Collegium Charter School

Equity, Bias & Culturally Responsive Practice

Disability & Race-Based Discrimination | Explicit Bias | Culturally Competent Teaching

Presented by: Student Services Department Date: August 31, 2026

How to Use This Training

This module is self-paced. Click through using the buttons on each slide

Navigate freely	Use the Menu to jump to any module, in any order, at any time.
Find your way back	The Home icon (top-right of every slide) always returns you to the Menu.
Knowledge checks	Each module ends with a short question. Click an answer to get instant feedback.
No penalty for a miss	An incorrect answer just gives you a hint and a chance to try again.
Track your progress	The dots at the bottom of each slide show which module you're in.

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Training Agenda

Click a module to begin. You can return here anytime using the Home icon.

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Foundations

Legal framework & shared language

Start →

02 

Understanding Bias

Implicit bias, explicit bias & harassment

Start →

03 

Disability-Specific Equity

Legal rights & the race × disability intersection

Start →

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Culturally Responsive Teaching

Principles, strategies & practice

Start →

Welcome & Community Norms

Menu

This work asks us to be honest, curious, and generous with one another.

1

Assume good intent, name real impact

We can hold both: intentions matter, and so do outcomes.

2

Speak from your own experience

Use "I" statements rather than speaking for a whole group.

3

Lean into discomfort, not away from it

Growth happens at the edge of what feels easy.

1. Foundations

Menu

Learning Targets

We will learn about:

1.) The laws that aim to ensure schools are free of discrimination.

2.) Common vocabulary for discussion of disability and race-based discrimination, implicit bias, and culturally competent teaching.

Success Criteria

I will be able to:

1.) Identify and describe the laws that ensure schools are free of discrimination.

2.) Define and use identified vocabulary for shared discussion of disability and race-based discrimination, implicit bias, and culturally competent teaching.

The Legal Landscape

DISABILITY

IDEA Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) & Least Restrictive Environment

Section 504 Prohibits discrimination based on disability; broader eligibility than IDEA

ADA Civil rights protection covering facilities, programs & activities

RACE

Title VI Civil Rights Act — prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in federally funded programs

Disparate Treatment Intentional, differential treatment based on race

Disparate Impact Neutral policies that produce unequal outcomes

Duty to accommodate is not the same as the duty to educate — both matter.

Intent isn't required for a policy to be discriminatory in effect.



Shared Language

Menu

Explicit Bias

Conscious, deliberate attitudes or beliefs about a group.

Implicit Bias

Unconscious attitudes that shape judgment without our awareness.

Disproportionality

A group is represented in an outcome (discipline, referral) at a rate that differs from their share of the population.

Cultural Competence

Knowledge and skills to work effectively across cultures.

Cultural Responsiveness

Actively using students' cultural context to drive instruction.

Cultural Humility

An ongoing practice of self-reflection and openness to learning.

Knowledge Check →

Knowledge Check — Foundations

Question 1 of 1

Menu

Which law prohibits discrimination based on disability and has broader eligibility than IDEA?

A IDEA

B Section 504

C Title VI

D FERPA

Click an answer to see instant feedback.

Menu



Correct!

Section 504 is a civil rights law that prohibits disability discrimination. Its eligibility is broader than IDEA — a student can qualify for a 504 Plan without qualifying for special education.

Start Module 2 →

Menu



Not Quite

Not quite. IDEA governs special education eligibility and FAPE; Title VI covers race, not disability; FERPA covers records privacy. The law that prohibits disability discrimination with broader eligibility than IDEA is Section 504.

Try Again

1. Understanding Bias - Related to race and culture

Menu

Learning Targets

We will learn about:

1.) Our own implicit bias

2.) How bias shows up in school

3.) Explicit bias, implicit bias, and harassment and how to respond.

Success Criteria

I will be able to:

1.) Acknowledge my own implicit bias.

2.) Identify and describe how bias shows up in the school setting.

3.) Define explicit bias, implicit bias, and harassment.

4.) Describe the appropriate response for when I observe bias or harassment.

Important shared understandings

Menu

1. All humans have implicit bias
2. Generally we tend to hold implict bias that favor our own ingroup
3. Implicit and explicit bias are related but are distinct mental contructs.
4. The implicit associations we hold do not necessarilt align with our declared beliefs or event reflect what we would endorse.

How Bias Shows Up in Schools

Menu

1. Deficit thinking about students or families
2. Lowered academic expectations
3. Adultification of Black and Brown students
4. Over-identification for special education
5. Under-identification / under-referral for services
6. Uneven access to high level & Honors/AP nomination

Implicit Bias: Reflective Practice

Menu

Opportunities for self-reflection

We encourage you to complete one more more of the opportunities below to reflect on your own implicit bias. We ALL have implicit bias and it is important to understand ours!

- Complete an implicit bias assessment - Note: None of your responses are shared with Collegium admiistration or staff.
- Complete the Common Beliefs Survey from Teaching Tolerance and reflect on your beliefs.
- Watch the series of videos from The New York Times, Who Me? Biased? and reflect on how those videos apply to you.

Implicit Bias: Reflective Practice

CASE STUDY

The Hallway Incident Scenario:

It's third period. Marcus, a Black seventh-grader, and Ethan, a white seventh-grader, are goofing around at the back of the classroom while the teacher explains an assignment. Both boys are talking loudly, and Marcus stands up to grab something off Ethan's desk, knocking over a chair in the process.

The teacher stops mid-sentence and says sharply, "Marcus! Office. Now." Marcus protests that Ethan was talking too, but the teacher repeats the direction. Ethan gets a quiet "settle down" and a warning look, then class continues.

Later, in the write-up, the teacher describes Marcus's behavior as "aggressive and defiant" and notes that "this is part of an ongoing pattern of disrespect." Ethan isn't mentioned in the report at all. Neither boy has any prior write-ups this semester. Both were, in fact, doing the same thing.

Reflection Questions

1. What was the first word or phrase that came to mind when you read how the teacher described Marcus's behavior versus Ethan's? Where do you think that framing came from?
2. If you rewound the tape and swapped the boys' races, but kept everything else the same — would you expect the teacher's response, or the write-up, to look any different? What does your answer tell you?
3. Think of a moment in your own classroom where two students did something similar but you responded to them differently. What made that feel like the "right" call at the time — and does it still feel that way now?

Responding when you observe incidents of harrassment

Menu

1

Recognize

Overt discriminatory conduct, slurs, or targeted exclusion based on race or disability.

2

Stop the incident

Stop the incident immediately by stepping in and separating the individuals.

3

Name the behavior

For example, “That comment is hurtful and discriminatory.”

4

Reassure and report

Reassure the victim and let them know they are safe and supported, and report the incident immediately to the building administrator.

Knowledge Check →

Knowledge Check — Understanding Bias

Question 1 of 1

Menu

What is the term for unconscious attitudes that shape judgment without our awareness?

A Explicit bias

B Implicit bias

C Disproportionality

D Cultural humility

Click an answer to see instant feedback.

Menu



Correct!

Implicit bias operates below conscious awareness, which is exactly what makes reflective practice — pausing to examine our first assumption — so valuable.

Start Module 3 →

Menu



Not Quite

Not quite. Explicit bias is conscious and deliberate. Disproportionality describes an outcome pattern, not an attitude. Cultural humility is a practice of openness. The term for unconscious, unaware attitudes is implicit bias.

Try Again

1. Disability-Specific Equity

Menu

Learning Targets

We will learn about:

1.) Key facts about the laws related to students with disabilities.

2.) Our own bias related to individuals with disabilities.

3.) Ensuring equity for all students.

Success Criteria

I will be able to:

1.) Acknowledge my own implicit bias related to students with disabilities.

2.) Describe key information about the laws guiding the education of students with disabilities.

3.) Articulate how I will provide equity for all students in my classroom.

Special Ed Laws and Our Own Bias

Menu

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is a civil right, not just a placement decision (view this video to learn more about LRE)
Shift the question from “Does this student need a different setting?” to “What can we change in the environment to better support this student right now?”

Presume competence — avoid low-expectation IEP goals (View this Ted Talk about presuming competence)

Know the difference: accommodations change access, modifications change expectations (read this article for more information on accommodations versus modifications and download a one page reference sheet!)

Understand manifestation determination before disciplining a student with a disability. A student should NOT be disciplined for a behavior that is a manifestation of their disability. (View this brochure for more information on MD in Pennsylvania)

Our own bias can prevent students with disabilities from having the access to education they deserve and are afforded by law!
(Take this Disability-related Implicit Bias assessment from Harvard)

Where Race & Disability Intersect

Menu

OVER-REPRESENTED

Students of color are disproportionately identified in categories like Emotional/Behavioral Disorder and Intellectual Disability, and disproportionately referred for exclusionary discipline.

UNDER-REPRESENTED

The same students are underrepresented high level and Honors/AP courses, often due to lowered expectations rather than lower capability.

Before referral, ask: Is this a skill gap, a language/cultural mismatch, or a true disability indicator?

Knowledge Check →

Knowledge Check — Disability-Specific Equity

Question 1 of 1

Menu

Before referring a student for evaluation, which question should you ask first?

A Would a referral reduce classroom disruption?

B Has the family already requested testing?

C Is this a skill gap, a language/cultural mismatch, or a true disability indicator?

D Does this student have a strong attitude toward school?

Click an answer to see instant feedback.

Menu



Correct!

Asking this question first helps prevent both over- and under-identification — it separates what looks like a disability from what may actually be a skill, language, or cultural mismatch.

Start Module 4 →

Menu



Not Quite

Not quite. Reducing disruption, family requests, and attitude are not the right first filter. The question to ask first is: is this a skill gap, a language/cultural mismatch, or a true disability indicator?

Try Again

4. Culturally Responsive Teaching

Menu

Learning Targets

We will learn about:

1.) Culturally Responsive Teaching Principles

2.) Culturally Responsive Classroom Practices

Success Criteria

I will be able to:

1.) State three Culturally Responsive Teaching Principles

2.) Describe Classroom strategies for Culturally Responsive teaching

3.) Develop a commitment to equity and reflect on what I have learned.

Culturally Responsive Teaching: Core Principles

Menu

Asset-Based Framing

See students and families through their strengths, not their deficits.

Relational Trust

Build genuine relationships across cultural and linguistic difference.

Identity-Reflective Curriculum

Students see themselves in what and who they learn from.

Classroom Strategies

Menu

Student CREW	Ensures all of our students have a sense of belonging while developing the Crew Characterstics.
Universal Design for Learning (UDL)	Bridges disability access and culturally responsive design by building in flexibility from the start. See the UDL Guidelines here!
Inclusive Family Engagement	Reaches families across language and cultural difference — not just those who show up. Explore some stratagies for Inclusive Family Engagement!

Opportunity for reflection

Lesson / Unit Equity Audit

If you would like, complete a simple Classroom Equity Audit to reflect on your practices.

Knowledge Check — Culturally Responsive Teaching

Question 1 of 1

Menu

Which practice bridges disability access and culturally responsive design?

A Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

B Manifestation determination

C Disparate impact analysis

D Gifted nomination

Click an answer to see instant feedback.

Menu



Correct!

UDL builds flexibility in from the start, so it naturally serves both disability access and cultural responsiveness — rather than retrofitting accommodations after the fact.

Finish: Commitments →

Menu



Not Quite

Not quite. Manifestation determination relates to discipline, disparate impact is a legal concept, and gifted nomination is a referral pathway. The practice that bridges disability access and cultural responsiveness is Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

Try Again

Commitments & Reflection - Complete in Google Form

Menu

MY COMMITMENT

One concrete practice I will change in the next two weeks:

REFLECTION

What is one thing from this training that challenged your thinking?

Menu

Reporting a Concern

Point of contact for discrimination or discipline complaints:

Maureen Wilkins, Director of Student Services

mwilkins@ccs.us

610-903-1300 x6034



Training Complete

Every student deserves to be seen accurately — and taught accordingly.

Questions? Maureen Wilkins • mwilkins@ccs.us • 610-903-1300 x6034