



# PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND UNDERSTANDING

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DISTRICT-WIDE DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

# The Challenges Confronting Us

- Understanding diversity in our community and across the nation
- Exploring different views, perspectives, values
- Addressing inter-cultural misunderstandings and tensions, historic and unresolved racial inequities, conflicts and ethical dilemmas
- Ensuring opportunities for learning and growing

# Responding to these Challenges

- Expose students at early age with concept of “choosing to be kind, caring and courageous”
- Help students see, accept, affirm and celebrate differences
- Empower students to recognize and confront bias, and discrimination
- Guide students to take responsibility for own actions... acting appropriately, speaking/standing up for others in need

# Taking Action

- Establish a “diversity infrastructure:”
  - District-wide Diversity Committee:
    - Represents a partnership between the school community and the community-at-large
    - Shares information, and promotes learning among its members, the building-level Diversity Cadres and the community-at-large
    - Identifies relevant resources
    - Assists the district in its efforts to support diversity
  - Building-level Diversity Cadres:
    - Comprised of faculty, administrators, parents, community members
    - Implements activities at building level

# Taking Action

- Approaches aligned with research and best practices in diversity awareness and anti-bias education
- Informed by nationally recognized sources (Teaching Tolerance – journal of the Southern Poverty Law Center; National Association for the Education of Young Children)
- In consultation with respected experts (e.g., James Childs, Bias Awareness Consultant; SUNY New Paltz)

# Taking Action

- Integrate diversity awareness/anti-bias education into K-12 curricula in developmentally-appropriate manner
  - ▣ Best Practices (e.g., student engagement; differentiated instruction; real world connections; honoring student experiences; family/community engagement; cultural competency among staff)
  - ▣ The Responsive Classroom Approach/Developmental Design
  - ▣ Anti-Bias Activities

# Taking Action

- Connect with other community-based events and activities that support diversity goals
- Multicultural Education Conference
- One Book One New Paltz
- Collectively review and fine-tune process
  - ▣ Meet throughout the school year
  - ▣ Report Diversity Cadre activities twice a year

# Going Forward

- Continue deepening our understanding and implementing of Critical Practices in Anti-Bias Education
- On-going review of student progress in:
  - ▣ Developing positive social identities (e.g., racial, cultural, gender, economic class)
  - ▣ Making caring human connections/appreciating human diversity
  - ▣ Recognizing unfairness
  - ▣ Cultivating their skills to act against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions