



STEPHANIE M. CURENTON JULY 2022

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**Measuring Classroom Equity to Drive Quality Improvement**

Early Childhood Investigations Webinar  
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- Executive Assistant at Early Learning Access
- Primary contact for registrations for ACSES trainings and logistical support
- Background in healthcare & service industries
- Mother of two
- Self-trained jewelry artist



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# Curiosity, Kindness, Healing, & Joy

INTENTION AND ENERGY



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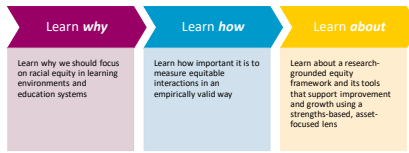
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## Learning Objectives



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Equity is about joy and love!

Seeing	Acknowledging	Adjusting
Seeing each person for their unique strengths, talents, and needs.	Acknowledging the world is unfair, so "treating everyone the same" will not close the gaps.	Adjusting teaching and learning interactions to be responsive to children's uniqueness.

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Why should educators care about racial inequity in the classroom?

... BECAUSE IT HAS REAL-WORLD CONSEQUENCES



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CONSEQUENCE

### Disparities in School Experience



- Disparity in resources (school funding, teachers, materials)
- Segregated schools & early education
- Eurocentric curriculum taught in English (nearly exclusively)
- Teachers' unconscious (implicit) bias, lowered expectations, and disconnected relationships
- Harsher disciplinary actions

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CONSEQUENCE

### Learning is Built on Relationships



- Bias is a part of the teacher-child relationship
- Current classroom observation measures do not assess bias in the classroom
- Bias is detrimental to children's healthful development & learning

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CONSEQUENCE

### Visible Minorities Face Discrimination



- Visible minorities have been denied access to a high-quality education
- Visible minorities have outward characteristic people use to negatively judge them about
  - Judgments based on how they look
  - Judgments based on how they sound
  - Assumptions about how they behave

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All children do not experience the same quality of education experiences.

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Racial equity is at the heart of quality.



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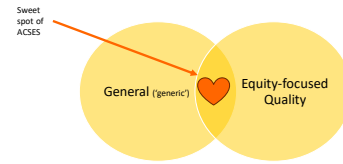
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### What is high-quality learning?



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TEACHING FOR EQUITY

Creating an environment where children thrive . . .

*“All students want their teachers to stand up for them, but Black and brown students need them to stand up against the rejection that suggests [they] have no right to be in the center of the pedagogy.”*

-Howard Stevenson, PhD, Constance Clayton Professor of Urban Education and Executive Director of the Racial Empowerment Collaborative at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education

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**ACSES:**  
Research-based Approach  
to Equitable Classrooms



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Key Term

Equitable  
Sociocultural  
Interactions

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## Equitable sociocultural interactions

### What do these equitable sociocultural classroom interactions look like?

Integrating curricula that reflects the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of our students

Partnering with families to affirm the identities of their child

Creating environments where visible minorities are accepted and respected by their peers



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## Equitable sociocultural interactions

### What do these equitable sociocultural classroom interactions look like?

Routines and structures that ensure all children feel relaxed and safe in their classrooms.

Taking the perspective of the child to understand their behavior.

Disciplining in a way that honors children's humanity and dignity.



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## Equitable sociocultural interactions

### What do these equitable sociocultural classroom interactions look like?

Considering the types of questions we ask and who we ask them to.

Creating opportunities for children to say more

Incorporating play-based and inquiry-based learning and exploration



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### Equitable sociocultural interactions

What do these equitable sociocultural classroom interactions look like?

- Encouraging teachers to do the "heart" work related to equity & change.
- Help teachers learn and grow in their knowledge of justice, equity, diversity, & inclusion.



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### ACSES Dimensions

A Framework to Support Marginalized Learners

- Challenging status quo knowledge
- Equitable learning opportunities
- (In)equitable discipline
- Connections to home life
- Personalized learning opportunities
- Participation and engagement



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### What do these dimensions look like in the classroom?

ACSES HANDOUT

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### Research Findings

1. ACSES has concurrent validity with CLASS, while also adding some unique windows into the classroom.
2. Dimensions of ACSES are associated with specific learning activities in PreK-3rd grade.
3. ACSES is associated with preschoolers' math and executive function skills.
4. ACSES is associated with elementary schoolers' math.
5. **ALL** elementary teachers demonstrated the ACSES teaching behaviors.
6. Both elementary and preschool teachers showed more ACSES teaching behaviors when their classrooms were more diverse.



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### ACSES QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ECOSYSTEM



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**Multi-Tiered System of Equity:**

Addresses sociocultural equity at all levels of the educational ecosystem

- Direct Supports to Build the Skills, Connections, and Strengths of RMLs and their Families (Student and Family Level)
- Professional Development and Measurement Related to Racial Equity (Classroom Level)
- Program-wide Policies, Structures, and Operational Practices about Racial Equity (School Leadership Level)

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## Using ACSES to *invest* in the skills and capacity of the ECE workforce

**BECAUSE ALL** TEACHERS CAN USE THE ACSES TEACHING BEHAVIORS



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## Ultimate Goal

Using the ACSES framework as the foundation for continuous quality improvement (CQI) can help the field engage in high quality teaching practices that center racial equity.



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But *how* do we measure equity?

DATA AT THE CLASSROOM LEVEL



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ACSES 3 Subscales

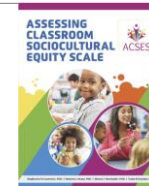
ACSES – Global	ACSES – Personalized	ACSES- Snapshot
Comprehensive tool measuring the collective experiences of the visible minorities	Tailored to an individual experience of a visible minority	Streamlined, qualitative version for quick assessments and short-term evaluations



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Learn More About ACSES



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# How can we achieve change?

IMPORTANCE OF CHANGING THE SYSTEM



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## THE CHALLENGE AHEAD

How can you create a school climate that supports social justice in the face of the racism, rising wealth inequalities, and continued education segregation?

- Speak Up and Speak Out
- Make Room
- Ask New Questions
- Expand Opportunities



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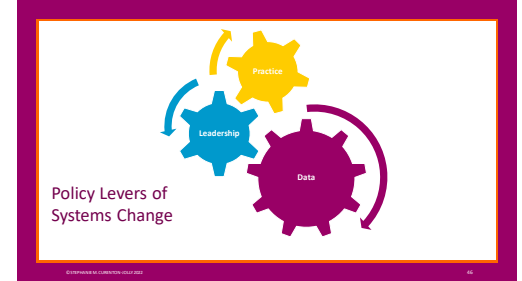
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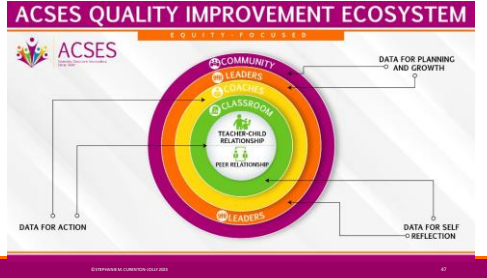
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LEADING FOR EQUITY

Create an environment for others to discover their leadership and power



POSITIVE MOTIVATION & FEEDBACK FOR GROWTH



INTERPERSONAL & PROGRAMMATIC GUIDANCE



TEAM BUILDING AND COLLABORATION

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FREE RESOURCES

Is your system focused on equity?

Is your leadership designed for equity?

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ACSES Equity Mentors (mentor-coaches)



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### Theory of Change for Equity Mentoring

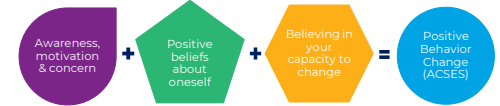
- Coaching for sociocultural equity as **transformative**, shifting beliefs and behaviors
- Seeks to target key **social-emotional** competencies of educators that underlie racial equity and instructional coaching
- Combines tradition of video reflection, discussion, and annotation from instructional coaching with **reflection and action planning** for racial equity



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### Positive Pathway to Behavior Change



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ACES Equity Action Plan

1. Gather & review data

2. Self-reflect

3. Visualize change

Practice-based and reflective coaching



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Horizontal lines for notes on slide 54.

Continue Your Equity Journey



Reach out: [contact@earlylearningaccess.org](mailto:contact@earlylearningaccess.org)



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Now Available On Demand!  
**ACSES Framework Introductory Series for  
Creating Equitable  
ECE Classrooms**



Scan to Register



Visit [StartEarly.org/ACSES](http://StartEarly.org/ACSES) to learn more!

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**Other Incredible Resources!!!**



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