IMPLEMENTATION EXERCISE

ISOLATING RACE

Time required: 45 minutes

Materials required: For each participant, Courageous Conversation Journal and a copy of the handout that follows

1. Introduce the Second Condition of Courageous Conversation:

    Isolate race while acknowledging the broader scope of diversity and the variety of factors that contribute to a racialized problem.

    Ask the group why it is important to isolate race in the conversation rather than avoid it altogether or address it in conjunction with other diversity issues, such as poverty and gender.

2. Based on whether you are facilitating a group of district administrators, secondary teachers, or elementary teachers, pass out the appropriate handout.

3. Inform the participants that you are going to examine the racial makeup of the school or school system. By creating this racial demography map, you can begin isolating race and statistically examining how it impacts achievement.

4. Divide the participants into small groups of four or five people, mixing racial groups if at all possible. Assign each team one of the sections on the handout, such as Student Body or Community Participation. At your next meeting, each team should submit a written report of findings to the facilitator and prepare to share with the entire group the following data:

    - Prior to collecting and examining any data, what did we believe to be the racial composition of the section that we were about to investigate? Why did we believe this composition existed/persisted?

    - According to the data, what is the racial composition—White, Black, Brown, Asian, Indigenous, or Multiracial—of each of the racial subgroups in the section you worked on?

    - What are the patterns you identified in your section in terms of the racial composition?

    - What preliminary explanations have you identified that explain these patterns? Include the following:

        Participation and nonparticipation

        Accessibility, opportunity, and inclusiveness

        Prejudice and discrimination

- What are some initial ways in which these discrepancies can be addressed?

5. At your next meeting, have each group report its findings.

6. After reporting, pose the following questions for an open discussion:
   - What racial beliefs are operational in our school or school system? How do the data we collected confirm or refute our racial beliefs?
   - In our school or school system, do we have a problem with racial inequity in terms of representation, participation, and/or achievement?
   - Do we need to address these racial issues? If so, why and how?

Additional Exercises

- Select several educators from a variety of departments or upper grade levels and have each identify a student of color or indigenous student. Have the teachers document how they see race impacting the students' schooling experience by selectively shadowing and conversing with these students during a full day. Have the educators report to the entire staff what they noticed and learned.

- Guide grade-level or departmental teams in doing a racial audit of their curriculum, similar to the Volkswagen advertisement analysis. What racial messages and images are present in texts, bulletin boards, websites, teacher representation, school announcements, and so on? How do the images and messages correspond with the racial composition of the student body?

Second Condition of Courageous Conversation

Isolate race while acknowledging the broader scope of diversity and the variety of factors and conditions that contribute to a racialized problem.

RACIAL MAKEUP OF OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM

Identify the racial composition of every subgroup under each section of your school system. This can be done through quantitative analysis of data or qualitative observation.

➤ District Administration
  i. Superintendents and assistant superintendents
  ii. School board
  iii. Staff development department
  iv. Curriculum department

➤ District Student Body
  i. All district students
  ii. Graduation rates
  iii. Dropout rates
  iv. Disaggregated student achievement

➤ District Personnel
  i. Classified staff
  ii. Unclassified staff

➤ Community Participation
  i. District PTA
    1. PTA leadership
    2. PTA membership
  ii. School board attendance
  iii. Other district–community partnerships
    1. Police
    2. Colleges/universities
    3. Local businesses
    4. Others

Include the following racial/ethnic identities as they pertain to your school system:

- Black
- White
- Brown/Latinx
- Asian

- Southeast Asian
- South Asian
- Pacific Islander
- Middle Eastern

- American Indian (Indigenous)
- Biracial
- Other racial identities or subgroups as needed

RACIAL MAKEUP OF OUR SCHOOL

Identify the racial composition of every subgroup under each section of your school. This can be done through quantitative analysis of data or qualitative observation.

➤ School Student Body

    i. All students

    ii. Attendance rates

    iii. Graduation/dropout rates

    iv. Retention rates

    v. Referrals and suspensions

    vi. Free and reduced-price lunch participants

    vii. Gifted and talented/advanced placement/honors

    viii. Special education/remedial

    ix. Disaggregated student achievement

➤ Community Participation

    i. School PTA

        1. PTA leadership

        2. PTA membership

    ii. School meeting attendance

    iii. Parent-teacher conferences

    iv. Volunteers

    v. Other school–community partnerships

        1. Police

        2. Colleges/universities

        3. Local businesses

        4. Others

➤ School Staff

    i. Principals and assistant principals

    ii. School governing board

    iii. Counseling department

    iv. Teacher leadership teams

    v. School staff

        1. Classified

        2. Unclassified

➤ Extracurricular Participation

    i. Student government

    ii. Extracurricular activities (athletics, dances, drama, debate, academics, clubs, etc.)

        1. Advisers and coaches

        2. Student participants

    iii. Extracurricular spectator attendance (all events)

        1. Student attendees

        2. Staff attendees

        3. Community attendees

    iv. Before- and afterschool advisers and student participants

        1. Athletic programs

        2. Academic programs

Include the following racial/ethnic identities as they pertain to your school:

- Black
- White
- Brown/Latinx
- American Indian (Indigenous)

- Asian
- Southeast Asian
- South Asian
- Pacific Islander

- Middle Eastern
- Biracial
- Other racial identities or subgroups as needed