

Beyond Celebrating Diversity: 11 Things I Can Do to Be an Equity Ally

1. **I will learn to pronounce everyone's name correctly.** No one should ever feel the need to shorten or change their names to make it easier for me or anyone else to pronounce them.
2. **I will step out of my comfort zone** by building a process for continually assessing, reflecting upon, and challenging my biases, prejudices, and socializations and how they influence my expectations for, and relationships with, each student, family, and colleague.
3. **I will review all promotional materials**, ensuring they are free of bias whether in implicit or explicit.
4. **I will reject deficit ideology** and find solutions that focus, not on "fixing" marginalized communities, but on fixing the conditions and practices that marginalize them.
5. **I will understand the relationship between intent and impact.** Often, particularly when I'm in a situation in which I experience privilege, I have the luxury of referring and responding only to what I intended, regardless of the impact I've had. I must take responsibility for and learn from my impact because most individual-level oppression is unintentional. But unintentional oppression hurts just as much as intentional oppression.
6. **I will reject the myth of color-blindness.** As uncomfortable as it may be to admit, I know that I react differently when I'm in a room full of people who share many dimensions of my identity versus a room full of people who are very different from me. I must be open and honest about this reality, because those shifts inevitably inform the experiences of the people with whom I interact. In addition, color-blindness denies people validation of their whole person.
7. **I will keep in mind that not all patrons have the same level of access to materials and resources**, such as computers and the Internet. I will be thoughtful about how I talk about using computers or accessing information online.
8. **I will build coalitions with colleagues and community members who are different from me** in terms of race, sexual orientation, gender, religion, home language, class, (dis)ability, and other identities. These can be valuable relationships for feedback and collaborative problem-solving. I must not rely on people from marginalized groups to teach me how to improve myself (which is, in and of itself, a practice of privilege).
9. **I will offer integrated equity-based programs and displays**, not just during special months or celebrations, but all year, every day.
10. **I will challenge myself to take personal responsibility before looking for fault elsewhere.** For example, if I have one patron who is being disruptive, I will consider what I, or a system has done that might be contributing to their behavior.
11. **I will advocate for equity for all underrepresented or marginalized patrons.** When I find myself justifying my inattention to any group of marginalized people due to the worldview or value system into which I was socialized, I know it is time to reevaluate that worldview or value system.



An EdChange initiative
www.edchange.org/handouts/20things.pdf
Paul Gorski gorski@equityliteracy.org
Revised Nov. 26, 2017

Adapted from "Beyond Celebrating Diversity: 20 things I will do to be an equitable educator"

<p>I am</p>	<p>BUT</p>	<p>I am not</p>
<p>I will...</p>	<p>Next step:</p>	