

ULTIMATE CONNECTION: CAN YOU TEACH ME IF YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE ME? NORTHEAST HIGH SCHOOL



REIMAGINE REDESIGN REBUILD REENGAGE

RETHINK YOUTH

CONFERENCE PROJECT BRIEFS

Project Brief

This project is being undertaken so that awareness can be spread about student voice and its effects. It requires everyone to open their eyes to the issues being discussed about the teacher-student race gap. This issue is an ongoing one that has been in schools all over the country for decades. The session coordinator has decided to go ahead with their objective because they believe that the color of a teachers skin isn't what matters, it is their compassion, drive, and willingness to work. The goal is to spread this to as many people as possible so that they can see this project and want to make a change.

Currently in America, more than ever before systemic racism is being acknowledged and discussed. Systemic racism is an ongoing issue that has impacted schools all over this country for decades. In our school system today only 12% of the educators are minority to a 50% minority student population. Many people believe that in order for students of color to learn well they need teachers who look like them. We believe that while we need more teachers of color in our educational system, our need goes far beyond that. It isn't the color of a teacher's skin that matters most, what would improve the quality of education for minority students are teachers who have the compassion, the drive and the will to teach. With these qualities in our teachers a white-washed history as well as teacher implicit bias' will cease to exist in the classroom. Lastly, Instead of Police officers being used in a punitive capacity they should be used as mentors in order to bring about positive relationships that will run off into our communities therefore changing the negative dynamic between minorities and police. All of these changes would bring a positive effect on the graduation rate of people of color. Our objective for today and going forward is to spread awareness of the need for these changes in minority schools.

We hope to teach others of all races that the color of skin shouldn't matter in schools, or anywhere in the world for that matter, but the compassion we have should. The ideas we have come up with do not require lots of money to bring change. Therefore we don't have much of a need for a budget. Getting rid of a 'white washed' history and integrating a more balanced history that tells the actuality of events concerning our ancestors can simply and inexpensively be done. We cannot expect textbooks to be reprinted right away but we can ask that teachers be more well rounded in their teaching and integrate other histories into their lessons. This can be done with the use of supplemental books to help tell a more balanced tale of history. To bring about this change, we will

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need the involvement of those who already have a stake in it: school boards, administrators, teachers, parents, and students.

Our team members are responsible for several things. After putting this project together, carrying out the presentation we will need to get the word out. This conference is our first step to getting the word out. From here we need to speak with all stakeholders in this matter. We will start with our own school district first. We should make an appointment to speak with members of our Board of Education making them aware of the necessary changes needed to give our student body an education that will put us in a place where we can equally compete with our peers globally. We will need them to agree to and advocate for these minimal and low cost changes. We would ask for a district wide mandate to be put in place for every person already working in our district and future employees to go through a serious diversity training. This should become a training that every person entering the district should go through before entering their workplace.

Next we would speak with building principals sharing our thoughts and assuring usage of supplemental books by teachers to help tell a balanced history. Finally, we would speak with building principals to set up a mentorship program specifically for school Resource Officers and students.

These responsibilities require a very small amount of supervision and it can be satisfied with an email or two. This project will officially start February 26th and is expected to be in place by the beginning of school year 2021-2022. In order for our project to work we need school boards, administrators, teachers and parents to listen to us, understand, and support us.

We have three phases and we hope that by the beginning of the 2021 school year we can have our objectives in action. It is our hope that the members of our Board of Education will see our presentation, consider and discuss our objectives during their next meeting and form a plan to make changes for next school year. We want this to be done properly but we don't see a need to prolong our requests.

The indicators that could help us determine whether this works or not is the behavior. Based on the bias behaviors shown by students and teachers, we will be able to tell if this project has started to work. Also, if teachers have started to integrate a more balanced history of all races into their lessons, this could be another indicator. Lastly, if we can see the relationship between police officers,

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students, and the community improving, we will definitely be able to evaluate the true results of this project.

Who will manage the reporting requirements? This question has a simple answer. The schools will report this. Just like they have reported the racial gaps and disparities, they can report the positive changes being made within schools and their communities.

This project will make changes in the schools and people in the schools will notice and make the reports. We think everyone will need this. Especially in schools like mine. A rise in graduation rates, a more accurate history of where we come from, and a drop in crime rates in minority communities will raise the morale in the city in which we live. We have needed this for decades.

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