

Communication/Equity Vignette #7

Sara is the leader of her math professional learning community. Her building administrators have asked that she lead her team through regular data cycles, where an assessment is generated as a team, implemented, and data is collected and then reviewed. Sara's team administers the assessment and shares their data electronically. Prior to the next PLC meeting, the shared document showing her team's data indicates that many of the students who are struggling on point-slope formula are male students of color. Sara recognizes this as an issue of equity -- pre-algebra is a necessary course for success in later math classes and college entrance. While student success rates are regularly addressed in PLC discussion, the consideration that there is a greater percentage of male students of color struggling in this concept, perhaps even the course, has not been raised before.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What assumptions might need to be disrupted?
- Prior to attending the PLC meeting, what steps can Sara set in motion to make sure this complicated topic can be addressed in a manner that appropriately balances teachers discomfort with their need for safety?
- What background knowledge or research might members of the PLC need to better understand the relevant institutional history that may be underlying?
- What other sections of the framework might you lean on to help in this situation?

Communication/Equity Vignette #8

Anna recently moves to a new school district. She teaches fourth grade next door to Tom, who has worked in the district for thirty years. After school one day, Anna shares about the reports her students are writing about specific states. She says that one student, reporting on Massachusetts, is including the fact that it was the first state to legalize same-sex marriage. Concerned about how this might be perceived in the larger community, she shares with Tom that she suggested the student focus on other aspects of the state's history and leave out the part about same-sex marriage. She also says she is uncomfortable with the topic.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What biases and assumptions are present in this situation?
- What feedback or advice might Tom, as a teacher leader, give to Anna?
- How can Tom help Anna better understand the culture and values of her new school district and the surrounding community?
- What other sections of the framework might you lean on to help in this situation?