

# Mental Health as Curriculum: Six Imperatives in the Fight for Justice in the “New” Normal

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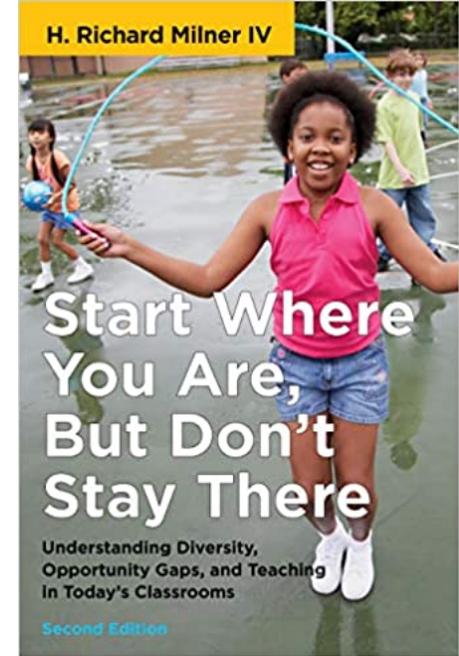
#startwhereyouare

# Imperative #1

**Curriculum should center identity and justice.**

# Opportunity-Centered Teaching

- Opportunity-Centered teaching is about relationships.
- Opportunity-Centered teaching is about building community knowledge to inform practice.
- **Opportunity-Centered teaching is about curriculum convergence.**
- **Opportunity-Centered teaching is about psychological and mental health.**



# What Converges in Curriculum Convergence through OCT?

The Who -- Identity

The What – Learning Opportunities

The Where -- Society/Community



# Common Language: Three Forms of Curriculum

**Explicit**

**Implicit**

**Null**

*E. Eisner (1994)*

# Implicit and Null Curriculum

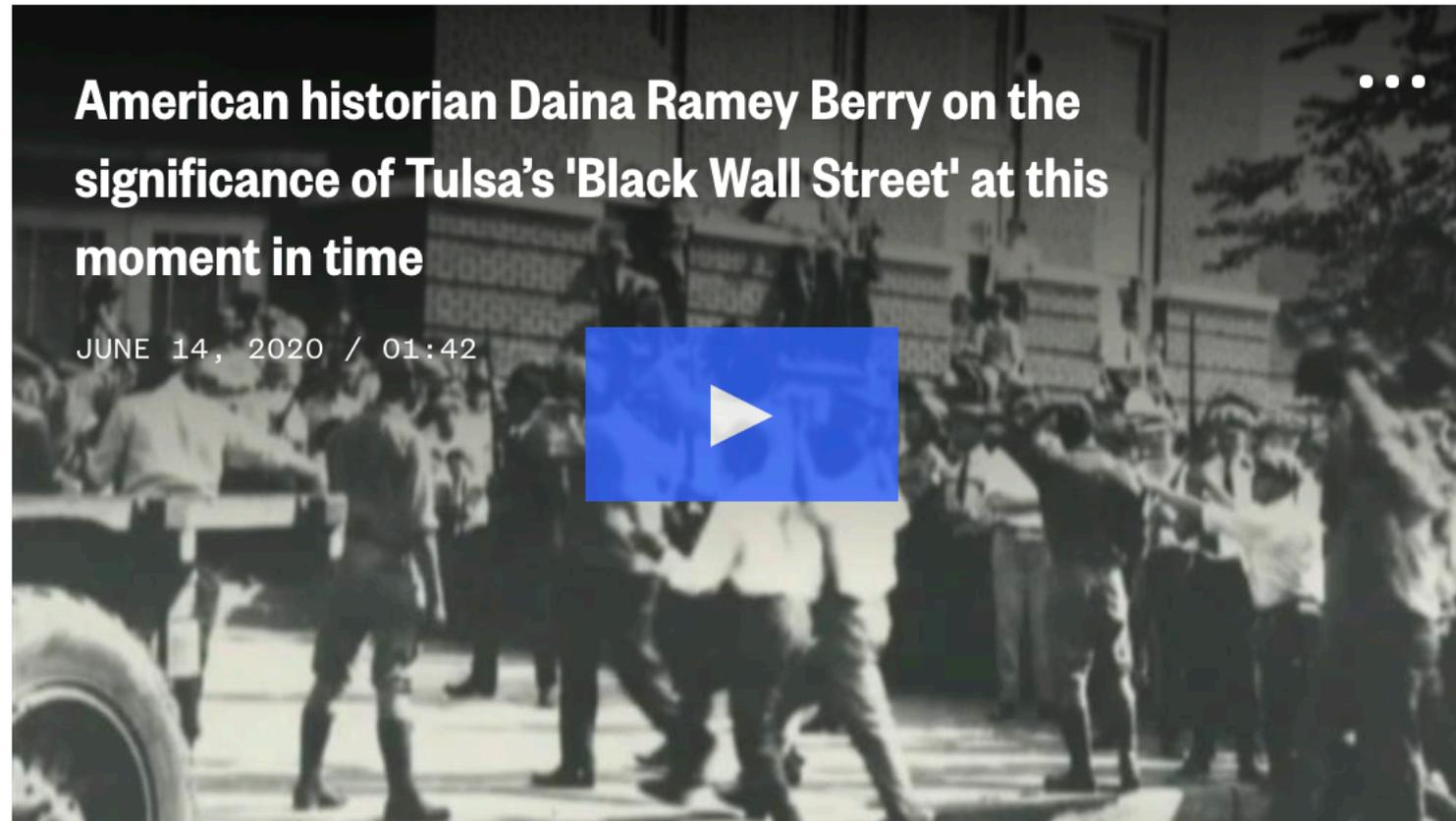


# Null Curriculum

## From Juneteenth to the Tulsa Massacre: What isn't [wasn't] taught in classrooms

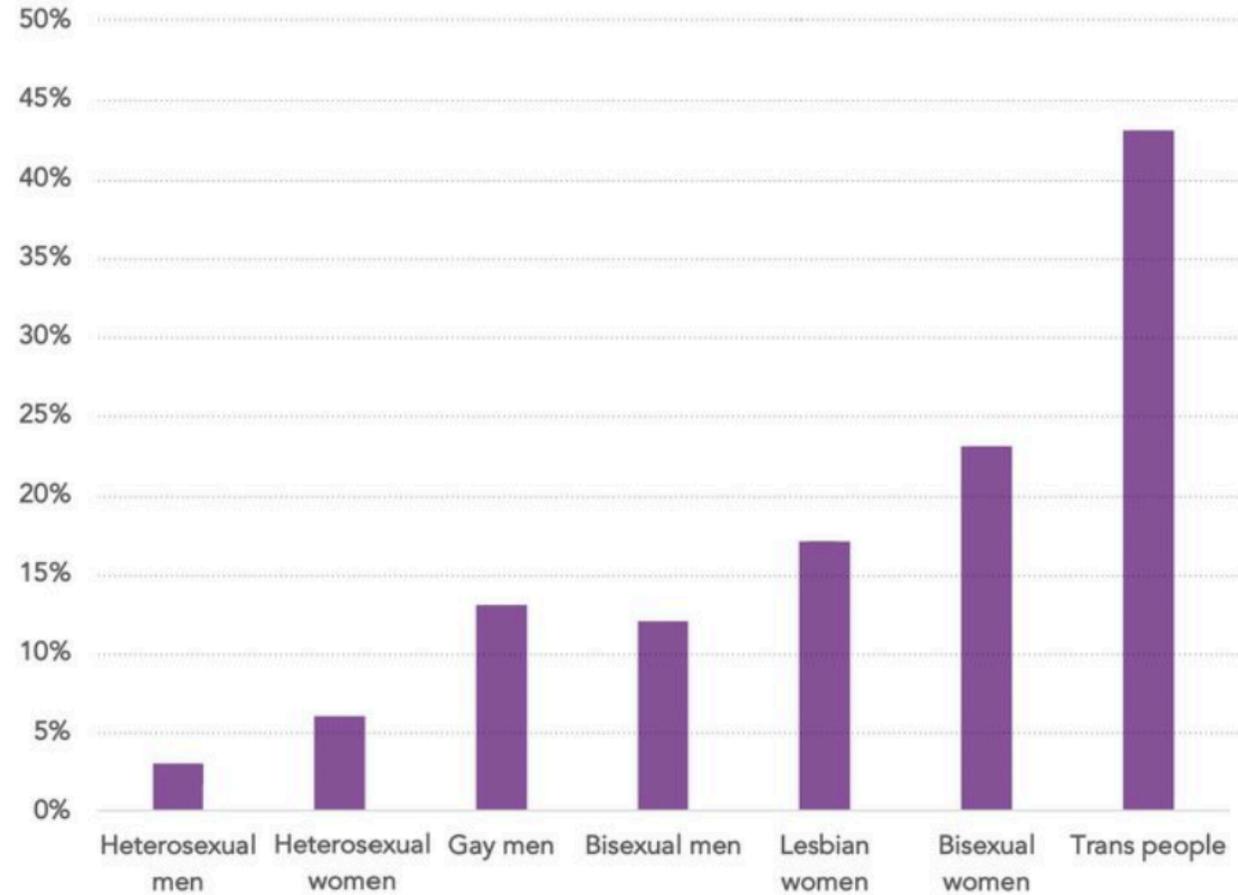


# Historian Significance of 'Black Wall Street'





## Proportion of Adults Who Have Attempted Suicide



Source: "A systematic review and meta-analysis of disparities in the prevalence of suicide ideation and attempt among bisexual populations," *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 2019; "Suicidality among trans people in Ontario: implications for social work and social justice," *Service Social*, 2013.

# Synagogue Shootings – Pittsburgh PA, Poway CA





Freddie Gray, 25  
Died while in police  
custody  
April 12, 2015



Brendon Glenn, 29  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
May 5, 2015



Christian Taylor, 19  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
August 7, 2015



Samuel DuBose, 43  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
July 19, 2015



Gregory Gunn, 58  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
February 25, 2016



Alton Sterling, 37  
Shot dead while  
detained  
July 5, 2016



Philando Castille, 32  
Shot dead while  
legally armed  
July 6, 2016



Tyre King, 13  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
September 14, 2016



Terence Crutcher, 40  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
September 16, 2016



Alfred Olongo, 30  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
September 27, 2016



**India Kager 28**  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
September 5, 2015



**Natasha McKenna 37**  
Tased dead while  
unarmed  
February 3, 2015



**Tanisha Anderson 37**  
Subdued and Killed  
while unarmed  
November 13, 2014



**Aura Rosser 40**  
Tased dead while  
unarmed  
November 9, 2014



**Yvette Smith 47**  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
February 16, 2014



**Mariam Carey 34**  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
October 3, 2013



**Shelly Frey 27**  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
December 6, 2012



**Darnisha Harris 16**  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
December 2, 2012



**Alecia Thomas 35**  
Beaten while  
unarmed  
July 22, 2012



**Shantel Davis 23**  
Shot dead while  
unarmed  
July 14, 2012

# Vicarious Trauma

“Vicarious trauma is the emotional residue of exposure that [people] have from hearing [other people’s] trauma stories and become witness to the pain, fear, and terror”

- American Counseling Association

“Being black and feeling blue”: The mental health consequences of racial discrimination Published in *Race and Society*.

Tony NBrown<sup>a</sup>David RWilliams<sup>a</sup>James SJackson<sup>a</sup>Harold WNeighbors<sup>a</sup>MyriamTorres<sup>a</sup>Sherrill LSellers<sup>b</sup>Kendrick TBrown<sup>c</sup>

“I Feel Sad and Don’t Know Why” (High School Senior at Alleghany County Community College Forum)

# Curriculum Convergence

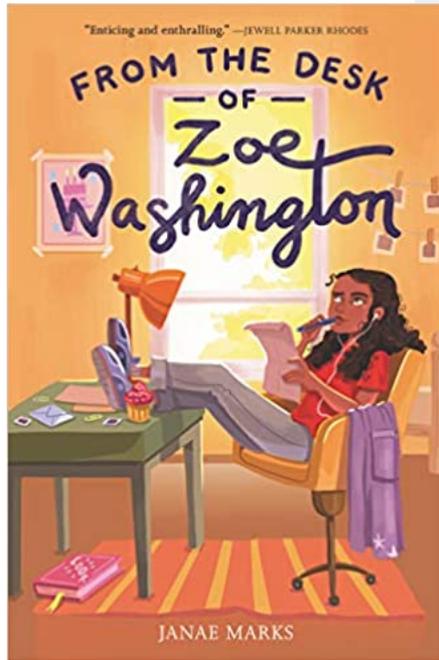
- The alarming and disproportionate number of deaths of Black people from COVID-19.
- Police shootings and murders of Black bodies such as Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Rekia Boyd, and Antwon Rose Jr.
- Colin Kaepernick's refusal to stand during the U.S. national anthem and the consequent backlash from the National Football League and fans
- Ongoing national immigration debates over children being taken from their family and placed in fenced cages
- The Flint, Michigan water crisis
- The brutal shooting of nine parishioners in a church in Charleston, South Carolina
- Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, Virginia (murder of Heather Heyer)

# Developmentally Appropriate Learning Opportunities

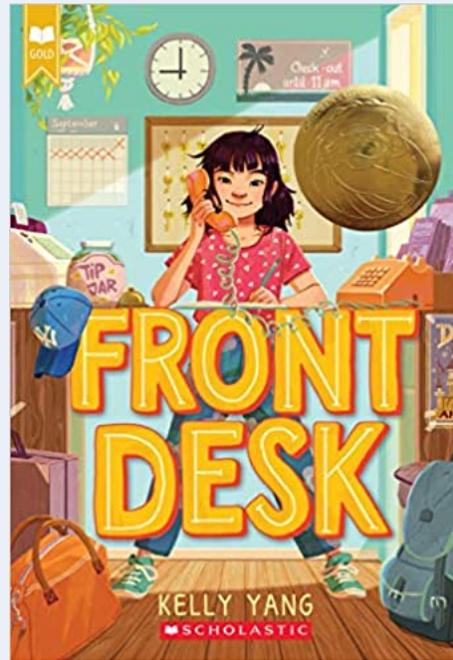
## Reimagining the Cannon in the New Normal

### Rudine Bishop

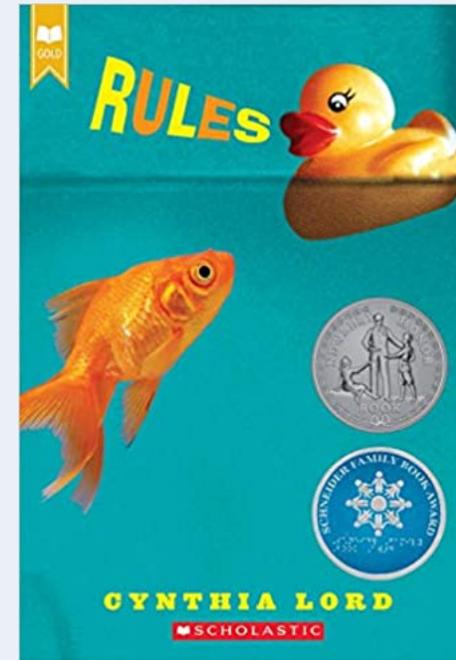
Mirrors



Windows



Sliding Glass Doors



## Imperative #2

**We must push to the highest form of curriculum – social action.**

# Levels of Multicultural/Anti-Racist Curriculum Integration

## LEVEL 4

### THE SOCIAL ACTION APPROACH

- Students make decisions on important social issues and *take action* to help solve some of the social ills and injustices in their school, community, and society.

## LEVEL 3

### THE TRANSFORMATION APPROACH

- The curriculum is transformed. The structure of the curriculum is changed to enable students to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspectives of diverse racial and cultural groups. “Tough” topics and themes are not avoided. These issues are central to the entire curriculum, not just one week or unit.

## LEVEL 2

### THE ADDITIVE APPROACH

- Content, concepts, themes, and perspectives are added to the curriculum without changing its structure (e.g., Black History Month or Native American Awareness Week). That which is safe, politically correct, and less controversial is more likely to be taught and discussed.

## LEVEL 1

### THE CONTRIBUTIONS APPROACH

- Focuses on heroes, holidays, and isolated events of culturally and ethnically diverse groups and individuals. Focuses more on what diverse groups have done than who they are and fails to transform and integrate the curriculum to levels of meaning and depth.

Adapted from: Banks, J. A. (2018). Curriculum transformation. In J. A. Banks (Ed.), *An introduction to multicultural education* (2nd ed., pp. 21–34). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

# Model and Show Examples of Different Dimensions of Protest, “Riots,” and Social Action

**Historical**  
**Intellectual**  
**Individual**  
**Collective**  
**Transformative**

**Analytic Tools of Social Action - Milner (2020)**

Sociopolitical Social Action  
Individual and/or Collective

## **Robbery in the Perry County Community**

- **Sociopolitical Consciousness**
- **Robbery In the Perry Community!**
- **How might you “teach” the robbery across different subject areas?**

# **Reactions**

**When issues go unaddressed!?**

## Protests (adapted from *New York Times*)

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/12/us/racial-discrimination-protests-ignite-at-colleges-across-the-us.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/12/us/racial-discrimination-protests-ignite-at-colleges-across-the-us.html?_r=0)

“Hundreds of students demonstrated at Ithaca College, demanding the resignation of the college president, Tom Rochon, for what they said was his lackluster response to complaints of racial insensitivity on campus.”



## Protests (adapted from *New York Times*)

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/12/us/racial-discrimination-protests-ignite-at-colleges-across-the-us.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/12/us/racial-discrimination-protests-ignite-at-colleges-across-the-us.html?_r=0)

“At Smith College, about 100 students demonstrated in solidarity with their counterparts in Ithaca and Missouri.”



## Protests (adapted from *New York Times*)

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/12/us/racial-discrimination-protests-ignite-at-colleges-across-the-us.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/12/us/racial-discrimination-protests-ignite-at-colleges-across-the-us.html?_r=0)

“At the University of Kansas, the administration called a town hall meeting to give students and faculty a chance “to be heard” before any concerns about race on campus could grow.”



## Protests (adapted from *New York Times*)

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/12/us/racial-discrimination-protests-ignite-at-colleges-across-the-us.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/12/us/racial-discrimination-protests-ignite-at-colleges-across-the-us.html?_r=0)

“At Claremont McKenna College in California, the junior class president resigned Tuesday after a furor over a Facebook photograph that showed her posing with two women who were wearing sombreros, ponchos and mustaches for Halloween. A campus demonstration followed on Wednesday.”



## Protests (adapted from *New York Times*)

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/12/us/racial-discrimination-protests-ignite-at-colleges-across-the-us.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/12/us/racial-discrimination-protests-ignite-at-colleges-across-the-us.html?_r=0)

“And at Yale, the campus is still in turmoil about an overheard “white girls only” remark at an off-campus fraternity party, and debating over whether students had a right to wear transgressive Halloween costumes.”



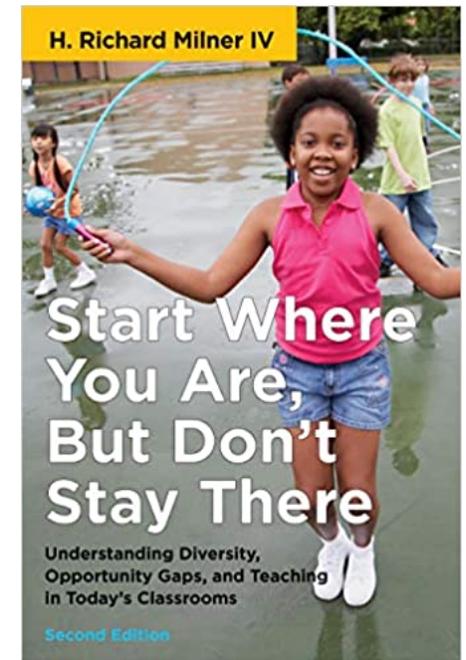
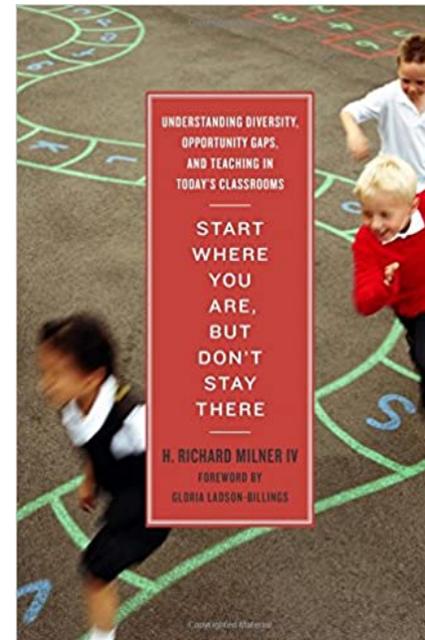
## Imperative #3

Affirmative, Anti-Racist Language is a critical curriculum site.

# Reimagining our Language

Irvine, Ladson-Billings, Milner  
There is NOT an Achievement Gap

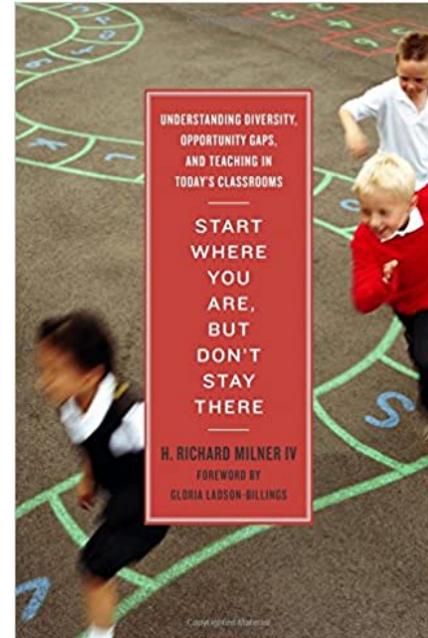
- A Caring Gap
- A Grace Gap
- A Vulnerability Gap
- An Access Gap
- A School Counseling Gap
- An Assessment Gap
- A Psychological Services Gap
- A Funding and Resource Gap



# Beyond Achievement Gap Talk

## Irvine, Ladson-Billings, Milner

- Geography of Opportunity Gap
- An Early Childhood Education Gap
- A Higher Education Gap
- A Community-Schools Connection Gap
- An Empathy Gap
- A Pop Culture/Hip-Hop Gap
- A Research Gap
- An Opportunity Gap



# Our Talk Makes a Difference

**BLACK LIVES MATTER**

**ANTI-BLACK RACISM**

# Problematizing Language

- At Risk
- Poor Children
- Unmotivated Students
- Disengaged Parents
- Culture of Poverty
  
- Others?

# Power in How You Talk about and to Your Students

## Imperative #4

**We must address all forms of Racism and  
Anti-Black Racism!**

**Why is it so difficult to have conversations about race, especially in  
“mixed” company?**

# Race has nothing to do with it?

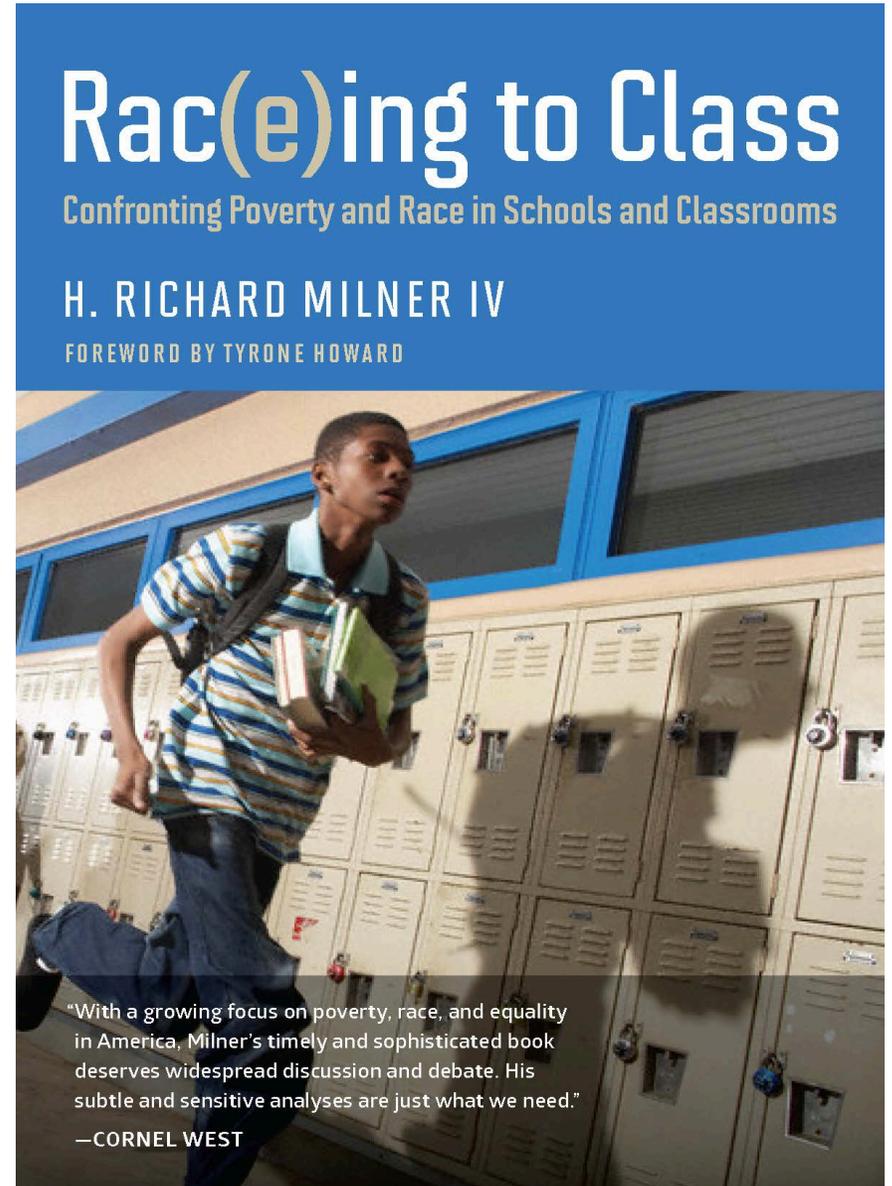
“Our principal invited you here to talk to us about specific strategies to teach our poor children. I was devouring what you had to say — you were right on target — until you got to this race stuff.

***Race has nothing to do with how to teach my kids living in poverty.*** What does it matter? Really!”

*(Rac(e)ing to Class, p. 4)*

# Defining Race

- Socially (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1994)
- Legally (Harris, 1993)
  - Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)
  - Rowles v. Board (1907)
  - Mendez v. Westminster (1947)
  - Brown v. Board (1954)
  - Milliken v. Bradley (1974)
- Historically (Anderson, 1988)
- Physically--not Biologically (Monroe, 2013)
- Contextually (Tate, 1997)



# Defining Racism

“The transformation of racial prejudice into...racism through the use of power directed against racial group(s) and their members, who are defined as inferior by individuals, institutional members, and leaders, which is reflected in policy and procedures with the intentional and unintentional support and participation...”

*(Carter, 2007, p. 24)*

# Colorblindness

People sometimes claim that they were raised to “just see people,” and to not think about race.

This thinking carries over into their conceptions of their work:

- Mindset 1: If I acknowledge the racial or ethnic background of my students or myself, then I may be considered racist.
- Mindset 2: If I admit that people experience and see the world differently, I may be seen as politically incorrect. I may offend others (students, colleagues) if I express my beliefs and reservations about race.
- Mindset 3: I should treat all my students the same, regardless of who they are, what their home situations are, or what their experiences related to race happen to be.

# Why Focus on Race?

- Adoption of color-blind ideologies make it difficult to recognize systemic/broader disparities and dilemmas such as
- An over-representation of students of color in special education
- An under-representation of students of color in gifted education
- An over-referral of Black students to the office
- An overwhelming number of Black and Brown students expelled or suspended.



# Terms/Definitions

## Racial Micro-Aggressions

“brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color” (*Sue et al, 2007, p. 271*).

a form of “cultural disrespect.” A “subtle daily insults that, as a form of racism, support a racial and cultural hierarchy of minority inferiority” (Koli and Solorzano, 2012).

*Teachers, please learn our names!: Racial  
microaggressions and the K-12 classroom*  
Kohli and Solórzano, 2012

FROM AN ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENT:

**I always tried to go up to a new teacher or substitute before class to tell them my name since I was always the first or second person on the roster. If I didn't go up there, during roll call I would hear a long pause, sigh or 'sorry if I can't pronounce your name' without even an attempt to say my name. If I was lucky my last name would be called. I often wished I had an English first and last name to avoid being laughed at by my peers when my name was not said or butchered...**

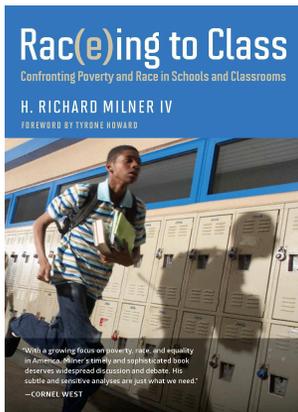
# Teachers, please learn our names!: Racial microaggressions and the K-12 classroom

Kohli and Solórzano, 2012

- **In elementary school, a teacher asked me to provide my mother's maiden name for an application form. I vividly recall him laughing at my response once I told him, 'Her maiden name is Sandel.' Her name seemed so 'foreign.' His confused response was, 'Like a sandal?' I didn't find that comparison humorous the way he did (or the rest of the class who began laughing too), but I definitely felt it was demeaning -- being ridiculed in front of my classmates.**

# Students' Experience

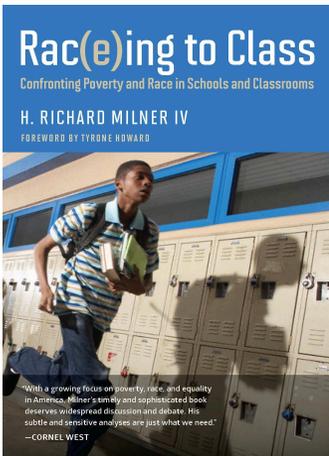
“That shit gets on my nerves. These damn white people follow me around the store like I’m going to steal the clothes off their backs. The white boys are in the store and nobody’s checking them. It’s the brothers they follow around, you know? The shit gets old. I’m sick of it. I’ve been working since I was 12 and saving. I can buy whatever I want in those damn stores...but you know it’s because I’m a brother that they checking every move I make.”



*Rac(e)ing to Class, p. 158*

# Students' Experience

“It’s like whenever I say something in class she [the teacher] is like ‘that’s interesting.’ But when a white student says the same thing or makes the same point, she’s like ‘that’s a great point.’ I’m thinking that’s exactly what I just said. She always does that so I just stop talking [participating] in class because I’m tired of it.”



*Rac(e)ing to Class, p 158-159*

**Why Race and Racial Identity?**

**Students' Academic Achievement is Related  
to Strong Sense of Racial Identity**

## Imperative #5

**Disrupt Deficit Beliefs about Minoritized Students and Build Culturally Relevant Pedagogical Practices!**

# Help students Build Beliefs in Themselves Self-Efficacy (Bandura, 1997)

- Verbal Persuasion
- Vicarious Experiences

# Asset- Tracking and Mapping

- **Identify a Group that has been grossly underrepresented and marginalized.**
- **Disrupt it through photos of assets**

# Anthony Borges – Parkland, Florida

Link: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/anthony-borges-parkland-teen-who-shielded-classmates-speaks-first-time-n862636>

- “Anthony Borges was shot five times during the Feb. 14 school shooting, which killed 17 people. He barricaded a classroom door and used his body as a shield as the bullets flew, protecting a class full of students from harm.”

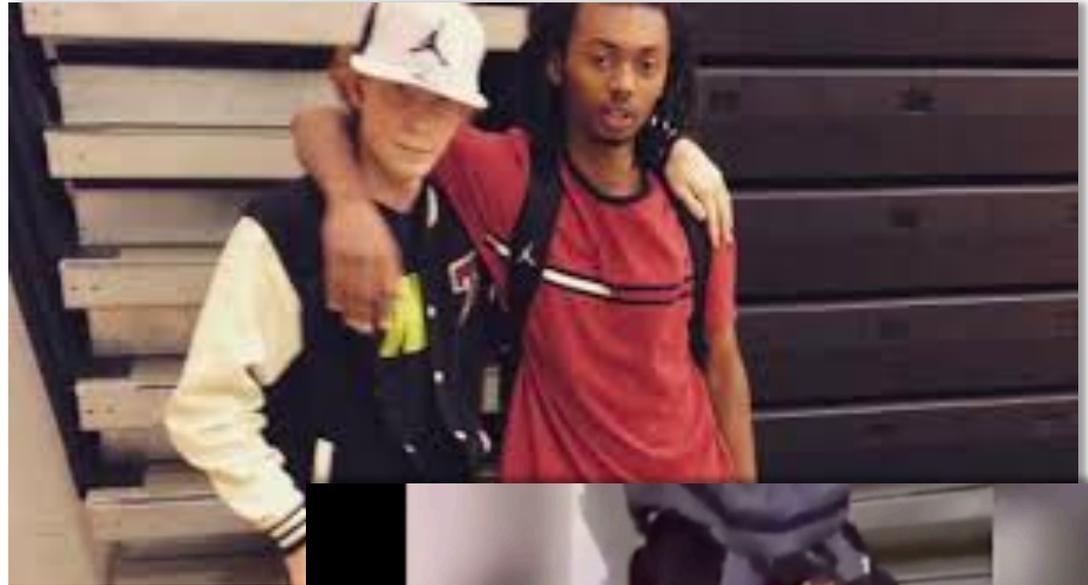
- NBC News



# Tae Moore – Greenwood South Carolina

*Link: <https://wnep.com/2016/11/09/student-buys-air-jordans-for-classmate-being-bullied-over-his-shoes/>*

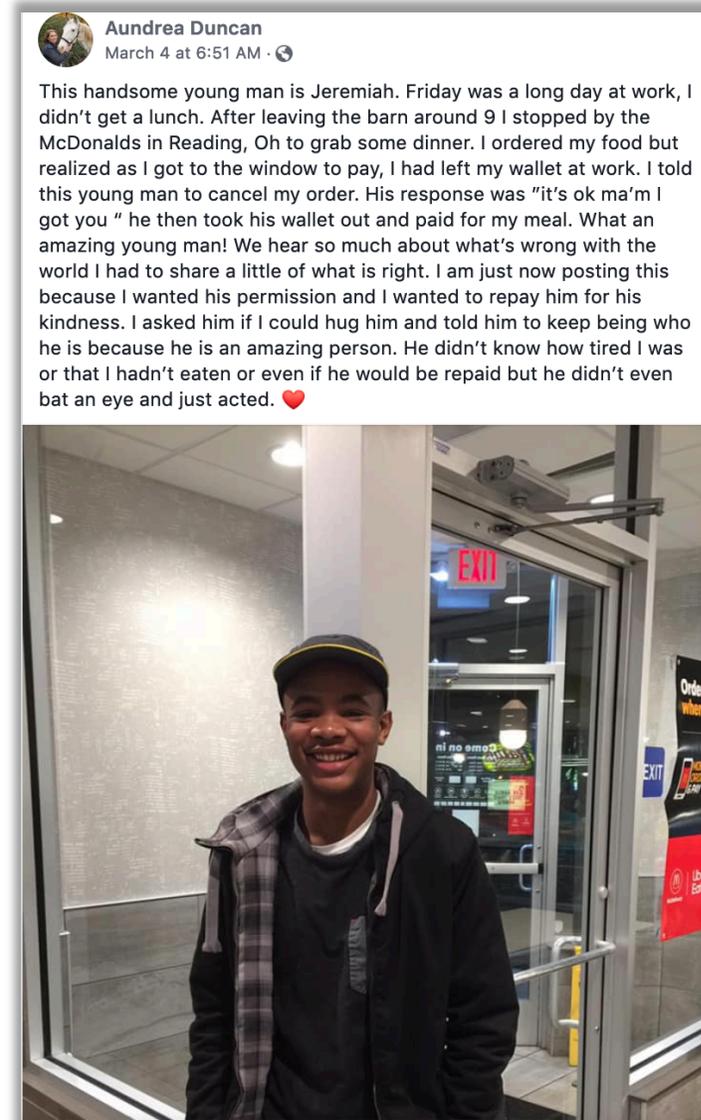
- “South Carolina student bought his classmate a pair of Air Jordan’s after he saw him being bullied over his shoes” – ABC 16 South Carolina
  - “This kid go to our school named Eazy-E. He likes to rap and etc., he said he wants to be a rapper, just trying to chase his dream but kids at school like to bully him and pick on him and talk about the way he dresses and looks, so I went and bought him some Jordan’s,”



# Jeremiah McDonald-Hemphill – Reading, Ohio

Link: <https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/mcdonalds-worker-praised-paying-customers-meal-forgot-wallet-161230936.html>

- “A woman in Reading, Ohio, who realized she forgot her wallet after ordering food at McDonald’s was so grateful to the employee who paid for her meal” – Yahoo News



# Maurice Adams Jr. – Milledgeville, GA

Link: <https://abcnews.go.com/US/adorable-boy-helps-elderly-woman-flight-stairs/story?id=55543071>

- “Maurice Adams Jr., 8, spotted an elderly woman with a walker struggling to climb up a flight of stairs . . .”
- “He stopped, approached the woman and helped her get to the top of the stairs . . .”
- “The woman hugged the helpful young man, and he went off on his merry way.”

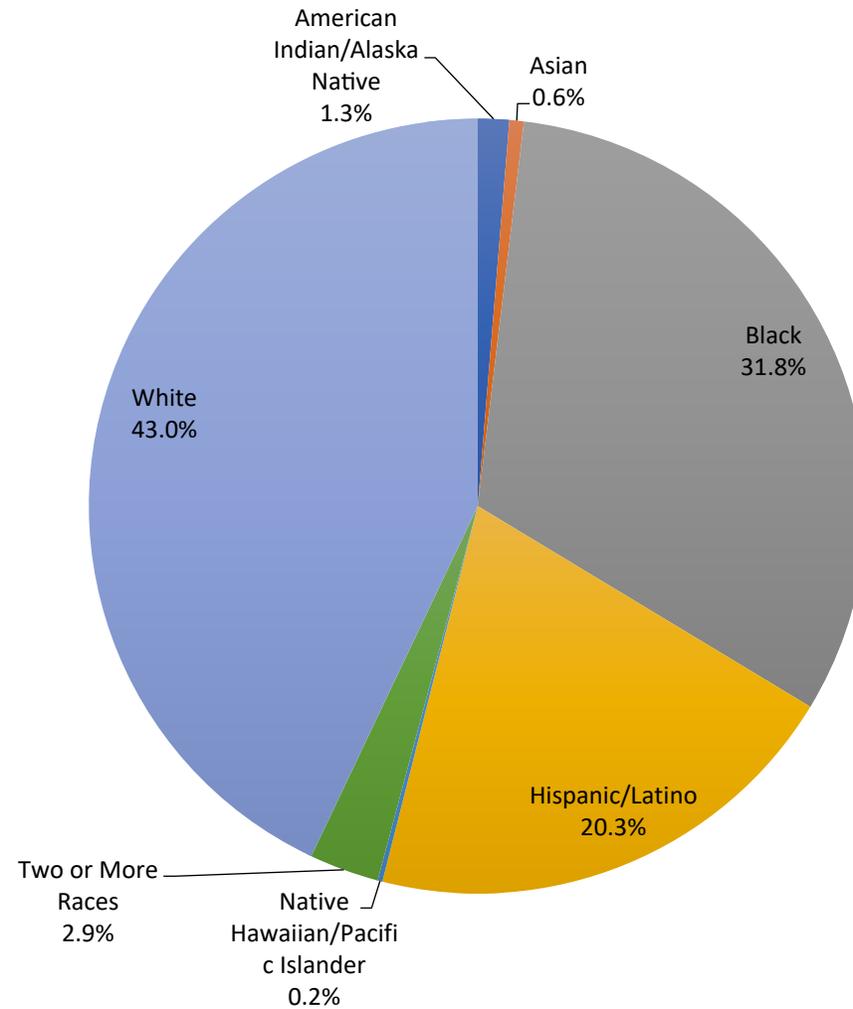
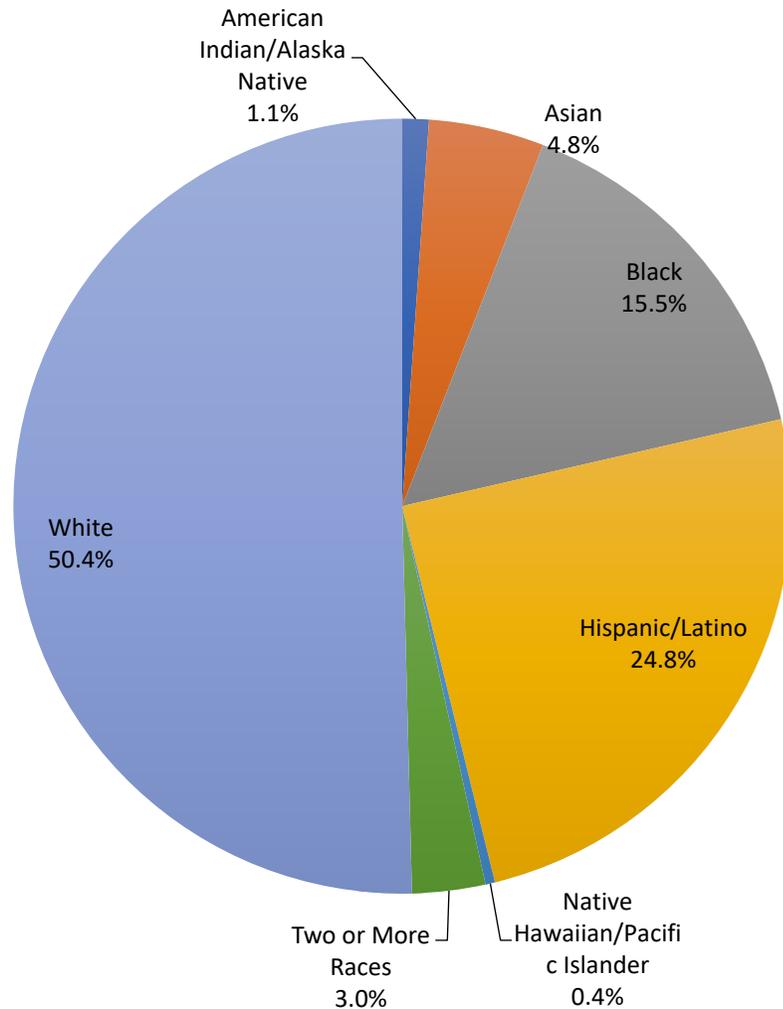
- ABC News



# Mindset Imperative #6

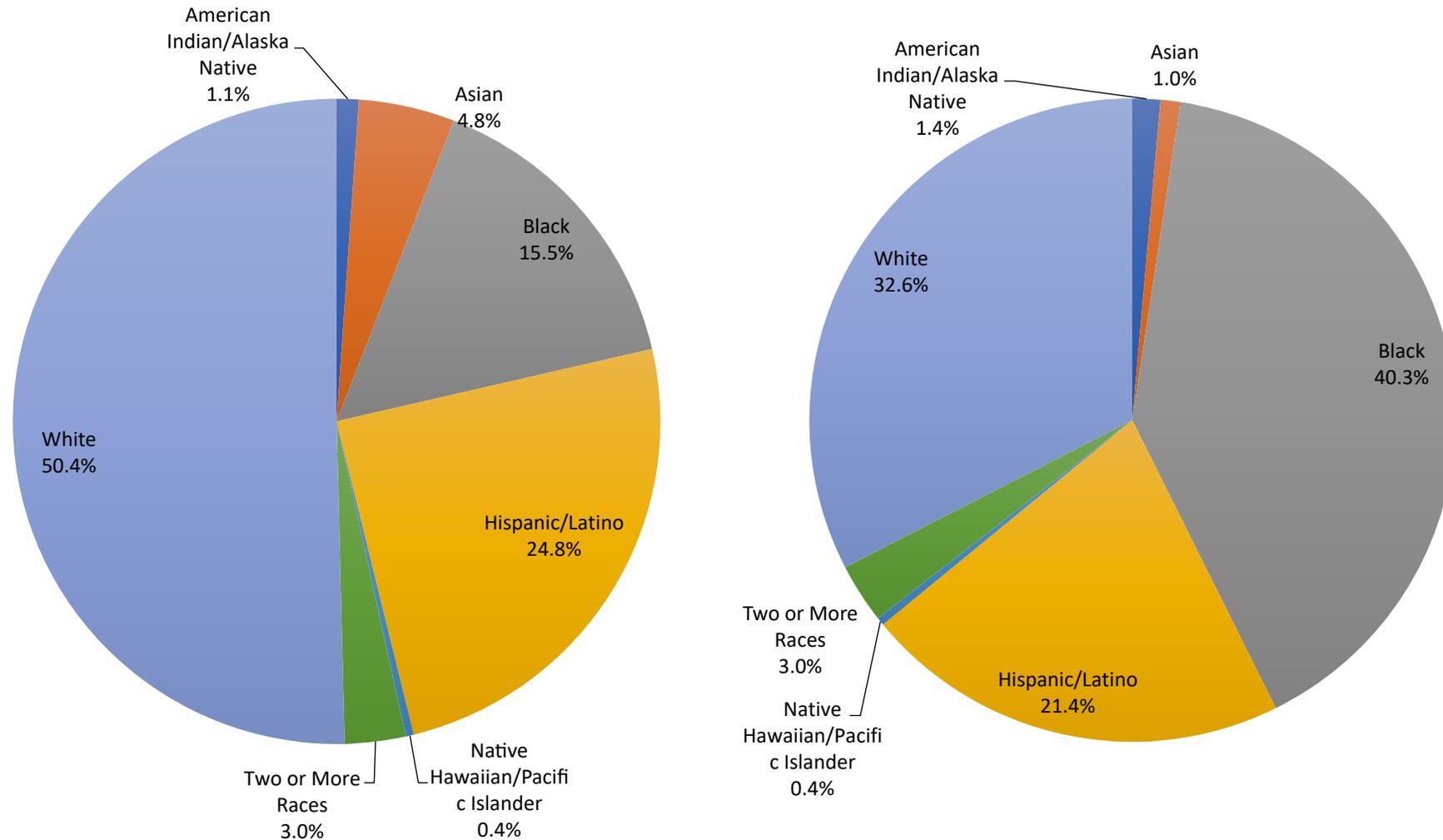
**We Must Pushout and Exclusion in links to  
Student Challenges at Regis.**

# National K-12 in-school suspensions by race and ethnicity

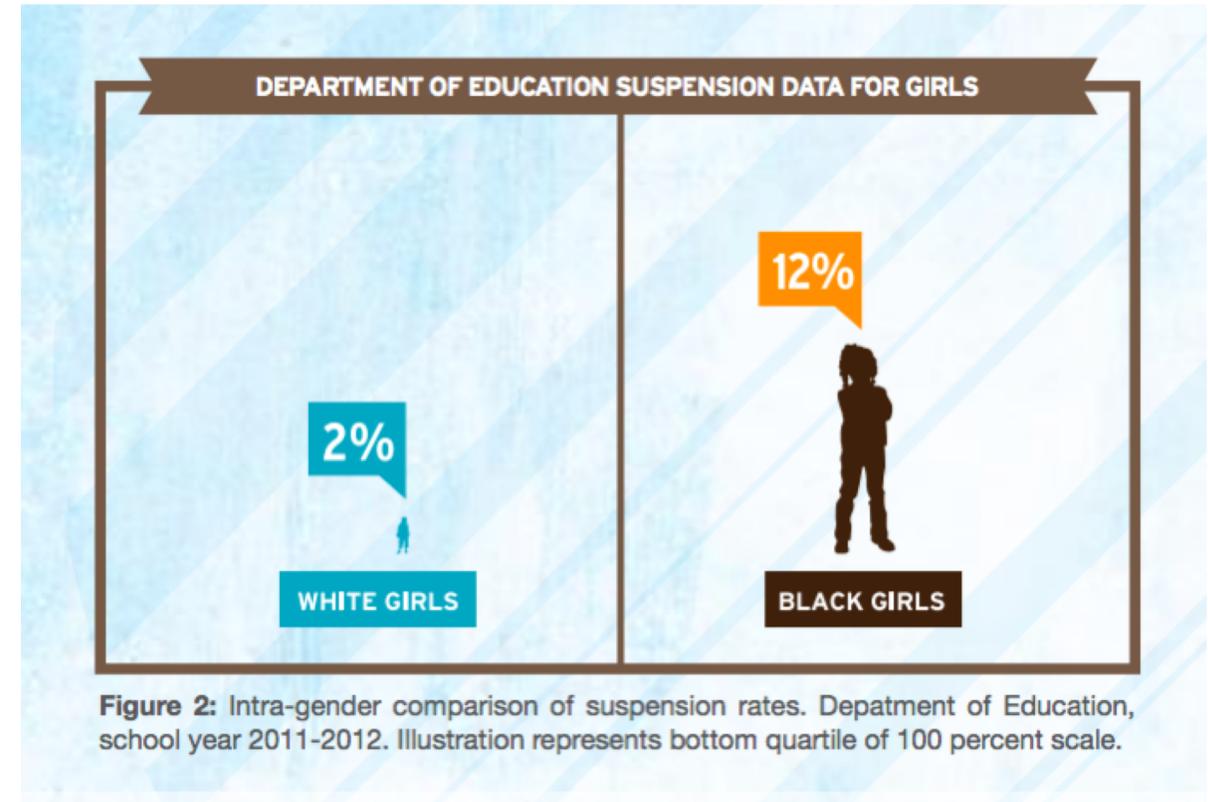
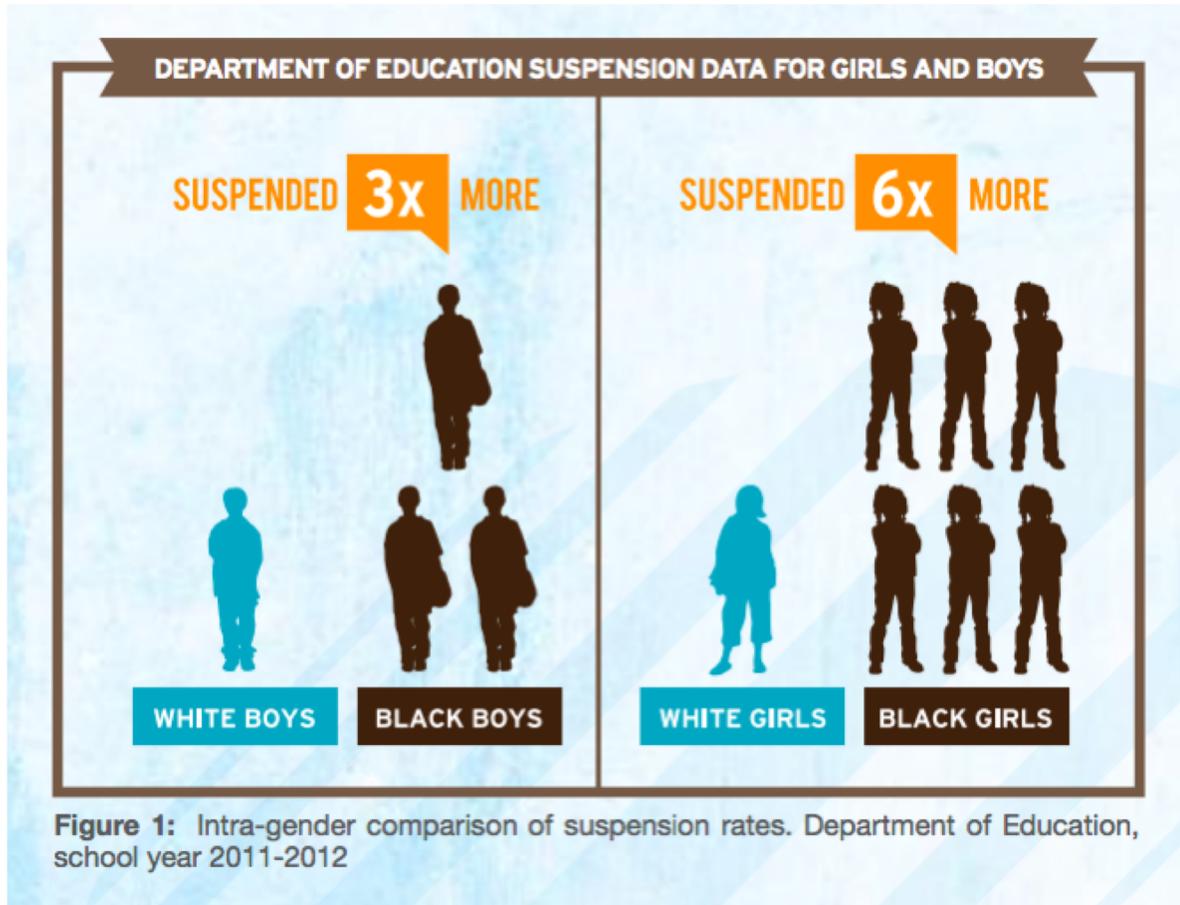


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), 2013-2014

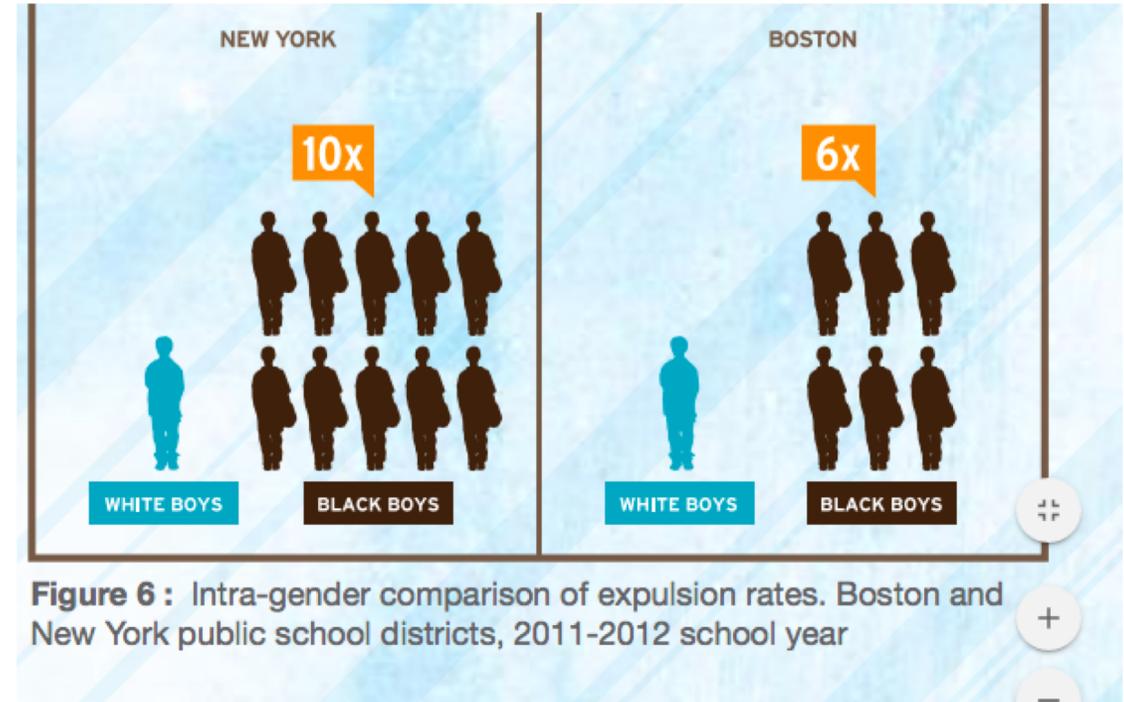
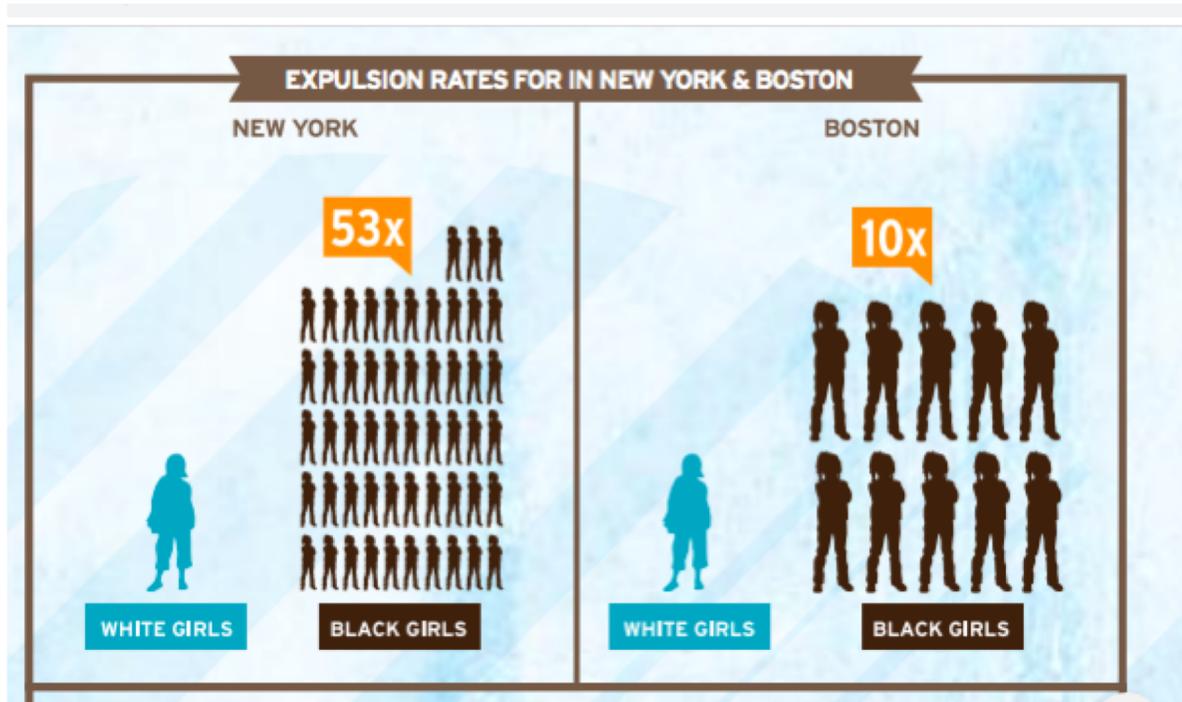
# National K-12 out-of-school suspensions by race and ethnicity



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), 2013-2014



\*Figures from Black Girls Matter: Pushed out, overpoliced, and underprotected



**Figure 6 :** Intra-gender comparison of expulsion rates. Boston and New York public school districts, 2011-2012 school year

\*Figures from Black Girls Matter: Pushed out, overpoliced, and underprotected

George Floyd



# Breonna Taylor



# Big Themes Covered

- Time on Task – Missed Instructional Time and Test Score Results (Woolfolk Hoy, 2015)
- Punishment Versus Discipline (Duncan-Andrade, 2017; Foucault, 1975; Noguera, 2003; Skinner, 1938)
- Black and Brown students referred for Subjective Infractions.
- White students referred for Objective ones (Skiba, 2004; Skiba, 2011)
- Infractions tend to originate on the classroom level.
- Most of office referrals are for non-compliance.

# A Bedtime Story



## Tenets of Discipline versus Punishment

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Punishment</b>
Provide Multiple Opportunities for Students to "Excel"	Exclude, Office Refer, Suspend, and Expel
Focus on Cognitively Rich and Rigorous Curriculum Practices	Teach to the Test
Communicate and Collaborate with Families on ways to Support Student Learning and Development	Ostracize and Marginalize Families, Parents and Communities
Model Tenacity, Persistence and Care	Give up on Students
Cultivate and Envision Students as Knowledgeable	Act as the Arbiter of Knowledge and Knowing

## Tenets of Discipline versus Punishment (Continued)

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Punishment</b>
Invest in the Individual to Impact the Community	Advance an Individualistic Ethos of Success
Build and Sustain Relationships with Students	Create Unnecessary Distance Between Students
Engage in Real Talk about Social Realities and Expectations in Society	Engage in Irrelevant Talk or No Talk at All Society
Expand Racially-Centered Textual Curriculum Opportunities	Develop and Enact Curriculum as White, Mainstream, and Traditional

# Final Recommendations

**Co-construct transformative changes at the micro (classroom), meso (school), and macro (district) level beyond the “normal.”**

# Taking Care of Yourself!

It is difficult for people to critique the world and work to change it when the world works for them. --Beverly Gordon

You cannot work for Freedom on behalf of other people until you are free yourself. --Cornel West

Share in the Chat – Examples of What you are/should be doing to take care of yourself!?!?

# Co-Constructing

- We need to place a moratorium on all standardized testing.
- We need to place a moratorium on assigning permanent grades. Feedback over grades.
- Push for more formative feedback.
- We need to value, honor, and acknowledge the fact that families/parents are our students' first teachers.

# Co-Constructing

- Develop a Student/Young People's Listening Series
- Develop BLM Leaders at different grade levels/subject areas and give them time and resources to support curriculum and instruction
- Encourage/require a Morning Meeting from PreK-12 every, single day!

# Elevate the Morning Meeting from PreK-higher education

Opportunity to “check in” with students

A Way to “humanize” the learning space

Provides opportunities for teachers to share and show

A Way to learn and make curricula connections

Prioritizes voice and experience among all

# Co-Constructing

- Relationships remain perhaps the most essential element to effective teaching and learning. A story about Nick Sabon!
- Remember your WHY in your Work!
- Talk to/build a real authentic relationship with someone outside of your identity space.

# Classroom Relationship Practices

Nature of Practice	Description
Student Interviews	Educators have a chance to talk to their students, both formally and informally, to learn about them. Teachers sometimes spend infinite amounts of time talking about students to their colleagues or to students parents but minimal time talking to students themselves.
Connected assignments	A practice that can help educators build their knowledge and understanding of their students lifeworlds is the assigning of projects and tasks that allow students to share experiences and interests with teachers.
Classroom talk and dynamic discourse	Teachers have an excellent opportunity to construct classroom learning time in ways that allow and foster classroom discussions that place students front and center.
Attendance at extracurricular activity of a student	An important way for educators to build classroom-level relationships with students is to consistently attend students activities before and after school.
Site visits in students communities	Deliberately visiting, patronizing, and otherwise engaging in the community where teachers teach and also where students live (note these two locations may be different) can be a powerful way for teachers to learn about their students and build relationships with them.

# Schoolwide Practices to build relationships

Nature of Practice	Description
Language-learning resource program for parents and families	Such a program can provide families in a school community with chances to acquire a new or second language that can assist them in the school community and beyond.
Parenting/family workshops	Because parents sometimes do not understand all that is expected of them to help their children achieve success, the workshops could be structured to assist parents to be active participants in their students education.
Diversity-related theme for the semester or year	The development and implementation of a theme for the academic school year or semester can allow those in a community to build common knowledge about the theme.
Schoolwide movie viewing	Schools can consider holding periodic, annual, semiannual, or quarterly movie showings and invite the school community (parents, teachers, students, community members) into the school to address dimensions of diversity and opportunity.
Community-centered dinner	Quarterly, semiannually, and/or annually, schools could host a dinner for parents (and other caregivers) and community members along with teachers, staff members, administrators/principals, and students.
Schoolwide book reading	Schools might consider adopting a schoolwide yearly reading selection that showcases some aspect of diversity or opportunity. The book should be read by all those in the community - students, teachers, community members, parents and staff- and teachers can use the reading as a site for discussion and curriculum construction across different age spans.

Let's Do the Work: No Stopping Us!

