

# Inclusion in Education and How that Makes us Stronger

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# Facilitator Introduction

- **Founding Head of School at Cambridge Street Upper School**
- **Former director of the Wayland METCO program**
- **Past President of the METCO Directors' Association**
- **Adjunct: UMASS Dartmouth, Teachers 21 LLP, Northeastern U.**
- **Co-founder and former executive director of (EMI) Empowering Multicultural Initiatives**
- **Founder and President of ManDez Group**
- **Experienced Teacher. Counselor. Administrator**

# Social Justice in Schools

Reflect on the question:

- How have Race and Culture affected your life and how does that inform your interactions with others in the community and the workplace?
- Find a partner and share your reflection
- Share out in large group

# What I have learned

**“Race and Culture are  
always operative and  
sometimes relevant” – *UT  
Saunders***

# The Cambridge Street Upper School

The Cambridge Street Upper School (CSUS) was founded in 2012 as a middle school serving grades 6-8. Current enrollment is approximately 300.

**Cambridge Street  
Upper School**



**Home of the Silver and Blue  
COBRAS**



# CSUS Demographics

<b>Student Demographic Group (300)</b>	<b>% in school</b>
African American/African Descended	34
Asian Pacific Islander	9
Hispanic/Latino	13
Native American	1
White	33
Multi-Racial	4
Free/Reduced Lunch	57
<i>Languages spoken at home</i>	<i>27</i>
<b>Staff Demographics</b>	<b># of staff (57)</b>
African American/African Descended	10
Asian Pacific Islander	3
Hispanic/Latino	2
White	38
Multi-Racial	4

# **Social Justice and Academic Excellence for All**

**June 2012: Affirmed *Social Justice and Academic Excellence for All* as our core values and identified *Cultural Proficiency* as a means to transform school policies and practices to be more equitable and inclusive for our diverse population. Team defined *What Should Social Justice Look Like at CSUS?***

# Our Assumptions

- ◆ We all engage in the work of equity and inclusion from a different perspective: We are all in different places and we all have something to offer to discussion about race, culture and other human dimensions
- ◆ There are no one “how to” books or absolute solutions you can immediately take back to your community. This work is incremental and tied to your thinking -- you need to build consciousness and work at it every day. How you think determines how you act.
- ◆ It’s critical that you bring your thinking back to your work/social engagements and make it relevant.
- ◆ You will (and should) leave with many questions and finding the answers to these questions should be challenging.

# Cultural Proficiency Seminar

**Sept. 2012: Introduction of weekly professional development seminars for all faculty members in grade level or specialist cohorts. Focused on understanding / implementation of culturally proficient practices in the classroom and in school programs, protocols and practices. Seminars facilitated by Head of School**

# Seminar Reboot

- **January 2015: Multi-racial team of six teachers trained as facilitators of the cultural proficiency seminar.**
- **April 2015: Teacher Facilitators redesign, implement and co-facilitate seminars.**
- **September 2016: Four additional facilitators trained and join original facilitators in advanced PD.**



# Upper school tackles race head on, weekly, with intense cultural proficiency initiative

■ May 25, 2016 – [www.cambridgeday.com](http://www.cambridgeday.com)



# Teacher Reflections

- ◆ “It’s created a place for me to feel comfortable trying things, talking about things, going out on a limb, especially being a white male. I know that I’m supported.”
- ◆ “The more you talk about something with the same group of people,” .....“you build cohesiveness and a safe space. We get to a place of understanding that this is about me and my role and thinking about myself and my beliefs, my background, and how it can impact the children in front of me.”
- ◆ ..reflecting on my own experiences and current life choices and how it impacts my teaching.”
- ◆ “... being more aware of expectations for students based on formal assessments/ work output, rather than basing expectations on conscious or unconscious biases about certain groups. “

# Teacher Reflections

- **“Being a new, young teacher from Vermont, with a primarily white background, there have been uncomfortable meetings for me ... those ones where you go home, laying in bed and thinking about those things: ‘Okay, I recognize I’m feeling uncomfortable right now.’ But it’s what you do with that. How will you change what you do?”**
- **.... “helping them be able to identify a sense of self, both academically and culturally, to develop enough self-confidence so they can break through an image that others may project on them to say, that’s not who I am.”**
- **“Discovering your own culture can help you better understand other cultures and points of view.”**

# Teacher Reflections

- **“Thinking and talking about race is getting to be second nature, especially for someone who hasn’t had to think about race at all”  
“It comes up all the time. I’m making it a part of my daily routine.**
- **“People of color can’t do this work alone. We all need allies.”**
- **“Not only has it opened my eyes to the way I teach, but also about how I raise my daughter. I’m being deliberate about certain things I raise with her. I’ve started changing my conversations with her the last two years.”**
- **“We have more work to do as individuals and as a school community in order to meet the needs of our community. “**

# Teacher Reflections

- **“Even if you are running a school that is just white kids. It never occurred to me before, but there, too, we should be talking about race. Race is an issue in the world and it’s important that people understand.**
- **“I need to be more deliberate in seeking culturally diverse experiences in my work and with my family”**
- **“I worked at ----- school that had in their mission the notion of cultural proficiency, but in their practice they did not exhibit it or communicate it toward the faculty.”**
- **“I have a space to ask tough uncomfortable questions that I would otherwise be afraid to ask.”**

# Community Engagement

- **January 2014: Invited educators, caregivers, school dept. officials and school committee members to begin conversations about equity and inclusion.**
- **March 2014: Contracted the Boston YWCA to facilitate their Community Dialogues program for 25 educators, caregivers, and school committee members. Theme: *“Race, Diversity, Culture & Your Child at CSUS”* The becomes the Community Dialogues Group (CDG)**
- **CDG set goals for 2016: Staff Diversity, Expanded Professional Development, Revise Discipline Procedures, Culturally Relevant Curriculum and Pedagogy, Increase Family Engagement, and Scholar Voice**



community  
dialogues

Opportunities &  
challenges in the  
current climate

# Increase Staff Diversity

- **Networked: LinkedIn, teacher fairs, teacher prep programs and regional conferences to recruit male teachers, and teachers of color.**
- **Increased males from 5 in 2012 to 15**
- **Increased teachers of color from 4 in 2012 to 11 and biracial teachers from 1 to 5**



# Expand Professional Development Offerings- Cultural Proficiency

- **Conferences: METCO Directors Association, Race Amity, ADL, COSEBOC, Debby Irving/Tim Wise/Teaching Tolerance**
- **Full Staff PD: August, January and May**
- **UMASS Instructional Practices: Identify and Implement Culturally Relevant Practices**
- **Facilitator Training: Continued training and increased facilitators to 11**

# Culturally Relevant Curriculum and Pedagogy

- **Scholars learn the term "cultural proficiency," and how the critical reading and questioning of history and contemporary issues can inform understanding, perceptions, words, choices and actions in our discussions about race and culture.**
- **Pedagogical decisions reflect a wider and more inclusive lens with an understanding that students approach to their learning is often culturally-based and their primary access to the teacher's lesson.**
- **The intentional inclusion of a variety of voices and perspectives into the lesson's content and reflected in series of guest presenters .**
- **Monthly Advisory Topics on Race, Culture and Identity**

# Revise Discipline Procedures

- **Address the large % of discipline referrals especially for Black and Latino boys**
- **Consult with Jessica Minahan (author of The Behavior Code) and with the Center for Restorative Justice**
- **Restorative practices : PD series for all staff / Facilitator Training for Scholar Support Team**
- **Restorative practices and the “trauma informed classroom” reflected in new discipline procedures**
- **Referrals from class are down / Discipline issues have decreased**

# Increased Family Engagement

- **NAACP Black and Latino Parent Forum: *How can CPS better serve your family?***
- **Cobras to College Night facilitated by a racially diverse team of caregivers**
- **CDG reconvened in May 2016 to assess progress**
- **Launch ASD community advisory group**
- **Diversity Dialogues launched in Oct. 2016**

# Family Engagement: Listening Conferences

- ◆ "We found that for too many families the first contact a caregiver has with a teacher or school official is around a negative issue. We wanted to change the paradigm. **We decided to formally begin this year's family engagement outreach as a listener.** We wanted our first contact with families to be both affirming for our families and instructive and illuminating for teachers and staff. The protocol begins with a **scholar goal setting interview** and a conference with the caregiver where **teachers ask about learning style, best conditions for learning, areas of challenge and other questions.**"



# Family Engagement: Diversity Dialogues

- ◆ **Diversity Dialogues: Equity and Inclusion at CSUS launched in Oct. 2016**
- ◆ **Dinner, topical films, guest speakers and the opportunity to discuss diversity related topics that are important to our school**



# Increase Scholar Voice Around Diversity

- **After-school Club – *Conversations about Diversity***
- **Gay Straight Alliance**
- ***Identity and Voice* Boy's Group presents on Freedom Riders**
- **Scholar Advisory Lunch with Head of School**
- **School wide community forum - *Stand Against Racism***
- **Saturday Morning Boy's Group - *The Goodmen Gang***
- **WIN Elective - *Conversations about Diversity***
- **World Language Week: Immigration and Linguistic Diversity**

# Challenge the Opportunity Gap

- ◆ CSUS is committed to challenging the opportunity gap that may affect every scholar differently. We want to provide the requisite support and resources to every scholar regardless of their socio-economic background. We endeavor to insure equity and inclusion for all to make it possible for every scholar to take advantage of the **Five A's**:
- ◆ **Academics**- Provide every scholar with a rigorous and supportive teaching and learning experience in every classroom
- ◆ **Arts** – Provide every scholar with exposure to and instruction in our dynamic visual and performing arts program

# Challenge the Opportunity Gap

- ◆ **Athletics and Wellness-** Provide every scholar the opportunity to participate in our school's wrap around athletic programs and wellness activities.
- ◆ **Associations-** Through advisory and other initiatives, scholars will develop positive and healthy relationships with advisors, teachers and fellow scholars.
- ◆ **Access-** Provide scholars with full access to afterschool programs and the resources to support extended learning at home.

# Community Partnerships

**Big Brother, Biogen, Breakthrough Cambridge, Health Alliance, Cambridge Housing Authority, Cambridge Police Department, Cambridge School Volunteers, Center for Restorative Justice-Suffolk University, City Sprouts, City Step, Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color, Draper Lab, Frisoli Center, Girls Leap Program, Lesley University, Goodmen Gang, Harvard University, Lesley University, MIT, Project Teach, Rise Up, Shady Hill Teacher Training Course, TERC, Tufts University, Tutoring Plus, UMASS, Upward Bound, Workforce**

# Recognitions

- ◆ **Teaching Tolerance Magazine: Fall 2014 issue**
- ◆ **Cambridge City Council proclamation- Fall 2015**
- ◆ **National Race Amity Conference: Presenters -Nov. 2015**
- ◆ **Harvard University Integration Project: Presenters April 2016**
- ◆ **Cambridge Day Article: May 2016**
- ◆ **Cambridge Public Schools adopts CSUS model: June 2016**



# Our next steps

- ◆ **Cultural Proficiency Seminar: Mixed group cohort**
- ◆ **Learning Walks focused on COSEBOC Standards and Practices**
- ◆ **Family Engagement activities off school grounds**
- ◆ **Increased focus on LGBTQ community**
- ◆ **Community Dialogues Revisited: Monthly dinner, film and discussion series**
- ◆ **Advisory Topics on Race, Culture and Identity**
- ◆ **Harvard University Reimagining Integration Project**

# Suggested Resources

- ◆ <http://csusraceamity.weebly.com/>
- ◆ <http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/teachers.html>
- ◆ <http://www.tolerance.org/>
- ◆ <http://www.rethinkingschools.org/index.shtml>
- ◆ <http://www.coseboc.org/coseboc-standards>
- ◆ <https://sites.google.com/a/cpsd.us/library-resources-and-news/teacher-resources/cultural-proficiency-resources>