
What is Inclusive Language?

Inclusive language is words or phrases that include all potential audiences from any identity group. Inclusive language does not assume or suggest the absence of any group.

Inclusive language acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equitable opportunities.

By using inclusive language we are showing others that we respect and care for them and that we are able to create a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Tips to remember when using inclusive language

- Where appropriate, ask about the language the person prefers and respect their wishes. Don't make assumptions about people or their characteristics based on stereotypes or limited information.
- Use people-centric language, which focuses on the person and reflects the individuality of people. People-centric language doesn't classify or stereotype people based on their association or identity with a group or culture.
- Be conscious of the implications of your language. Avoid excluding others or making people invisible by your choice of language. Avoid language and expressions that minimize or trivialize others.

Some general principles to consider:

Use people-centric language. The disability does not define the person. The person has a disability.

Use a strength-based approach such as "a person experiencing poor mental health," rather than "they are bipolar" or "crazy person."

Only use gendered language when it is appropriate for the context. e.g. use "the Chair" rather than "the Chairman."

Ask: Ask someone what their preferred pronouns are and respectfully use them correctly. Remember district policy states that employees may not intentionally refuse to refer to a student by their preferred pronoun.



These guidelines were compiled by the Eugene School District 4J Department of Equity, Inclusion & Instruction, in consultation with local community groups and stakeholders.

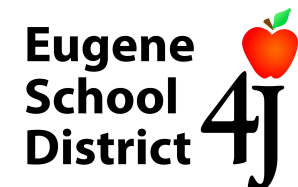


Inclusive Language Guide

Language holds the power to unite or divide, and to make an audience feel accepted or rejected.

The words and phrases in this guide are recommendations. As a general rule, ask the individual/group what terms they prefer.

**Department of Equity,
Inclusion & Instruction**



Inclusive Language: Race

African American/Black:

Explanation: “Black” and “African American” are not always interchangeable. Some individuals prefer the term “black” because they do not identify as African and/or American. If referring to a group in general, it’s appropriate to use black (lowercase).

Some people choose to use Black (capitalized).

Example: Refer to groups as “students of color,” “black faculty members,” etc., **not** “blacks.”

Asian, Asian American and Pacific Islander:

Explanation: Asian refers to people who are citizens of countries in the Far East, Southeast Asia or the Indian subcontinent or to describe people of Asian descent. Use Asian/Pacific Islander when referring to the relevant population in its entirety. Try to be specific when possible: e.g., if you are referring to individuals from Japan, instead of saying “Asian,” use “Japanese.”

Hispanic, Latin(o/a), and Latinx:

Explanation: Hispanic refers to people from Spanish-speaking countries. Latino, Latina or Latinx (La-Teen-ex) is a person of Latin American descent who can be of any background or language.

Example: When referring to a group, generally use Latinx as it is gender inclusive.

Native American:

Explanation: Native American is preferred unless the individual or group specifies otherwise. The term “Indian” is used only when referring to people from India, **not** Native Americans.

Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC):

People are using the term to acknowledge that not all people of color face equal levels of injustice.

Example: This term can be used when looking to introduce multiple ethnic groups.

Inclusive Language: Sexuality

It is important not to conflate gender and sexuality.

An individual’s gender identity is their internal perception of their gender and how they label themselves, whereas an individual’s sexuality refers to the types of sexual, romantic, emotional/spiritual attraction one has the capacity to feel for others.

LGBTQQIP2SAA or LGBTQ+

Explanation: Shorthand or umbrella term for individuals who have non-hetero/cis-normative gender or sexuality. Lesbian, **Gay**, **Bisexual**, **Transgender**, **Queer**, **Questioning**, **Intersex**, **Pansexual**, **Two-spirit (2S)**, **Androgynous**, and **Asexual**

The ‘+’ includes all other non-hetero/cis-normative identities not included within the LGBTQ acronym.

Remember:

- It is not appropriate to use the word “homosexual.”
- It is not appropriate to ask a transgender individual where they are in their transition.
- Avoid using the word “gay” in a derogatory way.
- Avoid using the word “queer” as this can be offensive to some.

Ask yourself:

“Would I mention ‘white student’ or ‘white faculty member’ when discussing others?”

Inclusive Language, *continued*

People of Color:

Do not use the term “minority” to refer to individuals/students from diverse racial backgrounds and ethnic backgrounds.

Instead use “students of color” or “staff of color.”

Underserved/Under-Represented:

Do not use the term “minority” to describe students from diverse backgrounds.

When referring to multiple groups of students from diverse backgrounds use “underserved / under-represented students.”

Immigration Status:

Do not use the phrase “illegal immigrant” or “illegal alien” to refer to individuals who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

These words dehumanize the individual by stripping their identity down to a legal status. Instead use “**undocumented**.”

Disability:

When referring to an individual with (dis)abilities it is important to identify them as a person with a disability, **not** a disabled person, person on the autism spectrum, or autistic person.

While discussing language surrounding disabilities it is recommend to approach the conversation with a “People First” mentality. People with disabilities are people first.