

Creating Inclusive Schools in Difficult Political Times:

How to Support Students in a Context of Violence, Racism, Religious
Discrimination, and Homophobia



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Workshop Outline

- Concepts, definitions, statistics, characteristics
- Understanding race, privilege, bias
- Social identity - impact on physical and psychological safety
- Legal Considerations
- Culturally competent and responsive school climate

Difficult Times & Current Stressors

- ❑ Community violence
- ❑ Targeted violence
- ❑ Political unrest
- ❑ Terrorist attacks
- ❑ Discrimination- racial and religious
- ❑ Hate attacks
- ❑ Modeling of negative behaviors and rhetoric
- ❑ Recent immigration, acculturation, refugee status
- ❑ Anti-immigrant rhetoric
- ❑ Poverty
- ❑ Day-to-day stressors
- ❑ Acute and chronic trauma exposure
- ❑ Bullying
- ❑ Intolerance
- ❑ Academic challenges
- ❑ Financial challenges

Ten Days After Election: Harassment & Intimidation

HATE INCIDENT MOTIVATION

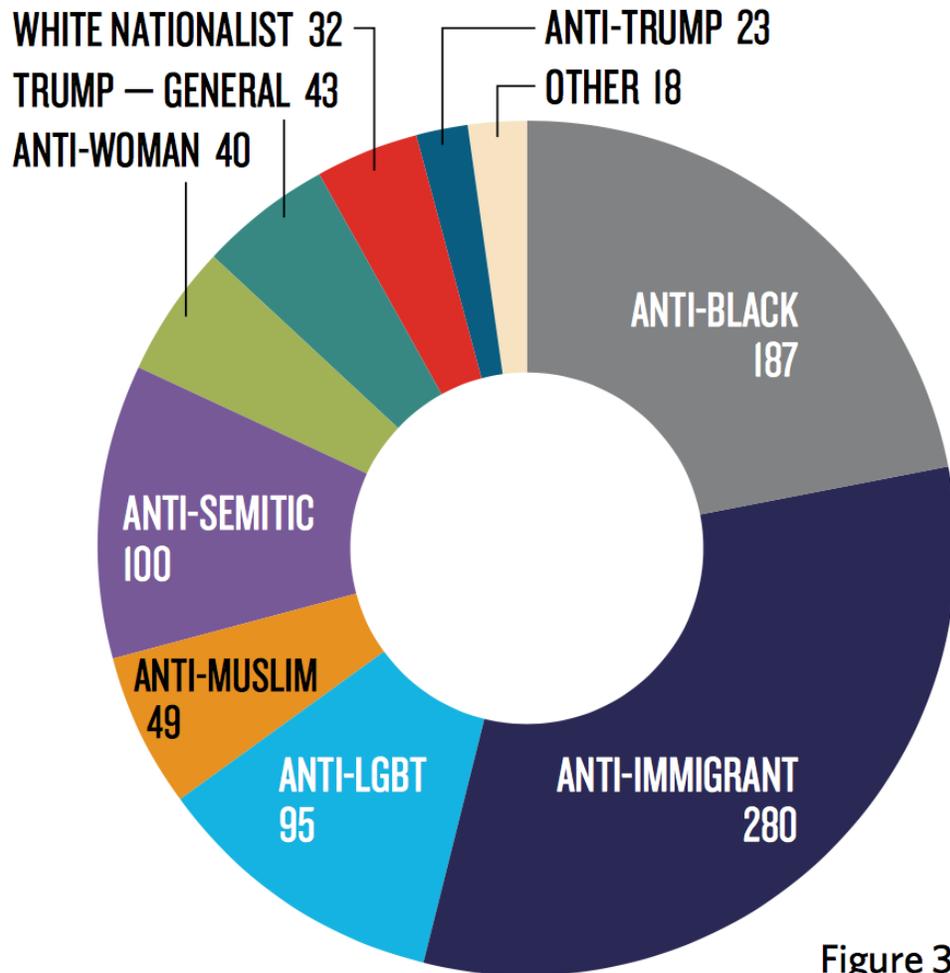
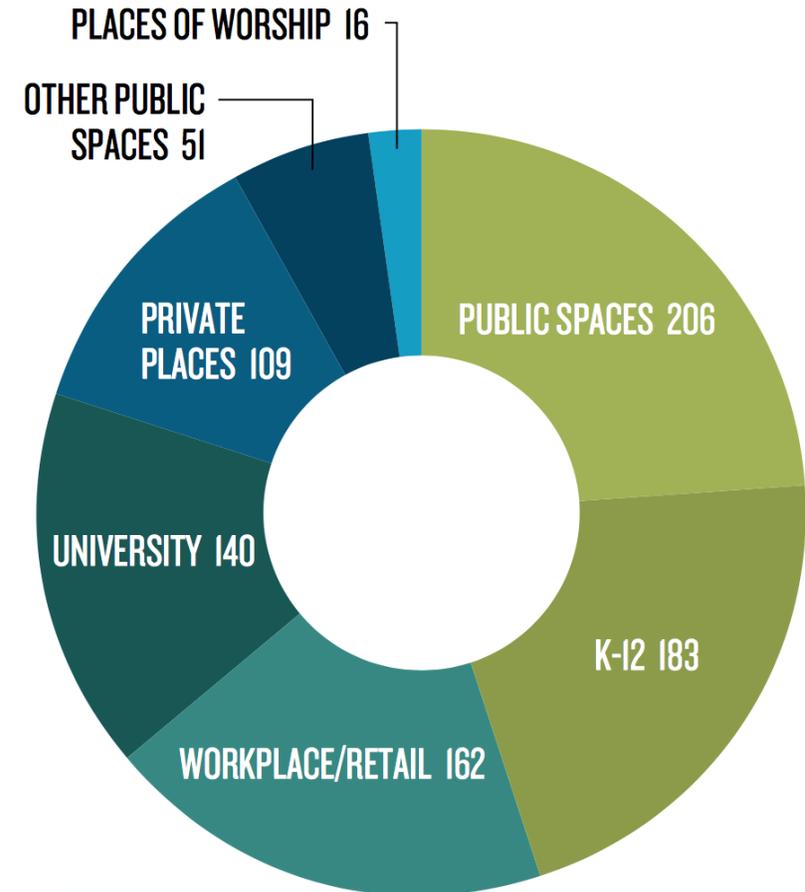


Figure 3

HATE INCIDENT LOCATIONS

Figure 2



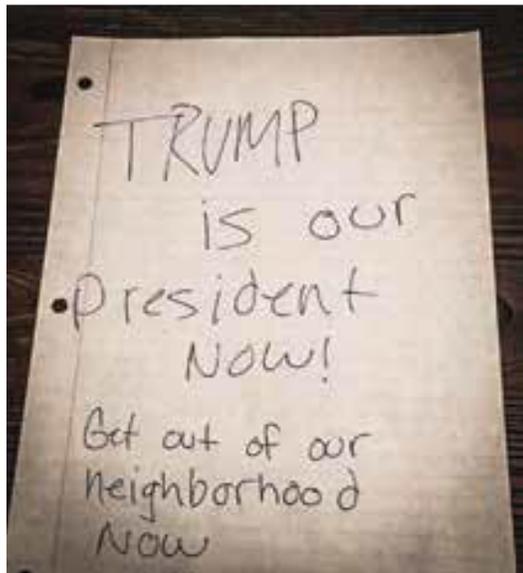
Examples



Durham, North Carolina



Columbus, OH



Clarksburg, WV



Effects of Election on Schools

- 90% reported school climate was negatively impacted
- 80% describe heightened anxiety and concern
- Increase in:
 - in verbal harassment - slurs, derogatory language, swastikas, Nazi salutes, Confederate flags
 - anxiety, particularly in marginalized students
 - derogatory language directed at those of non-majority cultures
- Negative impact on mood and behavior
- 2/3 reported administrators were responsive
 - 4 out of 10 unsure if school crisis/action plans address hate and bias
- 1/2 of teachers hesitant to discussion election in class

<http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/diversity/social-justice>₆

Effects of Election on Schools - Negative

- ***"In a 24-hour period, I completed two suicide assessments and two threat of violence assessments for middle school students. This was last week, one week after the election... students were threatening violence against African Americans. Students were suicidal and without hope. Fights, disrespect have increased as well."***
— MIDDLE SCHOOL COUNSELOR, FLORIDA (p8)
- ***"A kindergartener asked me 'Why did the bully win?'"*** — ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER, ARIZONA (p.8)
- ***"Our school is all immigrant, mostly students in upper teen years (14–21, most are over 16). The levels of anxiety have been through the roof since summer break. It's very hard for them to think. Their brains can literally handle a fraction of what students could learn in these same classes in the previous 16 years I have taught them. They escaped trauma recently and now are facing it ahead of them (and around them right now)."*** - HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER - MINNESOTA (p.8)
- ***"I teach in a primarily white, upper middle-class school that largely supports Trump. Unfortunately, there have been divisions between students since Trump's win. My African-American students are refusing to work with the white students who supported Trump. Students are no longer looking at each other as people, but are looking at them as who their parents supported. It is no longer about issues, but about hate and fear and disagreement and all the things we work our tails off to teach our students to be careful and wary of. My heart is breaking. And it was especially broken when the 12-year-old white male student saw an x on another white male student's paper and said to him, 'Here, let me help you,' and proceeded to draw a swastika on his paper. And our admin is telling us NOT to talk about it."***
— MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER, GEORGIA (p.9)

Effects of Election on Schools - Minimal

"Absolutely nothing; if anything, this survey is creating more hatred than the election results." — HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, RHODE ISLAND (p.11)

"Students stated, regardless of who won, we are still in this country together and we will make the most of it. They really did not see that whoever won would make a difference in their lives."
— HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, ALABAMA (p.11)

"I teach current events and the students did a very good job on breaking down how to actually do a true protest that will actually bring change vs. a mass temper tantrum. They also looked into how our democracy works." — HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, WASHINGTON STATE

Effects of Election on Schools

- ❑ Impact varied depending on demographics of school
 - ❑ Minimal impact in schools with mostly majority culture students (e.g. White)
 - ❑ Majority of students non-majority cultures - not targeting each other but increased fear and anxiety
- ❑ Schools that previously worked hard at establishing welcoming communities
 - ❑ reported students were affected but...
 - ❑ had the language and skills to avoid conflict;
 - ❑ showed solidarity
 - ❑ every child knows his/her value and importance, thus togetherness was demonstrated

Perpetrators in K-12 Schools

- ❑ Are not hate filled extremists - they see nothing wrong with their behavior
- ❑ Values underlying hate crimes are instilled at an early age
- ❑ Reinforced in environments (home, school, community)
- ❑ Negative images/stereotypes flourish in absence of positive images in media and school curricula
- ❑ Stereotypes foster violence within schools and hate crimes in the community at large

Confront the cultural climate that fosters everyday harassment and denigration of anyone who is perceived as different.

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Begins with Understanding Race & Privilege

- ❑ Acknowledge and understand how our own experiences and upbringing influence how we view world
- ❑ Differences in identity and struggles related to place and power are woven throughout social and political history and culture
 - ❑ Diversity has been country's strength but path to equality and mutual respect has been rocky

Role of Privilege

- ❑ Many have never been asked or required to reflect on own privileged status
- ❑ Uncomfortable, discordant with common narrative
- ❑ Have seen it as suppressing but not always acknowledging the benefits
- ❑ Comes in many forms and also assigned within groups
- ❑ Problematic when:
 - it skews our personal interactions and judgments
 - contributes to or blinds us to systematic barriers for those who do not possess a certain privilege...thus perpetuating inequity
- ❑ Concept of “unearned advantages”

“Privilege is not visible to its holder; it is merely there, a part of the world, a way of life, simply the way things are.” (Wideman & Davis, 1995)

Self-Reflection Questions

1. When was the last time you had to think about your ethnicity, race, gender identity, ability level, religion, and/or sexual orientation? What provoked you to think about it or acknowledge it?
2. When using social media, how diverse is your feed? How diverse are friends and followers?
3. How do you respond when others make negative statements towards individuals of a different ethnicity, race, gender, ability level, religion, sexual orientation and/or gender identity than yourself?

Self-Reflection Questions

4. How often do you go into social settings where the majority of individuals are of a different ethnicity, race, gender, ability level, religion, sexual orientation and/or gender identity than yourself?
5. If you recognized your privilege, what did you do with this realization?

Defining Equity

- *Equity* is the absence of avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically. (WHO)
- **Equality** in education is achieved when students are all treated the same and have access to similar resources.
- **Equity** is achieved when all students receive the resources they need so they graduate prepared for success after high school.

EQUALITY

EQUITY

THE DIFFERENCE MATTERS.



EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY



In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.



In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.



In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

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Social Identity

- How individuals define themselves in their social world
- Social groups in which they place themselves or are placed
- Complex - shaped by social and cultural factors; assimilation or rejection of these factors.
- Social context shapes social identity, and
- One's social identity simultaneously offers a framework for negotiating and giving meaning to a social environment.
- Teacher's underlying assumption about ethnicity and race impacts how different students of color are viewed in the school context, making distinctions between "good" or "bad" diversity (Randolph, 2013).



Addressing these issues requires political will and teachers and administrators willing to take risks (Weisman and Hansen, 2008).

The Educational Context for Immigrants

- ❑ One of marginalization, racialization, and pressures toward conformity
 - ❑ requires immigrant students to give up their home language and cultural identity.
- ❑ Nation has turned toward exclusion
- ❑ Dismantling of bilingual education
- ❑ Discussion of cultural diversity or curriculum diversity are disconnected from discussions of equity.



Anti-Immigrant Times

- ❑ A lack of outrage about hate language.
- ❑ Over and over Latino students commented about the invisibility of Latinos.
- ❑ One girl in tears, talked about invisibility, the lack of recognition of the racialized experiences of Latinos and the pain the humiliation their parents endure.
 - ❑ This girl recounted a story of her father being called a “stupid Mexican” by a white couple while he was installing a carpet in their home.
- ❑ Lack of representation in the curriculum.

Stop Texas from erasing Cesar Chavez and Hispanics from school books



These new standards would eliminate all Hispanics since the conquest of Mexico in the early 16th Century. Cesar Chavez, arguably the most important Hispanic civil rights leader of the 20th Century, is among the historical figures to be eliminated. One of Lowe's so called "experts" said that Chavez "lacks the stature...and contributions" and should not be "held up to our children as someone worthy of emulation." Also eliminated are a number of key Texas history makers such as Irma Rangel, the first Hispanic woman elected to the state Legislature.

Why Cultural Humility?

Being aware of our biases and being open to the meaning that is created through authentic interactions with diverse cultures is fundamental.

Without this, stereotypes and biases inherent in institutions or organizations can become agents of historic patterns of marginalization.

- Challenges individual and institutions to address inequalities.
- Instead of focusing on mastery in understanding others, this model requires personal accountability in challenging institutional barriers.

Individual Level: Self-Reflection

- What are my cultural identities?
- How do my cultural identities shape my worldview?
- How does my own background help or hinder my connection to students/communities?
- What are my initial reactions to students who are culturally different than me?
- How much do I value input from my service users?
- How do I make space for students to name their own identities?
- What do I learn about myself when I listen to others who are different than me?

Individual Level: Power Imbalances

- What social and economic barriers that impact the students?
- What specific experiences are the students having that are related to oppression or systemic issues?
- How does my practice actively counter and challenge power imbalances?
- How do I extend my responsibility beyond the individual student and advocate for change at a larger level? (Institutional, local, state, national?)

Institutional Level: Self-Reflection

- How do we organizationally define culture and diversity?
- Does our organizational culture encourage respectful, substantive discussions about difference, oppression, and inclusion - a culture of collaboration?
- How does our hiring process reflect a commitment to diverse staff and leadership?
- Do we monitor hiring practices to ensure active recruitment, hiring, and retention of diverse staff?
- Does our staff reflect the communities we serve?
- Is our leadership reflective of the populations/communities we serve?

Institutional Level: Power Imbalances

- How do we actively address inequalities internally (policies and procedures) and externally (legislative advocacy)?
- How do we define and live out the value of social justice?
- What are the organizational structures we have that encourage action to address inequalities?
- What training and professional development opportunities do we offer that address inequalities and encourage active self-reflection, and address power and privilege?
- How do we engage with the larger community to ensure their voices are heard in our work?

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Legal Issues:

Foreseeability & Negligence

- ❑ If a child writes or talks in a threatening manner (harm to self and/or harm to others), adults should be able to *foresee* potential safety issues.
- ❑ It is *negligent* on the part of the school not to notify parents or guardians or potential victim when students are known to be dangerous.
- ❑ It is also *negligent* not to supervise the student closely.
- ❑ *Negligent* to not provide staff training in regards to identification, reporting, intervening/supervision, and parent notification
 - ❑ Courts have required schools to produce records of staff training on suicide prevention
 - ❑ Immunity: school professional's can be sued for failing to protect students even if district has been found to have immunity from such a lawsuit

Office of Civil Rights (OCR)

Some misconduct can trigger federal antidiscrimination law(s)

- **“School districts may violate these civil rights statutes and the Department’s** implementing regulations when peer harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, or disability is sufficiently serious that it creates a hostile environment and such harassment is encouraged, tolerated, not adequately addressed, or ignored by **school employees.”**
 - Harassment does not have to specifically include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.
- Schools must do more than take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the harassment.
 - must also ***“eliminate any hostile environment and its effects, and prevent the harassment from occurring.”***

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Best Practices

Culture of Dialogue:

- Opportunities for open and honest discussion regarding:
 - Race
 - Equity
 - Sexual Orientation and Gender
 - Needs of the district/school/students
 - In a Multilingual environment

Culture of Collaboration:

- Equity is important to all of us:
 - Parents – Family liaisons
 - Teachers
 - Staff
 - Administration
 - Community

Culture of Change:

- Providing the resources to change culture:
 - Professional development
 - Creating positions that address student needs (family liaisons, etc.)
 - Empowerment of students
 - Diverse curriculum development

Culture of Equity:

- Success for all students:
 - Celebrations of diverse cultures
 - Challenging academics
 - Academic achievement
 - Culturally diverse educational staff

Safe, Supportive, Positive School Climates

- ❑ Reinforce a positive school climate
- ❑ Model and teach desired behaviors
- ❑ Reassure students will do all you can to protect
- ❑ Give them hope that all will be okay
- ❑ Help manage strong emotions
- ❑ Reinforce acceptance and appreciation for diversity as critical values

Culturally Competent Educational Leaders

- ❑ Assess one's own culture
- ❑ Value diversity
- ❑ Manage dynamics of difference
- ❑ Adapt to diversity
- ❑ Institutionalize cultural knowledge
- ❑ Value professional development - expand multicultural understanding, knowledge of nondiscriminatory practice

Talking to Others About Privilege

1. Start by discussing how privilege looks in our society and which groups have privilege and which do not.
2. Stress that privilege is relative to each individual's lived experience.
3. Recognize that having privilege does not require feeling guilty for your privilege.
4. Determine and offer ways to challenge systems of privilege and oppression in your own life.

Lesson Plan for MS and HS: <http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/diversity/social-justice>

Small Steps Change Lives

- ❑ Little things, daily, can add up to big changes over time
- ❑ What you do on a day-to-day basis helps students to make growth over time
- ❑ Don't get overwhelmed by the big issues and barriers; start small and build towards larger goals
- ❑ Find others willing to support change and together you can accomplish great things
- ❑ Ignore the negative and focus on the positive...everyone has strengths
- ❑ We may not always see the outcomes of our work but you are making a difference!
- ❑ REMEMBER...you as an individual can do great things!



Resources

The International Rescue Committee

- http://www.rescue.org/where/united_states

The State Refugee Coordinators

- <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/resource/orrfunded-programs-key-contacts>

Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BYRCS)

- <http://www.byrcs.org>

Congreso de Latinos Unidos, Inc.

- <http://www.congreso.net/about/agency-profile/>

PFLAG

- <https://www.pflag.org>

Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

- <http://www.glsen.org>

Resources

- National Association of School Psychologists. (2016). *Talking About Race and Privilege: Lesson Plan for Middle and High School Students* [handout]. Bethesda, MD: Author.
 - <http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/diversity/social-justice>
- Achieving Racial Equity: Calling the Social Profession to Action:
 - <http://www.antiracistalliance.com/SWPIRacialEquityReport.pdf>
 - http://www.schoolsoutwashington.org/1431_198/RacialEquityResources.htm
 - <http://www.indiana.edu/~equity/resources.php>
 - [Coming Together In Skokie & Niles Township](#)

Resources

- [National Association of School Psychologists \(NASP\)](#)
- [Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network \(GLSEN\)](#)
- [Transparenthood \(Blog\)](#)
- [TransActive Gender Center](#)
- [Welcoming Schools](#)
- [Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Center](#)
- [TransYouth Family Allies](#)
- [Philadelphia Trans-Health Conference](#)
- [TNET – PFLAG’s Transgender Network](#)

Schools In Transition

First-of-its-kind Publication providing guidance to schools to ensure safe and supportive environments for transgender students.

Published By: Gender Spectrum (2015)

Appendix D – gender transition and support plan



<https://www.genderspectrum.org/staging/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Schools-in-Transition-2015.pdf>



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