

THREE STEPS TO ADDRESS IMPLICIT BIASES & IMPROVE EQUITY

To support the **Utah Effective Teaching Standard 8c**: Recognizing and Reflecting on Personal and Professional Biases

1 IDENTIFY AND REFLECT ON INDIVIDUAL IMPLICIT BIASES BOTH IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM.

Implicit biases are the attitudes we unknowingly have about others that are based on subconscious stereotypes. Implicit biases often do not align with our conscious thoughts and beliefs, but they may surface in the classroom when teachers inadvertently treat students inequitably.¹

Identifying implicit biases cannot be done alone. Teachers should **SELF-ASSESS THEIR IMPLICIT BIASES** using tools, such as the **Implicit Association Tests (IATs)** from Harvard's Project Implicit.² Self-evaluations allow participants to identify biases related to race, gender, religion, weight stigma, age, sexuality, and ability in a variety of contexts.

After completing the IATs, teachers should actively **REFLECT ON THEIR IMPLICIT BIASES** to consider the impacts of their subconscious attitudes on their classrooms.⁴

ACTIVITIES FOR REFLECTING ON IMPLICIT BIASES

REFLECTION JOURNAL: After completing the IATs, take five minutes to write down responses to reflection questions, such as [those listed here](#).⁵

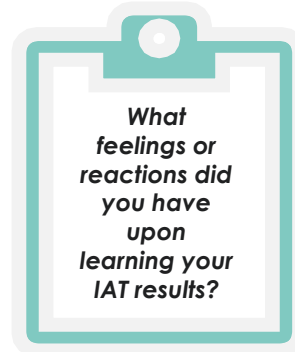
CLASSROOM EQUITY AUDIT: With greater understanding of your own implicit biases, reflect on the classroom environment and whether manifestations of implicit biases exist in instructional practices. Equitable classrooms demonstrate the following features:⁶

- Multicultural and culturally responsive pedagogy, curricula, and materials
- Active outreach to and substantive involvement of parents/families from all groups
- An inclusive and visual environment
- A wide variety of instructional strategies to meet differing learning styles and backgrounds

Example IAT Questions:³



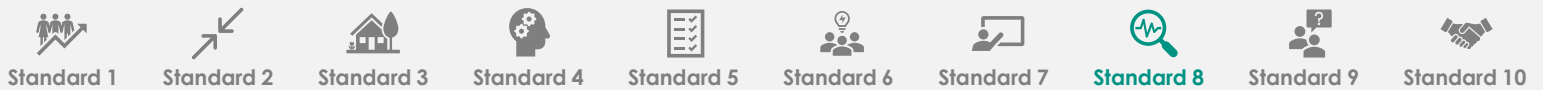
- Of 10 high school girls and 10 high school boys, how many of each would you predict will complete a Calculus class before graduating high school?
- How important is a person's race for getting ahead in life?
- On a scale of 1-10, how cold or warm do you feel toward disabled persons? Toward able-bodied persons?



Classroom Equity Audit Checklist ⁷

- The teacher uses flexible and heterogeneous grouping to provide enrichment for all students.
- The teacher nurtures student self-esteem through the study of different cultures.
- The teacher uses nonbiased verbal and nonverbal language.

[Click Here](#) for an expanded equity audit checklist



STANDARD 8: REFLECTION & CONTINUOUS GROWTH

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2 UNDERSTAND THE CONSEQUENCES OF IMPLICIT BIASES.

Implicit biases can manifest into discrimination and inequity, even though this is often not the teacher's intention.⁸ Implicit biases may cause teachers to make harmful assumptions about certain students, which can limit students' opportunities for success, growth, and achievement.⁹ Teachers' implicit biases are more likely to manifest when a teacher has **ambiguous or incomplete information**, is under **significant time constraints**, or is **fatigued or distracted**, which can limit cognitive function.¹⁰

SIGNS OF IMPLICIT BIAS IN THE CLASSROOM

Subjective disciplinary actions or labeling of student behavior. Students labeled as more "disruptive" than others might be of certain races, ethnicities, or genders.

Rates of instructional supports. Teachers may offer certain students more support than others, particularly in subjects with common stereotypes.

Conflating physical disabilities and intellectual disabilities. Teachers might inadvertently treat students with physical limitations as if they also have intellectual disabilities.

Assuming students of different backgrounds have different abilities or ambitions. Teachers might expect students of different genders or cultural backgrounds to be more or less skilled in certain subjects.¹¹

Click [HERE](#) and [HERE](#) for more signs of implicit bias.

16%
of black students are suspended, on average, compared to 5% of white students.¹²

12%
of black girls are suspended, on average, compared to 2% of white girls.¹³

26%
of gifted students are black or Latinx, despite these students making up 40% of students enrolled in schools offering gifted programs.¹⁴

27%
of AP students are black or Latinx, despite these students making up 37% of high schoolers.¹⁵

[CLICK HERE](#) for disciplinary impacts of bias.

[CLICK HERE](#) for academic impacts of bias.

3 REPLACE RESPONSES TO IMPLICIT BIASES WITH MORE EQUITABLE ACTIONS AND DECISIONS.

Eliminating biased responses requires teachers to think critically about their instructional and disciplinary practices and replace subconsciously biased practices with more equitable responses.¹⁶ Teachers should approach student success with a growth mindset, where they work to address any challenges a student might have, regardless of background, to maximize success.¹⁷

PERSPECTIVE TAKING

Empathize with students of various backgrounds and adopt their perspectives. Perspective-taking can help you attribute student challenges or success to actual factors over stereotyped associations.¹⁸

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

MENTAL IMAGERY

Expose yourself to counter-stereotypes, or individuals who do not fit the typical mold their backgrounds would commonly indicate. Imagining students as their counter-stereotypes can help you holistically support your students' needs.¹⁹

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

DATA ANALYSIS

Review student achievement and discipline data to uncover any patterns of inequity within your classrooms. Reviewing this data can help you identify patterns of implicit bias.²⁰

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following reports and resources delve further into some of the topics discussed in this document and can provide additional context to support teachers in recognizing and reflecting on implicit biases, and supporting student achievement by understanding, respecting, and celebrating differences in culture.

RESOURCE (LINKED)	PUBLISHING ORGANIZATION	QR CODE
Implicit Association Tests	Harvard's Project Implicit	
Video: "Strategies to Address Unconscious Bias"	University of California, San Francisco – Office of Diversity and Outreach	
"Inclusive Classroom Climate"	Yale University Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning	
"Inclusive Teaching Strategies"	Yale University Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning	
"Reflective Teaching"	Yale University Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning	
"Culturally Responsive Teaching: A Guide to Evidence-Based Practices for Teaching All Students Equitably"	Education Northwest	
"Culturally Responsive Teaching Matters!"	Equity Alliance	
"Equity Audits"	Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium	
"Culturally Responsive Teaching"	The Education Alliance at Brown University	

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

RESOURCE (LINKED)	PUBLISHING ORGANIZATION	QR CODE
"Culturally-Responsive Teaching Mindsets: Examples and Non-Examples"	Center for Collaborative Education	
Video: "Building Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Schools"	Alliance for Excellent Education	
Video: "Solving the Achievement Gap Through Equity, Not Equality"	TEDx Talks - Youth	
"Personal Assessment of Anti-Bias Behavior"	Anti-Defamation League	

REFERENCES

¹ Staats, C. "Understanding Implicit Bias: What Educators Should Know." *American Educator*, 2015, p. 30. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1086492.pdf>

² Ibid., p. 32.

³ "Implicit Association Test." Project Implicit. <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

⁴ Staats, Op. cit., p. 32.

⁵ [1] "Reflective Teaching." Yale University Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning. <https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/ReflectiveTeaching>
 [2] Reflection questions quoted verbatim with modifications from "Making Sense of Your IAT Results." The Ohio State University Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity. p. 2. <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-training/resources/iat-results.pdf>

⁶ Bulleted text was quoted verbatim with modifications from "Equity Audits." Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, 2018. <https://maec.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/MAEC-Equity-Audit-1.pdf>

⁷ Bulleted text was quoted verbatim with modifications from Ibid.

⁸ Staats, Op. cit., p. 30.

⁹ Riley, S. and C. Good. "Addressing Implicit Biases." Turnaround for Children, 2016. <https://www.turnaroundusa.org/addressing-implicit-biases/>

¹⁰ Bulleted text adapted from Staats, Op. cit.

¹¹ Bulleted text was adapted from [1] Riley and Good, Op. cit. [2] "Awareness of Implicit Biases." Yale University Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning." <https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/ImplicitBiasAwareness>

¹² "Civil Rights Data Collection - Data Snapshot: School Discipline." U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2014. p. 1. <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/Downloads/CRDC-School-Discipline-Snapshot.pdf>

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ "Civil Rights Data Collection - Data Snapshot: College and Career Readiness." U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2014. p. 1. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-college-and-career-readiness-snapshot.pdf>

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Riley and Good., Op. cit.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ [1] Riley and Good, Op. cit. [2] Galinsky, A.D. and G. B. Moskowitz. "Perspective-Taking: Decreasing stereotype expression, stereotype accessibility, and in-group favoritism." *Journal of Personal and Social Psychology*, 78: 4, 2000. Retrieved from ResearchGate.

¹⁹ [1] Riley and Good., Op. cit. [2] Blair, I.V., J.E. Ma, and A.P. Lenton. "Imagining Stereotypes Away: The Moderation of Implicit Stereotypes Through Mental Imagery." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81:5, 2001. Retrieved from ResearchGate.

²⁰ Staats, Op. cit., p. 33.