

**PROMOTING RACIAL EQUITY IN ARKANSAS'
Early Childhood System:
Supporting Teacher Competencies in Working
w/African American Male Children**



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**African American
Males**





ELAN PROJECT GOALS

Create an awareness of equity issues in the state;

Create an improved Early Childhood system and a racially balanced Professional Development System that result in the dismantling of structural inequities that limit opportunities for AA children and their families to succeed;

Revise the state's Core Knowledge and Cultural Competencies for teacher preparation to ensure that teachers are aware, prepared to teach, and work with children of color;

Outline concrete strategies, policies, and practices for early childhood programs to improve outcomes for African American males including:

- Creating interventions for African American males who show early signs of academic troubles;
- Closely monitoring the rigor of instruction and content they receive;
- Using aggressive recruitment strategies to hire more African-American males as teachers/role models; and Educating teachers to intentionally work with children of color.

Rewrite the rules to create recommendations to change laws, policies, and practices to address structural, institutional, and racial barriers identified in the state's professional development and early childhood systems.

History and Purpose

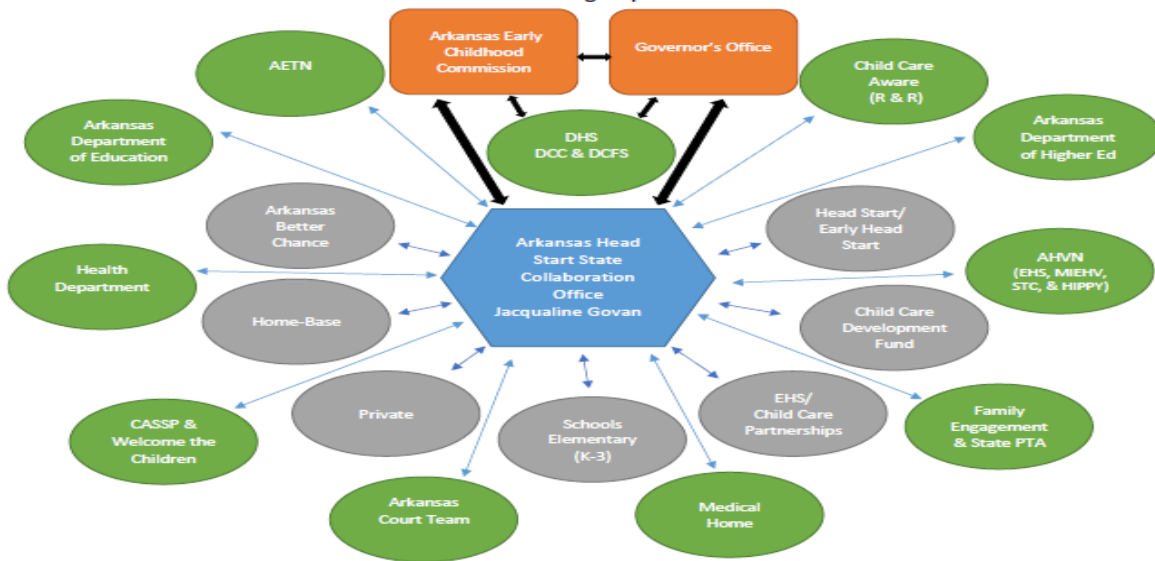


The Arkansas' Civil Rights Heritage trail acknowledges the sacrifices and achievements made by those who have fought for justice in the State of Arkansas: "The Little Rock Nine."

This project on access to early childhood education for our most vulnerable children, African American males, birth to age five, explores the reasons why teachers are not living up to the expectations of their teaching role. Arkansas' vision for a comprehensive, racially equitable, high-quality early childhood system is one that ensures that all children have an opportunity to develop and reach their full potential, without experiencing discrimination or bias. In reality, however, this vision has not always been achieved in Arkansas. This is because the goals of racial equity has historically been counter to both deeply rooted biases, as well as political, legal, and customary practices of racial discrimination and oppression.

Arkansas' Equity Leader Action Network Sociogram

A sociogram is a graphic representation of a group's interpersonal relationships used to define, reveal, and sometimes discover a group's structure.



Terms to Be Aware of...

- **Racism** is a complex system of beliefs and behaviors, grounded in a presumed superiority of the white race. These beliefs and behaviors are conscious and unconscious; personal and institutional; and result in the oppression of people of color and benefit the dominant group, whites.
- **Diversity** is the state of being diverse by having many different forms of ideas, types, etc.
- **Racial Equity** is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. We are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.
- **Racial Equality** occurs when people of all races are given equal opportunity. In other words, by ignoring their racial physical characteristics, and giving everyone legally, morally, and politically equal opportunity.
- **Structural Racism** is a term which refers to racist attitudes within a society because society is structured in a way that excludes substantial numbers of people from minority backgrounds from taking part in social institutions.
- **Institutionalized Racism** refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as non-white.

We believe that racial healing and racial equity are essential if we are going to accomplish our mission to support children, families and communities in creating and strengthening the conditions in which vulnerable children succeed.





Equity in Arkansas

Equity Surveys:

- Parents
- Teachers
- Administrators

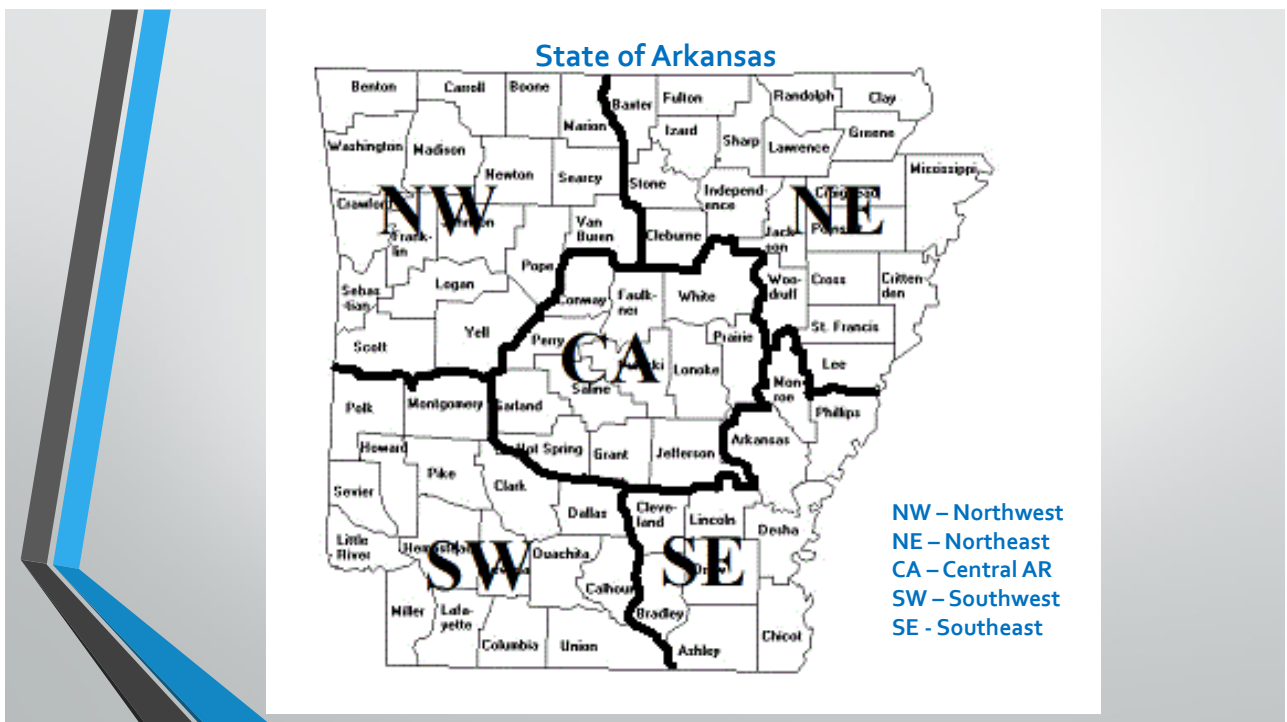


Equity Environmental Self-Assessment:

- Background Information
- Classroom Environment
- Center/Program/School Environment
- Family Engagement Environment

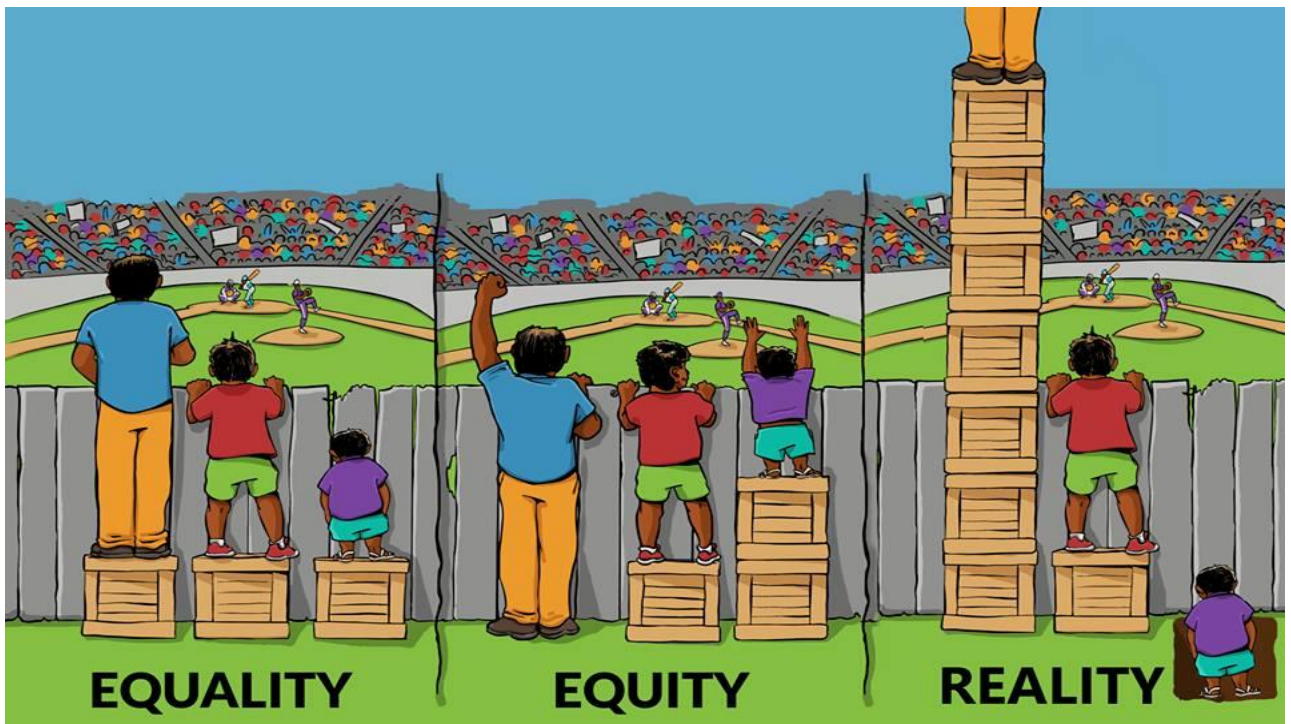
Basic Information From Surveys

Surveys	# of Responses	Position	Race	Gender	Position Held for...	Salary Range/Income	Area of The State
Families	804	Mothers 77%	AA – 49% Cau. – 39%	Females-83% Males-16%	B-5 years	Less Than \$9,999-31%	SE – 47% CA – 19%
Teachers	223	Teachers 61%	Cau. – 51% AA – 45%	Females-98% Males-2%	1-5 Years 31%	\$20-39,999 41%	CA – 29% SE – 27%
Administrators	67	Dir.-40% Adm.-25%	Cau. – 67% AA – 28%	Females-91% Males-9%	1-5 Yrs-32% 21-30=20%	\$40-59,999 34%	SW – 32% NW – 20%

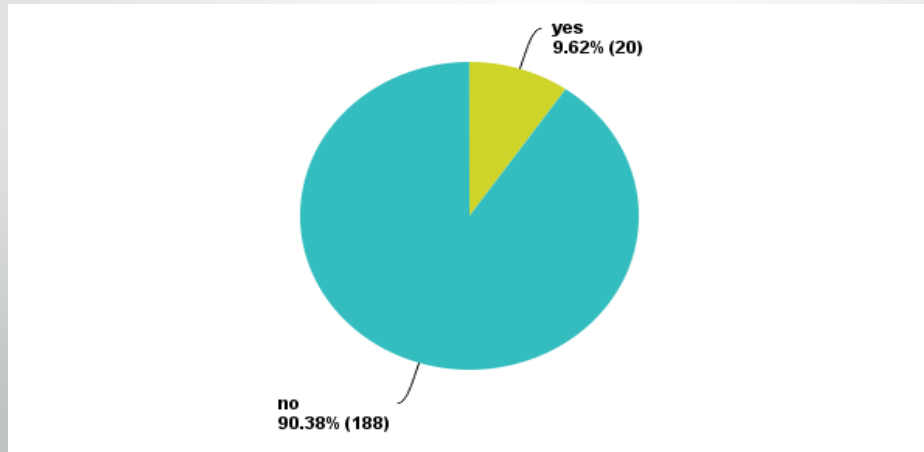


Defining Equity and Equality

# of Responses	Audience	Equity	Equality
209	Teachers	46%	7%
66	Administrators	68%	11%



There is an education achievement gap (using test scores) between African American males and Caucasian males in my classroom?



Ways gaps can narrow ...

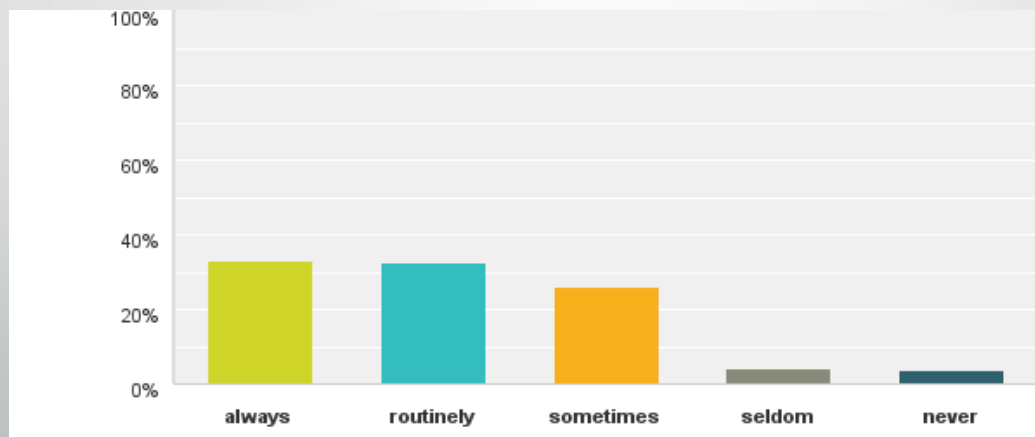
- The average scores of both groups increase, while the score of the lower performing group increases even more.
- The average score of the higher performing group does not change, while the score of the lower performing group increases.
- The average score of the higher performing group declines, while the score of the lower performing group increases.
- The average score of the higher performing group declines, while the score of the lower performing group does not change.
- The average scores of both groups decline, but the score of the higher performing group declines even more

These are differences in the achievement of Black and White students. It is important to note that this analysis does not identify what causes these differences, but rather, it describes whether the differences in achievement between Black and White students are observed between or within schools. Each portion—between or within—can be addressed by different sorts of policies.

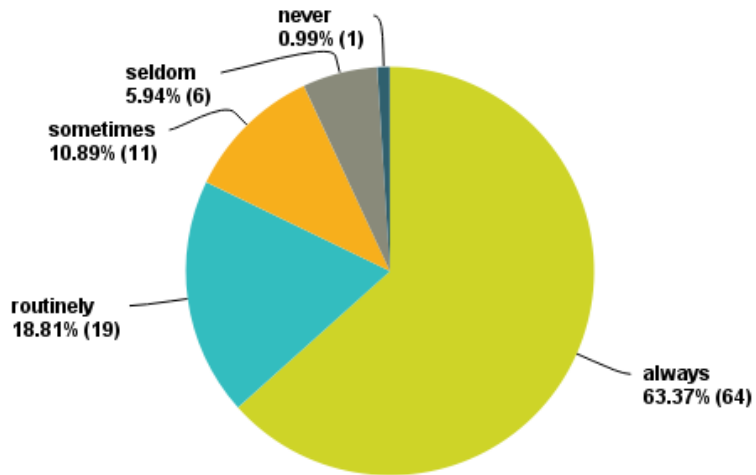
AR Commission on Closing the Achievement Gap Act 1314, Section 2 of the AR Code 6-15-1601

- (1) Develop a plan for the state designed to enable all public school students to meet the state's student academic achievement standards while working toward the goal of narrowing the achievement gap in public schools for the following subgroups: (A) Economically disadvantaged students; and (B) Students from major racial and ethnic groups;
- (2) Monitor the Department of Education's efforts to comply with federal guidelines on improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged, specifically including, but not limited to, the Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA);
- (3) Monitor the Department's identification of population groups to be motivated in closing the achievement gap efforts. The Commission may also expand the role and scope of the Commission to cover specific population groups as identified by the Department as target groups for closing the achievement gap.
- (4) Receive national school lunch data and reports biennially from the Arkansas Department of Education.
- (5) Interface with local school district achievement gap taskforces created under Arkansas Code 6-15-1603 to provide data on the achievement gap and achievement gap intervention strategies.
- (6) Present a report to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education, the Governor, and the State Board of Education no later than November 1 of each year; and
- (7) Create a website to provide ongoing information.

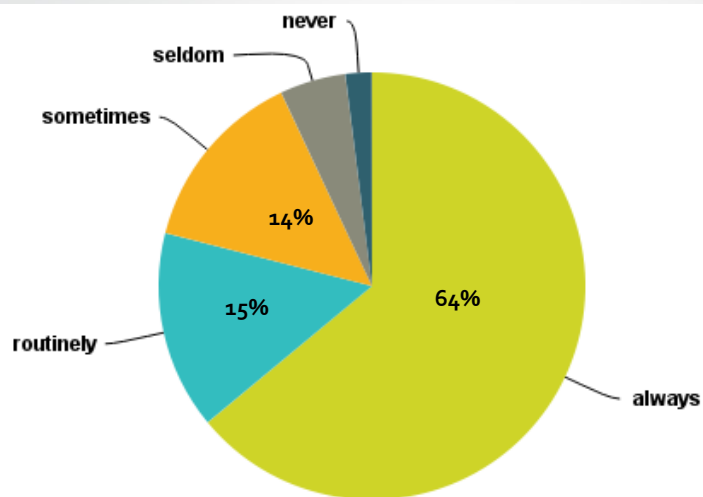
I use a variety of technology strategies and methods in my classroom to meet the multi-cultural needs of my children/students.



The pictures in the classroom reflect the cultural makeup of the children in the classroom.



The books in the classroom reflect the cultural makeup of the children in the classroom.



Supporting Teacher Competencies in Working with African American Male Children



Teachers require support as they face the challenge of effectively teaching diverse students in their classrooms. Teacher-educators have used various methods to foster change in teachers' thinking, attitudes, and behaviors regarding cultural diversity, but these efforts have produced mixed results because they often focused on content rather than the process of cross-cultural learning.

Children from culturally diverse communities, poor children, and children from marginalized racial groups have better educational outcomes when teachers have knowledge and practice skills that support home culture and language (Au & Mason, 1981, 1983; Dee, 2004; Knapp & Associates, 1995; Pewewardy, 1994).

Research suggests that both pre- and in-service early childhood teacher trainings have failed to prepare educators who can effectively teach children for whom English is a new language or second dialect, children of color, and children from economically marginalized communities (Ray & Bowman, 2006; Ray, Bowman, & Robbins, 2006)



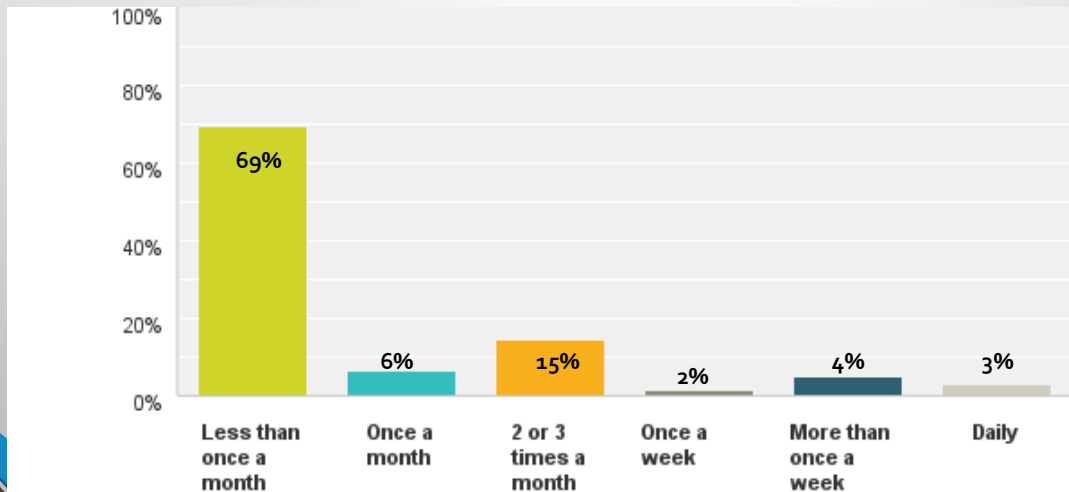
Cultural Competence



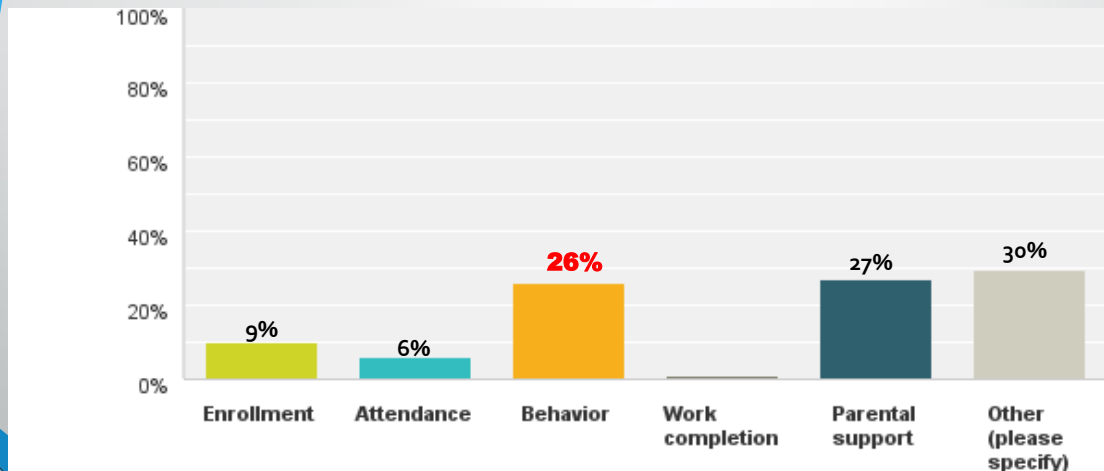
... requires that early childhood programs and organizations:

- have a defined set of values and principles, demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies and structures that enables them to work effectively cross-culturally.
- have the capacity to (1) value diversity, (2) conduct self-assessment, (3) manage the dynamics of difference, (4) acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge, and (5) adapt to the diversity and cultural contexts of the individuals, families and communities they serve.
- incorporate the above in all aspects of policy making, administration, practice, service delivery and systematically involve consumers, families, and communities

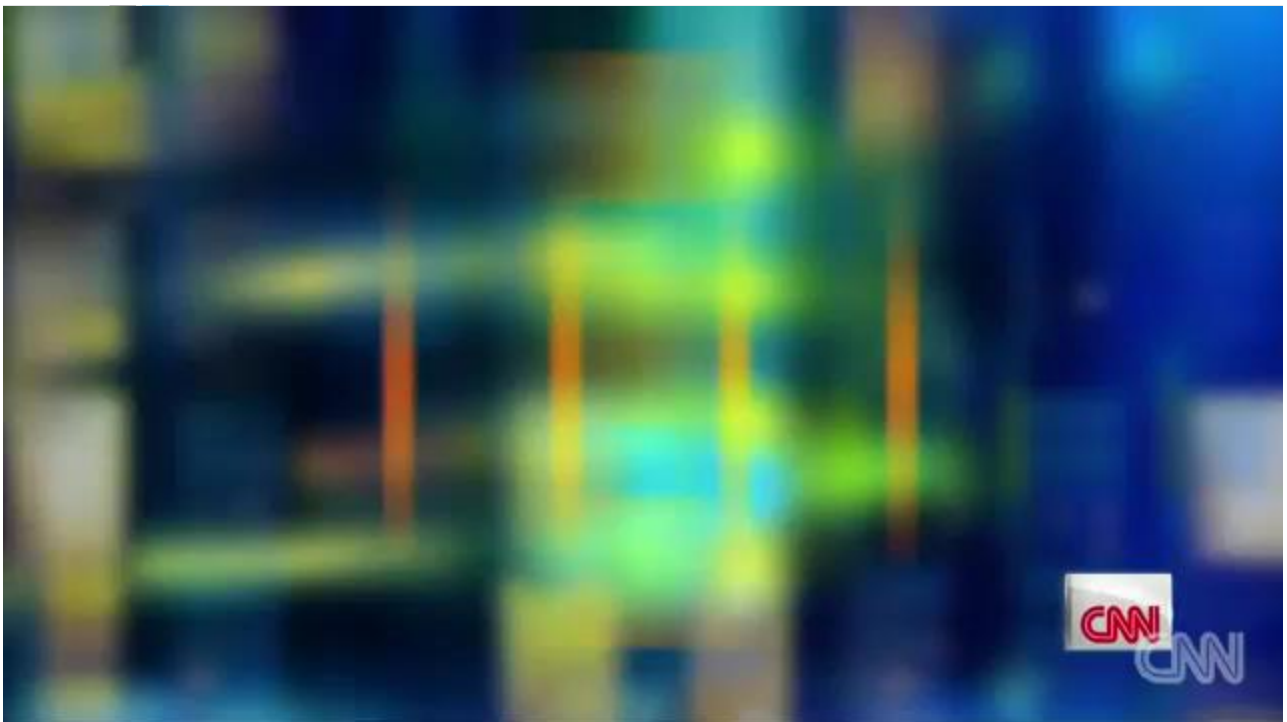
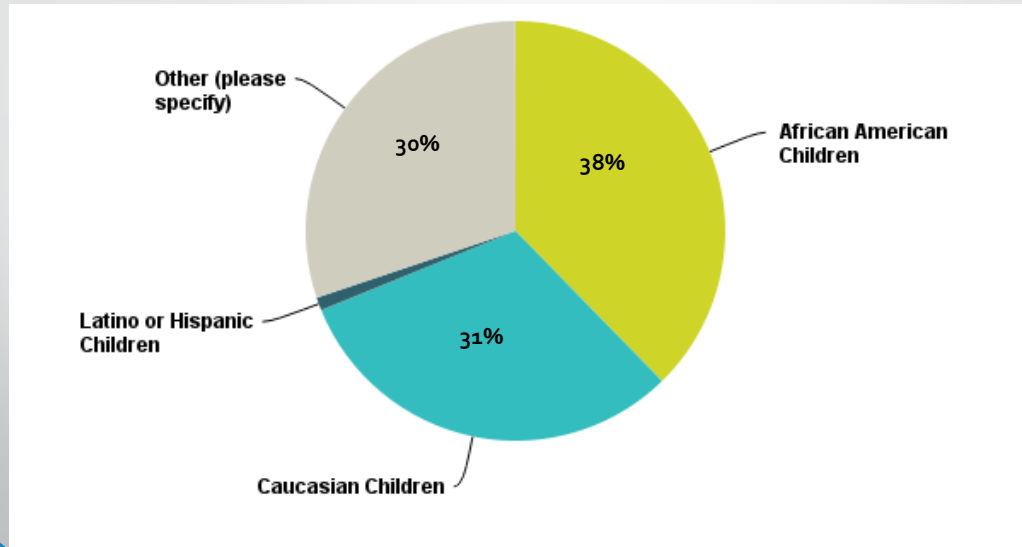
The administrator and staff contacts a family regarding an African American child's negative behavior:

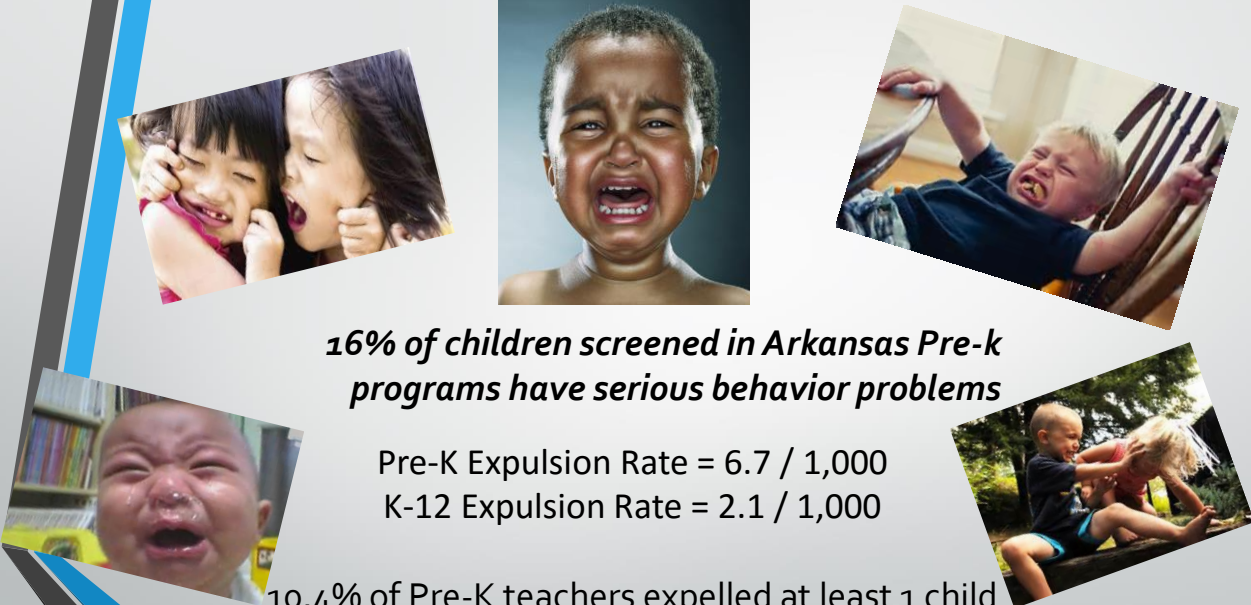


What is the number one factor affecting the education for African American males in your center, program, or school?



The children who show the most negative behavior on a regular basis in my classroom are:

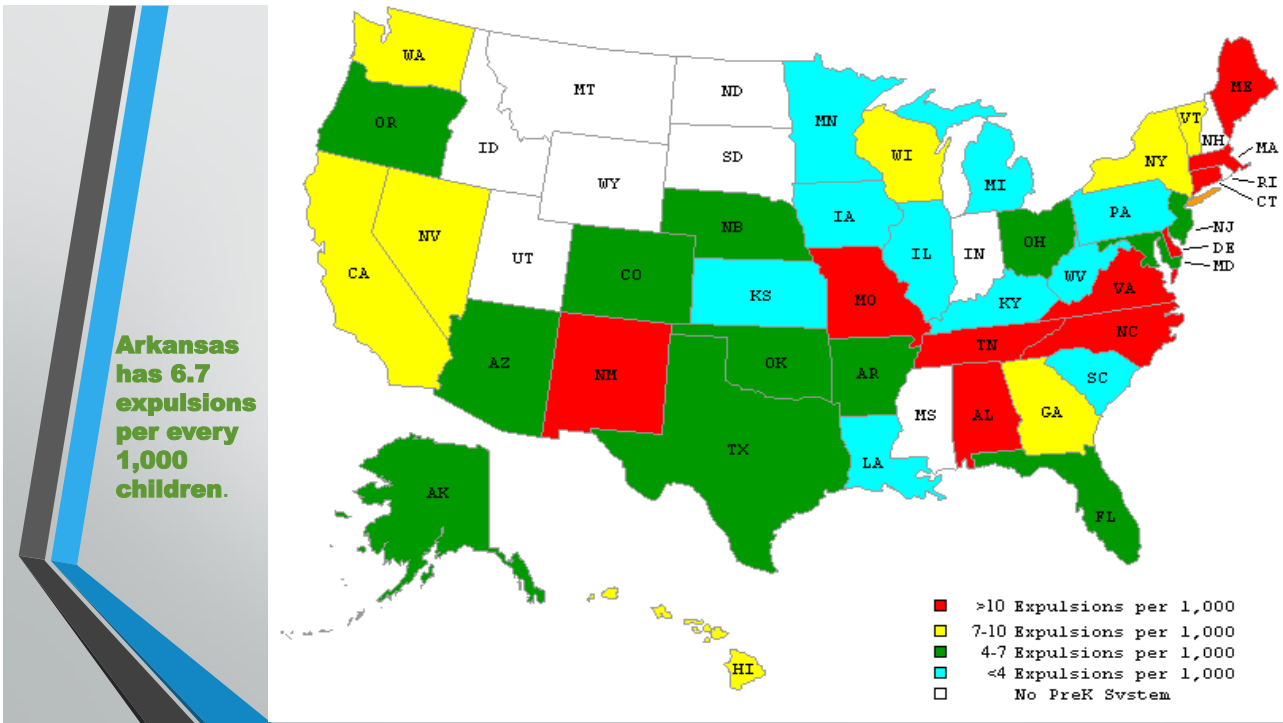


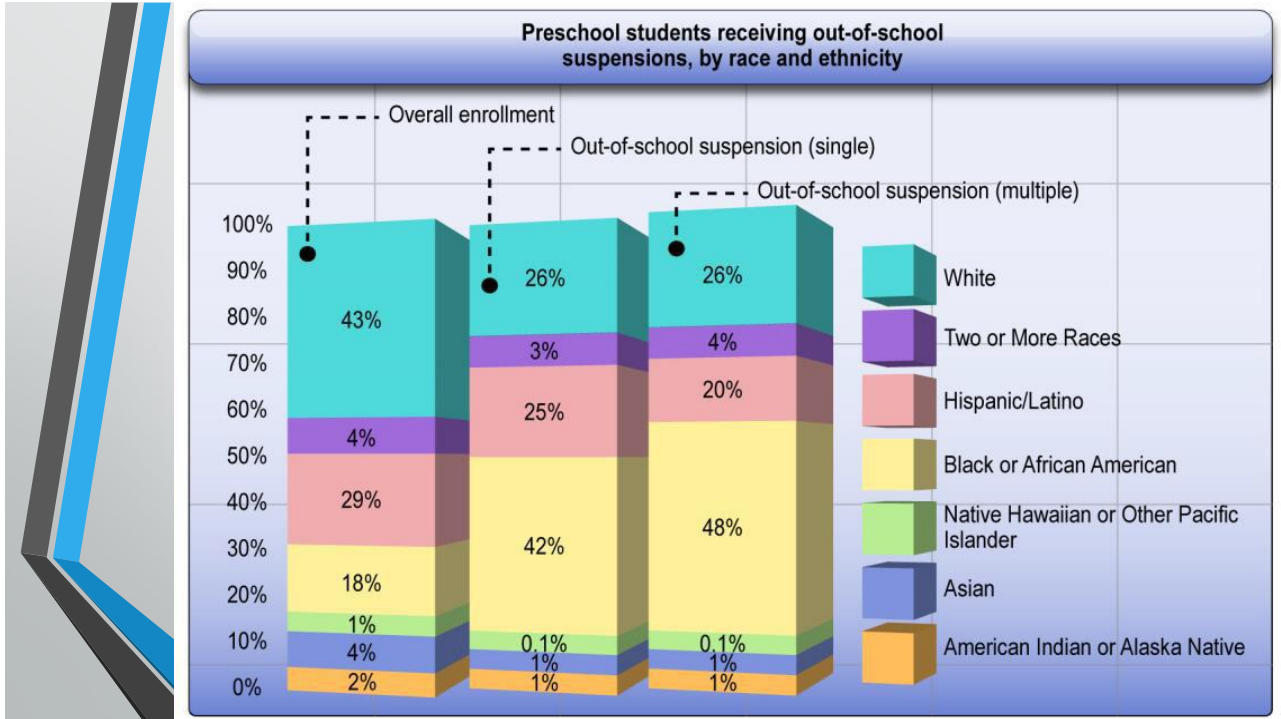


16% of children screened in Arkansas Pre-k programs have serious behavior problems

Pre-K Expulsion Rate = 6.7 / 1,000
K-12 Expulsion Rate = 2.1 / 1,000

10.4% of Pre-K teachers expelled at least 1 child in past year due to behavior problems





Behaviors are:

- Hard to manage
- Disrupt the class
- Difficult to control
- Can be unsafe
- Can make teachers feel ineffective
- Can anger parents



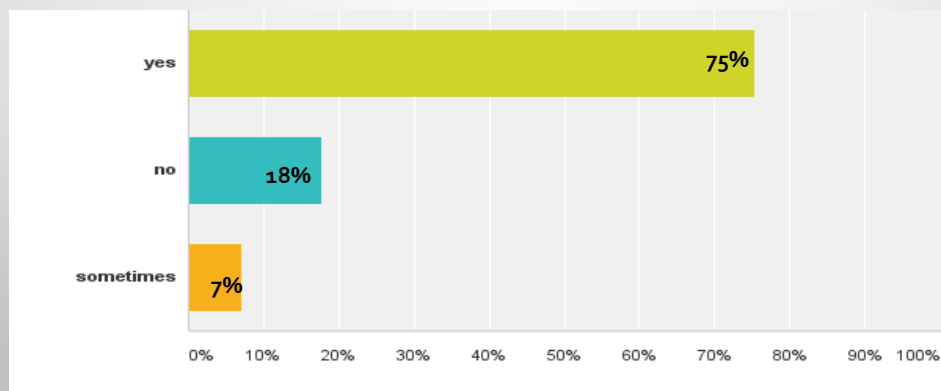
What ethnic groups do all children in your program represent? (Please share percentages)

Race Choices	Percentages	Exact Responses
Caucasian	83.78%	82
African American	93.24%	69
Latino/Hispanic	64.86%	48
Asian	36.14%	26
American Indian	28.38%	21
Other	37.84%	29

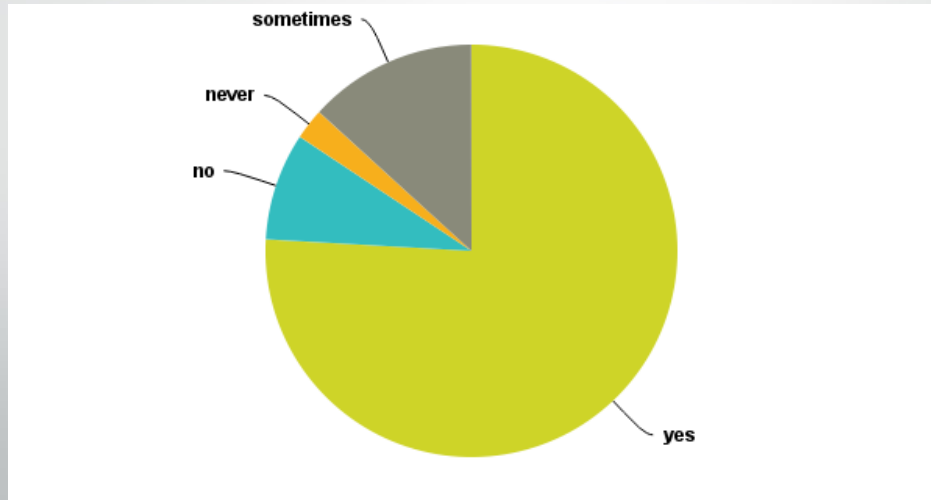
Please share the sent home, suspension, and expulsion rates during the last full center, program, or school year (2015-2016)

Races	Sent Home	Suspended	Expelled	Responses
African American Males	100%	98%	98%	53
Caucasian Males	92%	91%	91%	49

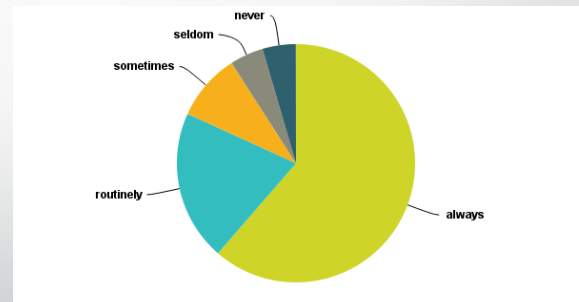
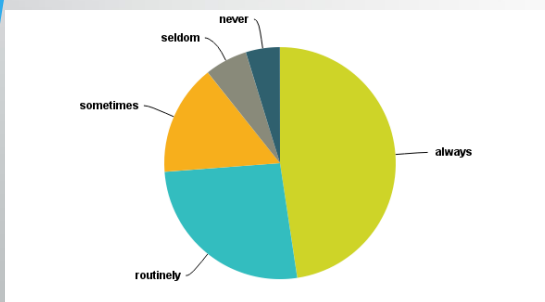
Are all children respected and not embarrassed when discipline/guidance is administered in your center, school, or program? Examples: holding a rope walking down the hall because they would not line up properly, set outside so others will know they are in trouble, standing in a corner.



Are equity policies and procedures available and communicated at the center, program, school, and community levels?

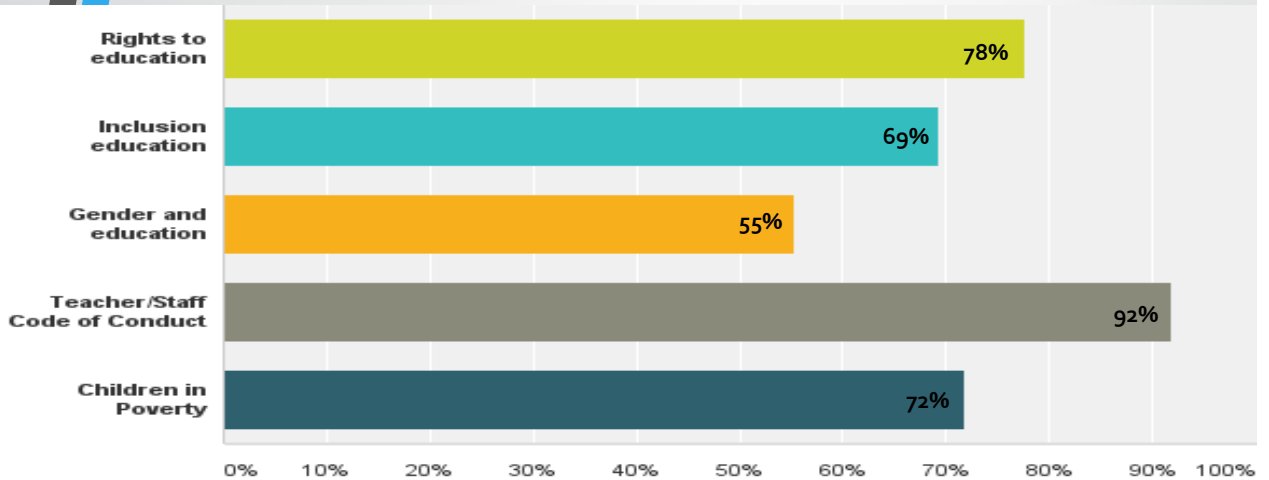


Culture, Language and Different Backgrounds are Taken Into Consideration

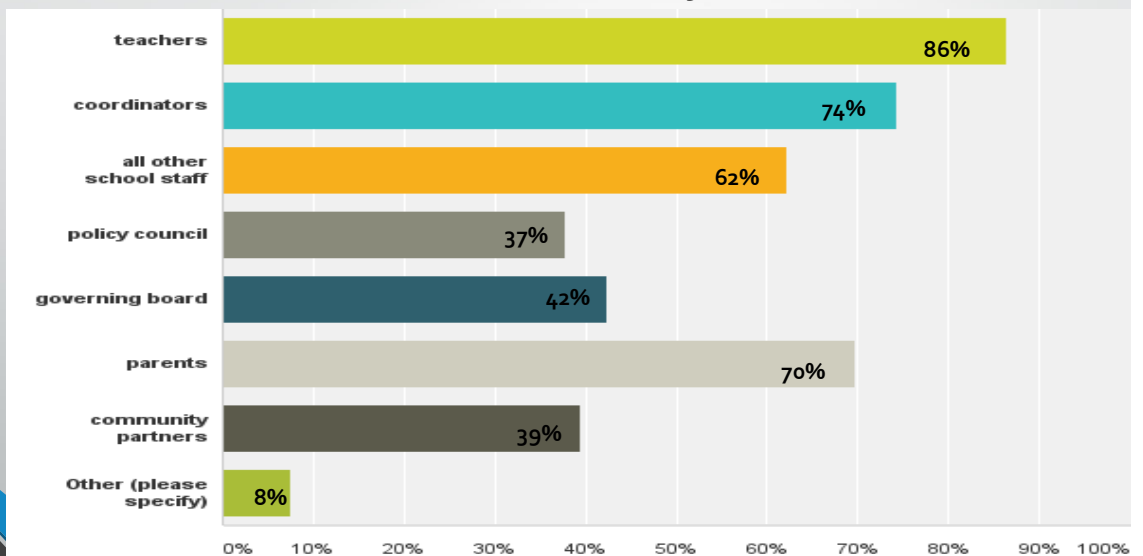


Are there clearly defined equity policies in your early childhood center, school, or program on *(Check all that apply)*:

Answered: 85 Skipped: 27



Are equity policies and procedures disseminated to: *(Check all that apply)*

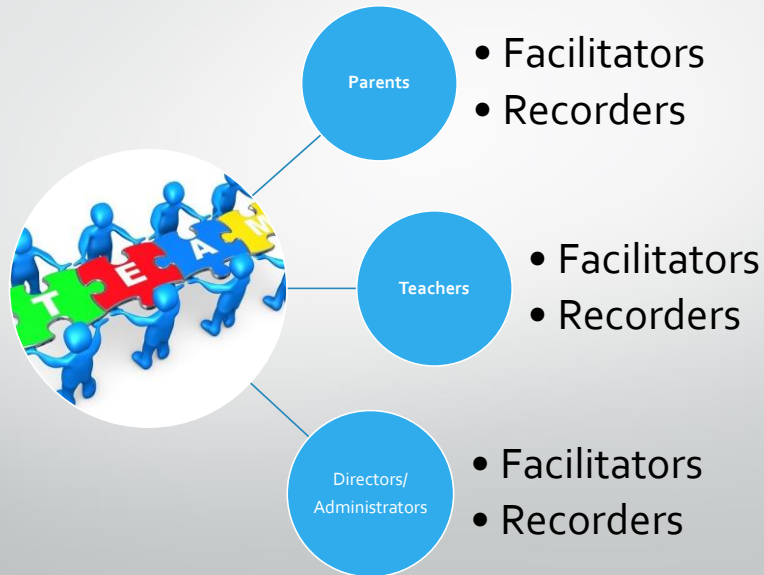


So What are WE Doing to Eliminate Inequities in Our Early Childhood Program?



Key Indicators	African American	White	National Average
Economic Well-Being			
• Children in Poverty	36%	12%	21%
• Children Whose Parents Lack Secure Employment	45%	23%	29%
• Children Living in Households w/a High Housing Cost Burden	47%	24%	33%
• Teens Not in School & Not Working	10%	6%	7%
Education			
• Young Children Not in School	49%	51%	53%
• Fourth Graders Not Proficient in Reading	82%	54%	65%
• High School Students Not Graduating on Time	25%	12%	17%
Health			
• Low-Birthweight Babies	13.0%	6.9%	8.1%
• Children Without Health Insurance	4%	4%	5%
• Child & Teen Deaths Per 100,000	36%	24%	25%
Family and Community			
• Children in Single Parent Families	66%	25%	35%
• Children in Families Where the Head of the Household Lacks a High School Diploma	12%	8%	14%
• Children Living in High Poverty Areas	32%	5%	14%
• Teen Births Per 1,000	32	16	22
Overall Child Well-Being			45

Equity Café Group Discussions



Equity Café Participants'

OUTCOMES

Participants will:

- Establish a level and safe discussion field for sharing their thoughts and experiences,
- Gain an understanding of the importance of racial equity in Early Childhood programs,
- Apply techniques and critical discussions to address racial equity,
- Exhibit the process of using "Courageous Conversation" in helping participants understand racial equity, and
- Identify ways to address solutions to racial inequities in their early childhood programs.



Equity Questions & Recording Form

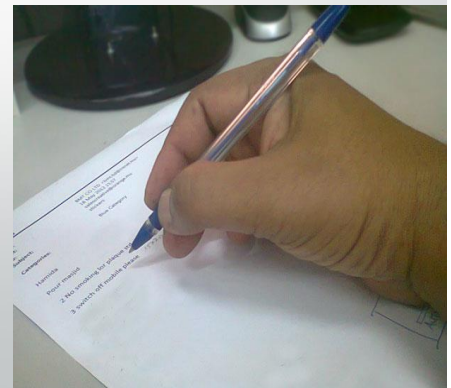


1. What are the specific disparities/inequities that you seek to eliminate in your early childhood program?
2. What barriers stand in the way of achieving more equitable outcomes?
3. What solutions do you have for solving these barriers?
4. In order to support parents, teachers, and administrators in providing quality educational services for African American males and children of color, what do you see as a need for parents, teachers, and administrators?
5. What recommendations for change would you offer to meet the needs of parents, teachers, and administrators?



Rewriting the Rules for Institutional Change

Data suggests that important measures such as teacher effectiveness, racially integrated early childhood programs, and a change in class size can improve things for AA male children. Evidence shows that desegregation can bring with it stronger teaching, better financing, a more genuinely diverse group of children's backgrounds and abilities, and therefore better outcomes for children.





ELAN Recommendations



Levels of Change	Levers of Change
<p>INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</p> <p>The individual consistently works alone and with others, to understand their own values, beliefs, implicit biases, unconscious racism, actions and relative privileges that contribute to racial inequities and equity; the individual acts to advance racial equity.</p>	<p><i>Public Awareness on Racial Equity</i></p> <p>Provide Racial Equity Train the Trainers Include Racial Equity in the States' Prof. Development Registry <i>Enhance the State's BehaviorHelp System</i></p>
<p>INTERPERSONAL LEVEL</p> <p>Individuals and groups are effective in relating to others <u>not</u> like themselves, actively include those typically excluded, share power, surface issues of racial inequality in interpersonal relationships, act to support positive change, and work to reduce interpersonal conflict.</p>	<p><i>AR Workforce Knowledge & Competencies</i></p> <p>Include Racial Equity in Better Beginnings/QRIS Provide Racial Equity Training for Parents, Teachers & Admin. Dissemination of Racial Equity Brochure & Bookmark</p>
<p>STRUCTURAL LEVEL</p> <p>They develop approaches to advance equity that offer new or reconstituted structural arrangements; they intentionally disrupt processes that are inequitable; they build shared leadership and collective power that leads to change; and they look for unintended consequences of policies and correct them.</p>	<p>Be responsible for Administrators and Teacher Evaluation Decrease the number of AA and children of color in poverty <i>Create a Statewide Family Engagement Guide/Frwk.</i> Provide Interventions for AA and Children of Color Create a Fatherhood Mentoring Program in the high schools</p>
<p>INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL</p> <p>Institutions systematically and intentionally apply a racial equity/economic justice lens to their policies, practices, regulations and work culture to dismantle policies that perpetuate inequality and design/develop policies and practices that</p>	<p>Racial Equity Training Requirements Statewide Admin. and Teacher Evaluation System Special Projects: Closing the Achievement Gap</p>



To push for excellence today

without continuing to push for access
for less privileged students
is to undermine the crucial
but incomplete gains that have been made.

Equity
and excellence
cannot be divided.

Ernest L. Boyer

