep such rhythm.” What was the impact these comments had on Debby’s understanding of race?

• P. 49 Richard Henry Pratt started the Carlisle School, a brutal assimilation program intended to “ensure positive outcomes” for Native American children. What was the intent of the schools? What was the impact?

• P. 153 Regarding her friend Sara’s concern about being the only black Board member: “I cringe now to think I tried to comfort her by telling her that what she experienced wasn’t important enough for her to worry about. I doubt the impact of my minimalizing her sentiments was comforting in any way.”

21. Debby discusses her deep shame in standing up and making statements at a conference in which she was one of only a few White people present. Several Black participants let Debby know about the impact of her comments. She felt humiliated and misunderstood. Think of a time when you hurt someone’s feelings without intending to. Was your impulse to defend yourself? Why do you think that most people’s urge to defend their intentions is so important to them? What can you do instead?

CHAPTER: “Feelings and the Culture of Niceness” (pp 166-171)

22. “The culture of niceness did nothing short of program me away from my humanity and into a socially scripted role with diminished capacity to feel my way through solutions. Like so many of the behaviors I adopted in childhood, silence and avoidance became subconscious habits” (p 169). What ideas are you taking away from the thought that many have of “white people having no culture”? Do white people have a culture? If so, what is it?

23. If you can think of any aspects of White culture, start a list. Which of these cultural values or norms match your own upbringing? If you have your own children, were they evident in your home?

24. What is your understanding of white privilege after reading this book?

25. After reading this book, many white people point out that their childhoods that were less than ideal; poverty, divorce, abuse, neglect… These are significant and traumatic barriers to overcome. In what ways does a person’s skin color represent an uneven playing field even considering people who are white and have had difficult upbringings?
Data You Need To Know!
Melissa Pointer

- Students with parents living in poverty:
  - Score lower on tests of cognitive skill in early childhood;
  - Have more behavior problems in school and at home;
  - Are more likely to drop out of high school, and those who do graduate are less likely to enroll in or graduate college;
  - Are more likely to have children at a young age; and
  - Are more likely to be poor themselves when they are adults. - *The Condition of Education*, the National Center for Education Statistics

- Level of parental education is important and significant predictor of child achievement. From an analysis of data from several large-scale developmental studies, it was concluded that maternal education was linked significantly to children’s intellectual outcomes even after controlling for a variety of other SES indicators such as household income. – Brookings Institute *Early Childhood Longitudinal Study- Birth (ECLS-B) Cohort*

- In *The New Jim Crow* Michelle Alexander cites multiple data points about criminal justice inequities:
  - Although the majority of illegal drug users and dealers nationwide are white, 3/4s of all people imprisoned for drug offenses are black or Latino.
  - In many states blacks make up 80% to 90% of all drug offenders sent to prison
  - Blacks are more than 6 times likely as whites to be sentences to prison for identical crimes
  - One in six black men had been incarcerated as of 2001. If current trends continue, one in three black males born today can expect to spend time in prison during his lifetime
  - In recent study, 15% of all drivers on NJTP were minorities yet 73% of all arrests on that roadway were of black despite similar violation rates to whites

- The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that Black children are 7.5 times more likely and Hispanic children 2.5 times more likely than white children to have an incarcerated parent which has the following impacts:
  - Removes a wage earner from the home, lowering household income.
  - Estimated that two-thirds of incarcerated fathers had provided the primary source of family income before their imprisonment.
  - Children with a parent in prison are at greater risk of homelessness, which in turn can have grave consequences.
  - Emotional strain of a parent’s incarceration can also take its toll on a child’s achievement in school. - odds of finishing high school are 50 percent lower for children with an incarcerated parent.
• Negative perceptions of black boys begin as early as preschool, and their behaviors are often “adultified” during later stages of childhood (i.e. “their transgressions are made to take on a sinister, intentional, fully conscious tone that is stripped of any element of childish naïveté”) (Ferguson 2000, p 83)

• Black boys continue to be largely underrepresented in gifted programs or honors and advanced placement courses (Schott Foundation, 2010).

• During a recent student teachers were asked to watch video clips of children – a black boy, a black girl and white boy and a white girl. They were told to look for challenging behaviors (even though no such behaviors were in the video) and their gaze while watching the video was monitored using eye tracking equipment. The study showed that when expecting to find “challenging behaviors” the teachers watched the black boys 42% of the time more than any of the other children (Gilliam, Maupin, Reyes, Accavitit, & Shic, 2016).

• Black children are eighteen times more likely than white children to be sentenced as adults in criminal justice courts and represent 58% of children sentences to adult incarceration facilities (Poe-Yamagata & Jones, 2007).

• Black boys are generally perceived as older than their white peers, with an average overestimation of 4.5 years (i.e. a nine-year-old is perceived and treated as a teenage: a fourteen-year old as an adult) (Goff et al., 2014).
Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain
Study Guide

As you set out to read this text, rather than anticipating to learn a new “bag of tricks”, think about Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) as a new mindset you will develop - a new way of thinking about and organizing instruction. Read the book with intention and purpose.

As you read, practice the reading strategies we are teaching our students to engage in when reading to learn: stop and jot, talk to someone about your new learning, make connections to previous learning, mark up your book, consider responding to the prompts in a journal, etc.

During August DID we will have a chance to talk in our teams about our reading and new learning and begin to plan how we might take “bite size action” beginning with one or two strategies for building relationships and one or two for building intellective capacity.

Chapter 1:
1. Consider the definition of CRT on page 15. Think about how you would state that definition if you were stating it as a commitment to a guardian or colleague about what you are doing to help a school dependent student meet their full potential.

2. Use the Read for Rigor Framework on page 17 as a checklist for yourself during and after reading. These are the broad categories of the strategies you will learn in this book.

3. Consider the three levels of culture. Which do you typically learn about your students? How might you go deeper?

Chapter 2:
4. The author describes two cultural archetypes she thinks are important to know – collectivism and individualism (p. 25-27). What would you say are the cultural archetypes operating among your students? What cultural practices do you see enacted?

5. “Understanding culture, recognizing cultural archetypes, and recognizing the sociopolitical context are about laying the foundation for being a culturally responsive teacher”. This is the work we have been engaging in! Reflect on our learning last spring about the Legacy of Slavery (refer to Melissa’s document for a refresher). How would you describe the sociopolitical context (mutually reinforcing policies and practices across social, economic, and political domains) that contribute to disparities and unequal opportunities for people of color in housing, transportation, education and healthcare, etc.

Chapter 3:
6. As you read chapter 3, ask yourself, what does this information mean for my instruction?

7. Try describing in your own words how the three parts of the limbic brain interact and explain the relationship of the amygdala to the RAS.

8. What analogies or metaphors might you use to describe the process of growing dendrites and neurons?

Chapter 4:
9. Recall the reflection you did while reading Waking Up White about your own cultural values. Consider how those values have shaped your beliefs about and expectations of students in the classroom (how you expect children to behave socially, take turns during discussions, volume during interaction, collaboration versus individual work, etc.) See page 57 for related questions for consideration.

10. Using the protocol in Figure 4.2 on page 63, reflect on an incident that was particularly challenging for you or concerning to you with a student that was culturally different from you. Does this protocol help you to consider an “alternative explanation” for the student’s behavior?
11. What student social and learning behaviors trigger you in the classroom? Think about which of the five areas of social threat make you defensive (Figure 4.3).

Chapter 5:
12. How can you learn more about what would help your students feel safe and trusting from their perspective and experiences?

13. What specific actions will you take to build trust and rapport and affirm your school dependent students in the first two months of school? (see figure 5.2 and 5.3 for support)

Chapter 6:
14. In what ways are you being an ally to your students?

15. Reflect on what type of hope you might default to (see figure 6.1 on page 93).

16. What might you do differently to offer better feedback?

17. Reflect on where you fall on the Warm Demander Chart.

18. Consider how you might incorporate the language in the Asset-Based Feedback Protocol (Figure 6.4 page 105) in your current reading and writing conferences with students?

Chapter 7:
19. As you read and understand figure 7.2 on page 111, consider opportunities to execute each step in the Academic Mindset Cycle during a typical readers or writers workshop lesson.

20. How can use ensure that we are not misinterpreting cultural differences as deficits, dysfunctions, or disadvantages in students leading you to react negatively toward the student rather than respond positively?

21. What are some specific ways you can help students strengthen self-efficacy and shift their mindset?

Chapter 8:
22. Where do you see opportunities for incorporating more information processing activities in your instruction?

23. Consider what you have read about the three stages of information processing, input, elaboration, and application, what changes in your lesson delivery might you need to make considering this information.

24. Of the abundance of strategies listed in this chapter to build intellective capacity, what are 3-5 that you believe you can incorporate in the near feature and when/how?

Chapter 9:
25. What routines and rituals are in operation in your class? What do they accomplish? Are they aligned with cultural practices significant to your students?

26. Consider ways you can utilize RULER tools like the Charter and Mood Meter check-ins to create routines that are culturally responsive.

27. What are the different talk structures you utilize in your classroom? Which additional structures might you add to your practice?

Melissa Pointer
1. “Prepare to adopt an “I don’t know what I don’t know” attitude. The sooner you can become comfortable with seeking what you don’t know, as opposed to proving what you do, the more you will learn and the more effective you’ll become as a racial justice advocate” (Irving 252).
   > Keep learning and growing. Don’t let the fear of doing or saying something offensive perpetuate the problem.

2. “[White people] are...still trapped in a history which they do not understand; and until they understand it, they cannot be released from it.” – James Baldwin
   > Understand the real history of people of color in the US. Learn more about how people of different races experience the US. Understand the systems in place in the US that currently impact communities differently. Watch Race the Power of an Illusion and 13th. Read texts like The New Jim Crow, Just Mercy

3. “Color-blindness, a philosophy that denies the way lives play out differently along racial lines, actually maintains the very cycle of silence, ignorance and denial that needs to be broken for racism to be dismantled... self-examination and the courage to admit to bias and unhelpful inherited behaviors may be our greatest tool for change. Allowing ourselves to be vulnerable enough to expose our ignorance and insecurities take courage. And love. I believe the most loving thing a person, or group of people, can do for one another is to examine the ways in which their own insecurities and assumptions interfere with other's ability to thrive” (Irving 249).
   > Notice race and your natural thought patterns in order to begin disrupting them.

4. “It turns out “articulate is one of those words white people tend to use to describe a person of color who is able to string a sentence together” (Irving 127).
   > Be aware of and thoughtful of your word choice. Don’t obsess just begin to notice. Also, understanding the difference between Intent vs Impact is critical. You may not have intended harm by something you have done but your impact may have caused harm. Be open to hearing that and doing better in the future.

5. Already on guard in America’s public spaces, and especially in schools, where chances of painful childhood associations are high, parents of color often need to take a deep breath and brave themselves before stepping through a school’s front office (Irving 137)... where does this leave parents who lack trust in America’s institutions, have traumatic memories from their own days as students, and lack the sense of belonging that would lead them through the door to ask in a perky voice, “Hey can I volunteer?” (Irving 141).
   > Foster belonging both for students and parents. Analyze your current policies, procedures, events, and systems to ensure you are not perpetuating institutional racism or exclusionary practices.

6. “When someone with the authority of a teacher describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked in the mirror and saw nothing” – Adrienne Rich
   > Reshape the Curriculum. Include books that represent diverse viewpoints, cultures, races, religions, family groups, etc. Teach about issues and topics that are relevant to students.

7. Findings suggest that people of color who encounter greater amounts of racial microaggressions are likely to experience a number of issues, including psychological distress, low self-esteem and physical health problems. (Nadal, Griffin, Wong, Hamit, & Rasmus, 2012).
   > Remain calm but be bold. Your students deserve for you to interrupt microaggressions.
8. “We keep people down by lowering our expectations of them and then forcing them to live down to them… people aren’t born inferior or superior, they just respond to the environment in which they are placed” (Irving 145).
   ➢ Have high expectations for all students. Communicate clear expectations for behavior and instruction. Communicate a “do your best, don’t give up, we believe in you” motto every day to ALL students.

9. 91% of white American’s closest friends and family members are white, and just 1 percent are black (Public Religion Research Institute).
   ➢ Build meaningful relationships with people unlike you. Engage in meaningful ways with people from other cultures.

10. “In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.” – Martin Luther King, Jr.
RESOURCE LIST

Strategy/Tool - Video - A Look at Race Through a Child’s Eyes

Details/Brief Description - Anderson Cooper details a study that seeks to gain insight into the way black and white children perceive each other. The findings are discouraging and indicate that children even at a young age believe they cannot be friends with children of another race.

Intended Outcome - Would be helpful to share with staff to provide insight on how kids may be perceiving one another. Many believe young children “don’t see race” when this study tells us otherwise which means it is important to address directly in our classrooms.

Strategy/Tool - Because I’m Latino, I Can’t Have Money? Kids on Race

Details/Brief Description - A 4 minute Video of middle school aged students talking about their experiences as children of color today. They share examples of microaggressions and racism they have experienced, fear and anxiety they have, etc.

Intended Outcome - Would be powerful to share with students and staff. Could be used when teaching/discussing the topic of stereotypes, racism, microaggressions, empathy, compassion, etc.

Strategy/Tool: Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Details/Brief Description: "...A personal literary exploration of America’s racial history by "the single best writer on the subject of race in the United States" (The New York Observer). "This is your country, this is your world, this is your body, and you must find some way to live within the all of it." In a profound work that pivots from the biggest questions about American history and ideals to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son, Ta-Nehisi Coates offers a powerful new framework for understanding our nation’s history and current crisis. Americans have built an empire on the idea of "race", a falsehood that damages us all but falls most heavily on the bodies of black women and men - bodies exploited through slavery and segregation and, today, threatened, locked up, and murdered out of all proportion. What is it like to inhabit a black body and find a way to live within it? And how can we all honestly reckon with this fraught history and free ourselves from its burden? Between the World and Me is Ta-Nehisi Coates' attempt to answer these questions in a letter to his adolescent son. Coates shares with his son - and listeners - the story of his awakening to the truth about his place in the world through a series of revelatory experiences, from Howard University to Civil War battlefields, from the South Side of Chicago to Paris, from his childhood home to the living rooms of mothers whose children’s lives were taken as American plunder. Beautifully woven from personal narrative, reimagined history, and fresh, emotionally charged reportage, Between the World and Me clearly illuminates the past, bracingly confronts our present, and offers a transcendent vision for a way forward." -iTunes

Intended Outcome: Deepen ones understanding of the experience of those identified as black in America, deepen ones understanding our nation’s history and current crisis, important background building needed for white staff.

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