



Denver Academy of Torah



ST. ELIZABETH'S SCHOOL



MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF EVERGREEN



Challenging minds, nurturing spirits.



Extraordinary Education. Timeless Traditions. Inspired Lives.



founded 1999



Learning to Soar



THE MCCLELLANDSCHOOL
CURIOSITY & EXPLORATION. TESTYERLAND. ACHIEVEMENT. FAMILY & COMMUNITY.



The Way You Learn Best



ACIS Thanks ISU Insurance
For Sponsoring Workshops at the 34th Annual Leadership Conference:
Planning for Today; Envisioning Tomorrow



ISU Insurance Services of Colorado (ISU) is a 139-year-old independent insurance brokerage firm, partnering with independent schools on their commercial insurance, risk management and employee benefits protection.





Unlocking the Promise of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

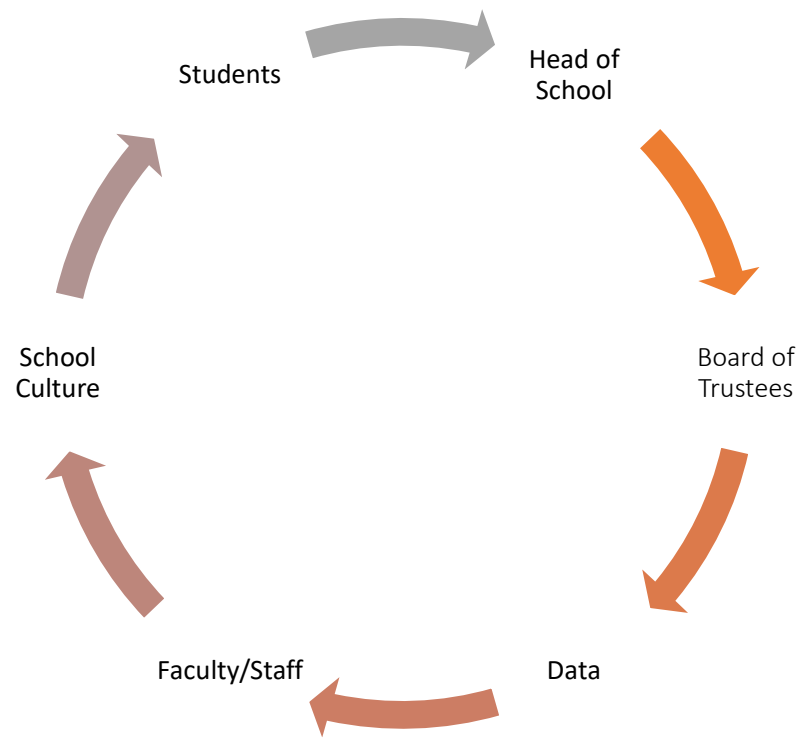
The Role of the School Leadership

A photograph of wooden letter tiles on a wooden surface. The tiles are arranged to spell out the word 'SCHOOL' in a row. The tiles are light-colored wood with black letters and numbers. The background is a warm, wooden texture. The text 'What Does Research Say About The "Headship Effect"' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

What Does Research Say About The "Headship Effect"

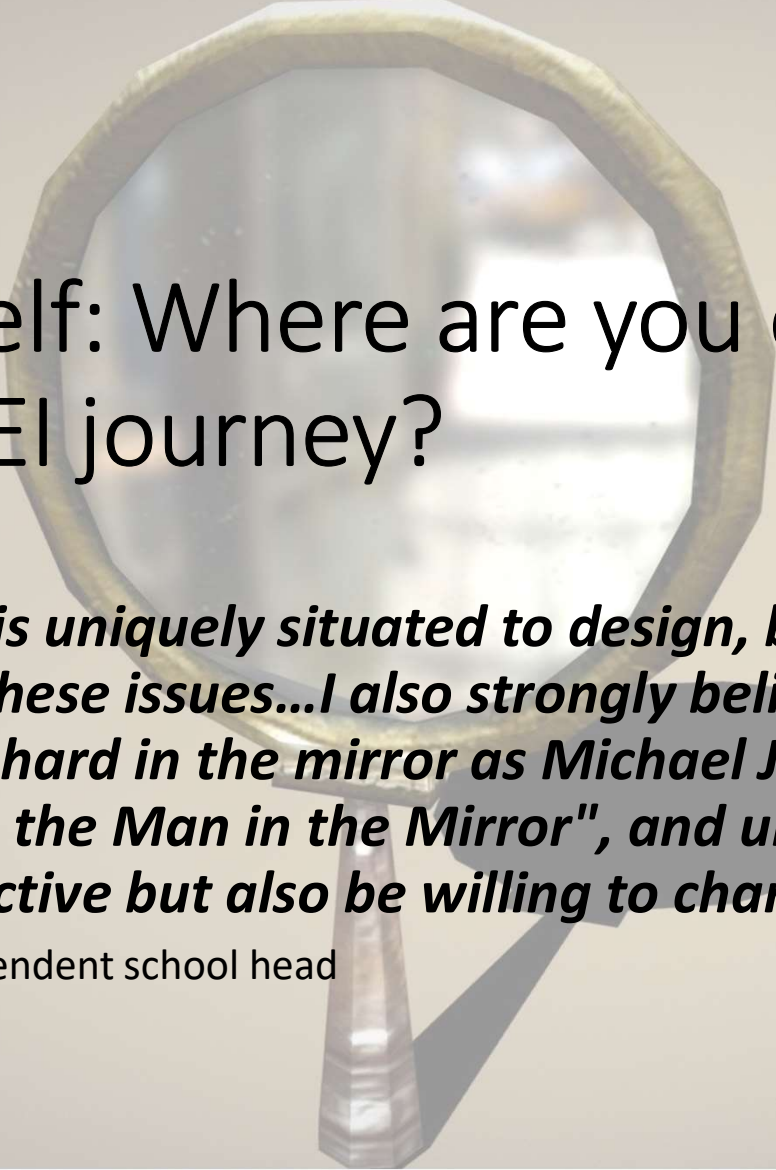
- **Positive relationship between headship and school culture** (Maher, 2000; Turan and Bektas, 2013)
- **Headship has a strong and positive effect on student academic achievement** (Anders, Soder, 1985; Wu, Shen 2021)
 - Some research suggests that it is as high as 25%
 - Second only to teachers

The Equity Cycle (adapted from Proinspire)





Put the oxygen mask on yourself first
before you put it on your child



Know Thyself: Where are you on your personal DEI journey?

" I think the head is uniquely situated to design, begin, and facilitate discussion about these issues...I also strongly believe it is everyone's obligation to look hard in the mirror as Michael Jackson advised us all "I'm Starting With the Man in the Mirror", and understand, own and share your perspective but also be willing to change it and have it challenged. " Independent school head



Work of the head and heart

- Requires self-reflection
- Requires self-awareness
- Requires continued professional development, conversations and engagement
- Requires courage

Because...

- It is personal, relationship-based, and at times emotional
- Is constantly evolving

Approach (Ratts et.al, 2015)

Awareness

Awareness of self and others, culture, perspectives, worldview and lived reality

Who am I as a cultural being? Who are others as cultural beings?

Knowledge

Factual knowledge of one's own culture and that of others

What do I know about my own culture, and that of others?

Skills

Skills to effectively communicate with and advocate for self and others

What skills do I need to function effectively in a culturally responsive way?

Actions

Intentional behavioral and relational acts to promote culturally responsive and competent environments

When and how do I take action, and not standby in silence?



Role of the Head of School:

Keeper of the Vision (Bolman & Deal 2021)

The Board's Responsibilities: DEI

It all starts at the board to set the tone for inclusion as a priority both internally and externally..." Independent School Board Chair

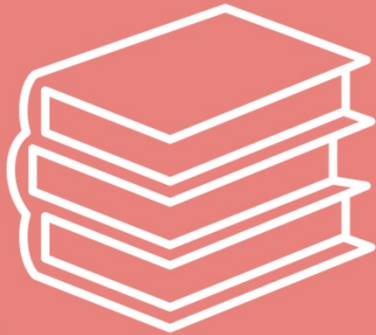
Four areas of oversight:

- ▶ Governance
- ▶ Strategy
- ▶ Talent
- ▶ Performance



Governance

“As a board, we should ask ourselves: Are we at risk of making a decision without fully understanding how the decision could impact the communities we serve?” (Independent School Board Member)



Boards that demonstrate good DEI practices will:

- ▶ integrate those practices in all board proceedings.
- ▶ explicitly detail expectations for operating in an inclusive manner.
- ▶ holds itself accountable for DEI practices with a committee established for this purpose.
 - ▶ This committee’s mandate is to elevate DEI visibility in the boardroom and promote DEI governance practices across all board committees and procedures.

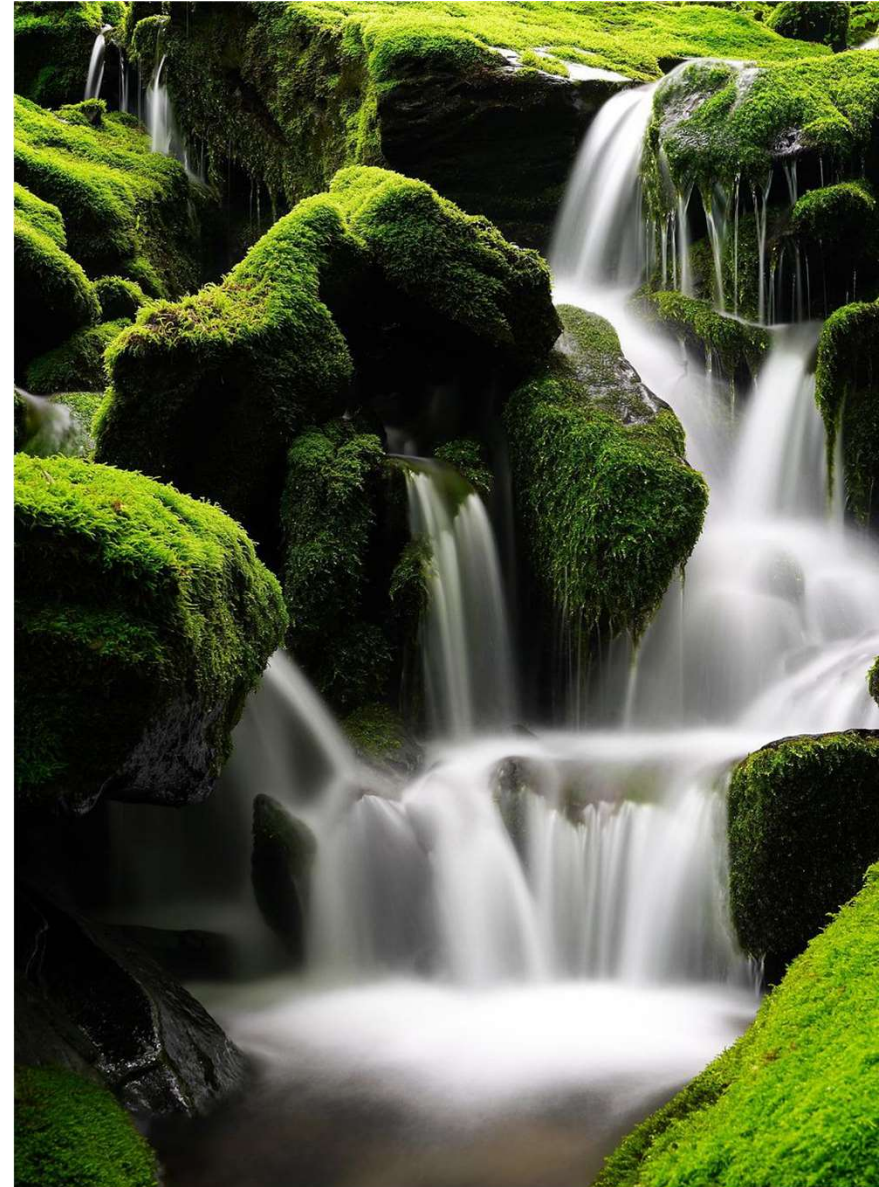


The Cascade Effect

Friedman (2013) uses this term to refer to an idea first conceptualized by Wilfred Bion (1943) and later made more accessible by Murray Bowen (1966).

How the board functions can have a **cascade effect**.

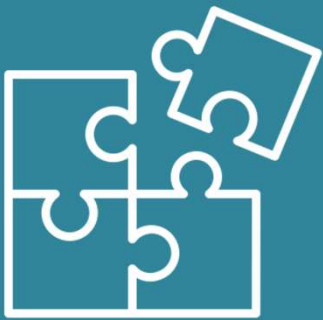
- “Cascade Effect” -where functioning at the highest-level trickles downward. *It refers to the idea that groups operate as an organic whole.*
- *A change in one member of the group will, inevitably, cause the others to change.*



Governance: How?

What Should Boards Ask?	What Should Boards Do?
How are decisions made by the board?	Ensure that all board members involved in the decision-making process are heard and respected.
Do board committees lay the foundation of good DEI behaviors in all relevant board processes?	Embed DEI language, thinking and actions into all relevant proceedings and practices
Does the data informing the board's operations and decision making come from a DEI set of sources and perspectives?	Avoid confirmation bias by challenging school leadership to seek out accurate, disaggregated data and research from multiple sources and perspectives.





Strategy

- Boards help school leaders develop a common vision and language for what diversity, equity and inclusion means
- Tight alignment between how the board defines diversity, equity and inclusion should tie into the school's vision and mission.
 - The tighter the alignment the more likely it will influence behavior changes in the school culture.
 - Example
 - If after reviewing data, the board determines that individuals with different identities leave the organization at unequal rates, what could this indicate about the level of inclusion or equity at the school?



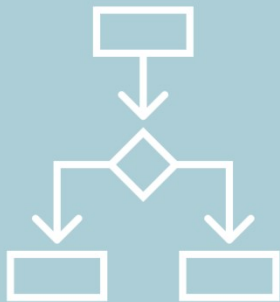
Strategy: How?

What Should Boards Ask?	What Should Boards Do?
How does the board define equity, inclusion, diversity and social justice?	Develop a common language with school leadership.
How does the school's strategic plan reflect DEI goals?	Provide input for insuring alignment between the school's vision, strategic initiatives and goals.
What is the school doing to advance its DEI agenda and where is it making progress?	Seek to understand the school's maturity levels and efforts. Use the Broaching Continuum as a benchmark.



Talent

“Where the board can influence DEI is in asking questions such as - what is administration doing to ensure that people at all levels and all back grounds have an opportunity to be developed and mentored? And, have we fully funded those initiatives?” *Independent school board chair*



- ▶ Boards set the tone by embodying DEI practices themselves
 - ▶ Hold school leadership accountable for developing the schools’ talent as well.
 - ▶ Is cultural competency part of the performance evaluation for leadership?



Talent: How?

What Should Boards Ask?	What Should Boards Do?
How is a DEI perspective built into the school's succession plan?	Prioritize a DEI lens in succession planning (which includes diverse representation)
How are DEI goals built into professional development opportunities and performance evaluations?	Support school leadership in promoting experiences and resources that support the development of faculty and staff. Help school leadership identify experiential gaps in the leadership ranks that require correction.
How are the school's employees and the board itself, becoming educated in DEI?	Influence diversity and inclusion education strategies, including focus on bias mitigation and set the tone for the importance of education by having board members participate in professional development.



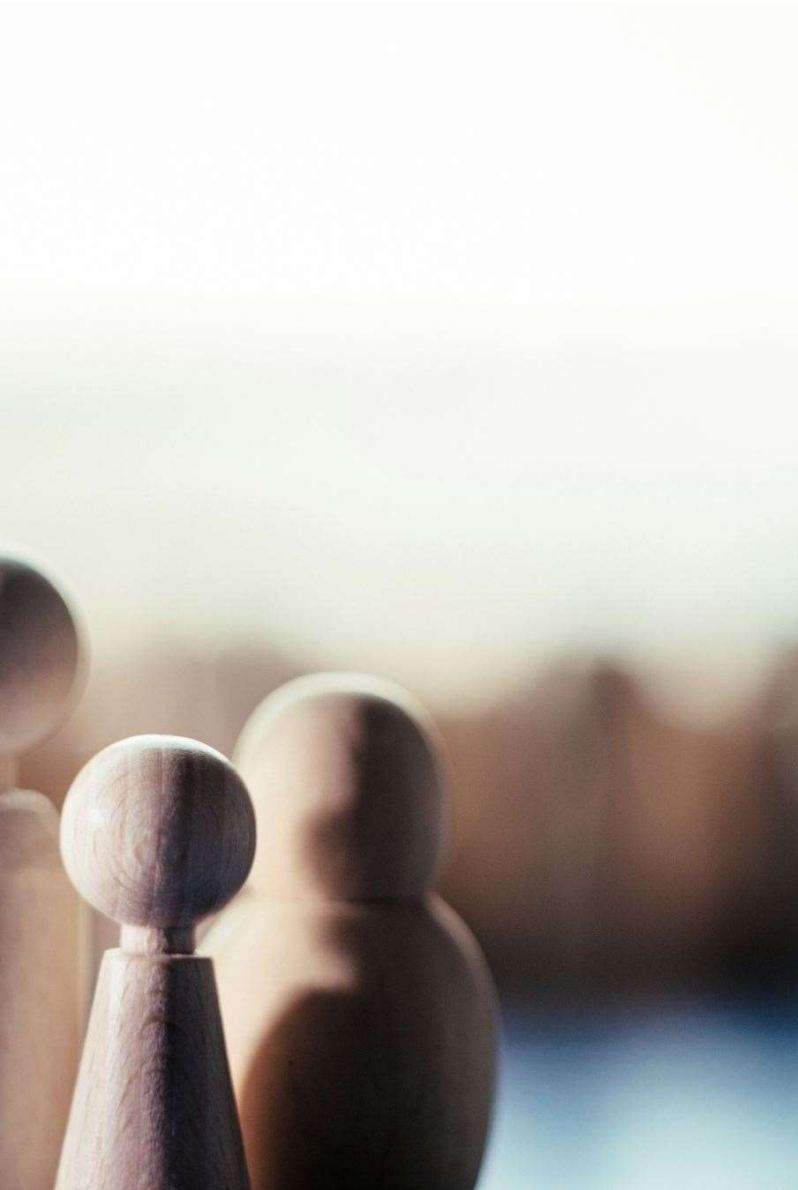
The DEI Professional

- Suditha Kumar
 - ExploElevate
 - Interviewed a sample of independent school DEI professionals
-



Research Question

- **What are the opportunities and challenges DEI Practitioners at independent school's face?**
- **How do schools support the DEI Practitioners at the school?**



3 Major Themes

- Leadership and Support
- Environment and Culture
- Strategies and Tactics

The DEI Practitioner: Board Support Is Essential (Kumar, 2020)

All of the practitioners interviewed named how vital it is for their role to be deeply supported by the board and the head of school. Interviewees noted that this support takes two forms - what we will refer to as “explicit” and “implicit” support.

Explicit Support:

- DEI must be central to, or fully aligned with, the mission and vision of the school and also incorporated into the strategic plan.
- The practitioner should be a senior leadership role that reports to the head of school.
- There must be Sub-committees at the board level focused on DEI.
- A direct line between the practitioner and the board, including attending board meetings and open communication regarding resources and support as needed.

The DEI Practitioner: Implicit Support

Implicit support is also critical. This can be an area where even when outward support is expressed, implicit support may not be present.

Implicit support includes having:

1. Faith that leadership will support the practitioner, should there be resistance or pushback from parents, alumni, or other constituent groups. This faith extends to trusting that the practitioner will not be “scapegoated” if an incident takes place at the school
2. Leadership holding space for the practitioner to share challenges they are facing openly and honestly.
3. The practitioner as a key participant in all conversations pertinent to their scope of work .

Leadership and Support: Explicit

"Diversity professionals... are too often caricatured as saviors... Their positions and work serve as absolution from the actual work necessary to achieve diversity and inclusion. The (DEI professional) is not a savior and should not be put in a position to act like one. The responsibility to establish clear goals, targets, timetables and processes should not only predate the development of the position, it should be evenly distributed across leadership." (Thomas 2020, P. 176)

Monitoring Performance

“Driving (DEI) has to be a shared responsibility. The school leadership executes and advances the DEI goals, and the board holds leadership and the entire organization accountable to those goals.” Independent school board member



- ▶ Transformations of any kind are subject to fatigue and failure unless someone is held accountable for outcomes.
- ▶ It is the board’s role to monitor DEI metrics at a high level, while requesting that school leadership collect and analyze the relevant data



Monitoring Performance: How?

What Should Boards Ask?	What Should Boards Do?
What metrics are in place to measure effectiveness of the school's DEI efforts and to identify gaps?	Influence the types of metrics used to track the progress of outcomes in DEI and the order of priority of these metrics.
How is the school pursuing continuous improvements to enhance its own DEI practices and outcomes?	Use tools such as the Broaching Continuum to measure the organizations DEI maturity.



Role of the Head: Communication

Communicate the vision

- Make the case for the "why"
- Understand and articulate the successes, challenges, goals and metrics of the work



Role of the Head: Chief Advocate

- To the extent that the head of school is a vocal advocate of DEI and matches these proclamations with actions they will have a direct impact on school culture.
- The head of school is the conduit through which priorities flow from the board and information flows to the board.
- The head of school sets the tone for the faculty and the school community about the school's priorities.
- The head of school sets the public tone for the school's approach to DEI.

Role of the Head: Chief Advocate for the work

Having the head of school as an advocate is critical since that person is uniquely positioned to articulate the vision of change and model how change will occur.

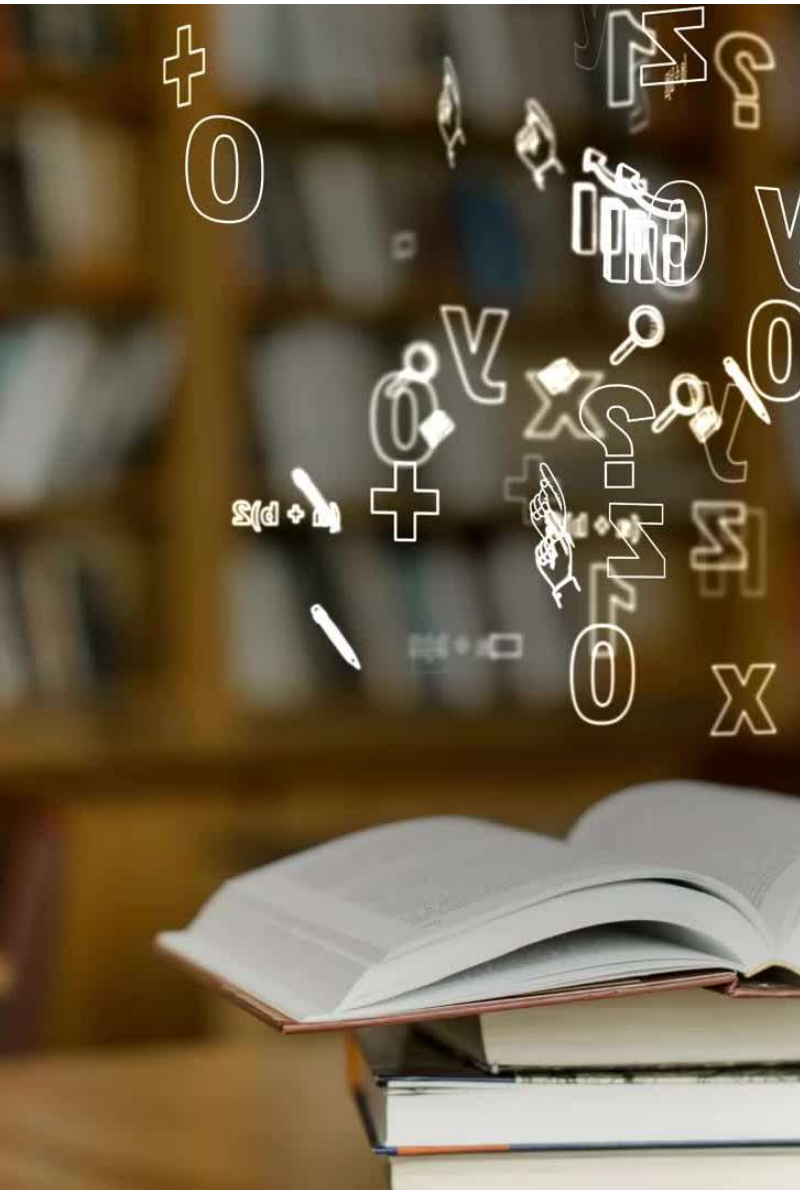
- Being directly engaged with the work
- Supporting those leading the work

Know Your Environment

Identify DEI priorities based on a rigorous assessment of the organization's current state.

- Leaders need quantitative and qualitative data to describe the current state of the school experience. That's necessary for setting realistic, impactful DEI goals and timeframes --





Collect Data & Track Progress

"It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data" Sherlock Holmes

Collect and Analyze Data that is:

- relevant to your school
- both quantitative and qualitative
- will paint a picture of your school's strengths and weaknesses
- will help you identify pain points where you might be able to make the greatest impact

"What gets measured gets done."

Role of the Head of School: Accountability

- Connect policy to practice by holding leaders at all levels accountable for fostering and supporting DEI goals.

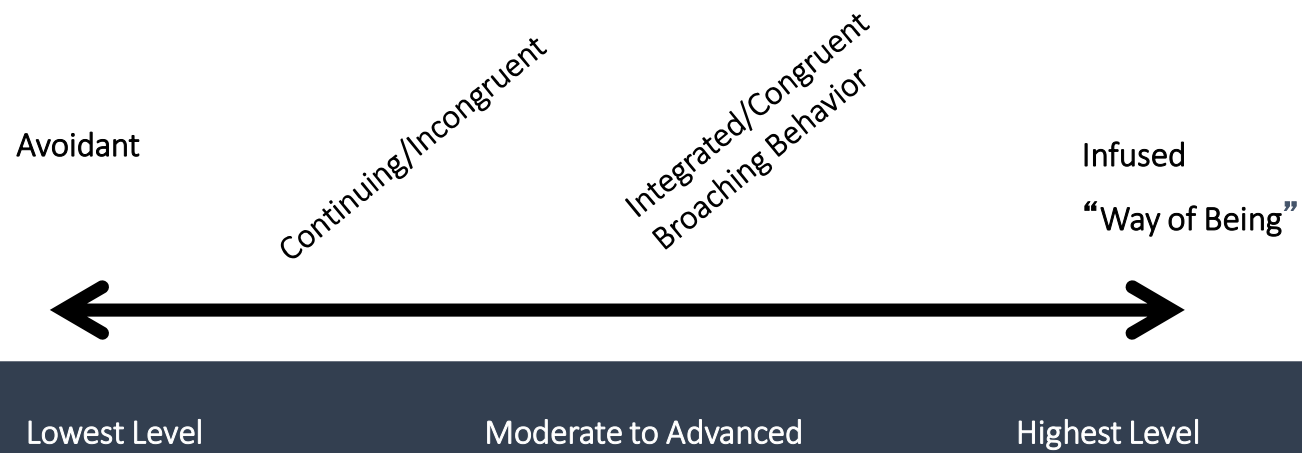


Role of the Head: Evaluation

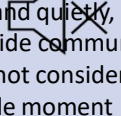
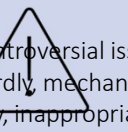

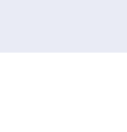

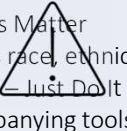

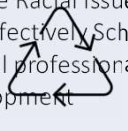
Assess where the
organization is on its DEI
journey

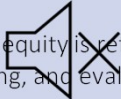
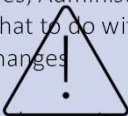


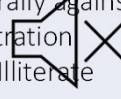


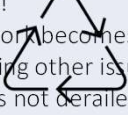
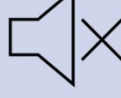





Continuum of Broaching Behavior (Wise, Day-Vines, 2020)



Broaching Continuum (Wise, Day-Vines, 2020)

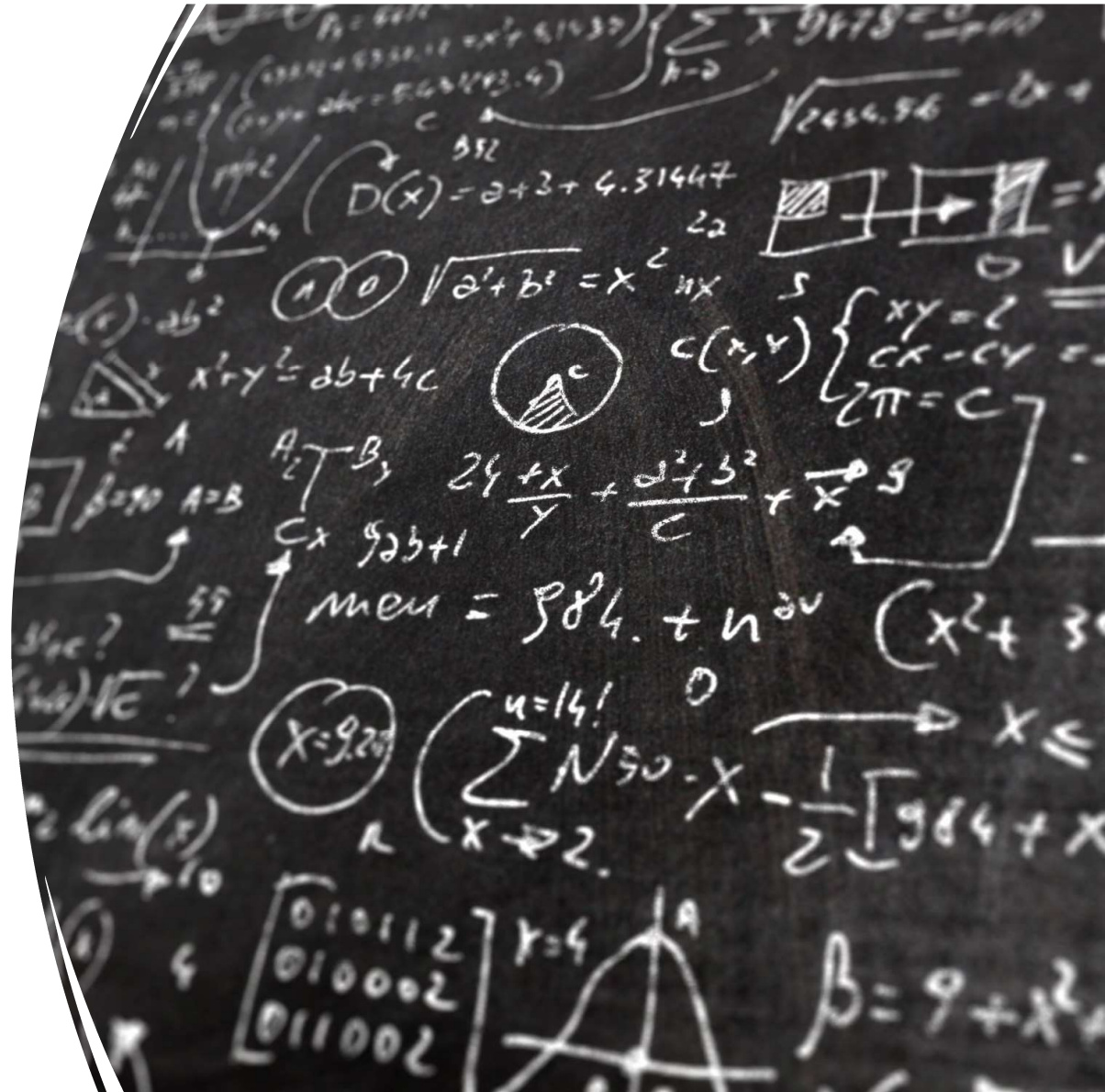
	Avoidant	Continuing/ Incongruent	Integrated/ Congruent	Infusing
School Stance	<p>Refusal to address controversial issues (reprimand quietly, no schoolwide communicate; Issue is not considered a teachable moment)</p> 	<p>Address controversial issues – but awkwardly, mechanically, superficially, inappropriately</p> 	<p>Address controversial issues - Thoughtful well-intentioned statements and actions (individual teachers and/or administrators have mastered the art and science of addressing controversial topics; comfortable talking about race)</p> 	<p>Social Justice Interventions/Activities Schoolwide professional development All stakeholders</p> 
What is said/done	<p>Nothing</p> 	<p>All Lives Matter Discuss race, ethnicity, culture – Just Do It with accompanying tools</p> 	<p>Thoughtful Reflection Heartfelt</p> 	<p>Engage Racial Issues Directly and Effectively Schoolwide Annual professional development</p> 

	Avoidant	Continuing/ Incongruent	Integrated/ Congruent	Infusing
Systemically	<p>Little collection, analysis, and application of data points</p> <p>Race and equity is reflected in hiring, onboarding, and evaluation process</p> <p>No apparent commitment to diversity in hiring</p> 	<p>Data collected, disaggregated and reported; Accept or don't critique disparities; Administration doesn't know what to do with data to guide changes</p> <p>Rhetorical commitment to diversity</p> 	<p>Collection, analysis, disaggregation of data, but done by individual teachers;</p> <p>Highly diverse faculty/staff</p> <p>Aspirational commitment to diversity</p> 	<p>Only collection, analysis, and application of data points</p> <p>Disaggregates data appropriately with an eye towards racial equity</p> <p>Race and equity is reflected in hiring, onboarding, and evaluation process</p> 
Consequences	<p>Anger; Student disengagement</p> <p>Withdrawal; Political Flashpoint;</p> <p>Parents rally against the administration</p> <p>Racially Illiterate</p> 	<p>Embarrassing Gaffes</p> <p>Racially Illiterate</p> <p>School personnel poorly equipped to manage discussions</p> <p>School develops dispositions but they are not accompanied by racial literacy tools</p> 	<p>Racial literacy is inconsistent throughout the institution</p> 	<p>Broaching is a competency practice!</p> <p>Framework becomes a map for addressing other issues;</p> <p>School is not derailed by racialized issues that emerge.</p> <p>Everyone is racially literate</p> 
Themes	<p>Silence</p> 	<p>Limited Engagement</p> 	<p>Some of us</p> 	<p>All of us</p> 

Role of the Head of School: Plan

"The thing to do with the future is not to forecast it, but create it. The objectives of planning should be to design a desirable future and to invent way to bring it about."

Russell Ackoff, The Wharton School



Invest the
appropriate
resources to
support the work





ROLE MODELS

The Role of the Head of School: Role Model

- Model the behavior you wish to see replicated in your school
- Support the board in its efforts to integrate DEI practices across all board committees and procedures

Role of the Head: Sustain the momentum

Clear expectations support ongoing individual and collective dedication.

- Accountability embeds DEI in an organization's strategy.
- And *both* of these require the head's commitment.
- Accountability and expectations cascade from leaders who embody their dedication to DEI.



Understand that DEI takes time and persistence



The Work is Never Finished

- The work is never finished
- Although specific programs may have a start and end date the school culture is always developing
- The school is on a DEI journey



The DEI journey

"This journey isn't always pretty, isn't always comfortable. But, the journey changes you. It should change you. And isn't that what the journey is for?" Anthony Bourdain



DR.VALAWISE
CONSULTING, LLC

V.WISE@DRVALWISE.COM
DRVALWISE.COM