

ACIS Heads Round Table

Leading Schools During Polarizing Times

Dr. Rodney Glasgow

President, The Glasgow Group LLC

Head of School, Sandy Spring Friends School



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Norms

- Speak from the “I” perspective. Be authentic.
- Be fully present.
- Listen to understand, not to judge.
- Lean into discomfort.
- Disagreement is a learning opportunity.
- Honor confidentiality.





What thrills you about the DEI work that your school is doing?

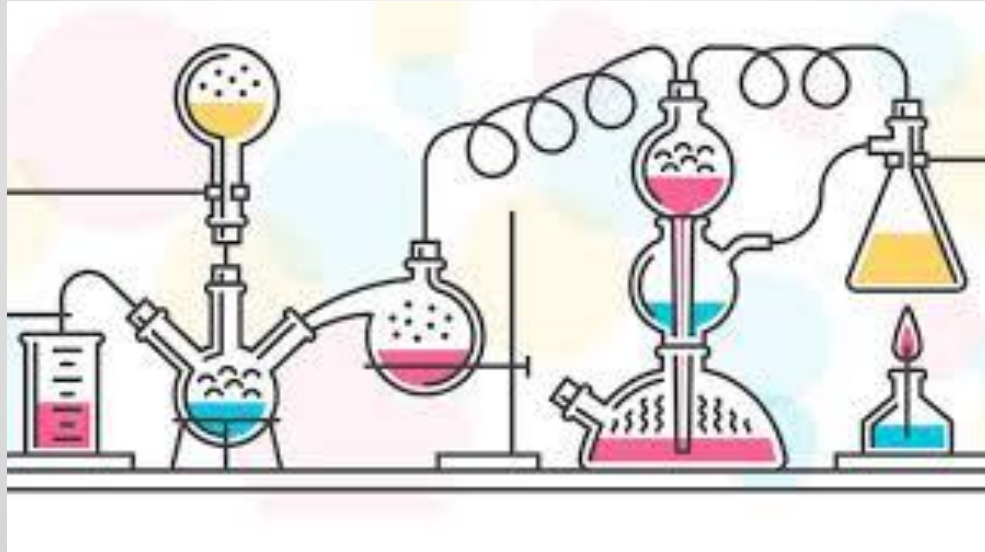
What do you fear most as your school continues and deepens its DEI work?

What is one question or conversation topic you have about DEI work in our schools?



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As Heads of School, how do our identities drive how we experience, interpret, act, and react out in the world?



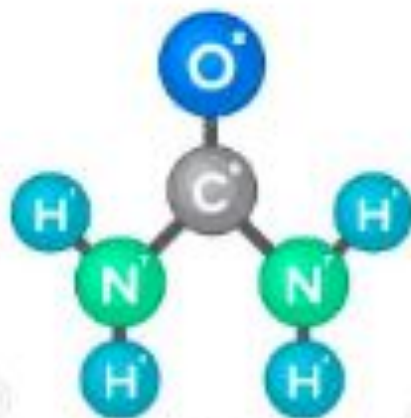
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Baking soda



Chloroform



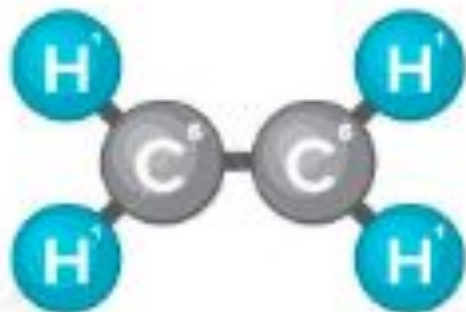
Urea



Ammonia

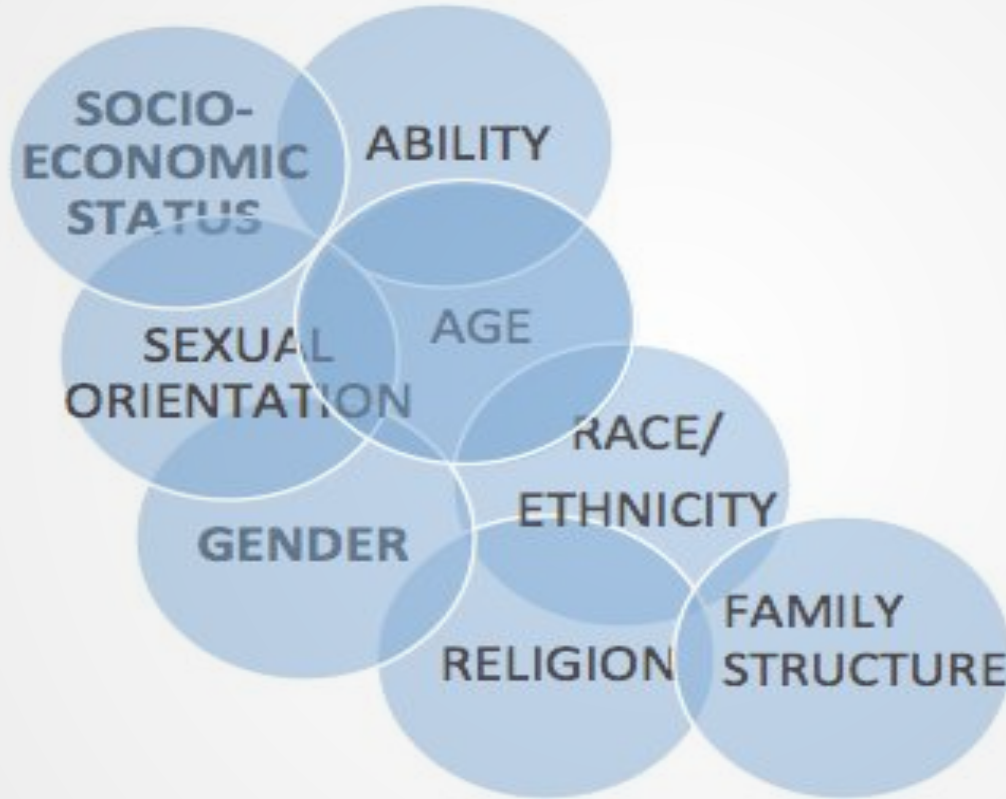


Hydrocyanic acid



Ethylene

Core Cultural Identifiers:





Let's look at a real life molecule moment...



*Is this an incident of
identity based harm?*

*How do you know if it
is or not?*



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A new parent emails you and says:

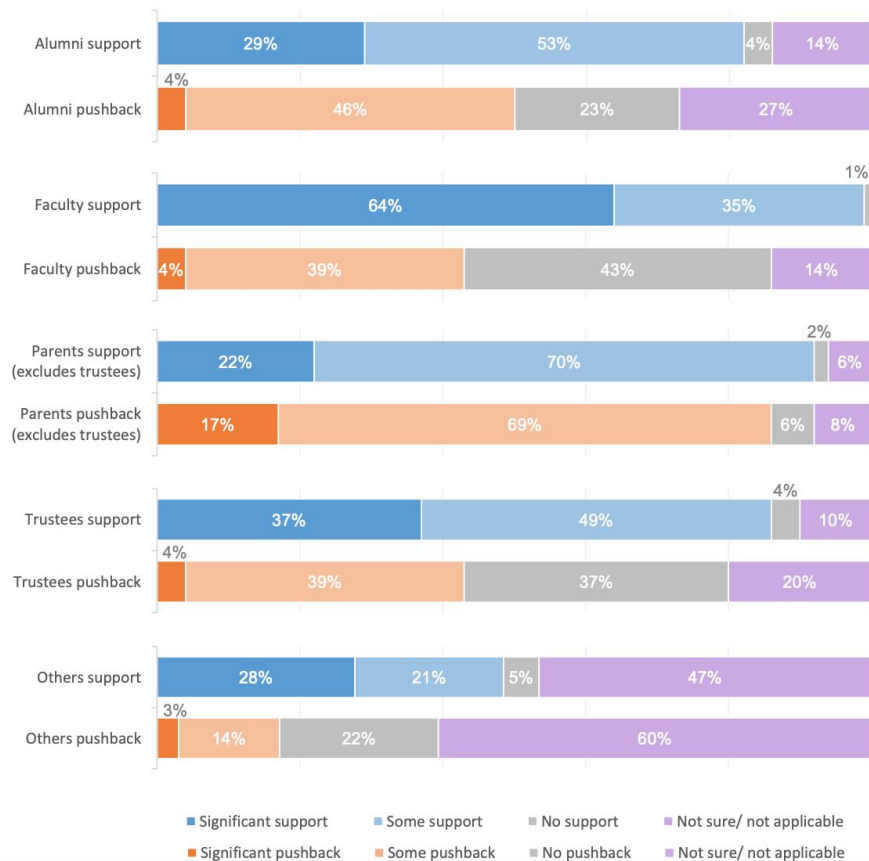
I'm pulling my kid. This is not the school we thought it was when we went through the admissions process. You said you honored all voices and perspectives. I don't feel like my perspective is honored at all, and I don't want my kid learning this misinformation and being indoctrinated by your teachers. People are people, and I just want my kid to know that.



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How would you describe the level of pushback and support that your school has received from the following groups on your diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice initiatives?*

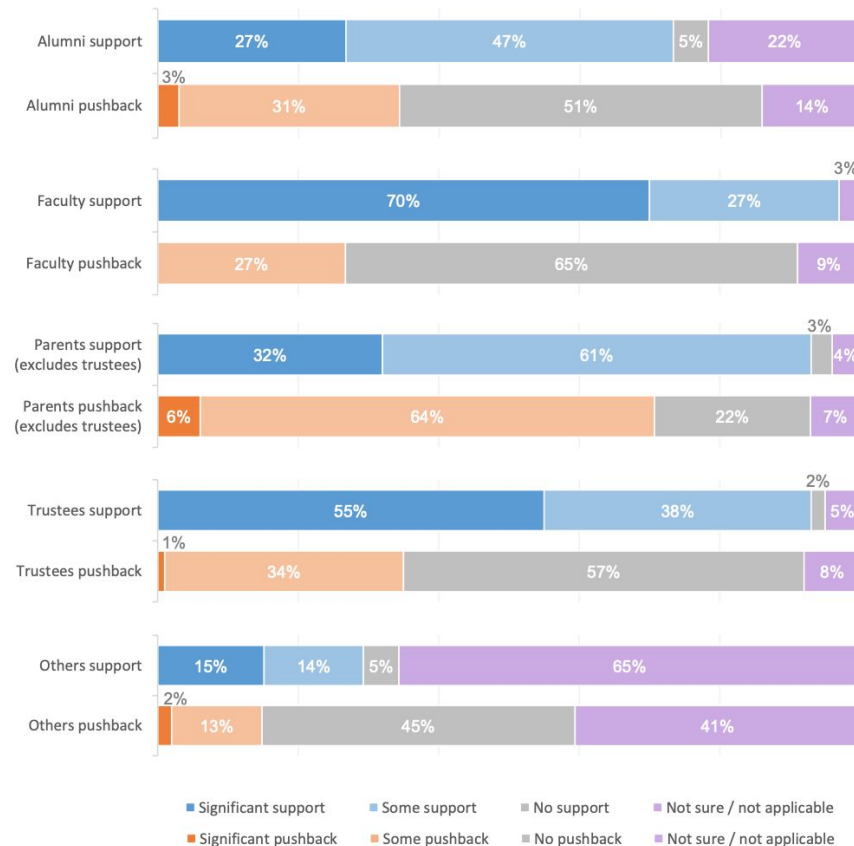
Consider the intensity of pushback/support, not number of individuals.



Diversity Practitioners

How would you describe the level of pushback and support that your school has received from the following groups on your diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice initiatives?*

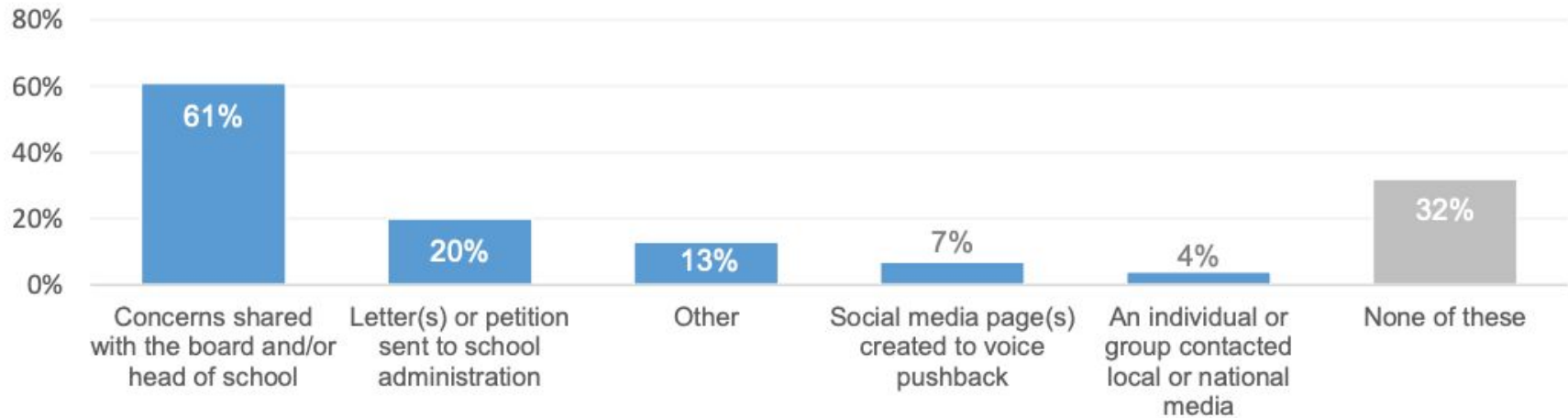
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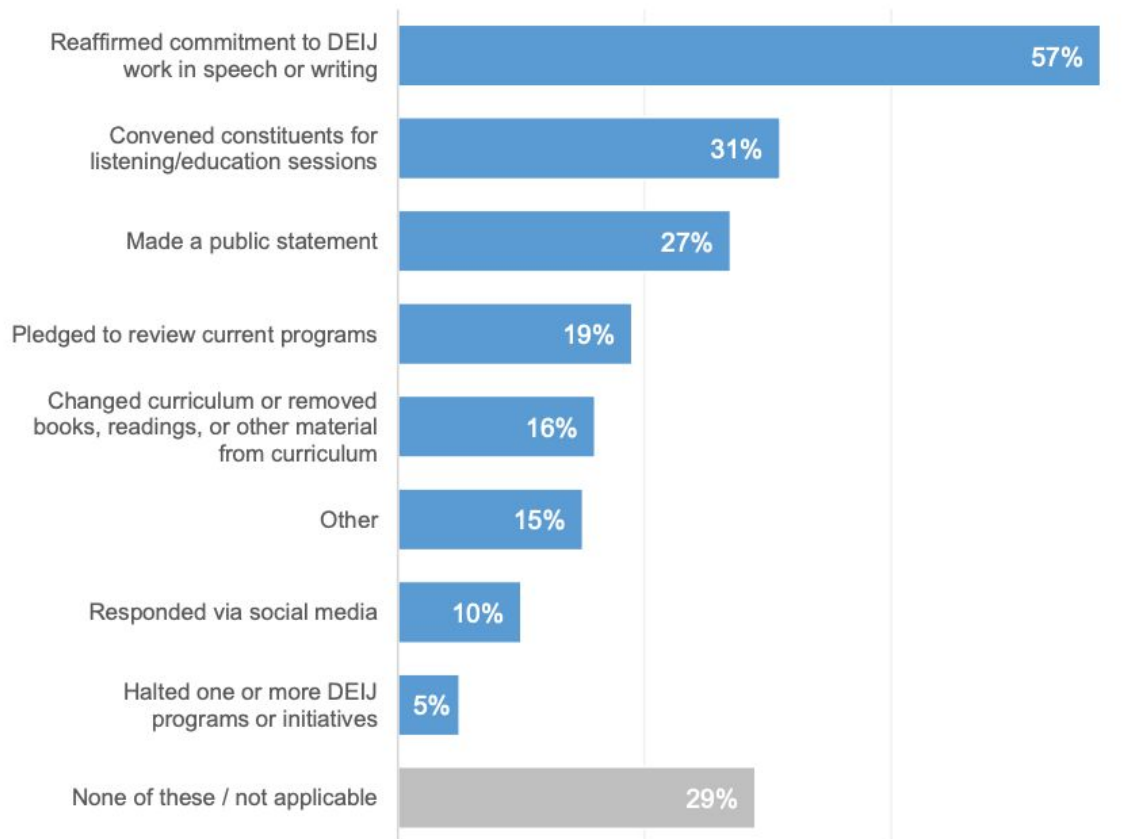
Heads of School

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To the best of your knowledge, have any of the following occurred at your school in a display of pushback against diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice initiatives, including but not limited to discussions of Critical Race Theory? Please select all that apply.

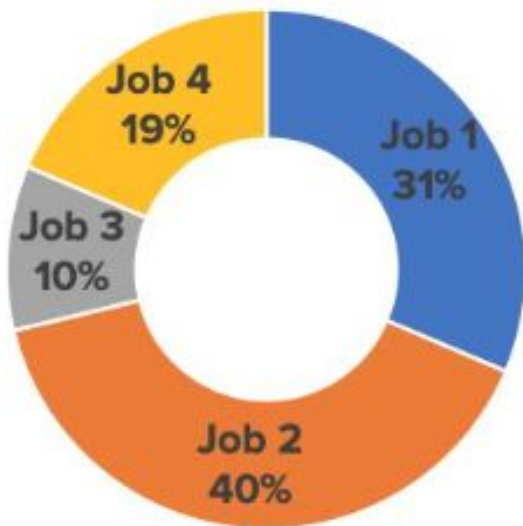


If applicable, which of the following actions, if any, has your school taken to respond to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice pushback? Please select all that apply.



Most Parents Are in Job 2

JTBD Overall Distribution



- May 2020 study, 2,300+ parents
- Job 2 most prevalent
- Jobs 1 and 2 account for ~70%
- Job 3 least prevalent (10%)

Job 1

Help me help my child overcome obstacles

Job 2

Help me fulfill my child's potential in a values-aligned community

Job 3

Help me develop a well-rounded person who will impact the world

Job 4

Help me realize my plan for my talented child

SOURCE: NAIS, "Why Parents Choose Independent Schools: A National, Quantitative Analysis" (May 2020)

EDUCATION · Published July 29

Private school head compares parents opposing 'woke' c Jan 6 rioters

The private school head claimed private schools are built to 're

by Caitlin Flanagan



The Internet

The

WASHINGTON FREE BEACON

COLUMNS PODCASTS VIDEOS NEWSLETTER STORE Q SEARCH

The New

New York's Private Privilege. It Has No

In this world — where tuition r topic has become flammable. Pa alumni have all entered the fray.

MORE ON: PRIVATE SCHOOLS

NYC private school offers reception for parents of students of color

How parents are fighting critical race theory in NYC schools

Whistleblowing teacher has proof 'woke' NYC

CULTURE

Why Private Schools Have Gone Woke

Meet the National Association of Independent Schools, which enf equity, and inclusion standards as a requirement for accreditation



FOX NEWS LIVE HEAD OF DC SCHOOL IS A RADICAL PROPAGANDIST TUCKER CARLSON TONIGHT

Crisis Checklist: Does It Fit Two of These?

- ❑ **Loss of Credibility:** Could the situation call into question legal, ethical, or professional credibility that could undermine personal or institutional authority? Could the situation damage the school's internal or external credibility or viability (threat to mission; reputational risk)
- ❑ **Multiple Stakeholders:** Could the situation negatively impact more than one constituent group within the school community?
- ❑ **Scalability:** How quickly could this escalate? How damaging would this be if it is public? What is the potential to go viral on social media? What is the potential to go viral in the drop-off circle?
- ❑ **National Relevance:** How does this situation align with recent headlines and local, regional, and national focus? How does the context, climate, and focus beyond the school impact how this situation will be viewed?
- ❑ **Emotional Impact:** Could this have a high emotional impact within the school? Could this have a high emotional impact beyond the school?
- ❑ **Repetitive Failure:** Is there a trend in this situation that could be damaging to the health, sustainability or reputation of the institution? Have you faced a similar situation that did not go well and may get connected to this one when the narrative is told?



Guiding Question #1

Where does diversity live in your school's mission and values? What words, specific to your school, do you want to use to clarify your approach to diversity?

Sandy Spring Friends School provides a welcoming and nurturing learning community with Friends testimonies and Meeting for Worship central to its life and vitality. A challenging academic curriculum, enriched arts program, inclusive athletics, and service opportunities promote intellectual excellence and strength of character. Recognizing the unique worth of each person, the School strives to develop individual talents and foster caring and effective citizens of the world.

Our Motto: "Let Your Lives Speak"

Our Values: Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, Stewardship

The word for the moment: Belonging



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Guiding Question #2

What are you currently DOING around diversity, equity, and inclusion? Set your marketing and communications strategy for DEI around your actions, backed by your philosophy. The philosophy is no longer enough if it is not actionable and acted upon.

- Know what your school's philosophy on diversity is, and be able to state it clearly.
- Know what your school is doing and the value of each action the school is taking in DEI, and be able to state it clearly.
- Actively use research from the fields of education and psychology to address the validity and developmental appropriateness of the school's DEI work.
- Use data from your own school - both qualitative and quantitative - to support the communications around your actions in DEI.

Guiding Question #3



What are the specific messages about diversity that the school wants to promote, and how do they match up to the school's reality around DEI?

- Have an understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement around DEI, and be clear about those.
- Market both for where you are and where you are going, and own both of those places as well as the journey between them.
- Do not promote an image of the school that is not aligned with the school's current realities around DEI. This is the quickest way to produce negative reputation in DEI among constituencies. Remember that admissions materials, interviews and tours as well as prospective employee materials, interviews and tours are also part of the communication and marketing process.

Sell what's in stock, market the future, explain what's on back order!



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Guiding Question #4

How is the school communicating about it's work in DEI to all constituencies - students, families, employees, trustees, alumni?

- Remember that the communications and marketing team are not the only communicators and marketers of the school.
- Especially in these times, be sure to have clear Guidelines and Norms for Civic Engagement
- Communicate proactively twice as much as you communicate reactively

Guiding Question #5

When will the school make active statements and declarations about DEI? What are local, regional, and national happenings that the school may need to be prepared to make a statement about, and what is the foundation of that statement?

Determine the criteria for the line between:

- the school taking a political stance
- addressing issues of human and civil rights that impact members of its community
- using moments of education sparked by internal or external events to be clear about the school's values and expectations

Are you ready for a big step forward?

- Anti-racism: not only managing your actions and reactions so that you do not perpetuate racism, also working to change the practices, policies, procedures, programs, and pedagogy that perpetuate racial inequity on your campus
- Belonging - This is MY school (vs I go to school here)
- Justice - repair of wrongdoing
 - Do you have a DEI professional on your senior admin team?
 - Have you reviewed discipline policies and trends for inequity and for handling incidents of identity targeting on campus?
 - Have you reviewed your academic placement, support, and achievement stats for inequities?
 - Have you reviewed your curriculum?



Reaction to Change

- Cognitive (changing how we think)
- Behavioral (changing what we do)
- Emotional (changing how we feel)

Misalignment among the three dimensions can lead to ambivalence and resistance. We need to tend to all three types of reactions to change.

(Piderit, 2000)



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The why is not a reaction.

The why is a continuation of your school's story. The why is that it is a part of your school's identity, its molecule.

Ask yourself, really, is IEJB mission appropriate for your school?



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- Our school is committed to this work because our mission states _____.
- When our school was founded, this work was at the center, and we know this because_____.
- While our school was founded in a time where this work was not central, we are now centralizing this work because we know it does align with the founding vision of _____.
- IEJB work looks different now, of course, but in the earlier days of our school we were doing this work when we _____.



What could we do now?

Do a full DEIB audit - culture, curriculum, professional development, policies and procedures

Create an annual community survey on belonging

- I feel comfortable being myself at school.
- At our school, every student belongs and is treated equitably regardless of their (age, ability, race, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, family structure)
- This year, how many incidents of bias, discrimination, or negative targeting did you witness based on someone's (identifiers)
- This year, the school did an effective job at furthering a culture of belonging and inclusivity
- When issues about (identifiers) arise at school, the school handles them appropriately.

Keep a 3-5 year trend dashboard and report out key progress and updates regularly to your school community

Invest in the education of parents, alumni, and board



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