

Learner Series: Opportunity to Access

Series 7 | Video 5 | Reflection

Navigating a Diverse Country

Allison Yoshimoto-Towery, former LAUSD Chief Academic Officer and current Executive Director of UC/CSU California Collaborative for Neurodiversity and Learning; Courtney Winkfield, former NYC DOE Deputy Chief Strategy Officer and current Executive Director of Programming and Development for Courageous Conversation. ®

Purpose

In this video, Yoshimoto-Towery and Winkfield discuss diversity in America. Diversity is one of our greatest strengths as a country. Allowing children to be exposed to different cultures and lifestyles gives them a better chance to explore their individuality and understand themselves better. They can connect and empathize with people who may not look like them.

Background

Diversity in the United States has been shaped by centuries of immigration, colonization, and cultural exchanges. Native Americans were the original inhabitants, with hundreds of distinct tribes and cultures before European exploration and settlement began in the 15th century. Over time, waves of immigrants from various parts of the world arrived, bringing their languages, religions, and traditions, contributing to the rich tapestry of American society. Slavery, a tragic part of American history, brought millions of Africans to the country against their will, contributing significantly to the country's diversity and influencing the nation's culture, systems, social dynamics, and many aspects of daily life. The struggle for civil rights and equality during more recent times is part of the continued diversity narrative to promote belonging and inclusion. When promoted and embraced in our schools, diversity can break down barriers, foster understanding, and help create a more tolerant, accepting, and just society.

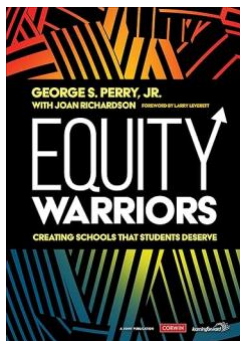
Reflections

How has exposure to diverse cultures and perspectives in school influenced your own beliefs and attitudes toward people from different backgrounds?

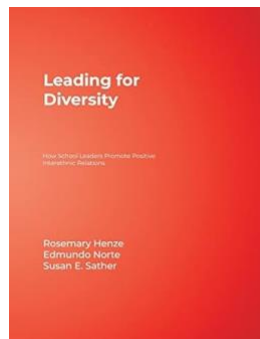
Reflect on an experience where you interacted with someone from a different cultural or ethnic background in your school. How did that encounter impact your understanding of diversity and inclusion?

In what ways do you think schools can further promote a sense of belonging and inclusivity among students from diverse backgrounds? How can you personally contribute to creating a more welcoming and accepting school environment?

Extended Connections



Equity Warriors: Creating Schools That Students Deserve – George S.



Leading for Diversity: How School Leaders Promote Positive Interethnic



Street Data: A Next Generation Model for Equity Pedagogy, and School Transformation – Shane Safir