

# Creating a Culture of Equity & Inclusion

Presented by Nishant Mehta  
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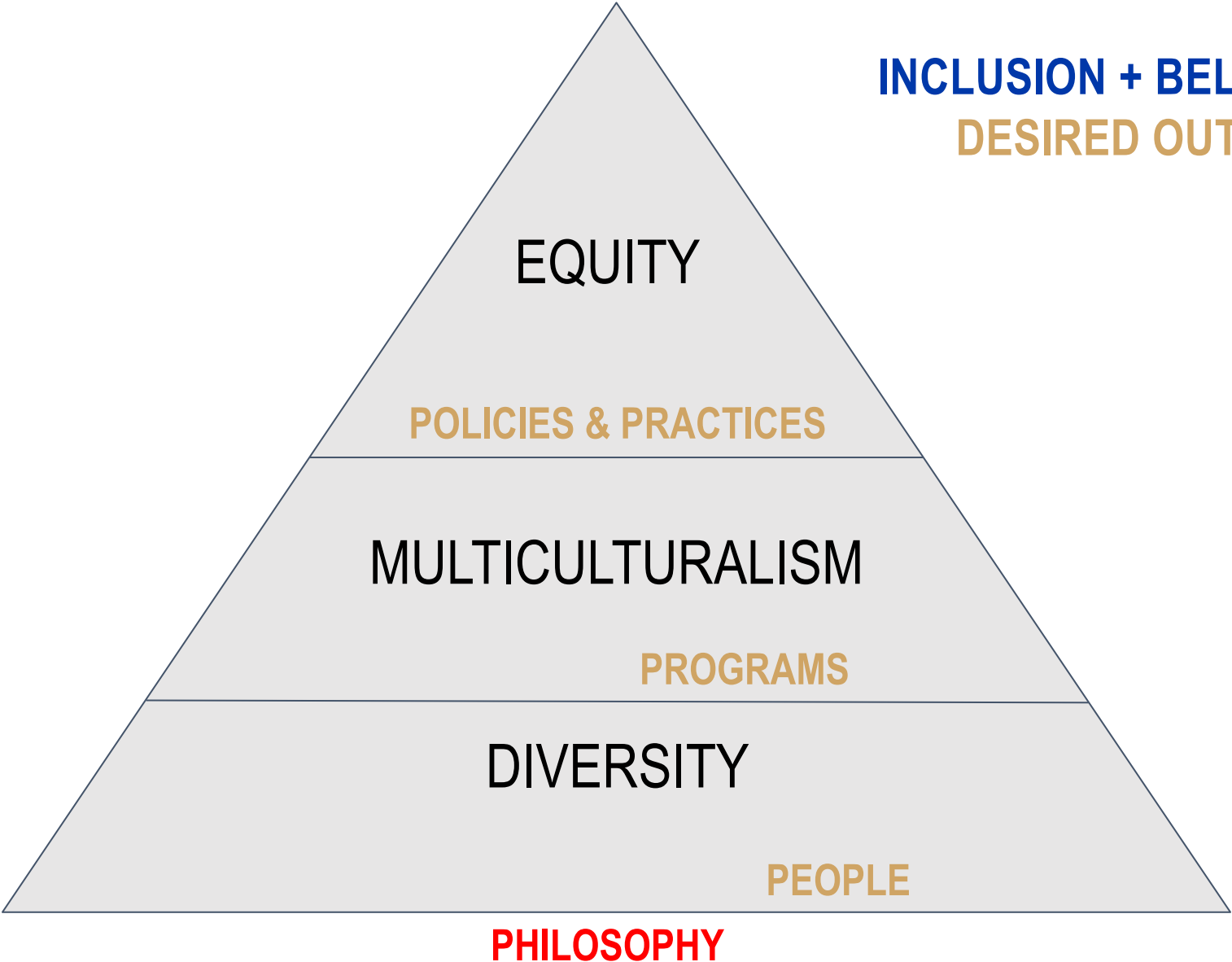
# Today's Objectives

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- ◆ Introduce a strategic lens, framework, and common language that will support you in:
  - Understanding key concepts around DEI
  - Understanding change within the context of school culture
  - Introducing a strategic framework to self-assess your DEI commitment

# Key Terms

**INCLUSION + BELONGING =  
DESIRED OUTCOME**



# Belonging vs. Inclusion

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## AUTHENTIC

Of undisputed origin; genuine



## IDENTITY

The fact of who or what a person or thing is...

💡 BEING AND FEELING SEEN AND HEARD

# Identity Threat

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## **SURFACE INCLUSION**

Included only because one is supposed to; or because the person represents a particular social demographic.

## **REAL INCLUSION**

Included, involved, accepted for what they will bring, not just who they are or represent.

“Are Your D&I Efforts Helping Employees Feel Like They Belong?” HBR, Aug. 2020

# Stages of School Transformation



# WHAT IS CULTURE?

"The way we do things  
around here."

- *M. Bower*

# Levels of School Culture & Change

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Invisible



Visible

Shared Values

Group Behavioral Norms

Espoused Values

Artifacts

Harder to Change



Easier to Change

**Case Studies**

**BREAKOUT**

# Case Study Discussion

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- Given your current role, consider your response or action.
- Are there gaps between the school's espoused values, group norms, and shared values?
- At which points in the story, could a different approach have averted the predictable outcome?

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- What common threads or patterns of support or resistance for this work did you notice across all three case studies? What principles or guidance for this work can you lift from their lessons?

# Case Study

## BREAKOUT 1

John is a member of the Board's executive committee, a major donor, and the parent of one child at the school. He calls the head's office one afternoon and shares that he has heard from several parents that the school's spending too much time and money on diversity issues. John and these families strongly believe that for an elementary school, these are not appropriate topics for young students and, wouldn't the school's resources be better spent on Math, English, classroom technology and supplies, and other such subjects for which families are paying tuition?

The head listens and replies that he's never heard this feedback, and in fact, he has heard the opposite. A few families and even teachers have recently inquired why the school isn't doing more on issues of diversity and have asked him to respond at an upcoming faculty meeting and PA meeting.

John listens and stands by his statement to the head that topics of race, gender, and so on are inappropriate for young students, and the school's resources should be redirected to classroom subjects, supplies, and so on. He plans to bring up this topic at the next finance committee meeting.

The head picks up the phone as soon as John hangs up.

# Case Study

## BREAKOUT 2

The fall semester is off and running. The school has hired several new teachers and administrators this summer. Many of the new hires are BIPOC, something the school recently committed to diversify the faculty and staff and represent the growing student population and neighborhood.

The HR Director approaches the head of school one morning and shares that his recent hires are making people “nervous.” The head doesn’t understand her insinuation and asks for more information. She shares that the new hires do not represent the school’s “typical profile” and there’s chatter among faculty and staff about all of the changes.

Later that day, a Black administrator who has been at the school for 15 years approaches the head and says she doesn’t know how to talk to any of the new hires and do her job anymore. The head again asks for additional explanation. The administrator says all of the Black faculty and staff were told by the previous head that there should be no more than three or four people of color meeting at any one time. Meetings were also always held with the door open, because otherwise it made “white people nervous.”

The head is shocked and surprised and doesn’t know what to say. He also wonders about his own future at the school, the school’s commitment to DEI as they have stated so publicly to everyone in the last six months.

# Case Study

## BREAKOUT 3

The leadership of a school is concerned about the politicization of issues related to racial inequity and BLM. The community response earlier this spring and summer to communications offering support for BLM has been mixed. Older alums are worried the school is making a political statement rather than staying neutral, while other current students and even faculty and staff are pushing for more advocacy and action.

On a routine walkthrough of the campus and classrooms, the Dean of Faculty notices several BLM stickers or flags and sends out an email to the full faculty with a directive to take down the flags or stickers until further notice. In his directive, he quotes handbook policy that “teachers may engage in political discourse with students from a position of objectivity and neutrality.” Some of the faculty, White allies and BIPOC, are upset with the email and interpretation of policy, and decide to ignore the directive. Instead, a representative sends a letter to the head of school requesting a group meeting with him.

While the meeting is being scheduled, the students catch wind of the chatter among the adults on campus, and write to the head of school that they would like to attend this upcoming meeting. At the next weekly assembly, two juniors get up on stage and agree with the Dean of Faculty’s directive, saying “Black Lives Matter is a political organization whose published mission is the destruction of the nuclear family, all grounded on the lie that the U.S is rife with systemic racism.”

There’s immediate pandemonium in the auditorium as there are cries of agreement and boos from the other students, and the Dean of Faculty rushes to explain that he didn’t encourage those students, nor was what they shared his personal beliefs about BLM.

# Case Study Discussion

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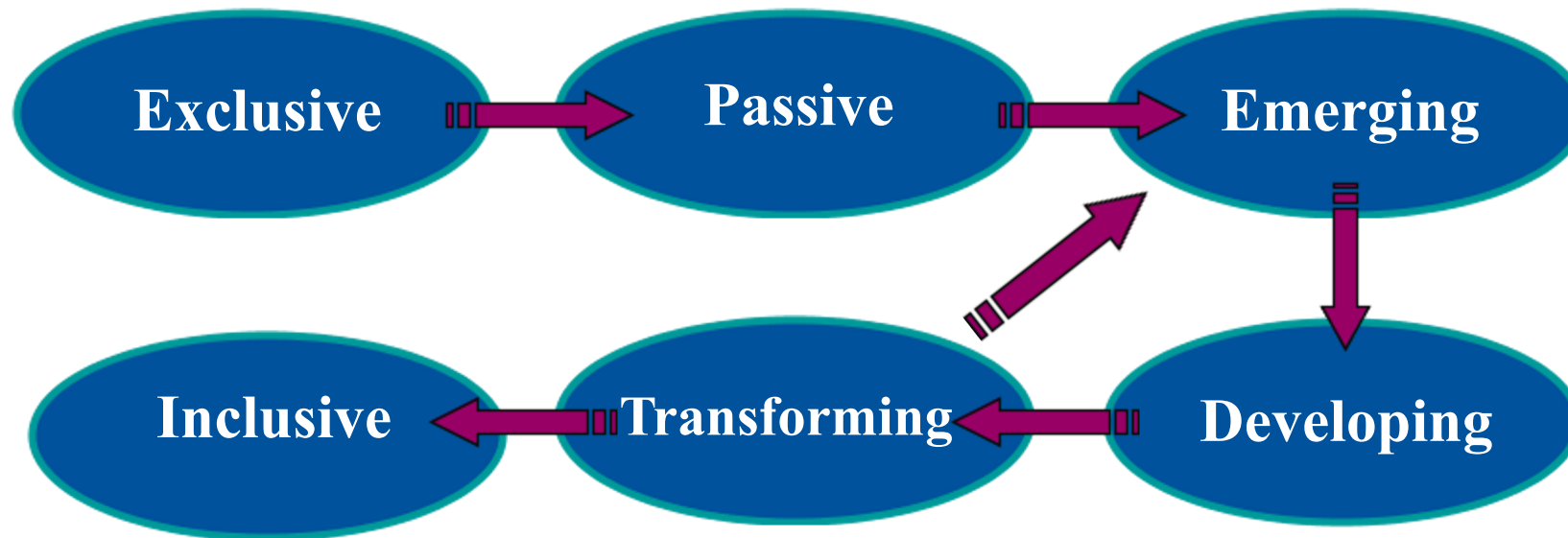
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# A Self-Assessment Framework

# Macro View: School Culture & Change

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# Philosophy & Mission of DEI: Definition

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## EMERGING

There is no campus-wide definition for diversity, inclusion, and equity

## DEVELOPING

There is an operationalized definition for diversity, inclusion and equity on the campus, but there is some variance and inconsistency in the application of the term.

## TRANSFORMING

The institution has a formal, universally accepted definition for diversity, inclusion and equity that is used consistently to operationalize many or most aspects of diversity on campus.



**POLICIES + PRACTICES + PROGRAMS + PEOPLE**

*\*Adopted from the [NERCHE Self-Assessment Rubric](#)*

# Philosophy & Mission:

## Alignment with Institutional Mission

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### EMERGING

While diversity, inclusion and equity complement many aspects of the institution's mission, they remain on the periphery of the campus. They are rarely included in larger, mission-centered efforts.

### DEVELOPING

Diversity, inclusion and equity are often mentioned as a primary or important part of the institution's mission, but are not included in the campus' official mission or strategic plan.

### TRANSFORMING

Diversity, inclusion and equity are part of the primary concern of the institution. Diversity, inclusion and equity are included in the campus' official mission and/or strategic plan.



**POLICIES + PRACTICES + PROGRAMS + PEOPLE**

*\*Adopted from the [NERCHE Self-Assessment Rubric](#)*

# Administrative Leadership & Institutional Support:

## Additional Operational Components

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- ◆ Strategic Planning
- ◆ Institutional Resource Management
- ◆ Hiring & Retention
- ◆ Professional development
- ◆ Funding
- ◆ Senior administrative leadership
- ◆ Institutional evaluation and assessment
- ◆ Institutional research
- ◆ Specialized initiatives
- ◆ Alumni affairs

# Next Steps

# A Reflection

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“People want their social group to be **included** and their individual self to **belong**. These are two different things.”

“Are Your D&I Efforts Helping Employees Feel Like They Belong?” HBR, Aug. 2020

“**Without equity you get diversity lite**, where lots of people can come to the party but only a few - of the same kind - can change the music. **Pursuing equity isn't about politics**; it's just about **taking a hard look at your practices and seeing reality.**”

[http://colorlines.com/archives/2012/12/apple\\_ceo\\_tim\\_cook\\_we\\_really\\_value\\_diversity\\_but\\_top\\_10\\_execs\\_are\\_all\\_white\\_males.html](http://colorlines.com/archives/2012/12/apple_ceo_tim_cook_we_really_value_diversity_but_top_10_execs_are_all_white_males.html)

# To Promote Healthy Racial Awareness Within Your School Community...

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1. What is ONE THING YOU can do?
2. What is ONE THING YOUR TEAM can do?
3. What is ONE THING THE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM can do?



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