Maximizing Equity & Access in K-12 Schools Resources
Learning Outcomes

- Understand CB’s definition of equity, access, diversity and inclusion and their relationship to one another.

- Explore the organizational and individual behaviors that promote/sustain exclusive, passive and inclusive relationships and environments in K-12 schools and districts.

- Be introduced to The College Board’s tools, *Organizational Strategies for Maximizing Equity & Access in K-12 Schools* and *A Self Assessment for Maximizing Equity & Access in K-12 Schools*, and learn how they can be used to help develop equitable and accessible relationships and environments for all stakeholders in K-12 Schools and Districts.
Moving Beyond Talk

- “American global competitiveness demands the full, active participation of every young person and his or her talents, regardless of location or circumstance of birth.”

  Chaka Fattah, Congressman - For Each and Every Child: A Strategy For Education Equity and Excellence Report 2/2013

- How do you move all internal & external stakeholders to want to take ACTION?
Equity and Access Policy

The College Board strongly encourages educators to make equitable access a guiding principle for their AP programs by giving all willing and academically prepared students the opportunity to participate in AP.

We encourage the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP for students from ethnic, racial and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underserved. Schools should make every effort to ensure their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population.

The College Board also believes that all students should have access to academically challenging course work before they enroll in AP classes, which can prepare them for AP success. It is only through a commitment to equitable preparation and access that true equity and excellence can be achieved.
Equity in education refers to all students receiving the individual support they need to reach and exceed a common standard.
ACCESS

Access refers to an institution’s ability to provide all students with access to academically challenging work.
DIVERSITY - Multiple dimensions of similarities and differences including ages, gender, race, ability, sexuality, ethnicity, learning, family status and many more…
INCLUSION - A strategic and deliberate system for building, managing and maintaining inclusive relationships and environments amongst diverse people.
THE PROCESS OF INCLUSION

- The process of inclusion (eight distinct components), include:
  - recognizing the imperative for building and maintaining equitable and accessible systems and environments;
  - identifying/assessing current strengths and weaknesses;
  - reflecting/increasing the diverse representation;
  - managing people according to their needs and interests;
  - eliminating barriers to full participation;
  - rewarding progress;
  - formalizing process, practices and procedures that support diverse representation & inclusive management; and,
  - revisiting and revising the entire process for inclusion on a regular basis
REFLECTIONS

- Now that you have a better understanding of what the multiple dimensions of diversity include, can you cite some examples of how the word diversity is often misused?

- How can you tactfully and thoughtfully help others understand the meaning of the word diverse and diversity when they are used incorrectly? (For example, when people use these words to refer to themselves and/or non-whites).
REFLECTIONS

- Do we use and encourage consistent language in our school/district or are people tacitly encouraged to rely on personal definitions that may misconstrue understanding?

- How have misconstrued definitions and information regarding equity, access, diversity and inclusion resulted in organizational inertia and lost momentum?

- What types of assistance and/or tools are needed to help ensure all stakeholders have an increased understanding of the information and actions required to build and maintain inclusive organizational relationships and environments?
Organizational/workplace environments are the result of deliberate action, vision-focused strategies and well-managed maintenance processes. Each environment requires continuous planning, management and assessment in order to build and maintain the desired environmental conditions.

Regardless of whether an environment is exclusive, passive or inclusive there are formal and informal systems in place that perpetuate organizational and individual attitudes and behaviors.
BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF DIFFERING ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

EXCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

- An exclusive environment is similar to that of an exclusive club or closed society, e.g. difficult to gain membership, rigid rules, secret traditions and rules, strict behavioral codes, specific and inflexible standards regarding who is and who isn’t welcome. Non-conformance to tradition is strictly not tolerated and member who attempt to affect change are valued even less than non-members.
PASSIVE ENVIRONMENT

- A passive environment is similar to going to the mall and being a member of a group by coincidence or association. Everyone there just happens to be in the same environment at the same time but there is no shared vision or mission and no deliberate effort to function as a deliberate group. There are general behavioral expectations that are rarely posted or publicized. If you join the group, it is assumed you know and will abide by the rules, standards and expectations. Mingling with others takes place by accident or happenstance. Assimilation is required and efforts to meet the needs of those who are differently-abled or who do not speak the language of the majority is tolerated or accommodated only when mandated by law.
INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

- In an inclusive environment, everyone is invited to be an insider; similarities and differences are welcome and celebrated; and, membership is open to all who share the clearly-stated vision and mission.

- Members go out of their way to make room for and to interact with others. Feedback as to how the environment can be improved as easily accessible to everyone is deliberately solicited.

- The rules, standards and expectations regarding the value of others are a critical factor of the success of the environment and are reviewed frequently.

- Recruiting stakeholders from similar and different population segments and maintaining an environment capable of retaining their participation is highly valued. Those who excel in ensuring the environment is open and accessible to all are rewarded with increased leadership responsibilities and opportunities.
REFLECTION

- In an exclusive environment, difference is unwelcomed and discouraged; and, resources and opportunities are not equitable or accessible to everyone intended to be served by the environment and its systems.

- In a passive environment, resources and opportunities are equitable and accessible to some of the people intended to be served by the environment and its systems. However people are required to assimilate to the norms of the majority and differences are sometimes tolerated but rarely valued and/or appreciated.

- In an inclusive environment, resources and opportunities are equitable and accessible to all of the people intended to be served by the environment and its systems. Assimilated to the norms of the majority is not required and cultural differences are welcomed, valued, celebrated and considered strengths/enhancements to the environment.
SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

- Divide into groups
  - What Would You Do Activity
    - Based on the in-the-news case studies, build a response to each case, select 2-3 best practices cited in the Organizational Continuum in each of the following areas:
      - Governance
      - Resource Management
      - Program Delivery
      - Constituent relationship management
The three questions asked most frequently regarding organizational transformation to inclusion are some variation of:

1. What are we supposed to be doing differently to ensure we are actually moving towards inclusion?
2. What should people be doing at differing levels of accountability to support our transformation to inclusion?
3. How will we know when our environment is functioning in an inclusive manner?
Exploring Assumptions, Actions and Achievements Fostering Different Organizational Environments:

- Organizational environments are supported by systems/processes - policies, practices, standards and traditions.

- We often fail to recognize that said systems/processes are intentionally or unintentionally upheld by individuals.

- Even individuals with the best intentions regarding ensuring equity and access to stakeholders at all levels of an organization can be unaware or unsure of how their respective behavior impacts the relationships and environments within an organization.

- It is often relatively easy to identify the assumptions, attitudes, actions and achievements that encourage organizational behaviors among others, but more difficult to recognize our own assumptions, attitudes, actions and achievements.
Now let’s take a closer look at some of the transformations that are required of individuals in an organization that is committed to ensuring equity and access for all stakeholders; and that is committed to ensuring that the relationships among its diverse stakeholders are managed in an inclusive manner.
TEAM ACTIVITY

What role do our personal beliefs and expectations about E&A, diversity and inclusion play in our organization’s culture?

- Break into groups of self-selected intercultural learning triads
  - Outline 3-5 point personal development plan citing:
    - Stereotypes I need to interrupt
    - Inclusive language I need to adopt
    - Cultures I need help understanding
    - Individuals I plan to invite to my learning community
INDIVIDUAL TRANSFORMATION

- It is often said that individual transformation is much more difficult than organizational transformation because in order to think and act inclusively:
  - most of us are required to question, interrupt and/or abandon attitudes, assumptions and behaviors that we were encouraged to adopt as children;
  - we may even be required to question, interrupt and challenge the attitudes, assumptions and behaviors of family, friends and professional acquaintances with whom we associate frequently;
  - we may have to learn how to seek out new relationships with people who we’ve traditionally not trusted, associated with and/or liked as a result of stereotypes we’ve believed about them; and,
  - we may make mistakes along the way and – at times – old and new relationships may seem uncomfortable confrontational and even combative.
FINAL REFLECTION

- If school districts and schools do not develop the skills, resources and environments needed to maintain inclusive environments and processes that ensure equity and access to all stakeholders regardless of the dimensions of their diversity, how will it impact your mission?
Contact Information

Brett Felder, Associate Director, ACCUPLACER and CLEP Programs

bfelder@collegeboard.org

212.713.7779