AN ANTI-BIAS TOOLKIT

From The Holocaust and Human Rights Center

HHRC Anti-Bias Toolkit

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Introduction

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

– Nelson Mandela

Schools should be places where everyone feels safe, welcome and respected for who they are. Thank you for making the time to explore this toolkit and to address bias in your school. The work you're engaging in will make your school a better place for your students, staff, families and community.

This toolkit offers some of the many actions you can take to confront bias in schools. It is not just a simple checklist. Anti-bias work is ongoing.

There will always be more to do for equity and inclusion. As you do this work, come back to this Toolkit. Find new actions to build on ones you have already done. You could also revisit some actions to dig in deeper. You'll probably notice overlaps between some of the actions. They often work together and may put you in a good position to take on another one.

This initial toolkit highlights ten possible actions to get you started examining equity at your school. While there are many more ways to explore equity than just these resources, we hope you'll find something to try here.

Every community and school is different. The issues you face are unique and your approach will be as well. This toolkit is designed to provide multiple opportunities and approaches to doing this work. Some tools may be more helpful for students while others may work better for teachers, parents, counselors, librarians, community members or school administration. Use these resources in ways that work for your community. The key is to *do something.* For each action in this toolkit, we've highlighted a few key resources to help get you started.

Your Feedback

Since this is the first version of this toolkit, we're hoping to build on it and continue to provide resources to schools in Maine. Your feedback will help direct this process. What tools did you use? What actions did you take? How did it go? What impact did your actions have on you and your community? Is there a type of resource you're looking for and could use help finding? **Please complete this survey** to let us know how you used this toolkit and what you'd like to see added or changed to make it even more helpful. Thank you!

A Chart for Action

This handy chart shows different actions explored in this toolkit. On the left side you'll find each action. Along the top are several school/community roles. A check shows actions that could be taken by that group. A star means you are a great fit to take this one on!

| Action/Tool	Student groups	Teacher groups	Staff members	Curriculum leaders	Admin team	Community	Families	Other
Collect demographic data	✓	✓		⭐	⭐	✓		
Map problem areas	⭐	✓						
Assess your school from multiple angles		✓	✓	✓	⭐			
Organize a school campaign for solidarity	⭐	⭐	⭐					
Find out if students feel safe and respected	✓	✓			✓			
Prepare to speak up	⭐	⭐	⭐	⭐	⭐	⭐		
Check out your policies	✓	✓			⭐	✓		⭐ school board
Prepare to respond to a bias incident	✓	✓	✓		⭐		✓	⭐ councilors
Delve into your curriculum		✓		⭐	✓			
Mirrors, windows, sliding glass doors		⭐		✓				⭐ librarians

Key:

✓ You are a good person to look into this action

⭐ You are a rock star who is particualrly well positioned to make this happen

Collect Demographic Data

A **vital first step** is knowing what's going on in your school. Collecting data about your community and students' experiences can reveal inequity across a number of areas, including how some students and groups are being disproportionately impacted and/or represented. This data will provide a jumping off point for other work and can show the importance of addressing inequity in your school. Having this data also helps make the case for addressing inequity and taking action.
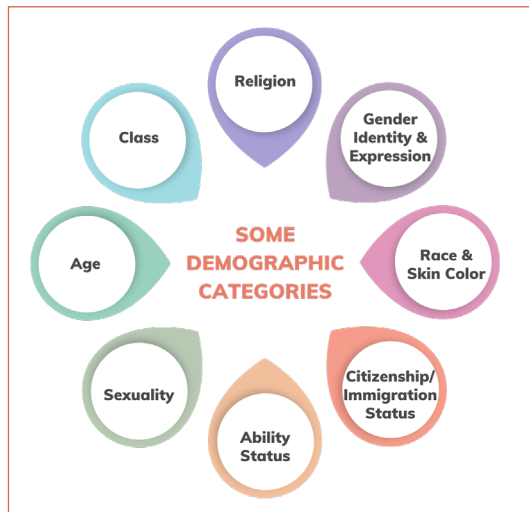
To help get you started, the *University of Southern Maine's* Equity and Excellence in Maine Schools (EEMS) "provides a clearinghouse of resources related to equity in K-12 schools," including one that leads you through a process for collecting data to identify achievement gaps. They focus on access to programming, discipline policies, funding, and achievement. Use their online tutorials, templates, recorded webinar, and examples to help assess 'opportunity discrepancies.'

Every two years, the Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS) collects health-related information from over 95,000 5th–12th grade Maine students. The results are aggregated by county, public health district and statewide, and some results are sorted according to race, gender, and LGBTQ+ identity. MIYHS data may help your school get a general sense of demographic and behavioral factors impacting your students and community.

After areas of concern are identified, it is important to proactively respond, and resources exist to help with this. The *Great Schools Partnership* created free resources to help schools use data to help address school culture and inform instruction. They also have a step-by-step guide to bring together a group for an Equity Pulse Check. Examples of how other schools responded can also be helpful. The *Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium's* paper "Educators Use Data and Find Solutions to Improve Equity" and a recorded webinar "Using Data Inquiry to Advance Equity" provide examples of how schools have used this type of data collection to address inequity.

> *"We can not begin to shape democracy without transforming the way we learn. If we continue to teach our students learned helplessness and continue a style of education that stifles finding one's you-shaped hole, we cannot expect future generations to challenge and improve our democracy."*
>
> — *Zoë Jenkins*

Map Problem Areas

allways, bathrooms, buses and tucked away corners of the playground—these are places students often report experiencing harassment. While every school has different dynamics, students will know your school's particularities. Faculty, staff and administration should know these areas too. Knowing where and when bullying and harassment tend to happen puts you in a better position to address it.

Learning for Justice's "Mapping Social Boundaries" lesson plan helps identify social groups and social dynamics by mapping how common spaces are used by different groups. *Facing History and Ourselves* gives an example of how to map your school in their video titled, "Students Map Bully Zones to Create a Safer School." This video shows students collecting data about bullying locations in their school and deciding how to respond to it. *Not In Our Town* has a "lesson idea" built from *Facing History's* video and includes additional teaching strategies and activity options. The lesson idea also delves into power dynamics, motivations, impact, hate crimes, and speaking up related to bullying and harassment.
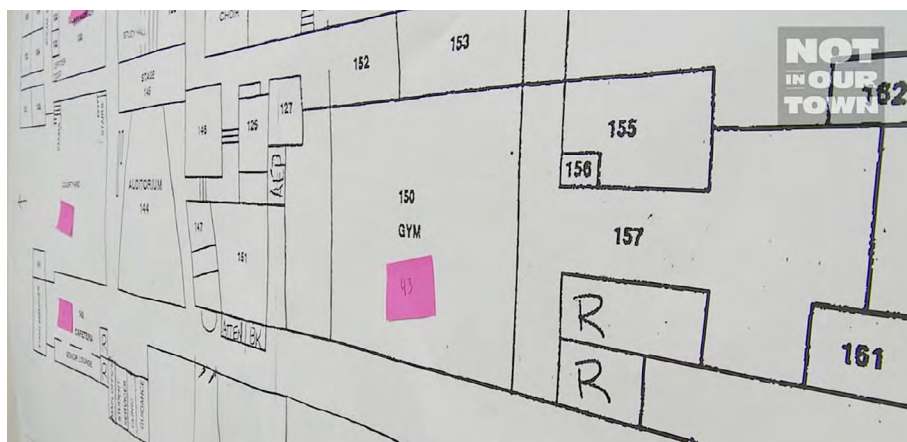
Students at Orange High School in Pepper Pike, Ohio created a map of the bully zones in their school and on campus to help them identify and address bullying. Watch the video of the project here.

HHRC adapted a mapping exercise with a 3rd grade in Down East Maine. In preparation, students took pictures throughout and around the school. Looking at the pictures together, we talked about the various places. Our conversation included discussion of the social dynamics of different spaces and the feelings associated with them. Doing this together gave us important insight into student experiences throughout the school—a sort of "social emotional geography" of the school. For example, we learned about the "Crying Spot" on the playground—an easily overlooked location where students hid away to cry without being seen by adults. By checking on this location regularly, the teaching team has increased their awareness of group dynamics and bullying and can better support students.

Assess Your School from Multiple Angles

Institutional change is A LOT of work. It requires lots of people power and time. Use tools to identify areas of concern, organize your efforts and move forward strategically.
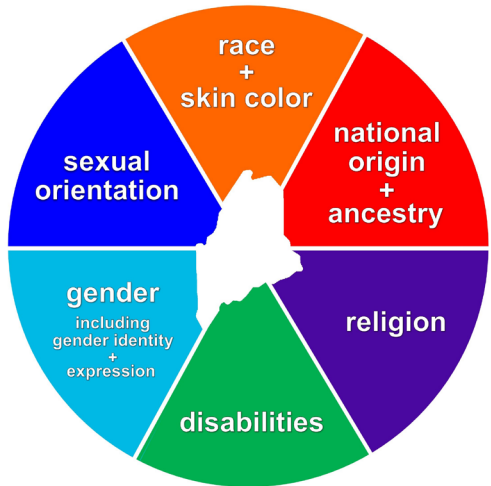
The *Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium* (MAEC) has created a comprehensive "equity audit" for schools. This audit contains criteria for equity in three aspects of schools: 1. school-wide, 2. classroom, and 3. teacher behaviors that encourage perseverance. There are multiple categories within each section, including the physical environment, policies, pedagogy, hiring and HR, and the curriculum. It was updated in 2021 to include factors related to COVID-19. The full audit is A LOT. When you decide to conduct an equity audit, set your community up for success. Be intentional and deliberate in your approach as you decide what part of the audit to take on. Before getting started, review *MAEC's* Equity Audit Considerations. It offers suggestions for the process, addresses some common misconceptions of these kinds of audits, and includes resources to help along the way. Plan ahead. Do not get discouraged. Take on what is manageable and can be done with integrity. This could mean starting with just one section, or even one subsection. Any work toward equity is good work.

The *University of Southern California's* School of Education Syllabus Review Guide is a resource focused on individual reflection and action. This tool is ideal for educators looking to assess their own work. The guide promotes "racial and ethnic equity and equity-minded practice" in relation to course design and pedagogical practice. Using an online interface, you're led through a process of inquiry to help illuminate practices that may not support your intended goals. After identifying potential concerns, they offer suggestions to better meet those goals. While originally geared toward higher education, the reflective exercises can be utilized by educators more broadly.

"The secret of education lies in respecting the pupil."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Let's *think* and *talk* about...

race + skin color

national origin + ancestry

religion

disabilities

gender including gender identity + expression

sexual orientation

because our **school communities are for *everyone*!**

CIVIL RIGHTS TEAM PROJECT

The Civil Rights Team Project and civil rights teams help schools think and talk about issues related to race and skin color, national origin and ancestry, religion, disabilities, gender (including gender identity and expression), and sexual orientation.

CIVIL RIGHTS TEAM PROJECT

A program of the Maine Office of the Attorney General

The Maine Attorney General's office administers the Civil Rights Team Project (CRTP). It is a "school-based preventative program" with the mission to "increase the safety of elementary, middle level, and high school students by reducing bias-motivated behaviors and harassment in our schools."

The CRTP and student civil rights teams around the state actively engage school communities in thinking and talking about issues related to:

- Race and skin color
- National origin and ancestry
- Religion
- Disabilities
- Gender (including gender identity and expression)
- Sexual orientation

In addition to taking on at least one project each year, Civil Rights Teams advisors and students participate in training, attend an annual conference, and have access to a number of resources and networks of support as they address bias and work for equity in their schools. They are a fantastic resource and source of support for students and schools seeking to address bias.

"More than ever before in the recent history of this nation, educators are compelled to confront the biases that have shaped teaching practices in our society and to create new ways of knowing, different strategies for the sharing of knowledge... The classroom remains the most radical space of possibility."
- bell hooks

Organize a School Campaign for Solidarity

Children and youth need to see their identities and the identities of others represented and acknowledged within their school community. Recognize and lift up the diversity of your community. Celebrations of our students' unique backgrounds, identities and family lives are a wonderful way to embrace diversity in our schools. These can include themed days, events, murals and other works of art, distribution of information and resources, guest speakers, and oral history projects. Choose activities that can include everyone, and do NOT single out any particular student/s based on their identities.

For example, the Special Olympics and Best Buddies spearheaded a "Spread the Word to End the Word" movement to raise awareness about ableism, including "addressing a particularly powerful form of exclusion: the word *retard(ed)*." This has grown into its own international organization Spread the Word, which works for the "inclusion of all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities." They provide a number of resources aimed at improving inclusion. This includes multiple school-based, online and pride activation kits with calendars, event ideas, fact sheets, and communications templates.

The *Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network* has created a number of national initiatives, including a Day of Silence, Solidarity Week and Changing the Game. Your school/group can register to participate in organized national days of action and access numerous resources, including lesson plans, professional development webinars, graphics, and action ideas.

Black Lives Matter at School organizes an annual week of action for racial justice in education during the first week of February. Organized around 13 Guiding Principles, they have also created a Starter Kit, K-12 curricular resources, and guidance for A Year of Purpose (days of action throughout the year, reflective exercises, and access to a ton of visual resources to help spread the word).

Lincoln Academy's *Project Unify* Club organized a week of "Spread the Word to End the Word" events that created multiple opportunities for everyone to be part of building a more inclusive community. In this photo students are holding a banner signed by several hundred LA students and staff.

Photo courtesy of Lincoln Academy

Find Out If Students Feel Safe & Respected

T**he best way to know** if your school is welcoming, safe, and respects all students is to ask them. School climate surveys are one way to get a sense of students' experiences. It also provides data for evidence-based identification of needs and action plans.

Learning for Justice has put together a very simple 1-page School Climate Questionnaire that can help illuminate students' experiences at school. It can also be used as part of a larger self-assessment.

The *Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network* (GLSEN) provides a School Climate Survey specific to the LGBTQ+ experience. The survey can be administered online or on paper. Annual reports providing insights into school climate across the U.S. and by state are also available.

While not a survey, the *Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium* has a school climate focused checklist that focuses on discipline. This checklist is part of their criteria for an equitable school, and includes various aspects of schooling that contribute to school climate, and can help provide an initial assessment and help identify areas to address.

Conducting a survey is just the first step, and provides baseline data to measure (and show off) the progress of your school climate initiatives. Carefully review the results with an open mind. Listen to students' different experiences of school and their sense of safety and belonging. Make the results publicly available and actively share them throughout the community (and don't forget your PTO/A, Civil Rights Team, and School Board). The results may elicit a variety of responses. Listen and learn. Together, identify areas for short-term and long-term improvement, and work with relevant stakeholders to develop clear collaborative plans to address issues.

The U.S. Department of Education's National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments has a number of resources to help plan and implement school climate action programs. Their "Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline" delves into student behavior and disciplinary practices as a core feature of school climate.

> **Note**: There are numerous school climate surveys and they all collect different information. The *U.S. Department of Education's National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments* has a vast library of climate surveys and measurement tools. However, if you seek to address bias and harassment, the survey must specifically ask about students' experiences of bias and discrimination based on social identity categories.

Prepare to Speak Up

> *"We can disagree and still love each other.*
> *Unless your disagreement is rooted in my oppression*
> *and denial of my humanity and right to exist."*
>
> *- James Baldwin*

Be prepared to respond to bias whenever and wherever it is expressed. By not challenging bias, we communicate approval and acceptance of it. At times it can be challenging to respond to bias in the moment – it is easy to be caught off guard or not know how to respond. A great way to deal with this is to think about how you'll respond ahead of time. Thankfully, there are resources to help you learn about different ways to speak up and practice do so.

Based on our partnership with *Learning for Justice,* the *Holocaust & Human Rights Center of Maine* (HHRC) offers "Speak Up" programs for students and school staff based on materials from *Learning for Justice*. This interactive program helps you identify bias and effective ways to respond. *Learning for Justice's* "Speak Up at School" guide includes steps for schools to take before and after a bias incident. There is also an on-demand professional development webinar and suggested activities to do with students to prepare them to speak up.

Central to speaking up is feeling empowered to use your voice. *HHRC's* "Finding Your Voice" program encourages youth engagement by introducing the critical role youth have played in social movements throughout U.S. history and exploring issues your students care about. *YouthInFront* offers a 3-unit online course "Understanding and Supporting Youth-led Activism" to help you empower students to actively participate in their communities.

Addressing systemic racism and unconscious bias have become lightening rods within the U.S.'s maelstrom of political bifurcation. As a consequence, discussions of these topics are often misinformed and frequently misrepresent what is happening. "What is Critical Race Theory, and What it Means for Teachers" provides a quick review of critical race theory and the state laws being introduced/passed in regard to it from a civil rights law and policy perspective. To help reframe this conversation, *Race Forward* created a "Counter-Narrating the Attacks on Critical Race Theory" resource. It offers a narrative framework and sample messaging to help counter political attacks on "critical race theory" specifically.

Know How to Report a Bias/Hate Incident

Not all bullying results from prejudice against certain groups or identities, but it is one place bias is frequently expressed. Maine schools are expected to have anti-bullying policies and clear procedures for responding to bullying. Some of bullying-focused resources can be used to create similar expectations and processes for bias reporting. Check out your school's anti-bullying policies. If they do not include language about bias-based bullying, update them. Maine's *Department of Education* created a number of resources for responding to bullying and cyberbullying.

However, there are no similar requirements for responding to bias incidents in school. Does your school have a reporting system when a bias incident occurs? Does **everyone** in your school know what bias is? Do you know who you're supposed to contact when a bias incident happens? If you don't know the answer to these questions, then check out your school's bias incident policy and procedures. Educate the entire community so they know what bias is and what to do if "something" happens.

Public Agenda has created a step-by-step discussion guide for schools called "Addressing Incidents of Bias in Schools: A Guide for Preventing and Reacting to Discrimination Affecting Students." Supplementing the guide is a webinar recording that highlights how Portland's *Casco Bay High School* utilized this resource.

Learning for Justice's Responding to Hate and Bias Incident at School: A Guide for Administrators, Counselors and Teachers" can help guide a school at any point in this process. It includes preparatory actions to take before "anything happens" (including a preparation checklist and sample incident reporting form), how to respond when some-thing occurs, and how to build long-term capacity following an incident. "

As you explore ways to address bias incidents in your school, take inspiration from Zoë Jenkins who helped create a "Diversity, Inclusion, Cultural Competency, and Equity" training for her Kentucky high school while she was still a student. She also connected with other Gen Z'ers to further develop the program and create a cohort of youth facilitators throughout the country. Following up on this, Zoë helped found DICCE, which developed by an intergenerational team to help Gen Z appreciate diversity, foster in-clusion, and empower others to create equitable change. They have created seven lessons designed to be held in weekly sessions over a seven-week period. The website offers free lesson plans and activities as well as resource guides.

Photo from Booze, Elizabeth. "The Future of Democracy, Led by Gen Z." Medium.com • February 7, 2021

Check Out Your Policies

*"One does not understand structures or systems by looking at intent.
Instead, we have to examine what they actually do—
how they operate and what the outcomes are."*

—john powell

Policy work may sound boring, and rewriting policies can be tedious. But, here's the deal: policies carry power, shape school climate and create accountability. School boards regularly revisit them and can help ensure they promote increased equity and inclusion.

The *U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Supportive Schools* has a number of resources to help schools address policies that may have a disparate impact on certain communities. For example, their "Addressing the Root Causes of Disparities in School Discipline: An Educator's Action Planning Guide" guides teams through a process of discovery, digging into causes of disparity, and developing an action plan.

> **When reviewing school policies, here are some considerations:**
>
> ◆ Use an "equity lens" (and beware of implicit "deficit lens" and how they impact our interpretations).
>
> ◆ "Collect Data/Get the Numbers" to figure out what needs to be addressed and to help assess inequitable implementation and impact of policies (e.g. discipline, attendance/tardiness, dress codes).
>
> ◆ Dig in to policies related to bias and assess how well they actually protect students (e.g. online engagement, hate symbols).
>
> ◆ Evaluate how School Resource Officer(s) interact with different groups.
>
> ◆ Incorporate and implement restorative practices and principles. (Note: This has to include training for all staff.)
>
> ◆ Explicitly include equity in policies and the review process, including race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, immigration status, national origin, language/s spoken at home, religion/faith tradition, differing abilities.

Delve Into the Curriculum

Teachers constantly tweak what and how they teach. Be sure to incorporate an equity perspective into this ongoing process. There are a lot of great resources to help; see the listing below for a few examples.
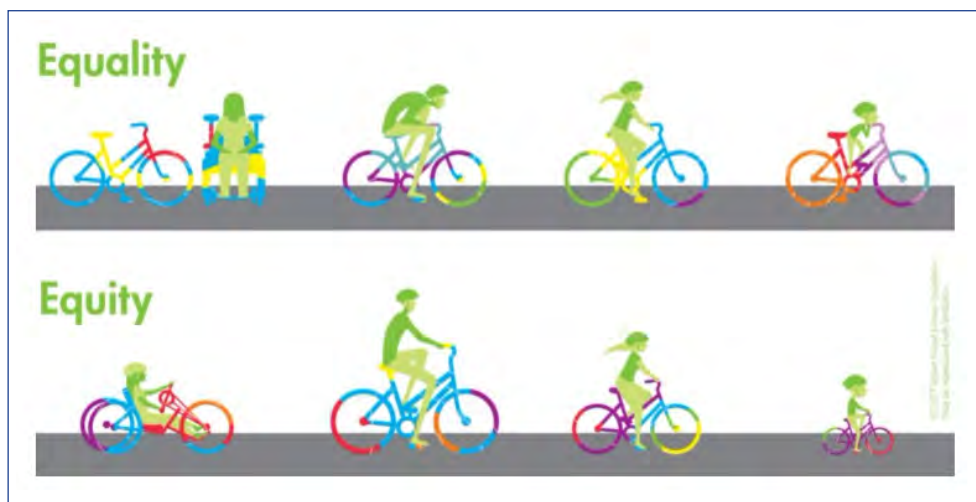

Maine's Department of Education Curriculum Review & Reflection page has resources to review your curriculum as well as your teaching. *The University of Southern Maine's* Equity and Excellence in Maine Schools has put together resources to assist with curricular audits that include evaluating both the explicit curriculum (e.g. assessment, readings) and implicit curriculum (e.g. pedagogy, norms, values). There are also tools for evaluating school-wide standards. Within the *Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium's* Checklist for an Equitable School is a section dedicated to the curriculum. *The Great Lakes Equity Center* created an "Assessing Bias in Standards and Curricular Materials" guide that includes how to incorporate equity domains in assessment as well as assistance evaluating the results.

When thinking about whose story is being told, there are a number of resources to help address the typical absence historically marginalized perspectives and voices in curricula. To address this, the Maine legislature passed LD 291 requiring that "Maine Native American History and Culture" be taught. Here are some resources to help make sure that happens:

◆ *The Abbe Museum*'s (Maine's only *Smithsonian* affiliate) Educator Hub curates resources to help Maine teachers meet the goals of LD 291.

◆ The *Penobscot Nation* developed a curriculum for teachers in response to LD 291. It includes units and lessons related to history, culture, literature, language, the arts, stereotypes, and Maine Indian Land Claims.

◆ The *Maine Department of Education's* has compiled a list of "Maine Native Studies Resources," including links to curricula, videos, indigenous language resources, historical content, Indigenous Peoples' Day explainers and activities, and more.

There are also a bunch of other resources Maine's Department of Education has for teachers seeking to diversify what they're teaching.
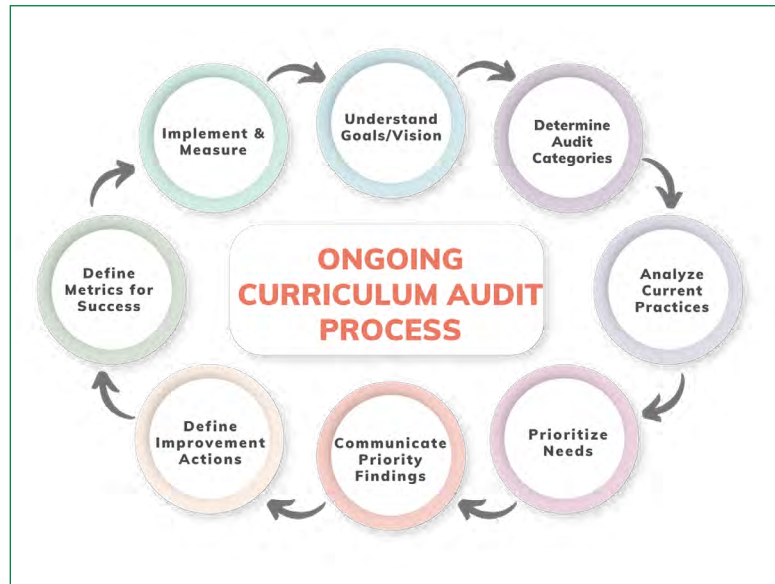
◆ Maine's Social Studies Team within the *ME DOE* has put together a number of professional development resources, including many related to culturally responsive pedagogy and curricular equity and inclusion.

◆ The *ME DOE* "Maine Online Opportunities for Sustained Education" (MOOSE) modules are online self-guided learning modules for preK-12 students. These modules were created **by** Maine teachers **for** Maine teachers and students. MOOSE modules explore a variety of topics, including several related to key anti-bias themes.

Welcoming Schools has a number of guides geared to elementary educators to help deal with common biased language and ideas, including "Defining LGBTQ Words for Elementary School Students" "Be Prepared for Questions and Put-Downs about Gender" and "What Do You Say to 'That's So Gay' & Other Anti-LGBTQ Comments?"

The Cromwell Center for Disability Awareness offers multi-year programs for K-6 students and parents/families as well as a number of activities and lessons online organized by grade level. They will also send their curriculum to any school in the state of Maine.

Image from The Cromwell Center

When teaching national history, *Learning for Justice* and *Facing History and Ourselves* have free lesson plans, activities and numerous other resources that are easily searchable by various categories.

"Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors"

BOOKS ARE...

MIRRORS   WINDOWS   SLIDING GLASS DOORS

STEPPING STONES   OVERCOATS   ANCHORS

SPRINGBOARDS   ESCAPE HATCHES   QUIET CORNERS

WARM BLANKETS   FLYING CARPETS   BEACONS TO NEW READERS

GRANT SNIDER (AFTER RUDINE SIMS BISHOP)

"When children cannot find themselves reflected in the books they read, or when the images they see are distorted, negative, or laughable, they learn a powerful lesson about how they are devalued in the society in which they are a part." In addition to the importance of seeing themselves reflected ("mirrors"), youth also need windows into different experiences and cultures that *"help them understand the multicultural nature of the world they live in, and their place as a member of just one group, as well as their connection to all other humans."*

Rudine Sims Bishop
"Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors"

Rudine Sims Bishop wrote this in her seminal essay "Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors" in 1990, clarifying many important concepts and opening up long overdue conversations. Below are more resources to help diversify what you're reading, enrich your thoughts on anti-bias work, and further your efforts to bring about change in your school and community.

◆ The *Maine Department of Education* has compiled a number of Diverse Books resources that include searchable databases, booklists, and help incorporating diversified literature into your teaching and curriculum.

Choosing and Evaluating Texts

◆ The Guide for Selecting Anti-Bias Children's Books by Louise Derman-Sparks helps you assess the diversity of perspectives in books you're already using and ones you're considering.

◆ *Learning for Justice's* tool to help evaluate texts for diversity offers both a "lite" and extended version and provides examples for a handful of texts and an on-demand webinar.

Lists of Books Sorted by Topic/Identity

◆ *Teaching for Change* has curated dozens of topical booklists, written a number of reviews of children's books, and has put together a Guide for Selecting Anti-Bias Children's Books.

◆ *The Cooperative Children's Book Center* (*University of Wisconsin-Madison's School of Education*) has a number of booklists for a variety of ages covering numerous topics and featuring diverse characters. *CCBC* also compiles statistics on diversity in children's books, which brings into stark relief the work we still need to do to increase diversity and inclusion in children's literature.

Images from Social Justice Books

◆ *Bates'* *Diverse Book Finder* focuses on preK-3 books with BIPOC representation, including all books depicting BIPOC characters. They have topical booklists (including topics such as adoption and holidays) and reviews of recommended titles, and their extensive collection is available via inter-library loan. Because they include **any** book with BIPOC representation, their reviews and recommendations should be used to help select texts.

◆ *We Need Diverse Books* seeks "a world in which all children see themselves in the pages of a book." In addition to programs supporting emerging authors, they send free books to schools and created the OurStory app to help you find books based on age, type of book, genres, identities represented, and story elements.

◆ *Lee & Low Books* focuses on publishing multicultural kids lit, and you can search their catalog by grade, culture, topic, reading level, language/bilingual, and STEM. They have free reading guides and lesson plans for hundreds of their books.

Image from Lee & Low Books

Booklists For Specific Identities

◆ For help finding texts by and about Native peoples, check out the *American Indian Library Association's* annual awards, Dr. Debbie Reese's (Nambé Pueblo) American Indians in Children's Literature, and *Smithsonian's* Critical Bibliography of Native Americans for K-12 (even though it's from 1996, its 215-page glory was put together specifically for teachers).

- Maine's *Indigo Arts Alliance* curates lists of remarkable books for their annual Beautiful Blackbird Children's Book Festival. Each featured title includes a video of the book being read/performed (available until the next year's festival). They also have a number of educator resources for many of these titles, including art activities, community performances, lesson plans, and video read alouds.

Image from AILA

- *Rich in Color* reviews YA books written by or starring BIPOC characters.

- The Brown Bookshelf highlights Black authors writing for young readers.

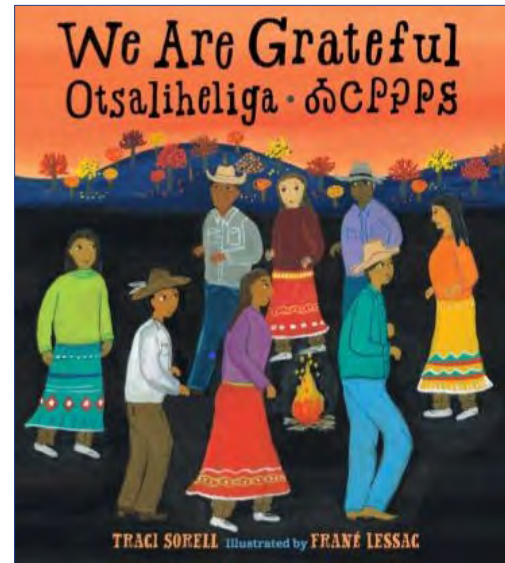- *The New York Public Library's* Schomburg Center (NYPL) has curated Black Liberation Lists for Adults, Teens, and Kids that are searchable by age and genre.

- The *American Library Association* maintains the list of Coretta Scott King Book Award winners.

- *Africa Access Review* reviews books that focus on Africa and includes recommended picture books and chapter books.

- In response to increases in anti-Asian harassment recently, Monisha Bajaj curated Children's literature with AAPI representation resources for *Learning for Justice*.

Image from Latinos in Kid Lit

- De Colores: The Raza Experience in Books for Children and Latinxs in Kid Lit review Latinx literature.

- *I'm Your Neighbor's* "Welcoming Library" is a pop-up display unit of 30 books available to Maine schools, libraries, and other organizations. The collection centers around the experiences of recent arrivals to the U.S. from outside Europe to engage youth in meaningful ways using their discussion materials, companion programming, and other education resources.

- *Colorin Colorado!* is a bilingual organization focusing on supporting English Language Learners that curates booklists organized by topic and
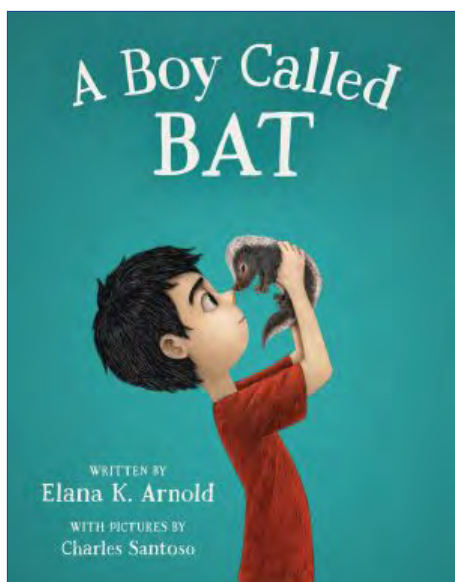
Image from Disability in Kid Lit

includes bilingual booklists (Spanish, American Indian, and Asian Pacific).

◆ *Disability in Kidlit* has a searchable list of recommended books for middle grades and YA that portray disability.

◆ *OUT Maine's* "Read the Rainbow" program donates sets of over 20 LGBTQ+ inclusive books to Maine school libraries.

◆ *The Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network* (GLSEN) CT hosts a Rainbow Library that distributes free LGBTQ+ affirming book sets to teachers in participating states. (Maine does not currently participate, but they're expanding fast and it's worth checking in every once and a while.) They have put together recommended books and provide a guide for accessing these books through your public library. The Rainbow Round Table of the *American Library Association* has a number of resources for libraries, including best practices, young adult booklists, searchable book reviews, numerous bibliographies organized by a myriad of topics, and a number of resources and suggestions for libraries. The *American Psychological Association's* Magination Press includes their Rainbow Collection of children's and young adult books that include LGBTQ+ voices and "promote inclusive school and family values."

◆ The Sydney Taylor Book Award is presented annually "to outstanding books for children and teens that authentically portray the Jewish experience" and an annotated list of all Sydney Taylor Book Award winners is maintained by and available for download by *The Association of Jewish Libraries*. *PJ Library* has a database of Jewish children's books for 0-8 years old that is searchable by age, topic, holiday, values and music as well as a searchable database for 9-12 years olds that include video and written reviews by young readers.

Image from PJ Our Way

Post Script: Keep Learning

No matter how much you know, there is always more to learn. Luckily, there are lots of free resources available, such as on-demand webinars, organizations who offer trainings, and loads of reading. Here are some professional development opportunities for school staff that include facilitator-led workshops as well as self-directed options.

The *Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine* offers educator seminars that dive deep into a topic as well as shorter professional development sessions for staff teams.

OUT Maine provides numerous trainings to help professionals better support LGBTQ+ youth, including a training specifically for schools.

Wabanaki REACH offers numerous educational programs for a variety of communities across the state. The presentations provide an opportunity for non-native people to learn about the shared history between native and non-native people, the present day impacts on Wabanaki communities and what actions we can take in response to harms that have been done.

The *Maine Department of Education* has compiled a ton of resources for social studies teachers, including online professional development sessions covering a wide range of topics, including Wabanaki history and culturally responsive pedagogy.

Learning for Justice's four-part online professional development seminar, "Critical Practices in Anti-Bias Education" focuses on instruction, classroom culture, family and community engagement, and teacher leadership.

Image from The American Psychological Association

Embrace Race focuses on resources for families and caretakers of young children as we navigate a world in which race matters. They have action guides, articles, webinars, personal stories, and numerous children's book recommendations which are organized by a focal theme.

The *Anti-Defamation League* has all sorts of resources for educators that include lesson plans, anti-bias strategies and discussion guides, a searchable database of reviews of children's lit that covers a wide range of topics, as well as professional development trainings, webinars and podcasts.

And don't forget those hundreds of booklists for adults and educators working for equity and inclusion that are circulating widely. The more we learn and better understand different communities' experiences, the better able we'll be to incorporate those nuances into our work and approach.

Together, we've got this!

Now that you've made it to the end of this toolkit, you've probably got some feelings. Hopefully, there's some excitement. Maybe you're also a little overwhelmed. You may even be unsure of what you're feeling, let alone what to do now. We get it. But, remember that any work to reduce bias in your school is good work. Pick an action and start there.

Yes, this *is* hard work. And, honestly, it keeps going. And it'll look different for every school. Don't let that discourage you. It just means we're all still learning, and we'll keep finding ways we can do better. That's why places like the HHRC and this toolkit and some many other fantastic organizations exist.

We know you've got a lot on your plate. We're very thankful you're doing this and are here to help however we can. Please be in touch and take care of each other.

The Holocaust and Human Rights Center

Mission

The Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine (HHRC) promotes universal respect for human rights through outreach and education. Using the lessons of the Holocaust and other events past and present we encourage individuals and communities to reflect and act upon their moral responsibilities to confront prejudice, intolerance and discrimination.

History

The Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine sprang from a 1984 seminar at Bowdoin College, the inspiration of Gerda Haas, Holocaust survivor and author. In April 1985, following the Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Day of Remembrance) service at the Blaine House in Augusta, the Holocaust and Human Rights Center announced its official birth, with Gerda Haas as founder. In October 2005, the HHRC broke ground on its permanent home, the Michael Klahr Center, a Maine architectural highlight on the UMA campus at Augusta. HHRC opened its doors to the public in May 2008 and continues the legacy created by Gerda Haas through school and community educational programming, teacher training, rotating exhibits, and events which bring a wide array of students, educators, community members and visitors to the Center each year.

Work

The HHRC offers free Holocaust, human rights, and anti-bias educational programming to schools and community organizations. We also offer professional development throughout the year, organize speaker panels and other events, host exhibits, and house an archive of artifacts related to the Holocaust. Check out our website for more information, and feel free to get in touch or stop by!

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