

Cultural Proficiency in Our Schools

An Introduction for All Staff

October 11, 2019

Overview



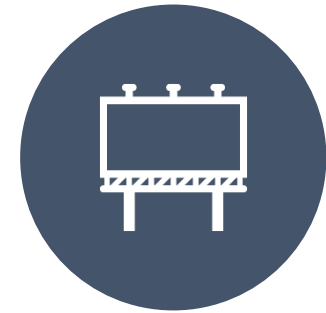
WHY THIS WORK
IS IMPORTANT



BASIC CONCEPTS
OF THIS WORK



OUR APPROACH
TO THIS WORK



TOOLKITS, TIPS,
AND STRATEGIES

Norms for Today...

- Be 100% present
- Participate to seek to understand
- Learn about yourself and others
- Enjoy



Opening Activity: What's in a Name?



- Find a discussion partner who you do NOT know well
- Share
 - Your complete name
 - Your preferred name
 - Who gave you your name
 - How you experience your name
 - How you think others experience your name

WHY this work is important

Diversity + Inclusion = Inclusivity

Diversity

Diversity means all **the ways we differ**. Anything that makes us unique is part of this definition of diversity.

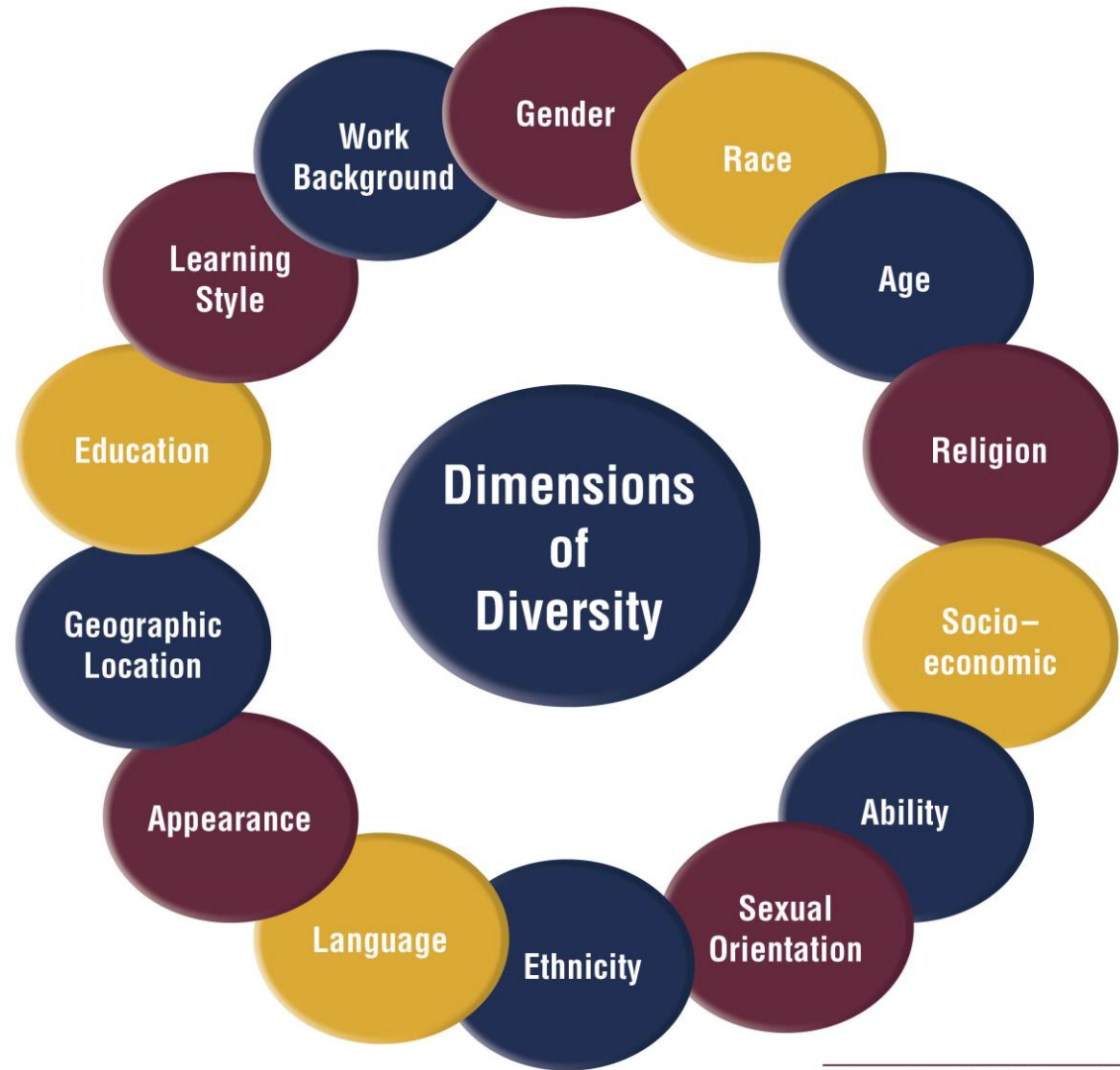
Inclusion

Inclusion means **bringing together**; making someone a part of something bigger and embracing diversity in a beneficial way.

Inclusivity

Inclusivity is taking diversity and inclusion and **turning this into action** by creating a school environment of engagement, respect and connection — where ideas, backgrounds and perspectives are tied together in a caring environment.

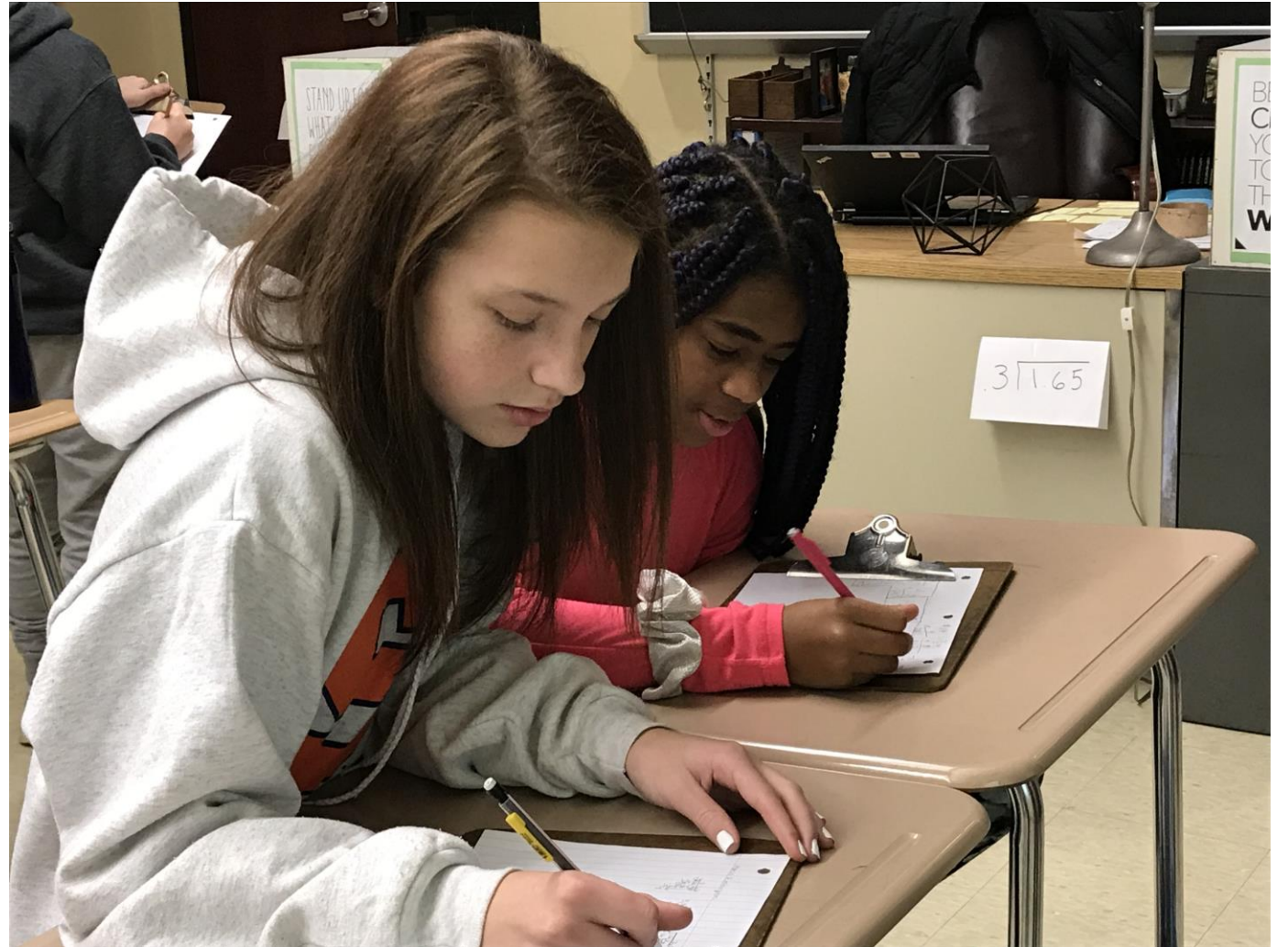
We are all
diverse



Adapted from the Loden Model

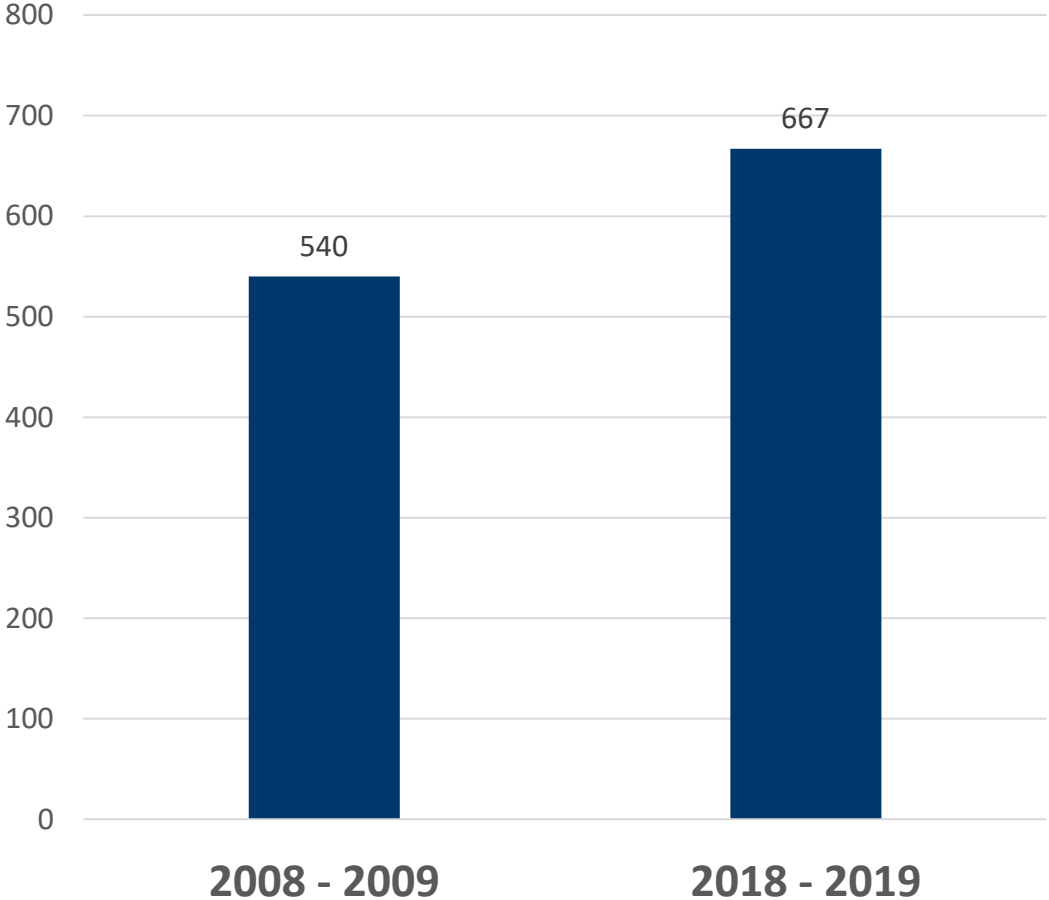
Pittsford Schools

Who are our
students?

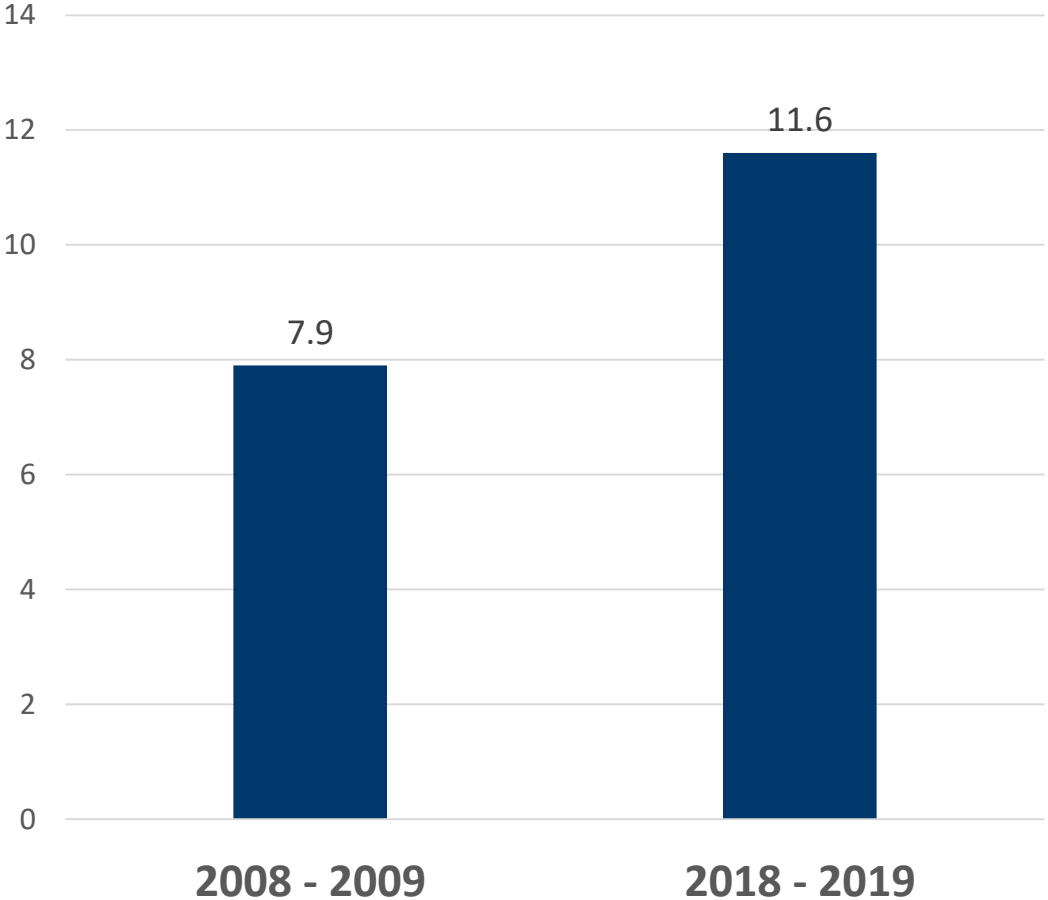


Students with Special Education Needs

Students classified



% classification rate



English Language Learners

2008-09

39 students

(.6% of total enrollment)

2018-19

52 students

(.9% of total enrollment)

Low Income Students – based on Free or Reduced Lunch self-identification

2008-09

198 students

(3.3% of total enrollment)

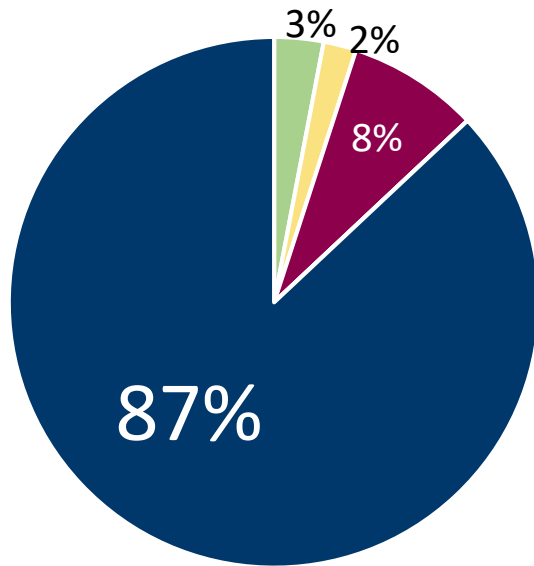
2018-19

211 students

(3.7% of total enrollment)

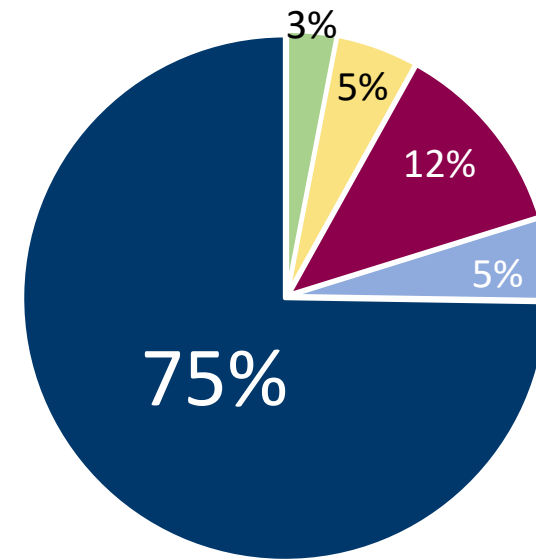
Race/Ethnicity

2008-09



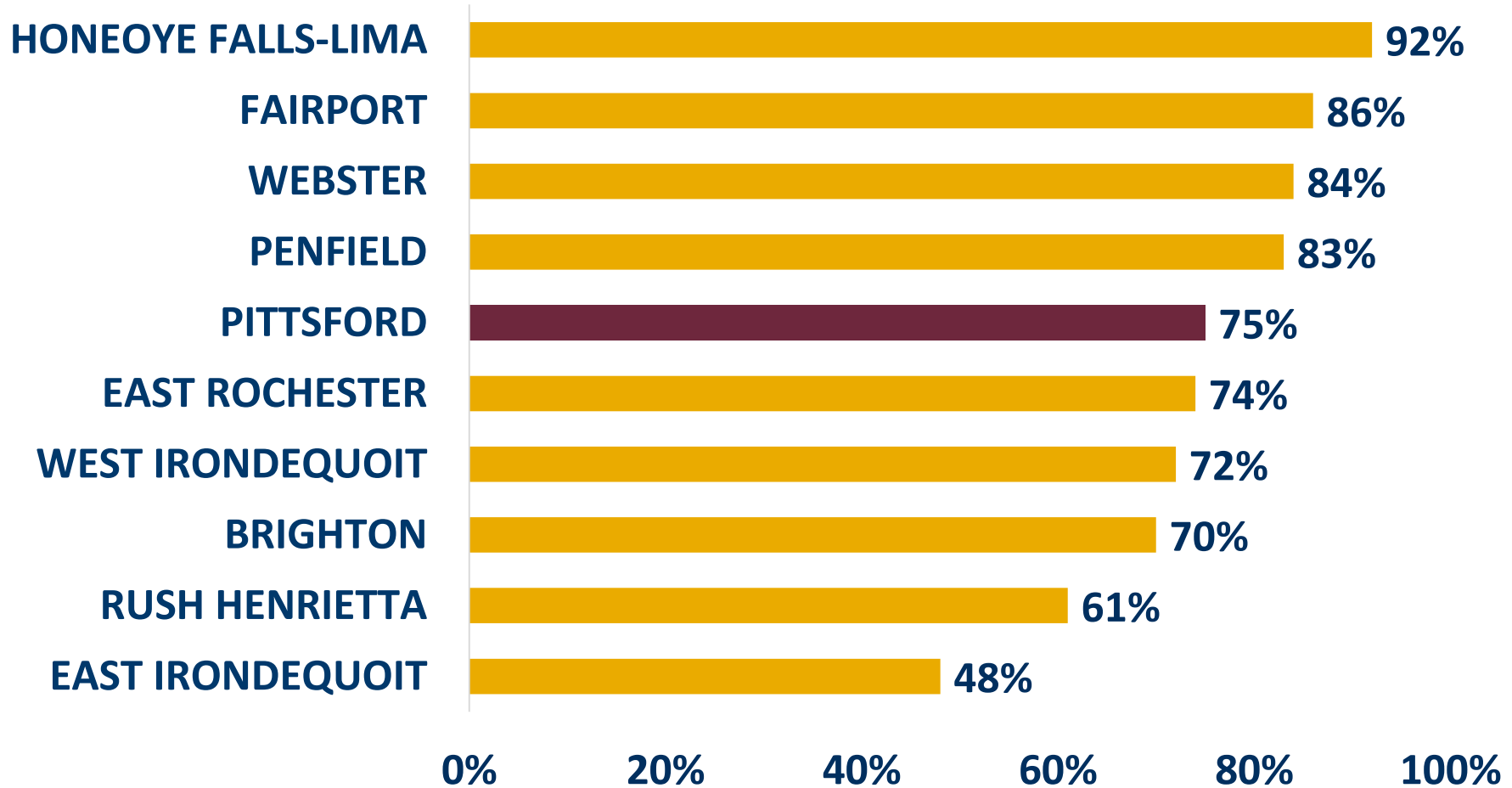
- Am Indian Alaskan Native
- Hispanic
- Multi-racial
- Black
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- White

2018-19

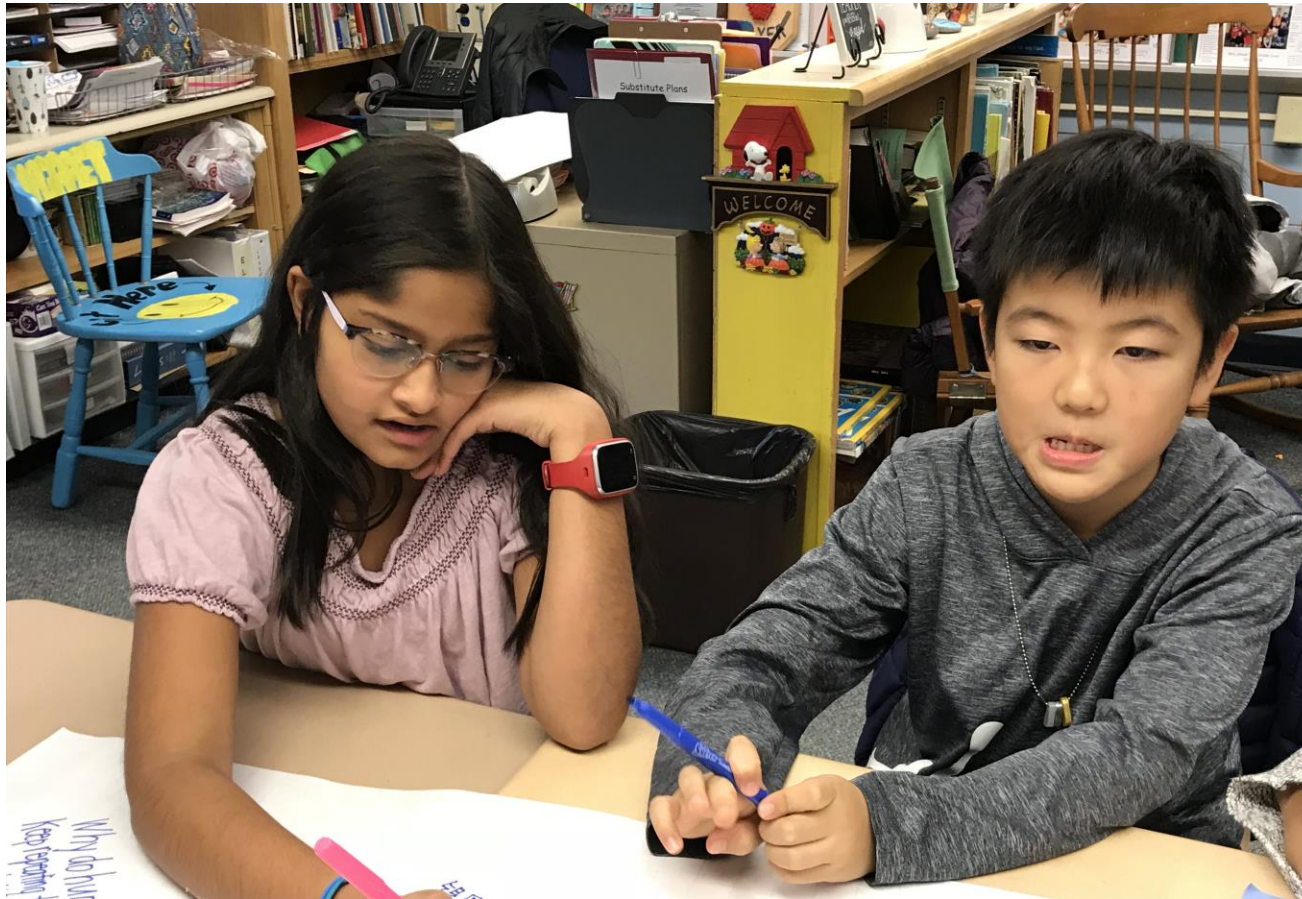


- Am Indian Alaskan Native
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- White

2018 Monroe 1 BOCES: White Student Enrollment



In summary...



Compared to 10 years ago, our students are more diverse in terms of their:

- Special education needs
- English language learning needs
- Socio-economic status
- Race and ethnicity

We must think about the students we currently have – not the students we used to have.

Who will our students be 10 years from now?



CONCEPTS involved in this work

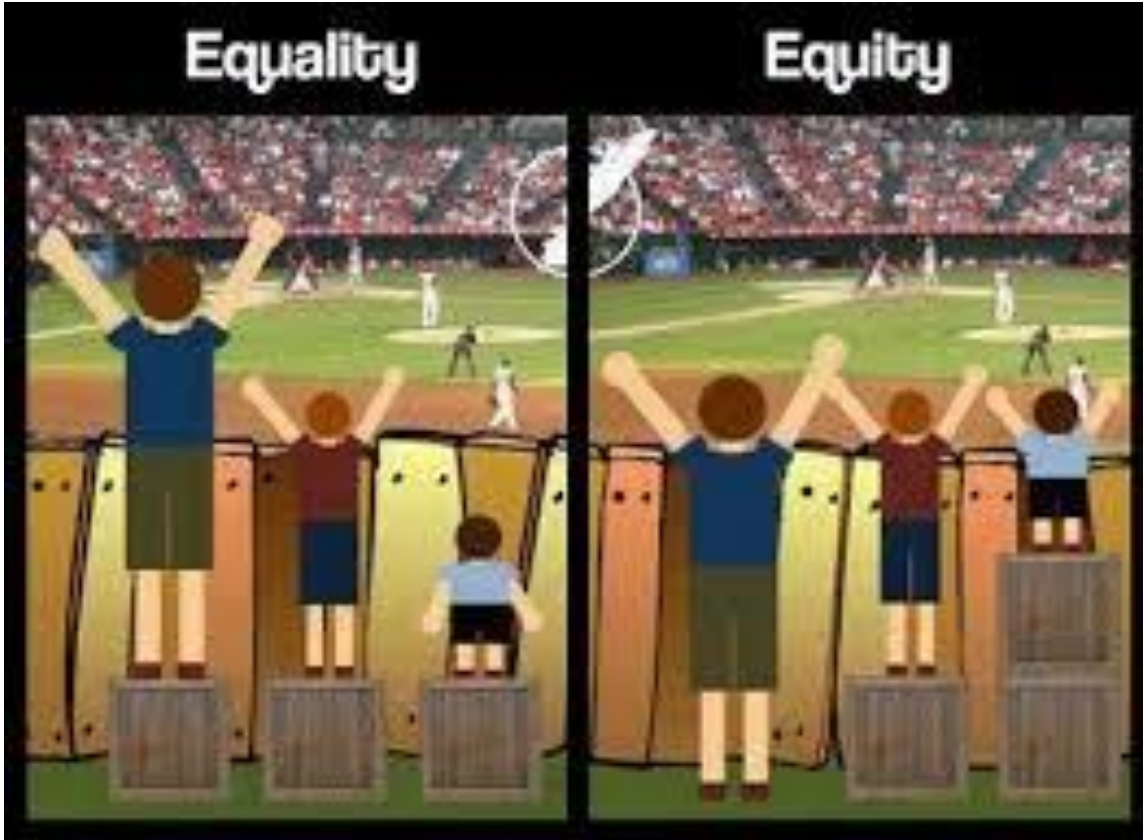
Some big ideas...

- Equity
- Culture
- Cultural Proficiency



Equality

Equity



CULTURE

History
Religion
Geography
Economics
Region
Community
Neighborhood
Social Group
Family

VALUES
ATTITUDES
BELIEFS
LANGUAGE
COMMUNICATION
BEHAVIOR

Society
Cultural Practices
Clan
Ethnic Group
Race
Gender
Traditions
Customs
Events

INDIVIDUAL

SCHOOL CULTURE

Values-Attitudes-Beliefs

Mission-Vision-Goals

Histories-Norms-Traditions-Stories

Policies-Habits-Expectations-Rituals-Ceremonies

Decision-Making

Communication

Collegiality/Professional Collaboration/PLCs

Relationships and Interactions

(How people treat each other, feel about each other, and work together)

Administrator to Staff / Administrator to Student / Staff to Staff / Staff to Student / Student to Student
School to Community

Culture

Culture refers to the ways of living: shared behaviors, beliefs, customs, values, and ways of knowing that guide groups of people in their daily life and are transmitted from one generation to the next.

Culture

Surface: Aspects that are explicit, visible, and taught

Food, dress, music, dance, literature, language, games

Low emotional charge – changes don't cause great anxiety

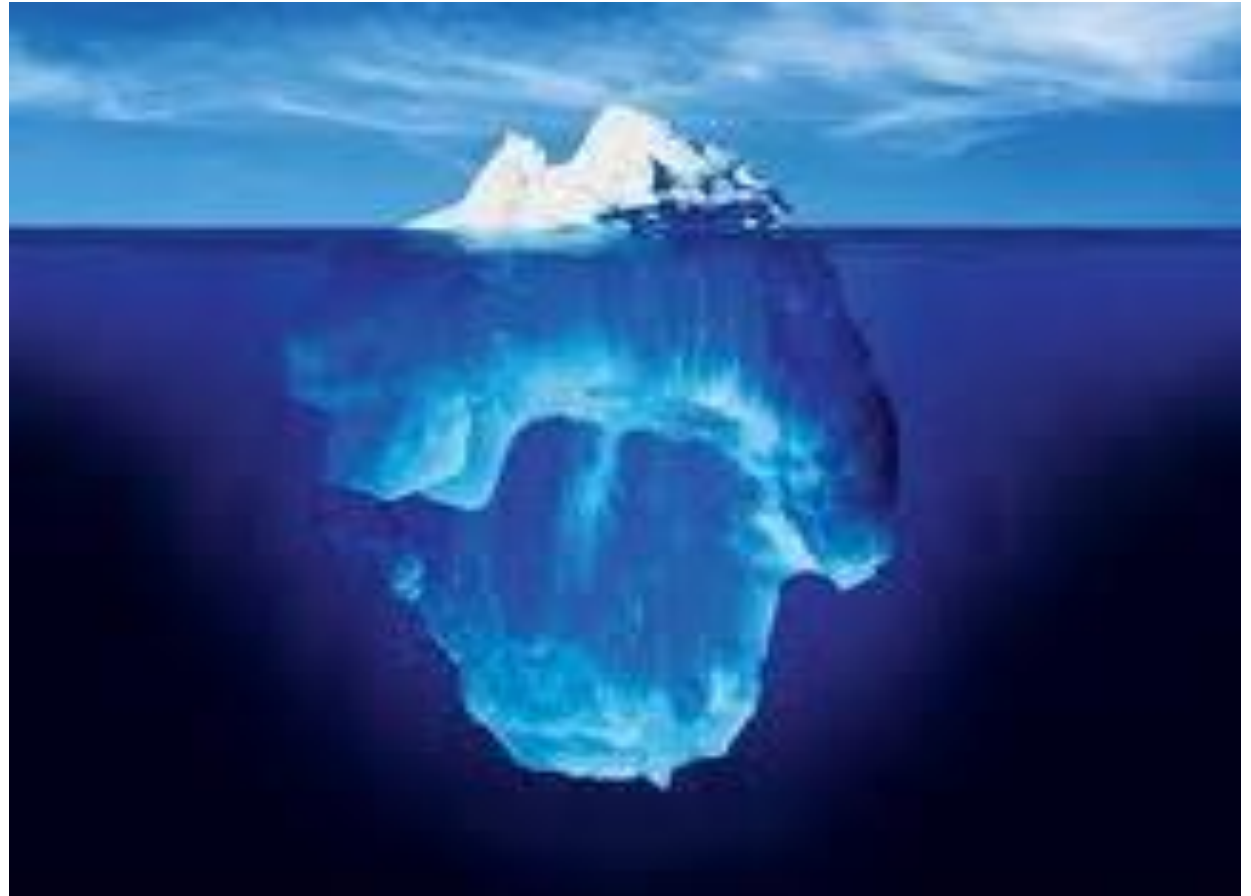


Culture

Just Below the Surface: Unspoken Rules

Courtesy, personal space, concepts of time, conversation patterns, nonverbal communication, eye contact, notions of beauty, notions of leadership, attitudes toward elders

Strong emotional charge – social violation of norms at this level can cause mistrust, distress, social friction



Culture

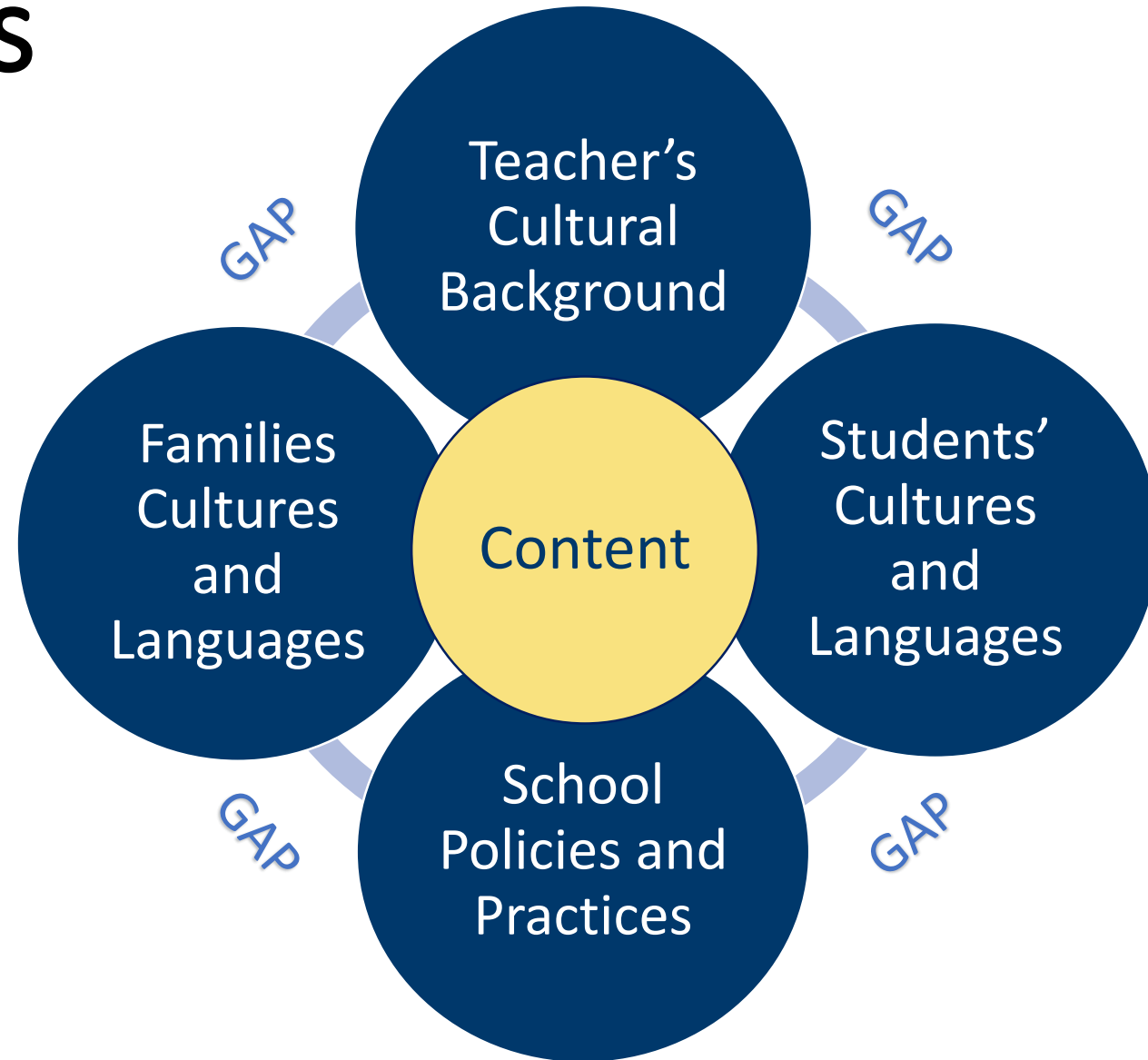
Well Below the Surface: Unconscious Rules

Definition of kinship, notions of adolescence, preference for competition or cooperation, conception of past and future, attitude toward dependents, problem-solving roles, patterns of group decision-making, relationship to nature and animal

Intense emotional charge – challenges produce culture shock, trigger brain's fight or flight response



Cultural Gaps



Valuing Culture and Ethnicity

"People's religion, sexual orientation, culture, and ethnicity often are not just facts about them, but are central to their self-definitions. People are not just persons who happen to be Christians, women, or African Americans. These characteristics are not possessions, like clothing, that can be shed or changed at will. **One reason that can be given for respecting diversity is that to fail to do so is to reject who people are.** It is to deny their worth. It does an especially insidious kind of violence to them."

Striker, Haller, & Soltis, 2005

Cultural Proficiency

Cultural proficiency is defined as an ongoing process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, genders, ethnic backgrounds, religions, sexual orientations, abilities and other diversity factors, in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

Cultural Proficiency functions as...

- A worldview
- A perspective
- A mindset
- A mental model
- A lens through which to view our work
- A guide to how we lead our lives



Transforming Professional Practice

From:

Tolerance for Diversity

(The focus is on THEM.)

When assessing the culture, we view changing demographics as a threat.

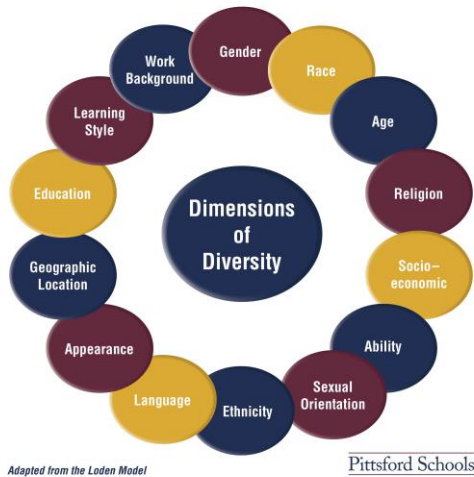
To:

Transformation for Equity

(The focus is on our PRACTICES.)

When assessing the culture, we study demographics to inform policy, practices, values, and how we relate to others.

An inside-outside approach



An inside-outside approach is about...

- being aware of how we, as individuals and organizations, work with others
- being aware of how we respond to those who are perceived as being different from us
- visible and not-so-visible differences
- living in a world of differences –
and preparing our students to live in a world of differences

Introduction to Culturally Relevant Pedagogy - videoclip



Other terms to be aware of

As we engage in further learning around this topic, other terms crop up which are important to understand. Here are just a few...



Implicit Bias or Hidden Bias



The attitudes or stereotypes that affect one's understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These are often unrecognized and may not align to one's declared beliefs and values.

These are hidden, or automatic, stereotypes and prejudices that circumvent conscious control.

Active Racism – Passive Racism – Anti-racism

Active Racism: Actions which have as their stated or explicit goal the maintenance of the system of racism and the oppression of those in targeted racial groups.

Ex: A person using a racial slur to describe a person of color.

Passive Racism: Beliefs, attitudes and actions that contribute to the maintenance of racism, without openly advocating violence or oppression.

Ex: A person hears another person use a racial slur, does not join in, but also does not intervene to stop the behavior.

Anti-Racism: Actions which explicitly work to end racism.

Ex: A person hears another person use a racial slur and intervenes in the moment to interrupt and put a stop to that behavior.

Microaggressions



The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

Our APPROACH to this work

What have we been doing?

- **Professional Development Opportunities**
 - Hidden Biases, Advancing Racial Justice, Safe & Inclusive Schools, Restorative Practices, Anxiety in the Classroom, Contemporary Antisemitism, Let's Talk About Hate, Using Diverse Literature...
- **Library Audit**
 - K-12 project
- **Best Buddies**
 - K-12 Programming in Pittsford
- **Roc2Change**
 - Four years of participation; Pittsford hosting this fall
- **Unified Basketball**
 - K-12 Programming in Pittsford
- **GSA clubs, Diversity Clubs, GirlsUp**
- **Kicks for Campers**



What have we been doing?

- **Relationship Mapping**
 - K-12 Project – all staff/all students
- **Partnership with schools in Modi'in, Israel**
 - Education Bridge Program/Jewish Federation of Rochester
- **Urban/Suburban Program**
 - Over 50 years of participation
- **English Language Learners Family events**
 - Ice cream socials, family cook-out
- **Curriculum Work**
 - Audit of all ELA texts; commitment to understanding, relevancy, and engagement of all learners
- **Training of all bus drivers and non-staff PCSD coaches on Hidden Biases**



More recently

- **Formation of Inclusivity Advisory Committee**
 - PDAA members, PDTA members, parents, community members
 - Half of the committee is comprised of non-PCSD employees selected for their expertise and representation of diverse communities
 - Advisory to Superintendent
- **Expanded staff recruitment efforts**
 - Allowing us to hire an increasingly diverse staff
- **Climate and Culture Survey**
 - Staff, students, parents



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Moving into this school year..

- **Summer Leadership Retreat**
 - 80 Stakeholders
 - Equity Institute Training – Generation Ready
- **Culturally Responsive Education four-day workshop**
 - Administrators and Teacher Leaders
- **Code of Conduct work**
 - Multiple stakeholders
 - Two Phase process
 - Integration of restorative justice practices
- **Additional policy/practice reviews**
 - Instructional materials, textbook adoptions, attendance



Expanding our reach...

Superintendent's Conference Day

- Today – involvement of all building staff in the conversation

Generation Ready Work

- Three additional full day workshops for stakeholder group
- Focus groups
- Building visits



What do we Believe?

PCSD Mission, Vision, Values

IAC Success Statement

Pittsford Schools



Toolkits, Tips, and Strategies



Things you can use now...

- Responding to Bias in Schools
- The N-Word in Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Classroom Instruction
- Key Features of Culturally Responsive Teaching
- Talking About Diversity
- 6 Ways to Foster Cultural Awareness in the Classroom
- Let's Talk: Discussing Race, Racism and Other Difficult Topics with Students

Websites to visit for additional information

Social Justice Books

- <https://socialjusticebooks.org/>

Teaching Tolerance

- <https://www.tolerance.org/>

Rethinking Schools

- <https://www.rethinkingschools.org/>

Stay Woke Examining Racism in America: Resources for Educators

- <https://www.smores.com/w6dbc-extra-flyer>

In CLOSING...

Other cultures

The world in which you were born
is just one model of reality.

Other cultures are not
failed attempts at being you.

They are unique manifestations
of the human spirit.





Listen to the silence

Our moral purpose...

"Acting with intention to make a positive difference in the lives of students, their families, and society as a whole."

Michael Fullan

