

Our Diversity Work at Island Park Elementary

IP Diversity Team Mission Statement:

Island Park Elementary School has a site-based diversity team consisting of certificated and classified staff (additional parent and student members will be included in the future). The team adopted a Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion statement that included commitments to:

- Rich Curriculum and classroom activities that reflect our diverse student population
- School events that celebrate and honor our diverse student body and community
- Staff development that enhances skill sets to meet the diverse needs of our learning community
- Staff, student and parent involvement in committees and activities that study, suggest and support diversity initiatives

The team meets monthly to participate in diversity-related book/article studies and monitor diversity initiatives in the areas of staff development, data collection, community and school-wide events, classroom activities, and curriculum. Our focus this year has been around gender equity. The team is studying current literature on gender equity and access issues in public schools to gain a better understanding of trends and learning implications. The team has created draft language around our school commitment to gender equity.

A link to a complete list of current diversity initiatives is posted on the school's website.

Island Park Library Collection:

The Island Park library continues its purposeful acquisition of picture books and novels that depict, through illustrations and text, our society and student body's demographics. Newest items to our collection also address age appropriate issues of diversity, equity and social just. Topics include the history of women's rights, stories about citizens with disabilities, as well as Native American, African American, Latino/Hispanic, and Asian biographies and stories (fold talks, historical fiction, and poetry). *See attached list and preview some of the latest additions that are soon to go onto our shelves!*

Professional Development:

David Hoffman is attending a three-day institute of Coaching and Leading for Racial Equity. The sessions focus on how to engage in difficult conversations about race. Participants examine race, power, privilege, and institutional racism to deepen understanding and practices around coaching and leadership. The institute is designed to build capacity to affect positive educational outcomes of historically under-served students. The institute is guided by the essential question: What coaching/leadership moves are critical to disrupt and dismantle inequitable practices, policies, and

procedures so that all students achieve. Learnings and activities will be shared with staff.

Lisa Deen is attending next week a workshop on Hiring & Retaining a Diverse Workforce workshop scheduled for Tuesday, March 28th. MISD is a multicultural organization that honors the diverse staff, students, and parents it serves. To improve our practices, we are looking at ways to develop the cultural competence of those who work within the institution. As we grow in our cultural competence, we gain insight and understanding of many needs and perspectives. As a result, we are able to advocate for change and take action to create a welcoming environment that draws people to our organizations. This workshop is a foundational step learning strategies for creating an equitable process that brings in more diverse candidates and ways to retain them once they are hired. We will look at effective language for creating a culturally responsive job description, strategies for advertising, ways to develop culturally competent interview questions and more.

5th Grade Diversity Poems and Islandwood Camp Experience:

Fifth grade students wrote "I Have a Dream: and "I am From" poems that highlighted their personal uniqueness and appreciation of the world's diversity. They recently completed their yearly outdoor education experience at Islandwood on Bainbridge Island. Part of the camp's curriculum included a study of the diverse cultures that settled Blakely Harbor. During this learning session, students watched a film on the history of the harbor, discussed the benefits of immigration on the local economy, and hiked down to the harbor to view and talk about how artifacts (cemetery headstones and structural remains) reflect the diversity and contributions of early settlers.

Lakeridge Elementary

- Regroup after meeting with Dr. Hollins with whole staff and then met as elementary DAT and focus on awareness and education
 - DAT members - created norms for the group (used Glenn Singleton norms as a guide)
 - DAT members - each took the implicit bias test (race) and discussed results
 - DAT members - wrote I AM poems
 - DAT members - leading a book study with staff members: Whistling Vivaldi
- International Night
- 3rd graders Culture Project
- PE – Bollywood 4th
- Differences in school systems – teacher training from parents (Chinese)
 - Looking to get more of this training from various cultures
 - Parent volunteering to have a recess “class” on Bollywood dancing

- <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

Northwood Diversity Action Team: Northwood created a site-based Diversity Action Team when the school opened this fall. Our focus this year has been to learn more about the students we serve at Northwood, to continue to develop our instructional strategies and curriculum options to engage our diverse learners, and to celebrate and honor our diverse community through curricular events and community involvement events. We have had an influx of English Language Learners to our school, and to support them, each grade level has a leader who engaged in six days of training in Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD), a collection of strategies to support English Language Learners in developing language skills alongside content learning. These leaders have led their colleagues in professional development sessions on early release days. Additionally, we have had parent presentations from our community to help our teachers understand the Chinese school system many of our students came from, as well as the communication challenges they face in coming into a U.S. school system. In addition to the all-elementary work we are engaged in with Dr. Caprice Hollins, we have scheduled Ben Ibale to provide a workshop to all staff this Spring: Instructional Strategies for Culturally Competent Classrooms. The PTA has supported our DAT initiatives through a very well-attended International Night, as well as through funding to support in-school assemblies and presentations for our students that help students develop awareness of and appreciation for diversity in our communities.

West Mercer Diversity Team: West Mercer Elementary School created a site-based diversity team during the 2015-2016 school year and has continued its work into the 2016-17 school year. During monthly meetings, the team focuses on questions and activities to build awareness, knowledge, and skills for both staff and students. We started the 2016-2017 school year off by looking at “Invitational Education”, celebrating ways that we welcome new families into our classrooms and our school and then focusing on ways we can be even more invitational. We had a very successful Principal’s Coffee in the fall with many new families represented and we were able to hear each of their respective voices; where they had come from and what they hoped for, in terms of overall education, learning, and community while their children are at West Mercer. We reviewed and updated our website, in terms of the West Mercer Diversity Commitment Document and the West Mercer Diversity Initiatives. We are continuing the work that Dr. Caprice Hollins has done with us as a district elementary staff, and are looking at deepening our understanding of microaggressions. The team took an Equity & Diversity Walk, in terms of who we see represented when we walk the hallways. We will then take the results of our Equity & Diversity Walk to reflect on how closely what we saw aligns with how educationally invitational we believe we are. In addition, we have invited Ben Ibale to present to staff in March. His presentation will focus on “Instructional Strategies for a Culturally Competent Classrooms”. A number of our members have also attended professional development conferences around the themes of Diversity, Equity and Restorative Justice and we have shared with one another our take-away learning.

West Mercer has also embraced Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) as a means of support for our many ELL students. Six of our teachers (along with our ELL teacher) participated in six days of intensive training. GLAD strategies are being used throughout the building and our GLAD trained teachers have taken on leadership roles to share these GLAD strategies among the staff.

IMS DAC MEETING REPORT TO DISTRICT DAC 3-17-17

Kathy Shaner, Representative

IMS Social Studies Curriculum Analysis

Last month we looked at language arts curricula; this time we looked at social studies curricula with each grade level presenting. In particular, we were interested in curriculum pieces where we helped students grow in taking multiple perspectives.

OBSERVATIONS: We have improved with conscious effort and awareness to be inclusive when selecting augmenting documents for 6th grade Ancient Civilization, to 7th Grade WA State History, to 8th Grade US History.

Gaps:

We need to find even more primary and secondary sources from multiple perspectives—especially females of history.

GOALS:

1. 7th grade: African American of WA State History specifically (Kathy Shaner has asked the NW African American Museum to publish their wonderful timeline that is not currently accessible to all). It should be included in curricula where we currently are piecing together with websites.
2. There is a need to continue training students to take multiple perspectives as an essential challenge for this literal age group.
3. Need more opportunities for kids “to share” their personal histories and diversity as they relate to history.

CYBER ONLINE RESPECT TRAINING

Observation: We find at middle school level students are mostly good at outwardly controlling conversations (with a few exceptions).

Discovery: When overt behavior loses its outlet, students find “KEYBOARD COURAGE” & middle schoolers will sometimes go covert and begin online disrespect.

Our goal: Continue to be proactive in training, but also view these encounters as cyber learning opportunities.

MARYJO BUDZIUS: RESTORATIVE JUSTICE CONCEPT

Restorative justice is a concept with tons of potential benefits; however, training for teachers, families, kids, counselors will be extensive and costly. To be effective, Mercer Island’s whole community will need a “real understanding of the entire process from start to finish.” It would need to be a continuing educational process for new families and reviewing process as retraining is warranted.

There is major portion of the restorative justice concept that takes place in the classroom that involves classroom management. This would absorb a lot of time and revolve around social emotional training as curriculum.

Pros/Cons

- + it teaches conflict is not a bad thing
 - something in curriculum has to make room for this process
- + Not about retribution, but rather about taking responsibility and giving back.
- + Not shaming the author of the unexpected action. Gives everyone a voice.

**Diversity Action Team
Staff Breakout Sessions
March 9, 2017
3:10-4:40**

- **The DAT meets twice monthly to plan staff and student activities.**
- **January-February Planned breakout sessions for March 9 staff PD**
- **March-April: Planning for May breakout sessions for students**

Staff chose 2 sessions to attend. Each session was 35 minutes long.

Sessions offered:

Implicit Bias Part 2---Learn more about Implicit Bias take the Implicit Bias test and debrief some of these topics:

- Discover the truth about bias
- I'm not biased. Am I?
- Sharing common misunderstandings about bias
- Self-reflection about hidden bias

What does it really mean to do "equity work"?

The goal of this workshop is to use provocative prompts to engage participants in a meaningful dialogue about our work in schools regarding equity and race.

Provocative prompts isn't merely to elicit conversation among participants; a good prompt also helps participants reexamine their own beliefs and attitudes. Please join us in a SAFE environment to have a great conversation around equity.

QSA

Students of the QSA will conduct an informative and enlightening workshop that includes vocabulary and concepts; how they feel in your classrooms, in the halls, and at school events; and how to be an ally and advocate. If you've ever wondered what QSA stands for, or wanted to learn more about your LGBTQ students, this is the workshop for you!

Microaggression

- **How do I microaggress against thee? Let me count the ways?**
- **What are microaggressions? What should I do when I hear them? How will I know?**

This workshop will help you understand how and why even well-intentioned comments convey hostility toward minority students at MIHS. Participants will hear student testimonies, take a matching "quiz", provide personal examples of things we've said or heard, and walk away with tools for how to recognize and respond to microaggressions.

Data from Staff Breakout Evaluation

Overall feedback on breakout sessions:

69 Responses on a scale of 1 -5 1 (Not Helpful) to 5 (Very Helpful)

Rating	1	2	3	4	5
Number of people who chose the rating	1	2	6	17	43

4.43 AVG

Average rating by session:

Rating 1 (Not Helpful) to 5 (Very Helpful)

Implicit Bias: 30 responses

Personally Beneficial 1-5 scale = 3.1 AVG

Professional Beneficial 1-5 scale = 3.5 AVG

Equity Work: 26 responses

Personally Beneficial -5 scale = 3.4 AVG

Professional Beneficial 1-5 scale=3.8 AVG

Microaggressions: 39 responses

Personally Beneficial 1-5 scale = 3.6 AVG

Professional Beneficial 1-5 scale= 3.5 AVG

QSA: 39 responses

Personally Beneficial 1-5 scale = 4.6 AVG

Professional Beneficial 1-5 scale= 4.4 AVG

Interested in attending similar breakout sessions in the future:

63 responses	Yes= 55	Maybe =6	No=2
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Sample responses from the question asking for 2 take aways that can influence teacher's practice.

- Try to put yourself in other people shoes as much as you can.
- The unconscious nature of implicit bias makes me want to be more thoughtful in the judgments I make.
- "Upend the system" -----Your "personal backpack", as my professor in college called it, matters greatly when approaching and handling equity work.
- To be more communicative with students. ASK them about their pronoun preference.

Tool: Interrupting Microaggressions

MICROAGGRESSION EXAMPLE AND THEME	THIRD PARTY INTERVENTION EXAMPLE	COMMUNICATION APPROACH
<p>Alien in One's Own Land To a Latino American: "Where are you from?"</p> <p>Ascription of Intelligence To an Asian person, "You're all good in math, can you help me with this problem?"</p> <p>Color Blindness "I don't believe in race."</p>	<p>"I'm just curious. What makes you ask that?"</p> <p>"I heard you say that all Asians are good in math. What makes you believe that?"</p> <p>"So, what do you believe in? Can you elaborate?"</p>	<p>INQUIRE Ask the speaker to elaborate. This will give you more information about where s/he is coming from, and may also help the speaker to become aware of what s/he is saying. KEY PHRASES: "Say more about that." "Can you elaborate on your point?" "It sounds like you have a strong opinion about this. Tell me why." "What is it about this that concerns you the most?"</p>
<p>Myth of Meritocracy "Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough."</p> <p>Pathologizing Cultural Values/Communication Styles Asking a Black person: "Why do you have to be so loud/animated? Just calm down."</p>	<p>"So you feel that everyone can succeed in this society if they work hard enough. Can you give me some examples?"</p> <p>"It appears you were uncomfortable when ___ said that. I'm thinking that there are many styles to express ourselves. How we can honor all styles of expression—can we talk about that?"</p>	<p>PARAPHRASE/REFLECT Reflecting in one's own words the essence of what the speaker has said. Paraphrasing demonstrates understanding and reduces defensiveness of both you and the speaker. Restate briefly in your own words, rather than simply parroting the speaker. Reflect both content and feeling whenever possible. KEY PHRASES: "So, it sounds like you think..." "You're saying...You believe..."</p>
<p>Second-Class Citizen You notice that your female colleague is being frequently interrupted during a committee meeting.</p> <p>Pathologizing Cultural Values/Communication Styles To a woman of color: "I would have never guessed that you were a scientist."</p>	<p>Responder addressing the group: "___ brings up a good point. I didn't get a chance to hear all of it. Can ___ repeat it?"</p> <p>"I'm wondering what message this is sending her. Do you think you would have said this to a white male?"</p>	<p>REFRAME Create a different way to look at a situation. KEY PHRASES: "What would happen if..." "Could there be another way to look at this..." "Let's reframe this..." "How would you feel if this happened to your ___..."</p>
<p>Second-Class Citizen Saying "You people...."</p> <p>Use of Heterosexist Language Saying "That's so gay."</p>	<p>"I was so upset by that remark that I shut down and couldn't hear anything else."</p> <p>"When I hear that remark, I'm offended too, because I feel that it marginalizes an entire group of people that I work with."</p>	<p>USE IMPACT AND "I" STATEMENTS A clear, nonthreatening way to directly address these issues is to focus on oneself rather than on the person. It communicates the impact of a situation while avoiding blaming or accusing the other and reduces defensiveness. KEY PHRASES: "I felt ___ (feelings) when you said or did ___ (comment or behavior), and it ___ (describe the impact on you)."</p>
<p>Second-Class Citizen A woman who is talked over.</p> <p>Making a racist, sexist or homophobic joke.</p>	<p>She responds: "I would like to participate, but I need you to let me finish my thought."</p> <p>"I didn't think this was funny. I would like you to stop."</p>	<p>USE PREFERENCE STATEMENTS Clearly communicating one's preferences rather than stating them as demands or having others guess what is needed. KEY PHRASES: "What I'd like is..." "It would be helpful to me if..."</p>

Adapted from Kenney, G. (2014). *Interrupting Microaggressions*, College of the Holy Cross, Diversity Leadership & Education. Accessed on-line, October 2014. Kraybill, R. (2008). "Cooperation Skills," in Armster, M. and Amstutz, L., (Eds.), *Conflict Transformation and Restorative Justice Manual*, 5th Edition, pp. 116-117. LeBaron, M. (2008). "The Open Question," in Armster, M. and Amstutz, L., (Eds.), *Conflict Transformation and Restorative Justice Manual*, 5th Edition, pp. 123-124. Peavey, F. (2003). "Strategic Questions as a Tool for Rebellion," in Brady, M., (Ed.), *The Wisdom of Listening*, Boston: Wisdom Publ., pp. 168-189.

Tool: Interrupting Microaggressions

MICROAGGRESSION EXAMPLE AND THEME	THIRD PARTY INTERVENTION EXAMPLE	COMMUNICATION APPROACH
<p>Color Blindness "When I look at you, I don't see color."</p> <p>Myth of Meritocracy "Of course he'll get tenure, even though he hasn't published much—he's Black!"</p>	<p>"So you don't see color. Tell me more about your perspective. I'd also like to invite others to weigh in."</p> <p>"So you believe that ____ will get tenure just because of his race. Let's open this up to see what others think."</p>	<p>RE-DIRECT Shift the focus to a different person or topic. (Particularly helpful when someone is asked to speak for his/her entire race, cultural group, etc.) KEY PHRASES: "Let's shift the conversation..." "Let's open up this question to others..."</p>
<p>Myth of Meritocracy In a committee meeting: "Gender plays no part in who we hire."</p> <p>"Of course she'll get tenure, even though she hasn't published much—she's Native American!"</p> <p>Second-Class Citizen In class, an instructor tends to call on male students more frequently than female ones.</p>	<p>"How might we examine our implicit bias to ensure that gender plays no part in this and we have a fair process? What do we need to be aware of?"</p> <p>"How does what you just said honor our colleague?"</p> <p>"What impact do you think this has on the class dynamics? What would you need to approach this situation differently next time?"</p>	<p>USE STRATEGIC QUESTIONS It is the skill of asking questions that will make a difference. A strategic question creates motion and options, avoids "why" and "yes or no" answers, is empowering to the receiver, and allows for difficult questions to be considered. Because of these qualities, a strategic question can lead to transformation. Useful in problem-solving, difficult situations, and change efforts. KEY PHRASES: "What would allow you..." "What could you do differently...." "What would happen if you considered the impact on..."</p>
<p>Traditional Gender Role Prejudicing and Stereotyping In the lab, an adviser asks a female student if she is planning to have children while in postdoctoral training.</p>	<p>To the adviser: "I wanted to go back to a question you asked _____ yesterday about her plans for a family. I'm wondering what made you ask that question and what message it might have sent to her."</p> <p>To the student: "I heard what your advisor said to you yesterday. I thought it was inappropriate and I just wanted to check in with you."</p>	<p>REVISIT Even if the moment of a microaggression has passed, go back and address it. Research indicates that an unaddressed microaggression can leave just as much of a negative impact as the microaggression itself. KEY PHRASES: "I want to go back to something that was brought up in our conversation/meeting/class" "Let's rewind ____minutes..."</p>

CONSIDERATIONS:

- The communication approaches are most effective when used in combination with one another, e.g., using impact and preference statements, using inquiry and paraphrasing together, etc.
- Separate the person from the action or behavior. Instead of saying "you're racist", try saying "that could be perceived as a racist remark." Being called a racist puts someone on the defensive and can be considered "fighting words."
- Avoid starting questions with "Why"—it puts people on the defensive. Instead try "how" "what made you"
- When addressing a microaggression, try to avoid using the pronoun "you" too often—it can leave people feeling defensive and blamed. Use "I" statements describing the impact on you instead or refer to the action indirectly, e.g., "when _____ was said..." or "when _____ happened..."
- How you say it is as critical as what you say, e.g., tone of voice, body language, etc. The message has to be conveyed with respect for the other person, even if one is having a strong negative reaction to what's been said. So it is helpful to think about your intention when interrupting a microaggression—e.g., do you want that person to understand the impact of his/her action, or stop his/her behavior, or make the person feel guilty, etc. Your intention and the manner in which you execute your intention make a difference.
- Sometimes humor can defuse a tense situation.

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Provocative Prompts

What does it really mean to do “equity work”?

#1 “...groups can often avoid unproductive situations if members recognize that inequity and prejudice have grown out of societal oppression or distressing earlier experiences. People need opportunities to work through the feelings from these hurts. Participants also need to be reminded that emotional release (through tears, trembling, laughing and talking, for example) is the natural healing process from the distress they have experienced. It is also important for people to be able to talk about the first time they encountered prejudice and inequity and their feelings at the time.”

Julian Weissglasss, “Deepening our Dialogue About Equity,” Educational Leadership, ASCD, April 1997.

#2 “I worry that in this country, we’ll only learn to value differences one at a time — work on each separately, difference by difference by difference. We view life in terms of its dualism: good (my way) or bad (your way). Instead, I wish we could learn, truly learn, that the fundamental problem is our basic attitude toward difference.”

Barbara Walker, Teaching Diversity, Gallos et al, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1997

#3 “Even in schools with very small populations of color, educators are becoming more aware of the need to prepare white students to live in a multiracial society. Yet this is a world with which the current teaching force has limited experience. Most white teachers were raised and educated in predominantly white communities. Their firsthand knowledge of communities of color and their cultures and histories are quite limited.”

Sandra M. Larence and Beverly Daniel Tatum, “White Educators as Allies: Moving from Awareness to Action”, from Off-White, edited by Fine et al

#4 “Because of the prejudice and racism inherent in our environments when we were children, I assume that we cannot be blamed for learning what we were taught (intentionally or unintentionally). Yet as adults, we have a responsibility to try to identify and interrupt the cycle of oppression. When we recognize that we have been misinformed, we have a responsibility to seek out more accurate information and to adjust our behavior accordingly.”

Beverly Daniel Tatum, "Talking about Race, Learning about Racism: the Application of Racial Identity Development Theory in the Classroom," Harvard Educational Review, spring, 1992.

Protocol for
What does it really mean to do "equity work"?

Step 1 (5 MIN) Staff will read the prompts and chose one prompt that speaks to them and write a response that includes:

- Does the message of the prompt resonate with your thinking or feelings? Why or why not?
- How does that impact you personally and professionally?

Use the space provided underneath the prompt to record your thoughts.

Step 2: Form groups finding participants with prompts different than yours (prompt#1, #2, #3, #4 should form a group). Each participant reads their prompt to others and discusses their written responses. After each person has shared, as a group discusses the essential question: What does it really mean to do "equity work"? Record answers to the essential question on chart paper.

Role Needed: Recorder

Step 3: Large group share out. Each group will share their answer to the essential question to the group.

Role Needed: Reporter

Step 4: Debrief the process. How did this process work for you? Did hearing from colleagues speaking about the prompts challenge your thinking any way?

International Festival

Monday, March 13, began the Annual MIHS International Festival. To highlight the diversity of our world, MIHS students will be saying the United States' Pledge of Allegiance in languages other than English; Mandarin, Chinese, French, Norwegian and Portuguese daily. Exchange students from around Washington State will arrive Thursday and participate in orientation activities. They will be attending classes with their MIHS host on Friday, so say hi and give them a warm MIHS welcome! The International Assembly on Friday morning will highlight music, dances, and speaker Dr. Redding. Dr. Redding is a minister, author, teacher, singer, spiritual director and has a PhD in Religious Studies with an emphasis in the New Testament. Dr. Redding was an Episcopal priest and is Muslim. Dr. Redding is a founder of the Abrahamic Reunion West, a non-profit committed to developing enduring relationships among Jews, Christians and Muslims. Tonight the exchange students along with their host families will be making meals from their country to share at the International potluck this evening before the dance and on Saturday they will host a brunch. Exchange students and their host will then enjoy; t-shirt signing, games and activities, a variety show highlighting the different cultures represented by our exchange students and finally big group picture.