EQUITY INSTITUTE TRAINING SESSIONS

The workshop series has been designed to enable school administrators, teachers, and support staff in responding effectively to people who differ from them. This series builds on the approach of Cultural Proficiency as a model for shifting the culture of the school or district; it is a model for individual transformation and organizational change. On the individual level, culturally proficient educators display personal values and behaviors that enable them and others to engage in effective interactions among students, educators, and the community they serve. At the organizational level, culturally proficient leaders foster policies and practices that provide the opportunity for effective interactions among students, educators, and community members. Cultural Proficiency is a powerful set of interrelated tools to create conditions for personal and organizational change in our diverse society.

Each session is designed as a full training day of interactive activities that build participants' cultural proficiency capacity in order for them to lead for equity. The consultants will serve as facilitators to provide tools and activities that can be used in multiple environments.

Session One: Assessing Cultural Difference

Session One introduces the tools and Cultural Proficiency Framework as a launch to bridging cultural divides. Through a process of critical reflection on cultural differences, participants will be better able to identify personal bias and identify hidden barriers to inclusion. In this session, participants will engage in interactive examinations of two Cultural Proficiency tools - The Guiding Principles and the Cultural Proficiency Continuum to deepen their understanding of cultural knowledge as demonstrated at the individual and school level. The Guiding Principles serve as the foundation upon which the approach is built and provide core values at the individual and the organization level. The Continuum tool indicates distinct ways of seeing and responding to differences by providing a language for describing both unhealthy and healthy behaviors, policies, practices, beliefs and values. Working in a collaborative process, participants will explore the first two tools of Cultural Proficiency and have extended opportunities to engage in courageous conversations around issues that emerge in diverse environments.

Questions that will guide the work:

- *How do you define culture?*
- *What does it mean to be culturally proficient?*
- *How does the school/district respond to differences?*
- *How might we use the tools of cultural proficiency to assess cultural knowledge?*

At the end of the session, participants will:

- *Understand Cultural Proficiency as a shared priority*
- *Have explored Cultural Proficiency as personal and professional work*
- *Have developed a common language and common understanding of the equity work - Use activities from Lindsey et al. 2019*

Session Two: Identifying Systemic Barriers

Session Two will focus on the historical perspective of American education. Participants will expand their understanding of the tools of Cultural Proficiency as a guide to addressing access and achievement gap issues. Participants will explore the effects of the past through the continued use of the Cultural Proficiency Continuum. Additionally, this session introduces participants to the two final Cultural Proficiency tools – Overcoming the Barriers and the Essential Elements tools. The Essential Element serve as standards for individuals and organizational values; assessing behaviors, policies and practices of the organization for planning; and measuring for growth towards culturally proficient environment. Overcoming the Barriers to Cultural Proficiency serve as caveats that assist in responding effectively to resistance to change. This session will utilize the barriers to focus on systemic privilege, oppression, and resistance to change as we address: diverse perspectives regarding educational history, cultural correlations to the achievement gap, and historical systems of oppression.

Questions that will guide the work:

- *What barriers to student access, opportunity or learning exist within your classrooms, schools and district(s)?*
- *What educational practices do we currently exercise that have lost relevance for our students?*
- *What are the cultural correlations to the achievement gap?*
- *How might we measure the effectiveness of our current practice?*

At the end of the session, participants will:

- *Have an understanding of diverse perspectives regarding the history of education in America*
- *Have explored the achievement gap and the cultural correlation*
- *Understand federal mandates and the cultural effects on students*
- *Understand how Cultural Proficiency tools guide addressing complex achievement gap issues*

Session Three: Transforming Professional Practice

The student population in the United States is becoming increasingly diverse with a growing range of languages, races, cultures and values. This has resulted in a growing cultural gap between Euro-centric educators and their students. Teachers actively seek ways to better serve students in response to these demographic changes. In this session, participants take a deeper look at the achievement gap correlations and expand their understanding of how to effectively use the tools of Cultural Proficiency as a guide to addressing access and achievement issues. Working collaboratively, we build upon our learning from session two by expanding our understanding of the historical perspective in education. We will continue our examination of culture at the individual and organization level by effectively using the tools of Cultural Proficiency as a guide for transforming our professional practice for inclusion and equity.

Questions that will guide the work:

- *What role do you play in maintaining the limited historical perspective of student access and inclusion?*
- *What data might you want to collect and track to inform you and others about the barriers?*
- *How might we expand access opportunities for underserved student groups?*
- *How might we use the Guiding Principles of cultural proficiency to address ethical tension?*

At the end of the session, participants will:

- *Understand how to review the culture of the school and underserved cultures.*
- *Understand how to identify barriers that may prevent a person, school, and district from becoming culturally proficient.*
- *Have a deepened understanding of Cultural Proficiency as a shared priority to overcome barriers.*

Session Four: Assessing Student Opportunities and Access

In Session Four participants critically reflect on their current district/school level initiatives to evaluate student opportunities and access. Participants use current district/school initiatives as an entry point. The examination of key data and selected rubrics will guide the institutional inquiry for detecting practices and policies necessary in meeting the determined objectives. Participants will then identify a deliberate set of equitable action steps and collaborate around designing a shared vision to pursue in order to achieve the equity and inclusion objectives. This interactive experience is designed to build cultural proficiency capacity in order to lead for equity and create an equitable environment.

Questions that will guide the work:

- *Based on current school or district initiatives, what is our primary focus?*
- *What beliefs, policies, and/or practices in your school/district to shape or inhibit an equity driven system? What does equity look like at the educational level?*
- *What can you do to create awareness and concern about the barriers and disproportional outcomes?*
- *How might we ensure equitable practices for underserved students?*

At the end of the session, participants will:

- *Be able to examine equity for education at the school level.*
- *Have used data and rubrics to guide support teams in the examination of policies and practices.*
- *Have engaged in cultural proficiency exercises to understand how the organizational capacity relates to the ability to leverage equity and inclusion.*
- *Have explored action steps for implementing a culturally proficient school*

Session Five: Creating a Shared Vision

Session Five consists of using the information gathered from previous sessions to compile and assess the current practice of the organization. The information from the previous practice sessions of the organization is then used to accomplish the needs assessment to establish a culturally proficient environment. Participants will continue dialogue and development of language and behavior practices around cultural proficiency to impact cultural connection at every level of the school community. This session provides the participants the opportunity to share their Equity Action Plan and employs support to fine tune and make modifications based on feedback on the plan before implementation.

Questions that will guide the work:

- *What action steps are needed to ensure systemic cultural and diversity values?*
- *How might we interrupt inequitable practices at the school level?*
- *What modifications are necessary to move the organization forward in equity and inclusion for all stakeholders?*

At the end of the session, participants will:

- *Have engaged in the skillful use of cultural proficiency conversations*
- *Be able to skillfully use techniques and tools to implement cultural proficiency as professional practice*
- *Have an understanding of cultural proficiency protocols to integrate into daily practice*
- *Produce action steps for implementing a culturally proficient school*