Addressing Biases

Studies show that when we are primed to recognize unconscious biases in ourselves and others, we are more likely to reflect on where our words, thoughts, or actions come from. Looking out for where our biases show up makes it less likely that we will allow them to influence our behavior and decisions.

The questions below focus on the student and will help you recognize and reflect on your biases in both physical and virtual settings. They have been generated to support you as you confront, challenge, and have conversations about bias and racism with students, parents, colleagues, and other stakeholders in your classroom community.

Directions: For each question, rate yourself using the following scale: 1—never, 2—rarely, 3—sometimes, 4—often, and 5—always.

Then, reflect on the biases that may be present in your physical and virtual settings. For each question, consider the following physical and virtual settings: classroom walls, hall walls, online learning platform, physical assignments, textbooks, digital assignments, digital library or bookshelf, physical shelves, teacher-created videos and screencasts, interactive websites, online resources, school and district websites, classroom newsletter, and email signatures.

1. How often do students see images of people with learning differences and disabilities represented in your learning environment?
2. How often do students see images of people of different races, ethnicities, and cultures represented in your learning environment?
3. How often do students see images of people with different races, ethnicities, cultures, learning differences, and disabilities represented in math, science, and engineering fields?
4. How often do you consider what students of different races, ethnicities, or cultures experience?
5. How often do you think about what students with learning differences and disabilities experience?
6. How often do your students have opportunities to contribute to your physical and virtual settings?
7. How often are major news events related to race represented in your learning environment?
8. How often are students' families and community members represented in your physical and virtual setting?