Racial Equity Policy That Moves Implicit Bias Beyond a Metaphor for Individual Prejudice to a Means of Exposing Structural Oppression

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Abstract

This case study follows a district racial equity initiative from policy formulation through implementation, and finally to the review of a high school discipline measure. The initiative had a consistent theme of addressing implicit bias. However, over time, district equity champions expanded the definition of implicit bias beyond its conventional meaning of subconscious prejudices and perceptions that may influence action. These champions came to identify policies, practices, and curriculum that presumed and privileged underlying White norms, and were thus implicitly biased. Hence, implicit bias became evident in powerful structural racism across the school system.

Keywords

implicit bias, institutional racism, racial equity

Background

The racial and ethnic composition of schools and school districts have had profound impact on the educational outcomes of racially minoritized and marginalized students.

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Some of the largest district with considerable wealth; however, regardless of how school finances might be able to support district, school demographics and policies addressing race are often misaligned. Thomasville Independent School District (TISD) was one of the 50 largest and most diverse school districts in the United States, with approximately 100,000 students (one seventh of students statewide). In terms of race and ethnicity, 43% of TISD students identified as White, 36% as African American, 11% as Latinx, and the remaining 9% as Asian/Pacific Islander, biracial, or other ethnicities. On the contrary, of the nearly 7,000 faculty, administrators, and central office personnel, 83% were White, 14% were African American, and 3% were defined as other (including Latinx). The racial and ethnic composition of students and adults were therefore substantially disparate.

Historically, school board members have had to defend the judgment of individual adults and the district as a whole against challenges of racism and discrimination. Particularly when it came to discipline, racially minoritized communities pointedly argued that when conflicts occurred involving minoritized youth, White adults' judgment was routinely seen as normal and justified. TISD thus fit a mold of districts amply described in the research (Clarke, 1961; Daneshzadeh and Sirrakos, 2018; Hartman, 1997; Hilliard, 1997; hooks, 1995; Jayakumar, 2007) in which ubiquitous White norms continue to "foster the permanence of White supremacist ideologies in our society" (Daneshzadeh and Sirrakos, 2018, p. 10). In these districts, Whiteness defines normalcy in school discipline, curriculum, instructional practices, and simultaneously marginalizes Blackness in all those dimensions of school life (Daneshzadeh and Sirrakos, 2018; Hartman, 1997).

This case study indicates how White hegemony contributes to racially disproportionate school discipline while demonstrating that systematic approaches to disrupting that hegemony are mandatory for effective reform. More so, while schools and districts may address implicit racial bias, this case points to the necessity of moving past confronting individual attitudes—even subconscious ones—to dismantling implicitly biased policies, practices, and structures.

In particular, the district in this study began by establishing broad policies on equity and race. Implicit bias was a highlight of those policies, and was understood initially as the subconscious prejudices that individuals held. During the implementation year of those policies, one of the high schools reported an apparent success in using Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to cope with a widespread discipline problem. However, that success received unexpected scrutiny from school board members with a social justice orientation. That scrutiny included challenging MTSS' apparent neutrality. Thus, the school leaders expanded the work on implicit bias from challenging individual prejudices to tackling policies and practices that appeared to be impartial but were in fact predicated on holding White behavior as the norm against which all students should be judged.

Case Narrative

This section provides an overview of the case study which involves a large urban school district in the South. Other participants in the study include the school board and several

central office school administrators. Thomasville initiated its new equity and race policy over the course of a year, and saw its first significant test case 6 months after the initiation. This narrative follows those 18 months in three sections: (a) from setting the policy's standards, (b) to implementation, and (c) to the presentation of a test case by the high school leadership team. Through the development and implementation of the equity and race policy, Thomasville came to regard implicit bias first as essentially about individual prejudices and later as policies and practices. The district then understood that their central cultural assumptions rendered them implicitly biased to privilege White standards of academic and social behavior. This shift from focusing on individually implicit bias to structurally implicit bias is the core leadership lesson of this case study.

Dr. Max Brown led the Racial Equity Policy Initiative as Thomasville's Senior Diversity and Equity Officer and served as the highest ranking African American male in the school district. As he established the race and equity policy, several challenges were presented such as the school board was uneasily committed to pursuing equity, school principals who likewise reflected significant differences on the urgency of educational equity, and a new superintendent, Dr. Sallie Clover, an internal promotion for the post.

Clover was a White female and local resident who had been with the district for 20 years, most recently as the School Improvement Officer. During the first year of implementing the race and equity policy, she served as interim superintendent. By year's end, she was elevated from interim to permanent superintendent as a result of a search process that emphasized the need for change, with a focus on the district's broad equity goal: "Students will not have their school success predicted by their race, social class, gender, and/or disability."

On the school board, two members represented opposite polls on the issue of educational equity. Mr. Rob Pérez, a Latinx community organizer, parent, and recently elected board member, was known for his persistence regarding the district's equity goal. By contrast, Mrs. Etta Smith was a White female, one of the longest tenured board members, and a retired teacher and campus administrator who consistently challenged the necessity of addressing equity, especially as it pertained to race and ethnicity.

Principals across the district had varying levels of comfort with matters of equity. New hires were able to articulate some policies and practices that could improve inclusion and equity. The bulk of principals rhetorically supported racial equity, although few could back up their words with the leadership skills needed to operationalize that support. A small faction of seasoned principals openly resisted and resented equity mandates.

Setting the Standards for the Equity and Race Policy

As Dr. Brown undertook this effort, he found that the district had no protocols for implementing equity and race policies at district or school levels. Rather, Thomasville had historically embraced an ethos of colorblindness in policy and practice concerning the large population of students of color in the district. Brown sought to use the equity and race policy to specifically deconstruct the notion of a colorblind policy and to address racial disparities in academic, discipline, and disability classification data.

The policy aimed to address disproportionate access to resources and curriculum, disproportionate discipline and disability classification, and culturally responsive pedagogy. In the first year, school board meetings and discussions focused on systemic changes to close the opportunity gap regularly faced by TISD students. With regard to access, Advanced Program and Advanced Placement courses contained disproportionately few Black and Latinx students. Looking at student achievement more broadly, Black students continued to score the lowest on state-mandated tests across all grade levels and subject areas. The discussions identified one contributing factor as the considerable amount of class time that Black students lost due to disciplinary suspension. Black males topped that list, followed by Black females. Finally, related to cultural competence, nearly 84% of the TISD teachers and administrators were White, while fewer than half (43%) of the students are White.

Convening a leadership group on equity and race. Brown established an Equity and Race Policy Committee to advise, critique, and monitor the district and schools' equity and race plans. The committee's mission was to oversee the policy development process and to communicate to the community the rationale for the policy once it had been approved by the Board. They met several times on their own throughout the school year on various campus as a way to distribute information and solicit feedback from all of the community stakeholders. They met further with Superintendent Clover to discuss and deliver findings regarding racial inequities in the district.

The committee included internal and external stakeholders. Internal members consisted of the district superintendent, two board members, two key central office staff (the Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Programs and the Executive Director of Student Services), and three building-level administrators (elementary, middle, and high schools) and teachers. External stakeholders included a parent advocate, a representative of the local Urban League chapter, clergy person, and a business owner.

Dr. Brown co-chaired the committee with school board member Mrs. Smith. He purposefully chose her because she had historically objected to equity-focused work. That choice derived from earlier grant-supported anti-racist work he had done in the district which paired equity advocates with equity resisters among the faculty and administration. Pairing Dr. Brown and Mrs. Smith as co-chairs on the committee had a salient effect on all, and moved the work forward broadly. So, he hoped for a similar effect here.

Opposition in policy development. During one Policy Committee meeting, Mrs. Smith asked why there was such a strong focus on race. She contended that the policy and the district should focus on poverty instead. When Brown shared the demographics with her indicating that nearly 80% of the district's student population are students of color, Smith immediately argued that the information was skewed and incorrect. In response, Brown turned to the district's research director/statistician to further interpret the data. Smith countered that the relative success of Latinx and Asian students compared with African American students proved that race was not a factor. She ignored the fact that White students outperformed all other racial subgroups. More basically than discussing achievement discrepancies, Smith refused to believe that TISD was indeed a

Table 1. Reflection Guide Questions and Strategies.

Focus questions for racial equity	
Individual perspective	How am I approaching teaching and learning from a strengths-based approach rather than a deficit approach to reach racialized students?
	How am I aware of how my bias impacts my interactions with students? Consider both implicit and explicit bias?
	How do I balance racial identity with individual identity for every student?
	As a school administrator in this district, regardless of whether you have biases or not, how will you ensure the implementation of the race and equity policy with fidelity?
Institutional perspective	How does each school's comprehensive plan address policies and practices that are implicitly racist?
	When our schools analyze student data (i.e., academic, disciplinary, attendance, etc.), we may disaggregate for race, but how do we think critically about how racism colors the data and our analyses?
	Understanding the competing roles throughout this district in this case, what might be some immediately areas in which a campus leader can address implementing the race and equity policy?
	What might be some strategies in which the entire district considers to ensure the implementation of the race and equity policy with fidelity?

Strategies for racial equity	
Individual perspective	Give and acknowledge diverse perspectives when teaching, making decisions, and communicating.
	Create opportunities at the school level, district level, and school board for open, crucial conversations about individual reflections and awareness of their own racial bias.
Institutional perspective	Examine data to explore the intersectionality of race, gender, income status, and culture.
	Address the inequities presented in this case accordingly and immediately when presented by others in both unconscious and conscious ways.
	Develop culturally competent teaching and learning that require focused activities and intentional structured environments.
	Analyze academic and behavioral issues with an eye to the role of explicit and implicit bias.

diverse district, despite the abundant data of a racially and ethnically complex student population.

Smith's resistance made it more evident to the committee that TISD needed a new equity and race policy. Furthermore, they saw that several steps would be necessary to convince the broader community of that necessity. Dr. Brown drafted an Equity and Race Reflection Guide for meetings with stakeholders with a particular focus on implicit racial bias. The guide used focus questions and strategies to stimulate those conversations (Table 1).

Table 2. Strategies to Address the Implementation of the Race and Equity Policy.

Phase 1 of implementation: address curriculum diversity
Phase 2 of implementation: address professional development
Phase 3 of implementation: address staffing and classroom diversity
Phased 4 of implementation: address policies and practices

   Dr. Brown and the Policy Committee held a parallel set of four meetings with school leaders through the remaining Fall semester. The goal was to strategically address tenets of the policy that went beyond implicit bias as an individual's disposition to larger structural manifestations of racial inequity: (a) diversity in the curriculum, (b) cultural competence, (c) staffing diversity/classroom diversity, (d) programmatic access, (e) school culture and school climate, and (f) central office departmental resolution and commitment to equity and race. The race and equity committee was charged with addressing the most salient strategic question: how do principals and other school administrators navigate implementing this policy while being held accountable for recognizing and dealing with implicit and in some cases explicit bias?

Implementation Plan

As a result of those meetings, Dr. Brown and the Policy Committee saw that addressing discipline disparities would be the most productive avenue to begin the wide-ranging project of building racial equity in the district. They posited that addressing disproportionate discipline in a broad context could be a fruitful example for how the work could be done in other areas. To that end, they composed an implementation plan to regard how discipline could be impacted in four strategic areas: (a) curriculum diversity, (b) professional development, (c) staffing and classroom diversity, and (d) policies and practices. TISD had already been employing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as its main systemic remedy for excessive suspension, an initiative of which Brown and the committee took note. As shown in Table 2, the four strategies were not to be implemented in isolation. Rather, they were to be considered complementary to PBIS as a means to diminish racial inequities and discipline disparities.

Curriculum diversity. Data from the Fall's stakeholder discussions indicated that African American, Latinx, and Asian students had few mirrors in the curriculum in which to see themselves, while White students likewise had few windows to experience cultures beyond their immediate exposure. Committee members described that homogeneity is a form of instructional implicit bias. They distinguished here between possible individual instructional choices or presumptions made by teachers and the institutionalization of Whiteness in the instructional core. Hence, the first major priority focused on the need to develop those culturally responsive windows and mirrors through instructional practices and rich curriculum resources. As measures of

achievement, each school was to create such a course or unit at each level. Furthermore, each leader was to document that development in work with School-based Decision Making (SBDM) Councils.

Professional development. In this arena, Dr. Brown and the Policy Committee interpreted the mandate from the Fall stakeholder discussions broadly. First, they believed that of the urgency of addressing, racial equity required each school and the district overall to devote 100 hr per year to mandatory professional development for all faculty and staff. The content of that training was defined broadly as cultural competence, and also tailored narrowly to training and implementation of restorative practices for discipline.

Regarding instructional and restorative practices, leaders were to concentrate on implicit bias with certified staff. Equity Institutes to be held in October, November, June, and July would fill that need. The training would include books studies and modeling practices that spoke to both individual dispositions as well as institutionalized norms and practices, such as *Black Male*(*d*) (Howard, 2014). Brown and the committee made further resources available to school leaders as to aid their professional development designing, including speaker series, individualized trainings, and mini grants to support innovative practices.

Furthermore, Brown and the committee regarded strategic planning as an opportunity for professional development. They expected each school to design equity race plans to address their racial inequities and monitor progress. The Equity and Race plan should fit seamlessly into the Comprehensive District Improvement Plan. The Research, Accountability, and Systems Improvement Office (RASI) would ensure alignment. The plans should be outward facing, innovative, and based on best practices.

Staffing and classroom diversity. Next, when the Committee examined the demographics of the student population compared with the demographics of both teacher and administrator demographics, they chose to address staff diversity, notwithstanding Mrs. Brown's objections. The Staffing and Classroom Diversity strategy focuses on the need to develop and implement strategies to attract, recruit, and retain racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse and culturally competent educators and employees. Hiring practices would have a more strategic focus to consider conditional hiring, monitoring, and reporting to key personnel in the district to ensure that the diversity hiring is effectively occurring.

This set of strategies again raised implicit bias from a matter of individual disposition to institutionalized systems and norms. They did so in two ways. First, the committee reasoned that a more racially and ethnically diverse faculty and staff would harbor fewer derogatory implicit biases in the aggregate than an overwhelmingly White group would. However, Brown and the committee took care not to assume that identity and competence were synonymous. To that end, these strategies raised cultural competence as a significant factor for hiring and promotion, along with identity, since they knew that implicit racist biases could be held (or rejected) by people of all backgrounds.

Policies and practices. Finally, the remaining areas of focus presented a much needed ongoing and sustainable process to address access to high-quality instruction for students who of color who had been historically marginalized in TISD. At the school level, this portion of the Racial Equality initiative included (a) increasing the number of students of color in gifted and talented programming, (b) increasing the number of teachers trained to teach gifted and talented courses, (c) providing sufficient resources for all students in each school have access to evidence-supported out-of-school programs, and (d) providing language translation services at every school for access to high-quality instruction for English language learners and their families.

Dr. Brown and the Racial Equity Committee laid out district-level strategies as well. They tasked the school board with reviewing their policies with respect to racial equity. They pressed district administration to expand mandatory and ongoing professional development as outlined above. They further advocated for better communication and transparency by using the district website to publish an annual report on the district's progress on racial equity initiatives. Furthermore, it was imperative that the race and equity policy be implemented with the highest level of fidelity to address the challenges in the district including disciplinary intervention.

A Discipline Success Becomes a Test Case for the New Policy

At the January Board of Education meeting with Dr. Clover, recently elevated to district superintendent, a high school team's presentation would unexpectedly bring to the surface several dimensions of the racial equity initiative. The Thomasville High School leadership team reported on what they regard as a success for their PBIS initiative. One year previously, the team's data analysis revealed that more than 20% of all students were marked as late to class or received a discipline referral for skipping class. Having recently been trained in PBIS protocols, they recognized that crossing this 20% data point crossed the threshold to compel a Tier 1 universal intervention for the entire school. The team decided to assign additional faculty and staff hallway monitors to keep traffic flowing between classes, check hallway passes during class time, and essentially shepherd students to their classes. At the January meeting, the leadership team proudly reported to the school board and Dr. Clover that the class skipping rate has been reduced dramatically by 60%: a big win for the Tier 1 intervention.

The school board was eager to make a strong impression during Dr. Clover's first year. Several members praised the team for taking a data-driven approach and for achieving remarkable results in such a short period of time. Mrs. Smith and several other board members markedly make eye contact with Clover to emphasize that they prized these school leaders. Several commented that this PBIS effort was evidence of the high school enacting the racial equity initiative to guarantee access to high quality instruction for all students.

Mr. Pérez echoed the praise and then pushed further by stating,

> Let me ask you a question, and if you did not ask yourselves this question, may I encourage you to do so. What classes were kids never skipping? I ask this question

because they are voting with their feet. They are telling you what is important to them. Now, I don't know if they are always going to those classes because they love those teachers, because they are scared to death of those teachers, or because those classes are next to the cafeteria. But, until you ask those questions, you are missing about half of what is happening in your school.

The high school leadership team had no answer in the moment.

After the meeting, Clover pulled the team aside. She congratulated them on their success and added that Pérez had a point. She further emphasized that she was hired in part to take the equity goal beyond "feel good" rhetoric and to make it operational, as with the initiative led by Dr. Brown and the Racial Equity Committee. In particular, she wanted a finer analysis of the attendance data disaggregated by race of both the students and the teachers writing referrals. She felt that it was the leadership team's new duty to look for evidence of possible implicit bias in discipline referrals, and with 20% of the students involved, this could be a fruitful example. She emphasized that PBIS data analysis of student conduct alone made the implicit assumption that the adults' judgment was always right.

Clover also wanted a finer such analysis with respect to the gifted and talented versus other classes:

When Pérez says, "students are voting with their feet," this is just what Dr. Brown has been urging us to think about. Who is getting to classes that challenge them and are worth their time? And what classes and teachers are kids avoiding? There might be patterns there that we should understand.

Finally, she asked the team to consider whether the master schedule could be a schoolwide practice with a differential impact on students by race and the classes to which they had access. The high school's PBIS team had initially regarded their problem as a low-level yet widespread discipline issue. On the strength of Brown's work, Clover was pressing them to consider whether this was not about a fair number of bad kids, but a deeper structural issue. Could the master schedule have class conflicts built in that implicitly biased which students had access to certain courses?

Clover gave the team 5 weeks to come back to her with analyses and plans to meet the concerns raised during the school board meeting. She wanted them to do so with respect to the implicit bias and structural racism foci of the new Equity and Race Policy. She promised the support of Dr. Brown and any members of the Equity and Race Policy Committee whom they thought could be helpful.

Teaching Notes

In this case study, leaders who focused on racial equity found that they came to redefine implicit bias during the roll out and implementation phases. Initially, they defined implicit bias as individually held prejudice, which may be socially constructed but operates subconsciously on educators' perceptions and judgments. As

equity teams examined policies and practices at the district and school level, they recognized that those structures were consistently based on White norms. When those norms went unquestioned—simply assumed to be the definition of a good student—then implicit bias became synonymous institutional racism. Policies, practices, and structures were implicitly biased to privilege Whiteness. These teaching notes highlight that deeper analysis and action. We encourage practicing and aspiring anti-racist leaders to press their schools to grapple with the understanding that implicit bias exists powerfully in the policies, procedures, and teaching practices, as well as in the minds and hearts of individuals.

Research on effective anti-racist school reform, especially with discipline, indicates that implicit bias is a central concern. Racially disaggregating data were a prime equity strategy of late-20th century educational reform. Bonilla-Silva (2001) saw those reforms as severely flawed because they failed to deal with how the basic meritocracy of school functions was defined by White norms. When marginalized student groups fail to live up to those norms, they are blamed for their own failure. Ladson-Billings (2006) has called educators to replace the achievement gap framework with an education debt perspective that focuses on what schools owe to children: succinctly, the question is not how students are failing school, but rather how school is failing students.

The committee's analysis of district curriculum reflected this shift. They recognized that minoritized students could not find themselves in the curriculum. Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) explores the notion of whiteness as property, in the sense of who owns and controls a given institutional space (Harris, 1995). Leonardo (2014) describes how curriculum and other structures of schools as institutions are those spaces. Leonardo and Broderick (2011) make a similar claim that curriculum and teaching methods can promote White forms of academic performance (i.e., "acting White") as the norms to which all students should aspire. This is a powerful way that African American, Latinx, and other racialized students are marginalized in classrooms.

Turning to matters of student discipline, Anyon et al. (2017) indicate that racially disaggregating discipline data alone are insufficient for the same reason. Effective change must deal with how individual teachers and administrators may express act on implicit biases. Several studies of the attempts to ameliorate excessive and disproportionate suspension with restorative justice practices indicate that systemic change without thorough attention to systemic implicit and explicit bias fails to make meaningful change (Lustick, 2017; Mansfield et al., 2018) and MTSS/PBIS (Anyon et al., 2017). Mansfield et al. (2018) report that teachers resist the implementation of positive behavior practices primarily because they unrealistically expect immediate change. They also note that White teachers perceive that restorative justice results in "inequitably meted out" school suspensions, which they feel undermined the discipline system in general (p. 304).

Bal (2018) and Bornstein (2017) further indicate that conventional codes of conduct, MTSS systems, and other school wide policies and practices enshrine White norms of acceptable behavior. Thus, disciplinary and therapeutic means to return

Table 3. Data Analysis Template.

Individual and Structural Levels	Strengths	Challenges	Disaggregate by race class, gender, and language acquisition
Student(s)	—	—	—
Teacher(s)	—	—	—
Institution (policies and practices)	—	—	—

students to Tier I "normal" behavior implicitly means getting them to act White (Bornstein, 2015). And paradoxically, when inclusive school leaders uncritically deployed PBIS (an early version of MTSS) to address excessive and racially disproportionate suspension, they wound up exchanging one deficit disciplinary identity ("disorderly student") for another psychopathological one ("disordered student") (Bornstein, 2017).

Increasing efforts have been implemented to integrate cultural responsiveness practices into PBIS as a strategy to address some of the inequities and disproportionality in behavioral intervention plans (Bal, 2017). Bal et al. (2018) argued that the racialization of school discipline is a systemic and complex problem that requires systemic solutions. Bal et al. (2018) detail a process for creating culturally responsive structures, power sharing, and policies that fundamentally shift the way schools do business in this critical arena.

Bornstein (2017) proposes a template for data analysis that expands conventional analysis in two ways. First and most significantly, it moves the analytic gaze from the conventional focus strictly on students to a more comprehensive look at the adults and the institution's policies and practices as well, as indicated by the three rows in Table 3. This shift echoes the sentiment of School Board Member Pérez in the case narrative who encouraged the high school leadership team to look into the other "half of what is happening in your school."

Second, the columns of the template expand beyond data analysis that typically emphasizes student deficit. Leaders could use this template to insist upon documenting strengths as rigorously as challenges. Along with disaggregating data by dominant and marginalized identities, this analysis potentially leads data-informed decision away from deficit thinking.

For the purposes of this case study, we also propose this data analysis grid to expose implicit bias at the individual and institutional levels. Following quantitative analyses of data from the first row, teams can dig more deeply into the qualitative factors where individual perceptions, decisions, and actions are affected by implicit bias as it is conventionally understood as a deep-seated but perhaps subconscious personal prejudice. However, next two rows hold the most power for disrupting structural institutional implicit bias.

Simply examining the role of teachers, institutional policies, and practices as rigorously as students breaks one implicit bias of conventional data analysis. We argue that when students are the only ones whose behavior and results are scrutinized, this is an

implicit bias that adult judgment is correct, unquestionable, above reproach. School leaders can change this paradigm by developing their communities' capacity for thorough evaluation of all factors contributing to troubling situations.

The grid's final column challenges implicit bias a step further. Schools routinely disaggregate student data, although they too often revert to deficit interpretations of those data (Howard, 2014; Muhammad, 2010). However, we rarely, if ever, disaggregate the same data for the adult identities. Bornstein (2017) points out that analyzing office discipline referrals (ODRs) by disaggregating the authors' race, gender, disability, and so on sheds a whole new light on patterns of conflict in the classroom. Likewise, analyzing institutional policies and practices for their responsiveness or opposition to the identities of students potentially reveals implicit bias at a structural level. Consider, for example, how numerous schools have been disciplining African American students for wearing dreadlocks, not specifically because the students' racial identity but because a nominally colorblind dress code of conduct rendered their cultural expression deviant. This is just one of the many injustices that students from racially minoritized and marginalized groups experience of a daily basis in public schools. On a final note, how might schools districts consider what is needed for schools to develop, implement, and evaluate effective race and equity policies and practices with strict conformity and ethical considerations?

Suggestions for Teaching with Case Study

Racial equity and discipline disparities questions

- In this case, where did leaders help stakeholders to discern between strength-based and deficit-based teaching approaches to authentically reach racialized students? How might you translate those actions to your school or district?
- Which aspects of your campus-based or district-based strategic plans could be entry points to specifically address racial equity as TISD did? Furthermore, analyze the resistance that Dr. Brown and colleagues met, and identify analogous situations and actors in your context.
- Consider your current school or district. How does it define implicit bias? Do they deal with it fundamentally as a matter of individual mindset, or do they acknowledge structures, policies, and practices that are implicitly biased?

Theoretical/empirical questions

- What leadership strategies were indicated in how TISD leaders work changed when they framed implicit bias as a characteristic of systems rather than of individuals? What were the affordances and limitations of each framing in this case, and how would they translate to your community?
- How well did TISD prepare themselves to simultaneously address the needs and development of academic, emotional, social, political, moral, and cultural skills without compromising interpersonal interactions and perceptions? What leadership practices would you adopt from their approach, and what pitfalls would you seek to avoid from their experience?

Personal/hypothetical questions for self-reflection

- How am I aware of individual student identity and how do I balance their racial identity with individual identity for every student?
- How do I conceptualize my own personal biases, implicit and explicit, when making decisions not as an adult but for the consideration for the child (student)?
- When analyzing a vexing situation at school, am I willing and able to identify implicitly biased structures, practices, and policies?
- Do I bring the most appropriate stakeholders at the table to determine the need for addressing inequities, racism, and academic and discipline disparities?

Extension Activity

- Reexamine both campus and district mission and vision statements in your school community to be more inclusive to address the strategies of the Equity and Race Policy as part in district and campus improvement plans;
- Create a committee of both campus- and district-level staff to redesign district-level Strategic Comprehensive Plans as the model for campus-level Strategic Comprehensive Plans;
  - Map out key stakeholders that should be included in a committee that represented the racial and cultural breadth of the community;
  - Compare the two committees. What are the power differences? What outcomes could you predict from each group?
- Use the Data Analysis Grid (Table 3) to analyze academic and behavioral issues with an eye to the role of explicit and implicit bias at the personal and structural levels in the district. Consider each cell of Table 1 equally seriously, to see a broad array of factors.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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