Telling Our Story: Parenting While Black

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Session Objectives

- Introduce counternarratives
- Draw connections between our experiences and those of other students of color
- Collaborative build our capacities to support students and families of color
“To create a community of learners; educators, students and families must support, learn from and challenge one another, and the systems of oppression in which they are operating in.”

Carmen Perkins
Expectations

- Be open-minded
- Be courageous
- Speak and listen from the heart
- Suspend judgement
- Be respectful
Kandace’s Story
Carmen’s Story
How Did We Get Here?

The United States has an unfortunate and long-standing history of excluding particular groups from learning and schooling.
Examples of Exclusion

Exclusion of Immigrant Students

Plyler v. Doe
According to The American Immigration Council:
“In 1975, the Texas Legislature authorized local school districts to deny enrollment in public schools to foreign-born children who were not “legally admitted” to the United States. Two years later, the Tyler Independent School District adopted a policy requiring foreign-born students to pay tuition if they were not “legally admitted.” Under the school district’s policy, children were considered “legally admitted” if (1) they possessed documentation showing that they were legally present in the United States, or (2) federal immigration authorities confirmed they were in the process of securing such documentation.”
Examples of Exclusion

Exclusion of Immigrant Students

According to The American Immigration Council:

“In 1994, California voters enacted Proposition 187, which prohibited public elementary and secondary schools from admitting any student who was not lawfully present in the United States, and which required schools to notify federal immigration authorities within 45 days of any student reasonably believed to be in violation of federal immigration laws. The measure was subsequently struck down in federal court for violating Plyler.”
Examples of Exclusion

Exclusion of Non-English Speaking Students

“By the 1880s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs implemented a policy of forced Anglicisation for Native Americans sending Indian children to boarding schools. Such policies did not succeed in eradicating the children’s native languages, but it did instil in them a sense of shame that guaranteed the exclusive use of English for future generations (Crawford, 1998; McCarty, 2002).”

In 1906, the approval of the Nationality Act in Texas officially designated English as the only language to be taught in schools.

Residual Effects

OPPRESSION
Oppression Is?

- The systematic institutionalized mistreatment of particular groups:
  - **Systematic** - deliberate and intentional, designed to keep everyone undesirable on the outside.
  - **Institutionalized** -- it is in the very fabric and foundation of every structure, process and program that is developed to support our way of life.
Reflect on the legacy of exclusion.

- How might historically excluded groups feel?
- How might members of historically excluded groups react to and interact with schools and school personnel?
- How does this impact your work?
Strategies

- Proactively provide opportunities for students to share their counternarratives
- Build authentic relationships with students, parents, and the communities they are part of
- Embrace the complexity and nuances of experiences
- Arrive authentically in your own skin; be mindful of how you show up in the world
- Create systemic conditions that allow people to be their authentic selves
Reflection

- When have you experienced the complexities of identity politics?

- How are you creating conditions for all people to authentically be who they are? What more could you do?

- How are you showing up for all those outside your immediate community who are experiencing disproportionate challenges?
Recommendations for Continuing the Work

• Reading
  – Culturally Relevant Practices
  – Critical Race Theory

• Professional Development/ Training
  – Implicit Bias Training
  – Restorative Practices
  – Data review (disaggregated)
  – Root cause analysis with relevant stakeholders
  – Collaboration with colleagues, families, community partners, & other outside resources

• Continued Self-Reflection
Closing Thought

“We all have blind spots. But we must train ourselves to see our biases, acknowledge them, learn from them, and undo what we can.”

Carmen Perkins
Keep the conversation going:

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