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**“CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS:  
THE MISSING LINK”**

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**INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

➤ **Purpose of this presentation:**

- Major assumptions that undergird the need for culturally courageous leadership in school communities
- Historical and contemporary context which provides a rationale for culturally courageous leadership by all stakeholders, and promising practices when introducing the guiding principles and requirements of culturally courageous leadership
- Discussion by institute participants of workshop information, including school scenarios and sample leadership practices, to facilitate critical reflection on the extent to which they practice or perceive the need for culturally courageous leadership by all stakeholders

➤ **ASSUMPTIONS**

- ◇ Cultural hegemony is still alive and well in American education
- ◇ Diversity education in the United States is largely characterized by approaches that stress assimilation
- ◇ Focusing exclusively on the achievement gap is counterproductive; standardized test scores cannot be the sole focus of school improvement efforts since they may be based on mediocre content and performance standards; time on task/successful engagement, disciplinary and special education referrals, suspensions, expulsions, dropouts, graduation rates, attendance, truancy & homework completion rates, are some other very important outcomes.
- ◇ Personal and organizational transformation are integral to effective leadership
  - Transformation is defined as including major paradigm shifts in the identity of the individual or mission of the organization, including espoused values, such as never giving up on a student, a ‘no excuses’ philosophy, and high expectations for all by all
  - Personal transformation includes greater congruence between espoused values and actions, and all stakeholders practicing new ways of “being”
  - Organizational transformation includes greater congruence between espoused values, policies, priorities, programs, performance expectations and performance behaviors by all school stakeholders.
- ◇ There is a necessity for all stakeholders to manifest leadership, including teachers, support staff, parents, students, administrators, and community leaders.

This workshop has three parts, as follows:

1. **Powerpoint overview** of the workshop and context
2. **culturally courageous leadership by all stakeholders: the missing link**
3. **Next steps**

---with the person to your left or right, form a dyad and each briefly share one example where you demonstrated courage in the work setting within the past school year

## **PART ONE: CONTEXT**

### **KEY SCENARIO**

Roosevelt Middle School draws from a range of culturally diverse neighborhoods and many of the students' families send them to Roosevelt because it is a small middle school and is considered less impersonal and 'dangerous' than the other middle school option in this particular geographic area. There are no Black teachers at the school. The student population is over 40% Black, including African immigrants, who constitute the fastest growing subgroup population. Students of African descent are the lowest achieving group in the school. **Roosevelt's major challenges** include: problems of some teachers with classroom management, very little parent involvement, students resenting the paucity of extracurricular and co-curricular activities, instruction that doesn't match the English language development levels of English language learners, poor attendance in after school programs by those most needing such support, limited instructional supervision, and limited coaching for teachers with marginal instructional performance. The school also has difficulty finding math teachers, and has no teachers with a BCLAD credential or GATE certificate.

One of the feeder schools for Roosevelt is Frederick Douglass Elementary School, which has over 90% Black students. One third of the Douglass faculty is Black. The socioeconomic background and grade level readiness of Douglass students has changed a great deal in the last four years. **Douglass' major challenges** include the following: low staff cohesion; only a few teachers implement culturally responsive strategies; low teacher expectations; teachers perceive limited home support for school expectations; and there is unevenness among teachers in their academic rigor. The language arts and social studies instructional materials contain distortions and omissions related to African American cultural heritage. There is also limited availability of computers and software. Many teachers at the school have not taken the principal's recommendation to participate in a graduate program at the local university that focuses on "effectively teaching African American students." Douglass has recently been designated a program improvement school.

--With your dyad partner, discuss your thoughts about the kind of courageous leadership needed at Roosevelt middle School and Douglass elementary school.

--Each person write on the appropriate participant notes page what they shared with one another [this practice of taking notes is strongly encouraged at select times throughout the workshop]

### **THREE MAJOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM MOVEMENTS IN THE LAST FORTY YEARS THAT HAVE NOT HAD THE NEEDED IMPACT ON THE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS:**

- desegregation
- multicultural education
- alternative schools

## **TWO MAJOR INTERVENING VARIABLES: CULTURE AND COURAGE**

### **GOAL OF CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP: CULTURALLY DEMOCRATIC LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

#### **BRIEFLY WRITE YOUR ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ON THE APPROPRIATE PARTICIPANT NOTES PAGE AND THEN SHARE WITH YOUR DYAD PARTNER**

--How do the definitions of culture and courage provided by the presenter relate to the leadership needs of Roosevelt and Douglass schools?

--What leadership actions are needed for Roosevelt and Douglass schools to develop culturally democratic learning environments?

### **EXAMPLES OF BARRIERS TO IMPROVED ACHIEVEMENT: CURRENT REALITIES IN SOME LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS:**

#### **SCHOOL CLIMATE: HOW PEOPLE FEEL AND HOW THEY INTERACT**

- Low staff morale, lack of mutual trust and respect, no consensus on a school vision and a perceived lack of staff influence on school decision making, especially in the enforcement of discipline
- Inadequate school-wide processes and procedures in place, regarding communication and problem solving
- Low teacher efficacy, fear of students and fear of self disclosure
- Student alienation
- Poor student attendance, high student truancy, and low student motivation

#### **SCHOOL/HOME RELATIONS: HOW TEACHERS AND PARENTS INTERACT**

- Almost no parental presence at the school on an ongoing basis, and teacher perception of no parental support for school expectations
- Inadequate school/home communication and school outreach to the parents; no parent education/training programs
- No parent involvement in the governance of the school
- No teacher visitation to students' homes

#### **TEACHING AND LEARNING: RELEVANCE, RIGOR, RELATIONSHIPS**

- Little guidance for teachers in classroom management and/or instructional strategies that motivate significantly below grade level students
- Limited assistance in using assessment data to drive instructional planning
- Low teacher expectations and limited instructional supervision/assistance
- No use of specific improvement plans for each student
- Inadequate after-school academic support programs to provide the special help needed by students
- Inordinate amount of time spent on discipline in all classrooms, contributing to low time on task and low student engagement
- Grade inflation [i.e. major discrepancies between grades & standards level performance]
- Tracking/grouping practices

#### **TEACHER SUPPORT: PREPARATION, PROBLEM SOLVING AND GROWTH**

- Inadequate school site support for new teachers
- No built-in structured time for teachers to engage in joint planning
- No site assistance to address differences between teaching practices and student learning styles/learner characteristics

**POLITICS: INTERESTS, VALUES, POWER, INFLUENCE**

- Impact of unions and residential segregation on board of education policies and priorities
- Culturally biased content standards
- Limited financial and human resources
- Inadequate allocation and utilization of existing resources

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION OF THE BARRIERS TO IMPROVED ACHIEVEMENT THAT APPLY TO ROOSEVELT AND/OR DOUGLASS SCHOOLS

**PART TWO: CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS: THE MISSING LINK**

**RULES OF CONDUCT FOR CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERS**

1. BE INCLUSIVE AND TAKE RISKS BEYOND YOUR COMFORT ZONE TO CREATE CULTURALLY DEMOCRATIC LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
2. UTILIZE SEVERAL KINDS OF POWER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS
3. START WITH SELF, WORKING FROM THE INSIDE OUT
4. FOCUS ON THE ISSUE OF RACISM WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF OTHER HUMAN DIFFERENCE CONCEPTS
5. KEEP THE ISSUE OF RACE AT THE FOREFRONT OF ALL TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

## SOME ALTERNATIVE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE YOUR CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP

### 1. POSITIVE CONFRONTATION

### 2. THE POLITICS OF IMPLEMENTATION

#### A. MODEL THE FIVE C'S:

- **committed caregiver** (positive attitude about Black children),
- **culturally competent consumer** (access knowledge about the African/African American culture),
- **consummate conciliator** (adapt to needs of Black learners and work through any conflicts that occur),
- **conscientious coach** (assess personal needs as well as student and teacher needs and facilitate critical reflection/growth of others via use of key questions),
- **courageous change master** (facilitate embracing of and adaptation to change, model and insist on accountability for improvement in African American student outcomes)

#### B. ENGAGE IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

#### C. NURTURE AFRICAN IDENTITIES

#### D. BE AN ARDENT ADVOCATE

#### E. USE PILOTS AND PHASING

#### F. REFLECT, DOCUMENT AND ASSESS

#### G. BE RESILIENT AND IMPROVE YOUR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

#### H. HAVE CONTINGENCY PLANS

#### I. KNOW AND USE WORK/COMMUNICATION STYLES TO INFLUENCE THE 'DYNAMICS OF DIFFERENCE'

#### J. PRACTICE "SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP" AND USE YOUR INSIGHT ON "IDENTITY CONSTRUCTS"

### **KEY SCENARIO, part two**

Roosevelt and Douglass schools are facing budget cuts in the coming school year, which will result in staffing reductions and may compromise the educational program. This necessity has dramatically affected staff morale. Most teachers feel they have inadequate time to meet during the school year to do joint lesson planning based on analyzing student work and assessment data. Most teachers also feel they have not received the training and coaching/mentoring they need to be more effective with their lowest achieving students. Most students in both places indicate liking their school, but report on the Healthy Kids survey that a lot of bullying takes place. Some teachers in both schools have difficulty with classroom management, and with helping students performing at below basic levels to achieve at the proficient performance level or higher.

WITH YOUR DYAD PARTNER, IDENTIFY AND BRIEFLY DISCUSS WHICH CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP RULES OF CONDUCT AND ALTERNATIVE IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES SHOULD BE PRACTICED IN THE TWO SCHOOLS, BASED ON WHAT IS DESCRIBED IN PART TWO OF THE KEY SCENARIO.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND EXAMPLES OF LEADERSHIP PRAXIS:**

**IN SELF SELECTED GROUPS OF 4 OR 5 PERSONS, DISCUSS THE CHART THAT FOLLOWS ON "CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP PRAXIS," WITH EACH PERSON IDENTIFYING AT LEAST TWO ITEMS IN THE CHART THEY INTEND TO ACT ON AFTER THIS CONFERENCE. DURING THIS DISCUSSION, COLLECTIVELY ANSWER THE ASSIGNED QUESTION FOR YOUR GROUP AND THEN DECIDE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU THINK THE SAMPLE LEADERSHIP PRACTICE [SLP] FOR THAT QUESTION REFLECTS CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP.**

- 1. CAN A PERSON PRACTICE CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP IN AN EDUCATIONAL SETTING WHERE ALL (OR MOST) PERSONS ARE OF THE SAME ETHNIC/RACIAL GROUP?**

**SLP: White female principal of elementary school where 20% of the students are of African descent integrates race and equity issues into all classroom observations, all staff meetings, all meetings with individual staff members and all site professional development activities.**

- 2. CAN A PERSON BE AN EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER AND NOT PRACTICE CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP?**

**SLP: Black assistant superintendent repeatedly encourages, without success, the 25 elementary principals she supervises to request some of their teachers to enroll in a local university extension graduate certificate program that focuses on "effectively teaching African American students."**

- 3. CAN A PERSON PRACTICE CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP AND NOT BE AN EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER?**

**SLP: Black high school principal implements major reform of attendance office procedures, requires all teachers to assume more responsibility for student attendance, revises job requirements for security staff to increase attention given to reducing truancy, and after classroom observations begins to engage teachers in discussions on what they are doing to improve student motivation to learn and increase student engagement, but does not look at or discuss individual teacher assessment results by race/ethnicity.**

- 4. What is the difference between being a courageous leader and a culturally courageous leader?**

**SLP: White and Hispanic teachers in a very culturally diverse elementary school, with 20% students of African descent, participate in grade level and multi-grade level groups, where they do book study, joint curriculum planning, and experience training on culturally relevant curriculum; they also receive help from a literacy resource teacher in implementing culturally responsive instruction, and purchase supplementary materials so students of most backgrounds have books reflecting their culture.**

5. What is the interface, if any, between gender or any other human difference issues and culturally courageous leadership?

SLP: White, Black, Hispanic, male and female students in select middle and high schools of a district receive initial and ongoing training/support as peer mediators/peer coaches, followed by teachers, counselors or assistant principals in their schools referring students to them, when student-student or student-teacher conflicts occur, especially cultural/racial conflicts, when students are having major academic difficulties, &/or when students are struggling with peer pressure or other identity issues.

**EXAMPLES OF CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP PRAXIS**

SCHOOL COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS	CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP PRAXIS
ADMINISTRATORS	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>KNOWLEDGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to integrate race and equity issues into all instructional leadership activities</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SKILLS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to develop and implement leadership plans that focus on how to address issues of race when doing classroom observations/supervision, and when analyzing all educational outcome data</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ATTITUDES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and value the relationship between equal educational opportunity, equity and excellence, social justice, teacher practice, and culturally democratic learning environments</li> <li>• Give high priority to improving student attendance, reducing truancy, and increasing motivation of African American students</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give priority to securing grants that will assist with anti-racist/equity priorities and programs</li> <li>• Challenge and stop questionable school practices (e.g. suspensions, expulsions, special education referrals) that disproportionately impact Black students</li> <li>• Disaggregate teacher assessment results by course/classroom/race/ethnicity &amp; use as a basis for 1-on-1 discussions of teacher instructional practices</li> <li>• Pilot use of form for student feedback at end of each semester to H.S. teachers who volunteer to participate in the feedback program; student and teacher rep's should participate in developing the form</li> <li>• Empower the voice of academically and socio-economically diverse groups of African American H.S. students, by eliciting perceptions of their learning experiences and classroom treatment</li> <li>• Empower the voice of African American parents, by eliciting their perceptions on school-related concerns and seeking help to help increase parent involvement</li> <li>• Identify student disciplinary and SST referrals by race, by teacher, and by reasons for referral</li> <li>• Facilitate accountability and improvement in job performance by documenting cultural proficiency performance of all staff based on training provided</li> <li>• Create culturally responsive teaching (CRT) teacher coaches who have model classrooms for others to observe and emulate; support teachers' development</li> </ul>

	<p>of CRT standards of practice which then drive the creation of lesson designs that demonstrate the integration of culturally relevant pedagogy in academic subject areas; include strategies for differentiated instruction in the lesson designs; use SIP funds to support the undertaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage services of others to develop assessment tools and conduct training so expectations for greater accountability can be monitored</li> <li>• Provide policymakers and executive leadership with specific examples of policies, procedures, benchmarks/actions needed at their level, and recommendations for how monitoring/enforcement should occur</li> <li>• After personal immersion/observation, provide feedback that challenges teachers, if necessary, to do more than give surface/cosmetic treatment to key concepts or instructional reforms related to anti-racist/equity pedagogy; expect and support “walking the talk” by modeling “walking the talk”</li> <li>• Assign coaches to work with principals on anti-racist/equity issues, where the coaches help administrators develop and implement individual development plans based on standards of practice</li> </ul>
<b>TEACHERS</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>KNOWLEDGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to operationalize culturally relevant curriculum/culturally responsive instruction in their subject/grade, and what it means to be a culturally proficient educator</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SKILLS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboratively plan and implement lessons that incorporate culturally relevant curriculum and culturally responsive instruction for all students, regardless of the academic, language, and socio-economic background of the student</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ATTITUDES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value the necessity of building on the cultural strengths of all learners and eliminating the curriculum omissions and distortions related to students of African descent</li> <li>• Be relationship oriented</li> <li>• Show that you care, but be firm in holding students to high standards</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home visitations</li> <li>• Share with colleagues successful classroom strategies used with students of African descent</li> <li>• Participate in professional learning communities with colleagues, focusing on the implementation of culturally responsive instruction</li> <li>• Choose methods and materials effective with African American students</li> </ul>
<b>STUDENTS</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve as peer coaches for academics, identity pressures &amp; mediation of racial conflict</li> </ul>
<b>PARENTS</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spend time at children’s school</li> <li>• Proactively volunteer to serve as link to resources in the African American community</li> <li>• Engage in collective concerted ongoing lobbying of education policy makers and administrators, to improve responsiveness to the needs of African American students</li> </ul>
<b>COMMUNITY LEADERS</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ATTITUDES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give high priority to collaborating with each other and using their collective influence to strengthen parenting of African American students</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Board, Local, County, and State policy makers or administrators, Pastors, leaders of organizations serving the Black community, such as the NAACP, Links, Urban League, YMCA, YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, CAAAE, &amp; local foundations, provide more support for and guidance to Black caregivers of special needs children, including African immigrants</li> </ul>
<b>UNIVERSITY EDUCATORS/LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD, COUNTY, AND STATE DEPT. OF EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>KNOWLEDGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness of the culturally diverse influences on development of various subject matter disciplines</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide direct assistance, inc. financial resources, that support K-14 collaboration focusing on postsecondary academic readiness of African American students</li> <li>• Develop policies &amp; programs requiring teacher educators to prepare future teachers to be culturally proficient educators, inc. skills to create culturally relevant curriculum and implement culturally responsive instruction in all classrooms</li> </ul>

### **PART THREE: OPEN FORUM TO DISCUSS NEXT STEPS**

---HOW DO WE “PURSUE THE JOURNEY OF BECOMING MORE EFFECTIVE CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERS?”

---REMINDER: THERE IS A CRITICAL NECESSITY FOR:

- LEADERSHIP BY ALL SCHOOL STAKEHOLDERS
- POLITICAL ALLIANCES
  - District, Local, State policy makers
  - Grassroots support
- COMMUNITY ORGANIZING
- A NETWORK OF CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS SCHOOLS
- GREATER PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY
- MORE RISK TAKING
- TACKLING RACE “HEAD ON” WHEN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING MAJOR DISTRICT/SCHOOL REFORMS
- \*\*\*A SUPPORT SYSTEM (“COCOON”) FOR LEADERS AS THEY ARE DEVELOPING THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ATTITUDES, FORTITUDE, AND PRACTICING THE ACTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH SUCH LEADERSHIP

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### **THE WORK OF THE FOLLOWING EDUCATORS/SCHOLARS HAS ALSO INFLUENCED THE CONCEPT OF CULTURALLY COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPED BY THE PRESENTER:**

- ◇ **Joseph Johnson**
- ◇ **Noma LeMoine**
- ◇ **Christine Lim**
- ◇ **Angela Louque**
- ◇ **Hazel Mahone**
- ◇ **Ollie Matos**

- ◇ **Sonya Nieto**
- ◇ **Richard Owen**
- ◇ **Catherine Pope**
- ◇ **Agin Shaheed**
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