

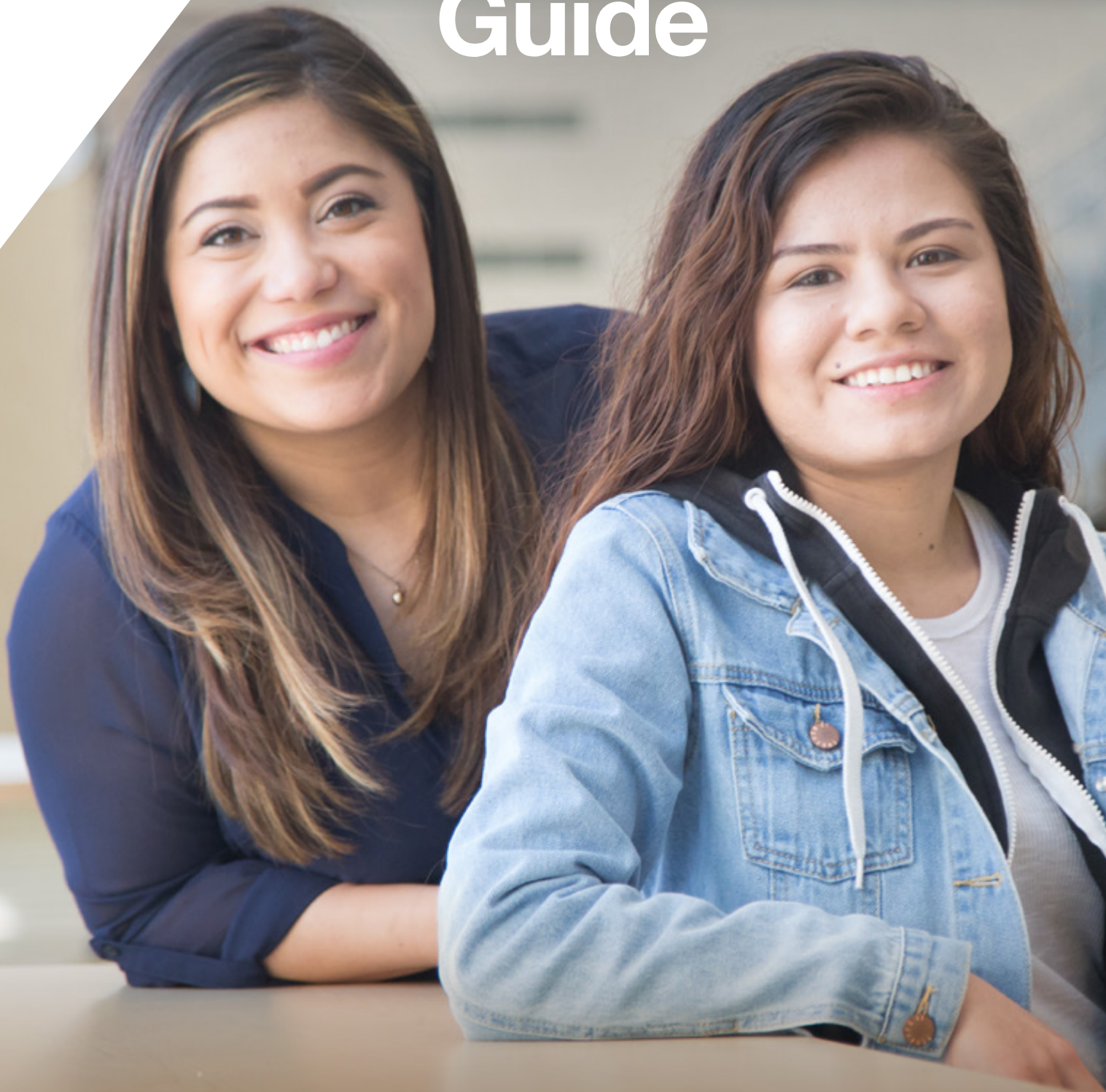


Communities
In Schools

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Resource Guide



September 2019



If you're reading this guide, you're about to take an important step in supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in your organization. This will be a rewarding and continuously evolving journey to support success for all students.

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This document contains live links to key articles and videos relevant to our work with DEI. Explore by clicking on resource titles. Clicking the table of contents items will help you navigate through the document.

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The background of the page is a photograph of a modern library interior, featuring tall bookshelves, a central service desk, and large, angular, low-profile seating pods. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter.

Introduction: **Quick Start Guide**

Create Equity-Minded Organizations:

A Quick Start Guide for Affiliate Leadership

This Organizational Leadership Quick Start Guide is designed for individuals who work in and on behalf of our state and affiliate offices, including Board Members and Executive Directors, as well as individuals who support major functions, such as Human Resources, Finance, Communications & Branding, and Advancement.

To get started:

1. Read the Introduction: Quick Start Guide

Take 10 minutes to read the Introduction: Quick Start Guide to familiarize yourself with the journey of diversity, equity, and inclusion at CIS; understand how to plot your organization on a diversity, equity, and inclusion developmental Stakeholder Commitment Continuum; familiarize yourself with the Organizational Self-Assessment Survey; and review a high-level summary of the Resource Guide. All together, this document will provide a solid foundation to understand the journey we are all sharing together.

2. Conduct the Stakeholder Commitment Continuum Organizational Assessment

- a. This survey will help stakeholders at your organization place themselves on a diversity, equity, and inclusion Stakeholder Commitment Continuum. Once you understand where your organization falls on the Continuum, you will use the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resource Guide to advance your organization along the Continuum.
- b. Instructions for completing the assessment are contained within the Stakeholder Commitment Continuum Organizational Assessment; however, organizations in the CIS network should decide how they wish to administer this assessment based on their knowledge of their local context.

3. Plot Your Organization, Functions, and Individuals on the Stakeholder Commitment Continuum

- a. The Stakeholder Commitment Continuum has five levels: Awareness, Understanding, Adoption, Ownership & Promotion, and Innovation. After completing the Organizational Assessment, you will understand where your Board, Leadership, and organizational functions fall within the Continuum.
- b. One individual may serve multiple functions in an organization. For example, someone in your organization may serve as both an Advancement and Branding & Communications professional. It is therefore possible for one person to occupy multiple categories in the Continuum, based on his or her knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the various functions that they cover. That individual will have multiple resources at his or her fingertips, wherever they fall in their journey to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion concepts into their practice.
- c. It is also likely that the functional divisions within your organization will fall into a variety of positions on the Continuum. Your organization's Board may be at the level of Awareness, while your Human Resources function may be well into Adoption. The Resource Guide, housed on the National Resource Center, is designed to meet everyone where they're at, no matter where they're starting.

4. Explore the Resource Guide

- a. All staff and stakeholders in your organization should select the chapter that corresponds to their place on the Continuum. Each chapter represents the five categories in the Continuum (Awareness, Understanding, Adoption, Ownership & Promotion, and Innovation).
- b. The beginning of each chapter contains a section called "All Staff and Stakeholders." After completing the readings in that section, stakeholders can read the materials under "Create Equity-Minded Organizations" and move to the subsection designed for their functional area(s) as appropriate. For example, there are often sections with further readings related to specific functions, such as Board functions, Human Resources, Finance, and more.

These four actions will set you up for taking the next steps on your diversity, equity, and inclusion journey!

Cultivate Equity with Students and Families: A Quick Start Guide for Student Supports Staff

This Student Supports Staff Quick Start Guide is designed for Program Directors, Site Coordinators, and Volunteers.

To get started:

1. Read the Introduction: Quick Start Guide

Take 10 minutes to read the Introduction: Quick Start Guide to familiarize yourself with the journey of diversity, equity, and inclusion at CIS, understand how to plot your organization on a diversity, equity, and inclusion developmental Stakeholder Commitment Continuum, familiarize yourself with the Organizational Self-Assessment Survey, and review a high-level summary of the Resource Guide. All together, this Introduction will provide a solid foundation to understand the journey you are about to take.

2. Participate in Your Affiliate's Organizational Self-Assessment

- a. This survey will help stakeholders at your organization place themselves on a diversity, equity, and inclusion Stakeholder Commitment Continuum. Once you understand where your organization falls on the Continuum, you will use the diversity, equity, and inclusion Resource Guide to advance your organization along the Continuum.
- b. Instructions for completing the assessment are contained within the Stakeholder Commitment Continuum Organizational Assessment, however, organizations in the CIS network should decide how they wish to administer this assessment based on their knowledge of their local context.

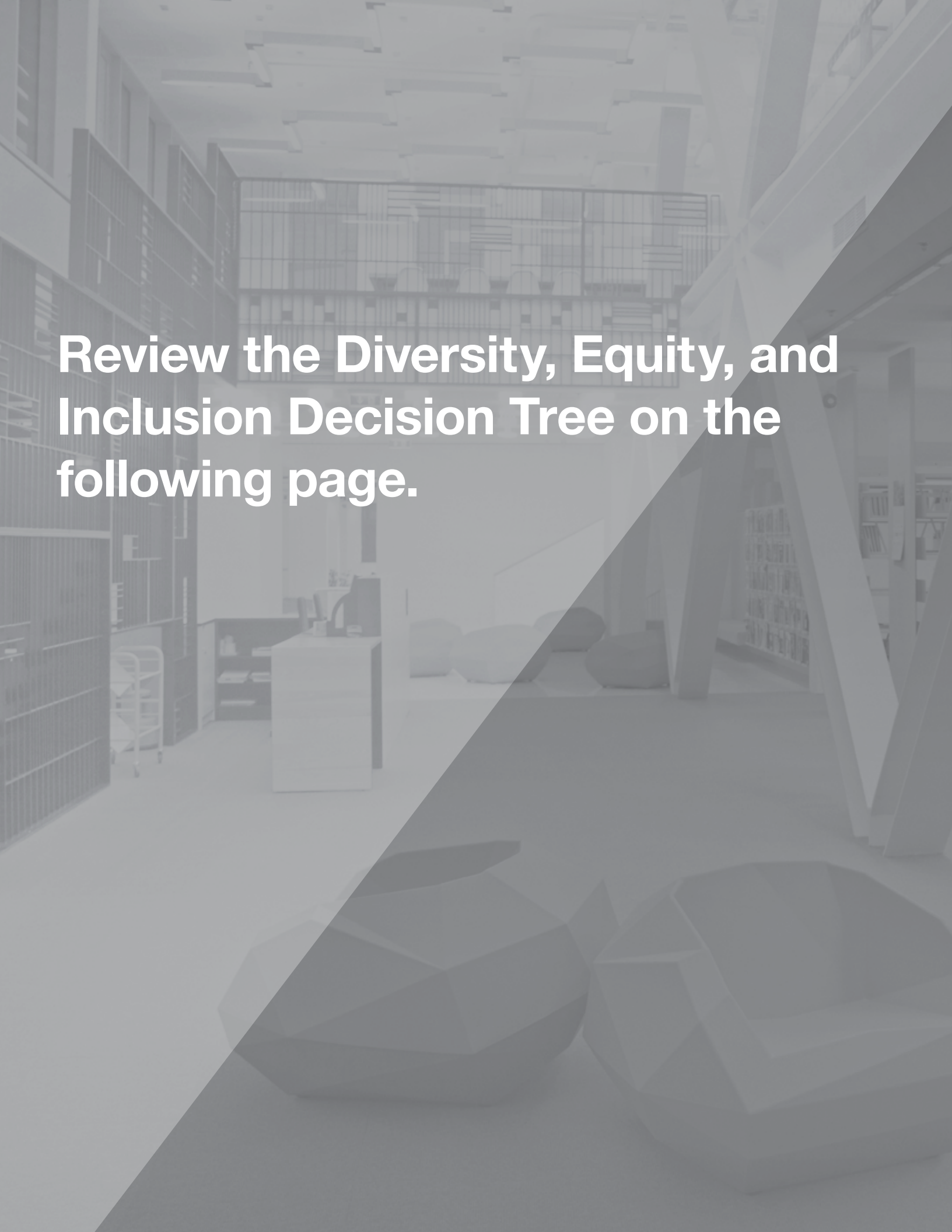
3. Plot Your Organization, Functions, and Individuals on the Stakeholder Commitment Continuum

- a. The Stakeholder Commitment Continuum has five levels: Awareness, Understanding, Adoption, Ownership & Promotion, and Innovation. After completing the Organizational Assessment, you will understand where you and other members of your organization fall within the Continuum.
- b. It is likely that the stakeholders within your organization will fall into a variety of positions on the Continuum. Your organization's Board may be at the level of Awareness, while your Site Coordinators may be well into Adoption. The Resource Guide, housed on the National Resource Center, is designed to meet everyone where they are, no matter where they're starting.

4. Explore the Resource Guide

- a. All staff and stakeholders in your organization should select the chapter that corresponds to their place on the Continuum. Each chapter represents the five categories in the Continuum (Awareness, Understanding, Adoption, Ownership & Promotion, and Innovation).
- b. The beginning of each chapter contains a section called "All Staff and Stakeholders." After completing the readings in that section, stakeholders can read the materials under "Cultivate Equity with Students and Families."

These four actions will set you up for taking the next steps on your diversity, equity, and inclusion journey!

The background image shows a modern library or study space. On the left, there are tall, dark-colored bookshelves filled with books. In the center, there is a white study desk with a computer monitor and some papers. To the right, there are more bookshelves and a staircase. In the foreground, there are two large, dark-colored, geometric sculptures that look like stylized rocks or abstract shapes. The overall lighting is bright and even.

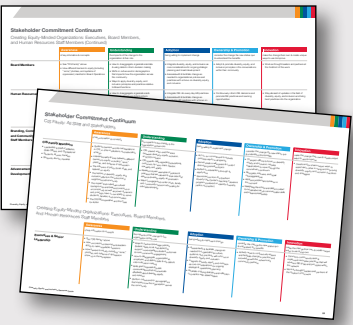
Review the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Decision Tree on the following page.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Decision Tree

1. Read the
**Introduction:
Quick Start
Guide**

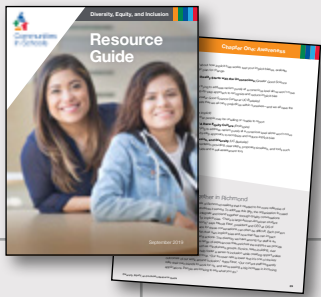


2. Take the
**Stakeholder
Commitment
Continuum
Assessment**



3. Plot Your Organization,
Functions, and
Individuals on the
**Stakeholder
Commitment
Continuum**

4. Explore the **Resource Guide**



Awareness

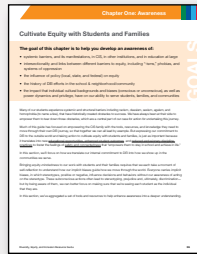
Read the section for
**All Staff and
Stakeholders**



Pick One

Create
Equity-Minded
Organizations

Cultivate Equity
with Students
and Families



Tools for Board
Members

Tools for
Leadership

Tools for Human
Resources

Tools for
Finance/
Resource
Development

Tools for Site
Coordinators

Understanding

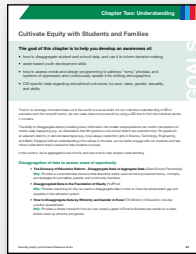
Read the section for
**All Staff and
Stakeholders**



Pick One

Create
Equity-Minded
Organizations

Cultivate Equity
with Students
and Families



Tools for Board/
Leadership

Tools for Human
Resources

Tools for
Finance/
Resource
Development

Adoption

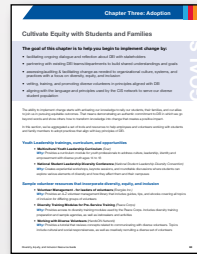
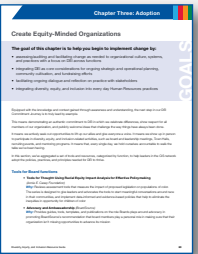
Read the section for
**All Staff and
Stakeholders**



Pick One

Create
Equity-Minded
Organizations

Cultivate Equity
with Students
and Families



Tools for Board
Members

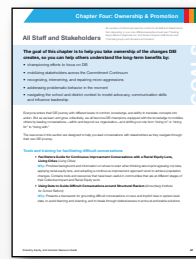
Tools for
Leadership

Tools for Human
Resources

Tools for
Finance/
Resource
Development

Ownership & Promotion

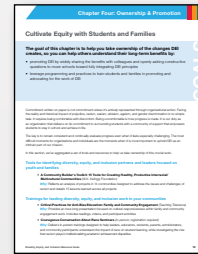
Read the section for
**All Staff and
Stakeholders**



Pick One

Create
Equity-Minded
Organizations

Cultivate Equity
with Students
and Families



Tools for Board/
Leadership

Tools for Human
Resources

Innovation

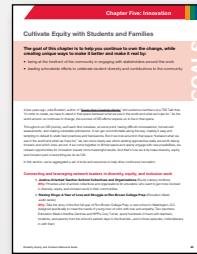
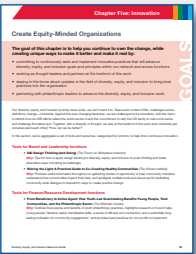
Read the section for
**All Staff and
Stakeholders**



Pick One


Create
Equity-Minded
Organizations

Cultivate Equity
with Students
and Families



Tools for Board/
Leadership

Tools for Human
Resources



Introduction to the Resource Guide

Letter from the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Planning Committee

Dear CIS Family,

We have long celebrated the fact that our work requires a combination of head, hands and heart. That's why we are pleased to place in your hands today a resource guide that represents the deep thinking, hard work, and inspiration of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Planning Committee.

Our Committee, comprised of passionate individuals from the CIS network and our national office, have spent the last two years researching best practices from the field, discovering insights from our own network, and listening to leading voices across the country. We've learned that our diversity, equity, and inclusion imperative to help all students succeed, regardless of their family background or life circumstances, is a steady journey of openness, discovery, and intentionality.

This guide is the first part of our roadmap. It will lead you through comprehensive diversity, equity, and inclusion readings, tools, and other resources that many of you requested as a part of this important work. Inside the guide you will find a Quick Start Guide, a stakeholder commitment continuum that will give you some bearings on where each of you are entering this journey (and how you are progressing), as well as information on where you can find additional resources and help.

We serve students who come to us with different backgrounds and experiences in life. We must recognize and celebrate their diverse backgrounds, help create equitable educational outcomes for them and provide an inclusive environment so that their voices and perspectives are honored. If this is to happen in a meaningful and authentic way, we must simultaneously do the same work within our own CIS family, applying these values and practices in our own day-to-day work, so that we can truly serve students from a place of respect and ensure that they have opportunities to thrive.

This is hard work, but we're confident that we are starting with intentional steps for this journey. We invite you to take your steps with intentionality by using the Quick Start Guide. Along the way, there will be delays and a few missteps, which is understandable; that is what a learning community is all about. But know that you won't be alone, so speak up, share, and let us work together to ensure we are headed in the right direction.

Together, we can ensure that all the students we serve, regardless of who they are or the challenges they face, have what they need to realize their full potential.

Together, we can be all in, for all our kids!

Respectfully,

The CIS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Planning Committee

Meet the CIS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Planning Committee

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CIS Federal Way, Washington
Coordinator, School Outreach

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CIS of Kalamazoo, Michigan
Senior Director, Community Engagement & Student Investment

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CIS of Chicago
Director, Integrated Student Supports

BRITTANY PRICE
CIS of Central Ohio
Site Coordinator

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Interaction Institute for Social Change
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Consultant

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Assistant Director, Training and Network Operations

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CIS of Hampton Roads, Virginia
Executive Director

PETER WUENSCHER
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Executive Director

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CIS of Houston
Special Initiatives Manager

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CORRINE CLEMENT
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DAWN GODAIRE
National Office, Arlington
Vice President, Human Capital and Office Administration

STEVEN McCULLOUGH
National Office, Arlington
Chief Operating Officer

MASSA GONGBAY
National Office, Arlington
Coordinator, Organizational Strategy & Effectiveness (DEI)

ERICA VEVURKA
National Office, Arlington
Principal, Stakeholder Engagement

SARAD DAVENPORT
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Senior Program Manager, Learning & Practice

MEGAN GRIMALDI
National Office, Arlington
Principal, Organizational Strategy & Effectiveness (DEI)

Acknowledgments

Communities In Schools would like to acknowledge the members of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Planning Committee who have tirelessly worked as a collaborative team to develop the diversity, equity, and inclusion Resource Guide since 2018. The group is made up of dedicated members of the CIS family from 10 different states and the National Office. They represent a variety of functional roles, including Site Coordinators, Program Directors, Executive Directors, and Chief Operating Officers, and are experienced in Integrated Student Supports, School Outreach, Community Engagement, Organizational Strategy, Human Resources, Learning and Practice, Training and Compliance, and more. The work they have done for the last 20 months will pave the way for a legacy of equitable student outcomes for generations to come.

Executive Leadership

Communities In Schools and, in particular, the members of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Planning Committee, would like to extend sincere appreciation for the leadership of Elaine Wynn and Dale Erquiaga. Their support was instrumental in getting us to the point where we can stand up as one to say, “We are committed to being a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization.” We look forward to continuing this journey together.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Design Team

We would also like to acknowledge the CIS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Design Team, which collaborated from January to July 2018 as a first step on the CIS DEI journey. It consisted of members from across the CIS network who designed a collaborative strategy for creating a DEI plan for the CIS network. They created the language that would become the *Case for Action* to articulate the reasons behind this important work, and they came to agreement on core milestones for the next several years.

Sonji Branch CIS of Memphis	Megan Grimaldi CIS National	Steve Majors CIS National	Judy Sanders-Bull CIS of Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Max Casero CIS of Central Texas	Tim Johnson Family Connection- Communities In Schools of Athens	Steven McCullough CIS National	Amanda Schroeder CIS Gulf South
Catherine Estevez CIS of Virginia	Carol Lewis CIS of Georgia	Elizabeth Mejia CIS National	Brittany Tigner CIS of Atlanta
Dawn Godaire CIS National		Earnestine Peterson CIS National	Sharon Vigil CIS of Central Texas

The Interaction Institute for Social Change

Communities In Schools would also like to acknowledge the tireless efforts and enthusiastic support of the Interaction Institute for Social Change. Over the course of the previous two years, the depth of knowledge, thoughtful insight, and mindful leadership of Cynthia Silva Parker, Susan Naimark, and Mikayla Lytton have been invaluable to our organization. Without their help, this toolkit would not have been possible.

Corrine Clement, Vice President of Culture & Community, Wynn Resorts

Communities In Schools is also deeply indebted to the support of Corrine Clement of Wynn Resorts. The CIS network has made great strides in moving the DEI imperative forward through Corrine’s creativity, energy, and honesty.



Why DEI? Why Now? Why You?

Why Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Is Now a Communities In Schools Imperative

As you know, equity has always been one of the founding principles of our work – for more than 40 years, we have joined together to fulfill a common vision to give every student, in every grade, in every school, in every area of the country, an equal opportunity to learn, thrive, and succeed no matter what cultural, economic, or societal barriers stand in their way.

We have made great progress as an organization, but we are learning from research and benchmarking that formalizing our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion can support us to accomplish even more for students and in faster time.

Recent research in the field of diversity, equity, and inclusion has shed a light on the barriers to student equity, not just being about the socio and economic challenges we are all too familiar with, but also their significant tie to our own unconscious biases and the racial lens we use to view these challenges.

When we personally raise our own level of awareness around our biases and learn more about things such as institutionalized racism, we naturally become more creative and inclusive about how to solve systemic problems in education. And when that happens, we finally have the possibility to eradicate these barriers once and for all instead of just chipping away at them year after year.

That's why we are taking on the work of DEI now and why it's so important for all of us to join in it together.

There are so many in our network out there doing innovative things that are creating positive change, and other affiliates who have learned valuable lessons from mistakes and missteps that would help others avoid the same obstacles, but until now we haven't established a way to gather, measure, and share these best practices amongst each other.

CIS National can now help gather data and best practice learning, facilitate training, support programs and initiatives, and drive policy changes that not only give the work of DEI strength in numbers, but provide resources for you to seek support and guidance to drive change on the ground in your own community. By being more inclusive with each other moving forward, together we can create more inclusive environments and outcomes for our students.

To accomplish this, it won't take just some of us – it's going to take ALL of us. And it starts with you. You should use this Resource Guide to learn definitions of DEI-related words and concepts. Educate yourself about micro-aggressions and unconscious and implicit bias. Our students experience systemic and structural barriers daily, such as institutionalized racism, classism, sexism, ableism, ageism, and homophobia (to name a few). Make a commitment to understand what all of the current buzzword “-isms” truly mean and the impact they have on outcomes.

Once you've raised your individual consciousness, then consider the role you play within this organization. How can this awakening of new thoughts and ideas inform you to better perform your role? Bigger than that – how can this knowledge support you to change the systems we are all operating within our organization?

This is a massive challenge, but it's one we must begin. All of us will be starting from different places of experience, acceptance, and education, which is why the Organizational Assessment is such a valuable place to start. But even though we are beginning at different points along the developmental Continuum, we can all reach the finish line together. Diversity, equity, and inclusion isn't about identifying a few key people to drive change. It's about how solutions can ONLY be achieved when we ALL learn and collaborate together...and bring as many partners along with us as we can.

Our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion must be threaded through everything we do. Our mission cannot be achieved without it, and we fundamentally believe we have a responsibility to ensure our supports lift all students.

How We Got Here

In 2018, we established a collaborative process for our network to engage in the development of a strategic diversity, equity, and inclusion roadmap. While there is no ideal endpoint to our journey of growing, learning, and evolving as the world continues to change, the following roadmap helps us set goals and milestones through 2022, and articulates the actions we must collectively take on our journey towards positive change.

Year 1 2018	Year 2 2019	Year 3 2020	Year 4 2021	Year 5 2022	Year 6 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft framework and roadmap • Stakeholder engagement identification and strategy development • Create common language and "Case for Action" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and implement stakeholder engagement strategy • Define success and establish baseline data • Develop DEI Resource Guide 1.0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue stakeholder engagement • Collect and analyze data to monitor & assess/report progress • Identify the desired changes in student outcomes • Pilot and refine DEI Resource Guide 1.0 and associated resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to see improvement in student outcomes • Implement continuous improvement loop (Collect and analyze data to monitor & assess/report progress) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert staff members leverage skills and resources • Continue implementing continuous improvement loop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student outcomes improve

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Roadmap

By the end of 2022, the CIS national office, state offices, and affiliates will have the practices, policies, and people to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in support of success for all students.



The Case for Action: The Time Is Now

All of our expressions of our work, our leadership, and our messages need to continually remind the world not just of our own commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, but of the collective and interconnected reasons we are committed to progress and the more equitable world we're working to create.

From systemic opportunity gaps and harsher punishments for students of color and students with disabilities to cyclical income inequality, we understand the challenges that our students and families face, and we believe in the power of diversity, equity, and inclusion to make a positive and lasting impact:



For **our students**, a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion means increasing educational opportunities, enhancing student outcomes, reducing exclusionary discipline practices, and fostering feelings of safety and connectedness;



For **our organizations**, prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion means creating a diverse workforce, fostering a climate of inclusion, and shaping business practices and policies that promote equity to reduce employee turnover, improve decision-making, and incentivize creativity and fresh thinking;



For **our communities**, elevating diversity, equity, and inclusion in the ways we partner with stakeholders, including parents, community leaders, educators, policymakers, business leaders, and faith-based organizations, means bringing people together to find innovative solutions that collectively address issues like systemic poverty and other barriers to equity.

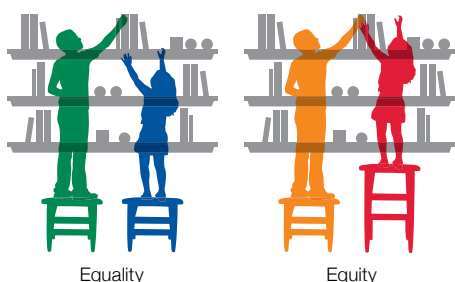
Together, we are helping to make more space for diversity, equity, and inclusion to be a key part of all youth-focused efforts that create community-level and national impact. Together, we are helping to create a more just society – one that truly surrounds all students with a community of support and tears down barriers to success.

What Do We Mean When We Talk About Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?

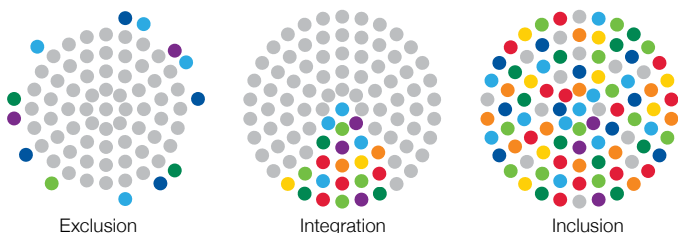
Our journey to becoming an organization that truly reflects the diversity of our communities and celebrates the strength of our differences to create a more just and equitable world for all students starts with understanding what we mean when we talk about diversity, equity, and inclusion. Throughout this guide, you'll see us use the acronym "DEI," but we should always be thinking about the very different and interconnected concepts each of those letters refers to.



Diversity includes all of the similarities and differences among people, not limited to gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, appearance, language, accent, ability status, mental health, education, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, and political perspective or affiliation. A person is not diverse—they are a unique, individual unit. Diversity is about a collective or a group and can only exist in relationship to others.



Equity recognizes and addresses power dynamics by making sure that everyone has equal access to the same opportunities. Equity takes into account that people have different access to resources because of systems of oppression and privilege, and seeks to balance those disparities. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.



Inclusion is celebrating, valuing, and amplifying perspectives, voices, and values that have been disadvantaged and/or marginalized. An inclusive environment creates equitable access to resources and opportunities for all, and helps individuals and groups feel safe, respected, engaged, and valued for who they are and for their contributions to community and society.



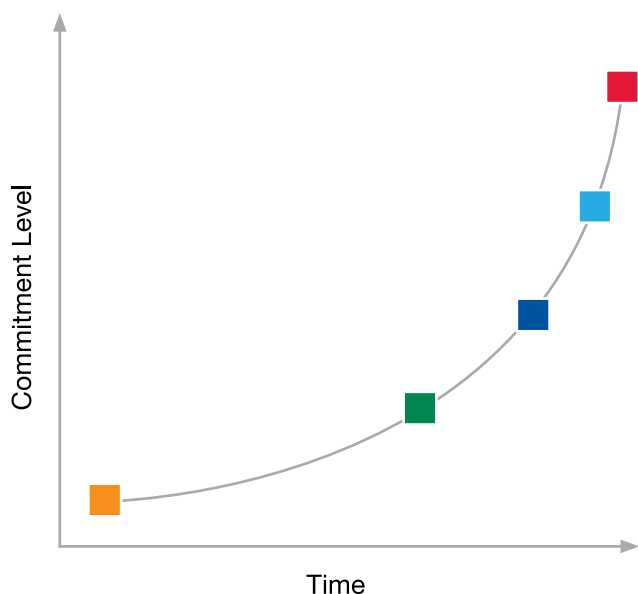
Executing on Our Roadmap: Using the Stakeholder Commitment Continuum

The steps in the roadmap below require us to use best-in-class resources, which is how the Resource Guide was inspired into existence. It will also take an understanding and appreciation that each affiliate within the network will likely begin this journey at a different stage of integrating DEI into their organizational policies, programs, and practices. Within CIS, some members of the network are just getting started while others have been actively engaged in diversity, equity, and inclusion for years.

To account for these varying stages of program integration and student support, the CIS Planning Committee developed the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Stakeholder Commitment Continuum.

The Stakeholder Commitment Continuum

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Stakeholder Commitment Continuum has five levels as outlined below:



Innovation

Stakeholders make the change their own and create unique ways to use and improve.

Ownership & Promotion

Stakeholders consider the change the new status quo and understand the benefits.

Adoption

Stakeholders are willing to implement the change.

Understanding

Stakeholders understand the impacts of the change to the organization and their role.

Awareness

Stakeholders are aware of basic scope and concepts of the change.

The Continuum contains relevant knowledge areas and actions for All Staff and Stakeholders, as well as individual benchmarks for:

Executives and Senior Leadership	Program Directors
Board Members	Branding Communications and Community Engagement Staff Members
Human Resources Staff Members	Site Coordinators
Advancement and Development Staff	Volunteers

See the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Stakeholder Commitment Continuum pullout on the following pages to learn more about key information and concepts at each stage in the Continuum.

Stakeholder Commitment Continuum

CIS Family: All Staff and Stakeholders

	Awareness	Understanding	Adoption	Ownership & Promotion	Innovation
	of key information & concepts	the impacts of the change to the organization & their role	being willing to implement change	consider the change the new status quo & understand the benefits	make the change their own & create unique ways to use & improve
CIS Family Members <ul style="list-style-type: none">Leadership & Staff of Affiliates, State Offices, and CIS NationalStudents, Alumni, FamiliesStudents, Alumni, Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Systemic barriers and its manifestations in CIS, in other institutions, and education at largeIntersectionality & links between different barriers to equity, including “-isms,” phobias, and systems of oppressionThe influence of policy (local, state, and federal) on equityThe history of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in the school and neighborhood/communityThe impact that individual cultural backgrounds and biases (conscious or unconscious), as well as power dynamics and privilege, have on our ability to serve students, families, and communitiesThe CIS DEI Imperative and the Case for Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">CIS’ shared vision and the links between diversity, equity, inclusion, and CIS’s missionCIS-specific data regarding educational outcomes, by race, class, gender, sexuality, and abilityResearch & peer examples of policies & practices that are relevant to their roles that advance diversity, equity, and inclusionWays to engage and center youth, family, and community voices in advocating for educational equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Act on our commitment to actively prioritize equity in all spacesDemonstrate a willingness & comfort discussing sensitive topicsReflect on interactions through an equity lensSee resources from the Southern Poverty Law Center’s Teaching Tolerance program (centered on identity, diversity, justice, and action)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Champion efforts to focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion; mobilize stakeholders to move through the commitment continuumRecognize, intervene, and repair microaggressionsAddress problematic behavior in the momentNavigating the school and district context to model advocacy & communication skills and influence leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create and/or share unique ways to assist each other in using and improving diversity, equity, and inclusion practices and strategies

Creating Equity-Minded Organizations: Executives, Board Members, and Human Resources Staff Members

	Awareness	Understanding	Adoption	Ownership & Promotion	Innovation
	of key information & concepts	the impacts of the change to the organization & their role	being willing to implement change	consider the change the new status quo & understand the benefits	make the change their own & create unique ways to use & improve
Executives & Senior Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">See “CIS Family” aboveHow unconscious bias impacts leaders’ ability to make equitable decisionsHow barriers to equity, including “-isms,” phobias, and systems of oppression show up in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ways to partner & leverage policies (federal, state, local, and district) to support more equitable student outcomes & more community engagementHow to disaggregate organizational, employee, and district data & use data to inform decision makingWrite grant proposals & public communications that communicate effectively about diversity, equity, and inclusionShifts in culture and/or demographics that impact how the organization serves the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assess/audit & facilitate change as needed to organizational culture, systems, and practices with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusionIntegrate diversity, equity, and inclusion as core considerations for ongoing strategic & operational planningFacilitate ongoing dialogue and reflection on practice with stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Actively work to continuously assess and facilitate change in practice and knowledge with the network and community partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Commit to continuously seek & implement innovative practices that will advance DEI goals and principles within the networkWork as thought leaders and partners at the forefront of this work

Stakeholder Commitment Continuum

Creating Equity-Minded Organizations: Executives, Board Members, and Human Resources Staff Members (Continued)

	Awareness	Understanding	Adoption	Ownership & Promotion	Innovation
	of key information & concepts	the impacts of the change to the organization & their role	being willing to implement change	consider the change the new status quo & understand the benefits	make the change their own & create unique ways to use & improve
Board Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• See “CIS Family” above• How different barriers to equity (including “-isms,” phobias, and systems of oppression) manifest in Board Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to disaggregate organizational data & using data to inform decision making• Shifts in culture and/or demographics that impacts how the organization serves the community• Ways to apply diversity, equity, and inclusion principles and practices relative to Board functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion as core considerations for ongoing strategic planning and board development• Assess/audit & facilitate change as needed to organizational policies and practices with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt & promote diversity, equity, and inclusion principles in the conversations within their community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work as thought leaders and partners at the forefront of this work
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• See “CIS Family” above• How different barriers to equity (including “-isms,” phobias, and systems of oppression) manifest in Human Resources functions• How Personnel Policies can create systemic barriers for staff• The impact that biases (conscious or unconscious), as well as power dynamics and privilege, have on organizational culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to disaggregate organizational & employee data & use data to inform decision making• Ways to apply diversity, equity, and inclusion principles in recruitment and retention strategies• How to provide ongoing professional development opportunities around diversity, equity, and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrate DEI into every day HR practices.• Assess/audit & facilitate change as needed to HR practices with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuously inform DEI decisions and promote DEI practices and learning opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stay abreast of updates in the field of diversity, equity, and inclusion and bring best practices into the organization
Branding, Communications, and Community Engagement Staff Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• See “CIS Family” above• How to integrate respectful, empowering, and inclusive DEI language, stories, and practices that avoid tokenism or paternalism• The values around storytelling for diverse communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to include and leverage a diverse base of media outlets and voices that are representative of target communities and audiences• How to incorporate appropriate cultural nuances for various audiences that not only translates but resonates with various communities• How to engage diverse representatives in informing and leading our communications and community engagement efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion as core considerations for ongoing communication and community engagement efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Actively work to continuously assess and integrate current trends and practices around culturally responsive communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commit to continuously seek & implement inclusive practices that will advance DEI goals and principles within our branding and community engagement efforts
Advancement and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• See “CIS Family” above• How to integrate respectful, empowering, and inclusive DEI language, stories, and practices that avoids tokenism or paternalism• The impact of diverse perspectives on philanthropy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to incorporate appropriate cultural nuances for various audiences that not only translates but resonates with various communities• How to integrate diverse partners, communities, and philanthropists• How to engage and cultivate diverse representatives in informing and leading our development efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion as core considerations for ongoing community cultivation and fundraising efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Actively work to continuously assess and integrate current trends and practices around culturally responsive philanthropy, fundraising, and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commit to continuously seek & implement inclusive practices that will advance DEI goals and principles within our advancement efforts• Partner with philanthropic leaders to advance the DEI work

Stakeholder Commitment Continuum

Bringing Equity-Mindedness to Our Work with Students and Families:
Program Directors, Site Staff, etc.

	Awareness	Understanding	Adoption	Ownership & Promotion	Innovation
	of key information & concepts	the impacts of the change to the organization & their role	being willing to implement change	consider the change the new status quo & understand the benefits	make the change their own & create unique ways to use & improve
Program Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">See “CIS Family” above	<ul style="list-style-type: none">How to disaggregate student & school data & use data to inform decision makingHow to assess needs & design programming to address “-isms,” phobias, and systems of oppression and continuously update it for shifting demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Facilitate ongoing dialogue & reflection on practice with stakeholders about diversity, equity, and inclusionPartner with existing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion teams/departments to build shared understandings and goalsAssess/audit & facilitate change as needed to organizational culture, systems, and practices with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusionVet, train, and promote diverse volunteers in principles aligned with diversity, equity, and inclusion and supervise/provide feedback as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Promote diversity, equity, and inclusion by widely sharing the benefits with colleagues and openly asking constructive questions to move schools toward fully integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Be at the forefront of the community in engaging with stakeholders around this work
Site Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">See “CIS Family” above	<ul style="list-style-type: none">How to disaggregate student & school data & use data to inform decision makingAsset-based youth development skillsHow to assess needs & design programming to address “-isms,” phobias, and systems of oppression and continuously update it for shifting demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Facilitate ongoing dialogue & reflection on practice with stakeholders about diversity, equity, and inclusionPartner with existing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion teams/departments to build shared understandings and goalsVet, train, and promote diverse volunteers in principles aligned with diversity, equity, and inclusion and supervise/provide feedback as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Promote diversity, equity, and inclusion by widely sharing the benefits with colleagues and openly asking constructive questions to move schools toward fully integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion principlesLeverage programming and practices to train students and families in promoting and advocating for the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Be at the forefront of the community in engaging with stakeholders around this workLead school-wide efforts to celebrate student diversity and contributions to the community
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">See “CIS Family” above	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Asset-based youth development skillsCIS-specific data regarding educational outcomes, by race, class, gender, sexuality, ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Align with the language and principles used by the CIS network to serve our diverse student population		



The Resource Guide:

An Executive Summary

The DEI Resource Guide was designed to provide a foundation of understanding of the work of DEI within CIS. It was created as a result of over a year's worth of research conducted by a team of more than two dozen individuals representing diverse voices from throughout the CIS network. The result is a set of thoroughly vetted, evidence-based best practices, tools, and resources to assist you on your DEI journey.

The Guide consists of six sections. Following an introductory chapter that includes a summary narrative and links to stories and research, it is then broken into five sections that parallel the Stakeholder Commitment Continuum. The chapters are:

- Chapter One: **Awareness**
- Chapter Two: **Understanding**
- Chapter Three: **Adoption**
- Chapter Four: **Promotion & Ownership**
- Chapter Five: **Innovation**

How to Use the Resource Guide

After following the directions in the Quick Start Guide, everyone within your organization should be prepared to place themselves on the Stakeholder Commitment Continuum and explore the corresponding portion of the Resource Guide.

Each chapter is organized with a narrative introduction, which is labeled for “All Staff and Stakeholders.” After reading this section, the user will advance to one of two sub-sections within the chapter:

- **Organizational Leaders will move to the sub-section entitled “Create Equity-Minded Organizations”**
- **Student Supports Staff will move to the sub-section entitled “Cultivate Equity with Students and Families”**

Under each of these subsections are resources that will support specific functional groups. For affiliate and functional leaders, they will find categories such as:

- Tools for Board Functions
- Tools for Leadership Functions
- Tools for Human Resources Functions
- Tools for Finance/Resource Development

Subsections for Student Support Teams are more broad, offering tools for taking self-assessments, supporting students with training and curriculum, and resources for implementing system change in core areas. You'll also explore how to design your work, amplify student voices, engage families, and identify community partners.

The following is an example of how an Affiliate Leader would use the Resource Guide. Let's say you are a Board Member who discovered the Board is currently performing in the “Understanding” level of the Continuum. You and your Board Members will first read the Quick Start Guide, then you will move to “Chapter Two: Understanding.” After reading the intro narrative prepared for “All Staff and Stakeholders,” you will then read “Tools for Board Functions.”

You will note that not every chapter has a specific resource section for each functional division. The Resource Guide that rolls out at Town Hall 2019 is version 1.0. Version 2.0 will be released at Town Hall 2020 and will contain expanded sections and guidance for all functional areas. Just as the work of DEI is a continual process, the CIS DEI Resource Guide will be a continual work in progress. This is the first step in a collaborative journey, with more resources, tools, and supports to come.

Chapter One: Awareness

This chapter begins with tools for how to self-identify the biases that often lead to subconscious actions of stereotyping, prejudice, and ultimately, discrimination. You'll become more aware of implicit biases that may be dictating behaviors and you'll find links to "Project Implicit" – tests that will raise your awareness of biases you may not realize you're exhibiting in your everyday life.

Some of the resources you will find include articles on:

- How to Stop the Racist In You
- Building a Race Equity Culture
- The Pursuit of Gender Equality: An Uphill Battle
- LGBTQ Inclusion: Good for Families, Communities, and the Economy

Chapter Two: Understanding

The focus of this chapter is on connecting the dots between DEI, the work we do, and the impact we create with children and families. Specifically, you'll find narratives and insights into:

- Tools and Resources for Using Research and Data
- How to Advocate and Train Advocates
- Understanding the History of Systemic Barriers and How They Show Up in Education
- Understanding the Influence of Policy on Equity
- Understanding the Challenges of Special Education for Students of Color

You'll also take a dive into exploring systemic barriers that produce inequities for our students along specific dimensions of diversity as they relate to:

- Race-based Inequities
- Gender-based Inequities
- Inequities Based on LGBTQ+ Orientation

Chapter Three: Adoption

A significant focus of Chapter Three is on the tools and training needed to navigate difficult conversations. Talking about race and equity can ruffle some feathers, so you'll find plenty of tools for championing DEI within your workplace and with your affiliate partners. You will also discover useful guidelines to have successful interracial dialogues with both students and colleagues.

Chapter Four: Ownership & Promotion

The Ownership & Promotion chapter takes preparing for difficult conversations to a new level by providing guidance for how to move from conversation to action. Everyone enters the journey of DEI with different levels of comfort, knowledge, and ability to translate concepts into action, but as we move up the development Continuum, we all become DEI champions equipped with the tools to mobilize others. We shift our role from "doing to" to "doing for" to "doing with."

The resources in this chapter will help you lead conversations with stakeholders, but more than that, will support you to facilitate difficult conversations with groups and partners outside your organization.

Chapter Five: Innovation

The resources in this final chapter are designed to help you consider new ways of evolving how you bring DEI into our mission. For example, one article in this series spotlights experiments, projects, and initiatives that show how funders and granters are working across disciplines to build communities and achieve significant and lasting progress. Other links spotlight tools and resources for facilitating community-wide dialogue to brainstorm ways to create positive change.





Chapter One

Awareness

All members of CIS should read the content for All Staff and Stakeholders, then depending on your role, Affiliate leadership should read “Creating Equity-Minded Organizations,” and Student Support staff should read “Cultivating Equity with Students and Families.”

All Staff and Stakeholders

The goal of this chapter is to help you develop an awareness of:

- systemic barriers, and its manifestations, in CIS, in other institutions, and in education at large
- intersectionality and links between different barriers to equity, including “-isms,” phobias, and systems of oppression
- the influence of policy (local, state, and federal) on equity
- the history of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in the school and neighborhood/community
- the impact that individual cultural backgrounds and biases (conscious or unconscious), as well as power dynamics and privilege, have on our ability to serve students, families, and communities

Research-based tools to help self-identify bias

The ability to distinguish friend from foe helped early humans survive, and the ability to quickly and automatically categorize people is a fundamental quality of the human mind. Categories give order to life, and every day, we group other people into categories based on social and other characteristics. These subconscious actions, known as implicit biases, can often lead to stereotyping, prejudice, and, ultimately, discrimination, because they affect our decision-making and actions without our conscious awareness.

To help people become more aware of the implicit biases that might be dictating their behaviors, psychologists at Harvard, the University of Virginia, and the University of Washington created Project Implicit to develop Implicit Association Tests (IATs). The tests, developed in 1998, remain a useful tool in raising awareness of the biases we might not realize we are exhibiting in our day-to-day lives.

A stereotype is an exaggerated belief, image, or distorted truth about a person or group—a generalization that allows for little or no individual differences or social variation. Stereotypes are based on images in mass media, or reputations passed on by parents, peers and other members of society. Stereotypes can be positive or negative.

A prejudice is an opinion, prejudgment, or attitude about a group or its individual members. Prejudices are formed by a complex psychological process that begins with attachment to a close circle of acquaintances or an “in-group” such as a family. Prejudice is often aimed at “out-groups.”

Discrimination is behavior that treats people unequally because of their group memberships. Discriminatory behavior, ranging from slights to hate crimes, often begins with negative stereotypes and prejudices.

Microaggression is a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group such as a racial or ethnic minority.

Explore the resources below to find out more about how implicit bias works, test your implicit biases, evaluate equity in the organization, and make a strategic plan for change.

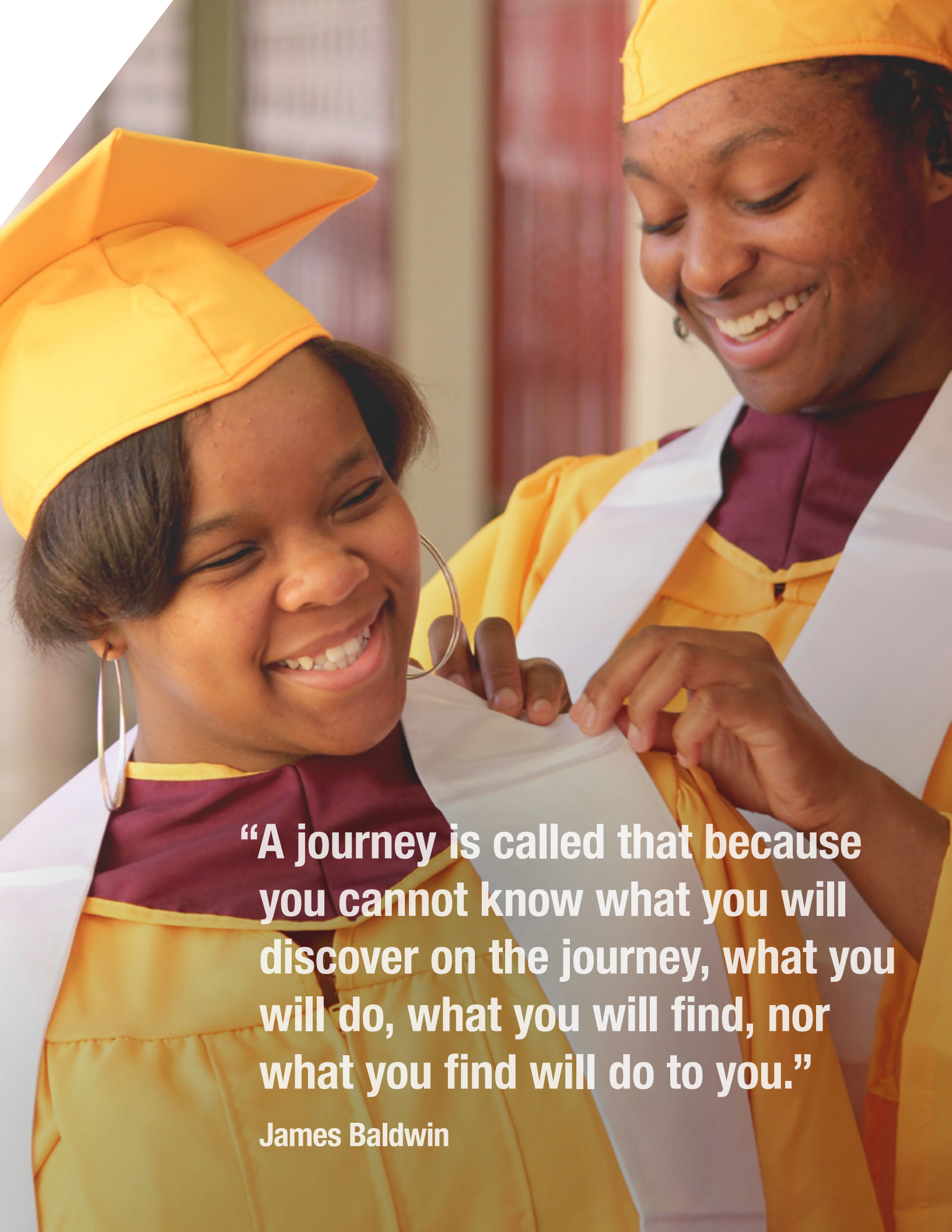
- **Understanding Our New Racial Reality Starts with the Unconscious** (*Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley*)
Why: Provides an argument for why trying to address racism purely at a conscious level alone won't move us forward, and highlights a new step-by-step approach to recognize and reduce implicit bias
- **How to Stop the Racist in You** (*Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley*)
Why: The new science of bias suggests that we all carry prejudices within ourselves—and we all have the tools to keep them in check
- **Implicit Association Tests** (*Project Implicit*)
Why: Measures attitudes and beliefs that people may be unwilling or unable to report
- **Awake to Woke to Work: Building A Race Equity Culture** (*ProInspire*)
Why: Provides an argument for why trying to address racism purely at a conscious level alone won't move us forward, and highlights a new step-by-step approach to recognize and reduce implicit bias
- **Strategic Planning for Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity** (*UC Berkeley*)
Why: Resource for change and implementation providing clear steps, proposed timelines, and tools such as an information-gathering and data guide and a self-assessment tool



Harold Fitrer
CIS of Richmond

Working together in Richmond

Communities In Schools of Richmond realized that it needed to be more reflective of the communities and students it served. To address this gap, the organization focused on helping staff better integrate and blend together through quality conversations that raised awareness for implicit bias. “There is large African-American student representation in Richmond,” says Harold Fitrer, president and CEO at CIS of Richmond. “Making space for these conversations can often be difficult. Each person has to come to terms with their own implicit bias and how that bias can impact behaviors, perception, and actions. The diversity we have among our staff is an opportunity to address a range of experiences that enriches the support we provide to students.” Activities such as mindfulness groups, picnics, team-building, river walks, and bicycle rides help foster a sense of inclusion while creating opportunities for experiences that build trust. “Our turnover rate is lower and it’s one of the key outcomes of our work around inclusion,” adds Fitrer. “Our current staff frequently refer their own friends to work for us, and we’re seeing a big increase in incoming applications. People are looking to see what you do.”



“A journey is called that because you cannot know what you will discover on the journey, what you will do, what you will find, nor what you find will do to you.”

James Baldwin

Create Equity-Minded Organizations

The goal of this chapter is to help you develop an awareness of:

- how unconscious bias impacts leaders' ability to make equitable decisions
- how barriers to equity, including “-isms,” phobias, and systems of oppression, show up in the workplace
- how personnel policies can create systemic barriers for staff
- the impact that biases (conscious or unconscious), as well as power dynamics and privilege, have on organizational culture
- how to integrate respectful, empowering, and inclusive DEI language, stories, and practices that avoid tokenism or paternalism
- the values around storytelling for diverse communities
- the impact of diverse perspectives on philanthropy

We know that embarking on a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) journey can be an incredible growth period for an organization, but the long history of oppression and ongoing persistent injustices are big and personal, which can make stepping onto this path feel really daunting. The 2017 [Race to Lead](#) report, published by the [Building Movement Project](#), reported results from a survey and interviews conducted with more than 4,000 nonprofit staff, capacity builders, and funders across the United States. One finding indicated that 48 percent of people of color and 39 percent of White people agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement: “nonprofits trying to address race and racial equity in their organizations often create tensions they are not equipped to resolve.”

What does it take to be “equipped” for a journey toward diversity, equity, and inclusion? Are there common pitfalls that we can anticipate? What are the “tensions” that show up, and how can we address them effectively? At CIS, we think of our DEI journey as existing across a Commitment Continuum that runs from Awareness, Understanding, Adoption, Ownership & Promotion, and ultimately, to Innovation. As we collectively move through our journey, we progress toward equity-minded organizations that reflect the communities we serve.

Moving across our diversity, equity, and inclusion Commitment Continuum means integrating DEI practices into every aspect of our mission—including how we engage with students, caring adults, educators, partners, and policymakers; what we focus on in our thought leadership; how we hire; and how we operate. We must be as specific as possible about how we plan to further integrate these concepts into our work. We believe that to be authentic about this commitment, we must be accountable—not just to ourselves, but to our communities and peers.

As a learning organization, we can take the lead in showing the world what it means to be an equity-minded organization, but we also need to prepare ourselves to continually look within and beyond to refine our thoughts or reassess our assumptions along the way. There is no end to this journey, but with every step we take, we become more effective, more successful, and more in line with community needs.

Below, we've aggregated a set of tools and resources, categorized by function, to help enhance awareness into a deeper understanding.

Tools for Board functions

- **Unrealized Impact: The Case for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** (*NewSchools Ventures Fund*)

Why: In addition to painting a comprehensive picture for the education sector by asking targeted questions, it identifies actionable insights for organizations at different stages of the diversity, equity, and inclusion journey

Recommended sections to focus on:

- Executive summary (pages 3–8)
- Key definitions (pages 12–13)
- Findings/charts (pages 20–22, 26, 29, 30–32)
- Equity & Inclusion Index (pages 27–28)
- Practical ideas for what diversity, equity, and inclusion looks like (pages 36–38, 41, 69, 73–74, 81)

- **Overcoming Hidden Barriers to Board Diversity & Inclusion** (*BoardSource*)

Why: Provides methods that prepare boards to be more explicit about diversity priorities and highlights ways to attract and include more diverse members



Aisha Bell
CIS of Chicago

Learning together in Chicago

From relevant articles and resources to evolving definitions, Director of Integrated Student Supports, Aisha Bell, collaborates with the CIS of Chicago team by submitting DEI-related content for the newsletter to keep it within a click's reach. "I believe we're helping to keep DEI relevant as a topic to discuss and explore for the organization," says Bell. "It's another way to impact messaging, brand awareness, and signal the importance of this work."

On our journey towards becoming an equity-minded organization, awareness is our starting point. But it's not a passive awareness that suggests only "I heard we're doing something about DEI." It's an active awareness that constantly looks for ways to better understand definitions in ways that are unique to the CIS family. This is particularly true for leadership. Both externally and internally, leadership should demonstrate an understanding of, and a commitment to, conversations and actions that align with our organization's commitment to DEI.

- **Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity** (*BoardSource*)

Why: Provides useful tools and guides on diversity, including a board diversity plan, examples, templates, and guidance on tools and trainings

- **Engagement Governance for System-Wide Decision-Making**

Why: Provides an overview of why community engagement is so important to nonprofits and creates a framework to help answer questions, such as:

Where does a board fit into this shared-governance system?

How does an organization manage the decision-making process so all organizational layers effectively participate in decision making?

Doesn't redistribution of decision making get unwieldy and inefficient?

- **How to Address Your Nonprofit's Board Diversity** (*BoardSource; webinar recording*)

Why: Unpacks the diversity findings from BoardSource's 2017 report "Leading with Intent," and answers questions raised since the report's release

Tools for Leadership functions

- **Unrealized Impact: The Case for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** (*NewSchools Ventures Fund*)

Why: In addition to painting a comprehensive picture for the education sector by asking targeted questions, it identifies actionable insights for organizations at different stages of the diversity, equity, and inclusion journey

Recommended sections to focus on:

- Executive summary (pages 3–8)
- Key definitions (pages 12–13)
- Findings/charts (pages 20–22, 26, 29, 30–32)
- Equity & Inclusion Index (pages 26–28)
- Practical ideas for what diversity, equity, and inclusion looks like (pages 36–38, 41, 69, 73–74, 81)
- Linking diversity, equity, and inclusion to student outcomes in schools (page 51)

- **Diversity Activities for Youth and Adults** (*Pennsylvania State University*)

Why: Steps through activities designed to raise awareness and foster conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion to help participants:

- Recognize how we place self-imposed limits on the way we think
- Discover that in many ways, people from different cultures and backgrounds hold similar values and beliefs
- Become more aware of our own cultural viewpoints and the stereotypes we may have inadvertently picked up
- Accept and respect the differences and similarities in people

- **D5's Self-Assessment for Foundation Diversity, Equity & Inclusion** (*D5*)

Why: Presents five strategic action areas of proven-effective policies and practices used by foundations across the country to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion

- **Evaluation Tools for Racial Equity**

Why: Outlines a set of guiding questions to help organizations determine readiness for racial equity

- **Implicit Association Tests** (*Project Implicit*)

Why: Measures attitudes and beliefs that people may be unwilling or unable to report and develop necessary action plans/trainings to address them

Tools for Human Resources functions

- **Awake to Woke to Work: Building A Race Equity Culture** (*ProInspire*)

Why: Introduces and explains the Race Equity Cycle, and provides actionable steps human resources functions can use to keep organizations on-track to building an equitable culture

Recommended sections to focus on:

- The Need for Equity Work + Building a Race Equity Culture (pages 6–12)
- How to get started (page 20)
- Glossary + Terminology (pages 24–25)

- **Glossary of Bias Terms** (*Washington University in St Louis*)

Why: Provides a glossary of bias terms that are important for all Human Resources professionals to understand

- **Guidelines for Achieving Bias-Free Communication** (*Anti-Defamation League*)

Why: Provides actionable steps for how to identify and eliminate discriminatory language related to sex, disability, age, or race workplace communications

- **Evaluation Tools for Racial Equity**

Why: Outlines a set of guiding questions to help organizations determine readiness for racial equity work

Tools for Finance/Resource Development

- **Nine Principles of Community-Centric Fundraising** (*Nonprofit AF*)

Why: Includes recommendations, sample actions, and behaviors that nonprofit fundraisers can adopt to (more) intentionally and respectfully keep the communities they serve at the center of fundraising practices and strategies



**As we collectively move through
our journey, we progress toward
equity-minded organizations that
reflect the communities we serve.**

Cultivate Equity with Students and Families

The goal of this chapter is to help you develop an awareness of:

- systemic barriers, and its manifestations, in CIS, in other institutions, and in education at large
- intersectionality and links between different barriers to equity, including “-isms,” phobias, and systems of oppression
- the influence of policy (local, state, and federal) on equity
- the history of DEI efforts in the school & neighborhood/community
- the impact that individual cultural backgrounds and biases (conscious or unconscious), as well as power dynamics and privilege, have on our ability to serve students, families, and communities

Many of our students experience systemic and structural barriers including racism, classism, sexism, ageism, and homophobia (to name a few), that have historically created obstacles to success. We have always been at their side to empower them to tear down those obstacles, which are a central part of our case for action for undertaking this journey.

Much of this guide has focused on empowering the CIS family with the tools, resources, and knowledge they need to move through their own DEI journey, so that together we can all lead by example. But expressing our commitment to DEI to the outside world and taking action to cultivate equity with students and families, is just as important because it translates into new educational opportunities, enhanced student outcomes, and reduced exclusionary discipline practices to foster the feelings of safety and connectedness that “empowers them to stay in school and achieve in life.”

In this section, we’ll focus on how we translate our internal commitment to DEI into how we show up in the communities we serve.

Bringing equity-mindedness to our work with students and their families requires that we each take a moment of self-reflection to understand how our implicit biases guide how we move through the world. Everyone carries implicit biases, in which stereotypes, positive or negative, influence decisions and behaviors without our awareness of acting on the stereotype. These subconscious actions often lead to stereotyping, prejudice and, ultimately, discrimination—but by being aware of them, we can better focus on making sure that we’re seeing each student as the individual that they are.

In this section, we’ve aggregated a set of tools and resources to help enhance awareness into a deeper understanding.

Tools for self-assessments

- **Diversity Awareness Quizzes with Answer Key** (*EdChange*)
Why: Challenges some of the false information floating around about difference and equity. Quiz topics include Equity and Diversity Awareness, Classism and Poverty Awareness, Re-Perception.
- **Four Ways Teachers Can Reduce Implicit Bias** (*Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley*)
Why: Provides a general overview of implicit bias with examples and spotlights 4 strategies on how to combat prejudice: cultivate awareness of their bias, work to increase empathy and empathic communication, practice mindfulness and loving-kindness, and develop cross-group friendships in their own lives
- **Privilege Walk and/or Race Walk** (*SUNY Albany*)
Why: Walks participants through an activity to recognize how power and privilege can affect our lives even when we are not aware it is happening (Note: Requires intentional framing and mindfulness about the whole group; while this activity can be very impactful, it can also be very triggering for those who have experienced traumas due to systems of oppression, so it is important that there is ample groundwork and strong trust built among the group prior to the activity)
- **Beyond Celebrating Diversity: 20 Things I Will Do to Be An Equitable Educator** (*Equity Literacy Institute*)
Why: Highlights 20 commitments educators can use to ground themselves in practices that can help cultivate a culture of equity with students and in classrooms

Tools for listening to our students

- **Don't Call Them "Post-Racial:" How Young People Actually Think About Race** (*Race Forward*)
Why: Shares findings from the Applied Research Center's focus group study of young people (18–25) and their perceptions of race and racial equity
- **Social Justice Standards: A framework for anti-bias education** (*Teaching Tolerance*)
Why: Provides a common language and organizational structure educators can use to guide curriculum development and make schools more just and equitable

Tools for Site Coordinators on how to hear more than the single story of students

- **Community Engagement Guide for Sustainable Communities** (*PolicyLink*)
Why: Describes the Sustainable Communities Initiative, where communities are catalyzing new networks of relationships, finding new problem-solving methods, and creating new inclusive decision-making tables to craft an authentic vision for an equitable and prosperous future
- **Community and Stakeholder Engagement Done Right** (*Annie E. Casey Foundation; webinar recording: note that this is a Webex extension. Once installed in your browser, it may take up to a minute to load.*)
Why: Teaches participants how to effectively partner with stakeholders, communities, and organizations that work with immigrant children, families and communities
- **Telling our Own Stories: Role of Narrative in Racial Healing** (*W.K. Kellogg Foundation*)
Why: Underscores the power of personal storytelling and narrative and its important role in racial healing

- **Equity Literacy Principles for Educators of Students Experiencing Poverty** (*Equity Literacy Institute*)
Why: Spotlights principles in the knowledge dimension of equity literacy as it pertains to educators' and schools' efforts to ensure equitable educational opportunity for families experiencing poverty
- **What Does My Head Scarf Mean to You** (*TED*)
Why: Writer Yassmin Abdel-Magied challenges us to look beyond our initial perceptions, and to open doors to new ways of supporting others

Icebreakers and activities with a focused diversity, equity, and inclusion lens for children, youth, and families

- **Diversity and Inclusion Activities** (*West Virginia University*)
Why: Provides icebreakers and activities focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Awareness Activities** (*EdChange*)
Why: Provides guidance on choosing and facilitating icebreakers and activities focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion
- **Speeches On Social Justice** (*EdChange*)
Why: Underscores the history of social justice in the U.S. by spotlighting important speeches that remain relevant
- **Social Justice Songs** (*EdChange*)
Why: Uses popular songs to underscore the importance of social justice in our society
- **Social Justice Quips and Quotations** (*EdChange*)
Why: Provides a database of compelling quotes and quips from writers, activists, and leaders describing the importance of social justice
- **Diversity Training Modules for Pre-Service Training** (*PeaceCorps*)
Why: Provides a diversity training model that includes several icebreakers and activities focused on stereotypes and perceptions

Information on how to build relationships to model diversity, equity, and inclusion

- **Equity & Social and Emotional Learning: A Cultural Analysis** (*The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning*)
Why: Spotlights social and emotional learning (SEL), a process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions; set and achieve positive goals; feel and show empathy for others; establish and maintain positive relationships; and make responsible decisions
- **The Language of Gender** (*Gender Continuum*)
Why: Provides a glossary of working language and examples of frequently used (and misused) terms—offering a starting point for dialogue and understanding

Chapter Two

Understanding

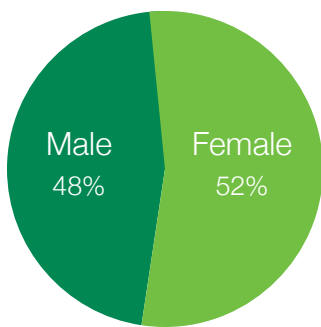
All members of CIS should read the content for All Staff and Stakeholders, then depending on your role, Affiliate leadership should read “Creating Equity-Minded Organizations,” and Student Support staff should read “Cultivating Equity with Students and Families.”

All Staff and Stakeholders

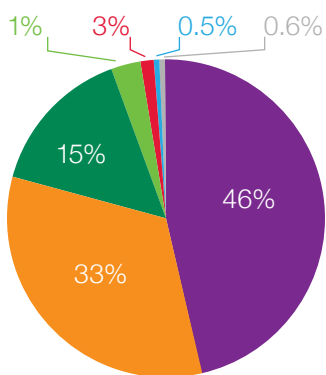
The goal of this chapter is to help you develop an awareness of:

- the links between diversity, equity, and inclusion and our mission
- CIS-specific data regarding race, gender, and other identifiers
- research and peer examples of policies and practices that are relevant to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion
- ways to engage and center youth, family, and community voices in advocating for educational equity

Sex/Gender of Case-Managed Students



Race/Ethnicity of Case Managed Students



- Hispanic or Latino
- Black/African American
- White
- Two or More Races
- Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Other

Connecting the dots between diversity, equity, and inclusion; the work we do; and the impact we create

We cannot talk about our mission to “surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life” without acknowledging and celebrating their differences. When we take a closer look at our students—when we go beyond traditional academics and really examine the social and emotional factors that make these young people who they are—we begin to understand the powerful story within each of them, and within each of us.

Our commitment to DEI goes hand-in-hand with our commitment to see each student as an individual with unlimited potential, and must be threaded through everything we do. All of the expressions of our work, our leadership, and our messages need to continually remind the world not just of our own commitment to DEI, but of the collective and interconnected reasons we are committed to progress and the more equitable world we are working to create.

A CIS study quoted in our [2017 National Impact Report](#) showed that teachers, principals, and superintendents reported poverty as the number one barrier to success in their schools. Other barriers included students coming to school unprepared to learn, chronic absenteeism and a reported lack of parental involvement. Since people of color are more than twice as likely as White people to live in poverty in the U.S., the unfortunate reality is that more children of color struggle with non-academic barriers to success. The majority of case-managed students that CIS served in 2017-18 were children of color. Site coordinators also reported working with populations such as English Language Learners and students identified as pregnant, homeless, living in foster care or a group home, or having an incarcerated parent.

Moving forward, CIS plans to dig deeper to understand how a student's identity might impact their CIS experience and how we can work together to address inequities. We will do this by collecting and analyzing student outcome data for various subsets of our student population to enhance our understanding of barriers they face, as well as opportunities for serving all students regardless of socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, or ability.

To enact true change, we need to hear, understand, and act on the voices and opinions of the people that demographics and statistics represent. The tools and resources below provide a starting point for rethinking data and research in ways that take DEI into account.

- **Data Equity Walk Toolkit** (*The Education Trust West*)

Why: Provides planning documents and resources to create your own Data Equity Walk, a guided activity designed to help you engage with education data and discuss equity issues. Participants dive into data that shows education outcomes and exposes gaps between groups of students. The data usually show district or school performance across different measures like student achievement and school climate

- **Demographic and Population Tools** (*Racial Equity Tools*)

Why: Provides an overview of the types of data sets most relevant for equity work, aggregates population databases, and offers helpful reminders about how to analyze data

- **Using Data for Root Causes Analysis** (*Annie E. Casey Foundation; webinar recording; note that this is a Webex video which requires you to download a Webex extension. Once installed in your browser, it may take up to a minute to load.*)

Why: Provides an overview of how to consider history, culture and institutional background to uncover causes of inequities and possible solutions. Root causes analysis enables organizations to make informed and strategic decisions about how to interrupt and change inequitable patterns

- **By the Numbers: Using disaggregated data to inform policies, practices, and decision-making** (*Annie E. Casey Foundation*)

Why: Provides case studies to make a compelling case for the collection, analysis and use of race and ethnicity data as an integral part of every organization's continuing improvement efforts, quality assurance, supervision and accountability processes

- **By the Numbers Part 1 and Part 2** (*Webinar recordings; note that this is a Webex video which requires you to download a Webex extension. Once installed in your browser, it may take up to a minute to load.*)

Tools and resources for using research and data

Achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion across any organization requires understanding the stories behind the research and data. When dealing with datasets, it's easy to lose sight of what really matters most. The following questions will help you explore the "why" behind the data.

- How does our research and data help us measure successes and barriers related to DEI?
- What kind of demographic data should we look for?
- What's missing that would help us better understand the inequities that are experienced by the students and families we serve?
- How do we use information to inspire action?

Taking time for self-reflection

Our DEI work is never done. As the world that we're a part of continues to change, we'll continue to grow, learn, and evolve with it. Doing so successfully will continue to require self-reflection, group-reflection, participation in difficult conversations, a willingness to listen and prioritize the perspectives and feelings of others, and ongoing assessments of progress. And, even as we make progress, people across our organization will continue to approach DEI from different backgrounds and levels of familiarity.

The resources in this section can help you initiate critical conversations to guide stakeholders towards a deeper understanding of their own power and privilege, and how it might directly impact their ability to move the CIS mission forward.

- **Ten Commitments for Equity Literacy** (*Equity Literacy Institute*)
Why: Features a series of commitments for stakeholders to make, to take action, and increase their understanding of equity
- **5 Paradigm Shifts for Educational Equity** (*Equity Literacy Institute*)
Why: Provides a useful list of reflective questions about equity topics

Advocacy tools

Ways to engage, train, and center community voices in advocating for educational equity

From simple daily interactions to deeper and deliberately planned conversations, advocating for diversity, equity, and inclusion means walking the talk at every opportunity. But that can be easier said than done. While everyone recognizes that poverty, racism, and a lack of power held by communities undermines children's education and development, the reality is few people know what to do about it.

A growing number of researchers, including Harvard's Mark Warren and Karen Mapp, authors of "A Match on Dry Grass: Community Organizing as a Catalyst for School Reform," argue that "community organizing represents a fresh and promising approach to school reform as part of a broader agenda to build power for low-income communities and address the profound social inequalities that affect the education of children." Warren and Mapp support this view by showing how organizing groups build the participation and leadership of parents and students, so they can become powerful actors in school improvement efforts.

By working together to raise awareness for the importance of educational equity in the communities we serve, we can identify new ways to foster collaborations between educators and community residents.

Additional Resources:

"The Community Engagement Guide" from PolicyLink contains concrete recommendations and conversation guides for engaging with communities.

"Social Service and Social Change: A Process Guide" from Building Movement Project explores the drivers of the conditions that create the need for their services, and to develop ways to address those drivers, even as they continue to deliver services.

Understanding the history of systemic barriers and how it shows up in education and other institutions

We know firsthand that American schoolchildren face alarming inequities in educational opportunities. While the public schools attended by some U.S. students are among the best in the world, other children are spending their days in unsafe, unsupportive, unchallenging, and under-resourced schools where their chances of academic success are minimal. These inequities are deeply tied to parental wealth, education, ethnicity, and race, and they are passed on from generation to generation. According to the [Economic Policy Institute](#), across districts large and small, rural and urban, low-income students—and students of color in particular—are outperformed on average by their higher-income White counterparts on all measures of academic achievement.

In a 2010 study, the [National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy](#) found that “marginalized communities—primarily children in low-wealth families and children of color, but also English Language Learners, gay and gender-nonconforming youth, students with disabilities, immigrant youth, and females in male-dominated fields—consistently experience public education in profoundly less positive ways than their more-advantaged peers, even within the same district or school building.” The study concluded that, as a result, they face a greater likelihood of not graduating from high school, lower college attendance and completion rates, and decreased economic potential following school.

We believe that changing these patterns of unequal opportunities and outcomes requires understanding the roots of inequalities, and the systemic barriers that impact the students and families in our country. To help build that understanding across CIS, we’ve compiled a set of resources that paint a more detailed picture of the impact these systemic barriers have on students and institutions—and what’s required to tear them down:

Race-based inequities

- **The Asset Value of Whiteness: Understanding the Racial Wealth Gap** (*Demos and The Institute on Assets and Social Policy*)
Why: Explores and debunks a number of popular explanations for the racial wealth gap, looking at individual differences in education, family structure, full- or part-time employment, and consumption habits
- **Umbrellas Don't Make it Rain: Why Studying and Working Hard Isn't Enough for Black Americans** (*The National Asset Scorecard and Communities of Color*)
Why: Provides additional context for why education and other typically mentioned factors haven't created equal outcomes and recommends a variety of policy solutions
- **Navigating Conversations About Race, Racism and Privilege** (*Simmons University's School of Social Work*)
Why: Outlines a set of principles developed to help guide productive discussions about race and discrimination
- **Racial Equity Resource Guide** (*W.K. Kellogg Foundation; registration required*)
Why: Provides a list of additional readings around topics such as Education and Race; Immigration and Race; and Poverty, Place, and Race

Gender-based inequities

- **The Pursuit of Gender Equality: An Uphill Battle** (*Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development*)
Why: Explores how gender inequalities persist in social and economic life around the world. Presents a range of statistics on gender gaps, reviews public policies targeting gender inequality, and offers key policy recommendations
- **How Our Education System Undermines Gender Equity** (*Brookings Institute*)
Why: Provides a compelling argument that gender equity persists because our education system devalues young women's contributions and underestimates their intellectual abilities more broadly
- **Unlocking Opportunity for African American Girls: A call to action for educational equity** (*NAACP*)
Why: Shines a spotlight on the barriers that restrict and limit the educational opportunities of many African American girls, the impact of those barriers on the lives of African American girls and women, and the available interventions that present opportunities to fundamentally improve life outcomes for young African American women

Sexuality-based inequities

- **LGBTQ Inclusion: Good for Families, Communities, and the Economy** (*Marguerite Casey Foundation*)
Why: Describes the importance of ensuring the economic inclusion of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning) people
- **The 2017 National School Climate Survey** (*GLSEN*)
Why: Documents the experiences of LGBTQ youth in our schools, demonstrates the degree to which they have access to supportive resources in school (and the possible benefits of these resources), and examines how the school experiences differ by personal and community characteristics

Understanding the influence of policy (local, state, and federal) on equity

According to the [National Education Association](#), inequities between White students and Black and Latino students correlate to the opportunity gap—disparity in access to quality schools and the resources needed for academic success. This affects us all, which is why lifting all students and closing the opportunity gap has always been at the core of our work. In our Policy Principles, we outline our vision for dismantling the systemic barriers that hold young people back, prevent bias in decision-making, and extend opportunities to marginalized groups. This kind of shift requires more robust policy strategies at the local, state, and federal levels.

To help build an understanding of the factors that continue to contribute to these gaps, we've compiled a set of resources below.

- **Inequality in Education and the Opportunity Gap** (*Brown Political Review*)
Why: Outlines the root causes of this gap to explain why it continues to exist
- **Brown v. Board of Education at 50: “With an Even Hand”** (*A century of racial segregation*) (*Library of Congress*)
Why: Provides a historical overview of America’s long history of legalized racial inequality and how it’s still affecting people today, as people of color continue to lack resources and equal opportunity in education
- **Discrimination Against Children of Color Begins in Preschool** (*Truthout*)
Why: Highlights the racial disparities in education through studies, such as the [Civil Rights Data Collection](#) study released by the U.S. Education Department Office of Civil Rights



Artrella Cohn
CIS of Kalamazoo

Leading transformation in Kalamazoo

In 2017, the Kalamazoo Community Foundation (KZCF) realized the need for an Anti-Racism Transformation Team (ARTT) to dismantle racism and be accountable to people who are historically underrepresented. Artrella Cohn, CIS of Kalamazoo’s Senior Director of Community Engagement & Student Investment, was tapped to co-chair the ARTT and support the work plan team focused on building capacity and organizational health within KZCF.

“The ARTT works to ask tough questions and create dialogue on the racial makeup of the KZCF,” explains Cohn. “That means promoting healthy working relationships between team members, connecting with other local ARTT organizations on best practices and policies, and challenging the organization to assess its own history of internalized racism and White, male dominant culture.”

Looking ahead, Cohn envisions CIS of Kalamazoo, and all affiliates across the CIS network, doing the same by incorporating their own local ARTT team to assess their organizational history, leadership structure over time, practices, and procedures.

Learn more here:

- **Kalamazoo Community Foundation: Anti-Racism Transformation: How anti-racism teams are transforming the workplace in Kalamazoo**
- **How anti-racism teams are transforming the workplace in Kalamazoo**

Understanding the challenges of special education for students of color

Although special education is a source of critical services and supports for more than 6 million students across the U.S., in some areas of the country, the overrepresentation of students of color in those programs is hard to ignore. Studies suggest that a special education placement often exacerbates the racial inequalities seen throughout the education system. We believe that access to an equitable and inclusive education system—where students can access the care they need regardless of race, ethnicity, or language use—requires acknowledging the flaws in the current system.

To help shine a light on the current state of special education and the challenges they create for students and families from traditionally marginalized communities, we've compiled the set of resources below:

- **How to Address the Over-Representation of Students of Color in Special Education** (*All4Ed*)
Why: Outlines a set of recommendations developed by the Alliance for Excellent Education in response to some evidence that students of color may be overrepresented in special education
- **Race, poverty, and interpreting overrepresentation in special education** (*Brookings Institute*)
Why: Provides additional and timely context for how to interpret the long-held view that students of color are overrepresented in special education by framing it through a more contextual lens: we don't just want to know if Black students are more likely to be in special education than White students; we want to know if Black students are too likely to be in special education—or, as it turns out, not likely enough
- **Sent Home and Put Off-Track: The Antecedents, Disproportionalities, and Consequences of Being Suspended in the Ninth Grade** (*The Civil Rights Project*)
Why: Provides national statistical data showing a direct correlation between Black students in special education and higher suspension rates
- **Special Education and the Miseducation of African American Children: A Call to Action** (*The Association of Black Psychologists*)
Why: Reviews the literature on the disproportionate placement of Black children in special education, traces the nature of the problem, highlights a number of causes, and outlines recommendations for attitude and behavior change
- **The Center for Civil Rights Remedies** (*Civil Rights Project*)
Why: Provides access to tools and reports that break down data on suspension rates at U.S. schools nationwide by subgroup and school level

Understanding how implicit (and explicit) biases impact our students, families, and communities

As humans we make countless automatic decisions at a subconscious level every day. Because our automatic responses are shaped by our lived experiences and the broader social contexts in which we live and work, a pervasive byproduct of this reflexive decision-making is implicit bias or implicit social cognition.

Specifically, implicit bias is the phenomenon in which stereotypes, positive or negative, influence decisions and behaviors without our awareness of acting on the stereotype. Implicit bias has even been shown to occur when individuals know or believe a stereotype is false.

The problem of implicit bias in education is that it can create self-fulfilling prophecies that create and perpetuate socio-economic, gender, and racial gaps in outcomes such as academic performance, engagement with school, and persistence in higher education. Because implicit bias is difficult to control, it is particularly important to be aware of its existence and effects so that we can better help educators shift the behaviors that come out of it.

We've compiled a list of resources designed to deepen understanding and foster productive conversations.

- **How Implicit Bias Impacts Our Children in Education** (*American Bar Association*)

Why: Outlines the impact implicit bias in education has on children, and provides an important historical context for progress made (and yet to be made) since *Brown v. Board of Education*

- **An Instructor's Guide to Understanding Privilege** (*University of Michigan*)

Why: Creates a curated primer for instructors to better understand and attend to the ways privilege operates in the classroom. The guide is broken up into sections: Introduction to Privilege, Why Talking About and Acknowledging Privilege is Difficult, Privilege in the Classroom, and Further Reading on Specific Kinds of Privilege

- **Managing Bias** (*Facebook*)

Why: Training video modules designed to help viewers recognize their biases and reduce their negative effects (includes stereotypes, performance bias, and attribution bias)

The case for intersectionality in educational equity

In recent years, the term “intersectionality” has broken free of academia to reach near-buzzword status. And, as with many buzzwords, it’s often used without a clear definition. The concept was first introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw in an article in 1989, in which she reviewed legal proceedings to illustrate how the way Black men and women experience the legal system is shaped by the intersection of race and gender. Crenshaw concluded that Black women were “disproportionately marginalized due to the simultaneous, intersecting nature of how they are read by others as both raced and gendered subjects.”

Put simply, intersectionality means that we all exist at the intersection of multiple identities. There is no single African-American, female, cisgender, working class, or first-generation experience. The range of identities that can intersect includes gender, race, social class, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, age, mental disability, physical disability, mental illness, and physical illness, and many more.

The nuanced lens of intersectionality is important in education because it helps us see a variety of social forces at the same time, whereas a gender or racial lens, would limit our ability to see and understand the way privilege, power, and oppression operate in interlocking ways.

We believe that delivering on our mission to surround students with a community of support requires becoming aware of the multiple forms of oppression and privilege each student faces—and how they interact with one another. We’ve compiled a short list of resources to help.

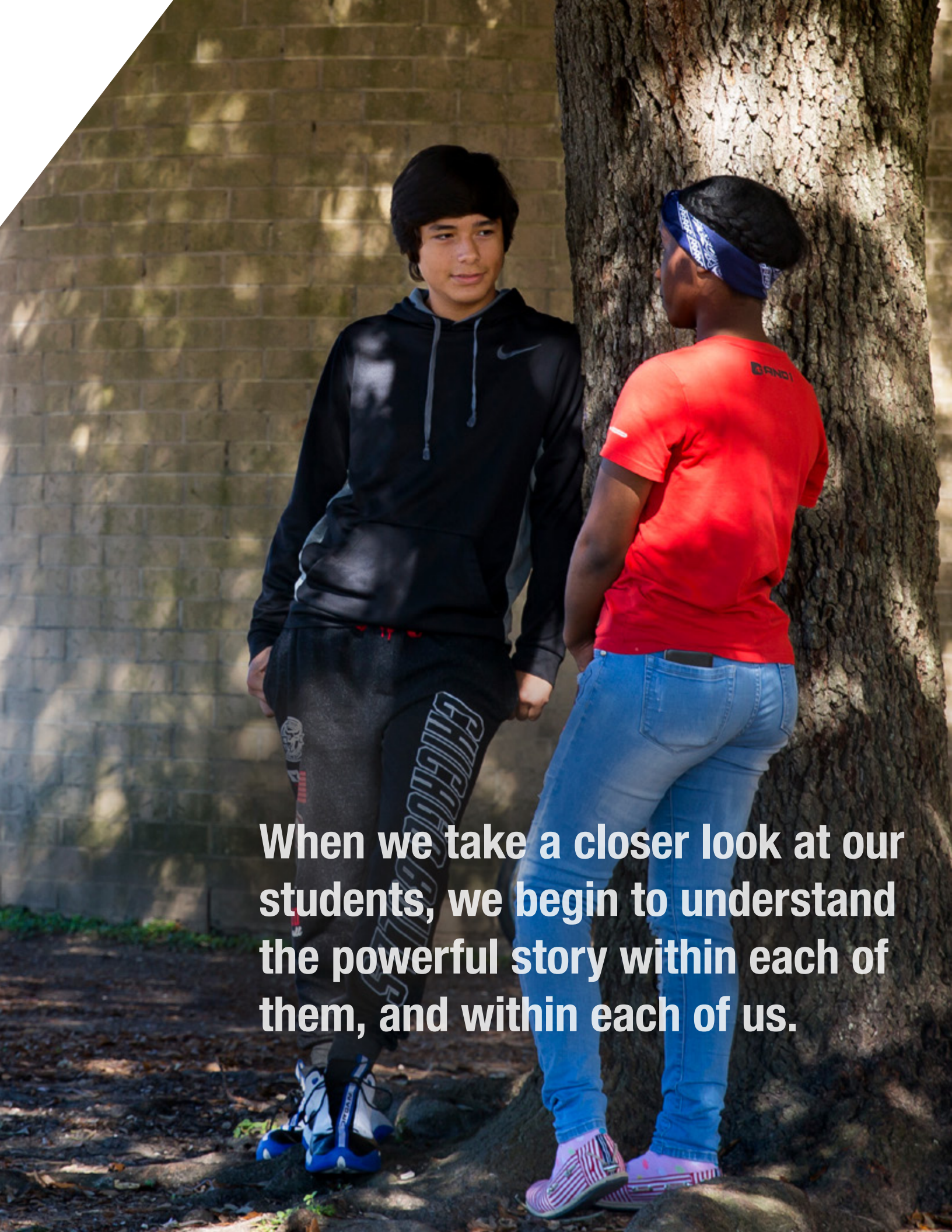
- **Understanding intersectionality is critical to advancing educational equity for all**

(SWIFT Education Center)

Why: Provides an overview of intersectionality in schools to make a case for implementing practices that are responsive and relevant to students’ complete cultural backgrounds

- **Why intersectionality can’t wait** *(Washington Post)*

Why: Makes a case (authored by Kimberlé Crenshaw) for the urgency of understanding and delivering on intersectionality

A photograph of two young men standing outdoors. The man on the left is wearing a black Nike hoodie and black sweatpants with 'CHICAGO' written vertically on the side. He is looking towards the camera. The man on the right is wearing a red t-shirt, blue jeans, and a blue bandana, and is leaning against a large tree trunk, looking away from the camera. The background is a brick wall and a tree. The text 'When we take a closer look at our students, we begin to understand the powerful story within each of them, and within each of us.' is overlaid in white at the bottom.

When we take a closer look at our students, we begin to understand the powerful story within each of them, and within each of us.

Create Equity-Minded Organizations

The goal of this chapter is to help you develop an awareness of:

- ways to partner and leverage policies (federal, state, local, and district) to support more equitable student outcomes, and more community engagement
- how to disaggregate data to inform decision-making
- how to communicate effectively about DEI
- shifts in culture and/or demographics that impact how we serve the community
- ways to apply DEI principles and practices relative to functions
- how to provide ongoing professional development opportunities around DEI
- how to include and leverage a diverse base of media outlets and voices that are representative of target communities and audiences
- how to incorporate appropriate cultural nuances for various audiences that not only translates but resonates with various communities
- how to engage diverse representatives in informing and leading our communications and community engagement efforts
- how to engage and cultivate diverse representatives in informing and leading our development efforts

To truly take hold operationally, DEI efforts require an aligned, committed, and engaged leadership that continually signals the importance of the work across the organization.

Beyond awareness, achieving an understanding of how DEI efforts directly impact our mission helps drive and sustain meaningful impact. Equipped with the knowledge gained during the awareness part of our Commitment Journey, we are reminded to step outside of the often-used DEI acronym and to truly consider our role in supporting diversity, equity, *and* inclusion in everything we do.

In this section, we've aggregated a set of tools and resources, categorized by function, to help deepen understanding.

Tools for Board/Leadership functions

- **Diversity in Giving: The Changing Landscape of American Philanthropy** (*Blackbaud*)
Why: Provides detailed insights about how nonprofit organizations can customize their fundraising approaches to attract more diverse donor communities. Includes profiles of different potential donor groups and their giving habits, attitudes, priorities, and outreach preferences

- **D5 Coalition Tools and Reports**

Why: Provides self-guided access to recent diversity, equity, and inclusion-focused data, research, events, and presentations, as well as how-to guides

Recommended tools for review:

- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Research and Tools**
- **State of the Work Report**
- **Foundations Facilitate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Partnering with Communities and Nonprofits**

- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resource Library** (*Nonprofit Leadership Alliance*)

Why: Provides access to a searchable database of resources to assist with your equity journey.

Relevant searchable topics include: Critical Conversations, Repositories, Board Diversity, Workplace Diversity, Gender Equity, Identity, Implicit Bias, Intersectionality, Organizational Plans, Racial Equity, Structural Barriers, as well as Uncategorized topics

Tools for Human Resources functions

- **Transgender Inclusion in the Workplace: A toolkit for employers** (*Human Rights Campaign Foundation*)

Why: Provides an overview of legal and other issues surrounding transgender inclusion, as well as highlighting current best practices, policies, and resources (supplemental videos can be watched [here](#))

Recommended sections to focus on:

- Pages 11–15: Provides an overview of statewide employment laws and policies, as well as a summary of Title VII, *Macy v. Holder*, and their impact on sexual orientation protection under the law
- Pages 20–25: Includes a checklist to evaluate and review company policies, practices, and procedures that affirm transgender inclusion in the workplace
- Pages 29–36: Provides a listing and sample language of gender inclusion best practices and policies
- Pages 37–53: Provides useful information and a template for developing gender transition guidelines, highlights suggestions on engaging in positive conversations with employees, communicating to others, managing day-to-day issues in the workplace, using appropriate language and pronouns, and a dictionary of key terminology
- Pages 54–57: Provides information on the Affordable Health Care Act and Section 1557 providing protection of discrimination based on sex discrimination, which extends to transgender persons
- Pages 60–79: Aggregates resources, scenarios, and Q&A tools to engage staff in training

Tools for Finance/Resource Development functions

- **Foundations Facilitate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Partnering with Community and Nonprofits** (*D5*)

Why: Investigates the systemic factors in the philanthropic sector that facilitate diversity, equity, and inclusion in grant-making and nonprofit practice to provide:

- Guidance for how to engage with foundations/funders as mutual partners that are focused on diversity, equity, inclusion, and capacity building,
- Tools that identify current trends and practices around culturally responsive philanthropy
- A better understanding of the power dynamics between funders and grantees



**We can better engage with
our students and help others
understand what's needed to
help students succeed.**

Cultivate Equity with Students and Families

The goal of this chapter is to help you develop an awareness of:

- how to disaggregate student and school data, and use it to inform decision-making
- asset-based youth development skills
- how to assess needs and design programming to address “-isms,” phobias, and systems of oppression and continuously update it for shifting demographics
- CIS-specific data regarding educational outcomes, by race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability

There's no shortage of student data out in the world, but as we build out our collective understanding of DEI in education and the nonprofit sector, we can make data more powerful by using a DEI lens to find the individual stories it contains.

The ability to disaggregate data by breaking down information into smaller subpopulations can confirm perceptions of what's really happening (e.g., an observation that 9th graders in one school district are outperforming 11th graders in an adjacent district), or debunk stereotypes (e.g., boys always outperform girls in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). Equipped with an understanding of the stories in the data, we can better engage with our students and help others understand what's needed to help students succeed.

In this section, we've aggregated a set of tools and resources to help deepen understanding.

Disaggregation of data to assess areas of opportunity

- **The Glossary of Education Reform - Disaggregate Data vs Aggregate Data** (*Great Schools Partnership*)
Why: Provides a comprehensive resource that describes widely used school-improvement terms, concepts, and strategies for journalists, parents, and community members
- **Disaggregated Data is the Foundation of Equity** (*HuffPost*)
Why: Provides reasoning for why we need to disaggregate data in order to close the achievement gap and inequities in the education system
- **How to Disaggregate Data by Ethnicity and Gender in Excel** (*TKI Ministry of Education; includes practice spreadsheet*)
Why: Provides a simple tutorial for how you can create a graph in Excel to illustrate test results for a class, broken down by ethnicity and gender

Tools to engage and center youth and family voices in advocating for educational equity

- **Starting a Youth Council** (*National League of Cities*)
Why: Offers the basics for forming a youth council in your city, as well as examples of the way different cities have configured their councils
- **An Advocate's Guide to Meaningful Family Partnerships** (*National Juvenile Justice Network*)
Why: Tackles some of the common hurdles for juvenile justice reformers that prevent effective partnership with families by outlining simple and achievable action steps. Provides concrete suggestions on how to be more intentional in building sustainable partnerships with families so the movement towards creating fair, equitable, and developmentally appropriate juvenile justice systems can proceed with the inclusion of these integral voices for change
- **Know Your Rights - A Guide for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students** (*ACLU*)
Why: Outlines the rights that transgender and gender non-conforming students have within public education
- **Grassroots Parent Organizing** (*Teaching Tolerance*)
Why: Spotlights lessons learned by Families with Power/Familias con Poder on their journey to using grassroots organizing principles to create a thriving organization of low-income families of color
- **The Promise Club Handbook**
Why: Helps parents form Promise Clubs to empower them so that they can empower their own children to achieve success—academically, socially, and emotionally

Asset-based youth development skills resources

- **Search Institute Developmental Assets**
Why: Provides a framework to identify 40 positive supports and strengths that young people need to succeed. Half of the assets focus on the relationships and opportunities they need in their families, schools, and communities (external assets). The remaining assets focus on the social-emotional strengths, values, and commitments that are nurtured within young people (internal assets). Broken down by age group:
 - **40 Developmental Assets For Children Grades K–3**
 - **40 Developmental Assets For Middle Childhood (8–12)**
 - **40 Developmental Assets for Adolescence (12–18)**

Tools to help affiliates advocate for students in the opportunity access area

- **Creative Ways to Close the Achievement Gap** (*The Edvocate*)
Why: Includes data and innovative solutions to reduce inequities in educational attainment
- **Opportunity Gap - Talking Points for Student Advocacy** (*Schott Foundation*)
Why: Provides talking points to keep in mind when discussing the need to give every single student an equal opportunity to learn

- **Empowering and Advocating for Trans Students** (*Schott Foundation*)

Why: Identifies key ways that students, educators, and schools can help make our public education system safer and more supportive of trans students

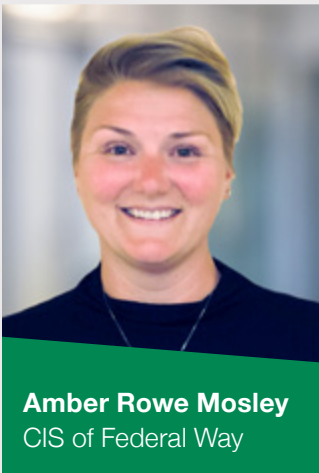
- **Unlocking Opportunity for African American Girls - A Call for Action** (*National Women's Law Center*)

Why: Spotlights barriers to educational success and their impact on the lives of African American girls and women. Contains recommendations for educators, school leaders, communities, advocates, policymakers, and philanthropic organizations to take action to advance the success of African American girls

Tools for civic engagement

- **Social Service and Social Change: A Process Guide** (*Building Movement Project*)

Why: Introduces a step-by-step process that nonprofit organizations can use to identify how groups can address systemic problems through social change work within the context of their usual services and activities. The process is designed to help organizations decide which strategies and actions will work best for them



Amber Rowe Mosley
CIS of Federal Way

Soaring with CIS of Federal Way

We saw issues around racism and bias at our school site. Our school district was already working with Pacific Education Group (PEG), a consulting firm with a mission of helping organizations address race, for a school staff training focused on white privilege and racial bias. After several discussions with our district Equity Director, it was clear we needed student voice to see real change. PEG lead our students through a series of trainings around their Courageous Conversations process, which is exactly what it sounds like—a way to use conversation to help people take action and spark change. We called the student version SOAR—Students Organized Against Racism and deployed it as a two-year initiative for students in the district.

CIS site coordinators at each high school in the district were responsible for recruiting a diverse group of students who wanted to participate in the work. Even though PEG came in to help us get ready, it's really the CIS site coordinators running the program as advisors. We just wrapped the first year, which was all about learning about systemic racism, interpersonal racism, white privilege, and how to have the conversation; next year will be about action.

With SOAR, the conversations students have about their experiences are helping to change the narrative and ultimately change outdated district/school policies. These are voices that are not traditionally heard, and now they are gathered around the table and speaking loudly—people are finally listening, and these students are ready to take action.

Our school is already the model definition of diversity and my hope is that by amplifying these student voices, we will create a more equitable and inclusive campus.



Chapter Three

Adoption

All members of CIS should read the content for All Staff and Stakeholders, then depending on your role, Affiliate leadership should read “Creating Equity-Minded Organizations,” and Student Support staff should read “Cultivating Equity with Students and Families.”

All Staff and Stakeholders

The goal of this chapter is to help you begin to implement change by:

- acting on our commitment to actively prioritize equity in all spaces
- demonstrating a willingness and comfort to discuss sensitive topics
- reflecting on interactions through an equity lens

Once upon a time, not that long ago, diversity efforts were focused on checking the compliance box to keep organizations out of trouble. Over the past two decades, the conversation has shifted to demand action and acknowledge that diversity is no longer the only word in the mix. In fact, the term has been criticized in academic circles as a word that actually softens hard conversations about inequality, to the point where “people in the majority absolve themselves of accountability for changing things or confronting their own biases.”

Conversations about diversity have evolved beyond a focus on whether different individuals are *present*, to focus on **inclusion**: How are different individuals’ perspectives included in important decisions? How often are peoples’ voices silenced? Is this an environment where people feel like they can “show up” authentically? Are differences valued, rather than merely tolerated? Similarly, the conversation about equality has shifted to be more about equity, to recognize that not all individuals start from the same place—and then take action to close opportunity gaps.

Driven by our mission to surround students with a community of support, we have a responsibility to encourage difficult conversations that help people recognize their biases; that recognize where well-meaning attempts at equality have resulted in unequal outcomes; that challenge assumptions about what’s right, what we know, what works, and who should be in charge. Put simply, we have a responsibility to our students, to our communities, and to each other to infuse meaning and passion into the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion so that we can all continue to make change.

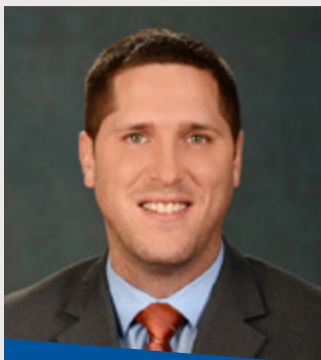
Tools and training to help navigate difficult conversations

- **Ten Lessons for Talking About Race, Racism and Racial Justice** (*Opportunity Agenda*)
Why: Provides accessible resources and concrete ideas/examples about discussing race
- **Beginning Courageous Conversations about Race** (*Courageous Conversations About Race; excerpt*)
Why: Offers useful guidelines for educators to have “successful interracial dialogues about crucial issues with both students and colleagues” and help create the conditions for safe exploration
- **Cultural Competence in a Multi-Cultural World** (*Community Toolbox*)
Why: Provides training tools to help enhance cultural competence and build culturally competent and inclusive communities

- **Conversations on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Guidelines for the Workplace** (*Inclusive Dubuque*)
Why: Provides guidance, ideas, and tactics for structuring fruitful conversations around diversity, equity, and inclusion with colleagues
- **How to Have Honest Conversations Around Inclusion When Diversity Becomes a Catch-All Term** (*2050 Trailblazers podcast*)
Why: Discusses how “getting comfortable with uncomfortable situations can help us start to have honest conversations about race and look to form authentic connections with our colleagues”

Tools and training for developing inclusive and equitable partnerships

- **Enhancing Effective Partnerships for Health Equity** (*Prevention Institute*)
Why: Explores the power of partnerships for improving equity and introduces the 8 Steps to Coalition Building, which can be used to develop a successful collaborative equity effort
- **Building Inclusive Communities** (*Community Toolbox*)
Why: Provides a strong framework for creating a culture of inclusive partnership and collaboration



Daniel Yoder
CIS of Mid America

Taking down labels at CIS of Mid-America


When Dan Yoder joined CIS Mid-America as Chief Administrative Officer, the staff was in the process of considering their office environment to ensure that everyone, regardless of gender, felt included. The team quickly agreed that the existing restrooms did not address the diversity of the community. With this belief in mind, they worked with a gender-fluid individual who had experienced workplace discrimination in the past to better understand how to be deliberate in creating a truly inclusive environment.

Yoder worked closely with CIS Mid-America’s human resources team and attorney to review employees’ rights at the local and state level. Together, they found that creating a gender-neutral restroom was lawful, and moved forward with the plan to create one.

While Yoder had some concerns about upsetting people with the change, he and his team remained rooted in their mission to create an environment that aligns with CIS’ organizational values. They were transparent in their efforts, deploying communications and signage that informed visitors about the restroom architecture and structure, and how it reflected a commitment to inclusion.

“It’s not enough to say what your values are, it’s about putting those values in play,” says Yoder.

Since June 2018, the CIS of Mid America main office has gender-neutral restrooms.



We have a responsibility to our students, to our communities, and to each other to infuse meaning and passion into the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Create Equity-Minded Organizations

The goal of this chapter is to help you begin to implement change by:

- assessing/auditing and facilitating change as needed to organizational culture, systems, and practices with a focus on DEI across functions
- integrating DEI as core considerations for ongoing strategic and operational planning, community cultivation, and fundraising efforts
- facilitating ongoing dialogue and reflection on practice with stakeholders
- integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion into every day Human Resources practices

Equipped with the knowledge and context gained through awareness and understanding, the next step in our DEI Commitment Journey is to truly lead by example.

This means demonstrating an authentic commitment to DEI in which we celebrate differences, show respect for all members of our organization, and publicly welcome ideas that challenge the way things have always been done.

It means we actively seek out opportunities to lift up our allies and give everyone a voice. It means we show up in person to participate in diversity, equity, and inclusion-related activities, such as board and leadership meetings, Town Halls, recruiting events, and mentoring programs. It means that, every single day, we hold ourselves accountable to walk the talks we've been having.

In this section, we've aggregated a set of tools and resources, categorized by function, to help leaders in the CIS network adopt the policies, practices, and principles needed for DEI to thrive.

Tools for Board functions

- **Tools for Thought: Using Racial Equity Impact Analysis for Effective Policymaking**

(Annie E. Casey Foundation)

Why: Reviews assessment tools that measure the impact of proposed legislation on populations of color.

The series is designed to give leaders and advocates the tools to start meaningful conversations around race in their communities, and implement data-informed and evidence-based policies that help to eliminate the inequities in opportunity for children of color

- **Advocacy and Ambassadorship** *(BoardSource)*

Why: Provides guides, tools, templates, and publications on the role Boards plays around advocacy in promoting BoardSource's recommendation that board members play a personal role in making sure that their organization isn't missing opportunities to advance its mission

Tools for Leadership functions

- **Do Nothing About Me Without Me: An action guide for engaging stakeholders** (D5)
Why: Provides guidance for how to effectively delegate decision-making to others to build empowerment through shared power
- **Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture** (ProInspire)
Why: Provides a useful refresher of the Race Equity Cycle at this stage, more focused on the ways to achieve the three primary goals of representation, inclusion, and integration of a race equity lens

Tools for Human Resources functions

- **Equity Primes, Prompts, Protocols Cheat Sheet** (Interaction Institute for Social Change)
Why: Provides prompts to help reduce bias among individuals
- **Courses in Management with an Equity Focus** (The Management Center)
Why: Provides a listing of training classes offered by the Management Center around Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- **Bias Interrupters Tools for Organizations** (The Center for WorkLife Law)
Why: Provides access to a comprehensive toolkit with concrete examples and actionable items for improving performance management, recruitment, assignment, and compensation practices
- **EDUCAUSE Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resources**
Why: Provides access to a portal with comprehensive resources for HR practitioners at all-levels. Topics covered include: reducing bias, recruitment, performance management, and compensation

Tools for Communications functions

- **Stock photography and images displaying diversity**
Why: Provide access to images that reflect different populations
 - **Images and Photos: Diversity and inclusion in the workplace** (Getty Images)
 - **Stock Photo Collections** (TONL)
- **Talking About Race Toolkit** (Center for Social Inclusion)
Why: Provides critical strategies for talking about race that can be customized based on the issue, audience, and the intention of the message

Tools for Finance/Resource Development functions

- **Guidelines for promoting racially equitable purchasing** (The Annie E. Casey Foundation)
Why: Outlines a clear, three-step strategy for helping organizations make more racially equitable purchasing decisions
Supporting resources:
 - **Directory of state-offices-minority-and-women-business-enterprises** (Minority Business Development Agency): Provides access to a searchable national directory with links to each state's office of minority-owned, women-owned, and small business enterprises
 - **Small Business Administration Portal:** Database that allows you to search for businesses in your area using specific search parameters
- **Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Message Manual for the Field** (D5)
Why: Helps leaders communicate with a variety of audiences about the importance of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion—and how it can help to better achieve an organization's mission. Highlights plug-and-play language that can be used for preparing materials and presentations



The ability to implement change starts with activating our knowledge to rally our students, their families, and our allies to join us in pursuing equitable outcomes.

Cultivate Equity with Students and Families

The goal of this chapter is to help you begin to implement change by:

- facilitating ongoing dialogue and reflection about DEI with stakeholders
- partnering with existing DEI teams/departments to build shared understandings and goals
- assessing/auditing & facilitating change as needed to organizational culture, systems, and practices with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion
- vetting, training, and promoting diverse volunteers in principles aligned with DEI
- aligning with the language and principles used by the CIS network to serve our diverse student population

The ability to implement change starts with activating our knowledge to rally our students, their families, and our allies to join us in pursuing equitable outcomes. That means demonstrating an authentic commitment to DEI in which we go beyond words and show others how to transform knowledge into change that creates a positive impact.

In this section, we've aggregated a set of tools and resources to help employees and volunteers working with students and family members to adopt practices that align with key principles of DEI.

Youth Leadership trainings, curriculum, and opportunities

- **Multicultural Youth Leadership Curriculum** (*Soar*)
Why: Provides a curriculum module for youth professionals to address culture, leadership, identity and empowerment with diverse youth ages 14 to 18
- **National Student Leadership Diversity Conference** (*National Student Leadership Diversity Convention*)
Why: Creates experiential workshops, keynote sessions, and roundtable discussions where students can explore various elements of diversity and how they affect them and their campuses

Sample volunteer resources that incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion

- **Volunteer Management - for leaders of volunteers** (*Energize Inc.*)
Why: Provides an A-Z volunteer management library that includes guides, tips, and ebooks covering all topics of inclusion for differing groups of volunteers
- **Diversity Training Modules for Pre-Service Training** (*Peace Corps*)
Why: Provides access to diversity training modules used by the Peace Corps. Includes diversity training preparation and sample agendas, as well as icebreakers and activities
- **Working with Diverse Volunteers** (*HandsON Network*)
Why: Provides a tutorial that reviews concepts related to communicating with diverse volunteers. Topics include cultural and social responsiveness, as well as creatively recruiting a diverse set of volunteers

Resources for creating safe spaces for students while practicing self-care

- **The Safe Zone Project**

Why: Provides online resources for LGBTQ awareness and ally training workshops; includes a curriculum guide and LGBTQ glossary of terms

- **Sustained Dialogue Institute**

Why: Provides guidance to help people transform conflictual relationships and design change processes through sustained dialogue, “a unique change process which (1) focuses on transforming relationships that cause problems, create conflict, and block change; and (2) emphasizes the importance of effective change over time.” Includes resources and information on starting a chapter on your campus

- **Racial Justice is Education Justice** (*National Education Association's EdJustice*)

Why: Provides a safe space to talk about race and school system equity; includes articles around creating classroom space for difficult conversations, as well as harmful racial discourse practices to avoid

- **Talking with Students About #JusticeForLucca** (*Teaching Tolerance*)

Why: Reflects on the violent police brutality news and footage students are often exposed to and provides resources to help educators understand how it can affect them, how to discuss this news with them, and how to bring #BlackLivesMatter into classrooms

- **Pure Edge**

Why: Provides strategies for educators and learners to support social, emotional, and academic development through mindful movement and rest

- **Building a Belonging Classroom** (*Edutopia*)

Why: Spotlights a series of videos exploring teaching practices grounded in the science of learning and human development, with a focus on the social and emotional development of students within the school system

Tools and training to navigate difficult conversations

- **Facing History and Ourselves: Educator Resources** (*Facing History*)

Why: Includes a wide range of flexible, multimedia materials, from primary sources, streaming videos, teaching strategies, lesson plans, and full units to support student learning

- **Courageous Conversations About Race in Schools** (*National Network of State Teachers of the Year*)

Why: Spotlight short videos designed to prompt a deeper, more authentic discussion about issues of racial equity in schools; includes discussion guides and additional resources

- **Teaching Tolerance Guide: Difficult Conversations with Students** (*Teaching Tolerance*)

Why: Provides strategies to facilitate difficult conversations about race and racism, as well as other types of discrimination, such as gender bias, ableism, and religious or anti-LGBTQ persecution; includes a section preparing the facilitator by using a simple self-assessment of readiness to talk about race and racism

Tools for implementing system change in core areas

- **Considering Culture: Building the Best Evidence-Based Practices for Children of Color**

(Annie E. Casey Foundation)

Why: Examines the role of culture in informing and enhancing efforts to level life's playing field for children of color. Spotlights how organizations are applying evidence-based practices in culturally relevant ways, and how local programs are adopting nontraditional approaches to successfully serve communities of color

- **Best Practices for Serving LGBTQ Students** *(Teaching Tolerance)*

Why: Provides a comprehensive list of inclusive schoolwide behaviors that can help LGBTQ students feel welcomed and safe at school

- **The New Frontier: An Integrated Framework for Equity and Transformative Improvement in Education** *(California Tomorrow)*

Why: Provides a framework for integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion work into school systems, and includes recommendations around policy, media, organizing, and networking

- **Tilling the Field: Philanthropy's Role in School Discipline Reform** *(Atlantic Philanthropies)*

Why: Shares lessons from Atlantic Philanthropies about engaging multiple stakeholders and supporting organizing around important policy changes

- **Essential Approaches for excellence and sustainable school system transformation**

(Capacity-Building Network)

Why: Curates articles covering topics such as school board leadership, common core state standards, and the role of the state in equity change

- **Five Strategies for Advancing Racial Equity in Public Education** *(Education Pioneers)*

Why: Spotlights strategies presented by four public school districts that pioneered programs to advance racial equity in their communities

- **Portland, Oregon Public Schools Racial Educational Equity Policy and Racial Equity Plan**

(Portland Public Schools)

Why: Spotlights a district-wide framework, from goals planning and approach development to establishing timelines and deliverables

- **Evaluation Tools for Racial Equity** *(Racial Equity Tools)*

Why: Poses guiding questions to evaluate yourself, your work, and/or your group activities through a racial equity lens



Chapter Four

Ownership

& Promotion

All members of CIS should read the content for All Staff and Stakeholders, then depending on your role, Affiliate leadership should read “Creating Equity-Minded Organizations,” and Student Support staff should read “Cultivating Equity with Students and Families.”

All Staff and Stakeholders

The goal of this chapter is to help you take ownership of the changes DEI creates, so you can help others understand the long-term benefits by:

- championing efforts to focus on DEI
- mobilizing stakeholders across the Commitment Continuum
- recognizing, intervening, and repairing micro-aggressions
- addressing problematic behavior in the moment
- navigating the school and district context to model advocacy, communication skills and influence leadership

Everyone enters their DEI journey with different levels of comfort, knowledge, and ability to translate concepts into action. But as we learn and grow collectively, we all become DEI champions equipped with the knowledge to mobilize others by leading conversations—within and beyond our organization—and shifting our role from “doing to” or “doing for” to “doing with.”

The resources in this section are designed to help you lead conversations with stakeholders as they navigate through their own DEI journey.

Tools and training for facilitating difficult conversations

- **Facilitators Guide for Continuous Improvement Conversations with a Racial Equity Lens, Living Cities** (*Living Cities*)

Why: Provides background and information on where to start when thinking about (and agreeing on) data, applying racial equity lens, and adopting a continuous improvement approach work to achieve population changes. Contains tools and resources that have been useful in communities that are at different stages of their Collective Impact and Racial Equity work

- **Using Data to Guide Difficult Conversations around Structural Racism** (*Annenberg Institute for School Reform*)

Why: Presents a framework for grounding difficult conversations on race and implicit bias in system-level data, to avoid blaming and shaming, and to break through defensiveness to arrive at actionable solutions



Cynthia Silva Parker
Interaction Institute for
Social Change

Reflecting on difficult conversations

While this responsibility may seem straightforward to some, others will have questions, concerns, and a variety of emotional reactions. Here are a few of the challenges you might experience with staff, board members, school personnel, students, community partners, or other stakeholders:

- They may not understand what equity, diversity, and inclusion mean or why they are important to address in your work.
- They may not see and may actively resist the notion that racism, sexism, and other “-isms” operate at a structural level. They may be wedded to the notion that the only issue (if there is an issue at all) is conscious bias and prejudice. As a result, they may challenge or even dismiss not only the formal definitions, but the lived experience and stories of other stakeholders.
- They may understand the concepts in theory, but believe that there are no pressing problems or issues related to equity, diversity, or inclusion that need to be addressed. (“We’re doing good work. We couldn’t possibly be acting out racism, sexism, homophobia, or ableism here!”)
- People whose identities carry privilege in this society (e.g., men, White people, heterosexual people) may feel personally blamed, shamed, or attacked by the mere mention of structural advantages (privilege) and disadvantages (oppression), even in the absence of an actual attack. They may express emotions vibrantly (e.g., crying, yelling, etc.) in ways that shut down a conversation or make others feel unsafe and unheard.
- They may over-generalize from their own experience, failing to acknowledge viewpoints and experiences other than their own.
- They may say all the “right” words without ever committing to take action.
- They may use words that offend (e.g., “minority”) or use arguments laced in stereotypes (e.g., “We aren’t going to hire based on a person’s race. We just want the ‘most qualified person’ for this job.”). They may make assumptions based on stereotypes and then build action plans as if the stereotypes are true (e.g., “Parents aren’t interested in being involved with their child’s education, so let’s work around parents as we plan to support students.”).

As you work with your stakeholders to move beyond Awareness to Adoption, you will want to create dialogues and planning sessions where they can voice their concerns, apply their insights, and build toward agreement on actions.



**Diversity, equity, and inclusion
has always been inherently at
the core of who we are.**

Create Equity-Minded Organizations

The goal of this chapter is to help you take ownership of the changes DEI creates, so you can help others understand their long-term benefits by:

- actively working to continuously assess and facilitate change in practice and knowledge with the network and community partners
- adopting and promoting DEI principles in the conversations within your community
- continuously informing DEI decisions, and promoting its practice and learning opportunities
- assessing and integrating current trends and practices around culturally-responsive communications, philanthropy, fundraising, and development

At CIS, diversity, equity, and inclusion has always been inherently at the core of who we are; it's rooted in our mission to surround students with a community of support, and in Bill Milliken's belief that it's "relationships, not programs, that change children." Now, equipped with the awareness, understanding, and knowledge of the greater impact DEI helps us have in students' lives, we own our commitment to infuse diversity, equity, and inclusion into everything we do and promote it throughout our communities, because it's *what* we do.


In this section, we've aggregated a set of tools and resources, categorized by function, to help us take ownership of this crucial work.

Tools for Board and Leadership functions

- **Facilitators Guide for Continuous Improvement Conversations with a Racial Equity Lens** (*Living Cities*)
Why: Helps facilitators and leaders advance cross-sector conversations and efforts aimed at population-level impact focused on continuous improvement, rather than compliance
- **Tip Sheet for Candid Conversations About Board Governance: How are we doing?** (*BoardSource*)
Why: Provides tips based on the governance areas most likely to be a challenge for boards of nonprofit organizations, as identified in BoardSource's Leading with Intent
- **How to Address Your Nonprofit's Board Diversity** (*NPQ webinar; clip only*)
Why: Invites a conversation around how to avoid tokenism on boards

Tools for Human Resources functions

- **Designing a Bias-Free Organization** (*Harvard Business Review*)
Why: Provides strategic guidance to HR leaders on how to embed diversity, equity, and inclusion into organizational culture

A photograph of three students in a library or study hall. In the foreground, a young woman with long brown hair and a young woman with dark curly hair are sitting at a desk, looking at a laptop. The woman with curly hair is holding a brown paper coffee cup. In the background, a young man with short dark hair is also sitting at a desk, looking at a laptop. There are bookshelves filled with books in the background. The text is overlaid on the bottom right of the image.

**It is our duty as an organization
that delivers on its commitment
to surrounding students with
a community of support that
empowers students to stay in
school and achieve in life.**

Cultivate Equity with Students and Families

The goal of this chapter is to help you take ownership of the changes DEI creates, so you can help others understand their long-term benefits by:

- promoting DEI by widely sharing the benefits with colleagues and openly asking constructive questions to move schools toward fully integrating DEI principles
- leverage programming and practices to train students and families in promoting and advocating for the work of DEI

Commitment written on paper is not commitment unless it's actively represented through organizational action. Facing the reality and historical impact of prejudice, racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, and gender discrimination is no simple task. It requires being comfortable with discomfort. Being uncomfortable is how progress is made. It is our duty as an organization that delivers on its commitment to surrounding students with a community of support that empowers students to stay in school and achieve in life.

The key is to remain consistent and continually evaluate progress even when it feels especially challenging. The most difficult moments for organizations and individuals are the moments when it is most important to uphold DEI as an intrinsic part of our mission.

In this section, we've aggregated a set of tools and resources to help us take ownership of this crucial work.

Tools for identifying diversity, equity, and inclusion partners and leaders focused on youth and families

- **A Community Builder's Toolkit: 15 Tools for Creating Healthy, Productive Interracial/Multicultural Communities** (*W.K. Kellogg Foundation*)

Why: Reflects an analysis of projects in 14 communities designed to address the issues and challenges of racism and details 15 lessons learned across all projects

Trainings for leading diversity, equity, and inclusion work in your communities

- **Critical Practices for Anti-Bias Education: Family and Community Engagement** (*Teaching Tolerance*)
Why: Provides an hour-long presentation focused on cultural responsiveness within family and community engagement work. Includes readings, videos, and participant activities
- **Courageous Conversation About Race Seminars** (*in-person; registration required*)

Why: Delivers in-person trainings designed to help leaders, educators, students, parents, administrators, and community participants understand the impact of race on student learning, while investigating the role that racism plays in institutionalizing academic achievement disparities

- **Racial Justice Training: Institutional Racism Trainings** (*Race Forward; registration required*)
Why: Delivers in-person trainings on institutional racism in education (note that trainings are focused more on systemic racism and not interpersonal racism)

Programming and practices to train student leaders in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion

- **Equity Conversation Guides for Young Leaders and Partners** (*Annie E. Casey Foundation*)
Why: Provides step-by-step instructions for facilitators to lead groups of young people in understanding the history of structural racism and how it operates today

Ways to promote student volunteerism and activism

- **Student-led racial equity course could debut at Oak Park and River Forest High School in 2019** (*Chicago Tribune*)
Why: Spotlights information about bringing a racial equity leadership program to your school and what it would look like
- **Building A Pipeline for Justice: Understanding Youth Organizing and the Leadership Pipeline** (*Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing*)
Why: Explores how youth organizing is an effective entry point for a more sustainable, long-term, and progressive social justice movement, and examines how high school-aged youth organizing in poor communities of color builds transformative power and cultivates immense leadership

Additional resources

- **So You Think You're an Anti-Racist? Ideological Adjustments for Well-Meaning White Educators** (*Equity Literacy*)
Why: A list of ideological adjustments that White educators can put into action to better support and educate marginalized students through a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens
- **Flip The Script By Calling Out Ableism First** (*Invisible Disability Project*)
Why: Provides a tool educators and students can use to call out and bring attention to ableism. It engages offensive, discriminatory behavior directly by alerting an individual or group to the presence of ableist attitudes and behaviors



Chapter Five

Innovation

All members of CIS should read the content for All Staff and Stakeholders, then depending on your role, Affiliate leadership should read “Creating Equity-Minded Organizations,” and Student Support staff should read “Cultivating Equity with Students and Families.”

All Staff and Stakeholders

The goal of this chapter is to help you continue to own the change, while creating unique ways to make it better and make it real by:

- creating and/or sharing unique ways to help each other use and improve DEI practices and strategies

GOALS

We’ve talked at length about how our DEI work is never done. Just as we constantly strive to find new ways to achieve our mission, we constantly look for ways to challenge the DEI status quo. That means committing to shifting the approach from bringing different people into existing systems to building partnerships and new systems. When there is an authentic bond and shared power and leadership, then there will be different outcomes. And those outcomes will be more effective, relevant, lasting – and mutual.

The resources in this section are designed to help you consider new ways of evolving how you bring diversity, equity, and inclusion into our mission.

- **Signs of Promise: Stories of Philanthropic Leadership in Advancing Regional and Neighborhood Equity** (*Funders’ Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities*; also saved [here](#))
Why: Spotlights experiments, projects, and initiatives that show how funders and grantees are working across disciplines to build communities and achieve significant and lasting progress
- **Shining the Light: A Practical Guide to Co-Creating Healthy Communities** (*The Kirwan Institute*)
Why: Provides useful information throughout on gathering stories of opportunity to help community members understand how communities impact their lives, and spotlights multiple tools and resources for facilitating community-wide dialogue to brainstorm ways to create positive change
- **Bridging Research and Education Organizing: Can we strengthen our combined power?** (*Justice Matters Institute*; also saved [here](#))
Why: Explores the implications of different research strategies for education change efforts by highlighting innovative recommendations for aligning community needs with research strategies



Sharon Vigil
Chief Operations Officer
for CIS of Central Texas

From Commitment to Practice in Central Texas

At Communities In Schools of Central Texas, a three-year plan is being implemented to operationalize the organization's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. They started by doing an assessment of culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS) to evaluate how well the organization meets national standards for providing equitable services to all individuals. Next, they formed a Change Team to work with a DEI consultant. After eight months of research and evaluation, the consultant made recommendations for how CIS of Central Texas could be more diverse, equitable and inclusive in all areas. A three-year DEI plan was developed based on these recommendations.

"The plan has a strong foundation to build from," says Sharon Vigil, Chief Operations Officer for CIS of Central Texas. "We introduced diversity, equity, and inclusion definitions, and a DEI commitment statement. Talking about DEI is easier when everyone is using a common language and has shared understanding of their meanings." Key performance indicators related to DEI goals are being established for every department, along with cascading goals, and a DEI dashboard for accountability.

Innovation will be the key to the plan's success. "We are identifying nontraditional staff recruitment opportunities," says Vigil. "We will provide DEI training plans for each staff member that is specific to their area of work and aligned to our mission and goals. Affinity groups will engage staff in cross-cultural dialogue. Our programming will create safe spaces for student-led conversations and exploration around identity, power, oppression, privilege, and possibilities. We will continue to ask the question—how can we be better?"



**We constantly ask
ourselves (and each other),
“How can we be better?”**

Create Equity-Minded Organizations

The goal of this chapter is to help you continue to own the change, while creating unique ways to make it better and make it real by:

- committing to continuously seek and implement innovative practices that will advance diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and principles within our network and across functions
- working as thought leaders and partners at the forefront of this work
- staying in-the-know about updates in the field of diversity, equity, and inclusion to bring best practices into the organization
- partnering with philanthropic leaders to advance the diversity, equity, and inclusion work

Our diversity, equity, and inclusion journey never ends—we don't want it to. Real-world context shifts, challenges evolve, definitions change—constantly. Against this ever-changing backdrop, we are challenged to be innovators, with the vision to rethink how our DEI efforts reflect the world we live in and the commitment to rally the CIS family to overcome inertia and challenge the status quo. Together, with a diversity of thought, we stay at the forefront of this work and constantly ask ourselves (and each other) “How can we be better?”


In this section, we've aggregated a set of tools and resources, categorized by function, to help drive continuous innovation.

Tools for Board and Leadership functions

- **D&I Design Thinking (and Doing)** (*The Forum on Workplace Inclusion*)
Why: Tips for how to apply design thinking to diversity, equity, and inclusion to push thinking and foster alternative ways of looking at challenges
- **Shining the Light: A Practical Guide to Co-Creating Healthy Communities** (*The Kirwan Institute*)
Why: Provides useful information throughout on gathering stories of opportunity to help community members understand how communities impact their lives, and spotlights multiple tools and resources for facilitating community-wide dialogue to brainstorm ways to create positive change

Tools for Finance/Resource Development functions

- **From Beneficiary to Active Agent: How Youth-Led Grantmaking Benefits Young People, Their Communities, and the Philanthropic Sector** (*The Sillerman Center*)
Why: Outlines the purpose and benefits of youth philanthropy practices, highlights research on how it helps young people “develop useful, transferable skills, a sense of efficacy and connection, and a potentially long-lasting inclination for community engagement,” and provides best practices for non-profits to implement

A photograph of three young people, two women and one man, standing in front of a grey brick wall. They are all smiling and looking upwards and to the right. The woman on the left has long dark hair and is wearing a dark jacket. The woman in the middle has curly dark hair, large hoop earrings, and is wearing a dark camouflage-patterned shirt. The man on the right has short dark hair and is wearing a black jacket with a yellow hood. The image has a diagonal white cutout in the top-left corner.

**If we come together to openly
engage with new possibilities,
we unleash opportunities
for innovation toward more
meaningful results.**

Cultivate Equity with Students and Families

The goal of this chapter is to help you continue to own the change, while creating unique ways to make it better and make it real by:

- being at the forefront of the community in engaging with stakeholders around this work
- leading schoolwide efforts to celebrate student diversity and contributions to the community

GOALS

A few years ago, Julie Burstein, author of *“Spark, How Creativity Works,”* told audience members at a TED Talk that, “In order to create, we have to stand in that space between what we see in the world and what we hope for.” As the world around us continues to change, the success of DEI efforts requires us to live in that space.

Throughout our DEI journey, we'll each find ourselves, at some point, having difficult conversations, honest self-assessments, and making vulnerable admissions. It can get uncomfortable along the way, making it easy and tempting to default to static best practices and frameworks. But if we look around in that space “between what we see in the world and what we hope for,” we can more clearly see which existing approaches really are worth taking forward, and which ones are not. If we come together to fill that space and openly engage with new possibilities, we unleash opportunities for innovation toward more meaningful results. And that's how we truly make diversity, equity, and inclusion part of everything we do as CIS.

In this section, we've aggregated a set of tools and resources to help drive continuous innovation.

Connecting and leveraging network leaders in diversity, equity, and inclusion work

- **Justice-Oriented Teacher Activist Collectives and Organizations** (*Equity Literacy Institute*)
Why: Provides a list of activist collectives and organizations for educators who want to get more involved in diversity, equity, and inclusion work in their communities
- **Raising Kings: A Year of Love and Struggle at Ron Brown College Prep** (*Education Week; audio series*)
Why: Tells the story of the first full year of Ron Brown College Prep, a new school in Washington, D.C. designed specifically to meet the needs of young men of color with love and empathy. Two reporters, Education Week's Kavitha Cardoza and NPR's Cory Turner, spent hundreds of hours with teachers, students, and parents from the school's earliest days to the final bell—and in three episodes, invite listeners in with them

Conclusion:

Creating A Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Future

Our journey to becoming an organization that truly reflects the diversity of our communities and celebrates the strength of our differences, starts with understanding what we mean when we talk about diversity, equity, and inclusion across our Commitment Continuum. This Resource Guide, and your continued engagement with it, is an important part of that journey. But it's only the beginning. The content in this 1.0 version will continue to evolve and inform the development of additional resources and tools, as well as a 2.0 version for Town Hall 2020 that will feature expanded sections and guidance for all functional areas.

Our current roadmap, which is focused on building a strong and lasting foundation that hardwires DEI into everything we do by 2022, is on track to equip the CIS national office, state offices, and affiliates with the practices, policies, and people they need to advance DEI—so that by 2023, we can start to measure improvements in student outcomes and chart the next chapter of our DEI journey together.

The Resource Guide is a compilation of relevant content from external resources that has been selected and vetted for its value by a diverse team within the CIS Network. As a result, you may occasionally encounter a link that is no longer valid as the external host site may have changed the location of the content. Please contact the National Office when this occurs at the email below. This is a collaborative project and we appreciate your partnership to keep the Resource Guide up to date.

diversityequityinclusion@cisnet.org

