ADVANCING RACIAL EQUITY

The Role of Government in Transformative Times
July 8, 2020
GPCOG Summer Briefing Series

Dwayne S. Marsh
Facilitator
TODAY’S OBJECTIVES

Gain understanding of the government’s role in contributing to racial inequity and our responsibility to advance racial equity.

Develop a shared racial equity analysis.

Gain increased understanding of how the public sector can advance racial equity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Segment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:00 – 12:20</td>
<td>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS. WRESTLING WITH THE MOMENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:20 – 12:40</td>
<td>GOVERNING FOR RACIAL EQUITY – A PRIMER</td>
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<td>12:40 – 1:10</td>
<td>REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD</td>
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<td>1:10 – 1:30</td>
<td>PRESENTER DIALOGUE</td>
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<td>QUESTIONS AND MOVING FORWARD</td>
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BILL WEBSTER, FORMER LEWISTON SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
CLAUDE RWAGANJE, CITY COUNCILOR AT LARGE, CITY OF WESTBROOK
OUR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

• Take space, make space.
• Anticipate discomfort.
• Build and maintain brave space.
• Own and honor your own emotions.
• What is said stays, what is learned leaves.
• Embrace virtual space.
OVERVIEWS AND ASSUMPTIONS

• Race matters.
• We are not just talking about individual acts of bigotry, we are talking about institutions and systems that perpetuate inequity. We are all a part of those institutions and systems.
• We have a responsibility for advancing racial equity.
THE MOMENT. The United States experiment is undergoing its most severe test in 150 years, with race at the center.

Global pandemic reveals the truth of the pervasiveness of racial inequity.

National and global economies crater to staggering degree with disproportionate impact on Black and Brown communities.

Epidemic of systemic racism in policing ignites unprecedented national protests.

National perspectives on race experience most dramatic shift in 55 years.

Federal leadership portends national crisis of democracy.

Public servants face unimaginable responsibility to respond with greatest constraints ever.
THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT
VALUES AND REALITIES

• All men are created equal.
• With liberty and justice for all.
• Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth
HISTORY OF GOVERNMENT AND RACE

Initially explicit

Government explicitly creates and maintains racial inequity.

Discrimination illegal, but "race-neutral" policies and practices perpetuate inequity.

Became implicit

Proactive policies, practices and procedures that advance racial equity.
WHY LEAD WITH RACE

• Racial inequities deep and pervasive
• Racial anxiety on the rise – race is often an elephant in the room
• Learning an institutional and structural approach can be used with other areas of marginalization
• Specificity matters — Race focused, but not exclusive always bring an “intersectional” analysis
NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

Normalize
- A shared analysis and definitions
- Urgency / prioritize

Operationalize
- Racial equity tools
- Data to develop strategies and drive results

Organize
- Internal infrastructure
- Partnerships

Visualize
NORMALIZING
EQUITY? EQUALITY?
WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?

ALL GENDER RESTROOM

Anyone can use this restroom, regardless of gender identity or expression.
RACIAL INEQUITY IN THE US

From infant mortality to life expectancy, race predicts how well you will do…
RACIAL EQUITY MEANS

Closing the gaps so that race does not predict one’s success, while also improving outcomes for all:

TO DO SO, HAVE TO:
  ✓ Target strategies to focus improvements for those worse off
  ✓ Move beyond services and focus on changing policies, institutions and structures
DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI)

 quantidade: diferentes identidades e culturas
qualidade: participação nas identidades e culturas
justiça: políticas, práticas, e procedimentos para garantir resultados equitativos

Source: City of Portland Office of Equity and Human Rights
Explicit bias

- Expressed directly
- Aware of bias / operates consciously

Example – Sign in the window of an apartment building – “whites only”

Implicit bias

- Expressed indirectly
- Unaware of bias / operates sub-consciously

Example – a property manager doing more criminal background checks on African Americans than whites.
WHAT TO DO WITH BIAS?

Suppressing or denying biased thoughts can actually increase prejudice rather than eradicate it.

Openly acknowledging and challenging biases allows us to develop strategic interventions.
Institutional/Explicit
Policies which explicitly discriminate against a group.

Institutional/Implicit
Policies that negatively impact one group unintentionally.

Individual/Explicit
Prejudice in action – discrimination.

Individual/Implicit
Unconscious attitudes and beliefs.

EXAMPLES FROM YOUR WORK –
Individual racism:
• Bigotry or discrimination by an individual based on race.

Institutional racism:
• Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.

Structural racism:
• A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.
## Asking Different Questions

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<tr>
<th>FROM:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blame</strong></td>
<td><strong>Causes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Who’s a racist?</td>
<td>What’s causing the racial inequities?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intentions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Effects</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>What did they mean?</td>
<td>What were the actions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What was their attitude?</td>
<td>What are the impacts?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prejudice</strong></td>
<td><strong>Systems</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>What beliefs made them do it?</td>
<td>What institutions are responsible?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grievance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Solutions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>How can we fix what just happened?</td>
<td>What proactive strategies and solutions?</td>
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OPERATIONALIZING
RACE IN INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

Federal Housing Administration

Interstate System

Location of city facilities

Streetlights
RACIAL EQUITY ANALYSIS. Tools designed to keep race at center of decisionmaking in policies, practice, and organizational culture.

Grown from field of practice.

Adopted widely in the public sector.

Benefits from improved transparency with community partners.

Especially critical to employ in times of crisis – or crises.
NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

**Normalize**
- A shared analysis and definitions
- Urgency / prioritize

**Operationalize**
- Racial equity tools
- Data to develop strategies and drive results

**Organize**
- Internal infrastructure
- Partnerships
What is a Racial Equity Tool?

Process

Product

Actively inserts racial equity into decision making processes
Who should use a Racial Equity Tool?

- Elected officials
- Government staff
- Community
Choice Points

• Key decision-making opportunities that influence outcomes.

• Cumulative impacts of many small choices can be as significant as the impacts of big decisions.

• Less likely to replicate the status quo.
What is a Racial Equity Tool process?

1. Desired results
2. Analysis of data
3. Community engagement
4. Strategies for racial equity
5. Implementation plan
6. Communications and accountability
Used in budget, policy, and program decisions

Examples:

- Streetlights / complaint-based systems
- Restrictions on use of criminal background checks in hiring processes
- Contracting policies and procedures
- Increases to the minimum wage
- Public utility project ranking criteria
- Re-evaluating distribution of public safety resources
What if I don’t have enough time?

Ask the question:

Who benefits or who is burdened by the decision?