

Ensuring Racial and Educational Equity Policy No. _____

VISION

It is the right of every student to have an excellent and equitable educational experience.¹ The Oak Park Elementary School District 97 Board of Education ([District 97](#)) is committed to racial equity, the success of every student, and to achieving our mission of creating a positive learning environment for all students that is equitable, inclusive and focused on the whole child. We seek to nurture the potential in each student. We are committed to creating and sustaining great schools where every student learns at a high level² and experiences a sense of belonging with the expectation of excellence.

To accomplish this, District 97 will provide an equitable and inclusive educational environment for all students. District 97 acknowledges that inclusion is not effective if it consists of merely inviting students and families into spaces that already exist, but rather requires us to create new spaces that are intentionally founded through the lens of this Policy. The concept of educational equity goes beyond simple equality, where all students are treated the same, to fostering a barrier-free environment in which all students, regardless of their background or personal attributes are extended opportunities and resources required for success. Equity is attained when there is sufficient evidence that each student has a high-quality educational experience, and outcomes are not predicted by race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion, national origin, foster status, involvement with the juvenile justice system, IEP status, disability, learning difference, immigration status, or language.

As a school district committed to equity, District 97 seeks to disrupt societal and historical inequities arising from institutional racism and white supremacy in our schools and eliminate disparities based on student status so that all our students will benefit and reach their potential³. Opportunity gaps between student groups are unacceptable and contradict our belief that all students can learn and achieve their full potentials. The policies, practices, procedures, and programs, climate, and culture in our District, at each building and in each and every classroom and extracurricular activity must be specifically designed and intentionally operated to ensure equity.

Educational equity benefits all students and our entire community.³ Equity provides all students with what they need to thrive, achieve at the highest possible level, and graduate prepared for college, career, and community success.⁴ Equity is the systematic fair treatment and full inclusion of all students, especially those who have historically been underserved in public education settings. ~~In order to realize equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone, equity must be applied~~ This applies across race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion, national origin, foster status, involvement with the juvenile justice system, IEP status, disability, learning difference, immigration status, or language ~~in order to realize equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone.~~ Excellence and equity are both essential to achieving our mission. Thus, equity must be elevated and integrated system-wide, as a core-mission priority in all planning, decision-making, and

¹ Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity, Seattle Public Schools

² Race and Equity, Policy: 0600, Edmonds School District

³ Race and Equity, Policy: 0600, Edmonds School District

⁴ Oakland Unified School District Board Policy, Students BP 5032 Equity Policy
<https://agi.memberclicks.net/assets/docs/Alliance-docs/ousd%20equity%20policy.pdf>

resource allocation, and reinforced every time our students, staff, families and community interact with the District.

District 97 seeks to understand, interrupt and eliminate conscious and unconscious sources of inequity patterns of institutional bias at all levels of the organization, ~~whether conscious or unconscious~~. Eliminating individual and institutional biases will increase achievement and graduation rates for all students, ~~eliminate while eliminating~~ the opportunity gaps between the highest and lowest performing students, and ensure ing the culture and climate welcomes and instills in each student and family a sense of belonging in our school community.⁵

We are aware that opportunity gaps persist across the country, and that complex societal and historical factors based in racism contribute to the inequities our students face. Nonetheless, rather than perpetuating disparities, we must address and overcome inequity and institutional racism to provide all- providing all students with the support and opportunity to succeed.⁶

NEED

Our data consistently reveals that race is the most persistent predictor of student performance in District 97. This has resulted in racial disproportionality in discipline and the underrepresentation of students of color identified as advanced learners. In addition, our data demonstrates that learning differences, disabilities, IEP status, and socioeconomic status ~~are is a~~ predictors of student performance. ~~and as well, while~~ Students may also ~~experience be experiencing~~ our District inconsistently depending on their ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, foster status, involvement with the juvenile justice system, ~~r-~~immigration status, or language.

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District 97 is committed to explicitly identifying and addressing all disparities in educational outcomes for the purpose of targeting areas for action, intervention, and investment.⁷ Race shall be addressed *explicitly, not exclusively*. Racial disparities are often intertwined with, and compounded by, disparities based on other factors. An intersectional analysis provides a more holistic and complete view. While race is a significant factor in most disparities, it may not always be the most salient factor. Thus an inclusive analysis of all relevant factors, not limited to race, will be considered if it is determined that such an analysis is needed.

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District 97 has made efforts to address the inequities in our District. One ~~example is the~~ We have successful integration~~d~~ of our schools based upon the children and families within the school's boundaries. We do not see what some neighborhoods experience with a concerted effort of our white families ~~seeking to seek~~ out schools that are less diverse than their home school. ~~-Also, our 2016 Vision process resulted in a vision statement that challenges us to provide an equitable education for all of our~~

⁵ Oakland Unified School District Board Policy, Students BP 5032 Equity Policy

⁶ Portland Public Schools Racial Educational Equity Policy

<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/depts/communications/docs/PPS-Equity-Policy.pdf>

⁷ Oakland Unified School District Board Policy, Students BP 5032 Equity Policy

students, and we have been adopting programs and practices consistent with an equitable education since its adoption~~2016~~. In 2017, we added the cabinet level position of Senior Directory of Equity. That said, ~~beyond even with the integration~~~~the basic makeup~~ of our schools, ~~and~~ the community's stated desire for equity, ~~and a senior district leader focused on equity~~, our efforts to eliminate inequities have been unsuccessful. Eliminating the opportunity gap while raising achievement for all students is the top priority of the Board, the Superintendent, and all district staff. Race, disability, and other characteristics must cease to be reliable predictors of student achievement and success.

PURPOSE

The Board has adopted this policy to: (1) eliminate racial inequities and systemic disparities; (2) create and ensure equitable educational opportunities for all students, especially ~~for~~ those who have historically been underserved in District 97 and public education settings; and (3) ~~to~~ support families in ~~effectively~~ navigating the services that are available to them ~~effectively~~ so that they feel a sense of belonging in the District, and know that the District will meet their student's and family's particular needs.⁸ This policy establishes a systematic, proactive, and preventative framework for the elimination of racism and cultural bias as factors affecting student achievement and learning experiences, and ~~to~~ promotes environments that intentionally welcome, respect and value diversity and inclusion. ~~Further~~ ~~the purpose of this policy~~ is to establish actions that District 97 shall take to address disparities in educational opportunity and achievement.⁹ We resolve to eliminate opportunity gaps at every level of our organization, through policy, procedure, and practice.¹⁰

SCOPE

This policy is comprehensive and system-wide in scope--addressing all functions, activities, and operations of District 97 and its outside providers, to the extent that the work occurs in our buildings and is facilitated by us.¹¹, ~~including, but not limited to, curriculum and instruction, special education and advanced learner differentiation, before and after school activities, , discipline, student services, professional development, workforce equity, hiring and retention, staff compensation, budgeting, contracting and procurement, policy development, strategic planning, operations and administration, facilities usage and management.~~

~~We also acknowledge that high-quality early childhood experiences are critical to preparing children having children prepared to take full advantage of equitable educational opportunities in elementary~~

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⁸ Racial Equity, Saint Paul Public Schools Policy 100.01: <https://www.spps.org/Page/5996>

⁹ Special School District No. 1 Policy 1304 Minneapolis Public Schools <http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us>

¹⁰ Race and Equity, Policy: 0600 , Edmonds School District: https://www.edmonds.wednet.edu/UserFiles/Servers/Server_306670/File/About%20Us/School%20Board%20Policies%20&%20Procedures/Section%200000/0600%20-%20Race%20and%20Equity%20FINAL%2010.24.17.p

¹¹ ~~Including, but not limited to, curriculum and instruction, special education and advanced learner differentiation, before and after school activities, discipline, student services, professional development, workforce equity, hiring and retention, staff compensation, budgeting, contracting and procurement, policy development, strategic planning, operations and administration, facilities usage and management.~~

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~~and middle school, and we are committed to advocating for and supporting the expansions of high-quality early childhood experiences from birth to five throughout the community.~~

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~~We also acknowledge that early childhood education is a critical component of an equitable education and are committed to supporting expansion of quality early childhood education in the community both through ongoing offerings from the District and investments in the Collaboration for Early Childhood.~~

This comprehensive approach to creating equity reaches beyond simply addressing individual and interpersonal bias; it includes change efforts at institutional, structural, and systems levels to ensure equitable policies, practices, procedures, and programs. The process shall include student, family, staff, and community voice, with an explicit focus on the students and families most impacted by historical inequities both within District 97 and throughout society.

This policy requires an inclusive and intersectional framework for addressing equity. While the primary focus of this equity policy is on race and ethnicity, District 97 also acknowledges that learning differences, disabilities, IEP status, and socioeconomic status represent other forms of social inequities and oppression, as do gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion, national origin, foster status, involvement with the juvenile justice system, IEP status, disability, learning difference, immigration status, or language. Understanding how these different forms of oppression intersect, and considering the personal characteristics of our students as our student demographics and societal biases change over time, will be key for creating equity across the District.

IMPLEMENTATION

To achieve equity for our students, District 97 shall take appropriate action in the following areas:

- A. Equitable Access: District 97 shall provide every student with equitable access to high-quality instruction, culturally relevant curriculum, grade appropriate assignments, high expectations, ~~deep engagement facilities,~~ and other educational resources necessary for them to succeed. Where necessary to effectuate this policy, this shall include differentiated resource allocation and/or targeted strategies to address inequities and achieve equity;¹² Practices, procedures and programs that result in over- or under-representation of any group of students compared to peers shall be subject to close review to assure that such results are due to meeting students' legitimate educational, social, or emotional needs. In the event that a practice or program is not equitably accessible, the practice will either be modified to meet the requirements of this Policy, or eliminated, if no modifications can be made or agreed upon, if it is not possible to modify it, then it shall be eliminated. In addition to access to instruction, the District will review physical and logistical limitations to student access such as transportation, access to technology, needs for academic support outside of school- hours, and other supports for families needed to ensure equitable access.¹³
- B. Racial Equity Analysis: District 97 shall review existing policies, programs, professional development, and procedures to ensure the promotion of racial equity and elimination of inequity and its contributors ~~thereto~~. Where existing policies, practices, procedures, and

¹² Racial Equity Analysis Tool: Seattle Public School

¹³ Policy 1304, Minneapolis Public Schools

programs are found to contribute to inequities, the District shall eliminate or reform them, in a transparent and timely manner, so that they are consistent with this Policy. All new policies, practices, procedures, and programs will be developed through the use of a racial equity review tool that is informed by effective equity tools from other school districts and the equity field.¹⁴, The racial equity review tool utilized by District 97 shall be developed by the Administration ~~in conjunction with~~ as part of the implementation planning process referenced in this Policy, and recommended to the Board for adoption. The tool shall establish a clear process and set of questions to guide the development, implementation, and evaluation of policies, practices, procedures, and programs to address the impacts on racial equity. The tool will help decision makers center racial equity in their thinking, choose options that best advance racial equity and remedy inequity, and avoid implicit bias and unintended consequences that can result by ignoring equity. The tool should be developed with meaningful stakeholder support, and shall be applied with stakeholder engagement and effective collection, analysis and use of disaggregated data. The District is committed to ongoing training to ensure that the tool is used with fidelity and supports teachers and staff in their adoption of it.

C. Eliminating Discipline Disproportionality: District 97 will eliminate disproportionality ~~of race and gender~~ in discipline, especially by race and gender, and support students' social, emotional, and cultural needs. ~~The~~ District shall achieve this through measures such as a district-wide emphasis on social-emotional learning and supports; restorative practices that center on student voices; staff and teacher professional development on topics related to equitable discipline practices (~~including but not limited to~~ -implicit bias; staff recruitment and induction processes that emphasize the District's commitment to restorative justice); ~~and~~ culturally responsive teaching pedagogy.¹⁵ Restorative practices shall be included in professional development for ~~teachers-staff~~ and also part of the curriculum so our students have a voice in our restorative practices and understand the expectations surrounding such practices. Restorative justice will be a priority and the first course of action in response to behavior issues that arise. The goal is to keep our students in the classroom, ensure that they have equal access to instruction, and ensure behavior management does not negatively impact how a student sees him or herself and how other students and people in the school community see that student.

D. Stakeholder and Community Engagement: District 97 cannot achieve equity without effective, robust stakeholder engagement. Student and family voice, along with teachers, staff, and other community stakeholders shall play a prominent role in implementing this policy. District 97 shall welcome and empower families, including underrepresented families of color (including those whose first language may not be English) and parents of students with disabilities and different learning needs as essential partners in students' education, school planning, and District decision-making. In addition, District 97 will include other partners who have demonstrated culturally-specific expertise in meeting its educational outcomes.¹⁶ District 97 will work with community partners and families to provide intentional, targeted outreach that ensures families and

¹⁴ Racial Equity Analysis Tool: Seattle Public School
https://www.seattleschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_543/File/District/Departments/DREA/racial_equity_analysis_tool.pdf

¹⁵ Oakland Unified School District Board Policy, Students BP 5032 Equity Policy

¹⁶ Portland Public Schools Racial Educational Equity Policy

students feel welcome and understand the services available to them and how to access information as well as provide opportunities for engagement with teachers and staff at times and places that are consistent with ~~scheduling~~ needs of all families.

- E. Workforce Equity: District 97 shall recruit, employ, support, and retain racially and linguistically diverse and culturally competent administrative, instructional, and support personnel. District 97 shall provide professional development to strengthen employees' knowledge and skills for eliminating racial and ethnic disparities in achievement. District 97 shall develop a concrete plan to develop a teacher and administrator workforce reflective of the ~~diversity of~~ our student body to provide children of all races, cultures, genders, and backgrounds with familiar role models in schools, with an emphasis on teachers of color and male teachers. All children benefit from seeing teachers and leaders of color in their school. In addition to recruiting talent that reflects the student body, the District will develop retention plans so that we are able to retain talent in the District. The ~~human resources department~~ District will foster good relationships between and among ~~st~~ our teachers and staff so that the workforce is supportive of one another and works together as a community, embracing the benefits of peer review.
- F. Professional Development: District 97 shall provide ongoing professional development to strengthen employees' knowledge of strategies and skills for eliminating bias and to understand the cause in disparities in achievement, including specific training on the use of the tools used to review practices through a racial equity lens, ~~and on~~ cultural responsiveness and the historical roots of structural racism. Professional development shall also include training on trauma informed care. The District 97 workforce shall be informed on and committed to equitable, inclusive and anti-oppressive methods for advancing the District's Vision. Our staff will also undergo training on the importance and value of a curriculum that is culturally relevant and not based on euro-centric traditions that have historically permeated all of our curricula. Teachers will continue to undergo training on effective in-class learning differentiation. This training shall not be limited to institute days but shall be ongoing, in our buildings and ~~will~~ include resources for our teachers and staff to engage with as questions arise. In addition to professional development for our teachers and staff, the Board, Committees, and organizations that work with our students will also undertake training consistent with this policy at a minimum of every other year.
- G. Welcoming School Environments: District 97 shall ensure that each school creates a welcoming culture and inclusive environment that reflects and supports the diversity of each school and District 97's student population, their families, our teachers and staff, and our community.¹⁷ The culture and climate will be intentionally designed and implemented to value all members of our school communities and require respectful interactions between our students and each other as well as between and among teachers and staff members and community members before, during, and after school so that every student and family and staff member feels a sense of belonging in each classroom and building. Our ~~teachers-staff~~ shall also be supported and provided the resources and training necessary to foster a culture of belonging in ~~their classrooms~~ our schools.

- H. Recognizing and Valuing Diversity: District 97 recognizes the value of a culturally relevant diverse

¹⁷ Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity, Seattle Public Schools

education and diverse student body and workforce. An education in a diverse environment is critical to succeeding in developing the skills necessary for our ~~students~~ students to be global citizens. The District shall incorporate teaching and learning materials and assessments intentionally designed to reduce bias and geared towards the understanding and appreciation of culture, class, language, ethnicity, and other differences that contribute to the uniqueness of each student and staff member.¹⁸

- I. Equity Leadership and Infrastructure: The Superintendent shall develop and recommend to the Board ~~a~~ a viable long term plan for funding, staffing, and implementing activities and initiatives to achieve the equity objectives. This plan shall include a leadership team and infrastructure as well as regular reporting that coincides with the budget cycle. The recommendation shall include an ongoing ~~committee structure~~ process that includes teachers and staff, students, parents, community members and Board members to provide input in the implementation of this Policy on at least a quarterly basis and to assist the Board in monitoring outcomes and communicating implementation and results with the community. ~~The position of A Senior Director of Equity or Assistant Superintendent for Racial Equity~~ shall continue to be part of the senior management team and report directly to the Superintendent.

Reporting and Accountability

The Board will hold the Superintendent accountable for establishing annual goals that prioritize the requirements of this Policy and making measurable progress in meeting those goals. All District employees will be informed of their responsibility for the success and achievement of all students. The Superintendent will establish administrative regulations and procedures to implement this policy, including annual reporting on student disparities with disaggregated data for all key equity and outcome indicators (e.g. graduation rates, discipline rates, drop-out rates; composition of advanced learning classes/programs-), and identification of inequitable impacts and outcomes that need attention and remediation that will be available to the public in a central, easily access~~ible~~ ible and user-friendly online space.

The Superintendent will publicly report on progress toward District goals at least twice a year, and will provide the Board with updated action plans each year.¹⁹ The action plans will also highlight discrepancies between the targets set and actual performance when applicable and provide specific solutions for identifying the root cause of such discrepancies and remedying them.²⁰ The report will also address the level of usage, ~~and~~ the effectiveness of, equity tools and practices, and resource allocation recommendations. In addition, all special reports to the Board and other communications regarding new initiatives or ~~providing a~~ status updates of ongoing initiatives will include a section on Equity and how the particular topic of the report is consistent with this Policy and our annual equity goals.

The Superintendent will include accountability standards for measuring implementation of this Policy in ~~each~~ each school, department, and office as well as an ongoing plan for continuous improvement

¹⁸ Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity, Seattle Public Schools

¹⁹ Portland Public Schools Racial Educational Equity Policy

²⁰ Policy 1304, Minneapolis Public Schools

informed by best practices.²¹ This Policy must inform School Improvement Plans and reporting required under those plans.

Coordination with District 200 and District 90

The Board recognizes that our community broadly includes District 200 and District 90. ~~While we will not allow District 97's work to be delayed as a result of the other districts,~~ The Board directs the Superintendent to work with the other Districts and encourage collaboration and alignment with action plans, wherever possible, that will result in measurable results for all of the students in the community. In conjunction with the administrations' work with District 200 and District 90, the Board is also committed to ~~maintaining a Tri-Board Committee on Equity,~~ working with the other Boards, including using best efforts to coordinate an annual joint report to the community, and ensuring District 97 is an active participant in community equity work at the Board level.

Engagement of Outside Equity Consultants

As a part of this accountability and transparency framework as well as a commitment to a dedication of resources, the Board may retain a reputable person/firm with significant expertise with educational equity to conduct an evaluation to comprehensively identify policies and practices, at the district and individual school levels, that are contributing to inequity and identify specific policies and practices that can and will advance equity. The Board's expectation is that the ~~Senior Director of Equity~~ Superintendent and our other Equity leaders will play a critical role in reviewing all of our practices, procedures and programs. ~~The Board acknowledges that having independent researchers outside the district's chain of command may be an essential step to getting comprehensive, candid feedback from stakeholders, including teachers, administrators and other district staff to advance equity and that an independent evaluator are possibly more likely to make necessary critiques and recommendations that challenge D97 stakeholders in ways that might be uncomfortable but are ultimately important.~~

OUTCOMES

With these actions in mind and in committing to provide equitable and inclusive educational opportunities for all students in all of its schools, District 97 establishes the following objectives:

- Create new learning environments that intentionally acknowledge the strengths and needs of all of our students rather than merely attempting to bring students who have not historically experienced District 97 in a positive manner into environments that were not created with all students' strengths and needs in mind.
- Eliminate the racial predictability and disproportionality in all aspects of education and its administration (e.g., the disproportionate over-application of discipline to students of color, their over-representation in Special Education, and their under-representation in various Advanced Learning programs).

²¹ Oakland Unified School District Board Policy, Students BP 5032 Equity Policy

- Ensure all students regardless of race, class, or other factors graduate ready to succeed in a ~~in a~~ career or continued learning within a racially and culturally diverse local, national, and global community.
- Establish annual goals for student achievement that include at a minimum raising the achievement of all students and ensuring that students performing below grade level accelerate learning to grade level or at least 1.5 years of growth, while eliminating the gaps between the lowest and highest performing students.
- Increase overall academic rigor at all ~~levels~~ to ensure that all students have access to an excellent education.
- Reporting that clearly communicates student performance metrics and programming and initiatives designed to ensure compliance with this Policy to students, parents, staff, and the community.
- Allocate resources to meet the aforementioned equity goals, including increased professional development and possibly an independent evaluator.
- Provide culturally responsive education to students and professional development and learning to staff
- Create and maintain a data page on the District website to report publicly and transparently to the community ~~our~~ compliance with the requirements set forth in this policy.

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EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy shall become effective immediately upon enactment. The Board acknowledges that in order to achieve the objectives contained herein and implement this policy, resources, including but not limited to, additional teaching and support staff, professional development, and data analysis professionals may be required. Accordingly, implementation shall begin on August 2019 for the 2019-2020 school year following a comprehensive, transparent planning process with the community that will result in an implementation plan. The implementation plan shall establish priorities, milestones, and where and how the District shall engage with stakeholders on an ongoing basis and will be premised on the need to rethink all aspects of policies, practices, procedures and programs in order to meet the requirements of the Policy.

DEFINITIONS

Bias means prejudice toward a group and its members relative to another group.

Demographic group generally refers to any group of students who share similar characteristics, such as gender identification, racial or ethnic identification, socioeconomic status, physical or learning disabilities, language abilities, or school-assigned classifications.

Disaggregated data results from examining system-wide data through the lens of student demographic groups to uncover patterns and trends that may be true for some student groups, but not all students in the system.

Disproportionality means that there are more (or fewer) children from a particular group who are experiencing a given situation than we would expect, based on the group's representation in the general population.

Diversity means variety; different types of people.

Equity means a system of fairness in both opportunities and outcomes. Equitable systems provide access, opportunities, and resources required for students to learn at high levels. Whereas *equality* tends to center on similarity of input, *equity* centers on how those inputs impact *outcomes*. With a focus on how our inputs are increasing opportunities for *all* students to achieve at high levels, with particular and prioritized attention to meeting the needs of those most disenfranchised.

Implicit Bias means the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control. biases people are usually unaware of and that operate at the subconscious level. Implicit bias is usually expressed indirectly.

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Inclusion means full access, authentic representation, empowered participation, with a true sense of belonging and agency.

Institutional Bias refers to the treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against, a person or thing based on the group, class, or category to which that person or thing belongs rather than on individual merit.

Institutional Racism means policies, practices, procedures, and programs that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally.

Intersectionality means the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

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Racial Equity means the systematic fair treatment of people of all races that results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. Racial inequities and disparities are eliminated, race is no longer a predictor of outcomes, and outcomes for all groups are improved.

Racism refers to a complex system of beliefs and behaviors, grounded in a presumed superiority of the white race. These beliefs and behaviors are conscious and unconscious; personal and institutional; and result in the oppression of people of color and benefit the dominant group, whites.

White Supremacy refers to the system of racial hierarchy and inequality, based on the ideology of White superiority, which has been historically, institutionally, economically, and culturally embedded in our society, resulting in cumulative advantage and privileges to White people and cumulative disadvantages to pPeople of cColor.

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