STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

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1) Replace “color blindness” and/or stereotypes with a “cultural lens” which enables one to view members of other groups both within the context of their culture and as unique individuals.

2) Understand stylistic and cultural differences among students, teachers, etc. from different cultural/racial groups.

3) Celebrate rather than simply tolerate cultural/racial differences and recognize how diversity contributes to the social and educational experience of students.

3) Recognize the impact of language on cross-cultural relationships and demonstrate cultural sensitivity through your choice of words.

4) Eliminate prejudices, cultural naiveté stereotypes and cultural privilege through the rigorous and ongoing examination of your beliefs, cross-cultural exposure, openness to new information and verbal acknowledgement (which helps expose the fallacy of prejudices and therefore promotes their elimination).

5) Acknowledge and understand how past and current inequities impact the perspective held by members of different cultural groups.

6) Understand the complexity of cross-cultural issues and develop the ability to view them from a multi-dimensional rather than a narrow viewpoint.

7) Overcome fears which prevent honest cross-cultural engagement (such as the fear of “saying the wrong thing” or being perceived as overly angry, sensitive, etc.).

8) Dialogue about challenging cross-cultural issues by asking open-ended questions, listening attentively (without jumping to conclusions) and honestly discussing your thoughts, perceptions, etc.

9) Speak calmly and rationally (remember that it is possible to have an intense discussion about difficult cultural/racial issues without either party becoming upset, angry, etc.).

10) Acknowledge the validity in another’s perspective.

11) Focus on changing yourself rather than others.

12) **Keep cross-cultural dialogue going** even in the midst of tension, disagreement, etc.