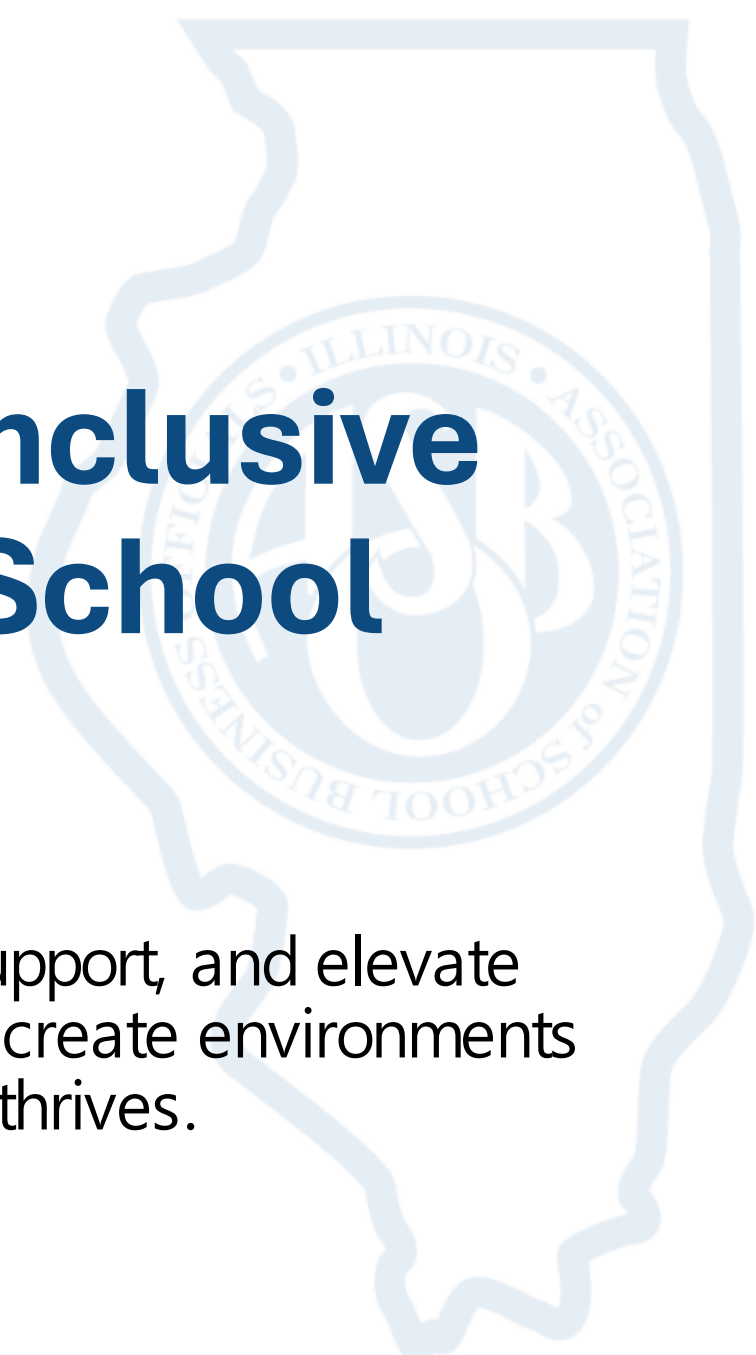




The Power of Inclusive Excellence in School Leadership

Reimagining how we attract, support, and elevate diverse talent in our schools to create environments where everyone thrives.



Introductions



Jennifer Currier
(Moderator)

Vice President, Senior Analyst
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Tamara Mitchell, SFO
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Chief Financial Officer
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Arica Finney
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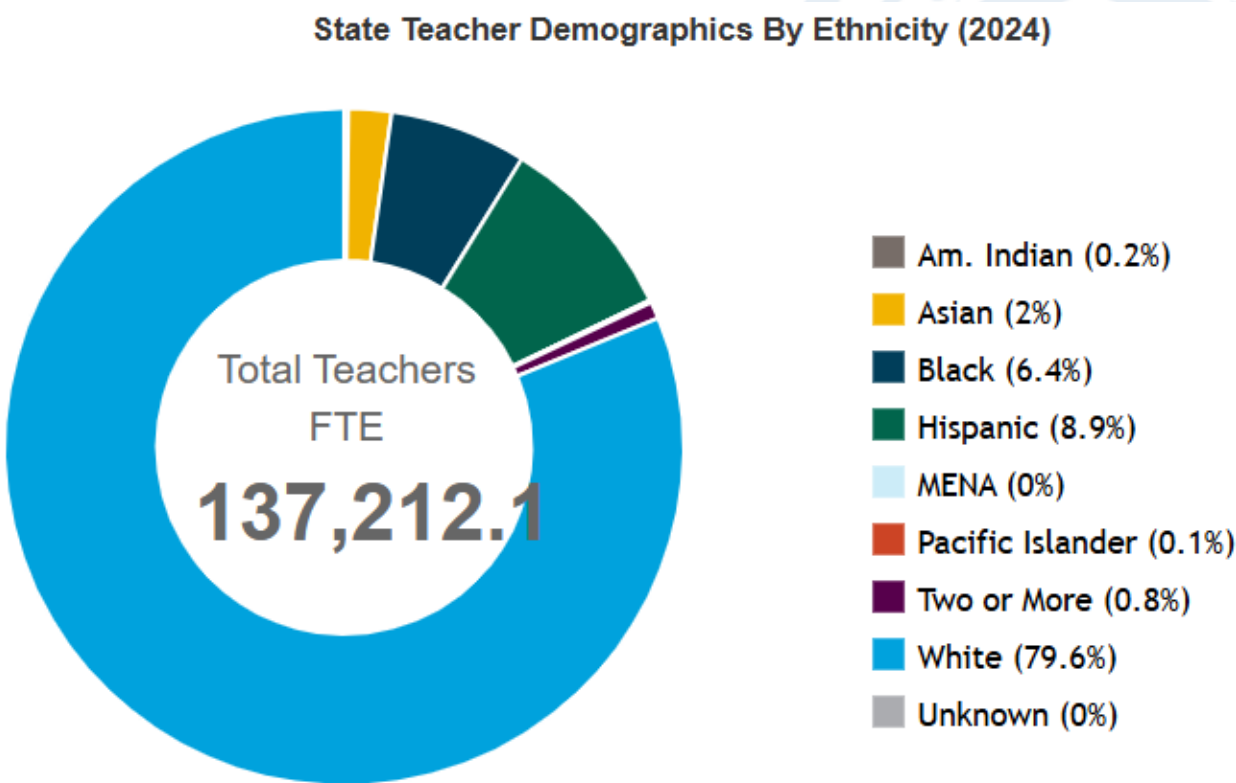
Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- **Explain** how diverse perspectives and inclusive leadership practices improve innovation, engagement, and outcomes in K–12 education.
- **Identify** evidence-based strategies—including financial, structural, and cultural approaches—to recruit, support, and retain a diverse workforce.
- **Develop** at least one actionable step they can take to foster an inclusive culture and equitable practices within their own school business leadership role.

Why Inclusive Excellence Matters in Education

The Current Landscape



The Innovation Advantage



Creative Problem-Solving

Diverse teams identify solutions that homogeneous groups miss, finding innovative approaches to persistent educational challenges.



Community Connection

Leaders from varied backgrounds build stronger bridges between schools and the communities they serve.



Academic Results

Schools with diverse leadership teams show measurable improvements in student achievement across demographic groups.

Research shows that diverse teams outperform homogeneous teams by 35% when tackling complex challenges.

Case for Inclusive Excellence: What the Research Shows

According to RAND (2022), three main factors most impact hiring and retaining diverse educators

1

Addressing Financial Barriers

- Why it matters to CSBO's? Budgeting to attract talent

2

Fostering Belonging & Supportive Work Environments

- Why it matters to CSBO's? Budgeting to retain talent

3

Building Grow-Your-Own and Partnership Pipelines

- Why it matters to CSBOs? Budgeting to Build Capacity of Talent

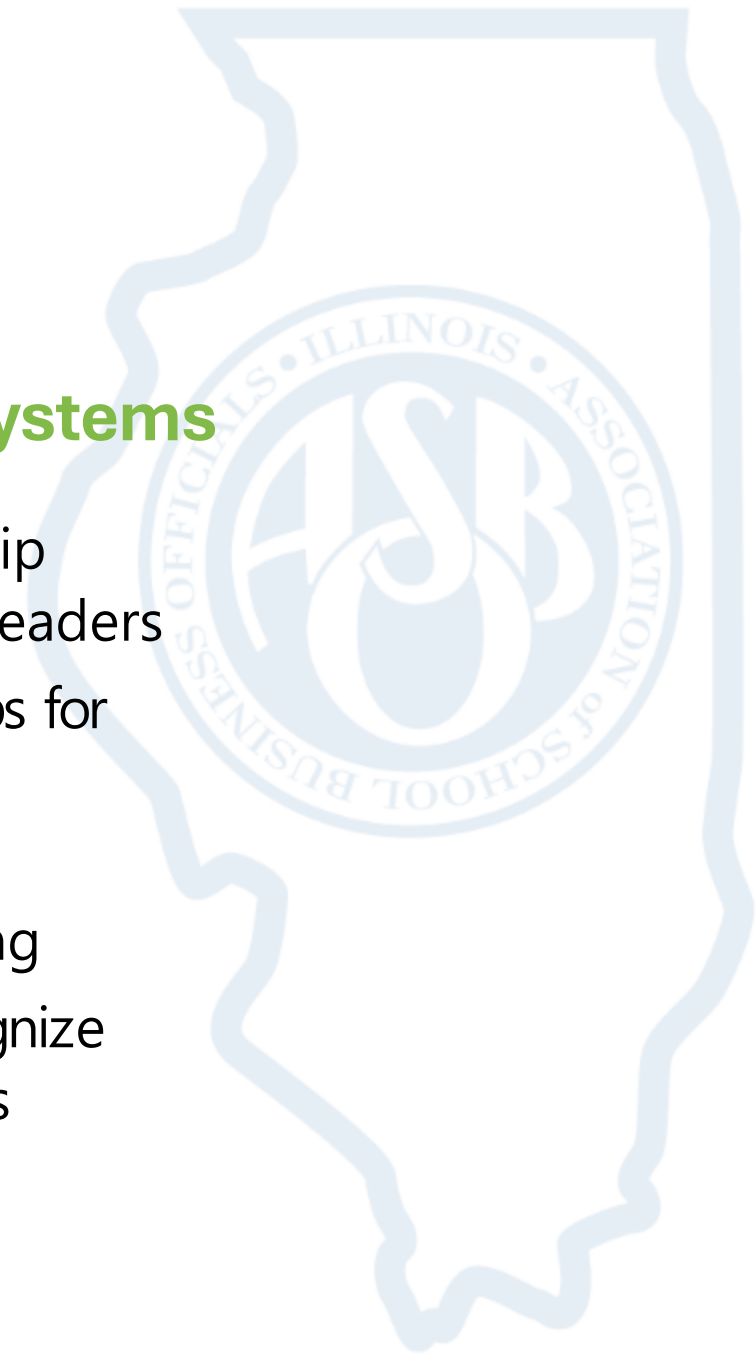
Attracting and Retaining Diverse Talent

Reimagine Recruitment

- Partner with diverse educator preparation programs
- Create "grow your own" leadership pathways
- Review job descriptions for biased language
- Ensure diverse interview panels

Sustain Support Systems

- Establish mentorship programs for new leaders
- Create affinity groups for professional growth
- Provide cultural competency training
- Celebrate and recognize diverse contributions

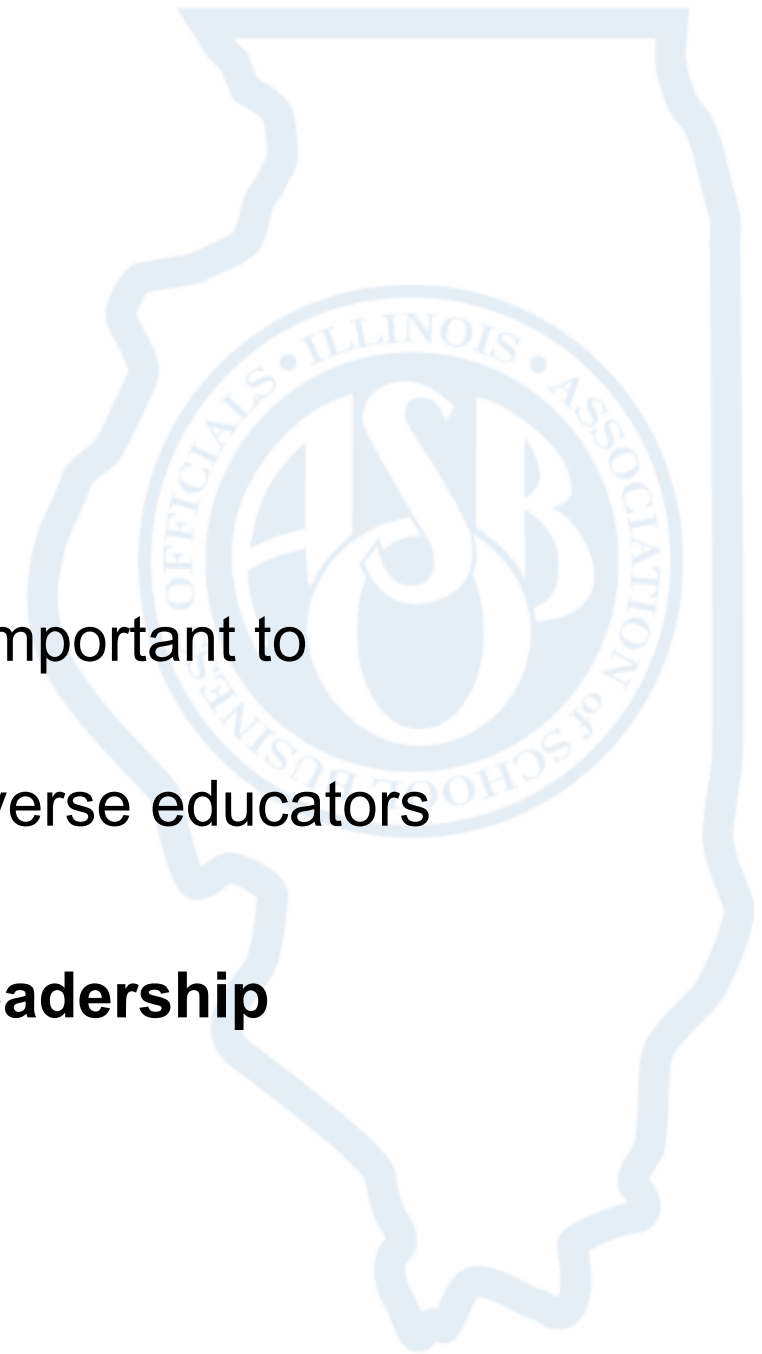


Moving from System to Self

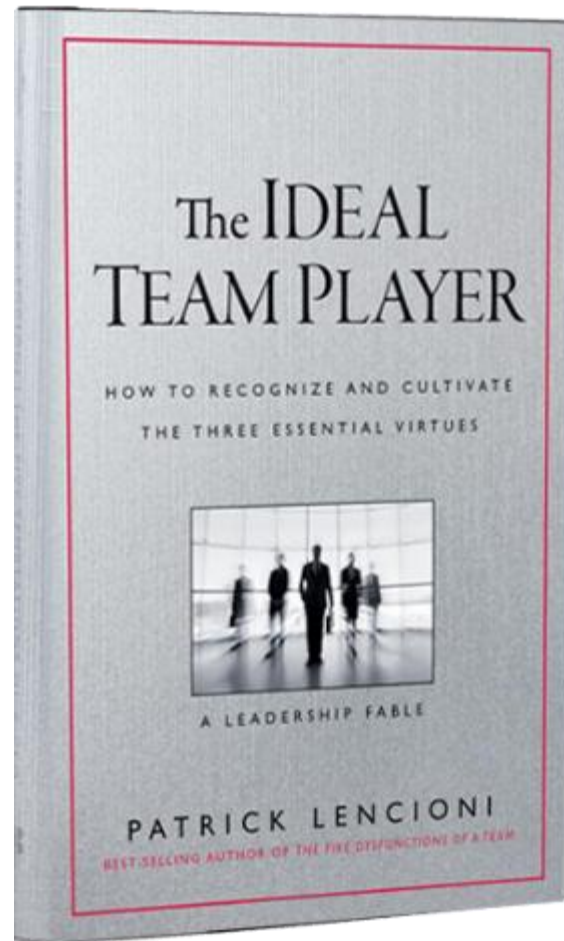
So far, our time together has focused on systems:

- Discussed why inclusive excellence matters in education
- Shared that diverse teams are higher-performing teams
- Detailed what surveyed teachers and principals of color feel are important to recruitment and retention
- Learned ways to positively impact recruitment and retention of diverse educators

We will now move on to discussing YOU and your individual leadership



The Ideal Team Player in Educational Leadership



HUNGRY

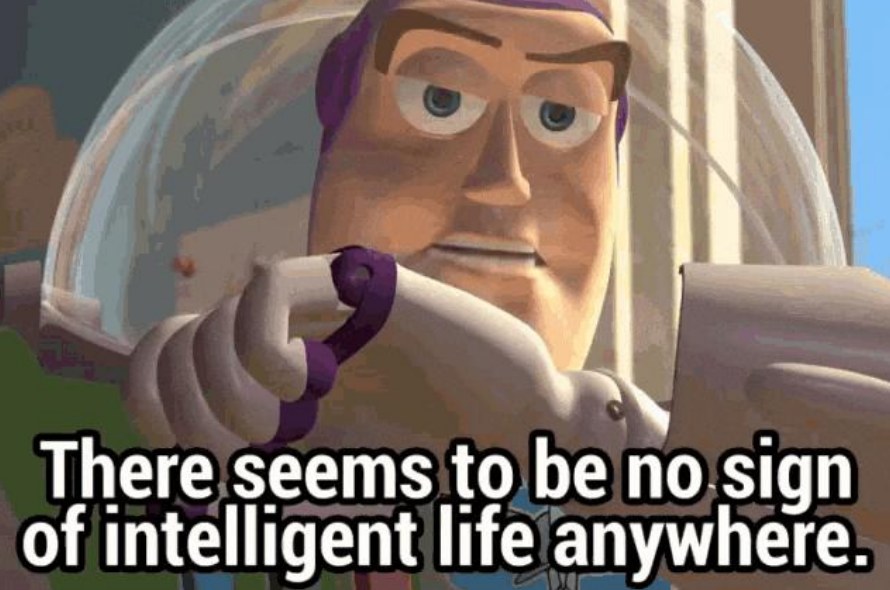
HUMBLE

SMART

COMPETENT



AUTHOR: PATRICK LENCIONI



Building Your Inclusive Leadership Practice

Recognize Blind Spots

Acknowledge your own cultural lens and how it shapes your leadership decisions. Seek feedback from colleagues with different perspectives.

Expand Your Network

Intentionally connect with educators from backgrounds different from your own. Listen to understand rather than respond.

Champion Equitable Systems

Review hiring practices, professional development opportunities, and promotion pathways for hidden barriers to advancement.

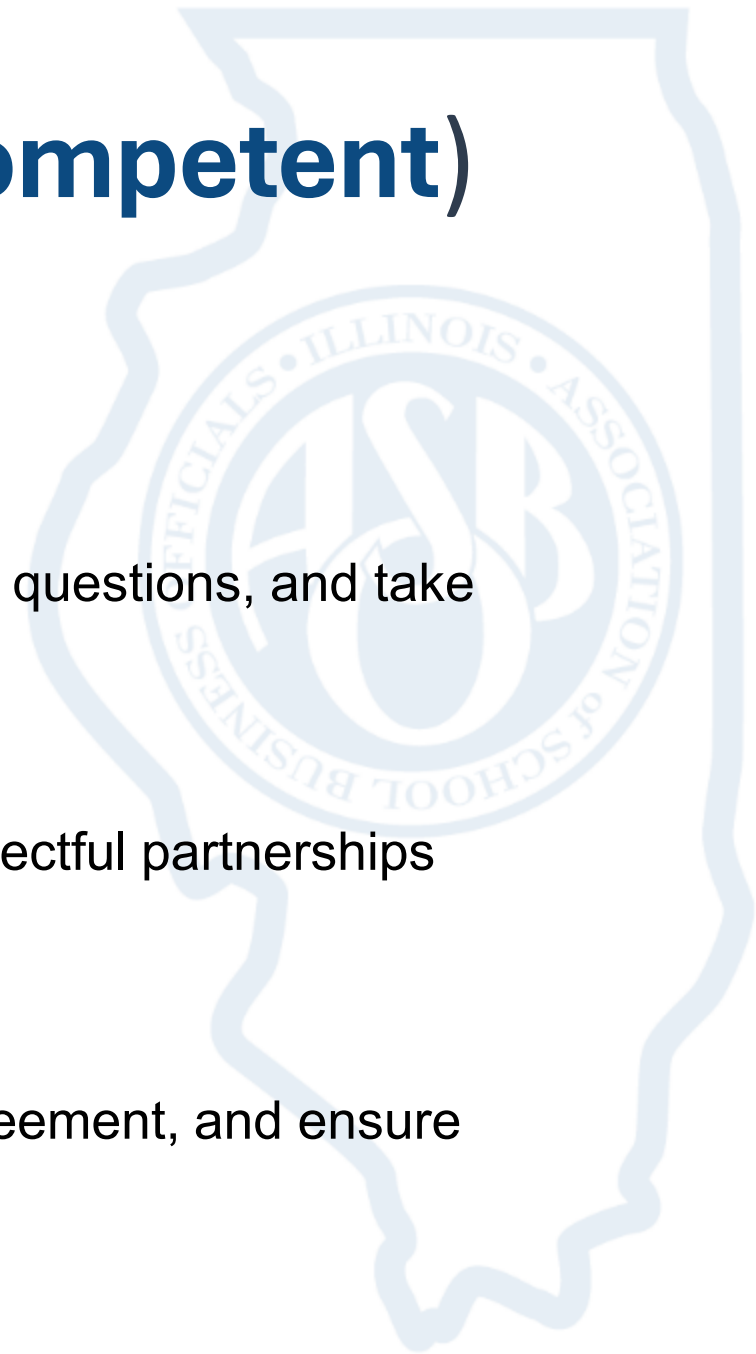
Model Inclusive Behaviors

Demonstrate the value of diverse perspectives by how you conduct meetings, make decisions, and allocate resources.

Beyond Humble, Hungry, Smart (and Competent)

Inclusive Leadership Behaviors That Build Thriving Teams

- **Psychological Safety**
 - Create an environment where team members feel safe to share ideas, ask questions, and take risks without fear of embarrassment or retaliation.
- **Cultural Humility**
 - Commit to self-reflection, acknowledge personal biases, and cultivate respectful partnerships across differences.
- **Active Listening & Inviting Dissent**
 - Deliberately seek out diverse perspectives, encourage constructive disagreement, and ensure all voices are heard and valued.



Budgeting for Inclusion – The CSBO’s Role

Initiative

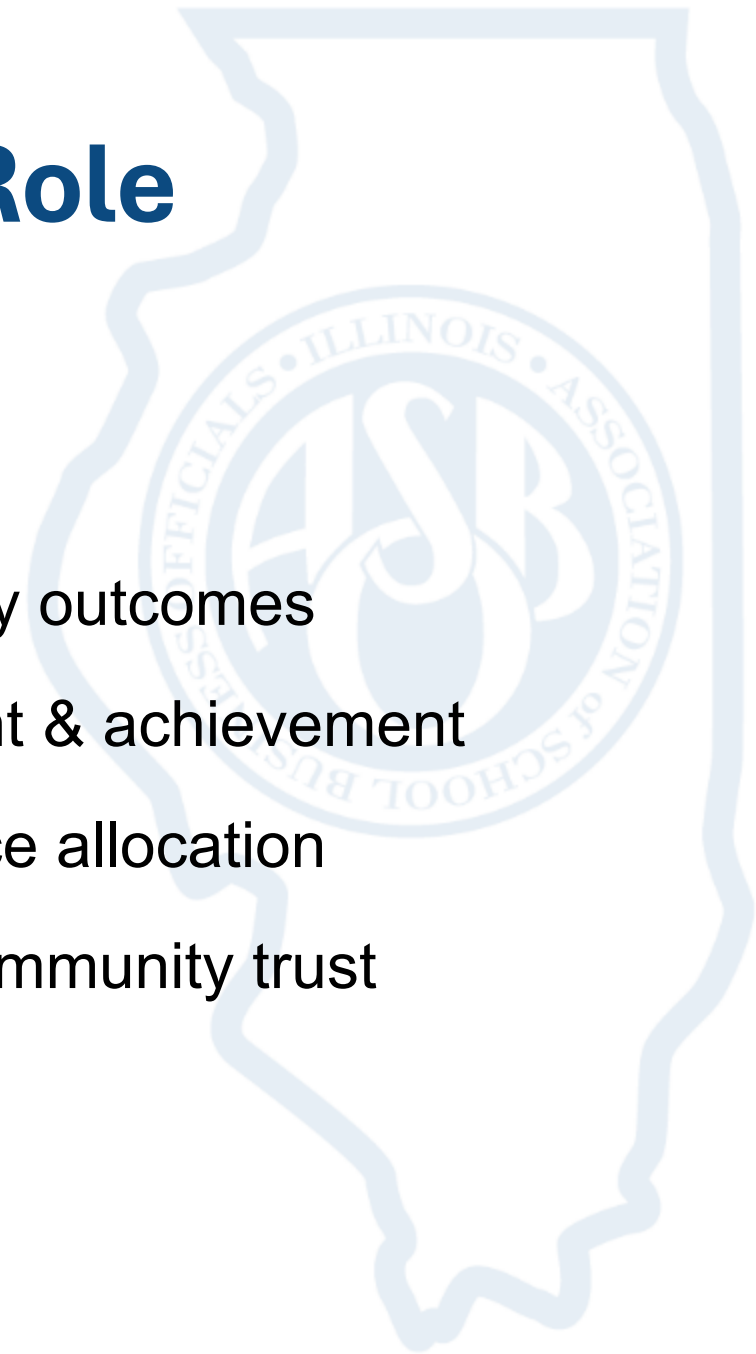
Inclusive PD
Diverse Hiring
Equity Audits
Family Engagement

Budget Area

Staff Development
Incentives
Data
Outreach

Impact

Better equity outcomes
Engagement & achievement
Fair resource allocation
Stronger community trust



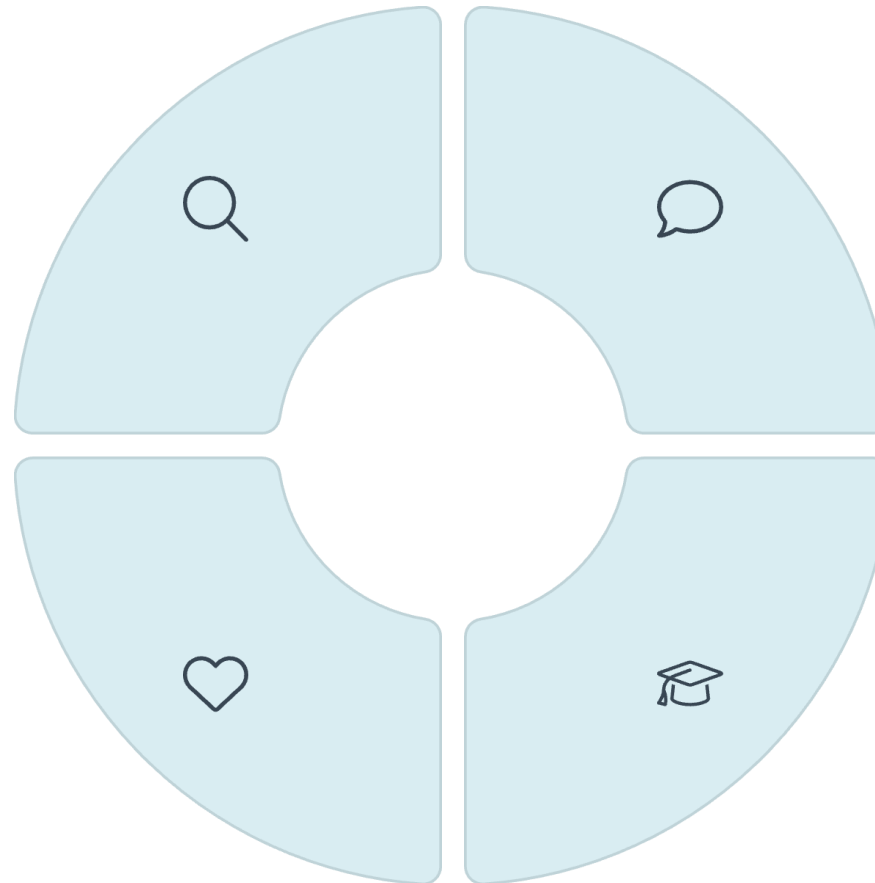
Measuring Progress Toward Inclusive Excellence

Representation

Track demographic data of leadership at all levels compared compared to student population population and community.

Climate & Culture

Assess school climate through formal surveys and informal feedback from all stakeholders.



Voice & Agency

Survey staff perception of inclusion and belonging. Monitor who speaks and is heard in decision-making forums.

Student Outcomes

Analyze achievement data across demographic groups to identify gaps and progress.

What gets measured gets improved.

Regular assessment helps maintain momentum toward inclusive excellence.

Time for Reflection

Think about a time when someone with
a different perspective helped you
solve a problem you were stuck on.
What did you learn?

Your Next Steps Toward Inclusive Excellence



Self-Assessment

Evaluate your current leadership practices through an equity lens. Identify one strength to leverage and one area for growth.



Strategic Planning

Develop a 90-day action plan with specific goals for increasing diversity of thought and representation in your team.



Community Building

Create regular forums where diverse perspectives can be shared safely and valued authentically within your school.

Remember: Inclusive excellence isn't just about who's at the table—it's about whose voice is heard and valued.

Questions?

Thank you for your time!



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Steiner, E. D., et al. (2022). *Prioritizing strategies to racially diversify the K–12 teacher workforce*. RAND Corporation.

Lencioni, Patrick M. 2016. *The Ideal Team Player*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

<https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2020/2020103/index.asp>

<https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/state.aspx?source=teachers&source2=teacherdemographics&Stateid=IL>

Tools and Resources

Inclusive Leadership Self-Assessment Worksheet: https://www.usi.edu/media/hs3hsfqo/marsha-hughes-rease_inclusive-leadership-self-assessment.pdf

Quick reads published by the Center for Creative Leadership:

<https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/when-inclusive-leadership-goes-wrong-and-how-to-get-it-right/>

<https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/what-is-inclusion-in-the-workplace-a-guide-for-leaders/>

TEDx talk that the author of The Ideal Team Player gave in 2020 – he ends with a call to action:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRh80RyT74I&t=778s>

The Six Signature Traits of Inclusive Leadership authored by Deloitte's Human Capital team:

<https://www.deloitte.com/content/dam/assets-zone1/au/en/docs/services/consulting/2023/deloitte-au-hc-six-signature-traits-inclusive-leadership-020516.pdf> - the introductory pages are largely focused on Deloitte's area of business but beginning on page 11 of the pdf, the six traits are described in a broadly applicable way. The green call out box on page 16 of the pdf provides examples of subtle biases, too.