

**Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES/Instructional Support Services
Equity Action Plan
Fall 2023**

At Cattaraugus-Allegany (CA) BOCES/Instructional Support Services (ISS), we believe that every member of our community deserves to feel a sense of belonging and dignity. It is through the honoring of individual dignity that members of our community will sense that they belong. This belief is reflected in our Equity Action Plan, which aligns with the Essential Elements of Cultural Proficient Practices by R. B. Lindsey, Nuri-Robins, and Terrell (Welborn, et al., 2022) and promotes our dedication to the Dignity Framework as defined by Floyd Cobb and John Krownapple (Cobb, F. & Krownapple, J., 2019).

**Dignity Framework by John Krownapple and Floyd Cobb
(Cobb, F. & Krownapple, J., 2019)**

Standards for Dignity

- Presume competence and positive intent
- Build partnerships and community
- Repair harm and restore relationships
- Affirm differences and uniqueness

Indicators for Belonging

Appreciated; Treated Fairly; Accepted; Validated

Dispositions for Dignity

Empathy; Patience; Openness; Listening

**Essential Elements of Cultural Proficient Practices by R. B.
Lindsey, Nuri-Robins, and Terrell (Welborn, et al. 2022)**

- Assessing cultural knowledge
- Valuing diversity
- Managing the dynamics of difference
- Adapting to diversity
- Institutionalizing cultural knowledge

As Floyd Cobb and John Krownapple stated, "therefore, if we are ever to be successful in meeting the equity needs of our students, we must first come to terms with our own sense of self-worth so that we can acknowledge the equal human worth of each student" (2019). Our Equity Action Plan demonstrates our commitment to an empowering journey of self, empowering individuals to bring their unique perspectives and experiences to the workplace, where they will be valued and celebrated. By fostering a sense of belonging and embracing differences, we believe that we will not only create a more dynamic and innovative work environment, but also improve the quality of education for all.

Our goal is to provide opportunities for our staff and other educational professionals in our region to explore individual identities and cultures as well as develop awareness and acceptance of identities and cultures that are new, different, or unfamiliar to them. By doing so, we believe that we can enhance the quality of education through shared resources and support our mission of being an essential partner in education in the region we serve.

Our Organization's Mission: To enhance the quality of education through shared resources.

Our Core Values:

- To have highly satisfied customers...
- To treat all individuals with respect [and dignity]...
- To provide an environment that supports innovation and risk...

Our Catch Phrase: Essential Partner - #EP

In Instructional Support Services our vision is that everyone belongs, even those we haven't met yet.

Current Reality and Rationale: Assessment Data (and other information/observations)

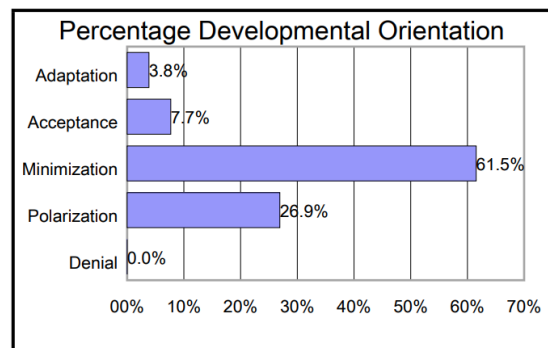
Since the spring of 2022, the CA BOCES/ISS team has conducted two assessments and utilized a district-level assessment to determine our current reality. The data collected from these assessments have provided us with valuable information to help us understand our team's capacity and perceptions of cultural proficiency and having a sense of belonging.

Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI®)

In the spring of 2022, ISS administered the IDI® on a volunteer basis to team members including the leadership team, support team, and coordinator team. Out of 39 possible participants, we had approximately 28 people complete the inventory. The inventory revealed the group's perceived intercultural development orientation to be in Acceptance while the developmental orientation was in the earlier stages of Minimization.

This means the group perceived itself as being able to appropriately adapt to cultural differences and having the capacity to appreciate patterns of cultural difference in one's own and other cultures in values, perceptions, and behaviors. Despite this perception, the group's developmental orientation was at an earlier stage of development known as Minimization. This orientation indicates the group's primary orientation tends to highlight commonalities across cultures that can mask important cultural differences in values, perceptions, and behaviors. A gap in a group or individual's perceived orientation and primary orientation is normal as humans tend to overestimate their capacities in this realm.

The data also revealed the spread of orientations within the group: 0% in Denial, 26.1% in Polarization, 61.5% in Minimization, 7.7% in Acceptance, and 3.8% in Adaptation. As a group, the majority of team members' developmental orientations were either in the transitional mindset of Minimization or the monocultural mindset of Polarization.



Three key measures of the IDI® are the group’s perceived orientation, their developmental orientation, and the orientation gap. The average profiles of the group were averaged and indicated a perceived orientation of 122.2 which is within Acceptance. The developmental orientation of the group was averaged to 96.68 which falls within Minimization. The interpretation of these measures would indicate the group values the idea of cultural difference, appreciation of those differences, and has a positive curiosity about cultural differences, but their primary mindset resides within Minimization. When the primary orientation of a group is within Minimization, diversity can feel stifled and unseen because a key characteristic of the Minimization mindset is a focus on cultural similarity while simultaneously deemphasizing cultural differences that make a difference.

The group’s orientation gap was 25.54. This number is the difference between the group’s perceived orientation and their developmental orientation. When the orientation gap is 7 or lower, this is an indication that a group has an accurate perception of their mindset and skills with regard to intercultural development. A gap of 25.54 would indicate the group does not have an accurate perception of their mindset and skills within intercultural development and members of the group may feel surprised that their developmental orientation is at an earlier point of the continuum than their perceived orientation.

It should be noted that group profiles on the IDI® are an average of the group members in the data set. Individuals within a group may have a wide range of perceived and developmental orientations.

The Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale (Goodenow, 1993 as in Cobb, F. & Krownapple, J., 2019)

Following a summer of regional work around the text, *Belonging Through a Cultural of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation*, our leadership team wished to focus on developing a sense of belonging in order to support further development of our team’s capacity to interact across cultures while supporting a welcoming and affirming environment in the workplace. In the text, Cobb and Krownapple cite the PSSM as a measure of belonging as it is aligned to the indicators of belonging they highlight in the book: acceptance, appreciation, validation, and being treated fairly.

The ISS Leadership team modified the PSSM to reflect an adult context within the CA BOCES ISS Division (i.e., “teacher” was changed to “leadership;” “students” was changed to “team members;” etc.). We provided the team time to take the inventory and then compiled the results.

Category	Focus	Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Total Responses	Weighted Total	Average
Appreciated	Team	*12. I feel very different from most other team members.	5	3	11	1	6	26	78	3.00
Validated	Team	4. Other team members take my opinions seriously.	2	3	9	8	3	25	82	3.28
Validated	Leader	5. ISS leadership is interested in me.	0	9	6	6	6	27	90	3.33
Appreciated	Team	18. Other team members here like the way I am.	2	2	9	8	5	26	90	3.46
Accepted	---	*3. It is hard for people like me to be accepted here.	2	4	7	5	9	27	96	3.56
Accepted	---	*6. Sometimes I feel as if I don't belong.	1	5	6	4	10	26	95	3.65
Accepted	---	10. I am included in our work at ISS.	1	0	9	11	6	27	102	3.78
Validated	---	13. I can really be myself at work in ISS.	1	1	8	8	8	26	99	3.81
Treated Fairly	Team	11. I am treated with as much respect as other team members.	0	3	6	8	8	25	96	3.84
Accepted	---	1. I feel like a real part of ISS.	0	3	5	11	7	26	100	3.85
Appreciated	---	2. People here notice when I'm good at something.	0	1	8	9	7	25	97	3.88
Treated Fairly	Leader	14. The ISS leaders here respect me.	1	1	8	5	12	27	107	3.96
Validated	---	15. People know I can do good work.	0	1	5	11	8	25	101	4.04
Appreciated	Leader	*9. ISS leadership is not interested in people like me.	0	3	4	4	13	24	99	4.13
Appreciated	---	*16. I wish I worked in a different organization.	1	2	1	7	14	25	106	4.24
Accepted	---	17. I feel proud of belonging to ISS.	0	1	4	8	12	25	106	4.24
Treated Fairly	---	8. People in ISS are friendly to me.	0	0	4	8	15	27	119	4.41
Treated Fairly	---	7. There's at least one person in ISS I can talk to if I have a problem.	0	0	1	2	23	26	126	4.85

The out of a possible 5 points, each of the four indicators of belonging had the following averages:

Appreciation	3.74
Validation	3.62
Acceptance	3.71
Treated Fairly	4.27

The leadership team analyzed the results and made the following observations/conclusions:

- The team's sense of appreciation from other team members showed up in 2 of the 5 lowest scored indicators.
- The team's sense of validation from leadership and other team members also showed up in 2 of the 5 lowest scored indicators.
- A sense of being treated fairly showed up as one of the more highly scored indicators.
- Acceptance did not show up at all in the highest scoring indicators.

We also debriefed the results with team members and came to similar conclusions. Our biggest concerns were that team members may not feel like they belong or they are affirmed. We concluded more work needed to be done in this area, and that more work around identities and cultural competence/proficiency may be necessary.

Some challenges we face with the data we've collected so far:

- Significant team turnover of coordinators and support team members since the IDI® was administered, and even some since the belonging survey was administered.
- We believe a contributing factor to some of the feelings toward belonging may be due to recalibrating ourselves following the pandemic. Although full lockdown only lasted three months, we still didn't have many in-person meetings or collaborations for about 6-9 months following that. We have a sense that lack of contact resulted in some gaps in some of the indicators of belonging.

Work we've explored and engaged in so far:

- [Intercultural Development Inventory](#) has been administered with team members with many team members participating in 1:1 debriefs of their individual profiles. Six team members are trained as IDI® Qualified Administrators, so there was an option for team members to have a peer/co-worker debrief their profile, and not their manager.
- [New York State's Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#) has been a driving force in our work. Specifically, the principle of Welcoming and Affirming Environment has been central to our work with our team for the last two years.
- We continue to go back to *Belonging through a Culture of Dignity* (Cobb, F. & Krownapple, J., 2019) as a central text and resource to our work with the division. We've been emphasizing the indicators of belonging and how culture plays a role in being treated fairly, appreciated, accepted, and validated.
- Eleven team members have been going through certification training for the [Cultural Proficiency Framework](#). Through that learning, we're seeking ways to incorporate the Framework and tools with the team. (Dr. Jaime Welborn, Dr. Peter Flores)
- Six team members are currently enrolled in a 12-week course for Facilitating Intercultural Coaching with True North Intercultural. (Dr. Tara Harvey)

Some of the thinking behind our work so far:

- Building our own capacity as a leadership team to support intercultural competence, proficiency, and development (awareness of self and awareness of others).
- Building our team's capacity to support this work internally and externally.
- Laying a foundation of awareness among team members regarding concepts of culture and belonging.

Outcomes:

In Instructional Support Services our vision is that everyone belongs, even those we haven't met yet.

We prioritize knowing and owning our individual identities and cultures, and we encourage bringing our whole selves to work. In doing so, we affirm, appreciate, and validate the identities and cultures of others in the workspace. We strive to create learning environments where diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences are seen as assets to learning, both for children and adults. As we model these behaviors and values in our shared work experiences, we hope to promote a more inclusive and welcoming community in the region. With that, we aspire to the following seven outcomes:

1. **Understanding and Awareness:** ISS will be able to identify and describe their own cultural backgrounds, experiences, and identities, as well as those of others.
2. **Valuing Diversity:** ISS will understand the importance of diversity and inclusivity and be able to articulate the benefits of an environment that recognizes and values different backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences where culture is seen as an asset to learning.
3. **Cultural Competency:** ISS will be able to navigate cultural differences and interact effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds.
4. **Model Behavior:** ISS will showcase and model tools, resources, surveys, assessment, practices, learning, etc. within our division and during professional development workshops, daily interactions, and communications that align with cultural competency.

5. **Self-Reflection:** ISS will engage in ongoing self-reflection to understand the impact of their own cultural experiences and biases on their thoughts, actions, and interactions with others.
6. **Retention and Recruitment:** ISS will promote a better understanding of different cultures and backgrounds, leading to a more welcoming and affirming environment.
7. **Continuous Learning:** ISS will be committed to ongoing learning and development in the area of cultural competency.

Goals:

Goal 1: The Instructional Support Services Division will increase its average developmental orientation as measured by the Intercultural Development Inventory.

- Increase to an average developmental orientation of 106 by May 2023.
- Increase to an average developmental orientation of 116 by May 2024.
- History of DO:
 - 96.68 - Spring of 2022
 - 105.03 - Spring of 2023

Culturally Proficient Action Steps What actions will we take to reach our goals?	Person(s) responsible (Positions, depts, <i>not names</i>)	Resources: Materials and/or Personnel	Timeline: When will we benchmark?	Status
Assessing Cultural Knowledge Administer the IDI® to current team members and conduct a group debrief (offer individual debriefs)	Leadership Team IDI® Qualified Administrators	IDI® Codes IDI® QAs	Spring of each year.	Tara Harvey (6/23) Several team members had individual debriefs after Division Day (6/23)

Offer IDI® and a one-to-one debrief to new team members as part of the onboarding process.	(QA)		Ongoing.	IDI added as an option for coordinator OnBoard.
Valuing Diversity When facilitating professional learning (internally and externally), model and utilize equitable protocols (SRI), restorative circles, etc. to promote equity of voice.	Leadership team Coordinator team	Protocols	Ongoing	OnBoard is inclusive of a protocols and tools module.
Managing the Dynamics of Difference Administer the Intercultural Conflict Style inventory with the division, discuss differences in styles, and consider actions for interactions with people who have different conflict styles. Offer the Intercultural Conflict Style (ICS) inventory for new team members.	Leadership team	Intercultural Conflict Style inventory	March 2023 Ongoing	Administered in March 2023. Not currently added to OnBoard.
Adapting to Diversity Following group and individual debriefs	Accountability	Individual	Starting May	Provide a “mixer” that could

<p>of the IDI®, encourage team members to select accountability partners with whom to work on their Intercultural Development Plan (IDP®)</p>	<p>partners</p>	<p>Intercultural Development Plans</p>	<p>2023, then ongoing.</p>	<p>help set up accountability partners at the end of DD.</p> <p>Creating Intercultural Coaching CLC for ISS staff.</p>
<p>Institutionalizing Cultural Knowledge</p> <p>During division meetings, department meetings, and other events, facilitate activities to increase knowledge of self and others’ cultural identities (e.g., Diversity Rounds, Diversity Timeline, Core Values, Compass Points, Beads, etc.).</p> <p>During division meetings, department meetings, and other events, facilitate activities to increase knowledge of the Cultural Proficiency Framework and concepts such as privilege, bias, othering, etc.</p>	<p>Leadership team</p>	<p>Protocols, cultural awareness activities.</p>	<p>Ongoing, minimum of 4/4 division meetings.</p>	<p>Started with Tara Harvey in June 2023, continue to do this during DD in the 23-24 school year.</p> <p>Can department meetings have common elements that could extend cultural knowledge? Rather than creating additional sessions.</p> <p>Can cultural elements be brought into Student Programs events? Discussion on nametags; dietary options; etc.</p> <p>DIE activity at faculty meeting.</p> <p>High leverage: Extending positive greetings at the door</p> <p>Are we moving into Empathy?</p>

Goal 2: By Fall 2023, the Instructional Support Services Division will maintain or increase the average agreement with each of the four indicators of belonging (appreciation, acceptance, validation, fair treatment) as measured by a modified Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale.

<p>Culturally Proficient Action Steps What actions will we take to reach our goals?</p>	<p>Person(s) responsible (Positions, depts, <i>not names</i>)</p>	<p>Resources: Materials and/or Personnel</p>	<p>Timeline: When will we benchmark?</p>	<p>Status</p>
<p>Assessing Cultural Knowledge</p> <p>Administer Belonging Inventory/Survey to current team members and analyze results.</p> <p>Provide a copy of the Cobb & Krownapple text to all new team members as part of the onboarding process and weave activities/discussion into the onboarding workbook.</p>	<p>Leadership team</p> <p>Leadership team Sr. Coordinators</p>	<p>Survey</p> <p>Cobb & Krownapple text</p>	<p>Fall 2022 Fall 2023</p> <p>Spring 2023, ongoing</p>	<p>Remind people about the survey at Sept. DD, then administer in October.</p> <p>Added to the 2023-24 version of the OnBoard book.</p>
<p>Valuing Diversity</p> <p>Engage in explicit conversations about The Dignity Framework during Divisional, Departmental, and regional meetings (i.e., dignity, belonging, diversity, inclusion, equity, culture, etc.).</p>	<p>Leadership team</p>	<p>Cobb & Krownapple text</p>	<p>Spring 2023</p>	<p>Division Days Curriculum Forum Leaders Connect</p>

<p>Managing the Dynamics of Difference</p> <p>Adopt the Dispositions of Dignity (i.e., listening, openness, patience, empathy) as invitations to brave space across the division. Zoom in on each of these and their relationship to managing the dynamics of difference.</p>	Leadership team	<p><i>Belonging</i> text</p> <p><i>High Conflict</i> text</p> <p>Additional resources</p>	Spring 2023	<p>Look at Safe Spaces and Brave Spaces</p> <p>Silo?</p>
<p>Adapting to Diversity</p> <p>Focus on strategies and skills that build a welcoming and affirming environment as described in the NY CRSE Framework.</p>	Leadership team	NY CRSE Framework	Spring 2023 - Fall 2024	
<p>Institutionalizing Cultural Knowledge</p> <p>Review interview questions for teachers, support staff, and coordinators to include questions relating to cultural proficiency and belonging.</p>	Leadership team	Resource 5D from Welborn, 2022	Spring 2023	<p>Page 339 of Welborn book.</p> <p>Develop question shells for EMA, KBS, Teachers, Staff Developers and place in PM folder</p>

Goal 3: By late Fall 2023, we aim to have at least one district within the region begin the work of developing an Equity Action Plan with facilitation by CA-BOCES.

<p>Culturally Proficient Action Steps What actions will we take to reach our goals?</p>	<p>Person(s) responsible (Positions, depts, <i>not names</i>)</p>	<p>Resources: Materials and/or Personnel</p>	<p>Timeline: When will we benchmark?</p>	<p>Funding</p>
<p>Assessing Cultural Knowledge</p> <p>Conduct a needs assessment to determine potential interest in developing an Equity Action Plan for the entire region.</p>	<p>Leadership team</p>	<p>Data analysis looking for inequities across the region and in individual school districts. (ESSA)</p>	<p>June 2023</p>	
<p>Valuing Diversity</p> <p>Host a one-day, regional session introducing the Cultural Proficiency Framework and the potential of an equity action plan.</p>	<p>Leadership team</p>	<p>Framework, texts, activities, templates</p>	<p>Summer 2023</p>	
<p>Managing the Dynamics of Difference</p> <p>Identify potential conflicts/barriers between the data, school, and community and create breakthrough questions.</p>	<p>Leadership team</p>	<p>Breakthrough questions template, assessment data, needs assessment day analysis</p>	<p>Summer 2023</p>	
<p>Adapting to Diversity</p>				

Individual districts analyze and reflect on district data as it compares to regional data with BOCES facilitator.	District administration and Leadership team	ESSA data	Summer 2023	
Institutionalizing Cultural Knowledge Identify an area of focus to describe how and where to include cultural knowledge in ongoing professional development of the school.	District administration and Leadership team	ESSA data	Fall 2023	

References:

- Cobb, F. & Krownapple, J. (2019). *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Key to Successful Equity Implementation*. Mimi and Todd Press.
- Hammer, M.R. (2022). *The Intercultural Development Inventory® (IDI® v5)*. Olney, MD: IDI®, LLC.
- Hammer, M.R. (2022). *The Intercultural Development Inventory® (IDI®) Resource Guide*. Olney, MD: IDI®, LLC.
- Welborn, J., Casey, T., Myatt, K., & Lindsey, R. (2022). *Leading Change Through the Lens of Cultural Proficiency: An Equitable Approach to Race and Social Class in Our Schools*. Corwin.