



# Cultivating Critical Consciousness for Centering Equity in PBIS

## Key Definitions

**Access:** All members of the educational community should have entrance into, involvement with, and full participation of resources, conversations, initiatives, and choices that are attentive to heritage and community practices (Paris, 2012).

**Asset Pedagogies:** Teaching practices that "...empower students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 17). Asset Pedagogies utilize the students' backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences to inform the teacher's lessons and methodology (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014).

**Assimilation:** The process through which a group gradually adopts the characteristics, customs, and attitudes of the prevailing culture.

**Civilizational Racism:** This level is the level of broad civilizational assumptions that, though they construct the nature of our world and our experience of it, are not typically conscious to most members of a civilization (Scheurich, 2002).

**Critical Consciousness:** The willingness and ability to see how power and privilege are at work to systematically advantage some while simultaneously disadvantaging others (Radd & Kramer, 2013).

**Cultural Mismatch:** Dominant culture typically influences all functions of school that often unintentionally excludes the voices of historically marginalized children and their experiences (Riddle, 2014; Fruchter, 2007; Noguera, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999).

**Culturally Sustaining:** "The term culturally sustaining...requires that [educators] support young people in sustaining the cultural and linguistic competence of their communities while simultaneously offering access to dominant cultural competence...[it] has as its explicit goal supporting multilingualism and multiculturalism in practice and perspective for students and teachers" (Paris, 2012, p. 95).

**Educational Equity:** When educational policies, practices, interactions, and resources, are representative of, constructed by, and responsive to all people such that each individual has access to, can participate, and make progress in high-quality learning experiences that empower them towards self-determination and reduces disparities in outcomes regardless of

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individual characteristics and cultural identities (Fraser, 2008; “Great Lakes Equity Center,” 2012).

**Equitable Learning Environments:** Shifting onus away from focusing on students toward systems. Systems that center and value multiple perspectives and lived experiences as worthy.

**Expect Non-Closure:** This commitment embraces ambiguity because it is a process which centers the voices from those who have been historically disenfranchised”. This commitment involves not rushing to quick solutions, especially in relation to racial understanding, which requires ongoing dialogue (Singleton & Linton, 2006).

**Experience Discomfort:** This commitment acknowledges that discomfort is inevitable, especially in dialogue about race, sex, class, and national origin, and that you make a commitment to bring issues into the open. It is not talking about these issues that create divisiveness. Divisiveness already exists in society and our schools. It is through dialogue, even when uncomfortable, the healing and change begin (Singleton & Linton, 2006).

**Implicit Bias:** The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. The biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual’s awareness or intentional control (Blair, 2002 and Rudman, 2004, as cited in Staats & Patton, 2013).

**Institutional Racism:** This level of racism exists when institutions or organizations have standard operating procedures (intended or unintended) that hurt members of one or more races in relation to members of the dominant race. It also exists when institutional or organizational cultures, rules, habits, or symbols have the same biasing effect (Scheurich, 2002).

**High Outcomes:** Efficacy of solutions benefit all towards self-determination and the ability to act as contributing citizens in a democratic society and global community (Waitoller & Kozeski, 2013).

**Meaningful Participation:** Agency and voice are afforded to all members of a community by intentionally centering members who have been historically on the margins, including, but not limited to people living in under-resourced communities, people with dis/abilities, as well as racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse individuals. Multiple perspectives are pursued and valued (Fraser, 1998).

**Positionality:** The multiple, unique experiences that situate each of us; namely that gender, [gender expression], race, class, [ability, religion, national origin, language], and other aspects of our identities are markers of relational positions rather than essential qualities (Takacs, 2003; Maher & Tetreault, 1993; Alcoff, 1988

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**Power:** The legitimate control of, or access to, those institutions [resources and opportunities] sanctioned by the state [authorities] (Major, 2005).

**Privilege:** Refers to any advantage that is unearned, exclusive, and socially conferred (Johnson, 2005).

**Racial Bias:** [Race-based] attitudes or [negative] stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions (Staats, Capatosto, Wright, & Contractor, 2015).

**Representation:** Providing and having adequate presence of all when decision and choice-making as to examine the patterns of underlying beliefs, practices, policies, structures, and norms that may marginalize specific groups and limit opportunity (Mulligan & Kozleski, 2009; Chen et al., 2014).

**Self-Awareness:** Is the recognition of one's social identities and the ways in which those identities interact to shape a sense of self and experience (Goodman, 2011).

**Self-Examination:** Is excavating how one's identities inform their understandings of and experiences with complex social problems (Mitchell, 2007).

**Societal Racism:** This level is similar to institutional racism but exists on a broader, society-wide scale. Societal racism exists when prevailing societal or cultural assumptions, norms, concepts, habits, expectations, etc., favor one race over one or more other races. The privileging of one view over others that results in social practices that have negative effects (Scheurich, 2002).

**Speak Your Truth:** This commitment is about being open about thoughts and feelings and not just saying what you think others want to hear (Singleton & Linton, 2006).

**Stay Engaged:** This commitment is about remaining morally, emotionally, intellectually, and socially involved in the dialogue (Singleton & Linton, 2006).

**Subtractive Schooling:** A form of schooling that systematically strips historically marginalized students of their language, culture, and academic wellbeing through the assimilation to the dominant culture (Valenzuela 1999).

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