



Willard Elementary School

BELONGINGNESS & INCLUSION

PTO Family Forum

January 27, 2021

Ashlie Stapleton & Megan Stewart Hodge | Co-Liaisons | [Willard PTO Belongingness](#)



Our Time This Evening

- ★ **Constructive Conversation Guidelines**
- ★ **Our State of Belongingness**
- ★ **Defining Our Foundation of Belongingness & Inclusion**
- ★ **Our Path Forward**

NOTE: Items underlined contain a "live" link to referenced study / website.

This Brave Space

You are invited to be yourself in this brave space:

Together we will create brave space

Because there is no such thing as a “safe space”

We exist in the real world

We all carry scars and we have all caused wounds.

In this space we seek to turn down the volume of the outside world,

We call each other to more truth and love

We have the right to start somewhere and continue to grow.

We have the responsibility to examine what we think we know.

This space will not be perfect.

It will not always be what we wish it to be but

It will be our brave space together,

And we will work on it side by side.

-by Micky Scott Bay Jones

Constructive Conversation Guidelines

LISTEN ACTIVELY. Respect others when they are talking.

YOUR PERSPECTIVE. Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing, e.g. use "I" instead of "they," "we," and "you".

STORY-TELLING. Instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your own spin on her or his experience, share your own story and experience.

CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE. Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions, but refrain from personal attacks.

FOCUS ON IDEAS. The goal is not to agree; it is to gain a deeper understanding.

ENGAGEMENT. Participate to the fullest of your ability. Community growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice.

BODY LANGUAGE. Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses as they can be as disrespectful as words.

CONFIDENTIALITY. Don't repeat specific stories or experiences that others share, as it is important to be assured of confidentiality in order to be authentic.

ASSUME GOOD INTENTIONS.



Our State of Belongingness

WILLARD FAMILIES | 2020 Belongingness & Inclusion Survey*

IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS, HAVE:

...you been treated with less respect than other people? 15%

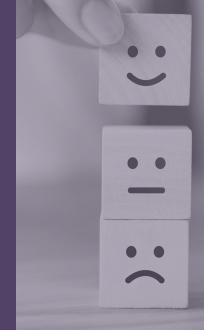
...you been treated unfairly at restaurants/stores? 6%

...people acted as if *they think you* are not smart? 21%

...people acted as if *they are* afraid of you? 6%

...people acted as if *they are* better than you are? 30%

or, **NONE** of the above. 61%





Our State of Belongingness

WILLARD FAMILIES | 2020 Belongingness & Inclusion Survey*



MY FAMILY UNIT AND I:

...feel COMFORTABLE SHARING photographs of our family, stories from our religious & cultural celebrations, details of our personal life without worrying. **70%**
that will invite negative perceptions.

...can SPEAK UP at Willard | affiliated community events | discussions and not worry that others will attribute something about what I/we said to our family's **55%** identity category.

...feel CONFIDENT ASKING for help | assistance | clarification because others view me/my family as equally competent, engaged and contributing to the **64%** Willard community.

...feel individually and as a family COMFORTABLE BEING our preferred selves, SHOWING our true & authentic personalities and that others won't judge us **40%** negatively for it.

...feel that our perspectives (and perspectives like ours) are INCLUDED in **52%** decision-making.

....feel like WE BELONG in the Willard family community. **67%**

Or, NONE of the above. **12%**

*Identity Category: e.g. gender(s), family construct, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability status, other.



Our State of Belongingness

D90 PARENTS & FAMILIES | 2019 Inclusiveness Perception Survey

DO YOU EVER FEEL UNWELCOME OR UNCOMFORTABLE IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY BECAUSE OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?

...the language I speak at home.

<5% ... my gender identity.
...my sexual orientation.

...where I live.

5% to 10% ...my family structure.
...my perceived level of education.

>10% to 15% ...my religion or religious beliefs.

>15% to 20% ...my ethnicity or cultural background.
...my associations or affiliations.

>20% to 30% ...my family's length of time in the community.

>30% ...my opinions.

— “ —
Think their child/children is
always accepted for who they
are in the D90 Community:
ALWAYS 49%
OFTEN 35%
SOMETIMES 14% |
NEVER <2%.
— ” —

— “ —
Approximately 50% of
Parent/Family Respondents
feel welcome or comfortable
at D90 school or sponsored
activities.
Conversely, >20% saying
they sometimes/never do.
— ” —



Defining Our Foundation

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

**“DIVERSITY is being invited to the party,
INCLUSION is being asked to dance.”**

-Verna Myers, Culture-Change Catalyst

“BELONGING is dancing like no one’s watching.”

-Anonymous

DIVERSITY

Any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups & people from one another, e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical & mental ability, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.

INTERSECTIONALITY. The compounding discrimination of multiple factors is greater than the sum of its parts.

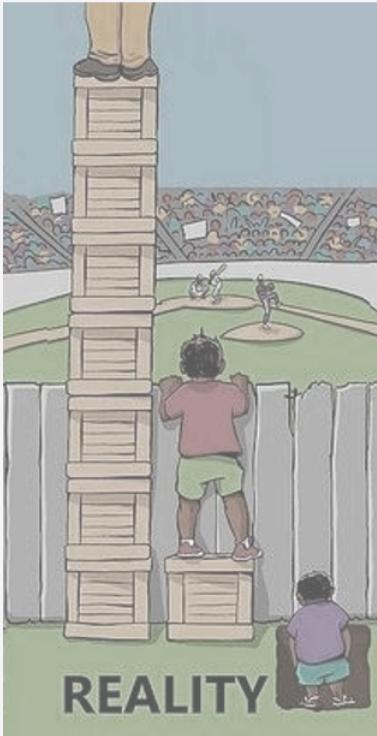
INCLUSION

BELONGINGNESS. People experience a feeling of belonging when they are their authentic selves.

UNIQUENESS. People believe their uniqueness is welcomed, respected & highly-valued.

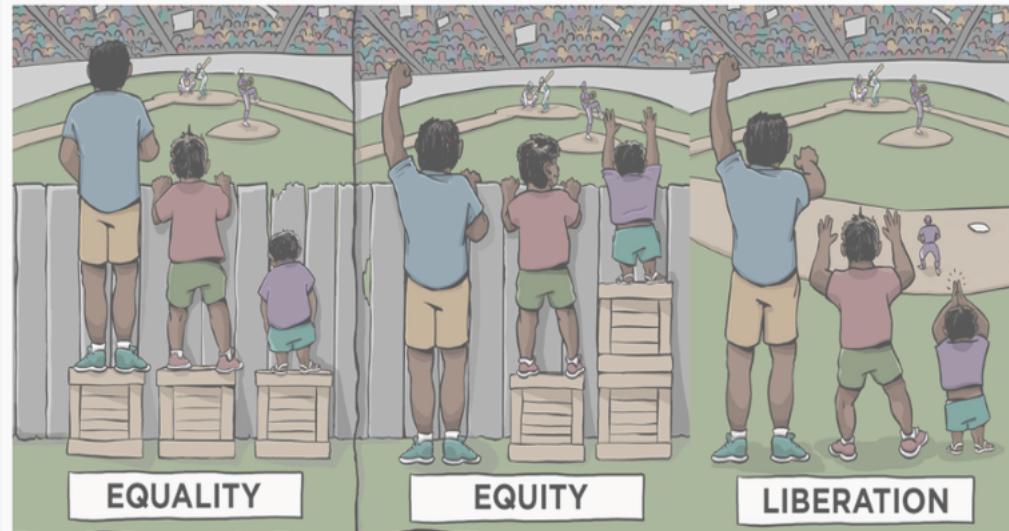
Defining Our Foundation

EQUITY



EQUITY.

An action (s) to ensure fairness and that everyone has access to the same opportunities.



RACIAL EQUITY (AS DEFINED AT OPRF). ...Refers to the condition that would be achieved if students' racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how they fare. While the current disparities often are referred to as the "achievement gap," we believe that this incorrectly puts the onus on students. Instead, we believe that the issue should be reframed as an opportunity gap, because it isn't the students who need to be fixed. It's the system.

Defining Our Foundation

SYSTEMIC RACISM

For link to video, click [here](#).



Defining Our Foundation

SPOTLIGHT ON SYSTEMIC RACISM IN OUR COMMUNITY

JUN

Racial Hate Crime at RF Jewel. (June 3, 2020)

Although BIPOC* make up 17.8% of RF's population, BIPOC drivers account for 66% of the RF Police traffic stops made in River Forest. ([Illinois Traffic and Pedestrian Study & US Census Bureau](#))

JUL

Of the 967 field investigations (i.e. non-traffic related investigations), Black people were stopped at SIX-times the rate of white people, despite Black residents comprising 18% of OP population. ([Freedom to Thrive Oak Park Analysis](#))

"Black Lives Matter" mural defaced. OP. (July 8, 2020)

SEP

Recurring "Zoom bombing" racist & anti-Semitic incidents at OPRF High School.

"No Human is Illegal" mural recurring defaced. Forest Park. (ongoing through December 6, 2020)

DEC

Racial Hate Crime at RF residence. (December 19/20, 2020)

D200 Board of Education apologized for and denounced a D200 Board Member's Islamophobia comments directed at an OP resident. (comments made week of November 23rd)

DEC

Objections filed to remove two Black candidates running for OP Village Trustee from the upcoming ballot. (December 30, 2020)

20
21

Racial Hate Crime at OP's L!ve Cafe. (January 7, 2021)

Recurring theft of Anti-racism, LGBTQ and social justice signs from RF homes.

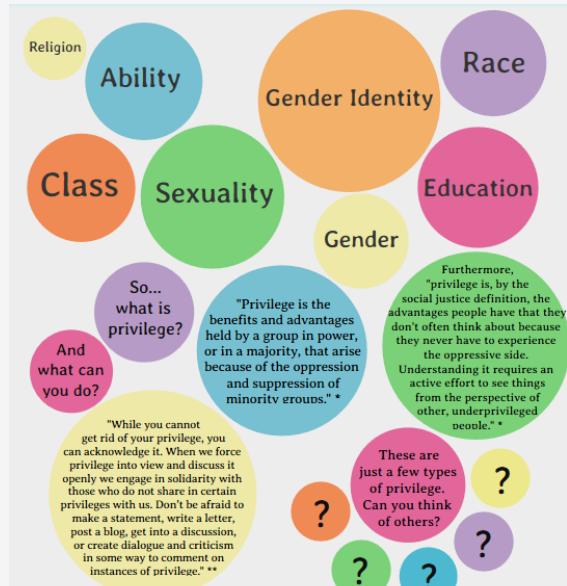
Defining Our Foundation

IMPEDIMENTS TO INCLUSION



PRIVILEGE.

An invisible package of unearned assets which one can count on cashing in each & every day, but about which one is largely oblivious.



UNCONSCIOUS BIAS.

Underlying attitudes & stereotypes that people *unconsciously attribute* to another person or group of people that affect how they understand & engage with that person or group, e.g. gender identity, race / ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability status, age.

MICROAGGRESSIONS.

Underlying attitudes & stereotypes that people *unconsciously attribute* to another person or group of people that affect how they understand & engage with that person or group.

STEREOTYPES.

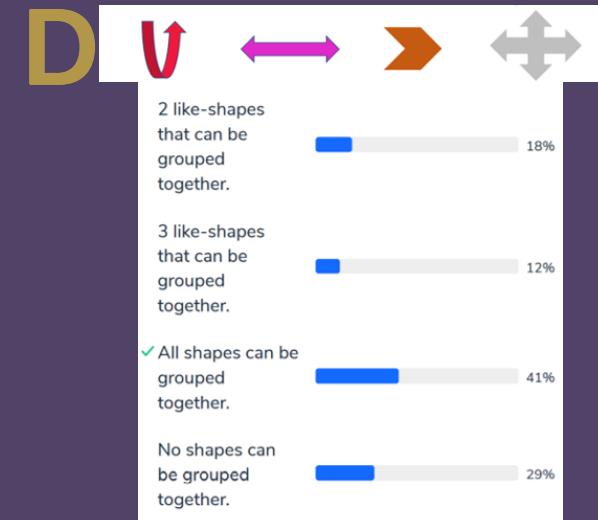
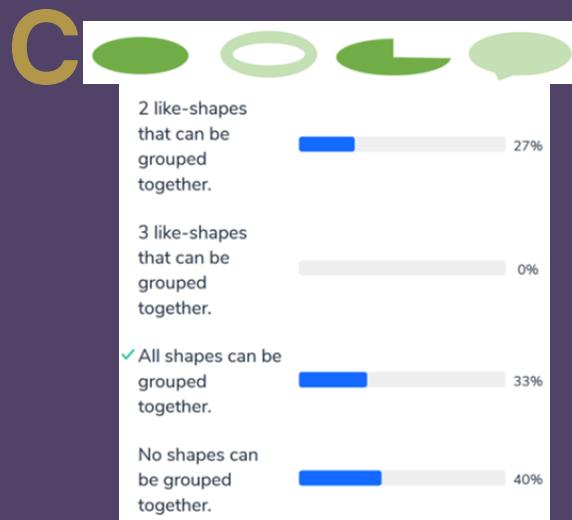
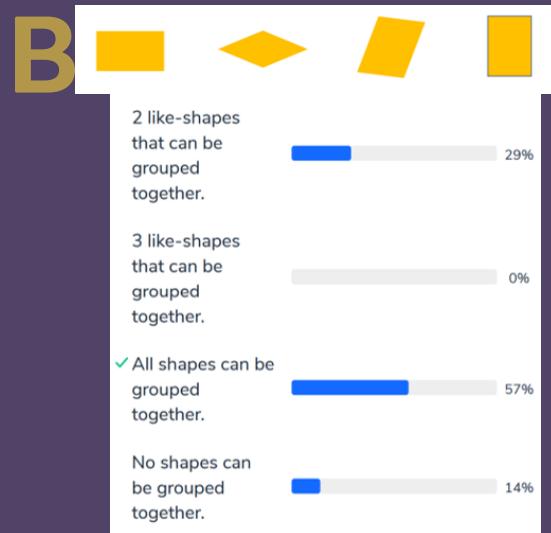
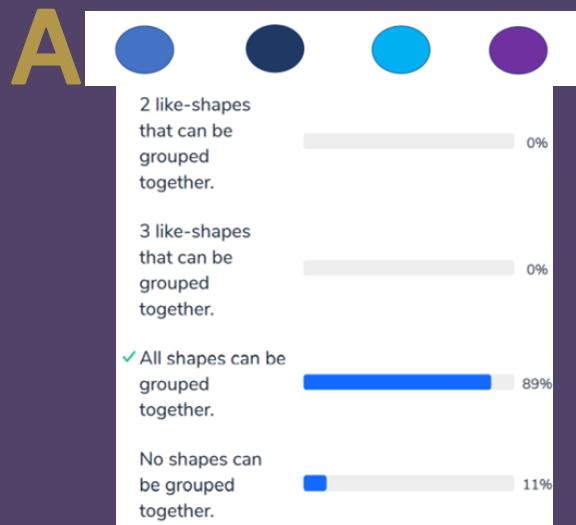
A standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment.

Defining Our Foundation

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BIAS

HOW DO YOU GROUP EACH SET OF SHAPES BELOW?

Live Poll Results Below



Defining Our Foundation

SPOTLIGHT ON UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS.

Underlying attitudes & stereotypes that people *unconsciously attribute* to another person or group of people that *affect how they understand & engage with* that person or group, e.g. gender identity, race / ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability status, age.

PERFORMANCE BIAS. People often value women's contributions less highly than men's.

ATTRIBUTION BIAS. View women as less competent than men. White men are often viewed as more competent and leader-like compared to women or Black people. Latinx Americans tend to be stereotyped as less intelligent than white people. Many people unconsciously assume a Latinx person has poor language skills, even if their grammar and word choice are perfectly correct.

AFFINITY BIAS. Gravitate towards people like ourselves in appearance, beliefs and backgrounds. May take it a step further by avoiding or disliking people not like us.

NAME BIAS. When you judge a person based on their name and perceived background.

AGE BIAS. Discriminating against someone on the basis of their age.

Defining Our Foundation

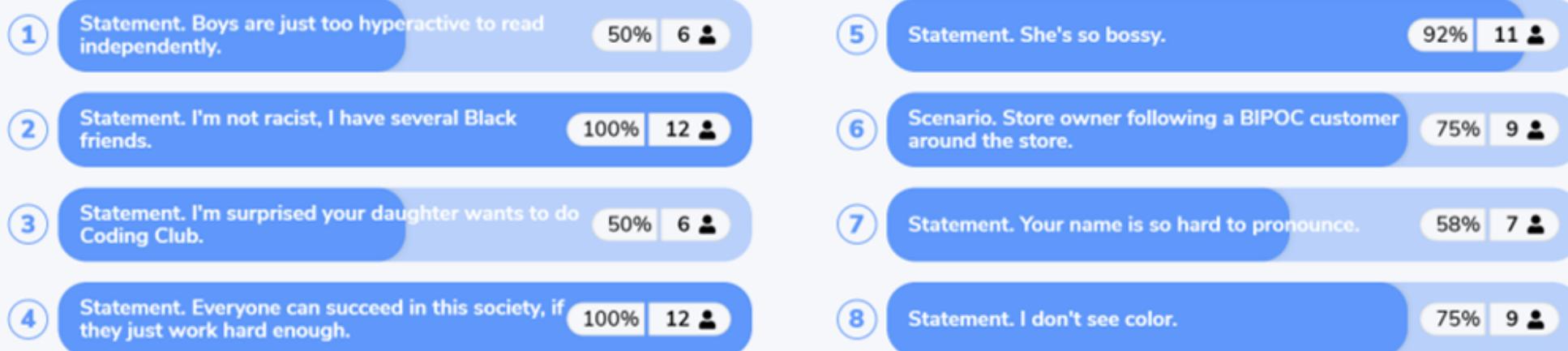
THE PREVALENCE OF MICROAGGRESSIONS

HAVE YOU OBSERVED OR EXPERIENCED SIMILAR STATEMENTS / SCENARIOS IN OUR COMMUNITY?

Live Poll Results Below

MICROAGGRESSIONS.

Underlying attitudes & stereotypes that people unconsciously attribute to another person or group of people that affect how they understand & engage with that person or group.





Our Path Forward

TEACHER COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

FOR LINK TO VIDEO ON PTO BELONGINGNESS WEBPAGE, CLICK [HERE](#).

Willard Staff
Discussions
About Race



**Not everything that is
faced can be changed,
but nothing can be
changed until it is faced.**

JAMES BALDWIN

Our Path Forward

OUR CONVERSATION. SCOPE. Willard | Lincoln | RMS | Broader Community (i.e. Maywood covenant)

OUR CONVERSATION. ADVISORY COMMITTEE.
Strategic objectives, purpose and engagement.

OUR CONVERSATION. AFFINITY GROUPS.
Opportunities to further build community, foster support and identify knowledge-sharing opportunities through identity-based affinity groups.

OUR CONVERSATION. COMMUNITY OUTREACH.
Representation at & knowledge-sharing from community organizations.

GROUP ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY. "So You Want to Talk About Race?"

INDIVIDUAL ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY. Race Conscious Dialogues. Racial Cross-Fit. Other?

NEXT STEPS. Short *Follow Up Survey* of interest for engagement in Our Path Forward.