DISTRICT EQUITY INITIATIVE

Presented by: Natalie McGee

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Partnering for School Success

"Creating a collaborative culture is the single most important factor for successful school improvement initiatives and the first order of business for those seeking to enhance the effectiveness of their schools."

Eastwood and Lewis

In Appreciation

Terry Cross

Co-Authored *Towards a Culturally Competent System of Care,* published by Georgetown University. He has 40 years of experience in child welfare, including 10 years direct practice.

Randall Lindsey

Co-Author of Cultural Proficiency: A Manual For School Leaders ; Emeritus Professor, California State University, Los Angeles

What is Cultural Proficiency?

Culturally proficient is defined as an **ongoing process** by which *individuals* and *systems* respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, sexes, ethnic backgrounds, religions, sexual orientations, abilities and other diversity factors "in a manner that **recognizes, affirms,** and **values the worth** of individuals, families, and communities and **protects** and **preserves the dignity** of each."

(NASW, 2001)

What is Cultural Proficiency?

A way of being that enables both individuals and organizations to respond effectively to people who differ from them.
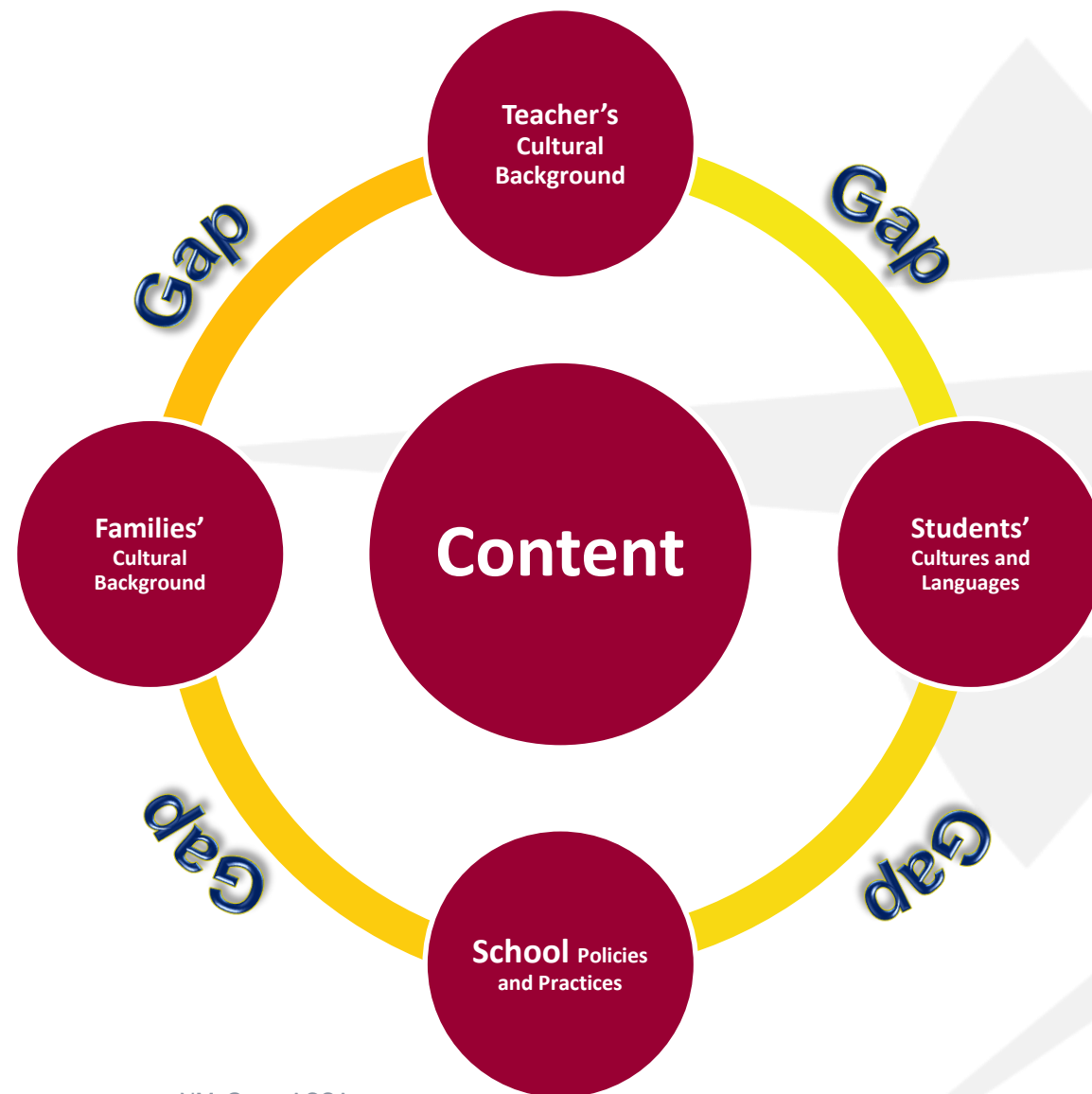
- Cultural proficiency is not an off-the-shelf program. It is an approach; it provides tools and help for an increasingly diverse world with an increasing number of well-intentioned and fearful people.

- The **use of specific tools** effectively describing, responding to, and planning for issues that emerge in diverse environments.

- **Policies and practices** at the organizational level and *values, beliefs* and *behaviors* at the individual level that enables effective cross cultural interactions among employees, clients, and community.

Cultural Proficiency functions as…

- A worldview,

- A perspective,

- A mindset,

- A mental model,

- A lens, **through which to**

    view your work

- The manner in which we lead our lives.

Cultural Connections

Why Culturally Proficient Practices?

- **School systems must recognize that, marginalized populations have to be at least bicultural and that this status creates a distinct set of issues to which the system must be equipped to respond**

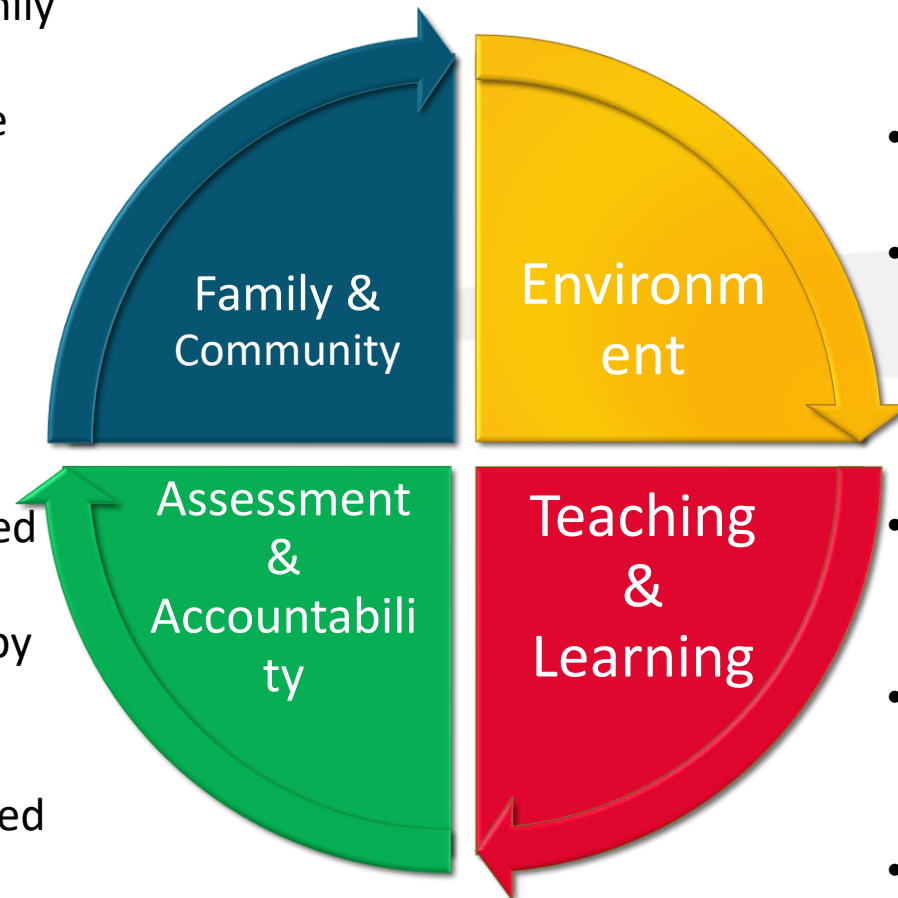- Inherent in cross-cultural interactions are dynamics that must be acknowledged, adjusted to, and accepted.

Generation Ready's Approach

- Generation Ready uses a **review, diagnose**, **develop,** and **implement** tool that ensures teaching and learning process and experience:

  - Is free from bias, stereotyping and prejudice (whether intentional or unwitting)

  - Is inclusive

  - Values and celebrates diversity

  - Supports the statutory requirements and duties placed upon schools and districts to promote equality, challenge discrimination and unequal treatment, and eliminate discrimination

Cultural Proficiency Equity Check

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- A system in place to determine family preferences for communication.
- Specific efforts are made to involve families who generally have low participation.
- Family and Community involved in decision making

- Student work, information, and other materials displayed represent the cultures of the school
- Bilingual staff or interpreters are utilized
- The school is a safe, caring, and responsive learning environment for all students.

- Assessment data is consistently used to inform instruction
- Assessment data is disaggregated by race, ethnicity, language and IEP status
- Varied assessment methods are used to assess student learning

- Teachers are knowledgeable of learners (cultural, social, ethnic, personal context and needs/strengths
- Teachers review learning process to ensure it not reinforce stereotypes, prejudice & discrimination
- Instructional strategies are varied to meet the need of all learners

Family & Community · **Environment** · **Assessment & Accountability** · **Teaching & Learning**
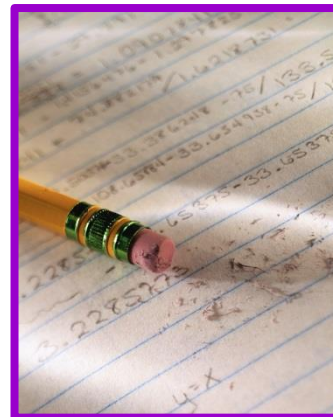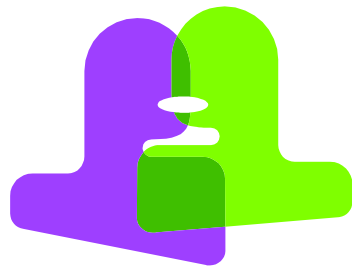
Questions that Guide Our Work

- What barriers to student learning exist within the district, our schools, and us?
- What are your, your school's, and the board's core values that support equitable learning outcomes for students?
- What examples do you have for unhealthy and healthy language, behaviors, policies and practices used by you and your board and school colleagues?
- What standards do you, district/school use to ensure equitable learning outcomes for students?
- To what extent are you satisfied with student learning outcomes in your school and in your district?
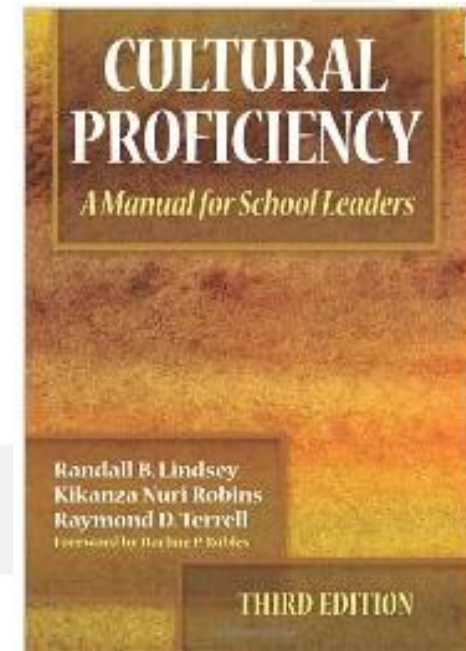
What To Expect

DIALOGUE

ACTIVITIES

JOURNALING

Four Agreements

- **Stay Engaged**
- **Experience Discomfort**
- **Speak Your Truth**
- **Expect/Accept Non-Closure**

CULTURAL PROFICIENCY
A Manual for School Leaders

Randall B. Lindsey
Kikanza Nuri Robins
Raymond D. Terrell

THIRD EDITION

- Personal Journal
- End of Session Reflection

The Framework for Cultural Proficiency Uses Four Unique Tools – Schools, 3rd Ed, pages 4-7

- **The Guiding Principles**
  - Underlying values of the approach
- **The Continuum**
  - Language for describing both healthy and non-productive policies, practices, and individual behaviors
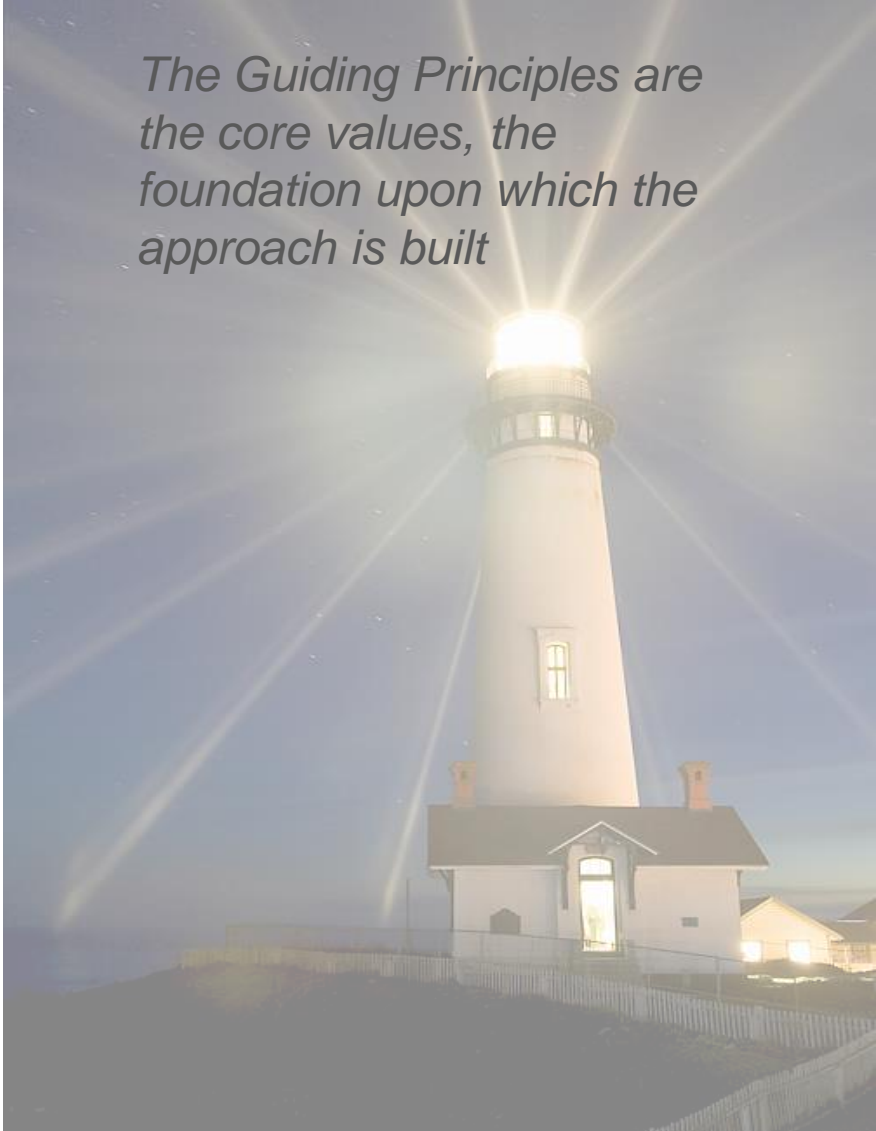- **The Essential Elements**
  - Five behavioral standards for measuring, and planning for, growth toward cultural proficiency
- **The Barriers**
  - Two caveats that assist in responding effectively to resistance to change

RLindsey

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Tool #1 - Guiding Principles – Chapter 4 & ACSA article

- Culture is a predominant force

- People are served in varying degrees by the dominant culture

- Acknowledge group identities

- Diversity within cultures is important

- Respect unique cultural needs

The Guiding Principles are the core values, the foundation upon which the approach is built

Cultural Perceptions Manual, 3rd Ed., 214
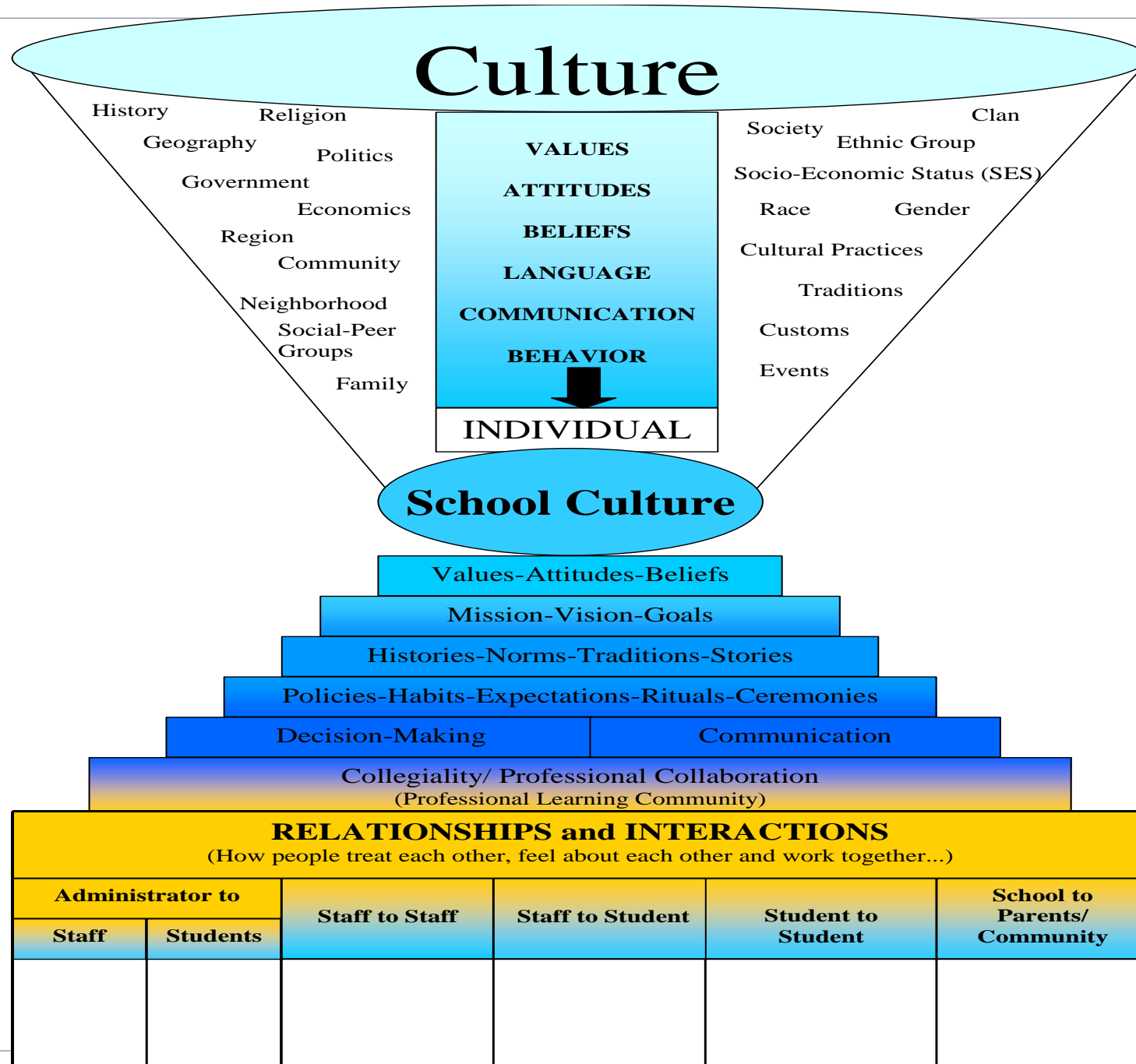
Deepens Learning

Engage in the activity:

- Select a partner that you do not know well.

- A and B?

- A shares her perceptions about B (next slide)

- B responds to those perceptions

- B shares his perceptions about A

- A responds to those perceptions

Share your perceptions:
How do you think your partner would respond?

- ✓ Country of family origin and heritage

- ✓ Languages spoken

- ✓ Interests or hobbies

- ✓ Favorite foods

- ✓ Preferred types of movies, TV programs

- ✓ Preferred types of music

- ✓ Pets, if any, or favorite animals

- ✓ Fantasy vehicle

Systemic Tension – Conceptual Framework

The **Barriers** are the demonstration of beliefs held by people who explicitly or implicitly resist change and foster a sense of privilege and entitlement that inform *Destructiveness, Incapacity & Blindness*

The **Guiding Principles** are explicit or implicit demonstrations of core values and beliefs held by people, the foundation upon which the approach is built, that inform *Precompetence, Competence & Proficiency*

Tool #2 – Overcoming Barriers to Cultural Proficiency – Chapter 3

The barriers to cultural proficiency are systemic privilege, oppression, and resistance to change

- **The presumption of entitlement**

- **Systems of oppression**

- **Unawareness of the need to adapt**

- **Resistance to change**

Chimamanda Adichie

*The Danger of a
Single Story*

Dimension of YOU

Tool #3 - The Continuum
Schools 3rd Ed, Chapter 5, pages 111-123

- **Cultural destructiveness**
- **Cultural incapacity**
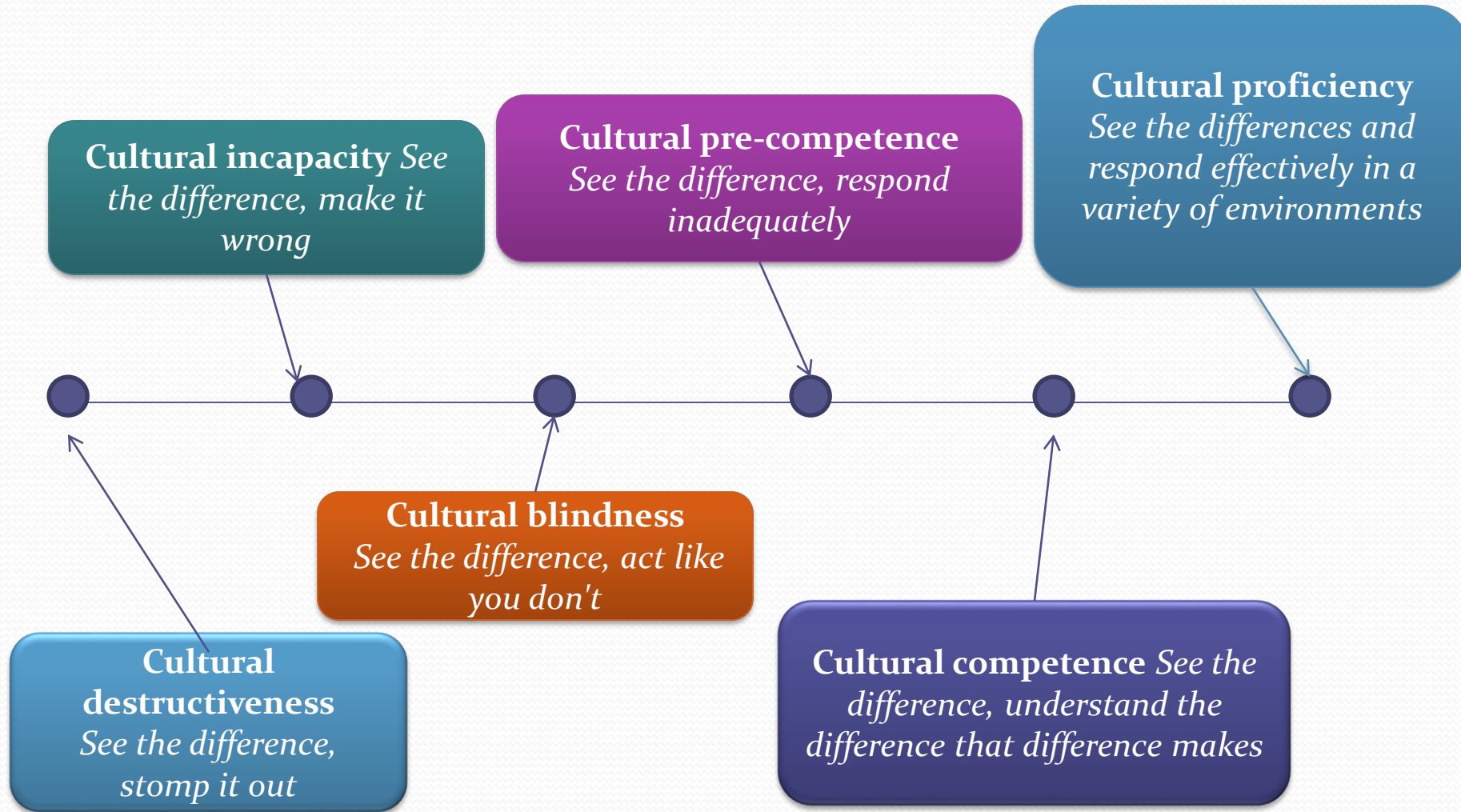- **Cultural blindness**
- **Cultural pre-competence**
- **Cultural competence**
- **Cultural proficiency**

> *There are six points along the cultural proficiency continuum that indicate unique ways of perceiving and responding to differences.*

CULTURAL PROFICIENCY CONTINUUM

Cultural incapacity *See the difference, make it wrong*

Cultural pre-competence *See the difference, respond inadequately*

Cultural proficiency *See the differences and respond effectively in a variety of environments*

Cultural blindness *See the difference, act like you don't*

Cultural destructiveness *See the difference, stomp it out*

Cultural competence *See the difference, understand the difference that difference makes*

HANDOUT

Adapted from: *Cultural Proficiency* by Randall B. Lindsey, Kikanza Nuri Robins, and Raymond D. Terrell (Corwin Press, 1999, 2003), and *Culturally Proficient Instruction* by Kikanza Nuri Robins, Randall B. Lindsey, Delores B. Lindsey, and Raymond D. Terrell (Corwin Press, 2001)

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Cultural Destructiveness

"See the difference; stomp it out."

Using one's power to eliminate the culture of another.

Hostility/Negativity

- Period preceding 1492 – Pre-Columbian

- *I don't want those kids in my class/school*

- *No such thing as autism*

- *Physical abuse*

- *'They don't value education'*

Cultural Incapacity

"See the difference; make it wrong."

Believing in the superiority of one's own culture and behaving in ways that disempower another's culture.

Dismissive/Blaming

- Questioning qualifications

- Mispronouncing unfamiliar names; making fun of

- *With an accent like that, they couldn't be very smart*

- *Their parents don't care, why should I?*

- *I'm very successful when working with 'normal kids'*

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Cultural Blindness

"See the difference; act like you don't."

Acting as if cultural differences do not matter or as if there are not differences among/between cultures.

Pretending/Unable to see Culture

- Diversity/equity training separate from other PD

- Ignoring access/achievement gaps

- *Really, I don't see color; I treat all kids alike*

- *What's wrong with what we are doing; most are doing well*

- *Don't be so sensitive; I was 'just kidding'*

Cultural Precompetence

"See the difference; respond to it inappropriately."

Recognizing the limitations of one's skills or an organization's practices when interacting with other cultural groups.

Begin to know what we don't know; becoming aware of culture

- Short-term PD is event based

- Long-term PD is data driven; what is needed to be learned

- Begin to recognize issues of disproportionality

- *We are trying to teach the kids who used to go to school here*

Cultural Competence

"See the difference; respond positively. Engage and adapt."

Esteem culture; knowing how to learn about organizational culture; interacting effectively in a variety of cultural groups.

Doing/Speaking Up

- Students and visitors can see images like and different from them

- School is using disaggregated data to drive decision making

- Access data gathered and analyzed for developing strategies for inclusion

- School functions as a learning community

- Multiple perspectives invite speaking out against unfairness

Cultural Proficiency

"See the difference; respond positively. Engage and adapt."

Esteeming culture; knowing how to learn about organizational culture; interacting effectively in a variety of cultural groups

Advocacy for social justice

- Lived commitments to
  - Advocacy
  - Social justice; doing what's right for students
  - Life-long learning
- Realization that Cultural Proficiency is a 'process'
- Commitment to mentoring at 2 levels

Tool #4 - Essential Elements for Cultural Competence –

Leaders, 3rd Ed, Page 7

The Essential Elements of cultural proficiency provide the standards for individual behavior and organizational practices

- **Assess Culture**

- **Value Diversity**

- **Manage the Dynamics of Difference**

- **Adapt to Diversity**

- **Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge**

Essential Elements of Cultural Proficiency

- **Assess Culture:** understand how the culture of your school affects those with different cultures.

- **Value Diversity:** celebrate and encourage the presence of a variety of people in all activities.

- **Manage the Dynamics of Difference:** learn effective strategies for resolving conflict, particularly among people whose cultural background and value differ.

- **Adapt to Diversity:** change the way things are done to acknowledge the differences that are present in the staff, students, and community.

- **Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge:** incorporate cultural knowledge into the mainstream of the school/organization

The School System Incorporates Cultural Knowledge

- **CP** Educators assess and raise consciousness about their own individual and organizational cultures.

- **CP** Educators, while learning about their culture, learn about the cultures of their students and families.

- **CP** Educators engage the community expertise to assist them in the journey.

This all leads to institutionalizing the knowledge in the school system.

Benefits of Becoming Culturally Proficient

- Increased level of comfort with members of different cultures

- Increased knowledge of own culture

- Increased freedom to explore other ways of being

- Discovery of passions and interests that complement current interests

- Increased capacity to teach members of diverse cultures

- Increased resources and knowledge

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Thank you for your willingness to grow with us today!