

The Journey to Equitable and Inclusive Classrooms

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Participants will be able to ...

- Understand the current and projected demographics of the population of New Jersey and the and the diverse communities and families that our schools serve
- Understand the power of first impressions and stereotyping.
- Understand the power of perspective and the impact of one's background, experiences and "journey".
- Gather resources that can be used in schools and classrooms to allow for all families to feel included, welcome and supported.

First Impressions



Think about the following: Age, birth country, ethnicity, religion, nationality, accent, occupation, first language, and favorite food

Who Are They?

Rajvir

- Age 38
- Born in London, England
- Ethnicity - Indian
- Religion - Sikh
- Nationality - US Citizen
- Occupation – Lawyer
- First Language – English
- Favorite Food - Pizza

Baninder

- Age 40
- Born in London, England
- Ethnicity – Indian
- Religion – Sikh
- Nationality – US Citizen
- Occupation – Assistant Superintendent
- First Language – Punjabi
- Favorite Food – Cheese

...Brother and Sister

Stand Up!

- If you were born in another country
- If one or both Parents was born in another country
- If one or both Grandparents were born in another country
- If one or both Great Grandparents were born in another country

New Jersey Demographics

Race and Hispanic Origin	Percent of New Jersey Population
White (total)	72.1%
Black or African-American	15.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	.6%
Asian	10.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	.1%
Two or More Races	2.2%
Hispanic or Latino	20.4%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	55.1%

- **31% say they speak a language other than English at home**
- **6.7% of people under 65 years old have a disability**
- **51.2% of the population is female**
- **350 languages spoken at home by us residents**

Projected New Jersey Demographics

Race and Hispanic Origin	Percent of New Jersey Population in 2030
Black or African-American	11.8%
Native America/Two or More Races	2.3%
Asian	12.9%
Hispanic or Latino	26.7%
White , not Hispanic or Latino	46.3%

- **By 2025 the white non-Hispanic population will no longer be the majority: they are expected to account for just 49.4 percent of total population**
- **Native American/Multiracial populations will increase 110%**
- **Asians populations will increase and will account for about 75 percent of the state's total labor force growth between 2010 and 2030**

What Do our Classrooms Tell Us?



Classroom Tradition in Maryland

Robbinsville School District: Sharon Elementary School

Total Student Ethnicity 2018

Ethnicity Totals	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American /Alaskan	Hawaiian /Pacific Islander	Multi-Racial
Total Number of Students	510	25	54	428	3	1	39
Percentage of Population	48.11%	2.36%	5.09%	40.38 %	.28%	.09%	3.68%

Total Students at SES (Including PreK): 1060

So What?

- What does this mean for you?
- What do you want to know to help you better work with families from diverse backgrounds?
- Are there challenges you face in supporting our families?
- Do you have experiences that would benefit the group?

Perspective



Have you ever?

- Have you ever had an issue of finding a band-aid that matches your skin color?
- Have you ever made judgments about people because of the color of their skin?
- Heard a joke that made fun of a person of a different ethnic background, race, or religion?
- Been the target of name calling or being made fun of because of your ethnic group, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation?
- Been left out of an activity because you are different?
- Had your name laughed at or made fun of?
- Been threatened by someone who is different from you because of your difference?

Perspectives: Being a Minority In America

[Taco Night](#)

[Becoming Joey](#)

[What Kind Of Asian Are You?](#)

From Your Perspective...

- Do you have a memory of becoming aware of differences? If so, what was it?
- Did you ever have an issue finding a band-aid of your skin color?
- What stood out for you in the readings, activity and/or video clip? Why?
- Were there any surprises? Anything that challenged what you know — or thought you knew?
- What messages, emotions or ideas will you take away? Why?
- What questions do you still have?

Start With Building Relationships

- Know yourself
 - What story, perspective, or culture do you bring to the table
 - What preconceived notions or characteristics may you have? Remember there is variability in each group or child. Be wary of categorizing (natural for human brains)
- Get to know your students and families
 - Send information sheets home and ask about language, traditions, holidays, interests
 - Don't be culture-blind

The Importance of Names

- Learn how to say your student's name properly
 - Names are identities
- [The Lasting Impact of White Teachers Who Mispronounce Minority Student Names](#)
- [My Name, My Identity Campaign](#)
 - Santa Clara County Office of Education
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOipDe7lhYM>

Going Beyond the Holiday or “Month”

- Be mindful of language
 - Spring break not Easter break
- Make sure questions or writing prompts are inclusive of all cultures and experiences
 - Not asking what students did for Easter or Easter break

Going Beyond the Holiday or “Month” 2

- Provide opportunities for students’ to share family routines and life throughout the year, not just at holiday time
- Make sure all cultures and ethnicities are represented on your walls, especially those of the students in your class
- Books with diverse characters, cultures, and themes
[The Danger of a Single Story](#)

Going Beyond the Holiday or “Month” 3

- Ensure projects or tests do not fall on a student’s religious or cultural holiday
 - Most of the students will not get a day off for the holidays their families observe
- Encourage families to continue speaking in their native language
 - Have students teach the class words in their language
- Bring in world events and current events into the classroom

Ways to Share about Holidays

- Make sure to keep in mind that not all cultures and religions are homogeneous
- Focus on the academic aspect of the holiday not the religious aspect
- Research that culture, talk about the country that holiday originates from
- Balance the emphasis of one holiday over another
 - Green and red decorations, christmas trees Elf on the Shelf, talk about Santa, but may only have a class period on Kwanzaa, Diwali, or Hanukkah

Perspectives

- Perspective taking: Impact on students when we unconsciously focus on certain holidays only (Christmas, Easter, etcetera)
- We have to meet students where they are not only academically but culturally
- We can't expect everyone to feel as we do about every holiday including holidays such as July 4th

Resources 1

[The New York Times: 25 Mini Films](#)

[Teaching Tolerance](#)

[Multicultural Children's Books](#)

- Lee & Low
- We Need Diverse Books

[Preparing for Cultural Diversity: Resources for Teachers](#)

Resources 2

[Empatico](#)

→ Free tool that connects classrooms around the world

Don't forget to have crayons of all skin colors!

Thank you!

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