

**STEP 0:**

# **START WITH YOURSELF AND CEDE POWER**

## **OUTPUTS OR OUTCOMES**

- Identify your own bias, power, and privilege in how you make decisions



While systems are a product of design, they can be redesigned to better reflect the needs of all stakeholders. Redesign can only be successful in addressing inequities if the current designers **recognize, consider, and design** against the ways implicit bias, psychological bias, racism, power and privilege impact decision-making.

Our identities are multi-faceted, and each part influences how you experience the world and the assumptions and biases you hold. As a society, implicit biases are so deeply ingrained in our social norms that we often cannot even tell that they are there. Your students might experience marginalization and oppression based on a variety of [ideas that fuel oppression](#), including but not limited to discrimination based on race, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, and socio-economic status. Race is one of the most prevalent root causes of inequity in the United States education system.

To begin to unpack racism at the **personal, interpersonal, and institutional levels**, we have compiled a series of readings and reflection questions for readers to explore. Create time and space to reflect on the following questions, both as an individual and collectively:

- **In what ways have my biases helped to maintain racism within my school?**
- **What are examples of interpersonal racism and how does it play a role in my interactions at my school?**
- **How does institutional racism live within our school?**

You can find a list of resources to learn from and to help you reflect on each of these anchoring questions. The goal is to strengthen your capacity to reflect and learn as individuals and a redesign team.

## REFLECTION POINT

In going through the resources, did you experience any of the common pitfalls of deep personal equity work?

*Feeling defensive or failing to acknowledge oppression*

*Not recognizing emerging emotions*

*Not voicing the emotions with your team*

*Excusing actions with good intentions*

*Doing the work in isolation*

Return to these reflection points in future conversations to reflect and see how you've acknowledged these pitfalls in yourself and/or as a team.



## EDUCATION ELEMENTS'S REFLECTION APPLIED TO PERSONALIZE LEARNING

As we encourage schools to reflect on their own practices we would like to offer examples of how we are engaging in these reflections as an organization. Our reflections will be included for each step of the process throughout the paper.

We have been helping schools design and implement Personalized Learning models for years. We prioritize utilizing empathy to understand the student experience which includes strengths, needs and interests. However, we have failed to acknowledge the undeniable impact of bias in design. Moving forward, we will prioritize reflecting on and exposing bias as part of the process to explicitly name the dynamics of power and privilege in creating classroom and school models.



## **IN WHAT WAYS HAVE MY BIASES HELPED TO MAINTAIN RACISM WITHIN MY SCHOOL?**

Great resources for learning how implicit bias impacts decision-making as well as your working and learning environments.

[Implicit Bias Tests](#)

[What is my complicity?](#)

[“Challenging White Dominant Culture: Time to Look in the Mirror”](#)

[Internalized Racisms Definition + Internalized Racism Inventory](#)

[What is Internalized Racism Flipping the Switch](#)

[Color Blind or Color Brave](#)

[Brene Brown and Ibram X. Kendi - How to be an anti-racist](#)

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## **WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF INTERPERSONAL RACISM AND HOW DOES IT PLAY A ROLE IN MY INTERACTIONS AT MY SCHOOL?**

Be aware of the power and privilege that you bring.

*Great resources available for white allies.*

[Deconstructing White Privilege](#)

[Well-meaning white people](#)

[Whistling Vivaldi NPR](#)

[White Privilege- Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#)

[Unpacking White Fragility](#)

[“The Surprisingly Racist History of ‘Caucasian’”](#)

[Addressing Whiteness](#)

[Side effects of white women](#)

[Who gets to be afraid in America- Ibram Kendi](#)

[The Danger of a Single Story](#)

[28 Common Racist Attitudes and Behaviors](#)

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*Great resources available for POC allies.*

[Non-Black POC start having conversations](#)

[Racisms has a cost for everyone](#)

[30 ways Asians perpetuate Anti-Black racism everyday](#)

[A History of Race and Racism in America, in 24 Chapters](#)

[The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans](#)

[Timeline of Events that Led Up to 2020 “Fed Up” uprising](#)

[Getting Called Out and How to Apologize](#)

[Racial Equity Tools Glossary and Key concepts](#)

[Audre Lourde: “The Use of Anger: Women Responding to Racism”](#)

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## **HOW DOES INSTITUTIONAL RACISM LIVE WITHIN OUR SCHOOL?**

Identify institutional bias of the school and district. Great resources available are...

[What is systemic racism?](#)

[Intersectionality Wars](#)

[How studying privilege systems can strengthen compassion?](#)

[Moving the Race Conversation Forward](#)

[Deepening of Our Understanding of Structural Marginalization](#)

[The problem with othering: toward inclusiveness and belonging](#)

[Targeted Universalism Policy and Practice](#)

[ASCD 14 resources for culturally responsive teaching](#)

[Culturally Responsive teaching guide](#)

# CEDE POWER

Once you have gained self-awareness around your own implicit biases and beliefs, you are better positioned to cede power. When you enter a space, be aware of the power dynamics that exist within the context (Ask yourself, where and how do I hold power right now?) and make conscious efforts to **lift up the voices** that may not hold power in that space. Ceding power can be as simple as being the last one to offer an opinion during a staff meeting or allowing others to make final decisions on work

they lead. One simple, but important way to practice ceding power, is creating space for those without power to provide feedback in a transparent way. As a principal, you can cede power by providing space for students, teachers, and parents to give authentic feedback (without fear of reprisal). For example, often our own preferences and beliefs as leaders will manifest into unspoken norms within the school that can morph into policies over time. It is important to uncover these **unspoken norms** around racist interactions within a school. In this example, you might ask staff,

*“What do new teachers need to learn about our school or system through their onboarding that is not part of our handbook, PD, and written process?”*

This will reveal a range of norms that you can then evaluate with an equity lens.

