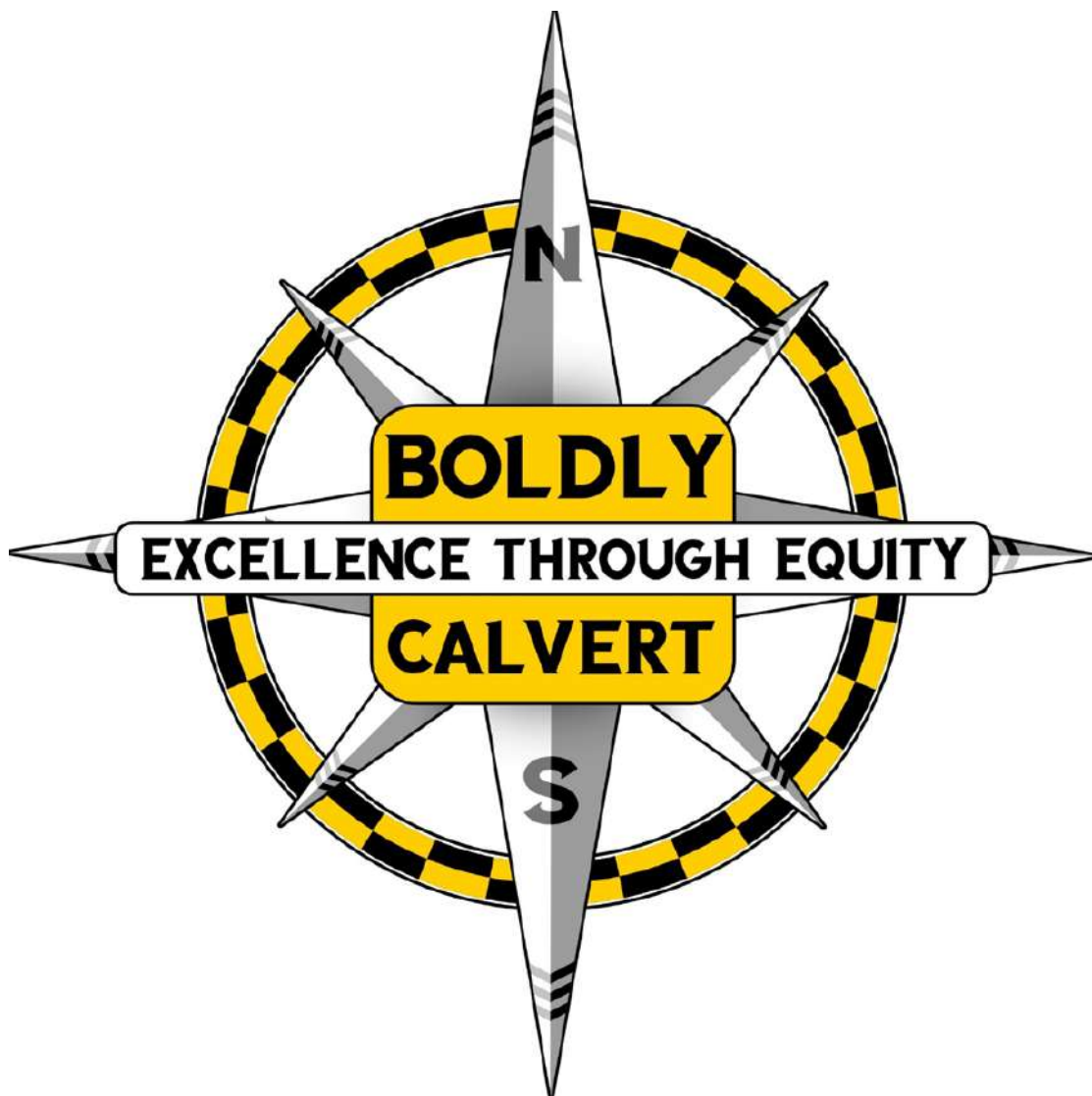


# THE CCPS 5-YEAR ACTION PLAN

ADDRESSING CULTURAL PROFICIENCY

2018-2023



## WHAT IS OUR CCPS EQUITY MISSION AND VISION?

### MISSION

The Office of Equity and School Improvement is dedicated to elevating access and opportunity for all.

### VISION

Calvert County Public Schools will nurture a diverse and inclusive community where WE:

- Value and accept difference;
- Grow through meaningful diversity experiences;
- Teach and work in a culturally responsive fashion;  
Examine and challenge our biases, assumptions, world views, and institutional structures; and
- Seek to understand and abolish inequities.

## WHAT MINDSET IS NEEDED TO MAKE OUR VISION A REALITY?

**Cultural Proficiency** is a mindset, a way of being, a worldview, and a perspective that is the basis for how one navigates a diverse society. In order to make clear the term **Cultural Proficiency** and the purpose of this document, the following definition will be used:

“The combination of organizational policies and practices, or an individual’s values and behavior, that enables the organization or the person to interact effectively in culturally diverse settings.”

-K. Nuri-Robins, D. Lindsey, R. Lindsey and R. Terrell, Culturally Proficient Instruction (2019)

It is also important to note that cultural factors pertaining to the work of equity include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, region, religion, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, language, socioeconomic status, age, disabilities, and family structures.

## WHY DOES CULTURAL PROFICIENCY MATTER?

CCPS is dedicated to excellence through equity. In order for a school district to be a system of excellence, each student must be provided the appropriate support and resources in order to access the educational opportunities that lead to productive citizenship. Culturally responsive classroom practices and resources help school systems meet the diverse needs of all students. Furthermore, cultural proficiency establishes an environment conducive to workforce satisfaction, cohesiveness, and success.

As the United States' population shifts to a more diverse citizenry and the world shifts to a more interdependent economy, we recognize that successful College and Career Readiness is predicated on growing inclusive educational and workforce practices.

According to Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders, Cultural Proficiency equips individuals to effectively respond to issues that emerge in a diverse environment by:

- Enhancing students' ability to learn, teachers' ability to teach, and all educators recognizing their roles in supporting classroom teaching;
- Preparing students to find their own places in the global community they will enter when they leave their school communities;
- Promoting positive community relations;
- Preparing students for outstanding citizenship; and
- Fostering effective leadership.

## WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE BY THE END OF THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR?

CCPS staff will educate as advocates for lifelong learning for the purpose of effectively serving the educational needs of cultural groups in their school and community, while holding the vision that they and the school are instruments for creating and maintaining a socially just democracy and for preparing our children to be productive citizens within our society.

## HOW WILL WE MEASURE OUR PROGRESS?

Each goal is designed to be measured annually via completed action steps, equity training surveys, qualitative data collection, and the annual Culture and Climate Survey.

## WHAT TOOLS WILL WE USE TO MOVE CCPS TOWARDS CULTURAL PROFICIENCY?

### TOOL 1: SOCIAL JUSTICE STANDARDS<sup>1</sup>

These anchor standards and learning outcomes are divided into four domains—Identity, Diversity, Justice, and Action (IDJA). Specifically, these standards provide a common language and organizational structure that instructional leaders can use to guide curriculum development and administrators and supervisors can use to make schools, departments, and systems more just, equitable, and safe.

The Teaching Tolerance Standards also recognize that, in today's diverse classrooms and workplaces, staff and students need knowledge and skills related to prejudice reduction and collective action.

**This tool provides a framework for us to build equity training, school curriculum, and an understanding of how to interact with each other.**

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<sup>1</sup> The above standards have been developed by Teaching Tolerance, a product of the Southern Poverty Law Center: <https://www.tolerance.org/frameworks/social-justice-standards>.

According to the Teaching Tolerance Program, The Social Justice Standards serve as a framework for anti-bias education. The program describes the standards as follows:

"The Social Justice Standards are a road map for anti-bias education at every stage of K–12 instruction. Comprised of anchor standards and age-appropriate learning outcomes, the Standards provide a common language and organizational structure educators can use to guide curriculum development and make schools more just and equitable."

## IDENTITY

Demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities.

## DIVERSITY

Express comfort and joy with human diversity; accurate language for human differences; and deep, caring human connections.

## JUSTICE

Increasingly recognize unfairness, have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts.

## ACTIONS

Demonstrate empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions.

## TOOL 2: THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF CULTURAL PROFICIENCY

If we say we represent an inclusive learning community that values difference and the contributions from all members, then all of our actions and words must reflect that. The Guiding Principles are the core values upon which the Cultural Proficiency approach is built.

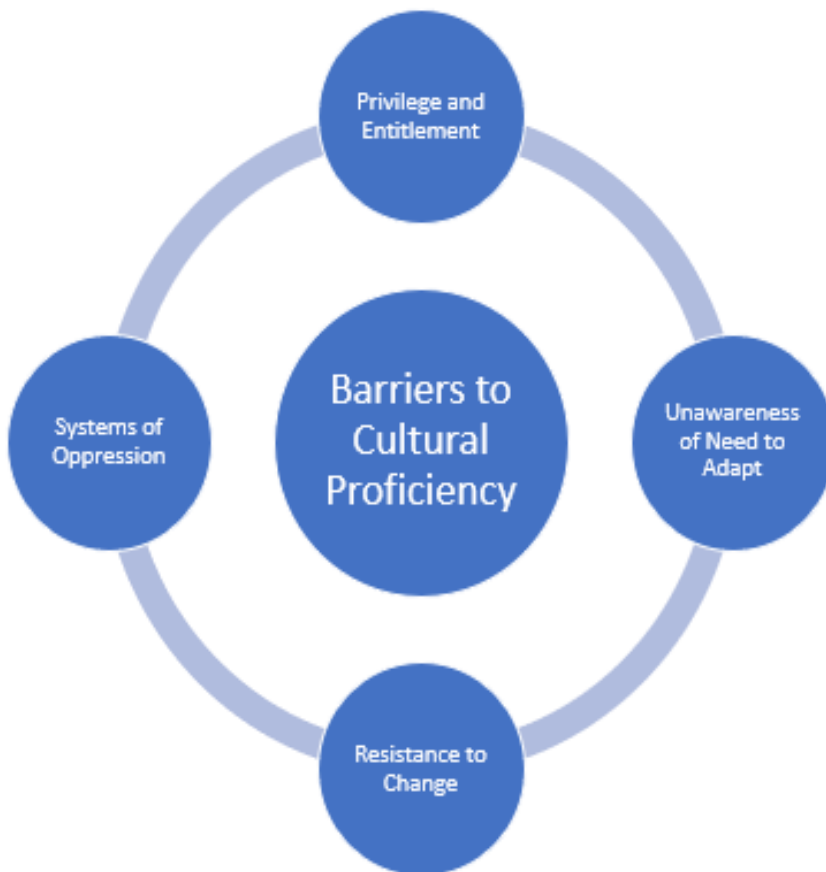
**This tool provides educators and schools with the moral framework for effectively engaging in the work of equity.**

Culture is a predominant force	People are served in varying degrees by the dominant culture
People have individual and group identities	Diversity within cultures is vast and significant
Each cultural group has unique cultural needs	The best of both worlds enhances the capacity of all
The family, as defined by each culture, is the primary system of support in the education of children	People who are not a part of the dominant culture have to be at least bicultural

Inherent in cross-cultural interactions are dynamics that must be acknowledged, adjusted to, and accepted	The school system must incorporate cultural knowledge into practice and policymaking
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## TOOL 3: THE BARRIERS TO CULTURAL PROFICIENCY

School districts across the nation continue to struggle to serve all students equitably. If we fail to recognize, acknowledge, and commit to overcoming the barriers to cultural proficiency, we will operate from a deficit model worldview. A deficit model worldview enthusiastically blames and finds fault with marginalized individuals, those not of the dominant culture, as solely responsible for their lot in life. In other words, if all students just worked harder, they would experience success. This mindset provides the comfort which prevents us from seeing ourselves as a part of the inequity in our system, and ultimately prevents us from seeing ourselves as part of the solution.



**This tool allows us to be explicit when we talk about the barriers to cultural proficiency in order to effectively and honestly view, assess, and change our system's landscape.**

**Privilege and Entitlement-** The belief that all personal achievements and societal benefits are due solely to the merit and quality of one's character. This often makes people blind to the barriers experienced by marginalized individuals

**Systems of Oppression-** Oppression is not always the intentional act of an individual. Oppression may be the function of systemic policies and practices.

**Unawareness of Need to Change-** The failure to recognize the need to make personal and school changes in response to the diversity we encounter. People who are unaware often believe that there would be no problems if the "others" would just adapt.

**Resistance to Change-** Some may resist moving towards cultural proficiency because they do not

want to examine their own unconscious bias and discriminatory practices, fear a loss of power, or feel overwhelmed that they may be expected to do things differently.

## TOOL 4: THE CULTURAL PROFICIENCY CONTINUUM

The six points along the following continuum provide a common language for describing healthy or nonproductive policies, practices, and individual values and behaviors.

**This tool provides a framework and the language discussing and analyzing how all aspects of our system perceive and respond to difference.**

CULTURAL DESTRUCTIVENESS	CULTURAL INCAPACITY	CULTURAL BLINDNESS	CULTURAL PRECOMPETENCE	CULTURAL COMPETENCE	CULTURAL PROFICIENCY
<b>Cultural Destructiveness</b> —"See the difference; stomp it out." Using one's power to eliminate another culture.					
<b>Cultural Incapacity</b> —"See the difference; make it wrong." Educating in a way that trivializes other cultures through the belief in the superiority of one's culture.					
<b>Cultural Blindness</b> —"See the difference, act like you don't." Educating so that you don't see or acknowledge the culture of others; choosing to ignore the differing experiences of cultures within the school.					
<b>Cultural Precompetence</b> —"See the difference; respond inadequately." Educating with an increasing awareness of what you and the school don't know about working in diverse settings. At this level, you and the school can move in a positive, constructive direction, or you can falter, stop, and possibly regress.					
<b>Cultural Competence</b> —"See the difference; understand the difference that difference makes." Educating with your personal values and behaviors and the school's policies and practices being aligned in a manner that is inclusive of cultures that are new or different from yours and those of the school.					
<b>Cultural Proficiency</b> —"See the difference; esteem it; respond positively and affirmingly." Educating as an advocate for lifelong learning for the purpose of effectively serving the educational needs of cultural groups in your school and community, while holding the vision that you and the school are instruments for creating a socially just democracy.					

-K. Nuri-Robins, D. Lindsey, R. Lindsey and R. Terrell, Culturally Proficient Instruction (2012)

*Any student who emerges into our culturally diverse society with a monocultural perspective on the world can legitimately be considered educationally ill-prepared.*

-- Sonia Nieto

## TOOL 5: TRAINING MODULES

This tool provides structured learning opportunities with clearly aligned learning goals and outcomes which may be measured for effectiveness.

**Overarching Goal:** CCPS staff will educate as advocates for lifelong learning for the purpose of effectively serving the educational needs of cultural groups in their school and community while holding the vision that they and the school are instruments for creating and maintaining a socially just democracy and for preparing our children to be productive citizens within our society.

## MODULE: CULTURAL IDENTITY

- 2018-2019: District Equity Team/Leadership
- 2019-2020: Staff

<b>Outcome: Staff will demonstrate awareness and respect for their own cultural identity as well as the cultural identities of others.</b>
<b>Essential Question: How do awareness, knowledge, and understanding of one's own cultural identity impact the learning and work environment?</b>
<b>Additional Supports Aligned with Module Outcome and Essential Question:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ District-wide Big Read (Fiction and/or Nonfiction)</li><li>▪ Speaker Series</li></ul>

## MODULE: IMPACT OF RACE AND CULTURE

- 2019-2020: District Equity Team/Leadership
- 2020-2021: Staff

<b>Outcome: Staff will demonstrate the awareness, knowledge, and understanding of the impacts of race and culture on learning and work environments.</b>
<b>Essential Question: How do awareness, knowledge, and understanding of race and culture impact the learning and work environment?</b>
<b>Additional Supports Aligned with Module Outcome and Essential Question:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ District-wide Big Read (Fiction and/or Nonfiction)</li><li>▪ Speaker Series</li></ul>

## MODULE: ADVOCATING FOR EQUITY

- 2020-2021: District Equity Team/Leadership
- 2021-2022: Staff

<b>Outcome: Staff will have the knowledge and will to take responsibility for advocating for institutional practices, policies, and procedures that effectively serve to the educational needs of all students and help to create and maintain a socially just democracy.</b>
<b>Essential Question: What does taking responsibility of advocating for institutional practices, policies, and procedures that effectively serve the educational needs of all students and help to create and maintain a socially just democracy look like?</b>
<b>Additional Supports Aligned with Module Outcome and Essential Question:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ District-wide Big Read (Fiction and/or Nonfiction)</li><li>▪ Speaker Series</li></ul>

## WHAT ARE OUR GOALS AND WHAT STEPS WILL WE TAKE?

### GOAL #1

Increase CCPS staff and leadership awareness, understanding, and proficiency level in discussing matters of equity, culture, ethnicity, and race with a specific focus on personal bias and the development of an equity lens.

#### Rationale:



Staff and leadership must be comfortable examining and discussing matters of equity, culture, ethnicity, and race with a specific focus on personal bias in order to hold open and honest conversations surrounding achievement gaps. An environment of trust is essential to individuals reflecting on their own cultures and experiences while working with CCPS. These conversations should lead to a discussion about the achievement gap as merely a symptom of an attitude gap as opposed to an ability gap.

**Result:**

By the end of these professional learning opportunities, school-based administrators and teacher leaders will move toward becoming more culturally proficient in order to effectively train staff. All staff will advocate for students in ways that honor the differences among cultures, see diversity as a benefit, and interact knowledgeably and respectfully with students and adults among a variety of cultural groups. In addition, staff will support and encourage lessons and teaching pedagogy that reflect research-based instructional strategies shown to benefit the various cultural and learning tendencies of students.

**Looks Like:**

- Honest and reflective conversations about cultural proficiency and otherness
- Courageous conversations around race as it relates to student performance and adult interactions
- Applied strategies for building relationships with all students regardless of identity
- Increased student academic performance from all student groups

**Action Steps 2017-2022:**

1. Develop and implement consistent culturally proficiency professional development experiences that clearly align to specific learning goals and outcomes for administrators and teacher leadership through Administrative and Supervisory meetings, Division of Instruction and Special Education meetings, and District Equity Leadership Team meetings.
2. Develop and implement consistent culturally proficiency professional development experiences, by train-the-trainer model, that clearly align to specific learning goals and outcomes for all staff through diverse modes of delivery.

**GOAL #2**

Establish relationships with student groups, the community, Maryland school districts, and organizations connected to the work of cultural proficiency and minority achievement.

**Rationale:**

CCPS is not the only school or entity exerting great efforts to examine the reasons behind opportunity gaps between diverse groups. CCPS is also not the only organization building cultural proficiency in order to eliminate inequities. Many community-based organizations and student groups have a vested interest in learning about the work CCPS is doing to achieve excellence through equity and are interested in how to support our students.

**Result:**

Collaborative relationships will be established that allow for open communication about the needs and concerns of community stakeholders that represent the diversity within CCPS. Furthermore, collaboration with schools, universities, and other entities will strengthen the knowledge, efforts, and effectiveness while providing a national perspective of the work being done to address cultural proficiency.

**Looks Like:**

- Participation in community events focused on diversity, racism, and outreach
- Collaboration with the Calvert County Public Library System
- Collaboration with faith-based groups/organizations
- Collaboration with events supported by the Program Coordinator for Strategic Partnerships and Community Engagement
- Exchange of best practices and equity training modules with other organizations
- Examining initiatives that have/have not worked in other school districts
- Collaboration and outreach to student groups

**Action Steps 2017-2022:**

1. Build community partnerships and awareness surrounding the issue of cultural proficiency with various community and stakeholder groups.
2. Build relationships with Equity points of contact in school districts across Maryland and the nation, Maryland State Department of Education, and recognized equity scholars. This will result in:
  - a. Building rapport with leaders from other school districts and organizations engaged in the work of addressing cultural proficiency;
  - b. Sharing best practices;
  - c. Sharing professional learning modules and trainings; and
  - d. Examining initiatives that have/have not worked in other Maryland school districts.

### GOAL #3

Elevate access to academic success and achievement for each student through culturally responsive curriculum and instruction.

#### **Rationale:**

In our increasingly diverse society, it is now more imperative than ever for educators to build their capacity to understand diversity as an asset, to be sensitive to students' wide-ranging perspectives and experiences, and to leverage diversity for the benefit of all students.

Culturally responsive teaching is the vehicle that bridges the various ways students understand, know, and communicate, especially in order to engage students from non-dominant cultures. This offers the possibility for transformational knowledge that provides equitable access to academic success. Furthermore, culturally responsive instruction transforms how students interact with each other and better prepares all students for success in a diverse society.

#### **Result:**

By the end of these learning opportunities, instructional supervisors and instructional staff will move closer to cultural proficiency and will make curriculum and instruction more culturally responsive. Instructional supervisors and instructional staff will advocate for students in ways that honor the differences among cultures, see diversity as a benefit, and interact knowledgeably and respectfully with students and adults among a variety of cultural groups.

**Looks Like:**

- Completed learning experiences focused on implicit bias, diversity, equity, and culturally relevant instruction
- Written commitments to providing access for all students
- Enhanced curriculum reflective of diverse cultures and multiple perspectives
- Developed tools that assist the evaluation of materials for diversity
- Created library spaces inviting to all students

**Action Steps 2017-2022**

- The Division of Instruction and Special Education (DIS) will build its understanding of culturally responsive teaching practices.
- The Division of Instruction and Special Education (DIS) will complete a review of policy and procedures for implementing new curriculum and revise as necessary.
- The Division of Instruction and Special Education (DIS) will build and promote learning experiences that focuses on improving the capacity of diverse students who have been marginalized and pushes back on dominant narratives about people of color.
- All School Librarians will be trained in implicit bias, diversity, equity, and social justice in order to reflect on and redesign library spaces.