

The Affirming Racial Equity Tool

Attribution

The original JCPS ARE Tool was curated by former DEP Resource Teachers including: Rachel Klein, Donna Lawson, Shashray McCormack, LaManda Moore Rodriguez, and Kadia Turner. Their work was adapted from the [Equity Framework](#) developed by Karla E. Vigil and inspired by James A. Banks, author of *Cultural Diversity and Education: Foundations, Curriculum, and Teaching*. This iteration of the ARE Tool was curated by DEP Anti-Racist Specialists LaManda Moore Rodriguez, Rachel Klein, and Aven Cook to better align to current challenges to racial equity work being done in JCPS and to other DEP anchor documents that work to fortify anti-biased, anti-racist, and racially equitable pedagogy and practices for all students every day.

Expectations for Use

The [JCPS Racial Equity Policy](#) acknowledges that:

- ❖ Persistent gaps in achievement, learning, expectations, opportunities, and disciplinary outcomes [exist] among student groups based on race and ethnicity.
- ❖ Students of Color have been disadvantaged by long-standing inequities in our society, the causes of which are multi-faceted, and reflect historical, social, and institutional factors.
- ❖ The District must take a systemic approach to ensure that Students of Color have equitable learning opportunities, experiences, and outcomes.

For these reasons, all schools are expected to utilize the ARE Tool in regular lesson and unit planning as well as in administrative coaching and observation cycles. Prior to implementation, the [ARE Tool Guidebook](#) should be reviewed by teachers, AICs, APs, counselors, resource teachers, and all school principals. As the ARE Tool is folded into the weekly planning done by teachers and teams of teachers in PLCs, it is also essential to review [The ARE Tool & PLC Framework Alignment Document](#). Should you encounter a term that is unfamiliar to you, seek the [Diversity and Equity Definitions](#) Guide for JCPS users.

While the JCPS Racial Equity Policy places many burdens of achieving racial equity on Central Office personnel and support staff, school expectations exist that all teachers must remain aware of, regardless of the curricular frameworks, materials, or resources that they choose to utilize in their classrooms. Those are detailed below to reinforce the purpose of the regular use of the ARE Tool in planning.

- ❖ Diversity in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
 - Racial Equity Policy Expectation #1.1: School is creating original content, expanding on district curriculum resources, and/or supplementing provided district curriculum so that all materials are inclusive, reflective, and validating of Students of Color, as detailed by the Affirming Racial Equity Tool.
 - Racial Equity Policy Expectation #1.2: School is actively utilizing culturally responsive instructional practices that improve learning outcomes for Students of Color.
 - Racial Equity Policy Expectation #1.3: School ensures multiple forms of assessment are utilized and that all classroom educators provide actionable feedback and revision opportunities until mastery is achieved by all students.

Citation

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Content Integration

Teachers regularly utilize examples from a wide variety of cultures and groups in lessons and units.

Lesson Descriptors	Lesson/Unit Plans for Implementation
The lesson's materials reflect diverse cultures and identities.	
The lesson's tasks reflect diverse cultures and identities.	
The lesson's secondary resources reflect diverse cultures and identities.	
The lesson's materials/tasks/secondary resources reflect the students in the class. (Mirrors)	
The lesson's materials/tasks/secondary resources allow students to explore/understand others' experiences. (Windows)	
The content within the lessons is validating to individuals/groups that are typically underrepresented.	

Notes on Use

For the purposes of this component, “diverse” will be defined as pertaining to any and all cultures that are NOT heterosexual, male-centered, white, Western, and/or Christian. When considering identity and intersectionality in a text, keep in mind that marginalization can exist across “minority” groups in reference to age, ability, class, gender, education, ethnicity, language, location, nationality, race, religion, and/or sexuality. Allow for intersectionality within lessons and units and know that this is not an exhaustive list of identities to consider.

Resources

[The ARE Tool in PLCs: Component Deep-Dive \(Content Integration\)](#)

[Affirming Racial Equity Across Content Areas](#)

[JCPS DEP Enhancing Curriculum SlideDeck](#) (Contains TOTE, BETI, the SIMPLE Pantry, Culturally Responsive Teaching Lesson Templates, and Topic-Specific Lesson Exemplars)

[Multicultural Booklist](#)

["Cultivating Genius: How to Select Culturally and Historically Responsive Text"](#) by Gholdy Muhammad

[The Everyday Projects](#)

[Social Justice Standards](#) from Learning for Justice

Knowledge Construction

Teachers intentionally plan lessons to ensure students understand how oppression and systemic racism influence knowledge and perceptions of knowledge.

Lesson Descriptors	Lesson/Unit Plans for Implementation
Teacher provides all students with the necessary background and historical context regarding bias, oppression, privilege, and/or systemic racism to purposefully engage in lessons.	
The lesson's materials and tasks develop students' academic skill sets through analysis, creative thinking, critical thinking, information literacy, inquiry, problem solving, quantitative literacy, reading, research skills, teamwork, and written and oral communication skills.	
The lesson's materials allow students to position themselves within the content to affirm their racial identities.	
The lesson's tasks allow students to assess, critique, and discuss the assumptions, values, and word choices represented in the lesson's materials.	
The lesson's tasks/secondary resources allow students to acknowledge and analyze oppression, power relationships, and privilege in the lesson's materials.	
The lesson's materials/tasks/secondary resources allow students to analyze the ways in which bias and cultural beliefs impact widely available information and "truthful" information.	

Resources

[The ARE Tool in PLCs: Component Deep-Dive \(Knowledge Construction\)](#)

[Affirming Racial Equity Across Content Areas](#)

[Funds of Knowledge Toolkit](#) from the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

["Seven Forms of Bias in Instructional Materials"](#) by David Sadker from the Myra Sadker Foundation

[Summary of Stages of Racial Identity Development](#) from Racial Equity Tools

[Race: The Power of an Illusion](#) from California Newsreel

[Project Ready](#)

[Social Justice Standards](#) from Learning for Justice

Prejudice Elimination

Teachers intentionally plan lessons to build understanding and foster intergroup relations.

Lesson Descriptors	Lesson/Unit Plans for Implementation
Teachers are aware of their own internal biases and how those biases impact students' achievement and engagement in their classroom.	
Teachers have created and implemented a plan to engage in active bias-checking alongside their colleagues, especially within departments and PLCs.	
Teachers are aware of materials and tasks that may be considered controversial, demeaning, emotionally charged, inflammatory, or offensive to underrepresented groups.	
Teachers build lessons/units that encourage students' cultural humility by developing a sense of pride and value in their own culture and others through extensive learning.	
Lessons/units allow students to understand the impact of bias and stereotypes through varied materials/tasks/secondary resources.	
Lessons/units allow students to see underrepresented people in a range of traditional and nontraditional roles.	

Resources

[The ARE Tool in PLCs: Component Deep-Dive \(Prejudice Elimination\)](#)

[JCPS DEP Diversity and Equity Definitions](#)

[Harvard Implicit Association Test](#)

[Examples of Microaggressions in the Classroom](#) from the EdVocate

[Four Types of Racism](#) from the City of Seattle Office for Civil Rights

[Diversity Toolkit: A Guide to Discussing Power, Oppression, and Privilege](#) from the University of Southern California

[Implicit Bias & Microaggressions](#) from Project Ready

["White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"](#) by Peggy McIntosh

Equitable Pedagogy

Teachers modify methods, resources, and strategies to facilitate academic achievement of underrepresented societal groups.

Lesson Descriptors	Lesson/Unit Plans for Implementation
Teachers create a community of learners through intentional use of cooperative learning strategies, shared responsibility, and teamwork.	
Teachers develop a tool box of instructional examples, methods, and practices that are culturally familiar to underrepresented students.	
Teachers utilize varied instructional methods to match students' learning preferences, to maintain students' attention, and to increase student interest in learning.	
Teachers ensure all students acquire necessary academic language to perform at high levels.	
Teachers hold all students to high academic expectations, providing the same rigorous academic content to all students through differentiation and scaffolding.	
Teachers present students with content that contextualizes real world situations, allowing students to address societal issues, not excluding controversial topics.	

Resources

[The ARE Tool in PLCs: Component Deep-Dive \(Equitable Pedagogy\)](#)

[Anti-Racist Pedagogy](#) from Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning

[Considerations for Anti-Racist Teaching](#) from Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning

[Anti-Racist Pedagogy in Action: First Steps](#) from Columbia University

["10 Things All White Teacher Should Know When Talking About Race"](#) by Angela Watson

[What is Equity?](#) from The National Association for Multicultural Education

[Project Zero's Thinking Routine Toolbox](#) from Harvard Graduate School of Education

Empowering Classroom Culture

Teachers recognize the value of culture and race in relationship building with both students and families, so teachers build positive relationships that are the foundation for a healthy, inclusive, and safe learning environment.

Lesson Descriptors	Lesson/Unit Plans for Implementation
Teachers are affirming of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, class, gender, and sexual orientation when interacting with students and their families.	
Teachers establish a classroom culture that rejects educational traditions that work to harm students in underrepresented groups and maintain the status quo.	
Classrooms acknowledge and affirm the strengths of students' diverse heritage and identities through positive, supportive, and welcoming interactions.	
Classroom expectations, routines, and rules are affirming and equitable, providing student feedback and voice regularly.	
Established communication systems are inclusive, translated as needed, and varied, ensuring that all caregivers and families have equal access to necessary information.	
Caregivers are regularly invited to contribute to students' learning, participate in ongoing classroom conversations, and share their expertise.	

Resources

[The ARE Tool in PLCs: Component Deep-Dive \(Empowering Classroom Culture\)](#)

[Let's Talk!](#) from Learning for Justice

[Speak Up!](#) from Learning for Justice

[One World Posters](#) from Learning for Justice

[Celebrating Women Role Models in Science, Technology, and Math](#)

["Empowering Students with Classroom Project-Based Learning"](#) by Kristen Moore from Next Gen Learning

["Three Ways to Empower Students to Own the Classroom Culture"](#) by John Spencer

["Why Teachers Must Examine Their Own Ideologies to Create Identity Affirming Classrooms"](#) by Erica Buchanan-Rivera from MindShift

[Responsiveness Assessment for Classroom Environments](#) from Erica Buchanan-Rivera

["Creating Identity-Safe Schools and Classrooms"](#) by Laura E. Hernández and Linda Darling-Hammond

[Creating an Intellectual Culture \(Cultivating Genius\)](#)

A.R.E. Through Assessment

Teachers intentionally plan assessments that allow students to showcase their knowledge and mastery through cross-curriculum skill sets with an embedded and purposeful feedback cycle.

Lesson Descriptors	Lesson/Unit Plans for Implementation
Assessments and feedback exist in continuous cycles, allowing students to set goals, interact with curriculum, create an artifact of their learning, receive coaching, and revise their work until mastery is achieved.	
Feedback on all major assessments is actionable, specific, timely, and goal-oriented.	
Rubrics are co-created whenever possible and utilized throughout all feedback cycles to ensure clear communication and strong collaboration between students and teachers.	
Assessments allow students to demonstrate their growth in a wide variety of ways, such as: demonstration, essay, multiple choice, performance, portfolios, presentation, and/or self-assessment.	
Assessments balance intellectual and practical skill sets through the Backpack of Success Skills and, wherever possible, are interdisciplinary in nature.	
PLCs disaggregate academic and behavioral data to examine achievement disparities by race and gender using their school's Equity ScoreCard.	

Resources

[The ARE Tool in PLCs: Component Deep-Dive \(A.R.E. Through Assessment\)](#)

[Affirming Racial Equity Across Content Areas](#)

[JCPS DEP Envision Equity ScoreCard](#)

[Equity in Grading Self-Assessment](#) from Solution Tree

[Grading for Equity: What It Is, Why It Matters, and How It Can Transform Schools and Classrooms](#) by Joe Feldman (Prologue & Chapter 1)

[“Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Assessment: Myths and Opportunities”](#) by Molly Faulkner-Bond from WestEd

[“A Culturally Responsive Classroom Assessment Framework”](#) by Carla Evans from the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment

[Rubric Samples](#) from PBLWorks

[Strategy Guides](#) from PBLWorks

[Social Justice Standards](#) from Learning for Justice