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Spring 2023

SCCS Tinley Cultural Relationships School Improvement Plan

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Recommended Citation

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Capstone Project: A School Improvement Plan

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Abstract

This school improvement plan (SIP) aims to identify and implement tangible practices to welcome families of color to the SCCS Tinley Park Campus and create pathways for cultural discussions to begin and grow within the school community. The plan also includes lesson plan materials in the form of tips and guidelines for conversation starters, a list of notable living people of color, technology resources and books for teachers to use in the classroom as they model and scaffold multicultural relationship building amongst students. This SIP also seeks to answer the question "What are effective strategies for increasing parent engagement from families of color and how does application of those strategies translate into a vibrant and visible multicultural community?" Participants for this plan include leadership of SCCS— administration and teachers, parents within the community, and all students enrolled at SCCS Tinley. The method is qualitative with heavy reliance on interviews, small-group conversation, and observation. I conclude the only successful way to improve the school experience of our families of color is to focus our attention on developing deep, vulnerable, and lasting relationships with each other.

Keywords: Parent engagement, classroom strategies, multicultural education, relationship development

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SCCS Tinley Cultural Relationships School Improvement Plan

Nearly every article written in the last ten years on race relations within the school setting begins with a phrase similar to this one: the demographics of the United States have changed drastically over the last ten years, and they will continue to change. The problem is American schools and the educational system have not adjusted to reflect the values of minority cultures through parent engagement, in policy, procedure, or planning, or in the curricula and the classroom. Schools often expect minority groups to adapt to the methods and culture of the majority. Minority groups are absorbed and assimilated into the school culture; therefore, most schools do not tangibly represent a blended cultural and ethnic community (Ishimaru et al., 2016). This problem impacts all students in the American school system; however, students and parents of color are the ones who pay the heaviest price when they must value a quality education over feeling included or over their own cultural comfort (Yull et al., 2018).

While there is an abundance of research on racial dynamics in the school setting, there continues to be gaps in existing studies. The largest gap in cultural educational literature is the need for more research at the practical implementation level for individual locations/districts (Berkowitz et al., 2017). Secondary gaps include how to best support teachers on the implementation of classroom cultural strategies and how administrators effectively lead teachers, students, and parents as cultural brokers for lasting systemic change (Priest et al., 2016; see also Lopez, 2015; Vittrup, 2016; Ishimaru et al., 2016, Adams et al., 2017).

Objective

The purpose of this school improvement plan (SIP) is to first address the concern students and families of color at SCCS Tinley may not feel welcomed, appreciated, or known as individuals, families, cultures, or racial groups. Second, the plan will propel our school

community to embrace and value what nondominant families and families of color could and should contribute to our school and the community (to our students, staff, administration, and families). Third, this SIP will provide teachers and administrators with proven strategies to be implemented in the classroom so teachers can help build cross-cultural relationships between students.

This SIP will help SCCS Tinley determine how to engage our community's families of color in a way that forms reciprocal partnerships between the dominant majority and our families who represent nondominant cultures and ethnicities (Ishimaru et al., 2016). Secondarily, the SIP will assist SCCS Tinley teachers as they use the classroom setting to support students in creating cross-cultural and intercultural relationships with each other (Mansfield & Jean-Marie, 2015). Without a purposeful plan in place to bridge existing gaps and prevent future ones, SCCS will not be the Christian community we intend or promote ourselves to be.

Any community fragmented in its relationships cannot collaborate in an effective and productive manner. Therefore, by intentionally forming and sustaining relationships within the community, collaboration between parents, teachers, students, and administration will be evident in community spaces, at community events, and in the classroom (Yull et al., 2018; see also Ishimaru, 2017). In the same way, students who have friendships with each other are more likely to learn together and from each other within the classroom. Learning in the classroom is a social experience; therefore, teachers should put concerted and intentional effort into modeling and scaffolding the building of relationships between students (Hawkins, 2014).

Scope

Research for this paper was drawn from the ERIC (Education Resources Information Center) database, the WorldCat discovery tool through DeWitt Library, and Google Scholar.

Search criteria was restricted to the last 10 years of publication and action research conducted in the school setting or which impacted student learning. Search criteria included keywords of culture, race, ethnicity, parent involvement, racism, multicultural education, race conscious, diversity, cultural leadership, and microaggressions.

Thesis

The principal finding through this research analysis is schools who have successfully implemented cultural parent engagement plans and classroom strategies for the purpose of valuing families of color and nondominant cultures have done so because every choice made, and every strategy implemented, is based on relationship formation. Secondary findings include all successful plans began by asking families of color for their assessment of current relationships and gaps within the school system (Berkowitz et al., 2017; Yull et al., 2014). Following collection of data, schools asked nondominant families to lead committees of stakeholders (teachers, administration, and other parents) to engage in conversations about race, education, and any other areas pertinent to the school culture (Yull et al., 2018; see also Ishimaru et al., 2016). These conversations led to implementation of policy, procedure, and planning changes reflecting a true multicultural approach to leading and guiding a school (Hajisoteriou et al., 2017; Mansfield & Jean-Marie, 2015; Rhoda & Wells, 2013). Schools who chose this approach did not ask families of color to blend in and take on the dominant culture; rather, the school chose to make nondominant culture and values visible within the community, and the dominant culture embraced nondominant cultures (Ishimaru et al., 2016).

The value of these findings is hope for SCCS Tinley, and any school, who is willing to look honestly at their structures, policies, and procedures to build up their community through relationship development between and within the cultures by hearing the voices of the minority

and inviting them to lead and collaborate in the changes. Therefore, SCCS would be wise to follow the successful steps noted in this study's findings. It would also behoove the school to address the following areas of this SIP:

1. Create a space and time for our community to discuss race, personal experiences within our community so we can better learn from and with each other, and the development of cross-cultural relationships.

2. Design a partnership model for current families to welcome and continue to develop relationships with new families.

3. Identify specific classroom strategies teachers can use to develop cross-cultural relationships between students.

Each one of these pieces is based solely on relational practices and strategies from my research intended to promote cross-cultural relationships and friendships. One relationship expands into another and another until all members of our community are functioning together, valuing each other's contributions, and acknowledging and celebrating our differences for the betterment and inclusion of all.

Overview

The structure of this literature review begins by identifying the relational themes of multicultural education and the need for relationship formation and development between stakeholders within the school community. Next, member groups within the school community, those impacted by the relationships within schools, are named: students, teachers, leadership/administration, and parents. Each member group of the community has distinct needs and concerns. Each group's perspective is described in detail with researched positive relational

strategies named to address those needs and concerns. The final section focuses on identified gaps warranting future research.

Review of the Literature

Four themes emerged from the literature of this review; they all centered around the *people* within a school system. There are four groups of people who are inexorably linked to each other through working relationships and the structure of a school: students, teachers, administration/leaders, and parents.

Students

Given students are the sole reason for a school's existence, and students are the ones whom teachers, administrators, and parents are educating, they are the first theme addressed. Priest and her team (2016) observed and led focus groups involving 67 students ages 8-12 to discover how they experienced and thought about race and racialization. The findings of this study demonstrated the need for students to know what racism really is lest they subsequently develop incorrect views and social constructs. In their study of 15 second graders participating in weekly literature discussions and drawings regarding race, Boutte et al. (2011) found similar results to Priest's research. Boutte's team concluded racism is understood through lived experiences (2011). Therefore, not addressing racism at an early age sends a message to children race is taboo. Avoidance of the discussion can also cause children to develop misconceptions concerning race (Boutte et al., 2011).

Knowing avoidance of racial discussions develops misconceptions and racism is understood through lived experiences, it is important to name incidents and converse about them. In an earlier study by Buchanan (2015), 52 college students from an elementary methods course participated in discussions on race and wrote reflections in response to questions posed in class.

The students could identify their earliest racial experiences (Buchanan, 2015). In a similar study, Kohli and & Solorzano (2012) examined the experiences of 41 older students across America by analyzing how racism is perpetuated via racial microaggressions through language in the classroom and how they affect a student's ethnic and linguistic identity. The researchers found even an isolated racial experience has lasting impact and is internalized by students. The internalized feelings are often shame, guilt, or "othering"—feeling different than others (Kohli & Solorzano, 2012). The combined results of these four studies indicate young children must be intentionally taught about race and participate in discussions about race at a developmentally appropriate level to form positive cultural identities of themselves and others.

Buchanan's study also included inquiry into white students claiming color-blindness. She found when race is not discussed and taught, white students do not understand their own "whiteness" (Buchanan, 2015). In other words, white students do not discuss facets of race or racial identity unless they are in a multicultural setting. Boutte et al. (2011) further explains the problem with colorblindness, proposing this "raceless" perspective doesn't acknowledge the personal identity, personal history, personal struggles, or personal legacy of people of color. By extension, it follows racial discussions should not be limited to classrooms where cultural diversity exists; conversations should also be present in classrooms where students are predominantly white.

The aforementioned research focused on older students. In contrast, Hawkins (2014) spent 10 weeks orienting herself with two preschool classrooms in Australia. She then conducted 11 weeks of observation using literature to teach young children about social justice which includes difference, diversity, and dignity. Hawkins found social justice should be an intentional, *taught* literature curriculum where specific topics are addressed and purposeful vocabulary is

used to positively shape children's views of social justice because young students can see beyond themselves and develop the skill of critical reflection when guided by an adult (Hawkins, 2014). In a similar study by Sarraj et al. (2015), 17 fifth graders participated in a two-week multicultural enrichment course. Sarraj's team found kids are generally curious, they can empathize with characters in stories, and they know preconceptions and stereotypes are wrong. The results of their study, like Hawkins, conclude students are self-aware: literary curriculum can be used to expose children to multicultural differences, enhancing familiarity and respect (Sarraj et al., 2015).

Hawkins (2014) and Sarraj et al. (2015) establish literature as a first step or launchpad for children to become more aware of cultures around them. The next step is for students to respond to the information learned from literature. Earlier research of DeCuir-Gunby et al. (2011) used semi-structured interviews with six high-achieving African American teenage honor students to determine how parents and schools influence a student's racial identity development. This research team agrees with Kohli & Solorzano, students are learning their culture from their family and trying to make sense of what culture and racial identity means for them within the school context. Therefore, seeing people who look like you in daily life and literary text is important (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011). Boutte also specifies using various types of fiction and nonfiction literature to ensure the issues read about and discussed are real and have concrete information (2011). These studies seem to indicate intentional literature choices regarding race and a student response in the form of art or discussion is affirming to a student's cultural identity development, regardless of their own race. These recent studies provide a practical framework for applying strategies to teaching students about culture, race, and ethnicity.

Teachers

Teachers comprise the second group of stakeholders in the school setting who are impacted by and who make their own impact on multicultural education. Vittrup (2016) conducted a study of 77 early childhood and elementary teachers to determine what their perceptions and practices were regarding discussions on race and ethnicity. The primary finding demonstrates teacher need for increased support to implement cultural teaching strategies into the classroom (Vittrup, 2016; see also Priest et al., 2016). Vittrup's (2016) observations describe teachers' cultural lessons as being limited to history and cultural holidays. She also observed what teachers say their views are of discrimination does not match their understanding of students' discriminatory actions in the classroom (Vittrup, 2016). In other words, there is a gap between knowledge and practice. Teachers in Vittrup's study cited several reasons for refraining from engaging in racial discussions in the classroom. They feel there is a lack of time to fit it into the curriculum, there is a lack of parental support, parents will object to the content, racial discussions are the parent's responsibility, and teachers must often gain administrative approval first (Vittrup, 2016). The results of this study appear to indicate the need for substantial administrative and professional development support for teachers.

Noting the discrepancy between teacher perceptions of their racial awareness and their practices in the classroom, the area of teacher readiness and professional development becomes an area of concern. Adams et al. (2017) conducted a study of approximately 255 educators who participated in a weekly relational professional development program designed to help teachers create and implement their own school improvement projects. Adams et al. (2017) found professional development for teachers must be relational so it transfers to the classroom effectively. This approach takes time and patience, requires authentic teacher inquiry, and must

help teachers understand their own population (Adams et al., 2017). Kohli & Solorzano's (2012) research complements the relational professional development needs of teachers by noting how teachers must identify and expand their own cultural limits, regardless of their own race or ethnicity. Boutte et al. (2011) adds teachers must also reflect on and analyze their own goals regarding race curriculum so they are prepared to receive feedback and criticism in a positive manner. The studies of Adams et al. (2017), Kohli & Solorzano (2012), and Boutte et al. (2011) seem to delineate steps for fleshing out Vittrup's conclusion there is a dire need for teacher professional development in multicultural education and teacher awareness of their own views and values.

One of the determining factors for teachers' professional development success is an administrator's support in the professional development process. Lopez (2015) supervised interviews with six school leaders who self-identified as culturally responsive leaders within their setting for the purpose of identifying culturally responsive leadership practices prepare students to live in wider global communities. The results of the study demonstrated successful cultural leaders were ones who were critically conscious and therefore took conscious action (Lopez, 2015). Lopez's research appears to confirm the need for relational professional development and intentional support for teachers from their administration, as noted in the studies of Vittrup (2016) and Adams et al. (2017).

School Leaders/Administration

School leaders and administration make up the third research theme on multicultural education. This group is tasked with initiating and facilitating changes within the school system to proactively lead by example. Mansfield & Jean-Marie (2015) led a secondary analysis of two prior studies to establish how school leaders engage in courageous conversations regarding

educational inequities. Their primary finding was leaders must know the social and cultural

realities of students because they as leaders direct the social climate of the school. This

determination leads to policy decisions, which in turn affect how students are socialized, a

dynamic impacting social inequities and student identity development (Mansfield & Jean-Marie,

2015). In other words, a leader's decisions have a trickle-down effect—whether positive or

negative.

A secondary finding of Mansfield & Jean-Marie (2015) states how action and practical

decisions must take place for a leader to successfully maintain a positive social climate. Ishimaru

et al. (2016) termed the leadership choices of administrators as formal actions for a shift.

Ishimaru et al. (2016) named appointing family engagement workers across all aspects of the

school as one such formal action for change (see also Hajisoteriou et al., 2017). In a later study,

Ishimaru (2017) notes how easy it is for strategy sessions to become generic and not focus on the

actual practices—to default to the system and conventional strategies instead of the relational

ones. Therefore, Lopez (2015) recommends leaders connect theory to practice, challenge the

status quo and dominant ideologies, and ensure attitudes and practices focus on equity and

diversity.

As stated by Mansfield & Jean-Marie, school leaders and administrators are agents for

cultural change. Swanson & Welton (2018) determined cultural change occurs best when leaders

are relational in their understanding of culture and social climate. Swanson & Welton (2018)

studied two white principals who participated in semi-structured interviews and were observed

during SIP meetings, staff meetings, and professional development meetings to establish how

white principals facilitate discussions about race and racism within their community. Three

levels of discussion were present during these meetings: race conscious, race neutral, and

explicitly resistant (Swanson & Welton, 2018). Swanson & Welton (2018) discovered for administrators to successfully navigate these discussions, they needed to know the racial dynamics and politics within their own school. Additionally, leaders must also understand their own emotions, spiritual beliefs, and values as these personal characteristics directly influence how administrators lead their schools (see also Mansfield & Jean-Marie, 2015). Stacer & Perrucci (2012) suggest leaders must also know their families' backgrounds, experiences, and reasons parents made the choice of participation in the school. Learning a family's history fosters openness and trust between the administration, teachers, and parents (Mansfield & Jean-Marie, 2015).

Swanson & Welton (2018) secondarily found leaders cannot bear the load alone. Successful administrators had constant coaching on school-wide change in racial equity from an on-site co-worker. They also engaged teacher leaders who then trained their teams (Swanson & Welton, 2018; see also Hajisoteriou et al., 2017). Ishimaru et al (2016) and DeCuir-Gunby et al. (2011) add leaders fostering relationships between parents promotes culturally affirming communities. Even though conversations were difficult, leaders continued to engage in them because, as Boutte et al. (2011) found, one-time discussions or events do not break the cycle of racism (or, they inadvertently further the cycle of stereotyping). These studies suggest relationship development between leaders and staff, leaders and parents, and teachers and parents is relationally necessary for leaders to successfully maintain a socially and culturally positive climate within the school.

Parents

The final group in multicultural research as it relates to schools is parents. They are the linchpin of change and leadership in multicultural education. Yull et al. (2018) surveyed four

African American single mothers, several school administrators and teachers, and a school social worker regarding their experiences in a parent engagement program. Parents were asked to identify their concerns, barriers they have faced, the impact of the mentoring program, and the degree to which the program raises critical consciousness (Yull et al., 2018). Two major themes emerged. First, parents of color feel unwelcome and dismissed as uncaring. Second, they often experience racial injustice and exclusionary discipline for their children (Yull et al., 2018). A secondary finding by Yull et al. (2018) is parents of color long for connection at their child's school; however, many families are making choices for better education and a safe school at the expense of their own comfort and inclusion. DeCuir-Gunby et al. (2011) states parents of color make one such sacrifice when demonstrating concern over being able to maintain their black identity in a majority white setting.

Stacer & Perrucci (2012) suggest a lack of school involvement by parents of color amounts to more than a group of "uncaring" parents. Parental involvement, or a lack thereof, is impacted by several factors including the parent's social and economic resources, their perceptions of the school, and their personal experiences with those in authority at their child's school (Stacer & Perrucci, 2012). Berkowitz et al. (2017) additionally suggests a school's cultural and social climate affects a parent's willingness to engage. Yull et al. (2014) indicates several additional circumstances when parents of color have found it difficult to engage in the school system. First, they or their children often face stereotyping, isolation, and color blindness. Second, there is often a lack of cultural competency, cultural enrichment, and cultural ignorance present within a school's climate and culture (Yull et al., 2014). Therefore, Berkowitz et al. (2017) suggests teachers must monitor their own attitude toward family involvement as it is crucial to the success, or failure, in engaging families of color.

The results of Yull et al.'s later research in 2018 shows how parents of color as mentors and liaisons had several positive effects for students in the classroom and relationships within the school community. First, parents of color were able to connect with students and redirect them towards positive learning within the classroom. Second, they were able to help teachers understand student life outside of the classroom as it related to racial concerns. Also, the role of mentoring and liaison-ing gained the parents of color respect from the students, teachers, and administration, resulting in a tight-knit community (Yull et al., 2018). Berkowitz et al. (2017) add minorities of the minorities must be included in the group who mentors and acts as liaisons.

Ishimaru et al. (2016) seems to confirm Yull et al. (2018) when the team notes parents of color are the most effective cultural brokers because they can help nondominant families decode the dominant culture (Ishimaru et al., 2016). However, Ishimaru et al. (2016) notes parents of color are not the only ones who can successfully traverse cultural barriers: anyone who shares something in common with the marginalized can be an efficacious cultural broker.

Parents of color are not the only parents who influence the culture of a school. The parental choices of the dominant, often white, culture also impact the cultural climate of a school. Roda & Wells (2013) conducted a study of 39 randomly chosen white parents to determine how school choice policies continue to increase segregation and stratification within districts. The primary finding was white parents often make choices contradicting their beliefs regarding multicultural education (Roda & Wells, 2013). Several themes emerged as reasons white parents choose a predominantly white school setting over a multicultural one. The first is white parents do value diversity, but there is a lack diverse options. Second, white parents often have anxiety over the competition, so they will choose a "best school" over a racially diverse one. Finally, many white parents can make privileged choices as they can often afford to define

"good" and "bad" schools (Roda & Wells, 2013). Roda & Wells (2013) suggest nuanced policy changes to school choice policies as an avenue to increase racial diversity. Two such policy changes are 1) School choice can no longer be "color blind" and policies must be race-conscious, and there should be an increase in private school options so families are not competing for the top two or three "best" schools (Roda & Wells, 2013). These research studies appear to purport all parents can engage successfully in the school community if given the chance to relate to each other in ways designed to develop relationship, rapport, and respect.

Summary

Research studies reporting successful results concerning family engagement and classroom strategies center around relationship development. Student, teacher, administrative, and parent concerns and anxiety surrounding multicultural education and engagement appear to be assuaged when knowledge of each other's backgrounds, experiences, values, and beliefs are shared, acknowledged, and understood through relationship and, eventually, friendship. Therefore, the need for more research, and the design and implementation of a relationship-based multicultural improvement plan at SCCS Tinley, is crucial to student success and increased parental involvement.

School Profile

Community Characteristics

Tinley Park is located 30 minutes southwest of the Chicago city limits in Illinois. This suburb is home to approximately 56,00 people. Most of the residents, 77.3%, are White/Caucasian, followed by 11.6% Hispanic and 5.9% Black/African American. Most homes are single family homes owned by the residents. Each home houses an average of 2.5 persons. Children age 18 and younger comprise just over 20% of the population (Quickfacts, 2023).

Tinley's adult residents have graduated from high school at the rate of 95.2%, and 36% have a bachelor's degree or higher in education. Other Tinley statistics are as follows: 69% of resident adults are active in the labor force, 86% own their own home, and the average home cost is about $250,000. The average income for families is $86,000 (Quickfacts, 2023).

Within the town boundaries, there are seven public elementary schools, four public middle schools, and one public high school in Tinley Park. There are also 11 private, tuition-based schools in the town from preschool to grade 12. SCCS Tinley is one of those 11 (Cities & Towns, 2023).

School District Characteristics

The Southwest Chicago Christian School (SCCS) Tinley Park Campus is part of the SCCS Association, which is comprised of 764 students at three campuses in the Southwest Suburbs of Chicago. The Oak Lawn Campus and the Tinley Park Campus are early childhood, elementary, and middle school campuses for preschool to 8th grade. The Palos Heights campus, the location for CCHS (Chicago Christian High School), is centered geographically between the other two campuses. The Association is governed by a board whose constituency consists of parishioners from supporting churches, parents of current students, and financial supporters. While the association is overseen by the board, the day-to-day operations are managed by the superintendent. SCCS is accredited by Christian Schools International (SCCSA, 2022).

The SCCS Association has a long faith history rooted in the Reformed tradition. The mission and vision statement reflects those roots: "To be a Christ-centered learning community, intent on restoring God's world" (SCCSA, 2022). SCCS's statement on their philosophy of education also reflects the Reformed tradition, stating the goal is to "develop our student's awareness of the lordship of Jesus Christ over all of life. SCCS prepares students spiritually,

socially, academically, culturally, and physically to serve society wholeheartedly and to glorify God by honoring him in all aspects of life" (SCCSA, 2022). To tangibly represent this ideology, SCCS developed a Profile of a Graduate. Graduates are followers of Christ, seekers of knowledge, pursuers of justice, and caretakers of creation (SCCSA, 2022).

School Building Characteristics

The SCCS Tinley campus is nestled in a neighborhood at the crossroads of 171st and 84th Avenue, Tinley Park. The building services 264 preschool to 8th grade students. Students of color (Black/African American, Latino, and Asian) represent 18% of our student population. The remaining 82% are White/Caucasian (Bergeson, 2022). The ratio of minority students at SCCS Tinley is within 2.9% of the surrounding Tinley Park community.

There are 34 faculty and staff members with experience ranging from first-year teachers to veterans of nearly 30 years. Southwest Tinley offers enrichment classes (specials) including gym, art, music, computer, Spanish, and library. All teachers are certified in their area of expertise and teach an average class size of 19 students, with two classrooms for most grade levels (Bergeson, 2022).

Most students enrolled at the Tinley Park Campus come from a traditional two-parent household; only 15 students from 12 families have a single-parent household. One other student has a stepparent from remarriage. Additionally, 40.3% of SCCS families have one student enrolled at the Tinley Park Campus, and 34.7% have two students attending SCCS. The remaining 25% of SCCS families have three or more children attending the SCCS Tinley and High School campuses. While the average income for families is not documented, families are advised tuition rates should not exceed 10% of their total income. Tuition assistance is available to families once tuition exceeds 14%-12% of their income. All attending families have signed a

document where they profess Jesus as Lord and regularly attend a Bible-based church for weekly services (Bergeson, 2022).

Student Portfolio & Performance

The Tinley and Oak Lawn Campuses both measure academic performance and growth through AIMSweb and MAP scores. AIMSweb testing is for Kdg-2nd grade; MAP testing begins in 3rd grade and continues through 8th grade. Based on Winter 2022-2023 MAP scores in reading, 61% of the 3rd-5th grade students who were tested are at the 60-100th Achievement Percentile in reading (DeBoer, 2023). The Winter 2022-2023 MAP scores in math demonstrate 57.8% of 3rd-5th grade students who were tested are at the 60-100th Achievement Percentile (DeBoer, 2023).

Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

SCCS has several formal curricula for content areas. Preschool-8th grade uses the Christian Schools International Bible lessons, Everyday Math from the University of Chicago, and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's Social Studies series. Preschool bases their literacy instruction on Jolly Phonics and teacher-created thematic units. Kindergarten through 8th grade relies on Wonders by McGraw-Hill for phonics and reading instruction. K-5 also uses Smithsonian Science for the Classroom, and grades 6-8 transition to Project Lead the Way (PTLW).

Instruction begins at 8:25 a.m. and continues to 3:15 p.m. Monday through Friday from mid-August to the first week of June. Students have an average of two specials classes a day and 50 minutes of recess breaks. Within the first six weeks of school, struggling students are identified based on daily work in the classroom, last year's MAP and AIMSweb scores, and teacher evaluation from the previous year. Each child is placed in a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) group based on this data for both literacy and math. Throughout the week, each student will meet twice in this group led by the classroom teacher or an MTSS aide where

targeted practice of missing skills is completed. The lowest performing students are also supported with pull-out services from the Academic Support Center staff.

Teachers are continuously performing formative assessments on units of instruction in each curricular area. Summative assessments for each unit are done upon the completion of each unit. SCCS Tinley is on a trimester schedule for evaluation of students. At the conclusion of each trimester, families receive a report of the student's progress regarding curricular, behavior, and social learning goals. At the first and second trimester, parents are encouraged to attend parent-teacher conferences where they can collaborate with teachers regarding their child's educational progress. Three years ago, SCCS Tinley began to use a hybrid standards-based grading (SBG) approach to assessment.

Professional Development Practices

The SCCS Association begins the year with two days of in-service. The first day includes worship together, an update from the superintendent, and sessions geared towards our latest administratively determined need. The second day is set aside for time with curriculum committees, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and individual campus meetings. In October, the entire association attends the Christian Educators Association (CEA) Convention with our CSI schools from surrounding states. It is a two-day conference where teachers worship together, hear from a capstone speaker, and then choose sessions related to Christian education and grade-level content. In February, we have a one-day in-service where teachers from all three campuses continue sessions from the beginning of the year. The next three years will focus on Teaching for Transformation.

Each year, teachers create a personal goal plan for the year. They choose three tangible actions they intend to personally grow in and develop throughout the year. These three areas are then included on each teacher's annual evaluation. Teacher evaluation occurs on a three-year

cycle. The first is a self-evaluation, the second is a peer-evaluation, and the third is an administrative evaluation. Funds are allocated each year for teachers to attend local professional development courses pertaining to their subject area or grade level. These professional development funds can also be applied to graduate or doctoral coursework to further the teacher's expertise in their content area.

Needs Assessment

There are many areas of SCCS Tinley functioning well support a quality educational experience for our students. For instance, district characteristics for the association describe a strong Christian identity based on history, current practices, and vision for the future. The curriculum is intentional and implemented following the prescribed scope and sequence throughout the grades. Instruction and assessment practices look academically strong on paper, and the results are evident in the campus' standardized testing results. The demographical data for ethnicity, culture, family structure, and income mirror the surrounding community.

For this school improvement plan, I chose to focus on the area of cultural relationships at SCCS Tinley for several reasons. The first and primary reason is our students of color withdraw from the school at statistically higher rates than our white students (Bergeson, 2023). Anecdotal notes from family exit interviews do not often specifically or explicitly state race as the reason for exiting the school system. However, carefully guarded statements by exiting parents are made, and an underlying tension is present reflects racial undertones. SCCS cannot sustain the higher rates of exiting and continue to mirror the local community. According to the U.S. Census Bureau projections, by 2045 White people will make up less than half of the racial and ethnic demographic of America; more than half of American residents will be racial minorities (Vespa et al., 2020). If the Census Bureau projections are correct, and SCCS continues to have a higher

percentage of minority students leaving than are applying and staying, then the school's multicultural future looks grim.

The second reason is the divide between our families of color and dominant white families is evident in social settings on campus. At dismissal, groups of white parents are standing together and conversing as they wait for their children to exit. Very few parents of color are in those groups or out talking at all. Parents of color often pick up and go, rarely present in the dominant groups or invited to join them.

Thirdly, the area of cultural relationships at SCCS Tinley is connected to nearly every aspect of the school. Cultural interactions impact students' social-emotional, spiritual, cognitive, and academic growth (DeCuir-Gunby, 2011; Kohli & Solorzano, 2012). Cultural interactions also influence classroom relationships, the classroom's social and learning climate, and the school's climate (Hawkins, 2014; Sarraj et al., 2016). Student discipline and classroom management are affected, often unknowingly, by race and ethnicity. Culture, race, and ethnicity have and should continue to be factored into the curriculum, instructional choices, and professional development. Racial relationships within the school also heavily influence parental involvement and engagement within the school (Stacer & Perrucci, 2012). By addressing the area of cultural relationships, this plan has the potential for a positive ripple effect into almost every area of the school.

Lastly, I have seen the positive results of engaging cross-cultural relationships. The first fifteen years of my teaching career were spent in two schools where I was the minority in the classroom and at family involvement events. I made many cultural faux pas, had tough conversations, and apologized regularly as I learned how to negotiate a culture unfamiliar to me. The people I learned from the most in those settings were individuals and families who extended

grace, who shared something in common with me other than race, and who were willing to develop relationships and friendships arising from those commonalities. Cross-cultural relationships have already formed a few times for me at SCCS Tinley, and those relationships are ones I continue to treasure even though the children have moved to higher grades.

Data Analysis

Data Summary

The school has very little data linked to cultural and ethnic demographics for any area of the school from the interest and application process to student and family experience to reasons for exiting the school system. The lack of data is due in part to the low percentage of students of color who currently attend SCCS Tinley and to the high percentage of students descended from the predominantly white, Dutch Reformed lineage of the school. The data available for the purposes of this SIP is currently limited to attendance/enrollment numbers, discipline records, academic performance, and the number of students who have left and when. The lack of data and data analysis simply reinforces the need for SCCS Tinley to take a proactive approach to developing an awareness of culture and developing cross-cultural relationships within the school.

School Strengths

The first strength is the campus' racial demographics for Black families is higher for SCCS Tinley than the surrounding community and within 5% for White families. As noted in Table 1.1, the Tinley Campus is also within 2.9% of the local community in terms of representation of all families of color. The narrow gap in percentage seems to be significant given the school faces strict restrictions for enrollment regarding faith, limiting the pool of potential applicants. The school data is self-reported on the enrollment application of families in attendance at the Tinley Campus.

Table 1.1

Racial Demographic Comparison 2023

SCCS Tinley Campus Families	Tinley Park, IL
2 Asian Families (1.1%)	Asian 3.4%
7 Latino Families (3.9%)	Hispanic/Latino 11.6%
23 Black/African American Families (13%)	Black/African American 5.9%
144 White Families (82%)	White 77.3%

(Bergeson, 2023 & Quickfacts, 2023)

The implication is Black/African American students and families and White students and families can see themselves represented in the classroom as much or more than they would in the local community. Also, despite a higher percentage of minority families who leave, many minority families have stayed, maintaining the 18% families of color within the school. The stable percentage in enrollment seems to indicate families of color see value to the Christian education their children are receiving at SCCS Tinley and therefore choose to stay despite the cultural dynamics within the school.

The second strength of the Tinley Campus is demonstrated in the academic performance of students. According to MAP scores, 61% of all 3rd-5th grade students at SCCS Tinley meet their learning growth goals and state standards at the 60th-100th achievement percentile in reading (DeBoer, 2023). Of 3rd-5th grade students tested, 57.8% are meeting their learning growth goals and state standards at the 60th-100th achievement percentile in math (DeBoer, 2023). It is difficult to compare SCCS Tinley to surrounding schools given SCCS relies on MAP scores and the public school district relies on a once yearly IAR (Illinois Assessment of Readiness) test. The NWEA clearly states the IAR and MAP Growth test compare the same subjects but are designed

to assess "slightly different constructs" (NWEA, 2021). Therefore, the two tests cannot be compared directly to each other. However, an IAR score of four establishes proficiency for state standards, which are aligned to common core standards, and a score of five exceeds the learning standard (NWEA, 2021). A score on the MAP Growth Assessment in the 60th achievement percentile or higher also establishes students meeting or exceeding the learning standards (DeBoer, 2023). By noting these percentages in Table 1.2, white students at SCCS Tinley are comparable or higher to meeting the state standards as their white counterparts in the public school. Also, the Hispanic/Latino students at the SCCS Campus are meeting standards at a higher level than their racial counterparts at Millennium Elementary (DeBoer, 2023; ISBE, 2022). The caveat to this data is the sample size for the SCCS Tinley Campus is statistically small and therefore skewed. SCCS Tinley data is pulled from 12 students spread across three grades and five to six classrooms. Students of color are not present in each classroom. In essence, one student of color in a classroom may be compared to 20-29 of his/her white counterparts in the classroom or grade level.

Table 1.2

SCCS Tinley Reading and Math Comparison

Reading	SCCS Tinley MAP Testing 3rd-5th grade (Students at or above the 60th achievement percentile)	Millennium Elementary IAR Testing 3rd-5th grade (Meets or exceeds benchmark)
Caucasian/White Students	63.2%	50.3%
Black/African American Students	25%	25%
Hispanic/Latino Students	50%	44.4%
Math	**SCCS Tinley MAP Testing (Students at or above the 60th achievement percentile)**	**Millennium Elementary IAR Testing (Meets or exceeds benchmark)**
Caucasian Students	60.5%	60%
Black/African American Students	25%	33.3%
Hispanic/Latino Students	50%	33.3%

(DeBoer, 2023 & ISBE, 2022)

School Challenges

The greatest challenge for SCCS Tinley is the high percentage of students of color who have chosen to disenroll from the Tinley Park Campus. Disenrollment choices and trends are difficult to ascertain with the arrival of COVID-19 in 2020. COVID-19 detrimentally impacted the enrollment at SCCS with the parameters of social distancing, sharing of learning materials, and masking. Therefore, data from 2020 is skewed and not representative of typical enrollment or disenrollment trends. Even so, Table 1.3 demonstrates since 2021, 36.8% of the families who have left SCCS Tinley are families of color (Bergeson, 2023). This statistic indicates the departure rate of students of color is disproportionate to the 18% of minority students who enroll

or re-enroll. The disenrollment rate for students of color is also significantly higher

proportionally than their white counterparts (Bergeson, 2023).

Table 1.3

Racial Disenrollment Comparison 2021-2023

	Students of Color	White Students
Number of Students Disenrolled	18	31
Percentage of Students Disenrolled	36.8%	63.2%
Differential of students disenrolled versus students enrolled by race (Bergeson, 2023)	+23.8%	-14.1%

   The second concern for the SCCS Tinley Campus, as noted in Table 1.4, is documented

behavior infractions for students of color is disproportional to the number students who are

enrolled. Students of color currently make up 18% of the student population, but according to

Goodfellow's infraction report, they have 27.3% of the school's registered infraction total from

January 2021 to the present. The percentage of infractions might be less concerning if the

percentage of them had not risen 6.8% for students of color from 2019-2020.

Table 1.4

Racial Comparison for Behavior Infractions 2019-2023

2019-2020	Students of Color	White Students
Number of Infractions	18	70
Percentage	20.5%	79.5%
2021-2023	**Students of Color**	**White Students**
Number of Infractions	57	152
Percentage	27.3%	72.7%

| Differential from Enrolled Students | +9.3% | -9.3% |

(Goodfellow, 2023)

The third significant challenge is the lack of data regarding SCCS' multicultural condition beyond enrollment, student performance, discipline, and exit numbers. Information documented by directors, principals, and the Association office does not include anecdotal information or analysis to supplement numbers, nor does it provide background or reasoning for cultural decisions from the school or families of color. Also absent is an analysis of the existing data or strategies applied after the data collection. The need for this SIP is identified by lack of data, observation of the school environment, and conversations with persons of color where areas of concern were noted by administrators or teachers aware of the cultural dynamics.

Assessment Options

Given the lack of data analysis (and skewed data due to small sample size) surrounding race and ethnicity in terms of student experience, family experience, school climate, and reasons for a family's exit from the school, several further assessment options are recommended. These surveys are based upon the research of Berkowitz et al. (2017) and Yull et al. (2014):

1. Survey current students of color about their classroom and school experiences at SCCS with Likert Scale ratings and space for optional anecdotal explanations of their rating.

2. Survey current parents of color and those who would like to be cultural brokers about their experience at SCCS with Likert Scale ratings and space for optional anecdotal explanations of their rating.

3. Ask teachers, or an observer, to complete observational checklists of interactions between students and between students and teachers for four weeks regarding racial interactions and curriculum.

After these assessments are complete, the SIP could be tweaked as needed based on the results and implemented immediately.

<div align="center">**Action Plan**</div>

Proposed Improvement Plan

There are three parts to this SIP to be implemented simultaneously and congruently with each other:

1. Create a space and time for our community to discuss race, personal experiences within our community so we can better learn from and with each other, and the development of cross-cultural relationships.

2. Design a partnership model for current families to welcome and continue to develop relationships with new families.

3. Identify specific classroom strategies teachers can use to develop cross-cultural relationships between students.

Alignment to Research

This SIP has five phases of implementation. The first phase is further assessment in the form of a Likert Scale and open-ended question surveys regarding student and parent experiences at SCCS Tinley. Berkowitz et al. (2017) and Yull et al. (2014) suggest a self-assessment of cultural relationships by families of color and identifying the gaps in cross-cultural relationships is the first step towards developing a healthily functioning multicultural community healthily. The third assessment encourages teachers, or an observer, to document cross-cultural interactions and learning in the classroom through a tally system and a cultural values self-assessment. Boutte et al. (2011) and Vittrup (2016) state teachers must have time to reflect on and analyze the

curriculum, their own views, and their approach to the curriculum to make their multicultural education more than a celebration of national holidays and traditions.

The second phase is analysis and discussion amongst parents and students of color in community café settings. Simultaneously, teachers and administrators are analyzing and dialoguing about their own values and classroom data. Yull et al. (2018) and Ishimaru et al. (2016) concur parents of color must be the ones leading and facilitating committees and discussions centered on race. This step is designed to allow nondominant students and parents to dialogue and process in a nondominant cultural setting first.

The third phase is an expansion of the second, where dominant and nondominant stakeholders within the SCCS Tinley community come together in the community cafés, a Welcome Team is formed, and discussion leads to vision casting for needs not yet identified. Teachers also begin to choose the classroom strategies, lessons, and resources from this SIP with support from administrative leaders. The studies of Lopez (2015), Vittrup (2016), and Adams et al. (2017) all clearly indicate teachers need time, resources, and administrative support as they analyze and implement changes to multicultural curriculum. The type of support needed from administration must be identified by the teachers from their process of inquiry (Adams et al., 2017).

Implementation and Change begins the fourth phase, where parents and administrators use their collaborative efforts to produce necessary changes or additions to policy, procedures, and planning. Hajisoteriou et al. (2017), Mansfield & Jean-Marie (2015), and Rhoda & Wells (2013) agree changes initiated from this group of engaged parents will demonstrate true multicultural leadership. Ishimaru et al. (2016) supports this approach, noting this system allows the

nondominant cultures to be visible and valued. Teachers begin to use the lessons, strategies, and resources in the classroom setting.

The fifth and final phase is Evaluation and Reanalysis of phases 1-4. Berkowitz et al. (2017) determined data collection must be systematic and ongoing, followed each time by interpretation and then action. Choices made to continue, modify, or cease components of this plan would be entirely dependent upon the evaluations made by those who have participated in the Community Cafés, the Welcome Team, and the classroom components of the plan.

Table 2.1

SCCS Tinley's Action Plan to Develop Race Relations

Phase 1: Assessment Through Data Collection			
Preparation to address Parts 1, 2, & 3 of the plan			
Students	*Teachers*	*Administration*	*Parents of Color*
Likert Scale and open-ended questions survey	Tally Chart of cultural interactions and learning	Support Teachers: accountability for completing the tally chart and cultural values.	Likert Scale and open-ended questions survey
	Teachers and support staff complete a survey of their cultural values.	Complete a survey of their cultural values.	Complete a survey of their cultural values.

Phase 2: Analysis and Discussion			
Addresses Part 1 & 3 of the plan			
Students	*Teachers*	*Administration*	*Parents of Color*
Participate in community cafes with each other to discuss and analyze the results of the child surveys facilitated by the school counselor.	School counselor facilitates the student community café.		

Students	Teachers	Administration	Parents
			Develop topics and a format for future community cafes with all parents.
	Participate in discussions with each other and administration regarding the results and implications from the tally chart and their own cultural values.	Facilitate discussions with teachers regarding the results and implications from the tally chart and their own cultural values.	

Phase 3: Collaboration
Addresses Part 1, 2, & 3 of the plan

Students	*Teachers*	*Administration*	*Parents*
Multiracial community cafes, where all students, are invited discuss and learn about race and ethnicity facilitated by the school counselor.	Multiracial community cafes, where the parents of all students, leaders, and teachers discuss race and ethnicity within the school.	Multiracial community cafes, where the parents of all students, leaders, and teachers discuss race and ethnicity within the school.	Multiracial community cafes, where the parents of all students, leaders, and teachers discuss race and ethnicity within the school.
		Participate in creating the Welcome Team for families who are new to SCCS Tinley.	Participate in creating and leading the Welcome Team for families who are new to SCCS Tinley.
	Choose strategies and resources to implement into their classroom culture and instructional lessons.	Check in with teachers and offer support for implementation of strategies, lessons, and resources.	

Phase 4: Implementation & Change
Addresses Part 1, 2, & 3 of the plan

Students	*Teachers*	*Administration*	*Parents*
		Meet with parents to hear, discuss, and consider changes to policy, procedure, and planning.	Changes to policy, procedure, and planning are proposed to administration.
New students participate with their families in activities set up by the Welcome Team.		Support the Welcome Team as needs arise and assistance is requested.	Launch the Welcome Team.
Participate in the lessons and learn from the strategies and resources teachers are implementing into classroom routines and instruction.	Implement the strategies, lessons, and resources into their classroom routines and instruction.	Check in with teachers about successes and setbacks with multicultural strategies, lessons, and resources. Support as needed.	Parent liaisons enter the classroom.

Phase 5: Evaluation & Reanalysis
Addresses Part 1, 2, & 3 of the plan

Students	*Teachers*	*Administration*	*Parents*
Complete a follow-up Likert Scale and open-ended questions survey.	Complete a follow-up Likert Scale and open-ended questions survey.	Complete a follow-up Likert Scale and open-ended questions survey.	Complete a follow-up Likert Scale and open-ended questions survey.
	Address the following: • Continue to modify, or add new strategies, lessons, or resources to the curriculum. • Identify future professional development	Address the following: • Continue and/or modify the Community Cafés? • Effectiveness of the Welcome Team?	Address the following: • Continue and/or modify the Community Cafés? • Effectiveness of the Welcome Team?

needs for multicultural education.	• Additional policy, procedure, and planning needs based on student and parent surveys. • Check in with teachers regarding classroom strategies, lessons, and resources. • Check in with teachers about future professional development needs and making a plan to meet those needs.	• Additional policy, procedure, and planning needs based on student and parent surveys. • Effectiveness of the parent liaison program.

Summary

In summary, this plan includes three goals executed in five implementation phases. These goals and phases are designed to invite honest communication, engage parents in collaborative multicultural community development, and form relationships between stakeholders within the community. The stakeholders include students, teachers, administration, and parents.

<div align="center">

Implementation of School Improvement Plan

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Timelines & Responsibilities

Timelines and responsibilities are broken down by the goals of the SIP: the Welcome Team, Community Cafés, and Classroom Strategies. Each Phase has the same timeline for each goal. Timelines are established in Table 3.1 for the Welcome Team, Table 3.2 for Community Cafés, and Table 3.3 for Classroom Strategies by month for the duration of one year beginning in the Spring 2023 and extending through the Spring 2024.

Table 3.1

Welcome Team

Phase	Stakeholders	Implementation Schedule
1: Assessment Through Data Collection • Fill out Likert Scales • Complete Values Survey	• Parents • Students • Teachers • Administration	April 2023
2: Analysis and Discussion • Community Cafés for nondominant families • Develop topics and format for full community cafés	 • Parents • Students • Parents	May 2023
3: Collaboration • Create the Welcome Team	• Parents • Administration	June 2023
4: Implementation & Change • Welcome Team is functional	• Parents • Administration • Students	August 2023-April 2024
5: Evaluation & Reanalysis • Evaluate the success of the Welcome Team • Analyze possible modifications of the Welcome Team	• Parents • Administration	May 2024

Table 3.2

Community Cafés

Phase	Stakeholders	Implementation Schedule
1: Assessment Through Data Collection • Fill out Likert Scales • Complete Values Survey	• Parents • Students • Teachers • Administration	April 2023
2: Analysis and Discussion	• Parents	May-June 2023

- Community Cafés for nondominant families
- Community Cafés for nondominant students

- Develop topics and format for full community cafés

	• Students	
	• Counselor	
	• Parents	

3: Collaboration
- Adult Multiracial community cafés
- Student Multiracial community cafés

	• Parents	August 2023
	• Administration	
	• Teachers	
	• Students	
	• Counselor	

4: Implementation & Change
- Multiracial community cafés continue
- Policy, procedure, and planning changes conversations

		August 2023-April 2024
	• Parents	
	• Administration	

5: Evaluation & Reanalysis
- Evaluate the success of the cafés
- Analyze possible modifications to the cafés
- Evaluate the policy and procedure changes

		May 2024
	• Parents	
	• Administration	

Table 3.3

Classroom Strategies

Phase	Stakeholders	Implementation Schedule
1: Assessment Through Data Collection		April 2023
• Fill in Tally Chart • Complete Values Survey	• Teachers • Administration	
2: Analysis and Discussion		May 2023
• Results of tally chart and survey	• Teachers • Administration	

3: Collaboration	• Teachers	August-September 2023
• Choose strategies, lessons, and resources	• Administration	
4: Implementation & Change		August 2023-April 2024
• Implement strategies, lessons, and resources	• Teachers • Administration	
5: Evaluation & Reanalysis		May 2024
• Evaluate the success of the strategies, lessons, and resources • Analyze possible modifications and additions to lessons, strategies, and resources • Identify future professional development needs	• Teachers • Administration • Parents	

Progress Monitoring

Swanson and Welton (2018) determined one administrator cannot bear the load of the multicultural climate of the school alone; at least one on-site support coach must be available to administration. Therefore, this SIP will be monitored by the principal, the curriculum director, and a teacher leader. Table 3.4 delineates check-ins will occur between the members of this team at the commencement of each phase, one to eight times during each phase, and at the end of a phase.

Table 3.4

Monitoring Team Check-In Schedule

Phase	Check In Time Frame
1: Beginning	April 3, 2023
1: Middle	April 17, 2023
1: End	April 28, 2023
2: Beginning	April 28/May 1, 2023
2: Middle	May 15, 2023
2: End	May 31, 2023
3: Beginning	May 31/June 1, 2023

3: Middle	June 15, 2023
3: End	June 30, 2023
4: Beginning	August 1, 2023
4: Middle	September 1, October 2, November 1, December 1, January 8, February 1, March 1, April 1
4: End	April 30/May 1, 2024
5: Beginning	April 30/May 1, 2024
5: Middle	May 15, 2024
5: End	May 31, 2024

Barriers and Challenges

The are several barriers to the success of this SIP. The first is this plan requires the participation of the entire school community to be viable. Secondarily, all participants must be willing to work in humble relationship with each other. If one group does not fulfill its roles, the other stakeholders of the community will feel the effects in negative and unhelpful ways. There are many moving parts to this plan; therefore, faithful participation and coordination amongst stakeholders will be key.

The second challenge to the success of this SIP is pride: this plan requires vulnerability and sacrifice. All stakeholders must honestly evaluate and articulate their own cultural experiences and values. Each member group will need to apply the Biblical principle of Philippians 2:1-4:

"So, if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, [2] complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. [3] Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. [4] Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others" (ESV).

Administration must willingly relinquish control and simultaneously lend support and leadership to teachers, parents, and students as they complete the relevant phases. Teachers will need to be teachable as they plan, prepare, and implement lessons prioritize showing value to all students. Students must listen to the experience of others as they develop empathy for each other. Parents will need to be the most vulnerable and simultaneously step into leadership as they advocate for the needs of the nondominant community in ways which bring unity and develops relationship.

The third barrier to this plan is the resource of time. The plan is set to launch in April as the school has intentions of forming a Welcome Team as soon as possible. The time commitment for administrators and parents is the most intense. The timespan of the SIP for each group will also require persistence, problem solving, priority, and prolonged attention for it to be successfully implemented and maintained.

Resources

There are many resources available to school communities as they implement multicultural educational curricula and programs. Resources for this SIP are divided into categories mirroring the three goals of the plan: Surveys and tips will be the basis for the Community Cafés (see Appendix 1.1-1.7), Welcome Team planning documents will support the launch process (see Appendix 2.1- 2.4), and classroom resources, strategies, and lessons will assist in relationship development (see Appendix 3.1- 3.6).

Community Cafés

Community café surveys (see Appendix A 1.1 & 1.2) include one survey with a Likert Scale rating system and open-ended questions for parents and students of color to complete. All parents, teachers, and administrators will also complete a cultural values survey (see Appendix A 1.3 & 1.4). These surveys will be used as the launch point for discussion in the nondominant

community cafés and for the inclusive culture cafés. There is a template for parents of color to

fill in as they determine the topics and format for the inclusive culture cafés (see Appendix A

1.5). For Phase 3, there is a policy, procedure, and planning template for parents and

administration to complete as a result of the discussions and needs identified during the

Community Cafés (see Appendix A 1.6). The final phase documents include a Likert Scale and

an open-ended questions evaluation of the community cafés and the policies, procedures, and

plans made throughout the year (see Appendix A 1.7).

Welcome Team

The welcome team documents include a tips sheet, a template for launching, and an

evaluation of the team's effectiveness. The tips sheet includes general guidelines for interacting

with members of groups in multiracial settings (see Appendix B 2.1). The template is basic

information needed to launch, but flexible enough to allow for the group's creativity and

inspiration to lead the details (see Appendix B 2.2). The evaluation will be completed by the new

families to give feedback and by members of the team for self-reflection (see Appendix B 2.3).

Classroom Resources

Resources for classroom use begin with the tally sheet of cultural interactions within the

classroom to be completed by teachers or a neutral observer (see Appendix C 3.1). Additional

documents include a list of books to be used for morning meetings or as read-alouds to

supplement the academic curriculum (see Appendix C 3.2), names of notable living people of

color who are members of the nondominant culture (see Appendix C 3.3), and technology

resources (see Appendix C 3.4). The same list of tips for the welcome team can and should also

be used by the community café groups and in the classroom by teachers (see Appendix C 3.5).

Parents of students of color are also encouraged to be a present and integral part of the classroom

learning environment. They are a resource to teachers and students. The final classroom resource

document delineates how parent liaisons can be an asset in the classroom (see Appendix C 3.6).

Conclusion

April Holland once said, "Embracing diversity is one adventure after another, opening

new paths of discovery connect an understanding to caring, listening, and sharing with others

who are different than ourselves." American schools, including SCCS Tinley, are facing the

choice of going on a cultural adventure as the racial, ethnic, and cultural demographics of the

United States have drastically changed and will continue to change (Census Bureau, 2023).

American schools to date have remained essentially unchanged and do not tangibly represent

blended cultural and ethnic communities (Ishimaru et al., 2016). Racial, ethnic, and cultural

minorities are daily being absorbed into the dominant white culture, sacrificing pieces of their

identities in the process (Yull et al., 2018). SCCS could acknowledge the changing demographics

of American society and choose to join the adventure of building cross-cultural relationships

within the school community.

SCCS Tinley must reckon with these cultural changes. There are four stakeholder groups

who will influence the ability of SCCS Tinley to be a culturally diverse community is healthy

and sustainable in the present and future: students, teachers, administrators, and parents. These

four groups will need to engage in open communication and learn from each other's history

through the sharing of individual experiences. They can then work and serve together and

develop lasting relationships.

Schools who successfully implement a multicultural education program are ones where

all students and families were valued through choices made in policy, procedure, and planning.

This plan delineates organizing community café forums for open dialogue, forming a welcome

team to help new families navigate the school, and intentionally using classroom strategies as proactive choices towards implementing a solid multicultural education program to intentionally develop relationships between stakeholders. The Tinley Campus has the opportunity to adventure together and become a beautiful mosaic of cultures representing God's diverse creation.

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Appendix A

Community Café

Resource 1.1 and 1.2: Community café surveys

Resource 1.3 and 1.4: Cultural values survey

Resource 1.5: Inclusive culture cafés structure

Resource 1.6: Policy, procedure, and planning template

Resource 1.7: Evaluation of community cafés and policies, procedures, and planning

Resource 1.1

Survey for Parents of Color

1. I feel connected to the other families at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What are things that make you feel connected to other families? If you do not feel connection, what would make you feel connected?

_____

_____

_____

2. My children feel connected to the other students at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What are things that make your child feel connected to other students? If you do not see the connection, what would make them feel connected?

_____

_____

_____

3. I feel connected to the teachers at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What are things that make you feel connected to teachers? If you do not feel the connection, what would make you feel connected?

_____

_____

_____

4. I feel connected to the administration of SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What are things that make you feel connected to administration. If you do not feel the connection, what would make you feel connected?

_____

_____

_____

5. I long for connection at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

6. I am motivated by the mission statement of SCCS Tinley "A Christ-Centered learning community intent on restoring God's world":

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What are things that make you feel motivated by the statement? If you do not feel motivated, what would make you feel motivated?

_____

_____

_____

7. Has a student ever made a racially inappropriate statement towards you or your child?

Never	Sometimes	Once	Many Times	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What things were said or actions done that felt like a microaggression or racism?

_____

_____

_____

8. Has a teacher ever made a racially inappropriate statement towards you or your child?

Never	Sometimes	Once	Many Times	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What things were said or actions done that felt like a microaggression or racism?

_____

_____

_____

9. Has an administrator ever made a racially inappropriate statement towards you or your child?

Never	Sometimes	Once	Many Times	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What things were said or actions done that felt like a microaggression or racism?

_____

_____

_____

10. Do you feel that your child has ever been unjustly disciplined due to his or her race by a teacher?

Never	Sometimes	Once	Many Times	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What were the circumstances and outcomes of the situation?

_____

_____

_____

11. Do you feel your child has ever been unjustly disciplined due to his or her race by an administrator?

Never	Sometimes	Once	Many Times	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What were the circumstances and outcomes of the situation?

_____

_____

_____

12. Do you feel your child's grades accurately reflect their ability?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please explain:

_____

_____

_____

13. Do you see your child as a student of color reflected in the curricular content?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please share where you have seen this representation:

_____

_____

_____

14. Do you believe SCCS students value and celebrate your child as a person of color?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What interactions have demonstrated this valuing to you or your child:

_____

_____

_____

15. Do you believe SCCS teachers value and celebrate your child as a person of color?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What interactions have demonstrated this valuing to you or your child:

_____

_____

_____

16. Do you believe SCCS administrators value your child as a person of color?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What interactions have demonstrated this valuing to you or your child:

_____

_____

_____

17. Does SCCS value you and your family's racial-ethnic identity beyond national holidays,

cultural celebrations, and history?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What interactions have demonstrated this valuing you or your child:

_____

_____

_____

18. Do you feel you made a choice for better education at the expense of your comfort or

feeling included at SCCS Tinley?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please explain:

_____

19. Do you have concern over your child being able to maintain their cultural identity within the predominantly white setting of SCCS Tinley?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please explain:

_____

_____

_____

20. Does your child feel comfortable discussing race, ethnicity, and multicultural topics here at SCCS Tinley?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please explain:

_____

_____

_____

21. Do you feel comfortable discussing race, ethnicity, and multicultural topics here at SCCS Tinley?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please explain:

_____

_____

_____

22. Do you feel you have a voice in the policies, procedures, and planning here at SCCS?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please explain:

_____

_____

_____

23. Is there anything else you feel would be valuable to share with the community?

_____

_____

_____

Resource 1.2

Survey for Students of Color

1. I am friends with other students of color at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What are things that make you feel connected to other students of color? If you do not feel connection, what would make you feel connected?

_____

_____

_____

2. I am friends with White students at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What are things that make you feel connected to White students? If you do not feel connection, what would make you feel connected?

_____

_____

_____

3. I feel like I can talk with the teachers at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What are things that make you feel connected to teachers? If you do not feel the connection, what would make you feel connected?

_____

_____

_____

4. I feel like I can talk with Mr. Siemer at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What are things that make you feel connected to Mr. Siemer? If you do not feel the connection, what would make you feel connected?

_____

_____

_____

5. Has a student ever made a racially inappropriate statement towards you?

Never	Sometimes	Once	Many Times	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What things were said or actions done that felt like a microaggression or racism?

_____

_____

_____

6. Has a teacher ever made a racially inappropriate statement towards you?

Never	Sometimes	Once	Many Times	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What things were said or actions done that felt like a microaggression or racism?

_____

_____

_____

7. Has an administrator ever made a racially inappropriate statement towards you?

Never	Sometimes	Once	Many Times	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What things were said or actions done that were felt like a microaggression or racism?

_____

_____

_____

8. Do you feel that you have ever been unjustly disciplined due to the color of your skin?

Never	Sometimes	Once	Many Times	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What happened?

_____

_____

_____

9. Do you feel your grades accurately reflect your ability?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please explain:

_____

_____

_____

10. Do you see yourself as a student of color pictured or discussed in school materials?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please share where you have seen it:

_____

_____

_____

11. Do you believe SCCS students value you as a student of color?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What interactions have demonstrated this valuing you:

_____

_____

_____

12. Do you believe SCCS teachers value and celebrate you as a student of color?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What interactions have demonstrated this valuing you:

_____

_____

_____

13. Do you believe SCCS administrators value and celebrate you as a student of color?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What interactions have demonstrated this valuing you or your child:

_____

_____

_____

14. Does SCCS value you and your family's racial-ethnic identity beyond national holidays, cultural celebrations, and history?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

What interactions have demonstrated this valuing you:

_____

_____

_____

15. Do you have concern over being able to maintain your cultural identity within the predominantly white setting of SCCS Tinley?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please explain:

_____

_____

_____

16. Do feel comfortable discussing race, ethnicity, and multicultural topics here at SCCS Tinley?

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please explain:

_____

_____

_____

17. Is there anything else you feel would be valuable to share with the community?

_____

_____

_____

Resource 1.3

Cultural Values Survey (Parents)

1. My culture values its unique identity as a culture:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

This is how I embrace my culture's identity:

_____

_____

_____

2. My culture understands its history:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

This is how I understand my history within my culture:

_____

_____

_____

3. My culture values family structures:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

This is how I value family structure:

_____

_____

_____

4. My culture values social justice:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

This is how I value social justice:

_____

_____

_____

5. My culture values a quality education:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

This is how I value education:

_____

_____

_____

6. My culture values engaging and participating in children's education:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

This is how I engage and participate in my child's education:

_____

_____

_____

Resource 1.4

Cultural Values Survey (Teachers & Administrators)

1. This is how race and culture impact my curricular choices:

    _____

    _____

    _____

2. This is how race and culture impact my classroom management and environmental
    choices:

    _____

    _____

    _____

3. This is how race and culture impact my discipline choices:

    _____

    _____

    _____

4. This is how race and culture impact my grading practices:

    _____

    _____

    _____

5. This is how race and culture impact relationships with my students:

    _____

    _____

    _____

6. This is how race and culture impact the way I speak to and the language I use with my
    students:

    _____

    _____

    _____

7. This is how race and culture impact relationships with the parents of my students:

    _____

    _____

    _____

8. This is how race and culture impact my choices on parent involvement in my classroom:

    _____

    _____

    _____

9. This is how race and culture impact relationships with my colleagues:

    _____

    _____

    _____

10. I am aware of microaggressions when I am with people of other races and cultures:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

11. I am colorblind (I do not see race; I see students as students):

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

12. I spend time reflecting on my cultural and racial choices:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

13. I believe that it is my role as a teacher to teach children about race and culture:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

14. I teach about cultures and races beyond national holidays and celebrations:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

15. I understand my role in scaffolding children's learning about race:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

16. I equate teaching about racism as a way to teach about social justice:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

17. I have time to integrate multicultural education into my curricular subjects:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

18. I believe that parents will object to a multicultural curriculum at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

19. I believe that the school impacts the cultural identity development of students regardless of the curriculum:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

20. I believe that I understand the cultural values of my students:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

21. I believe that I understand the cultural values of my parents:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

22. I believe that I understand my own cultural values:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

23. I believe that I understand the privileges that come with my own race:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

24. I am willing to engage in conversations about race and culture with my students:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

25. I am willing to engage in conversations about race and culture with the parents of my students:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

26. I am willing to engage in conversations about race and culture with my colleagues:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

27. I am willing to engage in conversations about race and culture with my own family:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

28. I believe that we are a welcoming community to all new and existing families at SCCS:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

29. I believe that students of color at SCCS feel welcomed and valued:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

30. I believe that parents of color at SCCS feel welcomed and valued:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

31. These are my goals for incorporating a multicultural curriculum into my students' learning goals:

_____

_____

_____

Resource 1.5

Community Café Meeting Format

(To be determined by parents of color or cultural brokers leading the discussions)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Possible Format (modify as needed):

1. Open in prayer.
2. Remind participants of positive guidelines for speaking in a group setting.
3. Break into groups for discussion.
4. Complete the Community Café form.
5. Take time to pray again as a large group.
6. Invite the discussion leaders to briefly share their groups' insights.
7. Confirm the next date and topic for discussion.
8. Adjourn

Meeting Tips & Guidelines

1. It is easy for strategy sessions to become generic and not focus on the actual strategic practices that will encourage growth and change (Ishimaru, 2017). Filling out the forms before, during, and after the cafés will keep us on track toward developing multicultural relationships.

2. Honor the start and stop times for the discussion.

3. We are here to learn from each other, find commonalities, and understand our differences in an effort to develop lasting positive relationships.

4. Our experiences to this point in life have not been the same. However, we can honor and respect each other through our body language and verbal responses to what is shared.

   -Listen first

   -Ask clarifying questions to understand

   -Encourage those speaking and thank them for sharing

5. We must recognize that one person's experience does not necessarily represent an entire race or culture's views; it represents one person's experience and opinion. Also, a cultural stereotype (true or not) does not in turn represent all individuals within a culture or race.

6. If you are unsure of what terminology to use in a group setting, just ask (Candace Neil)!

   a. Does this group and individuals within this group prefer the terms Black, African American, or both? (Persons of this race and culture determine this usage.)

   b. Does this group and individuals within this group prefer the terms Hispanic, Latino(a), or both? (Persons of this race and culture determine this usage.)

   c. Does this group and individuals within this group okay prefer the terms White, Caucasian, or both? (Persons of this race and culture determine this usage.)

Terminology and Vocabulary

1. <u>Stereotype</u>- a widely held, oversimplified, often fixed idea or image of a thing, person, or group of persons (OUP, 2023).

2. <u>Racism</u>- "prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism by an individual, community, or institution against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized" (OUP, 2023).

3. <u>Colorblind</u>- a perceived way to end racism by not acknowledging someone's race, ethnicity, or culture—seeing them as "just a person" (Vittrup, 2016).

4. <u>Colormute</u>- choosing to avoid speaking of race, ethnicity, or culture (Vittrup, 2016).

5. <u>Racial Bias</u>- to be biased against someone based on their race (OUP, 2023).

6. <u>Race Conscious</u>- someone who is aware of race and makes active choices against racism (Swanson & Welton, 2018).

7. <u>Race Neutrality</u>- someone who is aware of race, makes no active choices to end racism, but who is not explicitly racist (Swanson & Welton, 2018).

8. <u>Racial Socialization</u>- the ways in which a person learns about race and develops their self-identity as a result (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011).

9. <u>Racial Identity</u>- an identity adopted by individuals or groups of individuals based on race, ethnicity, or culture (OUP, 2023).

10. <u>Family Engagement</u>- Parents and families who are involved in the school in leadership roles (Ishimaru, 2017).

11. <u>Critical Race Theory (CRT)</u>- "A set of ideas holding that racial bias is inherent in many parts of western society, especially in its legal and social institutions, on the basis of their having been primarily designed for and implemented by white people" (OUP, 2023).

12. <u>Cultural Competency</u>- "Cultural competency means being aware of your own cultural beliefs and values and how these may be different from other cultures—including being able to learn about and honor the different cultures of those you work with" (2009).

13. <u>Culture</u>- "the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group" (OUP, 2023).

14. <u>Culturally Responsive Leadership</u>- Leaders who connect theory to practice, challenge dominant ideologies, and take action (Lopez, 2015).

15. <u>Social Justice Leadership</u>- A framework designed to help leaders be responsive as they "advocate, lead, and keep at the center of their practice and vision issues . . . and other factors that have historically marginalized others" (Lopez, 2015).

16. <u>New Racism</u>- "Racism based on cultural attributes rather than visible physical traits" (Priest et al., 2016).

17. <u>Exclusionary Discipline</u>- removal from a situation.

18. <u>Whiteness</u>- a white person understanding their own culture, history, and often the privileges that come with being white (Buchanan, 2015).

19. <u>Cultural Brokers</u>- Someone who helps families decode the dominant culture, often share a marginalized status with those they are engaging so the relationship is reciprocal (Ishimaru et al., 2016).

20. <u>Microaggressions</u>- "a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or <u>unintentional</u> discrimination against members of a <u>marginalized</u> group such as a racial or ethnic minority" (OUP, 2023).

21. <u>Internalized Racism</u>- the internalization of racism and feeling that your race is an inconvenience or inferior, resulting in anxiety, shame, and "othering" (Kohli & Solorzano, 2012).

22. <u>Cross-Sector Collaboration</u>- various groups across cultures (students, teachers, administration, and parents) within the school working together towards a common goal (Ishimaru, 2017).

23. <u>School Climate</u>- the quality and character of a school that is either real or perceived by stakeholders (Berkowitz et al., 2017).

Community Café # _____, Date:

Discussion Topic: _____

Goal(s) for this session:

1.

2.

3.

Areas of praise and encouragement identified for the school during café conversations:

1.

2.

3.

Areas of concern identified during café conversations:

1.

2.

3.

(These areas could be suggested as possible procedure or policy changes. See Resource 1.6 if you would like to discuss the concerns with an administrator.)

Suggested topic for next discussion:

Date of next discussion:

Resource 1.6

Policy, Procedure, and Planning Template (for parents and administration)

Current policy, procedure, or planning area:

Concerns with the current policy, procedure, or planning area:

1.

2.

3.

Positive aspects of the current policy, procedure, or planning area:

1.

2.

3.

Possible modifications, additions, or deletions of the current policy, procedure, or planning area:

1.

2.

3.

Meeting with principal scheduled for:

Outcomes of the meeting with the principal:

1.

2.

3.

Resource 1.7

Community Café Evaluation & Analysis (for all community café participants)

1. I enjoyed participating in the community cafés at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

2. I felt like my culture and race were valued at the community cafés at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

3. I felt like I was respected and valued at the community cafés at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

4. I have new positive relationships with individuals from participating in the community cafés at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

5. I can see tangible changes in the school community relationships after participating in the community cafés at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

6. I can see tangible changes in the school policy, procedures, and planning areas as a result of participating in the community cafés at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

7. I plan to continue engaging in racial discussions and celebrations due to the community cafés at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

8. I plan to find more ways to become engaged in the school and/or the school community due to my participation in the community cafés at SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

9. These are my suggestions for future community cafés:

    _____

    _____

    _____

10. These are the pieces of the community cafés I would like to see continue:

    _____

    _____

    _____

11. Please share any additional thoughts you have regarding community cafés at SCCS
    Tinley:

    _____

    _____

    _____

Appendix B

Resource 2.1: Welcome Team tips and guidelines

Resource 2.2: Welcome Team launch template

Resource 2.3: Evaluation of Welcome Team success

Resource 2.1

<u>Welcome Team Tips & Guidelines</u>

1. It is easy for strategy sessions to become generic and not focus on the actual strategic practices which will encourage growth and change (Ishimaru, 2017). Following the guidelines developed by the Welcome Team Leadership Team will keep us on track to developing multicultural relationships.

2. Honor the dates and times you have set up with new families.

3. We are here to learn from each other, find commonalities, and understand our differences in an effort to develop lasting positive relationships.

4. Our experiences to this point in life have not been the same. However, we can honor and respect each other through our body language and verbal responses to what is shared.

   -Listen first

   -Ask clarifying questions to understand

   -Encourage those speaking and thank them for sharing

5. We must recognize one person's experience does not necessarily represent an entire race or culture's views; it represents one person's experience and opinion as a result. Also, a cultural stereotype (true or not) does not in turn represent all individuals within a culture or race.

6. If you are unsure of what terminology to use in a group setting, just ask (Candace Neil)!

   a. Does this group and individuals within this group prefer the terms Black, African American, or both? (Persons of this race and culture determine this usage.)

   b. Does this group and individuals within this group prefer the terms Hispanic, Latino(a), or both? (Persons of this race and culture determine this usage.)

   c. Does this group and individuals within this group okay prefer the terms White, Caucasian, or both? (Persons of this race and culture determine this usage.)

Terminology and Vocabulary

1.   Stereotype- a widely held, oversimplified, often fixed idea or image of a thing, person, or group of persons (OUP, 2023).

2.   Racism- "prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism by an individual, community, or institution against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one is a minority or marginalized" (OUP, 2023).

3.   Colorblind- a perceived way to end racism by not acknowledging someone's race, ethnicity, or culture- seeing them as 'just a person' (Vittrup, 2016).

4.   Colormute- choosing to avoid speaking of race, ethnicity, or culture (Vittrup, 2016).

5.   Racial Bias- to be biased against someone based on their race (OUP, 2023).

6.   Race Conscious- someone who is aware of race and makes active choices against racism (Swanson & Welton, 2018).

7.   Race Neutrality- someone who is aware of race, makes no active choices to end racism, but who is not explicitly racist (Swanson & Welton, 2018).

8.   Racial Socialization- the ways in which a person learns about race and develops their self-identity as a result (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011).

9.   Racial Identity- an identity adopted by individuals or groups of individuals based on race, ethnicity, or culture (OUP, 2023).

10. <u>Family Engagement</u>- Parents and families who are involved in the school in leadership roles (Ishimaru, 2017).

11. <u>Critical Race Theory (CRT)</u>- "a set of ideas holding racial bias is inherent in many parts of western society, especially in its legal and social institutions, on the basis of their having been primarily designed for and implemented by white people (OUP, 2023).

12. <u>Cultural Competency</u>- "Cultural competency means being aware of your own cultural beliefs and values and how these may be different from other cultures—including being able to learn about and honor the different cultures of those you work with" (2009).

13. <u>Culture</u>- "the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group" (OUP, 2023).

14. <u>Culturally Responsive Leadership</u>- Leaders who connect theory to practice, challenge dominant ideologies, and take action (Lopez, 2015).

15. <u>Social Justice Leadership</u>- A framework designed to help leaders be responsive as they "advocate, lead, and keep at the center of their practice and vision issues…and other factors have historically marginalized others" (Lopez, 2015).

16. <u>New Racism</u>- "Racism based on cultural attributes rather than visible physical traits" (Priest et al., 2016).

17. <u>Exclusionary Discipline</u>- removal from a situation.

18. <u>Whiteness</u>- a white person understanding their own culture, history, and often the privileges come with being white (Buchanan, 2015).

19. <u>Cultural Brokers</u>- Someone who helps families decode the dominant culture, often share a marginalized status with those they are engaging so the relationship is reciprocal (Ishimaru et al., 2016).

20. <u>Microaggressions</u>- "a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or <u>unintentional</u> discrimination against members of a <u>marginalized</u> group such as a racial or ethnic minority" (OUP, 2023).

21. <u>Internalized Racism</u>- the internalization of racism and feeling your race is an inconvenience or inferior resulting in anxiety, shame, and 'othering' (Kohli & Solorzano, 2012).

22. <u>Cross-Sector Collaboration</u>- various groups across cultures (students, teachers, administration, and parents) within the school working together towards a common goal (Ishimaru, 2017).

23. <u>School Climate</u>- the quality and character of a school is either real or perceived by stakeholders (Berkowitz et al., 2017).

Resource 2.2

Welcome Team Launch Template

Potential Leadership Team Members:

Name:	Phone:	Email:	Race/Ethnicity:

Goals of the Welcome Team:

1.

2.

3.

Tasks of the Welcome Team:

Task	Leader Responsible for Coordinating

Additional Ideas:

Resource 2.3

Welcome Team Evaluation and Analysis Survey (for new parents)

1. Our Welcome Team family sincerely welcomed our family to SCCS Tinley through action and word:

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

Please share any information you feel applies:

_____

_____

_____

2. Our Welcome Team family connected with us monthly throughout the year:

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

Please share any information you feel applies:

_____

_____

_____

3. Our Welcome Team family was able to answer our questions about SCCS Tinley:

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

Please share any information you feel applies:

_____

_____

_____

4. Our Welcome Team family initiated reminders about upcoming events at SCCS Tinley:

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

Please share any information you feel applies:

_____

_____

_____

5. Our Welcome Team family helped us navigate the "hidden rules" or unknown aspects of SCCS Tinley:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please share any information you feel applies:

_____

_____

_____

6. We plan to continue the relationship we developed with our Welcome Team family beyond this year:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please share any information you feel applies:

_____

_____

_____

7. We were successful at SCCS this year due in large part to our SCCS Welcome Team family:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please share any information you feel applies:

_____

_____

_____

8. We would like to join the Welcome Team in future years and assist new families successfully join the SCCS community:

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please share any information you feel applies:

_____

_____

_____

WELCOME

9. ? :

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please share any information you feel applies:

_____

_____

_____

10. ? :

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please share any information you feel applies:

_____

_____

_____

11. ? :

Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Please share any information you feel applies:

_____

_____

_____

12. Please share any additional information you feel will assist us in evaluating the success of our Welcome Team:

_____

_____

_____

Welcome Team Survey Results

1. Our Welcome Team family sincerely welcomed our family to SCCS Tinley through action and word:

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

2. Our Welcome Team family connected with us monthly throughout the year:

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

3. Our Welcome Team family was able to answer our questions about SCCS Tinley:

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

4. Our Welcome Team family initiated reminders about upcoming events at SCCS Tinley:

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

5. Our Welcome Team family helped us navigate the "hidden" rules or unknown aspects of SCCS Tinley:

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

6. We plan to continue the relationship we developed with our Welcome Team family beyond this year:

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

7. We were successful at SCCS this year due in large part to our SCCS Welcome Team family:

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

8. We would like to join the Welcome Team in future years and assist new families successfully join the SCCS community:

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

9. *?*

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

10. *?*

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

11. *?*

Never 1	Sometimes 2	Neutral 3	Mostly 4	Always 5

12. Please share any additional information you feel will assist us in evaluating the success of our Welcome Team:

13.

Appendix C

Resource 3.1: Cultural interactions tally sheets

Resource 3.2: Multicultural book list

Resource 3.3: Notable living people of color

Resource 3.4: Technology resources for teachers

Resource 3.5: Guidelines and tips for teachers

Resource 3.6: Parent Liaisons

Resource 3.1

Classroom Cultural Interactions

Tally Chart Week 1:

Number of times nondominant students engage with dominant students	
Number of times nondominant students engage with teachers (outside of calling on them for a lesson)	
Number of times students of color engage with each other	
Number of conversations I have with students of color during transitions	
Number of conversations I have with white students during transitions	
Microaggressions I observed during the day	

Tally Chart Week 2:

Number of times nondominant students engage with dominant students	
Number of times nondominant students engage with teachers (outside of calling on them for a lesson)	
Number of times students of color engage with each other	
Number of conversations I have with students of color during transitions	
Number of conversations I have with white students during transitions	
Microaggressions I observed during the day	

Tally Chart Week 3:

Number of times nondominant students engage with dominant students	
Number of times nondominant students engage with teachers (outside of calling on them for a lesson)	
Number of times students of color engage with each other	
Number of conversations I have with students of color during transitions	
Number of conversations I have with white students during transitions	
Microaggressions I observed during the day	

Tally Chart Week 4:

Number of times nondominant students engage with dominant students	
Number of times nondominant students engage with teachers (outside of calling on them for a lesson)	
Number of times students of color engage with each other	
Number of conversations I have with students of color during transitions	
Number of conversations I have with white students during transitions	
Microaggressions I observed during the day	

Resource 3.2

Book Resource List

<u>Multicultural Book List</u>

Compiled by Candace Neil, MAED Educational Administration & Leadership

Title & Author	Topics
James and the Alphabet by James W. Anderson III	alphabet
Don't Touch My Hair by Sharee Miller	personal space, asking permission, representation
Saving the Day by Karen Parsons	curiosity, inventions, problem-solving
Bunheads by Misty Copeland	joy, happiness, fairytale style
Stacey's Extraordinary Words by Stacey Abrams	vocabulary (it's ok to have a big one), feelings, kindness, bullying
Milo Imagines the World by Matt De La Pena	perspective, imagination, transportation,
Izzy Gizmo by Pip Jones	inventions, STEM, perseverance
Tallulah the Tooth Fairy CEO by Dr. Tamara Pizzola	fairy tale, dentist, mistakes, forgiveness
The Camping Trip by Jennifer K. Mann	planning, challenges, map skills
Looking for a Jumbie by Tracey Batiste	pattern, repetition, monsters, folktales

12 Dinging Doorbells by Tameka Brown	pattern, repetition, holidays, numbers
Harlem Grown by Tony Hillery	plants, fruits, vegetables, earth day
The All Together Quilt by Lizzy Rockwell	math, teamwork
Not quite Snow white by Ashley Franklin	self-esteem, adjectives, nouns, verbs
Magic Hair by Raquel Hudson	how hair grows, predicting

Compiled by Rebecca Rael

Title & Author	Topics
The Girl with the Shoebox Lunch by Sharon Russell	transportation, family
Last Stop on Market Street by Matt De La Pena	transportation, acts of service
The Airport Book by Lisa Brown	transportation
Ruby Finds a Worry by Tom Percival	emotions
Meesha Makes Friends by Tom Percival	friendship

Tilda Tries Again by Tom Percival	persistence
Perfectly Norman by Tom Percival	perfectionism
Ravi's Roar by Tom Percival	managing emotions
The Invisible by Tom Percival	poverty
Milo's Monster by Tom Percival	friendship, jealousy
The King of Kindergarten by Derrick Barnes	confidence, first day of school
The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats	snow, tracks/footprints
We Are Water Protectors by Carol Lindstrom	earth day
When's My Birthday? by Julie Fogliano	anticipation, birthdays
Eyes That Kiss in the Corners by Joanna Ho	family identity, heritage
Millions of Maxes by Meg Wolitzer	uniqueness
Evelyn Del Rey is Moving Away by Meg Medina	friendship, moving

Saving American Beach by Heidi Tyline King	earth day, segregation, opera
Parker Looks Up: An Extraordinary Moment by Parker Curry	seeing yourself in heroes
The Queen of Kindergarten by Derrick Barnes	first day of school, fear
You Matter by Christian Robinson	self-worth
The World Belonged to Us by Jaqueline Woodson	day off of school
Dream Street by Tricia Elam Walker	neighborhood, community

<u>Book Reminders</u>

1. Representation, seeing yourself in books (and in the classroom) matters (Neil, 2023)!

2. Books often highlight these features for students of color: hair, athletic ability, or musical talent. Also choose ones that simply have characters of color, or books by diverse authors (Neil, 2023).

3. The books on this list can and should be used to teach literacy skills, social-emotional concepts, and more. Do not limit them to the multicultural character or topic (Neil, 2023).

4. A true multicultural curriculum is more than reading a story occasionally; however, books are a great starting point and a necessary component.

5. Students can empathize with characters in a story (Sarraj et al., 2015).

6. Reading books alone is not as effective as reading them *and* discussing them afterwards (Boutte et al., 2011).

7. Using fiction and nonfiction literature ensures the issues are real and have concrete information (Boutte et al., 2011).

8. Even children as young as preschool can see beyond themselves when guided through texts (Hawkins, 2014).

Resource 3.3

Living Person Resource

Have You Heard About?

(List compiled by Candace Neil)

Person	Curricular Tie In
Bessie Coleman	Aviation
Wilma Rudolph	Olympic sprinter
Muhammad Ali	Boxing, Parkinson's Disease
Marian Anderson	You can play her music during independent work times or transitions. Theatre, dramatic play
Arthur Robert Ashe Jr., Venus Williams, Serena Williams	Tennis player—math, geometry, spheres
Benjamin Oliver Davis Jr.	Transportation
Kamala Harris	Government
Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett	Influential in developing the COVID-19 vaccine
Nia Da Costa	Film director
Steveland Hardaway Morris 'Stevie Wonder'	Music, young talent Patterns (piano keys), counting, 5 senses
Mark Dean	Computers, internet STEM, shapes 2D/3D, letter recognition on the keyboard, typing
Marsai Martin	Creator of Black-ish

Marley Dias	Activist
Cory Nieves	Entrepreneur, owns Mr. Cory's Cookies, started at age 6
Maya Penn	Entrepreneur recycling, sustainability
Jahkil Jackson	Project I Am Blessing bags, philanthropy, emotions, needs vs. wants

Great People Reminders

1. Past-Present-Future: History is relevant, but all great people aren't dead! You must include living, current humans who are making change. Include our students (Neil, 2023)!

2. Try to find pictures for Black History that are in color. Black and white photos don't bring life to their memory (Neil, 2023).

3. You may need to do some research to find or learn more about these lesser-known people who can tie into your classroom studies in literature, the arts, science, social studies, and math.

4. This information is available to be used as a study of significant, current figures who are making a difference in the world during such times as morning meetings. They can also be embedded during a curricular study.

Resource 3.4

General Cultural Awareness

Cultural Education Considerations for PK-8 Students

1. Students are curious to learn about other cultures (Sarraj et al., 2015).

2. Students know stereotypes are wrong, but they don't always know what terminology and vocabulary to use to express stereotypes (Sarraj et al., 2015).

3. The curriculum and teachers need to use specific racial terminology. Teachers often shy away from racial conversations and teaching due to a lack of comfort and confidence (Sarraj et al., 2015 & Vittrup, 2016).

4. Making friends and engaging in open, developmentally appropriate dialogue about race is the best way for anyone to eliminate stereotypes (Sarraj et al., 2015; Vittrup, 2016). Friendship also helps children develop a positive self-identity (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011).

5. Not addressing racism sends a message that the topic is taboo. Students will develop misconceptions or own interpretations (Boutte et al., 2011). Kids are trying to find meaning; they already live in a world that requires them to know and have the verbal skills to function within it. They are not colorblind (Priest et al., 2016).

6. Consistent identity affirmation increases student academic achievement (Yull et al., 2014).

7. A child's earliest experiences with race are identifiable in adulthood (Buchanan, 2015). Even an isolated experience has a lasting impact and is internalized by a child (Kohli & Solorzano, 2012). Therefore, in a predominantly white classroom where race is often not discussed, teachers must be intentional about engaging in discussions on race and teaching the vocabulary. Children are not colorblind (Buchanan, 2015).

8. Names are important, and when not used with respect fall under the category of microaggressions. Respectful name tips:
    a. Learn every student's name and say it the way their family does. Mispronunciation and avoidance of saying a name can cause a child to want to become invisible.
    b. Laughter around a name is rarely good as it leads to teasing.
    c. Changing names was done during slavery. Names have meaning— do not change them without permission.
    d. It is laziness on a teacher's part to not get it right (Kohli & Solorzano, 2012).

9. One-time discussions about race do not break the cycle of racism; they may even inadvertently perpetuate it (Boutte et al., 2011).

10. Colorblindness, seeing someone as a person without culture, ethnicity, or race, doesn't acknowledge the personal identity, personal history, personal struggles, or personal legacy of people of color.

Terminology and Vocabulary

1. Stereotype- a widely held, oversimplified, often fixed idea or image of a thing, person, or group of persons (OUP, 2023).

2. Racism- "prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism by an individual, community, or institution against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one is a minority or marginalized" (OUP, 2023).

3. Colorblind- a perceived way to end racism by not acknowledging someone's race, ethnicity, or culture- seeing them as 'just a person' (Vittrup, 2016).

4. Colormute- choosing to avoid speaking of race, ethnicity, or culture (Vittrup, 2016).

5. Racial Bias- to be biased against someone based on their race (OUP, 2023).

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8. Racial Socialization- the ways in which a person learns about race and develops their self-identity as a result (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011).

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11.   <u>Critical Race Theory (CRT)</u>- "a set of ideas holding that racial bias is inherent in many parts of western society, especially in its legal and social institutions, on the basis of their having been primarily designed for and implemented by white people (OUP, 2023).

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13.   <u>Culture</u>- "the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group" (OUP, 2023).

14.   <u>Culturally Responsive Leadership</u>- Leaders who connect theory to practice, challenge dominant ideologies, and take action (Lopez, 2015).

15.   <u>Social Justice Leadership</u>- A framework designed to help leaders be responsive as they "advocate, lead, and keep at the center of their practice and vision issues…and other factors that have historically marginalized others" (Lopez, 2015).

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22. <u>Cross-Sector Collaboration</u>- various groups across cultures (students, teachers, administration, and parents) within the school working together towards a common goal (Ishimaru, 2017).

23. <u>School Climate</u>- the quality and character of a school that is either real or perceived by stakeholders (Berkowitz et al., 2017).

Resource 3.5

Technology Resources

Technology Resources

(Compiled by Candace Neil)

Resource	Academic Tie In
Sankofa Read Aloud https://www.youtube.com/@SankofaReadAloud	Sankofa reads African books you can't always find in hard copy. She also reads current multicultural literature. Early Childhood and Elementary
Tab Time with Tabitha Brown https://www.youtube.com/@iamtabithabrown	Episodes on fear, pets, trying new things, sharing, winning and losing, how things grow, cause and effect, and more! Early Childhood and Early Elementary
Karma's World https://www.netflix.com/title/81021116	Middle schooler who loves music.
Akili and Me https://www.youtube.com/@AkiliAndMe	Early Childhood (PK-K)
Gracie's Corner https://www.youtube.com/@graciescorner	Early Childhood and Elementary
Doggyland https://www.youtube.com/@DoggylandKids	Early Childhood (PK-K)

Even short multimedia clips can be used to entice student interest (Sarraj et al., 2015).

Resource 3.6

Parent Liaisons

Benefits to Engaging Parents In Your Classroom:

1. Engaging parents in your classroom creates a culturally affirming community (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011).
2. Engaging parents in your classroom helps reduce isolation in the community (Yull et al., 2014).
3. Benefits of having a parent liaison in your classroom:
   a. They can connect with students who are off-task and get them back on track.
   b. They can help teachers understand student difficulties outside of the school and with race-related concerns.
   c. Being involved in the classroom gains the parent mentors respect amongst the students and the community (Yull et al., 2018).
   d. They can work with small groups or with individual children.
   e. They can read stories to the students.
   f. They can moderate disagreements between students.
   g. They can answer questions during an independent learning task.
4. Parental involvement and engagement are often dependent upon their communication from the school and their perception of the school. A parent's likelihood of engaging is higher based communication from you and their perception of you (Stacer & Perrucci, 2012)! Parents will read your attitude towards them (Berkowitz et al., 2017).