CC365 ROOM PARENTS' Concepts, Skills and Guidelines

What does it mean to be simple and inclusive?
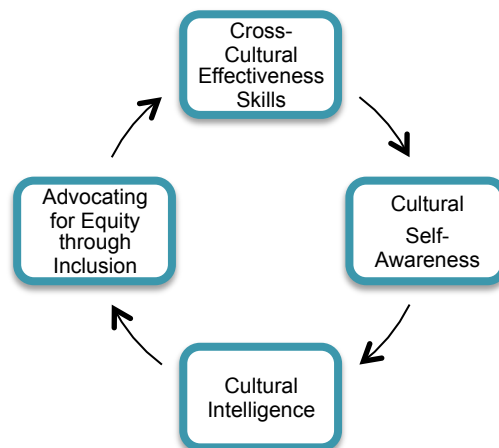
Respectful   Patient

Open-minded   Approachable

Observant   Reflective

Multiple Perspectives   Equitable

                                Non-judgmental

                                Thoughtful

                                Systemically Sustainable

Concepts:

Diversity has no fixed targets or magic numbers; inclusion is a continuing conversation – a journey, not a destination. Cultural competency requires a growth mindset; so when in doubt, ask.

Circumstances and experiences impact us on three levels of identity/diversity: the individual, the cultural and the institutional. On the individual level, we all need to work to uncover what lies "below the tip of the iceberg" in each of us to facilitate interpersonal interactions. We may be at different stages of competence for managing different facets of identity development.

Cultural competency is a composite of self-awareness, awareness of others, and cross-cultural effectiveness skills. The job of a culturally competent person or leader is to be aware of differing impacts with respect to varying levels of identity and manage each accordingly. Cultural competency promotes inclusion, social justice and equity, creating systemically stable and sustainable communities.

In developing this document, we have drawn upon the wisdom and insight of many, including:
(*Taylor,* 2007), (*Hall, 1976*), (*Jones, 2010*), and *(Dweck, 2008)*.

Practices that Help Create and Sustain Inclusive Communities
CC365 "Baker's Dozen" Inclusion Skills

Skills	Guidelines/Examples
1. Use diverse leaders for projects and committees. Diversity reflects differences in identity that traditionally have resulted in differing social experiences (MCDS *Statement of Community & Inclusion*).	• Think outside the box; diverse perspectives foster creativity and innovation • Diverse thinking groups outperform homogeneous ones.
2. Be sensitive to what someone with a different perspective from yours might feel about your thought process and decisions.	• Consider other points of view without necessarily agreeing • Include advisors with multiple perspectives from the beginning of any process
3. Create conditions for access to events and experiences for families of different structures.	• Families may not always look alike; they could be multi-racial; adoptive; and not always biological. • Families are groups of people that love one another
4. Create structures that respect the diversity of work divisions and roles.	• Midday luncheons might not be good for "working parents" • Some families may need childcare
5. Be aware of traditional impediments to participation in the school community and make continual adjustments and improvements.	• Remember to schedule events in the morning AND evening • Make sliding scale or complimentary tickets available to events and activities; find some events that are completely free for all
6. Create a "menu" of activities for the year that reflects a diverse set of interests and access points. No one event, project or activity can be expected to appeal universally.	• "Command performances" should have the most diverse planning committees to try to be as inclusive as possible • Don't be afraid to incorporate new cultures and traditions
7. Be aware of differing cultural interests in planning activities, not assuming that everyone can get on board with what a few friends think is a great experience.	• Some families like bowling more than kite flying • Some families prefer BBQ to sushi
8. Be mindful of the impact of specific calendar dates on different cultural or religious traditions.	• Try not to schedule important events during major holidays on the various cultural/religious calendars represented at MCDS
9. Be attuned to the impact of language and unintentional messaging in communications and projects.	• Ask "what did you do for the break" not "where did you go" • Two families could hear different meanings in the same phrase
10. Understand that "political correctness" is a fixed mindset, which does not reflect the skill and value of cultural competency.	• Ask what someone really means when they reference "PC"? • Flip PC to CP: Challenging the "old" Paradigm • Take the time to understand someone else's point of view – authenticity is more powerful than simply trying not to offend
11. Create regular opportunities for parents to develop increasing skills in fostering an inclusive community and leveraging the "hidden talents" among us.	• Engage skillfully in tough conversations with diverse groups of people; the rewards are priceless • Give yourself and others permission to learn from mistakes
12. Create regular channels to seek missing voices and continually refine our practice.	• Provide diverse mediums and varied opportunities for feedback; be intentional about being open • The best ideas are often unexpected
13. Recognize that what feels inclusive for one might still feel exclusive for another. Even the most skilled of "us" has room for growth, personally and institutionally.	• Each school year brings a new opportunity to stay in the work; learning is an iterative process • Set a new goal every year of developing/improving a new cultural competency skill