

## **Glossary of Terms** ***Diversity, Equity, Inclusion***

\*\* This glossary is not intended to be an exhaustive list of every word and term used in our work and conversation about diversity, inclusion, and social justice. These are basic working definitions to be used as a reference to help move diversity and inclusion efforts forward.

**Access** - Creating the necessary conditions so that individuals and organizations desiring to, and who are eligible to, use our services, facilities, programs and employment opportunities.

**Ally** - A person of one social identity group who stands up in support of members of another group; typically member of dominant identity advocating and supporting a marginalized group.

**Anti-racism**- The active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is re-distributed and shared equitably.

**Culture** - Is a way of life of a group of people--the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next.

**Cultural Competence** - Refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures. Cultural competence comprises four components:

- Awareness of one's own cultural worldview,
- Attitude towards cultural differences,
- Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews, and
- Cross-cultural skills.

Developing cultural competence results in an ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures. Cultural competence is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period.

**Disability** - A physical, mental or cognitive impairment or condition that requires special accommodations to ensure programmatic and physical access.

**Diversity** - Psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among any and all individuals; including but not limited to race, color, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, veteran status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, genetic information and learning styles. A diverse group, community, or organization is one in which a variety of social and cultural characteristics exist.

**Ethnicity** - a social construct which divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, and ancestral geographical base.

**Equality** - evenly distributed access to resources and opportunity necessary for a safe and healthy life; uniform distribution of access that may or may not result in equitable outcomes.

**Educational Equity**- Educational equity means that each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential. Working towards equity in schools involves:

- Ensuring equally high outcomes for all participants in our educational system; removing the predictability of success or failures that currently correlates with any social or cultural factor;
- Interrupting inequitable practices, examining biases, and creating inclusive multicultural school environments for adults and children;
- Discovering and cultivating the unique gifts, talents and interests that every human possesses

**Implicit bias** (also referred to as unconscious bias)-is the process of associating stereotypes or attitudes towards categories of people without conscious awareness – which can result in actions and decisions that are at odds with one’s conscious beliefs about fairness and equality. This can lead us to make biased and unfair decisions regarding who we hire for a job or select for a promotion, which classes we place students into and who we send out of the classroom for behavior infractions, and which treatment options we make available to patients. And, we know from extensive research, that this happens all the time in our schools, in hospitals, in policing, and in places of employment.

**Inclusion** - the act of creating involvement, environments and empowerment in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate with equal access to opportunities and resources embrace differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people.

**Intercultural competence** - is the ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to visible behavior and communication that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions.

**Marginalization** - Treatment of a person, group or concept as insignificant or pervasive and places them outside of the mainstream society.

**Micro aggressions** - intentional or unintentional verbal, nonverbal or environmental slights/insults that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative messages to people based upon their marginalized group.

**Multiculturalism** - the practice of acknowledging and respecting the various cultures, religions, languages, social equity, races, ethnicities, attitudes, and opinions within an environment. The theory and practice promotes peaceful coexistence of all identities and people.

**Power** - ability to control, coerce or influence people based on privilege identities. Power may be positional and provide access to social, political, and economic resources.

**Power-over** - used in discriminatory and oppressive way. Having power over others and therefore domination and control over others (e.g. through coercion and violence).

**Power-with** - shared with all people in struggles for liberation and equality. Using or exercising one's power to work with others equitably, for example, in a social movement.

**Privilege** - any unearned benefit, right or advantage one receives in society by nature of their identities.

**Race** - a social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance, ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, and the political needs of a society at a given period of time.

**Racism-**

- Is a belief that a particular race is superior or inferior to another, that a person's social and moral traits are pre-determined by his or her inborn biological characteristics.
- A system of racial inequality that benefits whites at the expense of people of color.

**Respect** - A feeling or understanding that someone or something is important, valued and should be treated in a dignified way.

**Social Construct** - An idea that appears to be natural and obvious to people who accept it but may or may not represent reality.

**Social Justice-** To take action as an advocate for a just society where all people have a right to fair and equitable treatment, support and resources.

*This resource was adapted from existing resources provided by the National Equity Project, Anti-Defamation League, National Multicultural Institute, University of California-Berkeley-Diversity Terms, National Conference for Community and Justice, Oregon State University, Texas A & M University, Arizona State University – Intergroup Relations Center.*