



Office of Equity, Diversity and Community Development
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EQUITY TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

Bias: Thoughts and feelings we have, and may not be aware of; implicit biases are preferences or aversions that permeate our world view without our conscious knowledge and become explicit when openly expressed (blonds have more fun).

Implicit Bias are thoughts and feelings we are unaware of mistaken about their nature, preferences or aversions to without our conscious knowledge.

Character: (1) Someone's nature, natural attributes as formed by habit or (2) The expression of unique individuality.

People of color/ Children of color: include those identifying as African American/Black, Latinx, Native American, Asian or Pacific Islander, and biracial. These identities constitute 30% of the US population and are among the fastest-growing populations in the country. Any child in this category, born in the US, immigrant, refugee, or temporary resident is included in this category for this purpose.

Class: Relative social status based on income, wealth, race, power, position, occupation and education.

Culture: The way of life of 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.

Cultural Responsiveness: A set of congruent behaviors, knowledge, will, and skills that enable just and effective work in multicultural settings. Cultural responsiveness is never fully achieved but is an ongoing process.

Cultural responsiveness can be developed by individuals, organizations, communities and beyond. Individuals develop their cultural responsiveness by building knowledge, values, skills, and will that help them to:

- develop self-awareness and an understanding of one's own culture(s);
- understand and appreciate other cultures;
- facilitate understanding among people of different cultures;
- confront inconsistencies, biases and unconscious assumptions of cultures; and,

- act to ensure fairness and access and correct for the results of historic inequities.

Organizations develop their cultural responsiveness by building the knowledge, values, skills, and will of individuals, and building equitable, accessible and inclusive organizational culture, expectations, policies, structures, systems, and processes. (Adapted from Garth Ham, Alliance for Nonprofit Management)

Discrimination: The act of unequal treatment towards members of social groups. A form of inequality where either non-legal or legal systems may perpetuate the exclusion of certain groups and is manifest in different ways. Discrimination is the behavioral component, or differential actions taken toward members of specific social groups.

Discriminatory practice: May be perpetuated toward a person, group (people living with a (dis)ability, students of color, ELL students, LGBTQ students) and/or ingrained in institutional practices; no child who is not a US citizen may enroll in a public school is an example of a potential systemic discriminatory policy.

Diversity: Groups of individuals reflect multiple dimensions of difference including race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, cognitive styles, and much more. Valuing diversity means embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of difference that exist in groups. (Adapted from Diversity Initiatives Campaign, The Diversity Project).

Equity: Equity means promoting just and fair inclusion throughout FPS and creating the conditions in which everyone can participate, prosper and reach his or her full potential.

Inclusion: A value and practice of ensuring that people feel they belong and that their input is valued by the whole (group, organization, society, system, etc.), particularly regarding decisions that affect their lives. (Adapted from Equity and Inclusion Campaign).

Prejudice: A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. (distaste, fear, repulsion, anger, frustration, pity, etc.)

Race: A socially constructed way of grouping people based on skin color and other apparent physical differences, which has no genetic or scientific basis. The concept of race was created and used to justify social and economic oppression of Blacks and other people of color by Whites. Highly dependent on phenotype, skin color, hair texture, and facial features. (From *Race: The Power of an Illusion*)

Racial equity: A situation where opportunities include accommodations so that one cannot predict an individual or group's access to resources or likelihood of well-being and social status based on their race.

Racial justice: The creation and proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes, and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment and outcomes for all people, regardless of race. (Applied Research Center).

Racism: = Prejudice + Power

a form of oppression based on the socially constructed concept of race exercised by the dominant racial group over non-dominant racial groups.

Racism operates on four levels: (Applied Research Center)

1. Internalized Racism is the set of private beliefs, prejudices, and ideas that individuals have about the superiority of Whites and the inferiority of people of color. Among people of color, it manifests as internalized oppression. Among Whites, it manifests as internalized racial superiority.
2. Interpersonal Racism is the expression of racism between individuals.
3. Institutional Racism is discriminatory treatment, unfair policies, and practices, inequitable opportunities and impacts within organizations and institutions, based on race.
4. Structural Racism is a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequality.

Social inequality: A social condition wherein certain populations have unequal status due to gender, religion, ethnicity, race, or other defining characteristics.

Stereotypes: The cognitive components of attitudes toward a social group consisting of beliefs about what specific groups are like (Steele, 2011).

Systemic discrimination: Creates primary and suppressed groups who differ in levels of power (prestige, visibility, attention, social, and personal) and access to attention, resources, and services (e.g. tutoring, opportunities, promotion, time in a system).