

We the People: Cultivating Equitable & Trauma-Informed PBIS Systems

B07 Grand Ballroom 1

Strand: Equity

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Credits Go To...

- Alex Shevrin Venet, author of *Equity-Centered Trauma-Informed Education* (2021).
- Floyd Cobb & John Krownapple, authors of *Belonging through a Culture of Dignity* (2019).
- Shane Safir & Jamila Dugan, authors of *Street Data* (2021).
- Byron McClure & Kelsie Reed, authors of *Hacking Deficit Thinking* (2022).
- Paul Gorski – Equity Literacy Institute
- Center on PBIS - Equity Workgroup

THE MIDWEST PBIS NETWORK

A blurred background image of a classroom. In the foreground, the back of a student's head and one arm raised in the air are visible. In the middle ground, a teacher wearing a blue face mask sits at a desk with a laptop. In the background, there is a green chalkboard and a camera on a tripod.

The Midwest PBIS Network (MWPBIS) is a national research, grant, and direct-funded organization housed at West 40 ISC #2 in Illinois. Our primary charge is to function as a hub of the Center on PBIS, a national technical assistance partnership funded from the U.S. Department of Education to assist state boards of education in building their capacity for installation, fidelity, outcomes, and sustainability of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).



Four agreements of a courageous conversation

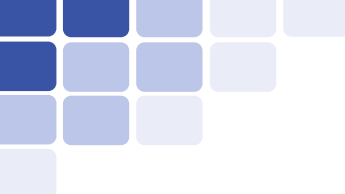
1. Stay Engaged
2. Speak your truth
3. Experience discomfort
4. Expect and accept non-closure

Source: Singleton & Linton, 2006



Key Takeaways

- Clearly define *equity, inclusion* and *belonging* through *trauma-informed* practices
- Asking better questions for better actions
- Evaluating your system's current status and seeking pathways to change



How do we honor the human
right to a safe and
accessible environment for
every learner?



It's the law.....

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

-Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964



What does this mean for schools?

The law requires schools to protect students from racial harassment and take immediate action to repair harm when harassment takes place.

In fact, it requires schools to address any form of racial discrimination, including disparate suspension rates; unfair discipline practices; unequal access to courses; or any action that impairs students' education because of their race or ethnicity.

Every public school in the United States is bound by Title VI.

Source: [Saving Title VI | Learning for Justice](#)



It's the law.....

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities by recipients of federal funds)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability by recipients of federal funds), with respect to recipients of funding from the Department of Justice.



TEACHER SHORTAGE...it's not a mystery

2021-2022 School Year

81% – The overall workload has increased.

80% – Spending more time addressing students' mental health.

55% – Less planning time due to staff shortages and other factors.

30% – School or districts' priorities changed.

25% – Changes to assignments or their classroom.

- At least 300,000 public-school teachers and other staff left the field between February 2020 and May 2022, [The Wall Street Journal](#) reports.
- K-12 teachers report the highest burnout rate of all U.S. professions, with more than four out of every 10 teachers noting that they feel burned out “always” or “very often” at work, according to a June 2022 [Gallup poll](#).

Source: [State of Teaching Statistics 2022 | AdoptAClassroom.org](#)

Source: ['It killed my spirit': How 3 teachers are navigating the burnout crisis in education](#)





Bottom line.....

Every learner deserves opportunities to
feel valued, secure and encouraged
towards entering global citizenship.

Definitions

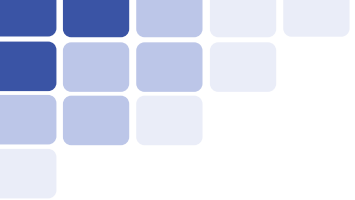


What is Equity?

In education, equity is "when educational policies, practices, interactions, and resources are representative of, constructed by, and responsive to all people such that each individual has access to, can meaningfully participate, and makes progress in high-quality learning experiences that empowers them towards self-determination and reduces disparities in outcomes regardless of individual characteristics and cultural identities." [1][2]

[1]Fraser, N. (2008) Social right and gender justice in the neoliberal movement: A conversation about welfare and transnational politics. *Feminist Theory*, 9,225-245.

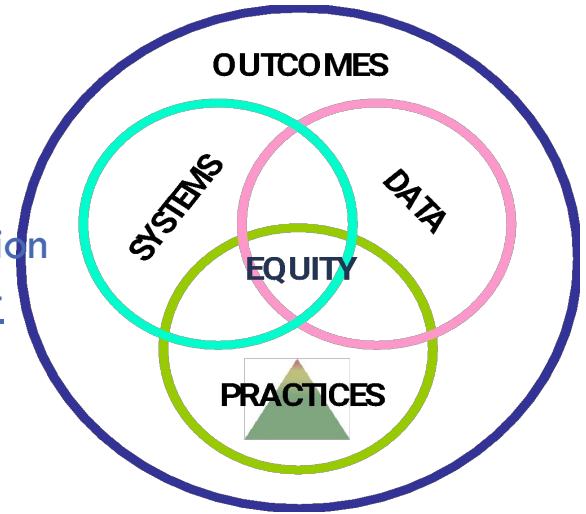
[2]Great Lakes Equity Center (2012). Educational equity: What's it all about? An Equi-learn Webinar presentation by Skelton, S & Kigamwa, J., The Great Lakes Equity Center Retrieved from <http://glec.education.iupui.edu/archived-webinar-events.html>



Educational systems cannot not be considered effective until they are effective for all student groups.

EQUITY

PBIS teams are more likely to increase equity in school discipline when they add explicit equity goals to their action plans. Addressing equity works best as a multi-component approach embedded within their existing PBIS system.



The components of equity within a PBIS framework are:

- Collect, Use, and Report Disaggregated Discipline Data
- Implement a Preventative, Multi-Tiered, Culturally-Responsive Social-Emotional-Behavioral Framework
- Use Engaging Instruction to Reduce the Opportunity Gap
- Develop Policies with Accountability for Disciplinary Equity
- Teach Strategies for Neutralizing Implicit Bias in Discipline Decisions



What is Inclusion?

Inclusion is defined as engagement within a community where the **equal worth** and **inherent dignity** of each person is **honored**. An inclusive community promotes and sustains a sense of belonging.

Source: Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity, Cobb & Krownapple, 2019



What is Belonging?

Experiencing appreciation, validation, acceptance, and fair treatment within an environment.

When people feel that they belong, they aren't distracted and worried about being treated as a stereotype or a singular part of their multidimensional personhood.

Source: Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity, Cobb & Krownapple, 2019



Definition

National Childhood
Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)

“Trauma occurs when a child experiences an intense event that threatens or causes harm to his or her emotional and physical well-being.”



What we are *really* talking about?

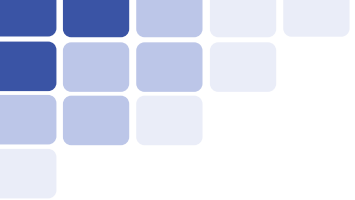
Extreme or chronic stress that overwhelms a person's ability to cope
& results in feeling vulnerable, helpless & afraid

- Can result from one event or a series of events
- Event(s) may be witnessed or experienced directly
- Experience is subjective
- Often interferes with relationships; self regulation; & fundamental beliefs about oneself, others & one's place in the world



Trauma

- There are multiple types of trauma.
- We do not decide what is traumatic for someone else. **Ever.**
Keep your eye on this ball!
- We don't need to know the details of a person's trauma to create an environment for all to belong and succeed.
- Trauma impacts how we see ourselves, how we see our place in the world, how we belong (or don't)
- Understanding trauma and using trauma-informed practices is part of the PBIS framework (aka NOT SEPARATE)



THE EXPERIENCE OF TRAUMA IMPACTS HOW WE SEE OURSELVES

The Intersection Between Trauma and Equity

It's more of a roundabout.



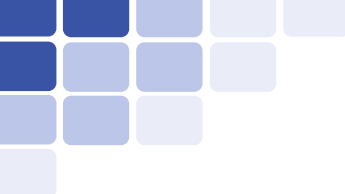


TRAUMA INFORMED EDUCATION IS ANTI-RACIST, ANTI-OPPRESSION

Key Understanding:

Racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, transphobia, and all forms of oppression cause trauma.

Inequity in schools can cause trauma.



**DOES TRAUMA
IMPACT HOW YOU SEE
& ENGAGE WITH
YOUTH?**

Indicators of Othering

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Otherized: Viewed, treated, and made to seem <i>different</i> in a way that ostracizes, denigrates, reduces, and dehumanizes (labels, objectifies, animalizes, etc.)</p> | <p>Mistreated: Dealt with in a way that is unfair, unjust, biased due to perceptions about your identity, group membership, conditions, circumstances, or cultural practices/norms.</p> |
| <p>Marginalized: Rejected and pushed to the edge of a group(s); put or kept in a position of limited significance, influence, and power; only able to gain access and belonging by changing or hiding important aspects of one's self.</p> | <p>Dismissed: Having your lived experience or expertise questioned, invalidated, and/or deemed insufficient.</p> |

Source: *Belonging through a Culture of Dignity*, Cobb & Krownapple, 2019



Caution of “Othering” using “Trauma”

“Trauma informed practice isn’t inherently a deficit view, but it becomes one when we use *trauma* as a proxy for *those damaged kids...*”

“Are we drawn to this because it provides an explanation for why the kids misbehave and offers a promise of solutions to *fix* them?”

“Equity Passionate vs. Dignity Competent”

(Cobb & Krownapple, 2019)

- Be wary of the engaging in the “savior complex”.

You are not the savior of students. You are not the one they have been waiting for. No prophecy has foretold your coming. You are a person of passion and training who is working to help other people learn. That is good and that should be enough. You are helping. You are the shoulder on which to cry. You are the one who connects to your students with the resources they desperately need. You will not be the one who “saves” them. To suggest as much robs students of their resiliency and agency. (p. 269)

Lehman & Chase (2015) as found in Venet (2021).



**Are we asking the right
questions?**



The importance of alignment....

“Coherence is foundational to both systems change and social emotional well-being. In its absence, educators lack a sense of direction and struggle to develop agency. There are simply too many things coming at them at once - all with a stated urgency - and it becomes overwhelming and, in turn, paralyzing....”

Source: *Street Data*, Safir & Dugan (2021)



Let's Fit the Script

Why are we asking how to restore justice?

Better question: Why wasn't there justice in the first place?

Answer: Acknowledge that the system was designed that way on purpose

We have to stop putting band-aids on gaping wounds.....



Examples

- ❑ Instead of fixing the kids, let's fix the injustice.
- ❑ Instead of focusing only on teaching resilience, let's ask why kids need to be so resilient.
- ❑ Instead of seeing a youth's response as defiant or unruly, let's see it as a normal response to stress.



KEY QUESTIONS

- DOES THIS PRACTICE, POLICY, OR DECISION HELP OR HARM?

- DOES THIS PRACTICE, POLICY, OR DECISION DEMONSTRATE THAT ALL YOUTH ARE WORTHY OF BELONGING, OR ONLY SOME YOUTH.



**We can no longer
engage in plausible
deniability.**



Actions Speak Louder Than Words....



Tap into Schoolwide Strengths

(4 factors for student success and well-being)

- Engagement
 - Student involvement in and enthusiasm for school.
- Hope
 - The ideas and energy students have for the future.
- Belonging
 - Feeling accepted and included as part of the school.
- Social-emotional competency
 - Learning to understand and manage emotions, including positive relationships.



Implementation of Schoolwide Strengths

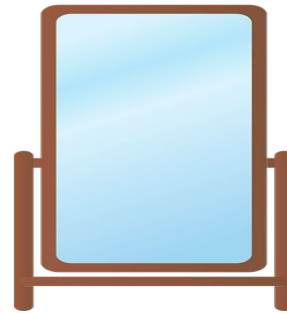
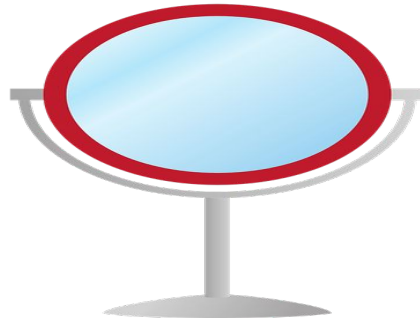
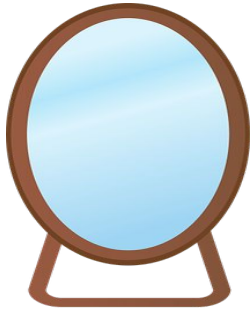
1. Establish a staff-level community.
2. Create a shared mission, vision, and language.
3. Cultivate safe classroom communities.
4. Know your students.
5. Develop your students as human beings *and* intellectuals.
6. Let the students do the work.
7. Ground curriculum in student realities.
8. Incorporate HUMANE data collection throughout this process.



How will we know we did the work?

Evaluate your system's current status and
prioritize pathways for change.

Always look in the mirror....



Contact Information

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