



Centerville City Schools

Diversity Plan

2020 - 2021

Mission and Vision

Mission: To empower our community of learners with knowledge, skills, and empathy to effectively engage a diverse world.

Vision: We will continually work to increase the cultural knowledge and self-awareness of our staff and student body. We will work to develop and enhance trusting relationships with our students and their families where all feel safe and encouraged to express their views. We will build a welcoming and inclusive environment that celebrates the uniqueness of all our families. We will encourage the recruitment and retention of diverse representations to have a staff reflective of the vibrant community we live in for the betterment of all.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Goals

Overview of Goals:

1. Develop an awareness of one's own cultural lens, diverse perspectives, and inequities in education and society
2. Increase community engagement and parental involvement
3. Recruit and retain staff from underrepresented racial and ethnic populations
4. Remove barriers that impede the engagement of all students in curricular and extracurricular activities

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Team for 2019-2020

Cedric Tolbert is an Intervention Specialist at Cline Elementary. Cedric is also an assistant coach on the Football and Track & Field Staffs at Centerville High School. He has a Bachelor's in Special Education, K-12, Mild to Moderate, from the University of Cincinnati. He has a Master's degree in Higher Education Administration from Central State University. He believes that diversity in all aspects of education will contribute to student success and optimize their continued growth and development in preparation for the life schooling. His hopes for Centerville schools are that diversity and inclusion efforts will be designed to maximize joy, build relationships, and minimize fear.

Joseph Wang is a School Psychologist at Tower Heights Middle and John Hole Elementary. He obtained his training in school psychology from Miami University. As a practicing school psychologist, much of his time is spent in the world of prevention, assessment, and intervention. He serves on collaborative teams for students in general and special education. An area of particular interest to him is Culturally-Responsive Practices. He has research interests in the mental health supports for minority and immigrant students.

Georgeanna Wright is an Art and Design teacher at Centerville High School. She holds a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Wright State University. As an Art teacher with over 17 years of experience, she works with students of all grade levels (9-12), backgrounds and abilities in the classroom. She has a particular interest in enlightening students to the multitude of ways that art and design exist in the world around us yet form a common language. She emphasizes exploring how various tools can be used as a means of individual creative expression. She believes that diversity is the understanding, acceptance, and celebration of all backgrounds and their unique experiences.

Ellie Ellis is a Statistics teacher and the Career Education Principal Designate, also at Centerville High School. Ellie has a Bachelor's degree in both AYA education and General Mathematics. She also has her Master's in Educational Leadership. All degrees are from the University of Dayton. She tries to incorporate as much choice, diversity and individual expression into her Stats lessons as possible. She believes that Statistics is one of the mathematics courses that allows students to explore the idea of individuality in their education. This allows Ellie and her students to celebrate, embrace and learn from multiple points of view, backgrounds and cultural lenses.

Megan LeMaster is the district's English Language Learner Coach for grades K-12. She has a Master's degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages from Wheaton College. For the past ten years, she has been working with English language learners of all ages. She has taught English as a second or foreign language to students in grades K-12 in the United States and in several other countries. Megan enjoys working with the immigrant families who choose to make Centerville City Schools their home. She places importance on recognizing the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning

The Role of District Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Team:

- To head DEI Task Forces
- To create and maintain an online resource bank with training, tools, and strategies
- To provide professional development in the area of diversity, equity, and inclusion for all staff within the district
- To meet as a team monthly to review common issues, diversity trends, and come up with solutions
- To serve as a point person for staff to send questions and request resources
- To attend trainings outside of the district and consult with Larry Burnley and Tiffany Taylor Smith of the University of Dayton

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consultants

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion team has had the privilege of working with experts in the field of intercultural competence, inclusive excellence, and diversity issues in education. Dr. Lawrence Burnley and Tiffany Taylor Smith have offered their consult to the DEI team and led professional development in topics of DEI in Centerville's Summer Institute.

Dr. Lawrence A. Q. Burnley was appointed University of Dayton's inaugural Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion in 2016. Previously, Dr. Lawrence Burnley served as the Associate Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Asst. Professor of History at Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington. He is also president and co-founder of Inclusive Engagements, LLC. Dr. Burnley has facilitated numerous seminars and workshops in diversity, equity, and inclusion, inter/cross-cultural dialogue, and critical reflection. A Cleveland native, Dr. Burnley holds a Doctor of Philosophy in the history of American education with a minor in multicultural issues in education from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. He also holds a Masters of Divinity from Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, Indiana, and a Bachelors of Arts with honors in African American Studies with a concentration in history from the University of Cincinnati. Dr. Burnley has published the book *The Cost of Unity: African American Agency and Education, in the Christian Church, 1865-1914*, published by Mercer University Press (2008). He is also a contributing author in *The Stone-Campbell Movement: A Global History* (January 2013).

Tiffany Taylor Smith is the Executive Director for Inclusive Excellence Education and Professional Development at the University of Dayton. In this role, Tiffany leads the development, implementation, and assessment of comprehensive, campus-wide professional development and training to promote and enhance intercultural competence, diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence. During the last 15 years, Tiffany has worked with education, business, and community organizations to increase intercultural competence for both adults and students. In 2001, she founded TR Taylor Consulting, LLC. (now Culture Learning Partners), to help build better cross-cultural relations, navigate cultural diversity, and increase cultural equity. She has previously worked as a consultant with Indiana Wesleyan University since 2013 to help develop and deploy an institution-wide diversity and inclusion strategy. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Rochester in Rochester, New York, and a Master's degree

in Education, specializing in Counseling Services, from Fordham University in New York. A Dayton native, Tiffany Taylor Smith graduated from Archbishop Alter High School in Kettering.

Our Definition of Keywords

Diversity

Diversity is the *presence* and *recognition* of individual differences and the embrace of these differences through mutual respect.

Equity

Equity is the recognition of the different challenges each individual student and staff member faces in our educational system and the removal of barriers to help all successfully achieve their goal(s).

Inclusion

Inclusion is the process of intentional engagement of students and staff that fosters a sense of belonging and purpose for all, and is grounded in the belief that every person has inherent worth.

Culture

Culture is a shared, collective COMMUNITY shaped by our environment, experiences, values, and perspectives.

Goal #1

Develop an awareness of one's own cultural lens, diverse perspectives, and inequities in education and society

Rationale: The first step to any form of action is awareness. Evaluating one's own cultural lens, as well as understanding our students' cultural backgrounds, can lead to a deeper understanding of student learning in a cross-cultural context and subsequently result in the increased engagement, motivation, and achievement of all students.

Strategies for Goal #1

- The DEI team will *establish and continually maintain an online resource bank* of tools and strategies for culturally-responsive teaching. Resources for culturally-responsive teaching may include but are not limited to: training modules, cultural learning activities, instructional strategies, and self-care activities. Members of the DEI team will review the diverse needs of the district through regular meetings, in order to make changes to the online resource bank.
- The DEI team will *lead summer and winter institutes* to support all staff on the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion. For the current school year, institutes will focus on developing a self-awareness of culture and broadening our interpretations of student learning behavior. (See figure 1 in the Appendix.) Members of the DEI team will use the evaluations to inform future summer and winter institutes.
- Members of the DEI team will *actively participate in building staff meetings* to be informed of current district trends and provide consultation from a culturally-responsive perspective.

Goal #2

Increase community engagement and parental involvement

Rationale: Effective family-school partnerships, where all feel welcomed and valued, contribute to the real learning of all students and require schools to make concerted efforts for trust building with families, particularly those from underrepresented groups in our community.

Strategies for Goal #2

- The DEI team will *host an annual community event (e.g., “We are Centerville”)* to celebrate the diversity of families within the vibrant city of Centerville. The event will help establish connections between members of the community and showcase community organizations. Each year the DEI team will determine a theme that centers on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- The DEI Team will *encourage relationship building between immigrant families and local families*. This strategy will be primarily accomplished through the Connect Centerville program, which connects local families to newly-arrived families in Centerville.
- The DEI team will conduct listening sessions throughout the community. These listening sessions will be in the form of Town Hall Meetings.

Goal #3

Recruit and retain staff from underrepresented racial and ethnic populations to better serve all students and staff by creating a diversely rich staff

Rationale: Having a diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning environment includes the recruitment and retention of leadership, administrators and teachers, from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. Although all teachers can overcome implicit biases, research has shown that a shared culture between teachers and students can lead to increased student engagement and performance. A diverse staff benefits all students.

Strategies for Goal #3

- The DEI Team will search for opportunities to *participate in recruitment/job fairs* to recruit staff from underrepresented racial and ethnic populations. The DEI team seeks to be a presence for recruitment of Centerville City Schools at colleges and universities.
- The DEI team seeks to *be involved in the process of interviewing potential teaching staff* to search for candidates that demonstrate a capacity for culturally-responsive teaching. This involvement may include but are not limited to: developing interview questions, serving on interview committees, and screening candidates
- Members of the DEI Task Force 3 will conduct exit interviews with all staff that resign from their position. This information will be used to inform the retention component of this goal.
- We will *advertise the benefits of working in Centerville City Schools to diverse candidates*. The team recognizes that more outreach needs to be done to recruit candidates from underrepresented populations.
- The DEI team will facilitate the *Underrepresented Staff Advisory Board* for the purpose of making recommendations to the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent
- The DEI team is facilitating a mentoring program with students of color at Wright State University. Students of color who are in teacher education will be matched in mentoring relationships with Centerville City Schools teachers for the duration of their education.
- The DEI team is starting a partnership with Central State University and Centerville High School students to encourage enrollment in teacher education.
- The DEI team seeks to *survey all staff to gauge sense of belonging and ability to actively contribute to district goals*.

Goal #4

Remove barriers that impede the engagement of all students in curricular and extracurricular activities

Rationale: The belief of the DEI team is that institutional barriers exist that hinder students in subgroups, such as students in poverty, English learners, and students of color, from accessing all curricular and extracurricular activities that's offered by Centerville City Schools. Increased involvement in the removal of barriers lead to a decrease in the achievement gap and contributes to a stronger sense of community amongst our student body.

Strategies for Goal #4

- The district will partner with Equal Opportunity Schools (EOS) to boost participation in AP courses striving to close the equity gap.
- Grants will be made available to staff in K-5 buildings through the Heren Foundation funds to purchase books with diverse representations. Building teams will work to research and select books that best meet their building needs with the purpose of increasing representation of all students' ethnicities and cultural backgrounds.

Outcomes

The DEI team hopes that the aforementioned goals and strategies will lead to:

- The formation of four task forces under each of the four goal areas
- An increase in the diversity of all staff positions as it pertains to racial, ethnicity, gender, and other demographics of underrepresented groups
- An increase in participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., racial, socioeconomic status, and gender) in Advanced Placement courses at the secondary level
- Evidence of an increase in a sense of community and belonging of all staff from district-wide surveys
- All staff participating in at least one training or online module regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion per year. This includes new hires.
- Recommendations for parent outreach and community engagement provided to the Superintendent based on listening sessions conducted in the community

Conclusion

We courageously resolve ourselves to the commitment to grow in our awareness and prioritize action that leads to inclusion and equity for all. The goals of the Diversity Plan arose from a year of research and conversations centered around race, culture, and the achievement gap. The goals will be modified and adapted to fit the changing needs of our community of learners. This is a journey that is ongoing and will require work. We will learn to deal with our discomfort and to be real with each other. We believe in the value of relationships across racial, cultural, socioeconomic, and other lines. Ultimately it is our mission to sustain an environment where all staff, parents, and students contribute, engage, and belong.

Appendix

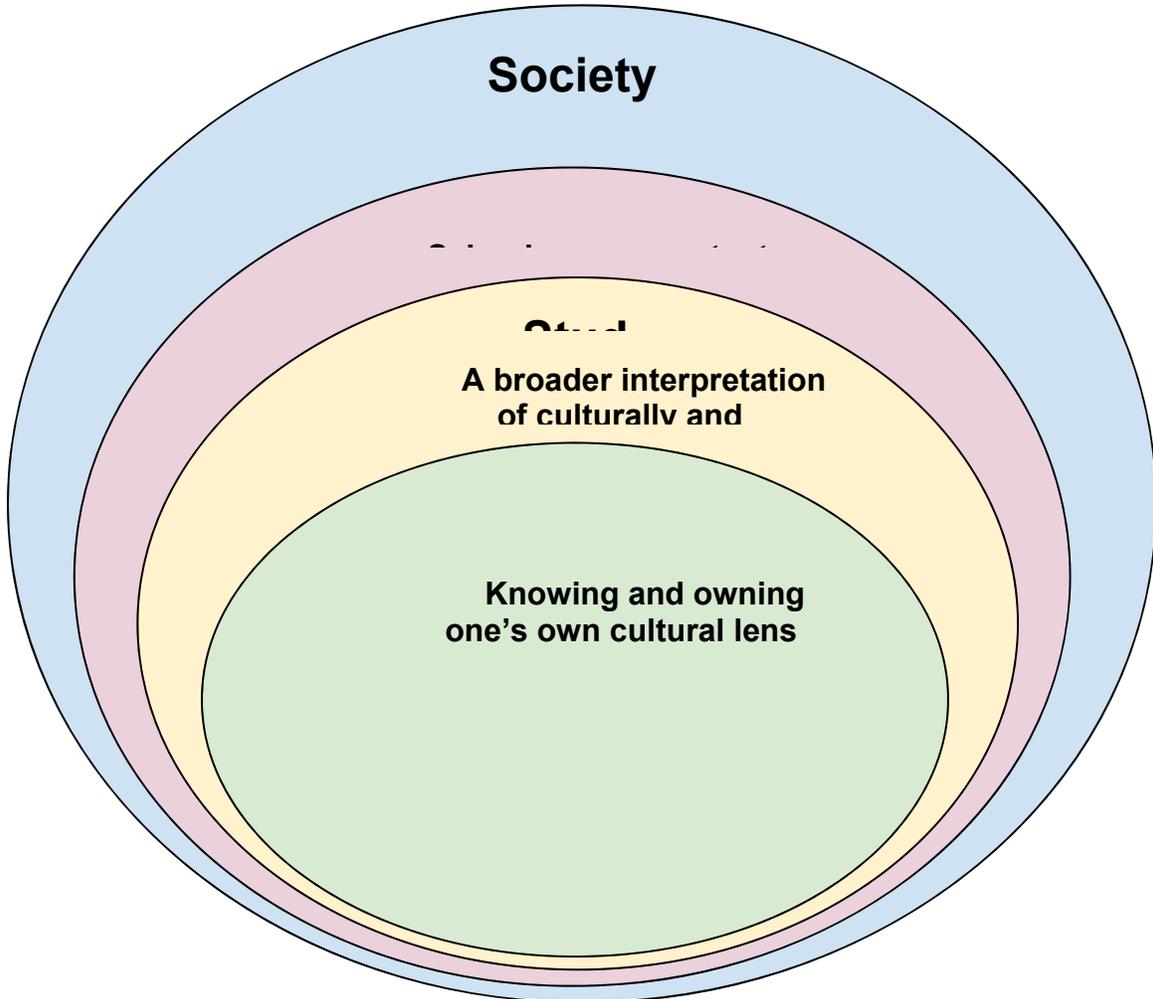
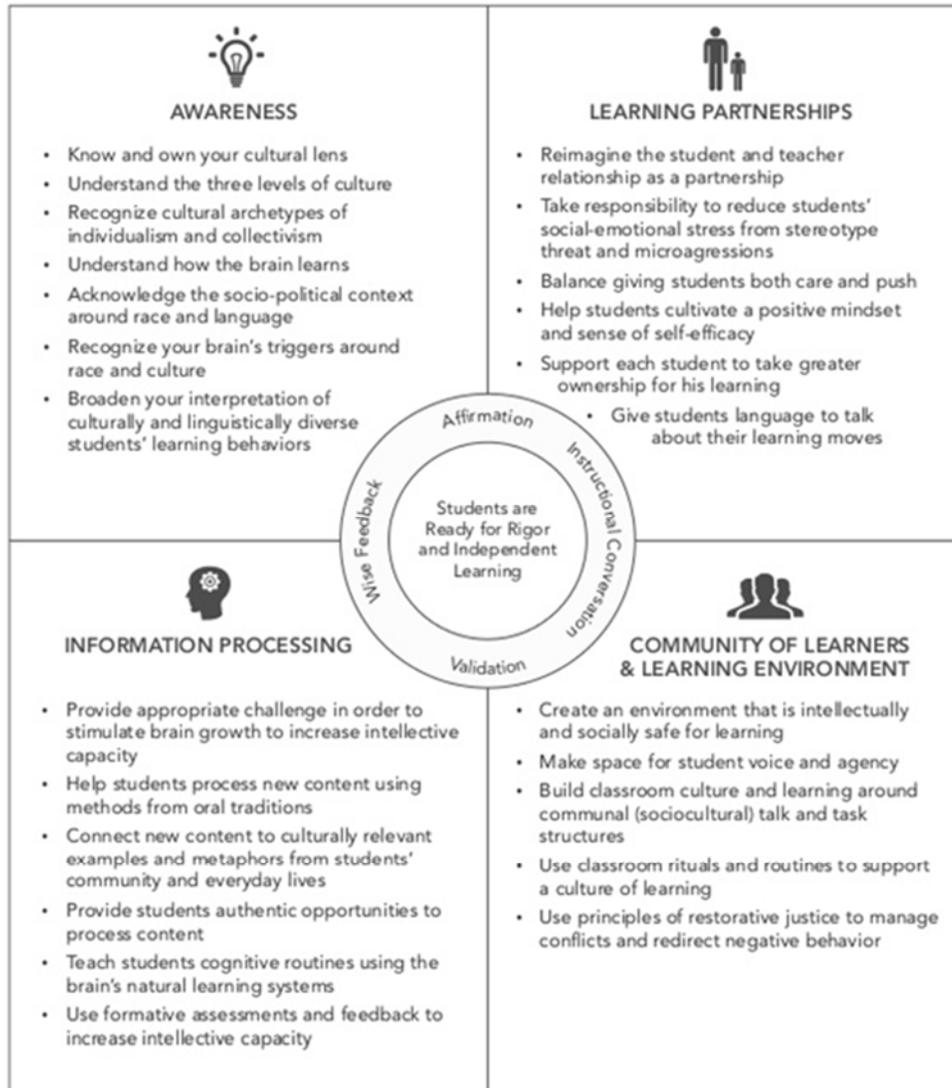


Figure 1. All staff in our district will develop a self-awareness of culture, a broader interpretation of student learning behaviors, and inequities in education and society.

READY for RIGOR

A Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching



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www.ready4rigor.com

Figure 2. Ready for Rigor Framework from Zaretta Hammond's Culturally Responsive Teaching and The Brain.

