

Cultural Proficiency in Whitefish Bay Schools

The Whitefish Bay School District is focused on increasing achievement for all students, narrowing achievement disparities and building cultural proficiency within the school community. Currently there are two efforts underway in the district.

Regional Consortium

In the spring of 2009 Whitefish Bay Schools became part of a regional consortium of North Shore School Districts in collaboration with PACE 3 (a Whitefish Bay parent advocacy group), and Cardinal Stritch University to begin a multi-year training in Cultural Competency. The Whitefish Bay team is comprised of school board members, administrators, teachers and parents. The team has three goals: to establish a common language through building relationships and trust in order to create a compelling vision of cultural equality and educational excellence; to cultivate mindsets and behaviors which support equity and achievement and to assist in the development of a sustained system marked by a school climate which is beneficial to all students.

Staff Book Study

In the summer of 2008 school staff members were invited to engage in a book study of “Courageous Conversations about Race: a Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools” authored by Glen Singleton and Curtin Linton. As of fall 2009 over 70 staff members, including all administrative staff, have participated. The purpose of the book study is to allow each participant to examine their cultural lens and determine how their “lens” influences their relationships with students and families from diverse cultural backgrounds. Participants engage in candid, honest dialog as they explore and uncover why inequities persist with the objective of cultivating the will and capacity to change bias practices and attitudes.