Antiracist Strategies to Disrupt Racial Inequities In Charter Schools (Part I)

Adapted from
THE COLOR CODE
10 Antiracist Tools & Strategies for Social Work Practitioners
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Purpose of this virtual workshop

To identify, recognize, and acknowledge the significant role race plays at the individual, community, and institutional levels across systems and to create an *anti-racist* framework for charter school professionals.

A deepened understanding around practical application of antiracist tools and strategies through individual and systems theory of behavior change

Practitioners will develop meaningful understanding of antiracism, what it means to become an antiracist, and implement into daily charter school practice

Agreements

Common Ground

- Respect

- Non-judgement

- "I" Statements

- Manage technology

- Integrity

- Authenticity

- Be Curious and Courageous

- Brave Space

Expectations

Learning & Growing

- Ask questions

- Allyship

- Practical application

- Connecting with the work

- Deepened truths

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Land Acknowledgement

Joyce Lynn Green, Grandmother

Young Aaron, Social worker

Elizabeth Gautier, Grandmother

BREAKOUT SESSION (SMALL GROUPS)

Virtual Icons

USE THE CHAT FEATURE

ICEBREAKER

Small groups
5 minutes

1-minute introductions *Prompts*

- Name

- Organization/agency

- Where are you from?

- One a scale from 1 to 10, where do you rank your understanding and commitment to antiracist social work practice? (1 = never heard of the term before today; 10 = I can teach antiracist praxis in my sleep)

- How do you normalize conversations around race dynamics in professional settings? Do you embrace conversations, or tend to default to superficial or "safe" boundaries?

Reality Pedagogy – Dr. Christopher Emdin

"*Little progress moving towards peace and justice...*

... has become part and parcel of our [educational] discourse" **– Dr. Christopher Emdin**

Reality Pedagogy values creating space/spaces for the student experience to ANCHOR learning and WELCOMES what is happening in society as the true catalyst for students and teachers to engage in the learning process, ***together.***

TO BECOME ANTIRACIST.... THE EDUCATION SYSTEM MUST:

1. Intentionally embed the learning experiences that are authentic to students
2. Students must feel that their societal experience(s) are embraced inside the classroom, and has value.
3. Learning, curriculum, and instruction should be rooted in action, in order to promote change
4. Students, parents, educators, and leaders should be able to question, analyze, and challenge the status quo of an archaic education system, and the creativity AND innovation of charter schools allows for this space!
5. The education system (all parts and the whole) – the leaders, positions, and staff inside the structure MUST be dedicated to unlearning and learning about cultivating an understanding of systems of oppression and marginalization
6. Education system (i.e. charter schools) have to embrace antiracist work where the students, parents, caregivers, community and faculty can critique the educational experience (inside the classroom) and outside (society)

White Supremacy Protectionism + Education System

- The school system, leaders and educators are not immune from the ills of racism
- White supremacy culture is an ideology (idea) that both white people and their ideas, beliefs, thoughts and actions are superior to non-white identities/spaces/cultures/races ideas, beliefs, thoughts, actions, and existence
- Are we witnessing a "mainstreaming" of antiracist pedagogy in education?
- ***Protectionism***, or the evading of sensitive topics centering around race or other ethical imperatives creates a disservice to students, families, and society
- Piltcher (2017) argues that *sensitive topics*, such as race, antiracism, etc., should not be a contested issue, rather an acknowledgement and integral part of being transposed in schools

Chat: White supremacy culture is reproduced and reinforced in societal institutions, schools/classroom (agree/disagree?) Why? Why not?

White Supremacy Culture in Education

- Perfectionism
- Sense of Urgency
- Defensiveness
- Quantity over Quality
- Worship of the Written Word
- Paternalism

- Either/Or Thinking
- Power Hoarding
- Fear of Open Conflict
- Individualism
- Progress in Bigger, More
- Objectivity
- Right to Comfort (Jones & Okune, 2001)

Chat: Identify 1-2 white supremacy values that comes up for you in your charter school/educational experience? (Does it? Does it not? Why/Why not? And How?)

BREAKOUT SESSION

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
10 MINUTES

HOW TO APPLY IN CHARTER SCHOOL

QUESTION:

- How does white supremacy show up in the classroom?

- What ways are you supported in your school to dismantle racial inequities?

Anti-racist tool/strategy #1

ANTIRACISM (noun)

The policy or practice of identifying and opposing racism and promoting racial tolerance

We Must Become Antiracist Practitioners

What's the problem with being "not racist"? It is a claim that signifies neutrality: "I am not a racist, but neither am I aggressively against racism."

But there is no neutrality in the racism struggle. The opposite of "racist" isn't "not racist." It is "antiracist." What's the difference? One endorses either the idea of a racial hierarchy as a racist, or racial equality as an antiracist.

One either believes problems are rooted in groups of people, as a racist, or locates the roots of problems in power and policies, as an antiracist. One either allows racial inequities to persevere, as a racist, or confronts racial inequities, as an antiracist.

Excerpt from How To Be An Antiracist, My Racist Introduction chapter (p. 9)

(Photo: Dr. Ibram X. Kendi, Race Scholar and Author of *How To Be An Antiracist*)

Chat: Can or should educators be neutral in the racism struggle? Why/why not?

Anti-Racist Pedagogy In Schools

Pedagogy (n): the method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept

What does it mean to enact __Anti-racist__ pedagogy in charter schools?

➤ *Antiracist practices* in the classroom can be defined as "*Looking for rules that promote fairness, equality, and safety*" (Condon & Young, 2017, p. xiii).
➤ Academic research shows that schools have taken a cautious approach, rooted in race-negative and white supremacist-protectionism
➤ Listen
➤ Decenter yourself
➤ Learn about the real history of American education and oppressive systems
➤ Understand equity
➤ Do not wait
➤ Build community

Chat: What are specific antiracist rules/policies that your charter school has enacted, or considered implementing?

Anti-racist tool/strategy #2

CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Critical Race Theory

Point of reference for this seminar is centered and guided by the framework of race, racial constructs, behaviors and actions, through the lens of *Critical Race Theory*

The Critical Race Theory movement considers many of the same issues that conventional civil rights and ethnic studies take up, but places them in a broader perspective that includes economics, history, and even feelings and the unconscious.

Unlike traditional civil rights, which embraces incrementalism and step by step progress, critical race theory questions the very foundations of the liberal order, including equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment rationalism, and principles of constitutional law (Springer, 2018)

Note definitions:

Equality theory, also known as Adams equity theory: aims to strike a balance between an employees input (motivation, skill-set, talent) and output (recognition) in the workplace
Legal reasoning: method of thought and argument that has four steps: issue, rule, facts, and analysis)
Enlightenment rationalism: centered on the sovereignty of reason and evidence of sense as primary sources of knowledge and advanced ideals (liberty, progress, toleration, fraternity, constitutional government and separation of church and state)
Principles of constitutional law: defining the scope of laws within the framework of the constitution; self-restraint dealing with the fundamental relationships within society (Cornell Law School, n.d.).

Race: A Central Focus

Race/Ethnicity should be a central focus/tenet and main component in educational pedagogy, not a supplemental topic

Woo et al. (2018) found that integrating race-related issues within any context must go beyond research, and into real-time agency and system

Chat: Can race be centralized in education decision-making? Yes/No? Why/Why not?

How to apply CRT into schools

- by looking at your specific agencies data through a racial lens, you will uncover the potential of gaps of services, bias, disproportionality and disparities.
- CRT provides a credible framework to identify race as a main cause of unequal and unfair treatment among the various populations/groups served.
- By centralizing race as the main component, steps can be taken to address issues pertaining to each decision point within the school system

- Discipline
- Goal setting
- Curriculum
- Special education
- Honors course
- College credit opportunities

BREAKOUT SESSION

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
10 MINUTES

HOW TO APPLY IN EDUCATION

QUESTION:

- What is your commitment to becoming antiracist?

- Does your school have strategies and practices in place to support **centralizing** race, racism, and antiracism?

Anti-racist tool/strategy #3

THEORIES OF DISPARITY (TOD)

Disparities across systems

- **Child welfare system (Colorado)**
  - Black children are 4x less likely to reunify with their families
  - Hispanic children are overrepresented 38.5% (31% CO population)
  - Black children are overrepresented, 11.3% (4.3% CO population)
  - White children underrepresented, 42.5% (56.4% CO population)
- **Education system**
  - Black boys are 3x more likely to be suspended than white boys
  - Black girls are 6x more likely to be suspended than white girls
  - In CO, 5,800 Pre-K - 2nd grade students were suspended (2017-2018)

- **Criminal Justice System**
  - Black juveniles are arrested 4x more than whites
  - Juvenile arrests (2018)
    - Black 4,618.3 (per 100,000)
    - American Indian/Alaska Native 2251.2 (per 100,000)
    - White 1792.7 (per 100,000)
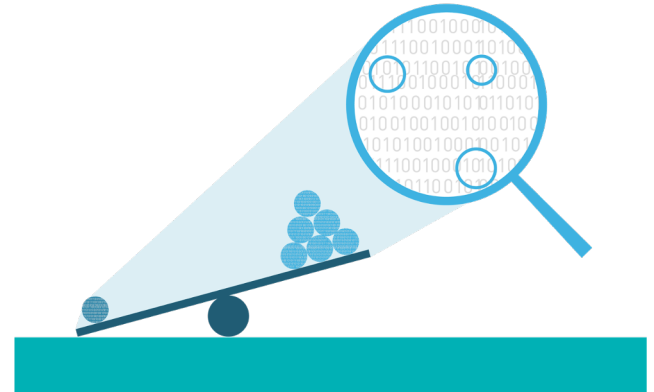
How to apply TOD into charter schools

- In addition, using the TOD, it is equally as important to define disproportionality, which is the overrepresentation of children of color within systems.
- As educators, you can use the Theories of Disparity in our everyday practice.
- It is a tool that is antiracist, and provides a racial lens that calls out, and brings attention to both the problem, and to provide solutions.
- **Practical Application** – by undergoing implicit bias training and education, educators can begin to look at their role in perpetuating systems of oppression through following unjust policies and procedures.
- Moreover, by acknowledging and following the data, practitioners will be able to identify targeted strategies and action steps to reduce and eliminate disparities
- Creating initiatives or task forces that are intentionally created to resolve and rectify inequities needs an all-hands-on-deck approach – teachers and senior leadership, working collectively to address and abolish inequities created by, or reinforced by the school structure and system.

Anti-racist tool/strategy #4

STORYTELLING

Storytelling

The power of sharing our story

Role of narrative, or storytelling

"Although narratives have the power to trap us in hopelessness, they may also be used as a vehicle to heal. We can reshape our ever-after ending by changing the tone of our story" (Perception Institute, 2019).

Creating new and authentic stories by being honest about the past, and creating an equitable future

Holding space for storytelling

How to apply Storytelling into charter schools

Narrative	Community	Healing

Narrative

Narrative approach can incorporate a relational worldview

Actively involves context in which the individual is experiencing distress (Cross et al., in press).

Emphasis on individual healing (personal)

Community

Recognizing resiliency at the communal level

Acknowledge the historic/current oppression and identify future voice, possibility and sustainability

The community understands what they need and do not need

Moving away from a "deficit" perception, and into empowerment based telling their own community story (rather than outsiders)

Practice based evidence, rather than evidence-based practice

Healing

Leaning into past trauma

Identify appropriate, non-traditional services/interventions

Traditional vs. Non-traditional

Traditional Western healing (linear paradigm)

Fails to consider individuality, spirituality, physicality or cognitive functioning

BREAKOUT SESSION

CONVERSATIONS AROUND RACE
10 MINUTES

CHAT FEATURE

QUESTION:

- Who taught you *how* to speak about race?

- As a leader, are you equipped with the language necessary to engage in conversations around race and antiracism?

- Can you use storytelling to engage students and families? How?

Anti-racist tool/strategy #5

THE SANKFOFA MODEL

The Sankofa Model

- An African word from the Akan Tribe in Ghana, Sankofa is the metaphorical symbol and representation of a journey or quest for critically examining our past in order to properly plan for the future.

- Depicted as a bird looking backward and taking an egg from its back, this powerful image has a profound translation into how social work practitioners can utilize this approach with BIPOC families – especially descendants of the African diaspora.

- By "going back and get it," antiracist educators must be able to partner with BIPOC families that embraces their past, without shaming, rather, appreciating the vulnerability and resiliency it takes to open up and discuss personal matters.

- With Black families that, culturally, do not disclose family issues with anyone outside the home. Educators must use their intellect and be patient in their approach to engage, partner, and connect, as to not re-traumatize or alienate families who already have a negative predisposition to the school system

The Sankofa Model (cont.)

- The Sankofa Model is a framework to allow our STUDENTS and FAMILIES to find their voice, through storytelling, by discovering (or rediscovering) their life story.
- Essentially, identifying background information that can help secure future-focused solutions for academic success.
- During this process, we also must be mindful of historical and current trauma that manifests into adverse conditions for communities of color – this includes racial, social, and economic.
- *How to apply the Sankofa model:* using narrative (storytelling), allow the student, parent, caregiver to be the expert of their own lives. Ask them what is meaningful for them, and allow them to take the lead on discovering, or rediscovering their life, with the support and empowerment of the teacher/educator

Chat: How can you use the Sankofa model in your social work practice?

BREAKOUT SESSION

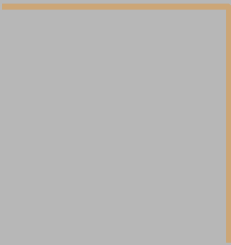## CONVERSATIONS AROUND RACE
10 MINUTES

CHAT FEATURE

QUESTION:

- What is your commitment to integrating antiracist strategies into your school system?

- What are the barriers/opportunities/threats to this kind of work in education?

Final Thoughts, Questions & Wrap-up

School professionals *must* engage in dismantling racist policies and inequities within every system they work with.

Educational leaders must disrupt the disparate status quo and *become antiracist* for students to achieve educational success

Additional Antiracist Resources
By Aaron Ross Green Sr.

The Color Code

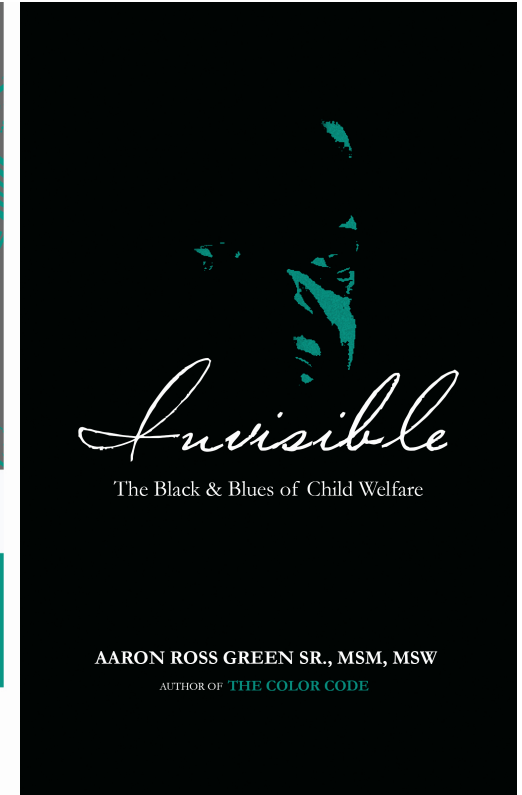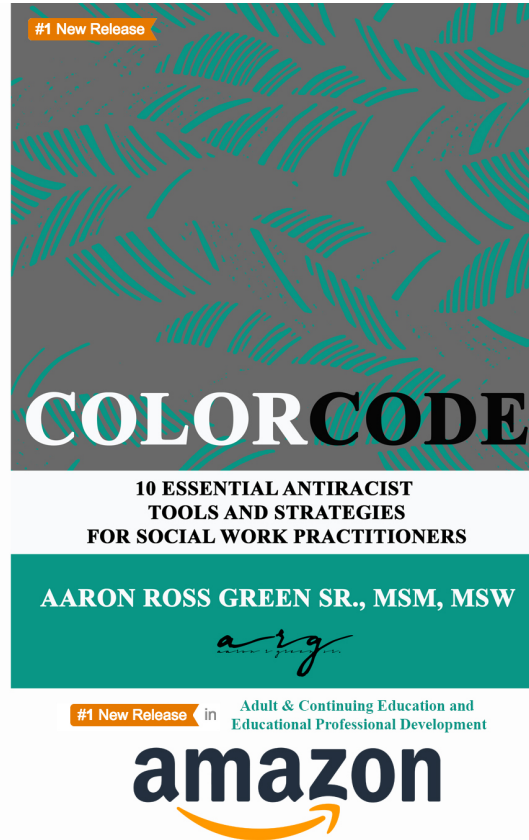Also available on Amazon (kindle and print)

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AUTHOR OF THE COLOR CODE

Thank you!

Appendix: Shared language and terminology

Antiracism the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life

Antiracist someone who is supporting antiracist policy through their actions or expressing antiracist ideas

Anti–Black two-part formation that voids Blackness of value, while systematically marginalizing Black people and their issues

White supremacy the belief that white people constitute a superior race and should therefore dominate society, typically to the exclusion or detriment of other racial and ethnic groups

Power unequally distributed globally by groups or individuals who yield greater power than others, allowing them greater access and control over resources

Race social construct (not biological), created by scientists to support worldviews that viewed some groups of people as inferior

Intersectionality an approach largely advanced by women of color, arguing that classifications such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and others cannot be examined in isolation from one another

(source: Racial Equity Tools glossary)

Appendix: Shared language and terminology (cont.)

Ally someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identify, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggled for justice

Anti-Indigenous racism is the ongoing race-based discrimination, negative stereotyping, and injustice experienced by Indigenous and First Nations People

Marginalization treatment of a person, group, or concept as insignificant or peripheral

Oppression Systemic devaluating, undermining, marginalizing, and disadvantaging of certain social identities in contrast to the privileged norm; when some people are denied something if value, while others have ready access

Privilege unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege, male privilege, etc.)

People of color often the preferred collective term for referring to non-White racial groups

Racial healing to restore to health or soundness; to repair or set right; to restore to spiritual wholeness

(source: Racial Equity Tools glossary)

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