SOULS OF OUR STUDENTS CURRICULUM GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Health risk behaviors related to diversity and inclusion:

The 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), a national survey sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control, shows bullying and harassment in schools to be a rising trend, so much so that rather than subsume the information under "Psychological Health" as in previous years, a separate section for the data has been created in the 2013 survey results. The YRBS results for Charlotte-Mecklenburg are on the CMS website and show 50% of students in our high schools "strongly agree that bullying and harassment by other students is a problem at their school". This number is up from 40% from 2007. Moreover, nationally the issue of bullying is taking center stage for youth serving agencies and there is a growing movement nationally and internationally of organizations specifically focused on anti-bullying work. Bullying behavior takes many forms, including, rejection, exclusion, verbal ridicule, physical mockery, verbal and physical intimidation and actual violence.

The Center for the Prevention of School Violence cites numerous reports detailing the causes and consequences of school violence. The evidence shows that bullying around race, gender and sexual orientation is prevalent in NC schools, and that students who are bullied are anywhere from 4 - 8 times more likely than their peers to suffer from depression and to be suicidal than their peers who are not victims of bullying. Other forms of self-harm such as cutting are more common among young people who feel rejected and excluded by their peers. Abuse of drugs and alcohol are also related to alienation, loneliness and fear of rejection. Students who are bullied are less likely to attend school regularly or to be able to focus on academic, intellectual and emotional development, and more likely to drop out and thus fail to graduate. In extreme cases, students who are alienated and feel marginalized or rejected commit extreme acts of violent revenge as in the case of the Columbine High School massacre.

Philosophy
Much of the negative behavior exhibited by young people is learned from adults, peers and from societal messages about what is acceptable and unacceptable, attractive and unattractive, cool and un-cool, and so on. The negative and exclusive attitudes many young people have towards those they see as unlike themselves or as outside the range of what is acceptable stem from a number of sources. Most significantly, this curriculum will address lack of understanding and appreciation of human differences, low levels of empathy for people from different cultures, backgrounds and identity groups, internalization of social stereotypes and biases and uncritical adherence to restrictive social norms.
The Souls of Our Students curriculum consists of a DVD made specifically to highlight diversity and inclusion issues affecting high school students and a series of related questions and activities. It will draw examples from the DVD to focus on:
- The ways in which young people are experiencing targeting, harassment and exclusion

- The forms of behavior among young people that reflect their inability to deal respectfully with differences among them
- The ways in which the students' experiences affect their sense of themselves, others and the world around them
- The ways in which social issues, ideas, norms and values, particularly as reflected in media coverage of news and current affairs, popular culture and advertising, influence how young people see themselves and others
- How students' inability to relate respectfully across lines of difference affects their relationships with one another
- How students' inability to relate respectfully across lines of difference affects the school culture and environment
- Strategies to bring about individual and institutional change related to respect for diversity and creating inclusion

Background Information

"Souls of Our Students" highlights issues of diversity affecting Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools by capturing stories of high school students from a range of different backgrounds. This 24 minute video captures two group interviews and five one-on-one interviews in which students discuss issues of difference, discrimination, harassment, privilege, change, and hope in the context of race, religion, socioeconomic status and sexual orientation.. This video has only the voices of students.

The goals of this video project and the accompanying curriculum are to:
- Create dialogue and promote understanding as a path to respect, acceptance and inclusion.
- Inspire students and teachers to uphold the dignity of each student when faced with challenges related to differences.
- Empower students and teachers to intervene in situations of bullying or harassment and to advocate for an inclusive school environment.

"Souls of our Students" is a collaborative project involving nine clergy from diverse backgrounds and faiths who participated in Mecklenburg Ministries Souls of White Folks program and leaders from non-profit organizations. The collaborating partners are Mecklenburg Ministries, Charlotte Coalition for Social Justice and Temple Beth El. This project was made possible through the generous support of Foundation for the Carolinas and was "seeded" by the funders of the original Souls of White Folks, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. This film is endorsed by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee, Community Building Initiative, Davidson College, International House of Metrolina, Johnson C. Smith University, Levine Museum of the New South, The Echo Foundation, Urban League of Central Carolinas, Inc., and Women's Inter-Cultural Exchange.

NC Healthful Living Essential Standards and Clarifying Objectives addressed in these lessons:

Mental and Emotional Health
9.MEH.1 Create positive stress management strategies.
- **9.MEH.1.1** Identify the body's physical and psychological responses to stressful situations and positive coping mechanisms.
- **9MEH.1.2** Plan effective methods to deal with anxiety.

9.ICR.1 Understand healthy and effective interpersonal communication and relationships.
- **9.ICR.1.**1 Illustrate the ability to respond to others with empathy.

9.PCH.2 Evaluate health information and products.
- **9.PCH.2.2** Monitor the effects of media and popular culture on normative beliefs that contradict scientific research on health.

In pursuit of achieving the Healthful Living goals and objectives, learners will:
- develop greater self-respect and appreciation of their own identity
- develop a greater awareness and acceptance of diversity among their peers and the school faculty and staff
- exhibit more respectful behavior towards those from cultures, backgrounds and identity groups different from their own
- develop personal and institutional strategies to create a more inclusive and safe culture and climate within the school

WELCOME TO THE "SOULS OF OUR STUDENTS" CURRICULUM
Notes to the user

Each lesson included in this curriculum guide corresponds to a subsection of the Souls of Our Students DVD and consists of three parts.

Part 1: Each lesson begins with a section from the "Souls of Our Students" video. Included in this curriculum are discussion questions for each section to help teachers debrief the video clip after showing it to the class. The questions are designed to frame the conversation for the activity that makes up the second part of the lesson.

Part 2: In each lesson there are one or two options for activities. Most activities can be used alone, or in conjunction with and/or to build upon previous sections. How they are used will depend on the learning goals and objectives you have set for your class.

Part 3: Prompts for student journaling are included in each lesson and a unit project has been outlined at the end of the curriculum guide. These two projects are meant to span the entirety of the unit in order to help students gain a deeper understanding of how the material relates to their personal lives. Each lesson should include a reference to these pieces of work and a reminder of any progress or submission requirements.

All worksheets that are needed for each section are included at the end of this booklet. There are also important teacher notes on facilitating tough topics and some helpful definitions of human relations language.

A great deal of the conversation that you will have in class will relate to stereotypes – what they are and how they shape our perception of ourselves and others. The "Glossary of Terms" may help you facilitate these lessons.

We thank you for your work to ensure that all young people can learn in a safe and inclusive environment where they can develop academically, emotionally, intellectually and socially. We sincerely hope that you enjoy using "Souls of Our Students" to help your students learn how they can make their classrooms and their school places for **all students to feel safe and respected.**

What does "diversity" mean?

The word diversity encompasses many things. It is crucial that the students understand that no matter what their background is, they contribute to the diversity of the class, their school and our community. Diversity (like "ethnicity") is a word that applies to everyone, not just people who are different from the majority or dominant norm. In Activity I, students should be asked to create a comprehensive list of the ways that people can be different. Examples include but are not limited to: Race, gender, class, country of origin, religion, political beliefs, ability, sexual orientation, family composition, immigration status, personality traits, talents, size, appearance, etc. If possible, try to get every student to offer a difference. It may be helpful to ask the students to name some of the types of differences they see in the room and at school and to verify whether all those differences are accounted for on the list.

On Stereotypes:

Stereotypes are ideas about people based on the group to which they belong, or are perceived to belong. Stereotypes are not facts, even if some pieces of them have some basis in an actual behavior attributable to some members of a group. It is very important to keep this in the forefront of any conversation with the students about stereotypes (see below "Internalized oppression") in order not to reinforce the students' negative perceptions of themselves or each other. For you to do this, it may also be necessary to examine your own ideas – this is not a blame issue, but simply a recognition of the fact that we are all bombarded with social stereotypes, whether overtly or subtly, on a daily basis. Everyone engaged in human relations activities must be willing to examine their own ideas, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors.

On internalized oppression
"Internalized oppression" is a term used in human relations work to denote the process by which oppressed, marginalized or minority groups come to believe the negative social stereotypes that they receive about themselves and act accordingly. For young people, this can manifest itself in many ways. Here are some major ones:

- S/he feels shame at being a member of the group and seeks to disassociate and find another way to identify – this is different that a confident and open-minded child embracing a diverse range of peers. If, for example, a student never wants to be with members of her/his racial group, that is a red flag.
- S/he blames members of her/his group for bringing about their oppressed condition – you should be concerned any time you hear a student negatively characterize their own group.
- S/he lacks belief in herself/himself because of the social messages that tell her/him that s/he is inferior and incapable – girls can't do science, Black students are better at sports, etc.
- The student embraces stereotypically negative behavior associated with her/his group – you can see this in girls embracing sexualized behavior, African and Latin American youth embracing gangsterism, Asian youth denying their names and so on.
- The student refuses to acknowledge issues of stereotyping, prejudice or discrimination related to an aspect of her/his identity. Such students may profess instead, for example, some sense of special status or may always simply switch the discussion to another topic or aspect of their identity. While it may seem positive that a student is not agonizing over these issues, it is important to recognize that denial is often a symptom of a sense of powerlessness which in turn is, in many cases, a reflection internalized oppression.

It is important to distinguish between internalized oppression and taking personal responsibility to change the things over which the child has control. When the student expresses anger, resentment, shame or rejection of her/his group as a whole, this is a manifestation of internalized oppression; it is based upon a stereotype of the group. This is different than a student deciding that s/he will define her/him self and make every effort not to be bound by the constraints that are often placed on members of her/his identity group.

Note on facilitating tough topics

The topics that are addressed in this curriculum are difficult. These topics are not regularly discussed in most people's everyday lives. There may be resistance in sharing stories of discrimination or marginalization due to fear of more discrimination and marginalization. If you sense this is the case, please feel free to use personal examples of experiences that are applicable. Sharing your own experiences and feelings opens the door for students to do the same. However, avoid responding to students' stories or comments with one of your own and/or telling students how they should respond or react based on your own feelings or experiences. Also, refrain from saying things like, "Are you sure that happened," "that's probably not what happened", "I'm sure that's not what they meant" or "you took it the wrong way." In human relations work, it is important that people feel comfortable sharing their stories without fear that their personal experience will be contradicted, diluted, reframed or encourage judgment. Always feel free to ask for clarification when a student shares something.

It is imperative to create a safe environment where students feel that they can really open up. It may be important to ask the class if there are any rules or guidelines they would like to have when talking about these topics. If they come up with any rules, it is up to both you and the class to enforce them.

As these are difficult subjects, it is important to allow for silences. Often students are processing and thinking about the subject. Rapid fire responses to questions may not be common. If the silence lingers too long, feel free to rephrase the question, ask the class if they understand what you just asked them, or lead off with an example.

On Laughter: Students often laugh or make jokes about things that hit them in a spot where they are vulnerable (thinking if I just laugh it off, then people won't know I am hurt) or about topics which make them uncomfortable. It is important not to let inappropriate laughter destroy a safe environment. Challenge the students who are laughing by asking them why they did what they did.

Helpful phrases:
Talk more about that.
How did that make you feel?
Why do you think that is?

These lessons reflect the work of public school health teachers, community partners and professionals, who are dedicated to quality health education to create safe and respectful school environments. This curriculum should be used as a learning tool that can improve the quality of young people's lives. Families, schools and communities work together to reduce risks and promote positive health behaviors.
Due to the sensitivity of the subject matter counselors and a referral system should be in place within the schools to support the additional needs of students.

LEARNING MODULES

Lesson I: Differences
Objectives:
9.MEH.1.2 Plan effective methods to deal with anxiety.
9.ICR.1.1 Illustrate the ability to relate to others with empathy

Bell Work:

- What is meant by identity? What makes up a person's identity? *(Optional discussion depending on the level of the students.)*
- Describe the following terms: Empathy, understanding, respect, identity, stress, anxiety, depression

Teacher Input:

In this section it is important to establish comfort in talking about differences. Students should feel able to talk about the ways in which they are different from each other and how their differences are shaping their experiences at school, in the community and

among their peer groups. It is important for students to understand that they each contribute a different aspect of diversity to the class. By the end of the lesson students should have a better understanding of who is in the room and of how differences and our reaction to them can affect the individual's sense of self esteem and their relationships with others.

Activity:
View segment "Differences" on DVD "Souls of Our Students

Discuss questions from bell work.
Additional discussion questions:

- What are the things about the students in the DVD that make them different?
- Are there any types of differences that weren't mentioned? Using the whiteboard/chalkboard, highlight as many as possible.

(T*eacher note on"Diversity":* The word diversity encompasses many things. It is crucial that the students understand that no matter what their background, they contribute to the diversity of the class, their school and our community. Diversity (like "ethnicity") is a word that applies to everyone, not just people who are different from the majority.

Activity 1.01: *"Culture Charts"*
Students should be asked to create a comprehensive list of the ways that people can be different. Examples include but are not limited to: Race, gender, class, country of origin, religion, political beliefs, ability, sexual orientation, family composition, immigration status, personality traits, talents, size, appearance, etc. If possible, try to get every student to offer a difference. It may be helpful to ask the students to name some of the types of differences they see at school, the mall, movies or other places they go frequently and to verify whether all those differences are accounted for on the list.)

Materials required:
- *Banner paper to make Culture Chart*
- *Markers – at least one for every two students*
- *Tape to hang chart*
- *Polaroid camera (optional)*

Special Note:
This activity serves as an icebreaker to enter the conversation about differences. Ideally this would be done BEFORE students watch the video. It's a great way to get the students thinking about the ways in which they are different, as well as discover common interests. It also serves as a great way to get the students comfortable with the issues and ready to talk about the subject.

Instructions:

Students will be asked to fill in the blanks on a pre-prepared chart (see attached diagram A) which records the following information:
- Name
- How I identify myself
- How I think others identify me
- My favorite place to be
- The one thing about me that might surprise you

While the chart is being completed, the photographs (if available) can be attached to the chart.

The teacher will ask for a volunteer to start OR the teacher will participate in the activity and start by reading her/his answers. Additional commentary should be brief. Whoever reads their answers next should take their turn by identifying with something said by the previous person. For example, the person says, "my favorite place to be is at the beach", the person wanting to go next says "I can identify with what X said because I also like to go to the beach".

There should be minimal processing after everyone has read their answers. Students should be allowed to comment on the diversity of the group and anything that is significant to them.

Activity 1.02:
"The Pieces of My Identity"
Materials required:
Copies of the identity chart (Appendix 2)
Pens/markers

Instructions:

Distribute copies of the identity chart handout (attached).

Ask students to pair up with somebody they do not know very well. Invite them to introduce each other, and then follow these steps:
- Ask students to write their names in the center circle. They should then fill in innermost circle with pieces of their identity they consider to be among the most important in defining themselves. Give them several examples of dimensions that might fit into this category: female, Jewish, brother, Asian American, young, middle class, etc. In the second layer, students should identify personality traits that describe them, as well as talents. In the outer layer, students should identify activities that they like to do.
- In their pairs, have students share two stories with each other. First, they should share stories about when they felt especially proud to be associated with one of the identifiers they selected. Next, they should share a story about a time it was

particularly painful to be associated with one of the identity dimensions they chose.

- Probe the group for reactions to each other's stories. Ask whether anyone heard a story she or he would like to share with the group. (Make sure the person who originally told the story has granted permission to share it with the entire group.)

Discussion Questions:

How do we think differences affect how we see ourselves and others and how others see us? (*Teacher note on internalized oppression:* "Internalized oppression" is a term used in human relations work to denote the process by which oppressed, marginalized or minority groups come to believe the negative social stereotypes that they receive about themselves and act accordingly. For young people, this can manifest itself in many ways. Here are some major ones:

- S/he feels shame at being a member of the group and seeks to disassociate and find another way to identify – this is different that a confident and open-minded child embracing a diverse range of peers. If, for example, a student never wants to be with members of her/his racial group, that is a red flag.
- S/he blames members of her/his group for bringing about their oppressed condition – you should be concerned any time you hear a student negatively characterize their own group.
- S/he lacks belief in herself/himself because of the social messages that tell her/him that s/he is inferior and incapable – girls can't do science, Black students are better at sports, etc.
- The student embraces stereotypically negative behavior associated with her/his group – you can see this in girls embracing sexualized behavior, African and Latin American youth embracing gangsterism, Asian youth denying their names and so on.
- The student refuses to acknowledge issues of stereotyping, prejudice or discrimination related to an aspect of her/his identity. Such students may profess instead, for example, some sense of special status or may always simply switch the discussion to another topic or aspect of their identity. While it may seem positive that a student is not agonizing over these issues, it is important to recognize that denial is often a symptom of a sense of powerlessness which in turn is, in many cases, a reflection internalized oppression.

It is important to distinguish between internalized oppression and taking personal responsibility to change the things over which the child has control. When the student expresses anger, resentment, shame or rejection of her/his group as a whole, this is a manifestation of internalized oppression; it is based upon a stereotype of the group. This is different than a student deciding that s/he will define her/him self and make every effort not to be bound by the constraints that are often placed on members of her/his identity group.

- How do our differences play out in our relationships with one another?
- What are the major concerns expressed by the young people in the film in relation to their sense of identity? What are your major concerns related to your sense of identity?

Closing Journal Activity:
"Something I learned about myself today was…"

Lesson II: Harassment
Objectives:
9.MEH.1.1 Identify the body's physical and psychological responses to stressful situations and positive coping mechanisms.
9MEH.1.2 Plan effective methods to deal with anxiety.
9.ICR.1.1 Illustrate the ability to respond to others with empathy.

Bell work:
Describe the following terms: Stereotyping, social and personal anxiety, and alienation,

Teacher Input:
In this lesson, students should gain a deeper understanding of the bullying and harassment going on in their school, and the ways in which students are contributing to it through stereotyping, harassment and targeting.   It is important for students to understand that there are degrees of bullying and that use of demeaning and offensive language often creates an environment where students feel marginalized, excluded and vulnerable. It is also important for students to understand the emotional, psychological and physical effects of marginalization, exclusion and bullying.

Activity:
View segment "Harassment" on DVD "Souls of Our Students
Video Discussion questions:
- What types of harassment are the students in the DVD experiencing in their schools and/or lives?
- What feelings does this harassment give rise to – for the students in the film and in the class?
- Is this different from or similar to what happens here?

Activity 2.01:
"What is going on in our school?"

Materials required:
Paper
Pens/markers

Instructions:

Each student should be asked to write a short paragraph about an incident they witnessed or experienced related to intergroup conflict.

Students should think about how the event made them feel and how it was addressed, as well as how they would have wanted it addressed.

Feel free to allow the students to share their stories in small groups and discuss what could have prevented the incident from happening, or what might have been the proper way of dealing with it so that it wouldn't happen again.

Activity 2.02:
"The Power of Words"

Instructions:

The teacher will redistribute the identity charts students have already completed. Looking at the chart, students will be asked to choose three pieces of their identity that they identify most with what they believe makes up their core.

Students will be asked to think about words, sayings or phrases related to these pieces of their identity that have offended them. The teacher should ask them to be as honest as possible. They will anonymously write down these words, sayings or phrases on strips of paper.

Students will be asked to complete this sentence: When I hear this said, it makes me feel _____and it makes me want to _____. Students should come up with a feeling and an action associated with the word/phrase they wrote before.

The teacher will post the words and the responses on the board.

Discussion Questions:

- People often tell young people to ignore what others say to them. Why is this so hard?
- What is it about the words that are used that make them so hurtful – what deeper meaning do they convey?
- What would it feel like if someone always had a negative comment about a piece of your identity that you can't change?
- Is it different if the comment isn't directed directly at you? Examples: That's so gay. That's so retarded. This homework is a bi*ch. That's so ghetto. Poor white trash. Etc.
- Why do we feel like we need to say these things, even if it hurts/offends people?

Closing Journal Activity:
"One thing that I really value about myself is…"

Lesson III: Discrimination
Objectives:

9.MEH.1.1 Identify the body's physical and psychological responses to stressful situations and positive coping mechanisms.
9MEH.1.2 Plan effective methods to deal with anxiety.

Bell work:
Describe the following terms: Targeting, popular culture, normative beliefs

Teacher Input:
In this lesson, students should begin to talk about the ways in which outside events and trends can affect the way we see and relate to each other. For example, post-911, incidents of targeting and bullying of Muslim students rose; after Columbine, students who were loners or wore trench coats became prime targets for mistrust; after Virginia Tech, Asian students felt harassed and blamed; and in the current climate of hostility towards undocumented workers, Latin American students have faced increased taunting about their status. It is important for students to recognize that the way we feel about others in relation to differences is often affected by the messages we receive about them from outside sources. Students need to be able to share their stories about ways in which they have either discriminated against others or have been discriminated against. The lesson also gives students the opportunity to assert and define their identity, while leaving stereotypes behind.

Activity:
View segment "Discrimination" on DVD "Souls of Our Students
Video Discussion questions:
- How do events, issues and trends of thought in the wider society affect how students see and treat one another?
- Have there been any events recently that have affected the way you interact with someone?

Activity 3.01:
"I am but I am not….."
Materials:
Paper and pens

Instructions:

Name a stereotype associated with one of the groups with which you identify that is not consistent with who you are. Fill in the following sentence:
I am (a/an) _____ but I am NOT (a/an) _____.
(So if one of my identifiers was "Teacher," and I thought a stereotype was that all Teachers are boring "stick-in-the-muds," my sentence would be:
I am a Teacher, but I am NOT a boring stick-in-the-mud.

When all the students have completed their sentence, they will share by simply standing up and reading their stereotype statement. You can either simply go around the room in some order or have people randomly stand up and read their statements. Make sure that students are respectful and listening actively, as individuals are making themselves vulnerable by participating. It is possible to start by reading your own statement. This part of the activity can be extremely powerful if you introduce it energetically. It may take a few moments to start the flow of sharing; so allow for silent moments.

Processing questions:
- How did it feel to be able to stand up and challenge your stereotype?
- Did anybody hear somebody challenge a stereotype that you once bought into or believed about another group? If so, what?
- (There is usually some laughter when somebody shares common stereotype such as "I may be Arab, but I am not a terrorist" or "I may be a teacher, but I do have a social life.") I heard several moments of laughter. What was that about?
- Where do stereotypes come from? Why do they exist?
- How do stereotypes affect our ability to form healthy relationships with people who are different from us?
- How can we eliminate these stereotypes?

Activity 3.02:
Telling Our Stories

Instructions:
The class should be divided into groups of no larger than 4 members. Each student then is given the opportunity to relate a story in which (s)he felt discriminated against, or in which (s)he felt (s)he had discriminated against someone else. Be sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to tell his or her story.

- It is vital to continually relate stories back to how they made the person feel. Students will often not offer this information without being asked.
- Remind students about confidentiality. Also, mention that it is better not to refer to people not in the class by name in their story. It is unfair to indict someone who is not there to offer their perspective.
- It is important to acknowledge the fact that we can't change what happened five minutes ago, let alone several years ago. The point is to figure out exactly what we are doing and then decide for ourselves if we want to continue doing the same things.
- Students are often reluctant to volunteer to begin this activity. A good strategy is, as the teacher, to tell your own story (briefly) first. This will help with the trust factor as well.

Closing Journal Activity:
"Discrimination exists in our society because…"

Lesson IV: Privilege
Objectives:
9.ICR.1.1 Illustrate the ability to respond to others with empathy.
9.PCH.2.2 Monitor the effects of media and popular culture on normative beliefs that contradict scientific research on health.

Bell work:
Describe the following terms: Social norms and values, popular culture and normative beliefs

Teacher Input:
In this lesson students will be encouraged to critically examine how and why advantages accrue to some groups and disadvantages to others. The teacher should engage the students in a conversation about privilege, using many examples of what that word means. Students should be asked to look at the advantages and disadvantages that come with being a member of different groups at all levels of society, including within the school. Students will explore how they know which group is which, what messages they receive from outside sources that confirm this for them and how privilege impacts their relationships with one another.

Activity:
View segment "Privilege" on DVD "Souls of Our Students
Video Discussion Questions:
- This section is called "Privilege." What does that word mean?
- What is the difference between a privilege and a right?
- Does everyone in our school have access to the same privileges? Why or why not?

Activity 4.01:
 "Word Bank activity" (Appendix 3)

Instructions:

Students will be asked to pick a card with a word on it defining a group of people, e.g., Christians, Muslims, Jews, US citizens, immigrants, homosexuals, heterosexuals... The students will answer a series of questions about that group of people, as follows:

What are some of the words or ideas associated with this group?
What do these words and ideas tell you about the status of this group in society?
What are the advantages or disadvantages that come with belonging to this group?

Processing Questions:

- How do we learn what the status is of the different groups in our environments?

- Does what we learn affect how we see individual members of that group? What are some examples of this?
- How does the status of our group, its advantages and disadvantages, affect how we feel about ourselves?
- How do our feelings about ourselves and attitudes towards others social status affect our relationships with one another?
- What can we do to improve our relationships?

Closing Journal Activity:
"One way that society tells me I am privileged or disadvantaged is…"

Lesson V: Acceptance & Change
Objectives:
9.ICR.1.1 Illustrate the ability to respond to others with empathy.

Bell work:
Describe the following terms: Empathy, leadership, goals and strategies for promoting inclusion

Teacher Input:
This final lesson is geared toward helping students realize the places in which they have power to make change. Through engaging in the activity, students should focus on the things that they can do that will immediately effect some change. They should also be asked to think critically about what the challenges to making changes will be and how they will deal with those challenges. They also should be asked to think about the types of support that are available to them.

Activity:
View segment "*Acceptance & Change*" on DVD "Souls of Our Students
Video Discussion Questions:
- What does acceptance mean to you?
- If the students had been in a community that was accepting of their various differences, how might their lives be different??
- What types of changes and suggestions did the students have? Do you have any similar ideas or suggestions? Different?

Activity 5.01:
 "Spheres of influence" activity – What can students and teachers do? (Appendix 4)
Materials:
Copy of the Spheres of Influence worksheet

Instructions:

This activity should be used to help the students focus on the changes they can make in their attitudes and behavior when dealing with differences, as well as to help them look for opportunities for making changes in their peer group's attitudes and behaviors.

Using the template provided, students will examine the primary, secondary and tertiary changes they can make to improve the environment of their school. They will also think critically about the supports available to them and the challenges they may face.

Students may be asked to share their sheets with the class.

Discussion Questions:
- Why is change necessary?
- What will the challenges be? How will you navigate them?

Closing Journal Activity:
"From this video I have learned…"

Unit Project: Who I Am

Objectives: 9.ICR.1.1 Illustrate the ability to respond to others with empathy.

 Special Note: This project works well as a take home project assigned at the beginning of this unit.

Instructions:

This activity begins an active introspective process while continuing to provide opportunities for individuals to make connections with each other. Students will create a project that best represents who they are. Students may use any creative medium to do this. They may create a collage of pictures and words, they may write a poem or a song. The only stipulation is that they must answer the question: Who am I?

Leave it open to their interpretation as much as possible, but suggest that they can, if they wish, include statements about where they are from regionally, ethnically, religiously, etc., memories from different points in their lives, interests and hobbies, mottos or credos, favorite phrases, family traditions and customs, and whatever else defines who they are. Be sure to let them know that they will be sharing their projects at the end of the unit.

Processing:
In order to ensure that everybody has an opportunity to share her or his story, you might consider breaking the class into diverse small groups of 4-6 if necessary.

Discussion Questions:
- What was it like being able to define yourself?
- What did you learn about others?
- How can you use this information in your life?

Things to consider:
- Be sure to allow time for everyone to be able to speak.
- Encourage applause, and thank folks for sharing their projects.
- Ask what, if any, connections people made with each other from this activity. What were some commonalities across projects? Did any of these surprise you?
- Did your project content change as you progressed through this class?

End of Unit Project: First They Came

First they came for the Communists,
And I did not speak out, because I was not a Communist.
Then they came for the Socialists,
And I did not speak out, because I was not a Socialist.
Then they came for the Jews,
And I did not speak out, because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me,
And there was no one left to speak for me.
-Martin Niemöller

At the end of the video, the students recited a poem by Martin Niemöller, which uses his experience in Nazi Germany to criticize apathy in situations of social injustice. Students should read the poem in class and discuss what it means. Why do you think the writer did not speak out? What might have happened if he had?

Students should be asked to think about their school environment and they should rewrite the poem to reflect their experience of what is happening in the community and in their school. They may use the following diagram or recreate the poem altogether.

First they came for the _____,

And I did not speak out, because I was not a _____.

Then they came for _____,

And I did not speak out, because I was not a _____.

Then they came for the _____,

And I did not speak out, because I was not a _____.

Then they came for me,

And there was no one left to speak for me.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Culture Chart Diagram*

Name	How I identify myself	How I think others identify me	My favorite place to be	One thing that might surprise you about me

* Please feel free to substitute or omit any categories.

Appendix 2. Pieces of My Identity

Identity Chart Instructions:
Place your name in the center circle. Inside the first circle write identity traits that include pieces of your identity that you were born with or that you view as permanent: such as race, class, gender, etc. In the second layer, please write personality traits that you believe best describe who you are and any talents you may have. In the outside layer, please include the things you like doing– hobbies, sports, etc.
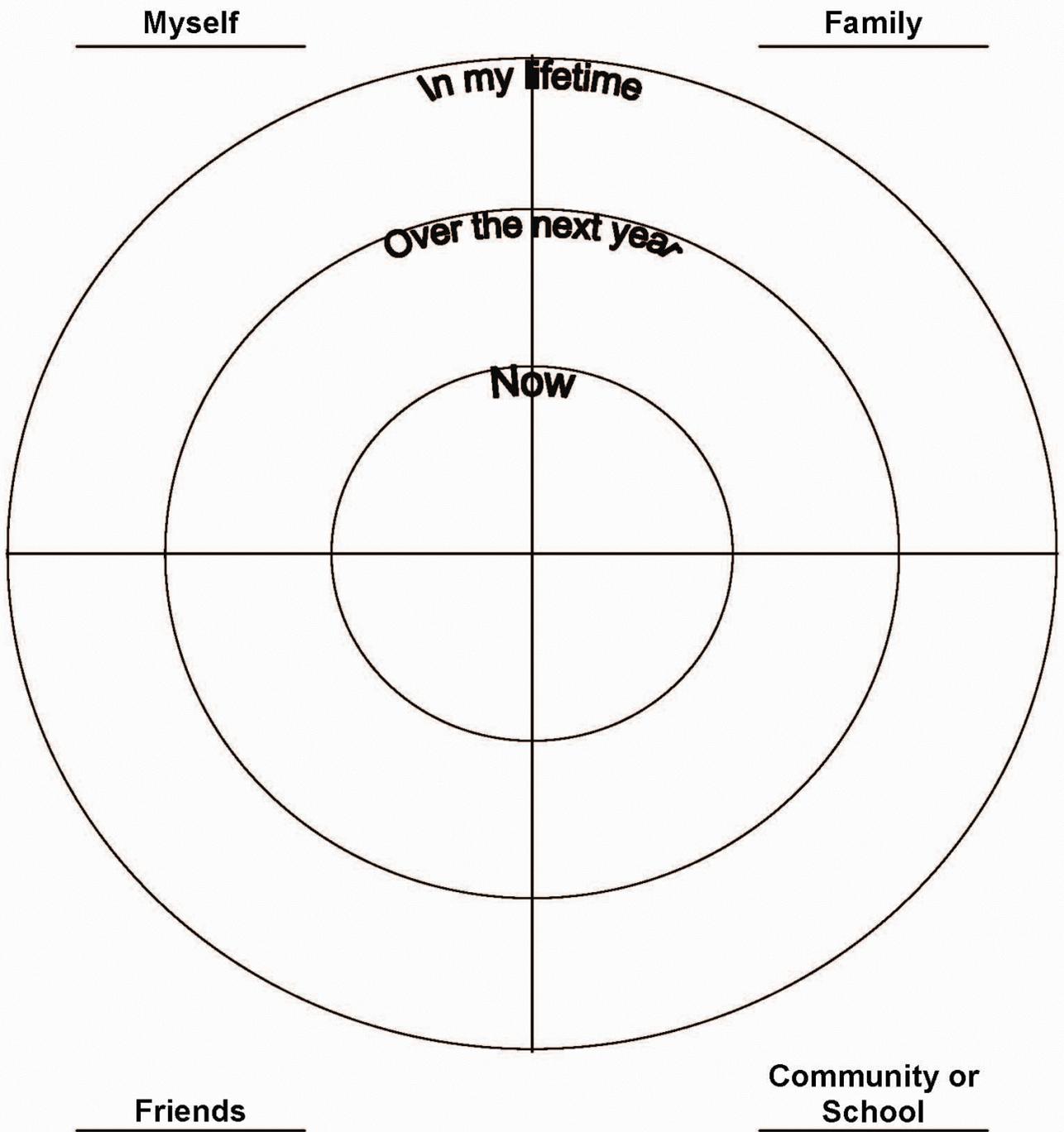
Personality traits and talents

Name

Who Am I?

Things I like to do

Appendix 3. Word Bank Cards

Christian	**Non-Christian**
Caucasian	**African-American**
Asian	**Hispanic**
Disabled	**Able-Bodied**
Rich	**Poor**

Fat	**In Shape**
US Citizen	**Immigrant**
Heterosexual	**Homosexual**
Male	**Female**
Ugly	**Pretty**

Spheres of Influence

Myself

Family

In my lifetime

Over the next year

Now

Friends

Community or School

Glossary of Terms

Diversity   Different characteristics among human beings. Includes culture, economic status, ethnicity, race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, religion, age, educational background, etc.

Community   A group of people whose members are connected to one another through a common identity, set of experiences, or shared purpose.

Culture   A way of living that makes a group of people distinct. It includes values, beliefs, language, style of communication, patterns of thinking, or behavior norms that are passed down from one generation to the next through learning and experience.

Race   A scientifically questionable categorization of human beings into groups of people who share similar physical characteristics, including eye shape, head form, skin color, hair texture, lip size, and bone structure.

Inclusion   A set of community values that suggest that people of diverse backgrounds, perspectives and beliefs should have equal opportunity to belong and contribute to their community. It requires people to value, respect, and accept their differences as being important to the overall community. Inclusion requires that people *feel* welcome and have access, in addition to being physically present.

Exclusion   A set of community values that suggest that certain people are not able or welcome to belong to and contribute to a particular group or community. Exclusion may be explicit, as in physically prohibiting a person from joining, or implicit, using language and messages and creating an environment in which the person gets the feeling that he or she is not welcome.

Stereotype   *A thought or an idea* we have about a group of people which implies that all members of the group conform to the same general characteristics. An oversimplified opinion, attitude, or judgment about individuals and groups. These thoughts or ideas inform our behavior when interacting with members of the groups about whom we have stereotypes. Ex. If I think that all African-American men are gangsters, I will be more likely to cross the street if an African-American man approaches me on the sidewalk.

Prejudice   Any *attitude* we hold that implies a preconceived idea about groups or individuals, based on stereotypes. This prejudgment is made without really knowing the facts that may contradict it. Moreover, prejudices often run so deep that they are held on to even in the face of contradictory evidence. Ex. Sally would not make a good accountant, because girls aren't good at math.

Discrimination   *Action or behavior* reflecting stereotypes and prejudice which results in the denial of rights on the basis of race, religion, gender, ability, culture, economic class, or age. It favors some individuals or groups and puts others at a disadvantage.   Ex: HR professionals screening out résumés from people with African American sounding names.

Bullying   The repeated direct or indirect physical, emotional and/or psychological assault of an individual. Targets of bullying are perceived to be inferior to the bully and are selected intentionally.   Bullying can take the following forms: Physical aggression (hitting, spitting, kicking), Social alienation (gossiping, spreading rumors, excluding), Verbal aggression (calling names, teasing), Intimidation (playing tricks on, publicly challenging) and Sexual (commenting on body parts, demeaning comments based on sexuality).

- Cyber-bullying -

Harassment   Continued verbal or physical intimidation of a person with the intent to demean, belittle or insult. Harassment causes the target to feel ashamed, embarrassed, fearful and anxious.

Targeting   The intentional mistreatment of a group of individuals based on changing social norms and current events. Examples include: Anti-Muslim sentiment after 9-11, anti-Hispanic sentiment due to the current immigration debate, anti-Asian sentiment during WWII.

'Ism'   A system, doctrine, or theory which asserts that there is superiority of certain groups based on economic class, race, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ability and age over others. Groups may use these assertions of superiority and inferiority to justify and promote advantages for certain groups and disadvantages for targeted groups. Examples:

Racism – oppression based on race/culture/ethnicity

Sexism - oppression based on gender

Oppression   The combination of prejudice and power that creates advantages that benefit some groups and discriminates against other groups. Terms commonly referred to as 'isms' are specific examples of oppression. Oppression operates at several levels:

Talk - verbal expression of prejudice

Avoidance - refusal to interact members of a group

Discrimination - exclusion, denial of rights of members of a group

Physical attack - acts of violence targeting members of a group

Extermination / *genocide* - murder and mass killing of members of a group