

Lesson Description:

Participants will gather in facilitated small groups rather than as a whole group to save transition time and mitigate for COVID concerns. This video will provide common foundational information and set the purpose of the rest of the session across the 100+ faculty. Following this video, faculty will engage in a small group process to practice and apply the concepts presented.

Learning Objectives:

1. Continue **building trust** in our cross-divisional small groups to deepen our equity literacy skills over time.
2. Understand that all of us **have biases** and **naturally interpret behaviors**.
3. Practice **expanding our interpretations of student behaviors** by asking questions, seeking outside perspectives, and surfacing our biases.

Equity-Focused Teaching Competencies:

1A. The teacher seeks outside evidence and perspectives to identify ways in which their worldview and multiple identities shape their educational beliefs and instructional practices.

3C. The teacher approaches student behaviors with questions, expanding their interpretations of student behavior to include different cultural displays of learning and social interaction.

Video Content

Slide #/Title	Script	Images	Production Notes
1 / Equity-Focused Professional Learning	Hi everyone! Welcome to our fourth all-school equity-focused professional learning session. We are excited to have the chance to spend time in our small groups learning together today. We haven't seen you since October, so we wanted to take the time to refresh your memories of where we have traveled together this year.		
2 / Winter Session Focus	In the fall, we focused primarily on building strengths-based relationships with students and using the equity lens reflective cycle. The first session focused on shifting our mindset to see differences in students as strengths. The case study featured a middle school teacher named Paul who felt like his student Samantha wasn't sharing enough about herself with him. The second session focused on unearthing deficit ideologies and bringing a warm demander presence to the classroom. The case study featured a high school teacher named Nelson		

	whose student Matthew struggled to submit assignments on time. Our focus for our winter sessions will be on student behaviors. Today, we will examine our own responses to student behaviors, and in February, we will look at how to respond to problematic behaviors between students.		
3 / Today's Competencies	We will focus on these two competencies today. Each time we are going to practice growing our self-reflection and self-awareness as a foundation toward becoming more equitable teachers. This time, we hope to engage in learning and reflection that helps us approach student behaviors by asking questions before we make assumptions.	Today's Competencies of Focus 1A. The teacher seeks <i>outside evidence and perspectives</i> to identify ways in which their <i>worldview and multiple identities</i> shape their educational beliefs and instructional practices. 3C. The teacher approaches and interprets <i>student behaviors with questions</i>, taking into account each student's identity and cultural context. 	
4 / Today's Learning Outcomes	Our work in our small groups will move us toward these three specific learning outcomes. First, since we haven't seen each other in two months, and a lot of life has happened since then, we know that we will need to co-create a trusting space to reconnect with each other right now, especially with all of the pandemic fatigue and fear we are feeling. Second, we know many of you already have a good working knowledge of implicit biases and the ladder of inference. We want to bring these ideas to the forefront of your minds today. Finally, pausing to expand our interpretations of student behaviors can have a real impact on our relationships with our students and on their ability to learn, especially for students who have been historically marginalized in schools. So, with all of that, we are going to transition into our time together with an individual reflection. Please grab a writing utensil. You can flip over your learning record and follow along with the prompts there. We will offer you four quiet minutes to reflect, about one minute per question. The idea here is to just jot some notes without overthinking.	Today's Learning Outcomes 1. Continue <i>building trust</i> in our cross-divisional small groups to deepen our equity literacy skills over time. 2. Understand that all of us <i>have biases</i> and <i>naturally interpret behaviors</i>. 3. Practice <i>expanding our interpretations of student behaviors</i> by asking questions, seeking outside perspectives, and surfacing our biases. 	

	You won't have to share your responses with anyone.		
5 / Individual Activity			>> CLICK VIDEO: Please click the video to play the timer (it has calming music with it!)
6 / Hidden Biases	We hope that by engaging in this short exercise, you began to notice the ways in which we consciously and unconsciously draw on our prior experiences when we interpret the behavior of those around us. This is entirely normal – we make associations because our brain is wired to do so, and we develop biases over time due to our brain's desire to create shortcuts.		
7 / Blindspot	In <i>Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People</i>, Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald call these unconscious, implicit biases “hidden biases.” They define “hidden biases” as bits of knowledge about social groups that we have stored in our brains because we encounter them so frequently in our cultural environments. Many of you will recognize this book after reading it with Jasmine in 2017. Even if it might be hard for us to admit that our hidden biases affect our perception of students, I imagine all of us can remember when other people’s biases have affected their view of us.		
8 / Assumptions	For instance, you may remember how it felt when a teacher misjudged you when you were a student yourself. As an educator, you may have felt your students’ parents have made assumptions about you, or that a student unfairly judged you, or that your supervisor leapt to conclusions before checking in with you. We have all experienced the impact of bias, and our school leaders and families have a serious role to play in surfacing and mitigating their own biases in their interactions with us. Some of us bear the brunt of these biases more than others, especially our BIPOC colleagues, our		

	LGBTQ+ colleagues, our women colleagues, and our colleagues who navigate other kinds of differences. An additional important finding to consider from Princeton researcher Jordan Starck is that “The more tired we are, the less we override [our biases] and the more likely we are to rely on stereotypes... The more we ask of our teachers, the more likely they are to rely on biases even against their own will. They don’t have the cognitive resources to override the biases.” This is an important consideration for all of us as we move into an especially tiring part of the school year in what seems to be a neverending pandemic.		
9 / Not off the hook	But acknowledging the larger social context of our school doesn’t totally let us off the hook. After all, as educators who work with children, we hold biases, too, and these biases can play a significant role in affecting how we interpret our students’ behaviors. And, as researcher Jordan Starck reminds us, “Teachers’ bias levels are related to student outcomes—the more biased teachers are, the worse students’ outcomes are.” For instance, according to a 2016 Yale Child Study Center experiment with preschool teachers, researchers found that “when teachers were primed to look for behavioral problems while watching a classroom video with Black and white children (none of whom were misbehaving), teachers gazed much longer at Black children than white children, as if anticipating the behavioral problems would come from the Black children.” So, what can we do to counter these biases and disrupt our mind’s default association-making behaviors?		
10 / Expand our Interpretation	To counter our biases in the face of student behaviors, we can first remind ourselves that “All behavior is communication.” This is especially important when we are working with young people whose minds and bodies are still growing and whose developmental process requires them to	How might we expand our interpretation of student behavior? 1. Remember: All behavior is communication. 2. Slow down and surface potential biases. 3. Ask questions and talk to colleagues to widen our perspective. 4. Capture more objective data.	>> Click to advance each paragraph

	If you could offer teachers one piece of advice for dealing with their most challenging student, what would it be? “To decide that you're going to shift away from judgment and toward curiosity about that child. So, you would stop asking, What can I do to fix this kid? and instead ask, What do I actually know about them? What do I need to know? What questions do I have about who they are? What can I learn? ... Reflect on what you can do to change the dynamic between you and this kid from one where they are a problem that you're trying to solve to one where they are a human being that you're trying to be in relationship and community with.” With that, we wish you an engaging and thoughtful time with your small group. Today, you will engage in another exercise in pairs before moving through the reflective cycle as your small group. We will send this video and the slidedeck after the session so you can return to the ideas here on your own time. Thank you for listening! Enjoy connecting with your group today!		
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