



Blind Spot 2 - Bias-Based Beliefs

Color-Evasiveness	
BELIEFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Color is not seen; cultural lived experiences are irrelevant (Bonilla-Silva, 2013 and Fergus, 2017).
VALUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualism • Centering/prioritizing norms of the dominant culture (Milner 2020), including norms around hairstyles, literature, holidays.
IMPACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leads to dismissal of assertions of systemic racism and systemic inequities which reinforces deficit thinking, poverty disciplining, and systemic inequities (Fergus, 2017) • Culture, values, practices of school members not a part of the dominant culture are devalued, marginalized, ignored and/or “problematic.” (The Continuum CCPEP.ORG, n.d.) • Invalidates lived racial experiences of students of color (Milner, 2020) • Cultural background and experiences of the student body are minimally reflected or not considered when determining curriculum or drafting policies and procedures. • Can result in students reliving traumatic experiences because of a lack of cultural sensitivity (Fergus, 2017) • Conversations about discriminated groups, systemic inequities and social justice are avoided or penalized. • Culture of fear, disappointment, tokenization or segregation (Milner, 2020) • Students experience microaggressions* (Fergus, 2017) • Missed opportunities to: (1) see the whole child; (2) learn about the students’ racial identities as well as their own and how it impacts what is taught; (3) broaden students’ horizons so they see themselves and their culture’s contributions to the curriculum as well as other culture’s contributions; and (4) prepare students to live and work in a diverse world (Milner, 2020).

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Deficit Thinking	
BELIEFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain groups of students/families/cultures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ do not care about their student’s academic performance. ◦ aren’t naturally smart or capable of high academic achievement. ◦ are not going to score high, if English is not their first language. ◦ If they didn’t test well, they’re not going to do well in the class or successfully handle the curriculum. <p>(Milner, 2020, Valencia, 2012, and)</p>
VALUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credibility of limited experiences or interactions with students from certain cultural groups • Using “leaves” or “trunks” as indicators of likelihood of student academic achievement • Patterns that fit personal lived experiences • The validity of one standard or limited measures to assess genius, talent and academic capabilities <p>(Milner, 2020)</p>
IMPACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Students with disabilities are presumed to not be capable [simply because] they’ve been identified as having a disability. And as a result, may not have access to the same opportunities as their peers” (CDE Office of Improvement Planning, et al). • “Assumes a denial of values that supports education...[which] allows for abdication of [educators’] responsibility for connecting with students and families (CDE Office of Improvement Planning, et al). • Students feel overlooked, lowered self-esteem • “Other-imposed” self-fulfilling prophecy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Pygmalion Effect. The Pygmalion Effect is a type of “other-imposed” self-fulfilling prophecy that states the way you treat someone has a direct impact on how that person acts (Schaedig, 2023). In other words, if we as educators expect certain actions from certain students, we are more likely to treat them in such a way that can lead to the anticipated actions. The students’ actions do not necessarily occur because we were right, but rather because of an internalized attitude the student adopted about themselves as a result of the ways we consciously or subconsciously treated them. • Lowered expectations in the classroom; increased “busy-work” • Lack of inclusive or rigorous curriculum • Disproportionately low numbers of people of color in honors or AP classes • Students experience microaggressions* (Fergus, 2017) • Missed opportunities to learn what students know and build on their cultural assets in order to develop learning opportunities that challenge students (Milner, 2020)

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Deficit Thinking	
BELIEFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-income students/families, particularly those experiencing generational poverty: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Lack morals, good manners, and/or the ability to avoid self-destructive behavior ◦ “Cannot follow directions” ◦ “Defensive, victimized, emotional” (Payne, 2003) ◦ Don’t take responsibility for their actions or success ◦ Are less motivated or less inclined to succeed ◦ Don’t take school seriously (Soss et al., 2011)
VALUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meritocracy • Compliance, assimilation to white dominant culture / “middle class norms” (Milner, 2020 and Payne, 2003)
IMPACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A tendency to look at and interact with students experiencing poverty through the lens of deficit-based thinking • Assumption that low-income students will be disruptive, disobedient and disrespectful (Payne, 2003) • Hyperfocused expectation that the poor students will act in a deviant way (Payne, 2003) • Educators default to harsher treatment for students of low-income families rather than wealthier peers (Payne, 2003) • Increased risk of segregated learning environments due to special education referrals (Milner, 2020) • Student internalized feelings of not being good enough or wondering if they’ll ever going to be good enough <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ “Other-imposed” self-fulfilling prophecy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Pygmalion Effect. • Students experience microaggressions* (Fergus, 2017) • Missed opportunities to: (1) learn more about students, families, and staff that make up your school/district learning community(ies); (2) develop trusting and engaging relationships with them; and (3) build on student, family, and community assets.

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Reflection

Which bias-based beliefs are at play in your school or district? Use the graphic organizer to gather evidence (consider evidence at the classroom, grade-level and school level).

BIAS-BASED BELIEF	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
COLOR-EVASIVENESS	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
DEFICIT THINKING	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
POVERTY DISCIPLINING	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>