Multicultural Communication Glossary

This glossary was produced in collaboration and support from within the community to help create a common language around culturally sensitive words and honor languages alive in our community. Within our district we have 117 families that speak a language other than English. That sums up to over 30 different languages spoken at school and at home! Using appropriate words and sharing the same definitions of words we use in everyday language creates a mutual understanding and respect towards people who are different than ourselves. The words are presented in English, Spanish, and Ojibway to reflect the importance of recognizing and using languages of cultures in ISD #709. When we are courteous with our words, we are contributing towards a safe and welcoming climate, effective and efficient work, and high achievement as a district. Let's start the conversations!

Accessible/

Refers to a site, facility, work environment, service, or program that is easy to approach, enter, operate, participate in, and/or use safely and with dignity by a person with a disability.

-Americans with Disabilities Act Glossary of Terms

Achievement gap/

The disparity in academic performance between groups of students…in grades, standardized-test scores, course selection, dropout rates, and college-completion rates, among other success measures. It is most often used to describe performance gaps between students of color and white students, low-income families and those who are better off, and those based on sex, English-language proficiency and learning disabilities.

-Education Week August 2004

Ally/El aliado

Someone who advocates for and supports members of a community other than their own. Reaching across differences to achieve mutual goals.

-UC-Berkeley Gender Equity Resource Center

Assimilation/La asimilación

A process of consistent integration whereby members of an ethno-cultural group, typically immigrants, or other minority groups, are "*absorbed*" into an established larger community. If a child assimilates into a new culture, he/she gives up his/her cultural values and beliefs and adopts the new cultural values in their place.

- Dot Connect "Dictionary Of Cross-Cultural Terminology/Inter-Cultural Terminology"

Authentic representation/La representación auténtica

The integration of people from diverse backgrounds where mutual respect, appreciation, and full value for the contributions of all participants is demonstrated.
  - Sonia Alvarez-Robinson (2000) *Moving Along the Cultural Competence Continuum: An Ongoing Journey*

Culturally responsive teaching/ La enseñanza que reconoce la cultura/

A way of teaching that fosters student motivation and engagement by providing instruction in a context meaningful to students and in a way that values their culture, knowledge, and experiences. It infuses family customs, as well as community culture and expectations, throughout the teaching and learning environment.
-St. Paul Public Schools

Cultural climate/El ambiente cultural

The physical environment, philosophical framework, and beliefs of the key stakeholders in the community's educational process.
-Duluth Public Schools Office of Education Equity

Cultural competence/La competencia cultural

The skills and abilities of education administrators and teachers to teach a multicultural student body effectively.
-Duluth Public Schools Office of Education Equity

- Cultural competence is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period. Both individuals and organizations are at various levels of awareness, knowledge and skills along the cultural competence continuum. (adapted by the National Center for Cultural Competence from Cross et al. (1989).

Cultural heritage/

The legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations.
-United Nationals Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Cultural structures/La estructura cultural

The policies, procedures and practices, programs, and curriculum design of the school district that pursues inter cultural proficiency.
-Duluth Public Schools Office of Education Equity

Culture/La cultura/Izhitwaawin

An integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting and roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group; and the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations.
-National Center for Cultural Competence of Georgetown University

Deaf

The lowercase 'deaf' when referring to the audiological condition of not hearing, and the uppercase 'Deaf' when referring to a particular group of deaf people who share a language – American Sign Language (ASL) – and a culture. The members of this group have inherited their sign language, use it as a primary means of communication among themselves, and hold a set of beliefs about themselves and their connection to the larger society.
-Carol Padden and Tom Humphries. (1988). *Deaf in America: Voices from a Culture*

Desegregation/La desegregación

The assignment of students to public schools and within such schools without regard to their race, color, religion, or national origin.
-Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title IV Section 401 (b)

Discrimination/La discriminación

The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, and other categories.
-FacingRace. "New Conversations About Race and Racism Discussion Tool"

Disparity/La disparidad

Inequalities that exist when members of certain population groups do not benefit from the same status as other groups.
-The Office of Health Communications and Health Disparities

Diversity/La diversidad

Understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing individual differences along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. Primary dimensions are those that cannot be changed e.g., age, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities/qualities, race and sexual orientation. Secondary dimensions of diversity are those that can be changed, e.g., educational background, geographic location, income, marital status, parental status, religious beliefs, and work role/experiences.
-Dot Connect "Dictionary Of Cross-Cultural Terminology/Inter-Cultural Terminology"

Educator/El/la educador(a)

Based off of the Latin word 'educo' meaning to draw out, lead out, and/or bring up plus 'ator' the English suffix for one that does.
- Merriam-Webster dictionary and Encylo Online Encyclopedia

Equality/La igualdad/

The state of being fair and impartial.
-Advocatesforyouth.org

Equity/La equidad/

Opportunities and access to all resources so that every person can achieve his/her full potential. Equitable treatment involves acknowledging diversity, recognizing and celebrating our differences, and eliminating the barriers that prevent the full participation of all peoples.
-Adapted from University of Minnesota Duluth Campus Climate Definitions

Ethnicity/La identidad étnica

A grouping of people based on geographical region, nationality, or culture.
-National Education Association Diversity Toolkit

Ethnocentrism/ El etnocentrismo

The experience of one's own culture as "central to reality" without recognizing the experience of one's own beliefs and behaviors as just one organization of reality among many viable possibilities.
-Adapted from Bennet, M. "Becoming Interculturally Competent. In Wurzel, J. (Ed.). (2004). *Toward multiculturalism: A reader in multicultural education,* 2nd ed.:62-77. Newton, MA: Intercultural Resource Corporation.

Equal opportunity employer/

Enforces Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
-US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Gender identity/ La Identidad de género

One's innermost concept of self as male or female or both or neither—how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different than the sex assigned at birth.
-genderspectrum.org

4

Hard of hearing

Can denote a person with a mild-to-moderate hearing loss. Or it can denote a deaf person who doesn't have/want any cultural affiliation with the Deaf community. Or both. (Hearing impaired is an offensive term).

-Deaf Life 2007

Identity/ La identidad

This includes awareness of self, identification (the label used for one's own group), attitudes about the group you belong to, and attitudes about other groups and the patterns of behavior that are commonly associated with a specific group: "How we perceive the world and how the world perceives us."

 - Sonia Alvarez-Robinson (2000) *Moving Along the Cultural Competence Continuum: An Ongoing Journey*

Inclusion/

Being a part of what everyone else is, being welcomed and embraced as a member who belongs.

-Kids Together, Inc.

Integration/La integración

The process of joining together diverse groups within a single context, usually applied to inter-racial interaction in housing, education, political and socio-economic spheres or activity, or the incorporation of children, defined as disabled, into neighborhood schools and classrooms. People who are integrated still retain their cultural identity, unlike those who are assimilated. Integration is the policy with action that ends segregation. It may be differentiated from desegregation on the basis of interaction as opposed to technical conformity to desegregationist laws and policies.

-Canadian Race Relations Foundation

Institutional racism/El racismo institucional

The manifestation of racism in social systems and institutions. It is the social, economic, educational, and political forces or policies that operate to foster discriminatory outcomes. It is the combination of policies, practices, or procedures embedded in bureaucratic structure that systematically leas to unequal outcomes for groups of people.

-National Association of Social Workers "Institutional Racism"

'Isms'/ 'Ismo'

A way of describing any attitude, action or institutional structure that subordinates (oppresses) a person or group because of their target group, color (racism/colorism), gender (sexism), economic status (classism), older age (ageism), religion (e.g. Anti-Semitism), sexual orientation (heterosexism), language/immigrant status (xenophobism), etc.

-Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative.

Learner/El aprendiz
Someone who acquires new skills, knowledge, disposition, or information through goal oriented instruction.
-Minnesota Department of Education. (2012). "Glossary of Terms-Minnesota Blueprint for Literacy"

Lens/El lente
How one sees the world through a particular view that reflects his or her understandings, values, beliefs, and norms.
-The Power of Culture Website

Oppression/La opresión
Prejudice and power; a systematic social phenomenon based on the difference between social groups that involves ideological domination, institutional control, and the promulgation of the oppressor group's ideology, logic system and culture on the oppressed group. The result is the exploitation of one social group by another for its own benefit, real or imagined.
-Global Exchange "Anti-Oppression Reader"

Poverty
The lack of money, meaningful purpose, and significant relationships."
-Community Action Duluth

Prejudice/El prejuicio
A negative or hostile attitude toward a person or group without relevant experience or knowledge and often based on negative sterotypes.
-City Lights, 15(1) by CityMatch, the National Organization of Urban Maternal and Child Health Leaders

Privilege/El privilegio
Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because of ethnicity.
-Revised from Peggy McIntosh. *"White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women Studies."*

Race/La raza/
The term is used to refer to groupings of people according to common origin or background and associated with perceived biological markers. Among humans there are no races except the human race.
-Understandingrace.org A Project of the American Anthropological Association

Racism/El racismo

An ideology that gives expression to myths about other racial and ethnic groups, that devalues and renders inferior those groups, that reflects and is perpetrated by deeply rooted historical, social, cultural and power inequalities in society.
-Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1998

Religion

Any specific system of belief about deity, often involving rituals, a code of ethics, a philosophy of life, and a worldview.
-Religious Tolerance.org

Right/El derecho

Things to which you are entitled or allowed; freedoms that are guaranteed.
-United for Human Rights

Segregation/La segregación

The separation of groups by race, gender, or other social categories.
-UnderstandingPrejudice.org

Sexual orientation/La orientación sexual

One's core sense of the gender(s) of people toward whom one feels romantically and sexually attracted (preferred over the term sexual preference).
-Safe Schools Coalition

Sovereignty/La soberanía

The power of a people to govern themselves.
-American Indian Policy Center

Spirituality

The general human experience of developing a sense of meaning, purpose, and morality.
-Canda, E. (1989). "Religious content in social work education: A comprehensive approach." *Journal of Social Work Education.*

Tokenism/ La política simbólica

When an organization considers the perspective of one person to be reflective of their entire cultural group-when relationships are approached as a "for" people instead of "with" people dynamic-when decisions are made "about" people "without" people--and where people are devalued in positions with no power.

- Sonia Alvarez-Robinson (2000) *Moving Along the Cultural Competence Continuum: An Ongoing Journey*

World View/La cosmovisión

The set of fundamental beliefs about reality that ground and influence one's perceiving, thinking, knowing, and doing.

-Facingthefuture.org