

CONCRETE STEPS TO RECOGNIZE AND COMBAT UNCONSCIOUS BIAS IN SCHOOLS

Sarah E. Fiarman, EdD

Agenda

- Welcome and Intro
- Unconscious bias
 - ▣ In all of us
 - ▣ In schools
 - ▣ What can we do about it?

Norms

- Stay engaged
 - Experience discomfort
 - Speak your truth
 - Expect and accept non-closure
- ▣ From *Courageous Conversations: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools*.
By Glenn E. Singleton, Curtis W. (Wallace) Linton (2005)

Like Pollution in the Air

The social science research demonstrates that one does not have to be a racist with a capital R or one who intentionally discriminates... on the basis of race, to harbor implicit racial biases.

--Cynthia Lee

"Making Race Salient: Trayvon Martin and Implicit Bias in a Not Yet Post-Racial Society"
North Carolina Law Review (2013)

African American students are suspended THREE TIMES as often as White students – 15 percent versus 5 percent. Hispanic students (7 percent) and Native American students (8 percent) are also suspended at higher rates than White students.

- ▣ "Discipline Policies, Successful Schools, and Racial Justice," by Daniel J. Losen, 2011 National Education Policy Center

Okonofua & Eberhardt Research

- ▣ Read the [article](#).
- ▣ Discuss:
 - ▣ What are the key takeaways from this research?
 - ▣ How else might bias manifest in schools?
 - ▣ What are the implications for you in your role?
- ▣ *Facilitator = person who traveled the farthest*

Addressing Unconscious Bias

1. Increase awareness
2. Anticipate bias, create systems to reduce it
3. Build empathy
4. Hold ourselves accountable
 - *Are we more effective with some groups of students than others?*
 - *If so, what change in our practice will make us more effective with all students?*
5. Commit to ongoing work

Action Planning

What concrete step(s) will you take back to your school?

What concrete step(s) will you take to address your own biases?

Resources

A few resources to extend the learning:

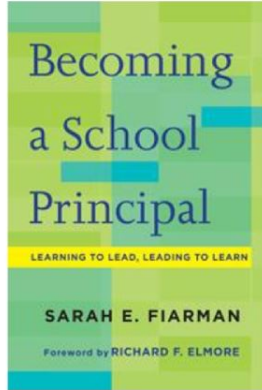
Opportunities for raising awareness about our personal biases:

- Facebook [video series](#) Managing Unconscious Bias
- MTV [website](#) "Look Different"
- Google video "Unconscious Bias at Work"
- SEED Training for leading groups discussing race and racism
- [Courageous Conversations About Race](#) Book with guide for discussing race and racism
- Jay Smooth [video](#) about how to talk about race

Resources about implicit (unconscious) bias:

- [State of the Science: Implicit Bias Review](#)
- Test your implicit bias [here](#)
- The [study](#) we read together about bias in approach to discipline
- Another [study](#) from Okonofua, this time about [countering](#) implicit bias**

More about unconscious bias in:



Your feedback please!

Please go to the NAESP app to fill out an evaluation for this session.

****Thank you!****

Contact info:

Sarah Fiarman

617-661-0538

sarahfiarman@gmail.com

LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/sarah-fiarman-974b7214>

If you asked me to name the greatest discoveries of the past 50 years, alongside things like the internet and the Higgs particle, I would include the discovery of unconscious biases and the extent to which stereotypes about gender, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and age deprive people of equal opportunity in the workplace and equal justice in society.

- Dr. Nancy Hopkins, from Boston University's 141st Commencement Baccalaureate Address, "Invisible Barriers and Social Change," on May 18, 2014

Concrete Steps to Recognize and Combat Unconscious Bias in Schools

- Ultimately, we believe our decisions are consistent with our conscious beliefs, when in fact, our unconscious is running the show.

- Cheryl Staats in *State of the Science: Implicit Bias Review*
Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 2014
