SD54 Equity & Inclusion Task Force
Meeting #2
February 23, 2021

Agenda
- Where we left off
- Roles and responsibilities
- Review process and proposed timeline
- Book discussion
- Belonging video and activity
- Inclusion definition

ACTION ITEM: Create a positive vision for equity and inclusion.

Review of Norms
- Use the words you have.
- Experience discomfort.
- Speak your truth.
- Expect and accept nonclosure.
- Listen patiently, listen actively, monitor your voice.
- Assume positive intent.
- Be respectful of each other and our stories being shared.
- Opinions are not right or wrong, they are built off experiences.
- Care to confront.
- Address the point - not the person.

Review of equity definition to date:
- Belonging
- Access
- Fair

Review of tensions generated from the committee during the first task force meeting
- Fear
- Lack of perspective
- Lack of understanding
- Thinking that silence is peaceful
- Being a bystander
- People not understanding the difference between equity and equality
- Discomfort because that could mean action is required
- Lack of awareness of our own behaviors/microaggressions
- Policies that promote inequity in classrooms
- Lack of personal experience can make us think we are doing more for our students than we actually are
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of offending
- Control and power
- White ignorance and defensiveness
- Lack of education
- Down playing equity and inclusion issues
- Changes are not systemwide

Achieving to belong-Asking Powerful Questions: Tensions Activity
- We talk about belonging because it is a natural need, not a desire or something that is nice to have, but a need we have to reach our full potential. We see this through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. First, we have our basic needs - physiological and safety (food water, shelter, security, stability). We know the next step should be belonging but as this image shows, in education we often skip straight to achievement. This may come from a good place. We all want our students to perform well and to achieve, but if we keep this as a target and bypass belonging, it can have detrimental consequences. The cost of achieving to belong is high because it undermines our value as a human being.
- Despite this, we continue traditions of schooling that promise belonging to students only if they first socially conform and/or academically achieve.
- Our book gave the high school example of students feeling like they need to participate in clubs so it can help them on their college applications, so they have a sense of achievement over feeling as if they belong. In *our* schools, an example could be that when we notice a student falling behind, we might go first to their academic data and use that as our starting point to problem-solve how to support that student.
- That might be useful in some cases, BUT, before we can even get to that step, we have to ask whether this student feels like he/she belongs because how can students achieve if they don't feel that they belong in our schools?
- Sometimes we prevent students from belonging simply through our use of language. We call students "struggling learners" or "low achievers" but these terms can also impact our own perceptions of our students. The well-known educational researchers John Hattie calculated the negative impact of stigmatized labels associated with lower expectations as a loss of 153% of a year's worth of learning and growth over the course of one year (Corwin).

ACTION ITEM
What would school look like if everyone had access and felt a sense of unconditional belonging?

Create a positive vision for equity and inclusion for
- Students
- Community
- Staff