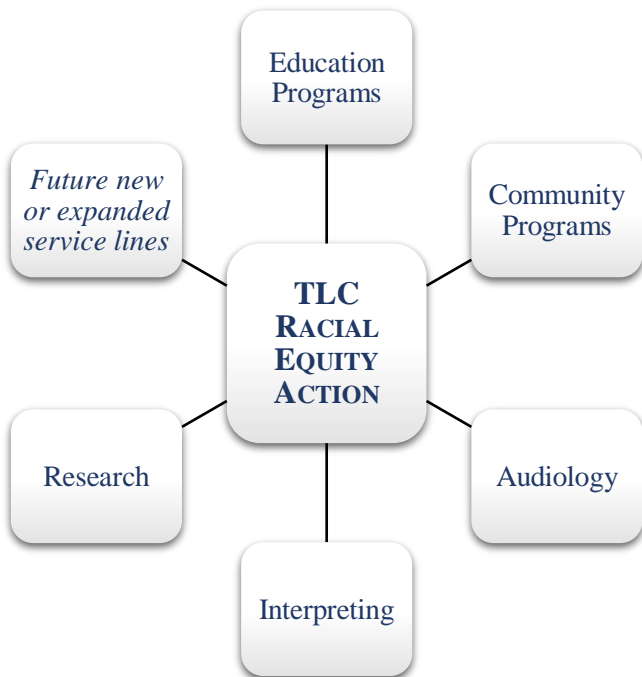


STRATEGIC PLAN TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



THE LEARNING CENTER
FOR THE DEAF

SUMMARY

This plan presents short-and long-term goals and actions aimed at creating a culture that is truly inclusive. This is an initial, and therefore dynamic, document; new versions will be released as we hold meetings, forums, and create change.

STRATEGIC PLAN TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT THE LEARNING CENTER FOR THE DEAF

VERSION 1: 7/12/20

The strategic plan to advance racial equity, diversity and inclusion will set a new standard for how we achieve our mission *to ensure that all deaf and hard of hearing children and adults thrive by having the knowledge, opportunity and power to design the future of their choice.*

At The Learning Center for the Deaf all employees, students, families and clients of color will feel safe, respected and valued. We acknowledge that **racism** is rooted in the society in which we live, is present in our organization and is difficult to uproot. We have much work to do in our commitment to drive **racial justice** and **antiracism**. We are committed to focused work on dismantling racial and systemic inequities for all students and staff. Our goal is transformational social and system change to solidify all the space that we occupy as safe, **equitable**, inclusive and respectful.

Racism is defined as “Conduct, words, practices or policies which advantage or disadvantage people based on their culture, ethnic origin or color. Racism is just as damaging in obvious forms as it is in less obvious and subtle forms, and is still called racism whether intentional or unintentional.”¹

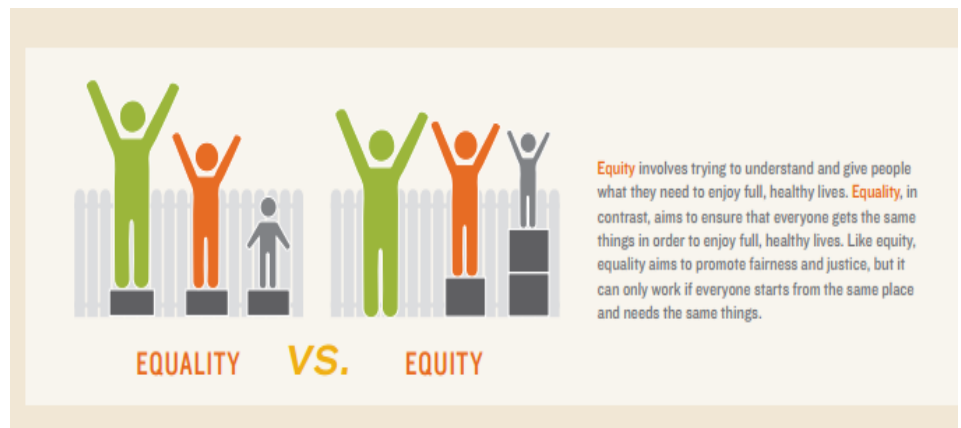
Racial Justice is “the proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all.”²

Equity is “As an outcome, we achieve racial equity when race no longer determines one’s socioeconomic outcomes; when everyone has what they need to thrive, no matter where they live. As a process, we apply racial equity when those most impacted by structural racial inequity are meaningfully involved in the creation and implementation of the institutional policies and practices that impact their lives.”³

Anti-Racism is “to think noting behaviorally wrong or right—inferior or superior—with any of the racial groups. To be antiracist is to deracialize behavior, to remove the tattooed stereotype from every racialized body. Behavior is something humans do, not races do.”⁴

The Learning Center for the Deaf 4 Racial Equity Goals:

1. Create opportunities to meaningfully engage with communities of color
2. Hire, train and promote a racially diverse and culturally-competent workforce
3. Create an anti-racist culture that is safe, respectful, and inclusive
4. Allocate resources necessary to advance racial equity



¹ The Parks and Nature Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (2016)

² Lawrence, K. & Keleher, T. (2004), Structural Racism

³ Center for Social Inclusion (2017)

⁴ Kendi, I. (2019)

⁵ Annie E. Casey Foundation, Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide (2014)

ACTION PLAN FOR CHANGE

This plan is designed to guide the first steps in our work to dismantle racism within TLC, and to build a new culture that advances racial equity. Structural Racism encompasses three facets of an organization: 1) The history that perpetuates racism, 2) The culture that allows racism to be normalized and replicated, and 3) The policies that allow racist behavior, intentional and unintentional, to be legitimized.² In order to confront and dismantle racism throughout the organization and all programs therein, we present an integrated plan that considers the systems, policies, practices, culture, and individual actions that create and perpetuate racism.

We have divided our action plan to address the four levels of change, encompassing both a macro and micro level approach, needed to dismantle four forms of racism:

MACROLEVEL APPROACH	1. Structural
	2. Institutional
MICROLEVEL APPROACH	3. Interpersonal
	4. Individual

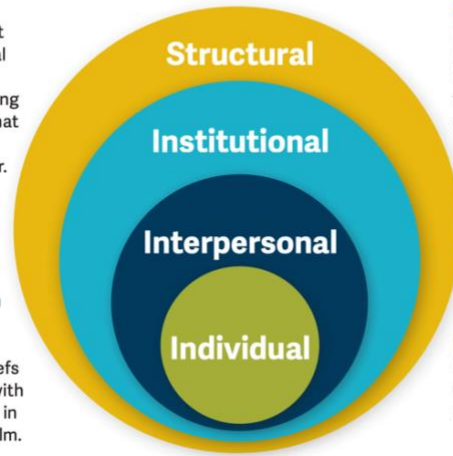
Four levels of change to address four forms of racism

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

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

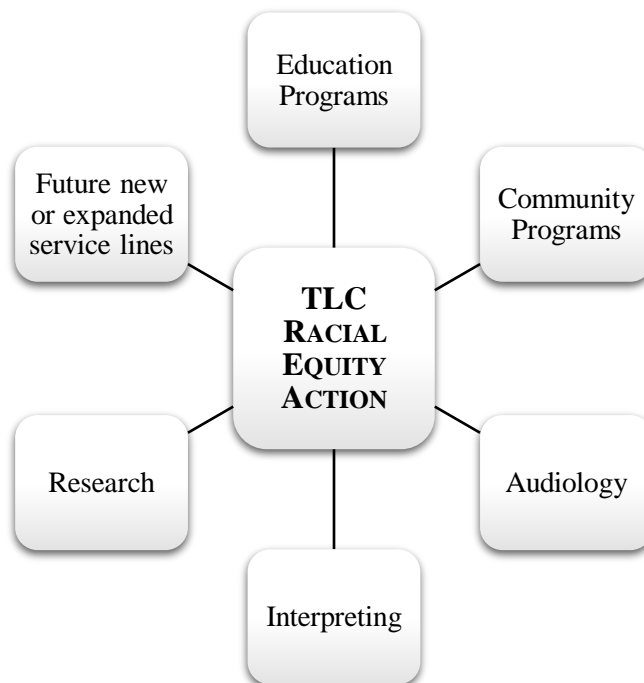
Interpersonal racism
Occurs between individuals. Once we bring our private beliefs into our interaction with others, racism is now in the interpersonal realm.

Individual racism
Pre-judgment, bias, or discrimination based on race by an individual.



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PROGRAM-LEVEL APPLICATION:



I. MACROLEVEL: STRUCTURAL & INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

1. Through the combined work of an independent consultant(s), the Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer, and the leadership team, TLC will create a long-term action plan to address, **at minimum**, the following topics. Further, TLC will use an evaluation cycle to assess, revise, implement and track ongoing results in an iterative and ongoing commitment to action and transparency.
2. Hire a leader in implementing strategic initiatives, including the creation of a culture for equity, diversity, and inclusion. Through this role, we will partner with leaders, faculty, students, staff, and internal and external constituencies to ensure programming and workforce development supports the TLC's inclusive values and strategic goals.
 - a. The position of Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer will report directly to the CEO and serve as a member of the executive leadership team. This role is designed to employ a trauma-informed lens while serving as the organization's diversity and inclusion strategist.
3. Retain a professional consultant, to work with the role of Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer, and to assess the current culture and organization of TLC, and to support the development and implementation of a long-term plan of action to address racial inequities within the organization. Inclusive of, at minimum, the following:
 - a. Survey all constituents (including: staff, students, families, alumni and community members) to determine gaps in racial equity across the organization.
 - b. Define the current state of organizational structure and operating mechanisms
 - c. With a commitment to transparency and accountability, this plan, inclusive of measurable outcomes, will be made public to the TLC Community.
4. Distribute an open invitation to all students, past and present, and invite them to dialogue, led by an independent facilitator, to listen to their personal stories, and to seek recommendations on ways that we can reduce bias, eliminate racism and promote inclusion and safety for all in our schools.
 - a. Conduct focus groups and public forums to obtain information about perceived issues and solutions within the community.
 - b. Identify various assets and barriers for improving all programs at TLC.
5. The CEIO and CEO will meet regularly, in an open meeting, with staff members who identify as a person of color to seek feedback in a direct line of communication between staff of color and administration.
6. The CEIO will meet monthly, in an open meeting, with staff members who identify as Black or Indigenous (BIPOC) to seek feedback in a direct line of communication between staff of color and administration.
7. The Board of Trustees will commit to seats of no less than 25% representation by BIPOC and other marginalized members.

8. Branding of the organization and individual programming will be assessed, with BIPOC, and other marginalized representatives, to ensure diversity that represents the inclusion of all of our community and further advances racial equity.
9. Assess current program policies regarding disciplinary action and academic performance with the support of an independent consultant(s) to identify a proactive action plan to address racial inequity.
10. Identify and develop a Framework or Model of Change to align with TLC's mission and core values. This Framework will be rooted in transparency and accountability. As such, TLC will adopt a Restorative Justice Model across all levels of the organization.
 - a. All leaders will receive training in the Restorative Justice process
 - b. HR Policies will be amended to include a restorative justice framework
 - c. Promote a critical engagement environment that also includes a student-centered space using restorative justice practices.
11. Establish a TLC Equity Committee; the committee will consist of representatives from the student body, parents, clients, staff and community members
 - a. A plan will be established to determine committee size, structure and meeting frequency
 - b. Ensure at least a 2/3 representation by those that identify as Black/Indigenous/Person of Color and other marginalized identities on the equity committee to ensure the inclusion of ideas from diverse points of view.
 - c. Analyze progress and seek inputs on the proposed action plan and outcomes.
12. The leadership team will transparently demonstrate their commitment to learning and growth by engaging in collective weekly learning exercises on topics of racial equity, and will make public the current resources they are reading/watching to support their efforts to identify ways to improve racial equity at TLC.
13. Review all student policies, including those related to requirements to participate in sports and other activities, and review all dress code requirements.
14. Review all human resource policies to determine where there may be bias and revise accordingly.
 - a. Assess and propose changes to TLC's hiring practices to diversify equity.
 - i. All interviews will include at least one BIPOC during the interview process.
15. Unpack all relevant curriculum to infuse a racial equity framework into how and what we teach.
 - a. Write a plan and timeline to replace or revise the curriculum accordingly
 - b. Assess how we celebrate culture and diversity through holiday and other traditions at TLC and make recommendations for improvement
 - c. Ensure that field trips are inclusive of culturally diverse opportunities
 - d. Write new policies for how the schools recognize diversity in these traditions.
16. Establish a mentorship program to increase the opportunities for teachers, administrators and interpreters of color.

- a. Consider a student mentorship program for students of color with the goal of creating a training pipeline that aligns with student career and education goals.

II. MICROLEVEL: INTERPERSONAL & INDIVIDUAL RACISM

1. Establish an expectation of anti-racist commitment. Staff education and professional development will ensure that TLC is committed to and actively practicing The Black Lives Matter Movement's 13 principles through interpersonal interaction, social media and other visible platforms.⁵
2. All staff across all programs will be required to participate in rigorous professional development which will focus on topics related to critical social justice lens.
 - a. A plan will be developed to retain presenters and educators to lead the development and to establish the calendar and meeting structure.
 - b. Create space and supply resources for teachers and staff to do internal work of becoming culturally responsive and critically conscious educators and practitioners.
3. A culture of individual accountability will be realized through the establishment of a reporting process for students and staff that witness or experience racism.
 - a. A formal policy for responding to complaints of racism will be established to ensure that all staff and students report that they feel safe at TLC.
 - b. A plan will be written dictating when, how, and who we engage with the police if a person/student/staff member of color is involved.
 - c. A decision process will include a panel of peers
4. TLC will host public dialogues about the roots of 'isms' and how individuals can become powerful social agents of change.

REFERENCES

1. <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2019/03/13/Parks-and-Nature-Racial-Equity-Diversity-and-Inclusion-Action-Plan.pdf>
2. <https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/Definitions-of%20Racism.pdf>
3. <https://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/our-work/what-is-racial-equity/>
4. <https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/54999/how-ibram-x-kendis-definition-of-antiracism-applies-to-schools>
5. https://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF_EmbracingEquity7Steps-2014.pdf
6. <https://www.dcareeducators4socialjustice.org/black-lives-matter/13-guiding-principles>

⁵ Black Lives Matter 13 Guiding Principles

ONGOING AGENDA FOR CHANGE

TASK	POINT PERSON	DATE TO IMPLEMENT	NOTES/RESOURCES NEEDED FOR FURTHER ACTION
Publicly commit to the Black Lives Matter Movement	CEO & all senior leaders	6/3/20	<i>Complete</i>
The leadership team will engage in collective weekly learning exercises on topics of racial equity.	CEO	6/10/20	<i>Implemented & ongoing</i>
The CEO will meet monthly in an open meeting with staff members who identify as a Person of Color	CEO	6/18/20	<i>Implemented & ongoing</i>
Racial Equity Resource page will be added to TLC website	Marketing & Communications Manager	6/10/20	<i>Complete</i>
Complete job description for the Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer (CEIO)	CEO	6/26/20	<i>Complete</i>
Seek feedback for the CEIO from the POC staff	CEO	7/1/20	<i>Complete</i>
Post CEIO position opening	Talent Acquisition Specialist	7/9/20	<i>Complete</i>
Establish a monthly meeting, with facilitator, for Black and Indigenous Staff	CEO	8/24/20	Facilitator needs to identified
Establish diverse interview team to select the Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer	CEO	7/10/20	<i>Complete</i>
Host open dialogue for students/families & alumni, led by an independent facilitator, to seek recommendations on ways TLC can reduce bias, eliminate racism and promote inclusion and safety for all in our schools.	CEO & CEIO	Aug.-Sept.	Date TBD: Facilitator needs to identified & dependent on pandemic reopening logistics
A professional development plan will be developed to retain presenters and educators to lead the development and to establish the calendar and meeting structure.	CEIO	Fall	Dependent on pandemic reopening logistics
All leaders will receive training in the Restorative Justice process	CEO, CEIO & HR Manager	<i>TBD</i>	Dependent on pandemic reopening logistics & CEIO hire date

HR Policies will be amended to include a restorative justice framework	CEIO & HR Manager	TBD	Dependent on pandemic reopening logistics & CEIO hire date
Retain a professional consultant to assess the current culture and organization of TLC	CEIO	TBD	Dependent on pandemic reopening logistics & CEIO hire date
Create a short-term action plan following the recommendations from the independent consultant(s) and use an evaluation cycle to assess, revise, implement and track results.	CEIO	TBD	Dependent on CEIO hire date & scope of work schedule from consultant
<i>Additional items will be added as plans are established</i>			