

Equity Vocabulary

Acculturation

Process of learning aspects of culture other than one's own influenced primarily by schools.

Ageism

Discriminatory beliefs and behaviors directed against people because of their age.

Androcentric

An attitude, belief, action, or institutional policy that is male-centered.

Anti-bias Education

An active/activist approach to challenging prejudice, stereotyping and bias, and the "isms". In a society in which institutional structures create and maintain sexism, racism, ableism, etc., it is not sufficient to be non-biased (and also highly unlikely), nor is it sufficient to be an observer. It is necessary for each individual to actively intervene, to challenge and counter the personal and institutional behaviors that perpetuate oppression.

Anti-semitism

Discriminatory beliefs and behaviors directed against Jews.

Assimilation

The process of absorbing a minority group into the main cultural body. Implicit in this process is that the main cultural body does not acknowledge or value the distinct characteristics of the minority group.

Bias

Any attitude, belief, or feeling that results in, and helps to justify, unfair treatment of an individual because of his or her identity. An inclination for or against a person or group of persons based, in whole or in part, on sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability that inhibits impartial and objective judgment affecting people.

Bias, Six Forms of

Curricular bias in materials and structure includes: **1) Invisibility:** Underrepresentation of certain groups, which can imply that these groups are of less value, importance, and significance; **2) Stereotyping:** Assigning only traditional or rigid roles or attributes to a group, thus limiting the abilities and potential of the group; denying students a knowledge of the diversity and complexity of, and variations among, any group of individuals; **3) Imbalance/Selectivity:** Presenting only one interpretation of an issue, situation, or group; distorting reality and ignoring complex and differing viewpoints through selective presentation of materials; **4) Unreality:** Presenting an unrealistic portrayal of this country's history and contemporary life experience; **5) Fragmentation/Isolation:** Separating issues relating to people of color and women (or other protected groups) from the main body of text; **6) Linguistic Bias:** Excluding the roles and importance of females by

constant use the generic “he” and sex biased words. Linguistic bias includes issues of ethnicity, culture and language proficiency as well.

Bicultural

Refers to the successful integration of two (or more) separate aspects of one’s cultural identity. Maintaining various components of one’s cultural identity and effectively expressing them at the appropriate times can be important bicultural skills.

Bilingual

An educational approach that uses two languages of instruction for students who are Limited English Proficient. **Bilingual-Bicultural** education means the cultures associated with the primary and secondary language are incorporated into the curriculum. **Developmental Bilingual** education builds and develops native language literacy and extends the literacy to students’ second language (English). **Transitional Bilingual** education provides students with all or most of their content-based instruction in their native language while learning English as a second language. **Two-way Bilingual** education provides a program model to integrate students whose native language is English with those for whom English is a second language for the purpose of developing bilingualism in both kinds of students. **Submersion Bilingual** education is “sink or swim”, it places students in a totally English language environment without using their native language and related literacy experiences as a basis for instruction.

Cross-cultural

The interaction, communication, or other connections between people from two or more different cultures.

Culture

The collective behavior patterns, communication styles, language, beliefs, concepts, values, institutions, standards, symbols, and other factors unique to a community that are socially transmitted to individuals and to which individuals are expected to conform. The ever changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, and world view shared by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors that can include a common history/herstory geographic location, language, social class, and or religion. The ways of believing, feeling and behaving of a group of people; the way of life of a people, their values, skills, customs, and resulting material culture. All people have culture. Culture is the name of what people are interested in, their thoughts, their models, the books they read and the speeches they hear, their table-talk, gossip, controversies, historical sense and scientific training, the values they appreciate, the quality of life they admire. All communities have a culture. It is the climate of their civilization.

Culture Adaptation

The adoption of the cultural behavior patterns and language (behavioral assimilation) of the host or dominant culture by newcomers to the society; the exchange of cultural traits between minority and majority groups; accommodation to environmental conditions and to available natural and technological resources; the ability to retain one’s own cultural identity while successfully participating in the mainstream culture.

Cultural Awareness

Consciousness of cultural similarities and differences; awareness of one's own culture and that of others.

Cultural Competence

Being able to function effectively in the context of cultural differences. To be a culturally competent provider of services, one needs to: Be aware of and accept cultural differences; be aware of one's own cultural values; understand that people of different cultures learn different ways of communicating, behaving, and problem solving; have basic knowledge or the skills to find out about a client's culture; and be willing to adapt or adjust the way one works with people to take into consideration cultural differences. A lifelong process which includes the examination of personal attitudes, the acquisition of relevant knowledge, and the development of skills which facilitates working effectively with individuals and groups who are culturally different from you.

Cultural Competence, Six Steps to

- 1) The personal recognition and acceptance that all types of cultures have a profound influence on our lives.
- 2) The personal awareness that oppression is pervasive in our society, it is part of our history, and, as much as we may want to escape the fact, it affects our relationship.
- 3) The acceptance that there are cultural differences and we need to learn to respect what we may not understand.
- 4) Having the humility to accept that we do not know everything about other cultures, and never will; therefore, we need to determine what it is we need to know about the specific groups with whom we are working.
- 5) A willingness to pursue that information in all ways available to us.
- 6) When we are unable to do the above, having the courage to identify and confront our personal resistance, anger, and especially our fears.

Cultural Democracy

The interface or relationship between the ideals of U.S. democracy (e.g. "freedom, equality, justice for all," often referred to as the American Creed) and the historical and social realities of our pluralistic society. This concept encompasses the gap between the realities of social practice and our democratic ideals.

Cultural Literacy

Knowledge of history, contributions, and perspectives of different cultural groups, including one's own group; sensitivity to and understanding of cultural groups in the U.S. and other countries; preparation of citizens to function effectively in multiple cultural settings.

Cultural Pluralism

A society characterized by cultural pluralism is one in which different cultures or ethnic groups live together in harmony and mutual respect, each retaining some of its cultural identity. There is cooperation of the various groups in the civic and economic institutions of the society and a peaceful coexistence of diverse lifestyles, folkways, manners, language patterns, religious beliefs and practices and family structures. A characterization of U.S. society as a universal (common) culture that

includes microcultural groups. It accepts ethnic and cultural diversity and the desirability of maintaining ethnic identity within the economic and political systems of the common U.S. culture. This is a view of the U.S. society as a “salad bowl” rather than a “melting pot”. Another emphasis is on the ideal that cultural diversity is a valuable resource that should be preserved and extended. This view of U.S. society endorses the principal that there is not one model American. It is the philosophical basis for multicultural, gender fair education.

Desegregation

An intermediate point on a continuum that extends from segregation to integration. The bringing together of students of different races (or other factors, e.g. sex and national origin) in common schools.

Discrimination

Any action, policy or practice, including bias, stereotyping, and student harassment, which is detrimental to a person or group of persons and differentiates or distinguishes among persons, or which limits or denies a person or group of persons opportunities, privileges, roles, or rewards based, in whole or in part on sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental emotional, or learning disability, or which perpetuates the effects of past discrimination.

Diversity

Differences among people or peoples reflected in a variety of forms, including but not limited to race, culture, perspective, talent, interest, ability, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, language and socioeconomic status.

Educational Equity

The educational policies, practices, and programs necessary to: **a)** eliminate educational barriers based on gender, race/ethnicity, national origin, color, disability, age, or other protected group status; and **b)** provide equal educational opportunities and ensure that historically underserved or underrepresented populations meet the same rigorous standards for academic performance expected of all children and youth. Educational equity knowledge and practices in public schools have evolved over time and require a comprehensive approach. Equity practices are planned, systemic and focus on the core of the teaching and learning process (curriculum, instruction and school environment/culture). Educational equity activities promote the real possibility of equality of educational results for students.

Elitism

An attitude, or institutional practice which subordinates or oppresses people due to their economic class, social position, or lifestyle. A belief of people holding power that they are superior to those without.

Ethnic

Of or relating to people grouped according to a common racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic or cultural origin. People who share a sense of group identity because of these factors.

Ethnic or Cultural Group Identity

That part of each of us that relates to what we have learned and internalized from the cultural group or groups to which we belong. Individuals may identify with one or

more ethnic or cultural group according to how they define themselves or they may be assigned this identity by others. Even within groups, differences are apparent and discrimination or harassment may occur among group members due to attitudes held about factors such as social standing, skin, color dialect, national origin, or tribal affiliation. Sensitivity to the way group identity has been determined and the way individuals accept or reject this identification is important.

Ethnicity

A sense of togetherness shared by members of a group who are linked through cultural tradition, ancestry, national origin, history or religion. A sense of peoplehood shared by members of a group who continue to identify themselves with a common ancestry, national heritage, religion, language, values, attitudes, and perceptions. Degree of ethnic identification and affiliation is by individual choice.

Ethnocentrism

Belief in the superiority of one's own ethnic group. Discriminatory beliefs or behaviors based on ethnic differences.

Ethnoviolence

Violence motivated by prejudice and bigotry based on race, ethnic background, or religion.

Equal Access

Traditionally means impartiality in opportunity. It usually applies only to physical or legal barriers.

Equality

Sameness of status or competency (everybody gets the same).

Equity

Fairness and justice of impartiality (getting what you need). Beyond equal educational opportunity (which means providing the same resources, opportunity and treatment for each student).

Gender

Refers to a means of classification based on female or male designations including the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that are identified as either female or male; the culturally determined behavior of males and females.

Gender Equity

Gender Equity is a set of actions, attitudes, and assumptions that provide opportunities and create expectations about individuals, regardless of gender. It is integral to and supports race, ethnic, economic, disabilities, and other equity concerns. In education, gender equity is specific action undertaken to create conditions that provide high-quality educational experiences for female and male students and enables outcomes of educational achievement with no differences based on gender. Gender equity is: an equal chance for learning for females and males; equitable options to learn subjects and prepare for future education, jobs, and career; no limits on expectations due to gender; equal encouragement for both females and males to develop, achieve, and learn; and equitable treatment for female and male students.

Gender Identity

Reflects the person's conviction that behaviorally and biologically he or she is either male or female.

Harassment

Behavior toward pupils based, in whole or in part, on sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental emotional, or learning disability which substantially interferes with a student's school performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment.

Hate Crime

Any act, or attempted act, to cause physical injury, emotional suffering, or property damage through intimidation, harassment, racial/ethnic or other slurs and bigoted epithets, vandalism, force, or the threat of force motivated all or in part by hostility to the victim's real or perceived race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Homophobia

The fear of feeling of love for members of one's own sex and therefore the hatred of those feelings in others.

Inclusion

The taking in of all, i.e. special students being a part of a general classroom.

Integration

The process of bringing together, or unifying, different groups to co-exist as a whole.

Limited English Proficient Student (LEP)

One who meets one or more of the following conditions: **a)** the student was born outside of the U.S. or whose native language is not English; **b)** the student comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; or **c)** the student is an American Indian or Alaskan Native and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on his/her level of English language proficiency; and has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language, to deny him or her the opportunity to learn successfully in English-only classrooms.

Macroculture

The universal or national culture that is shared by most citizens. The dominant cultural influence on the U.S. macroculture and its institutions has been white, male, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant.

Microculture

(Subculture) A group whose perspective and lifestyle are different from the cultural mainstream. Members of a microculture define themselves different; they share a set of norms, attitudes, and values that give them distinctiveness.

Minority Group

A minority group is one that is fewer in number than the largest, or majority group in a society. Although strictly related to numerical presence, "minority" is sometimes incorrectly used to designate groups that are perceived as having lesser status than the majority. While the term "minority" has recently fallen into disfavor in popular usage in the United States (due to the negative and stereotypic messages about

those groups to which it refers), it continues to be used by many as a term referring to the racial, ethnic and cultural groups protected by law.

Monoculturalism

Understanding and operating within one dominant culture. In order to be successful in a noncultural organization, individuals are asked to assimilate into the dominant culture because other cultures are not relevant.

Multiculturalism

The ability of an individual or an organization to acknowledge, adapt, and operate within more than one culture.

National Origin Groups

Ethnic groups consisting of persons from environments in which the dominant language may be other than English and who, as a result of linguistic and/or cultural differences do not have an equal educational opportunity.

Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

Has responsibility for enforcing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Investigates allegations of civil right violations and initiates investigations of compliance with federal civil rights laws in schools that serve special student populations, including language minority students.

Oppression

The systematic subjugation of one social group by another. Oppression is having the power to carry out systematic discriminatory practices through and with the support of major societal institutions. Examples are racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ageism.

People of Color

A collective term, which includes all the various national ethnic, or cultural groups of the U.S.A. that are regular targets of bigotry and prejudice, including African Americans, Asian Americans, American Indians, Latino or Hispanic Americans. Historically termed minorities, these people are numerically the majority globally and in parts of the U.S.A.

Pluralism

A state of society in which members of diverse gender, ethnic, racial, religious, or social groups maintain autonomous participation in both a common civilization and in separate cultural ones.

Prejudice

A preconceived, usually unfavorable opinion marked by suspicion, fear, intolerance, or hatred, that is directed against a certain racial, religious, cultural, ethnic or gender group or individuals perceived to be members of such a group. An attitude, opinion, or feeling formed without adequate prior knowledge, thought, or reason. Prejudice can be prejudgment for or against any person, group, or sex.

Protected Group Status

Refers to identifiable group membership specifically protected by federal or state civil rights or nondiscrimination laws.

Race

An arbitrary and artificial concept with multiple meanings and thus with very limited usefulness in describing groups of people. **1) Biological definition** – a concept

used by physical anthropologists to differentiate between various human subgroups based on their physical characteristics; **2) Social definition** – a group of people who others believe are biologically distinct and whom they treat accordingly; a concept used to isolate, separate, and stigmatize groups, which results in differential treatment of people of different skin colors.

Racism

Discriminatory beliefs and behaviors directed against people of color. Racism couples the false assumptions that race determines psychological and cultural traits with the belief that one race is superior to another. Any attitude, action or institutional structure which subordinates a person or group because of their color. A belief that human groups can be validly grouped according to their biological traits and that these identifiable groups inherit certain mental, personality, and cultural characteristics that determine their behavior. Racism, however, is not merely a set of beliefs but is practiced when a group has the power to enforce laws, institutions, and norms, based on its beliefs, that oppress and dehumanize another group.

Religion

A set of beliefs and values, especially about explanations that concern the cause and nature of the universe, to which an individual or group has a strong loyalty and attachment. A religion usually has a moral code, rituals, and institutions that reinforce and propagate its beliefs.

Scapegoating

Refers to the deliberate policy of blaming an individual or group when the fault actually lies elsewhere. Prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory acts lead to scapegoating. Members of disliked groups are denied education, employment, housing social or political rights or social privileges. Scapegoating can lead to verbal and physical violence.

Sex

Identity as female or male, based on biological distinctions in the reproductive organs.

Sex Bias

Behaviors resulting from the assumption that one sex is superior to the other. The under-lying network of assumptions or beliefs that says that men and women are different and should be different, not only physically but in taste, talents, interests and personalities.

Sexism

Discriminatory beliefs and behaviors directed at one sex or the other. An assumption that each sex has a distinctive make-up that determines the development and role of their respective lives; that one sex is superior and has the right to rule the other. It is the degree to which an individual's beliefs or behaviors are prejudiced on the basis of sex. Sexism describes prejudice and discrimination at both the individual and institutional levels. It is the collection of institutional policies, practiced, and structures which subordinate or limit a person on the basis of sex. Power plus sex bias equals sexism.

Sexual Orientation

Having an orientation of heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, having a history of such an orientation of being identified with such an orientation.

Stereotype

An oversimplified generalization about a particular group, race, or sex, which usually carries negative implication. Attributing behaviors, abilities, interest, values, and roles to a person or group of persons on the basis, in whole or in part, of the sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability.

Title I, IASA of 1994

Helping Disadvantage Students Meet High Standards. Reauthorized under the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994. Supports programs to assist economically disadvantaged and at-risk students.

Title II, IASA of 1994

Dwight D Eisenhower Professional Development Program of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994. Funds professional development, particularly in the areas of mathematics and science.

Title IV, IASA of 1993

Provides funds to governors, state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs), institutions of higher education, and nonprofit organizations to develop and operate a range of drug and alcohol prevention programs.

Title VI, Civil Rights of 1964

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.

Title VII, IASA of 1994

Bilingual Education Act. Established in 1968 under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Reauthorized in 1994 under the Improving America's Schools Act. Funds innovative programs.

Title IX, IASA of 1994

Supports the efforts of local educational agencies, Indian tribes and organizations, postsecondary institutions, and other entities to meet the special educational and culturally related academic needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives, so that such students can achieve to the same challenging state performance standards expected of all students.

Xenophobia

A fear of or hostility towards foreigners, an extreme form of nationalism which can contribute to protectionism and isolationism. Debates around immigration law reform include xenophobia schools of thought.

Some definitions cited from: Equity Mission Team, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Madison, Wisconsin; Midwest Equity Assistance Center, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas; and the Iowa Department of Education