



# Equitable Practices Through a Trauma-Informed Lens

Dr. Nikole Hollins-Sims  
Dr. Dana Milakovic

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# Learning Outcomes

- Participants will be able to:
  - Operationally define equity, types of trauma, and trauma informed approaches.
  - Identify how trauma informed approaches and equitable practices are interconnected.
  - Identify how equity and trauma informed approaches inform database decision-making.
  - Identify how equitable and trauma informed educational practices reduce the outcomes of disproportionality.

# Four Agreements of a Courageous Conversation

- Stay Engaged
- Speak your truth
- Experience discomfort
- Expect and accept non-closure

# Language Matters!

Definitions and Terminology are important to the work around creating equitable trauma-informed systems.

# ▶ Trauma Definition: Act 18 of 2019

1. Exposure to an event, series of events or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotional harmful or threatening.
2. Lasting adverse effects
3. Creates significant difficulty in cognitive functioning and physical, social, emotional, mental or spiritual well-being.

# Equity

Every student has access to the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background and/or family income.

[www.aspeninstitute.org/education](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/education); [www.ccsso.org](http://www.ccsso.org)

# Types Of Trauma

- **Community violence:** Robberies, shootings, assault, gang-related violence, hate crimes, group trauma affecting a particular community
- **Family trauma:** Abuse, neglect, experiencing or witnessing domestic violence, incarceration of family members, family substance abuse, family mental health needs, family medical needs
- **Grief and Loss:** The death of a loved one, classmate/teacher, or someone the child knows, including pets
- **Human-caused disasters:** Accidents, wars, environmental disasters, acts of terrorism



# Types Of Trauma

**Racial trauma:** Potentially traumatic experiences resulting from direct experiences of racial harassment, witnessing racial violence toward others, and experiencing discrimination and institutional racism. Racial trauma can include direct exposure of racial harassment, witnessing racial violence toward others, and experiencing discrimination and institutional racism

(Guarino and Chagnon, 2018; PDE, 2020)

# Types Of Trauma

**Historical trauma:** The cumulative emotional and psychological wounding across generations, including the lifespan, which emanates from massive group trauma . Historical trauma may be used interchangeably with generational trauma. This would include the emerging research on epigenetics.

# Types Of Trauma

**Cultural Trauma:** trauma that occurs when members of a collective (community) feel they have been subjected to an atrocious event and/or series of experiences that leaves permanent marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways

(Alexander, 2016)

# Racial Trauma Factors

- **Explicit Bias:** Explicit bias refers to the attitudes and beliefs we have about a person or group on a conscious level. Much of the time, these biases and their expression arise as the direct result of a perceived threat. When people feel threatened, they are more likely to draw group boundaries to distinguish themselves from others.
- **Hostile Environment:** Conduct that is sufficiently serious to deny or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from education programs or activities.

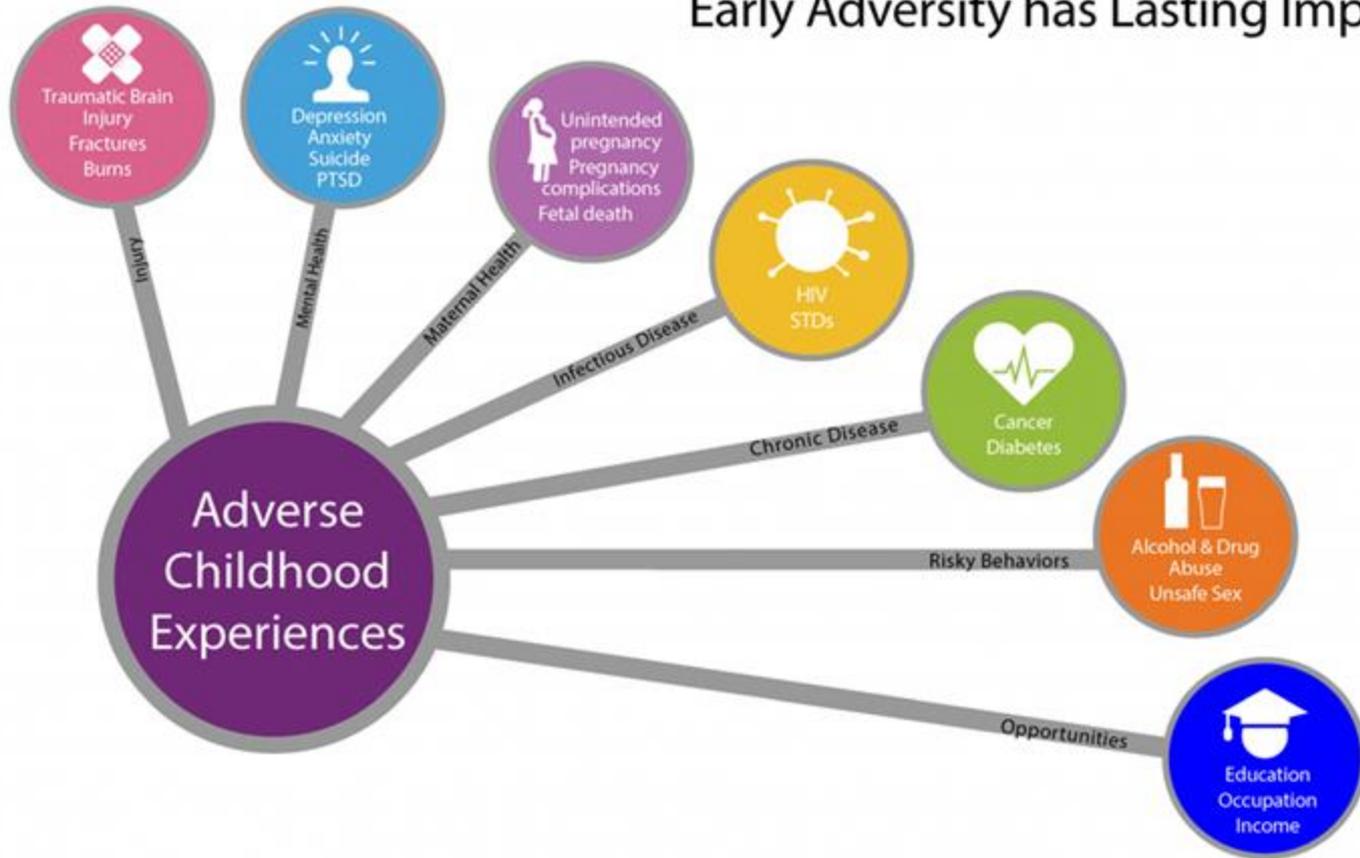
# Racial Trauma Factors

- **Structural or Institutional Bias:** Established laws, customs, practices, and systems that systematically reflect and produce group-based inequities. These structures and institutions may be biased regardless of whether individuals within those spaces who maintain those practices have biased intentions.
- **Inclusion/Inclusive Schools:** This definition moves beyond the traditional notion of inclusion as a term synonymous with special education and physically allowing students to be included in regular education classes and opportunities. Inclusion embodies a broader context that accounts for the social nature of school culture and climate and extends to all students and staff within the school community.

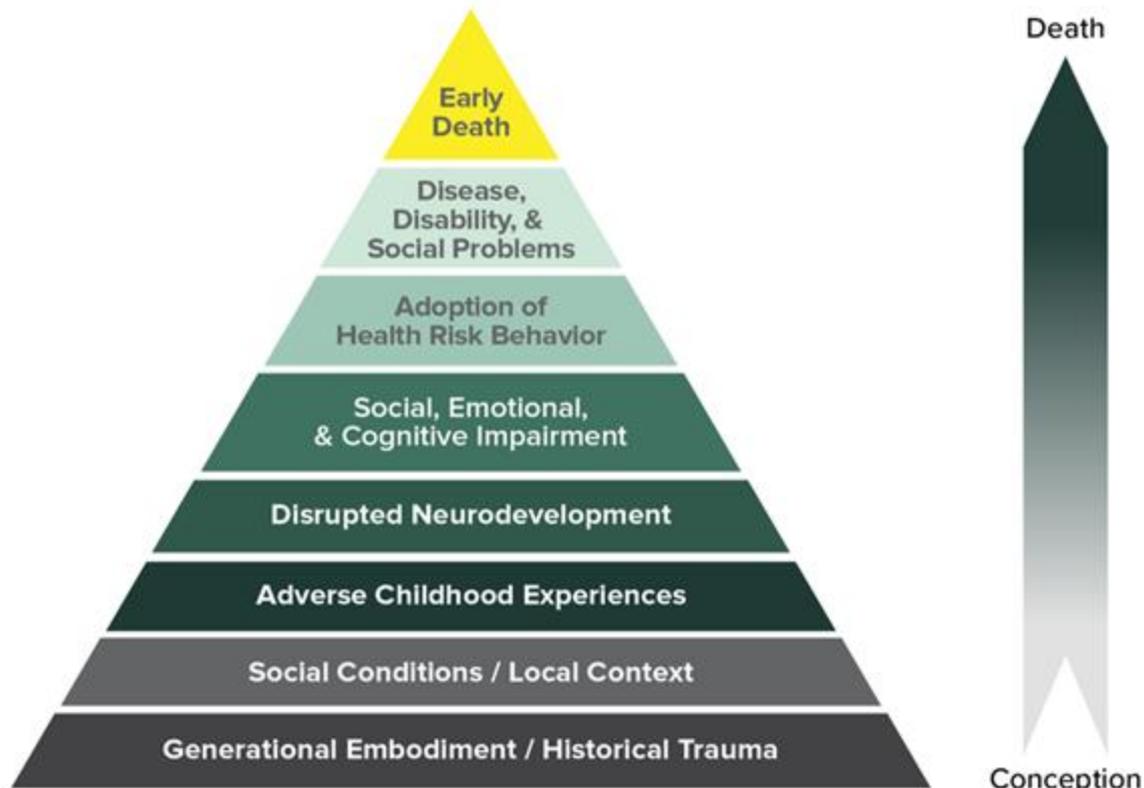
# Complex Trauma

The term **complex trauma** refers to exposure to multiple traumatic events from an early age, **and** the immediate and long-term effects of these experiences over development.

## Early Adversity has Lasting Impacts



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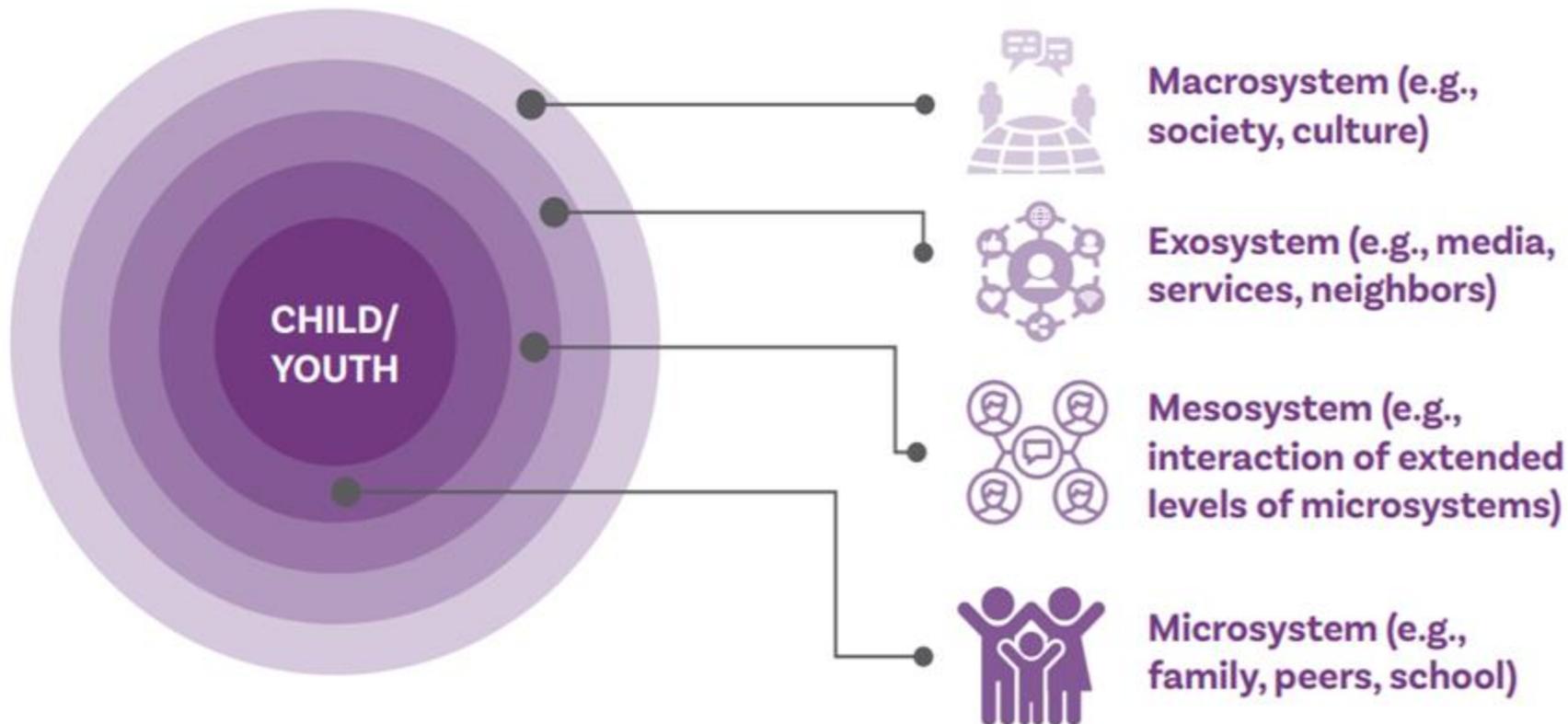


Mechanism by which Adverse Childhood Experiences Influence Health and Well-being Throughout the Lifespan



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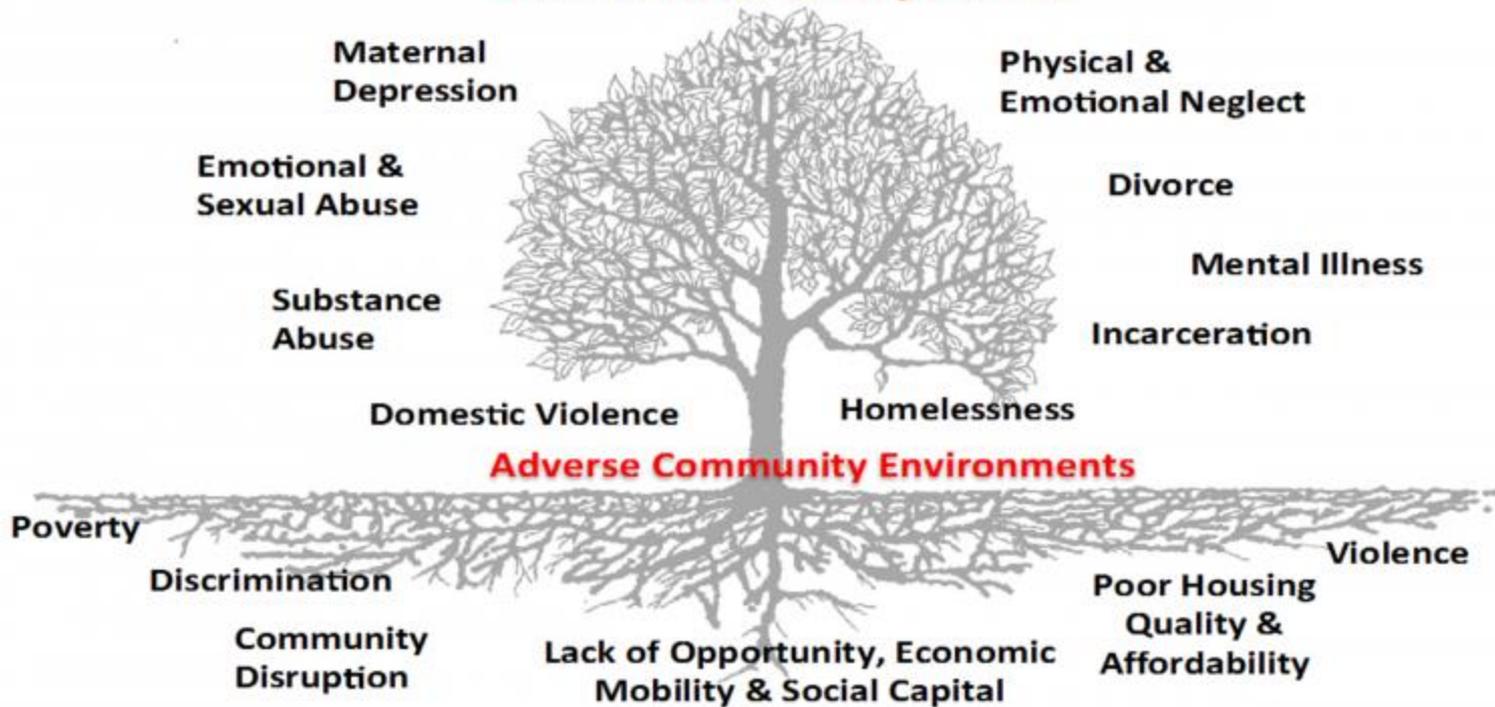
# Ecological System Model



(Hoover et al., 2019)

## The Pair of ACEs

### Adverse Childhood Experiences



Ellis, W., Dietz, W. (2017) A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model. *Academic Pediatrics*. 17 (2017) pp. S86-S93. DOI information: 10.1016/j.acap.2016.12.011



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# Prevalence Of Childhood Trauma

Groups at increased risk of exposure to trauma:

- Youth of color ages 12 to 19
- African American youth living in urban, low-income communities
- American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children and youth
- Children and youth with disabilities
- Refugees
- Children and youth who are homeless and living in poverty
- LGBTQ children and youth

Guarino and Chagnon, 2018

# What is a Trauma-Informed Approach?

1. Includes a school-wide approach to education and a classroom-based approach to student learning
2. Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma
3. Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, professional learning, procedures and practices
4. Purposes of recognizing the presence and onset of trauma, resisting the reoccurrence of trauma and promoting resiliency tailored to a school entity's culture, climate and demographics and the community as a whole.

# Trauma-Informed Care Values

- Safety
- Trustworthiness
- Collaboration & Mutuality
- Empowerment, Choice & Voice
- Cultural Sensitivity



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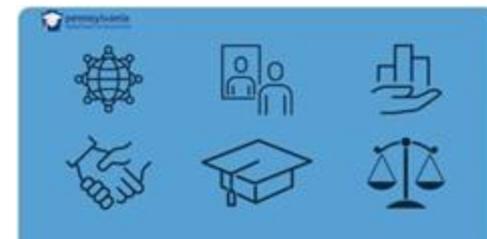
# ▶ Trauma-Informed Care Values

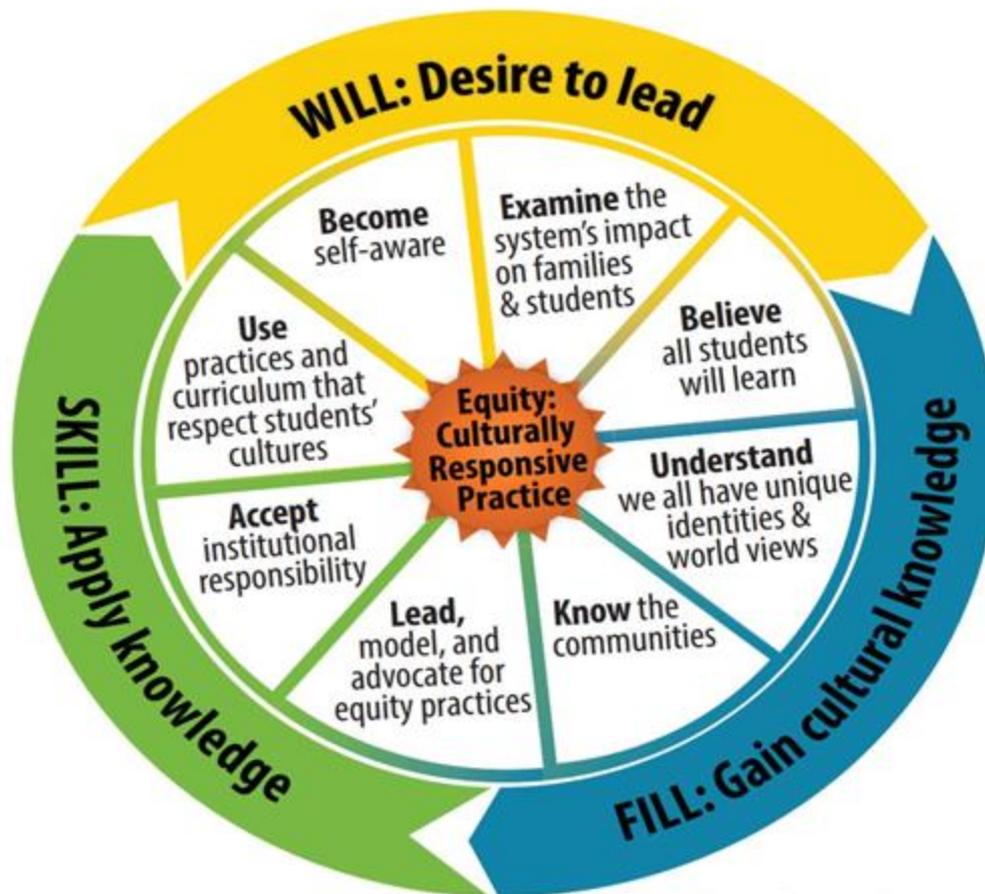
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- Empowerment, Choice & Voice
- **Cultural Sensitivity**



# PDE Equity Pillars of Practice

- General Equity Practices
- Self-Awareness
- Data Practices
- Family/Community Engagement
- Academic Equity
- Disciplinary Equity





Wisconsin Response to Intervention Center, IDEA CFDA #84.027

# Essential Elements of Cultural Proficiency

1. Value Diversity
2. Assess Culture
3. Manage the Dynamics of Difference
4. Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge
5. Adapt to Diversity

(Cultural Proficiency for School Leadership by Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 2019)

# Barriers to Cultural Proficiency

- The presumption of privilege and entitlement.
- Systems of Oppression
- Unawareness of the need to adapt
- Resistance to Change

(Cultural Proficiency for School Leadership by Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 2019)

## ▶ How does this sound in schools?

- “Their parents won’t come to parent conferences because they don’t care about the education of their children.”
- “Why try to help them? They will just end up in jail, just like their dad!”
- Don’t put these kids in my class. I’m not a special ed teacher.”

(Cultural Proficiency for School Leadership by Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 2019)

# What is Implicit Bias?

# Implicit Bias

- We generally tend to hold implicit bias that favor our own in-group.
- Implicit biases are malleable.
- Implicit biases are pervasive.
- Implicit and explicit biases are related to distinct mental constructs.
- The implicit associations we hold do not necessarily align with our declared beliefs.

## ▶ Implicit Bias leads to.....

- Ambiguous Judgments
- Snap Decisions
- Unconscious Behaviors

Where do you see implicit bias impacting decisions for students?

# Case Study

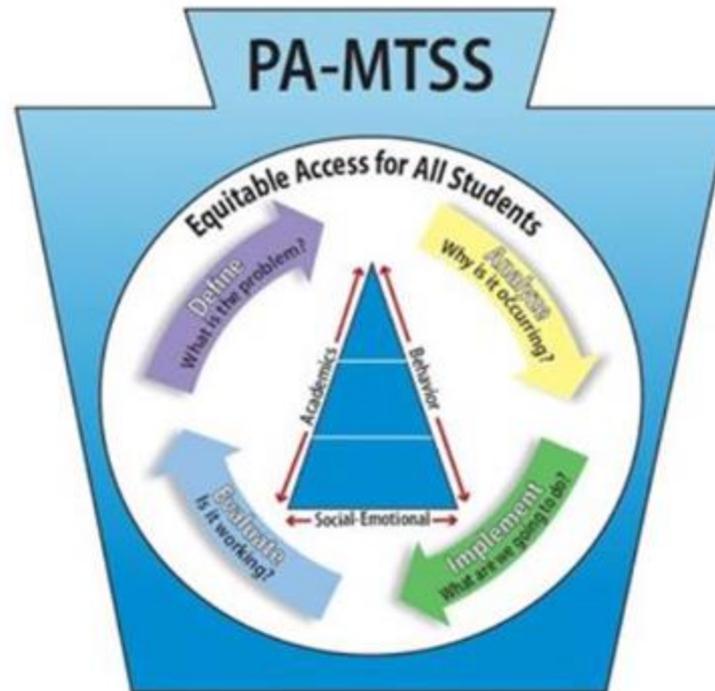
- Columbus School District, is a mid-size urban school district. Current enrollment in Columbus SD is 10,573, however enrollment has been on a steady decline given the poor academic performance and reputation of the district.
- One of the elementary school principals in the school district is a native to the area and has a strong desire to shift the morale of the staff at her building and encourage them to support all students in all areas: academics, behavior, and social-emotional learning.
- At a kickoff faculty meeting, the principal starts the meeting by asking each staff member to reflect upon his or her favorite teacher and why they chose that person. After the activity, she asks the staff to think about their implicit biases and how that impacts student achievement. One staff member walks out of the meeting and says that the issues are not about what they, as staff, are doing wrong, but rather the students and community just aren't willing to be educated. He goes on to express that the students aren't interested in education, but rather being out "in the street" and how can school compete with that? The principal tries to understand the staff members' perspective but insists that these types of activities will be provided throughout the school year, and it is imperative that all members participate.
- **When attempting to achieve buy-in from staff, did the principal approach this meeting in a way to meet that goal? What are some other recommendations you'd suggest to the principal to consider?**

## ➤ Breakout Time!

In your respective groups, take 10 minutes to discuss the case study and recommendations you'd make to the principal?

Assign someone who can report in the chat for your breakout team, when returning to the main room.

# Linking to an Equitable Multi-Tiered System of Support





The Number One Protective Factor for Youth:  
**A Safe, Stable, and Supportive Relationship  
with a Caring Adult**

# References

- Guarino, K. & Chagnon, E. (2018). *Trauma-sensitive schools training package*. Washington, DC: National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments.
- Kirwan Institute Implicit Bias Training Module Series  
<http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-training/>
- Lindsey, R.B., Nuri-Robins, K., Terrell, R.D., & Lindsey, D.B. (2019). *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders, 4th Edition*. Corwin.
- Pennsylvania Department of Education (2020). Empowerment Through Common Language in Pennsylvania: A Dictionary of Terms Related to Trauma-Informed Approaches in Schools.
- Pennsylvania Department of Education (2020). Equitable Practices Hub.  
<https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/equityandinclusion/EPH/Pages/default.aspx>

For more information on resources or education related to Equity and Trauma-Informed Approaches please visit PDE's website at [www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov).

**Dana Milakovic, PsyD, NCSP**

Mental Health/AOD Specialist  
Office for Safe Schools  
Department of Education

Cell Phone: (717) 649-1592

Email: [damilakovi@pa.gov](mailto:damilakovi@pa.gov)

**Nikole Hollins-Sims, Ed.D.**

Educational Consultant  
Pennsylvania Training and Technical  
Assistance Network (PaTTAN)  
Special Advisor on Equity to PDE

Phone: (717) 901-2283

Email: [nhollins-sims@pattan.net](mailto:nhollins-sims@pattan.net)

