



# Implicit Bias and the “In/visible Indian” in the Classroom

# 10

Christie M. Poitra and John Norder

In 2005, the American Psychological Association (APA) adopted a resolution titled, “Recommending the Immediate Retirement of American Indian Mascots, Symbols, Images, and Personalities by Schools, Colleges, and Universities. Athletic Teams, and Organizations” (APA, 2005). The resolution is extensive in its discussion of the negative impacts on Native American and First Nation communities and peoples and is inclusive of issues affecting youth and child development. As stated in the resolution, “the continued use of mascots, symbols images, and personalities establishes an unwelcome and often times hostile learning environment for American Indian students that affirms negative images/stereotypes that are promoted in mainstream society ... [and their use] by school systems appears to have a negative impact on the self-esteem of American Indian students” (n.p.). As with many educational contexts, the issues of stereotyping and implicit bias are persistent challenges in the classroom and in the broader development and implementation of inclusive educational policies and best practices.

---

C. M. Poitra (✉)  
Native American Institute, Michigan State University,  
East Lansing, MI, USA  
e-mail: [Poitrach@msu.edu](mailto:Poitrach@msu.edu)

J. Norder  
Department of Anthropology, Michigan State  
University, East Lansing, MI, USA  
e-mail: [Norder@msu.edu](mailto:Norder@msu.edu)

For American Indians, there are a variety of issues that extend beyond, but are linked to, the APA statement underlying implicit bias among teachers and educational professionals. The first issue is represented by a limited literature on American Indian education in diverse classroom settings that addresses issues of prejudice and implicit bias. As noted in an earlier chapter in this volume, the available literature on American Indians either focuses on well-documented issues of the achievement gap, the importance of cultural programming and curricular design on student success, the historical trauma associated with federal and religious boarding schools, or the complex dynamic of increasing engagements with and recognizing the sovereignty of the tribal nations, of which these youth are frequently members (see Chap. 5). However, most of this research is done in contexts where the schools are tribal or American Indians are a significant demographic if not most students.

In this chapter, we attempt to broaden this scope to focus on American Indian youth experience through an abstracted lens of the challenge of addressing implicit bias in less-documented educational settings, such as urban, rural non-tribal reservation areas, or schools with little American Indian student presence vis-a-vis other minority demographics. In the United States, this latter forms the clear majority of public school districts with American Indians forming 1.2 percent of the average public school student population (Devoe, Darling-Churchill, & Snyder, 2008).

Given the limited availability of current literature on bias, we will draw from the broader comparable literature on international Indigenous K-12 students in developed countries. This chapter will couch the discussion in the international education literature about the experiences of diverse primary and secondary students. From this literature and anecdotal data from contexts experienced and observed by the authors, we identify some promising avenues for school leaders to cultivate a more inclusive and welcoming learning environment for K-12 American Indian students. We recommend expanding strategic investments in teacher professional development and pre-service teacher development; the use of a curriculum that includes local Indigenous knowledge, narratives, and histories; and Indigenous family and community outreach and engagement. In this approach, we recognize that in addition to documenting the experience of American Indian youth in K-12 education, educating and partnering with teachers and education professionals are critical pieces of future success for our youth.

---

### **Implicit Bias and the “In/visible Indian”**

In thinking about the issue of implicit bias, presenting a personal experience of one of the authors is useful here to establish the usage of implicit bias that we will define further below:

Growing up in and around the suburbs of Minneapolis/St. Paul, I got used to being one of, if not the only, American Indian kid in the classroom and one of a handful in the entire school. My cultural identity was rarely commented on by the teachers, and, to a certain extent, I might have never really thought about being ‘different’ from the other kids in class if not for an incident in kindergarten. It was late autumn and the beginning of the holiday season, and Thanksgiving was a few weeks away. The teacher was doing a music lesson with the class and she brought out a set of jingle bells that could be worn on the wrist or ankles. She asked us if we knew what they were for, and everyone including me, shouted that they were for Christmas! She agreed with the same enthusiasm, and then she slowly asked with drawn out drama if we knew that they were also part of American Indian traditional dance. There were gasps and wide eyes among everyone in the room. At this point, she looked

directly at me and asked if I could show the other kids, none of whom were American Indian, if I could show them how to dance. I dutifully put the bells on my ankles and while she drummed a heart-beat rhythm on a hand drum, I danced awkwardly around the room for the other kids singing some of the few Dakota words I knew at the time. When I was done, everyone clapped, and I felt a sense of accomplishment and pride at the demonstration as well as a more compromised feeling of being very, very ‘Indian’ at that moment.

In examining this narrative, there are a few facts to establish regarding this engagement between the teacher and the “student.” The teacher knew that the author was American Indian because she had asked him at the beginning of the year based on his appearance—tanned skin, dark eyes, and almost black straight hair. To her credit, the year was 1976, and American Indians were in the local news almost every day as part of the American Indian Movement occurring at the time, so she likely had a point of visual reference for questioning the author’s ethnicity. However, she did not know the author’s specific tribal and cultural background. As a result, she was unaware if the author knew “traditional dance.” In this interaction, she imposed an identity and an ethnicity constructed from her experience rather than through a mutual exchange with the cultural knowledge of the author. By responding to this imposition, the author was reframed into a teachable object that could be presented for the education of the other students. He was made to feel uniquely “visible” in that moment for being culturally significant, but once the moment has passed, he was no longer recognized for his cultural identity, or rendered “invisible,” for the remainder of the year with that teacher.

The above example highlights elements of both explicit and implicit bias in the behavior of the teacher toward the author. Regarding explicit bias, the teacher both identified and focused student attention on the author as being American Indian. As the moment developed, she projected her view of American Indian traditional dance upon the student by asking him to perform. The implicit biases underlying this were the constructed assumption that led her to act in that manner both in terms of recognizing the author’s

cultural identity in that moment and then to not bring it up again for the rest of the year. Without being able to directly question the teacher, we can only guess, as suggested above, that her implicit bias emerged from the visible American Indian social activism prevalent in the media at the time in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. This may have been further informed by the many familiar depictions of historic American Indians in film, television, and other media. The image of a teary-eyed “Chief” Iron Eyes Cody in full Lakota Indian regalia standing beside a freeway as litter is thrown in front of him during the Keep America Beautiful public service campaign of the 1970s remains iconic and powerful for many people from that generation.

Focusing specifically on implicit bias, it is defined as holding unconscious assumptions or prejudice toward a population of people that influences the understanding and treatment of that population (Cunningham, Nezelek, & Banaji, 2004; Eberhardt, Goff, Purdie, & Davies, 2004; Goff, Jackson, Di Leone, Culotta, & DiTomasso, 2014; Sue et al., 2007). Implicit bias ranges from the individual level, as exemplified above, to institutional levels in its expression and impacts (Cunningham et al., 2004). But from the perspective of education, implicit bias can manifest in “some institutional characteristics of schools [that] systematically deny some groups of students equal educational opportunities” (Banks & Banks, 2010, p. 3). These characteristics result from a complex interplay of social reproduction, via an almost exclusive promotion of Western ideologies, histories, and knowledge, through standardized testing and teacher practice (Madden, 2015; McCarthy & Stanton, 2017; Olneck, 2000).

---

## Deconstructing Instructor Bias

As noted in the introduction, what little literature is available about the effect of implicit bias on American Indian K-12 students echoes the theme that cultural disconnects between students, families, and schools contribute to the inequitable treatment and negative educational outcomes for

American Indian and Indigenous students more broadly in other regions of the United States (i.e., Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians) and countries (Dion, 2007; Huffman, 2010; Johnston-Goodstar & Roholt, 2017; Kanu, 2006; 2011; Van Den Bergh, Densen, Hornstra, Voeten, & Holland, 2010). These effects can be seen in standard measures demonstrating both lowered self-esteem and learning engagement (Bodkin-Andrews & Carlson, 2016; Hirschfelder, Molin, Wakim, & Dorris, 1999; Johnston-Goodstar & Roholt, 2017).

Instructor bias can hinder, depending on its expression, diverse students’ learning engagement, educational experiences, and outcomes (Cooper, 2003; Howard, 2008; Johnston-Goodstar & Roholt, 2017; Phillips & Luke, 2017; Walton & Spencer, 2009; Weaver, 2015; Zimmerman, Khoury, Vega, Gil, & Warheit, 1995). The general literature has identified a linkage between teachers’ perceptions of their own racial identities and their treatment of diverse students from other backgrounds (Howard, 2008; Kohli & Solórzano, 2012; Pigott & Cowen, 2000; Zimmerman et al., 1995). In their study of teacher bias, Pigott and Cowen (2000) found that White teachers tended to view diverse students more negatively. Moreover, White teachers frequently applied stereotypical qualities to their diverse students and held lower academic expectations for those students. Teacher bias also influences the perceptions of the academic needs of diverse students. For instance, diverse students are more likely to be identified for special education services than their White peers (Artiles, Harry, Reschly, & Chinn, 2002). The overrepresentation of diverse students in special education programs is a systemic problem resulting from structural factors existing within schools, cultural discontinuity, and instructional and assessment issues (Artiles et al., 2002; Cooper, 2003).

Other studies share similar findings about the effects of teacher bias on their perceptions of diverse students’ behavior and intellectual capabilities (Downey & Pribesh, 2004; Pigott & Cowen, 2000; Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007; Vavrus & Cole, 2002; Zimmerman et al., 1995). Using the Implicit Association Test (IAT), Van Den

Bergh et al. (2010) surveyed 41 elementary teachers to measure their level of implicit bias. The results of the IAT data revealed that teachers held different academic expectations for diverse students than for White students. Furthermore, they found that teachers having a higher score on the IAT had more prominent achievement gaps among diverse students in their classrooms (Van Den Bergh et al., 2010). Classroom climate plays an important role in student achievement. Taylor and Walton (2011) investigated how diverse students perceive threatening and non-threatening learning environments. The study found that threatening learning environments hindered student learning and academic performance.

Threatening learning environments also impact Indigenous students. Johnston-Goodstar and Roholt (2017) used a mixed method research design to look at the relationship between microaggressions in K-12 schools and the learning outcomes of Indigenous students. The work cites lower graduation rates, absenteeism, and lower standardized test scores as indicators of a systemic problem of schools and teachers working with Indigenous students. The article advances that negative learning outcomes result from the implicit bias of teachers and threatening school and classroom environments. Indigenous students experience bias through extracurricular opportunities and discipline from teachers. Furthermore, the general invisibility of Indigenous issues, knowledges (i.e., Turnbull & Chambers, 2014, p. 156), and histories in the curriculum further marginalizes Indigenous students. The work concludes that Indigenous students are often left with the choice of enduring years of negative education experiences or dropping out.

In examining American Indian-specific contexts, these issues of implicit bias are often complicated by a simple lack of awareness of the presence of American Indian students in classrooms. As the authors have encountered and observed through personal experiences and work with educators, the stereotype of the "Invisible Indian" is a frequent issue that arises in initial encounters with educators. The stereotype is based on the production of local, regional, and

national narratives by the dominant society where American Indians are erased from these narratives at a certain point and rendered invisible as people who exist in the present (Furness, 1999). For example, Minderhout and Frantz (2008) examined the complex case of the Lenape Indians in Pennsylvania. According to state officials, including a former governor, "[t]here are no Indians in Pennsylvania" (p. 61), even though over 18,000 people had indicated they were American Indian on the 2000 United States census and there were nearly a dozen organizations in the state that served the American Indian community.

The consequences of this affect the construction of implicit bias in two ways. First, when such narratives are replicated in the educational system, K-12 teachers typically have little to no curricular material or training for presenting topics regarding American Indians (Bishop, Berryman, Wearmouth, Peter, & Clapham, 2012). Typically, if they have any material, it is part of the larger historical curriculum, which is often incomplete and rarely focuses on American Indian history into the twentieth century. One of the authors experienced this in a high school setting, where the history text being used by the teacher stated that all American Indians were removed from the state of Minnesota after the Dakota Indian War of 1862. There are and have been nearly a dozen American Indian reservations in Minnesota that were established prior to and after this event, but that was not presented in the text. This was another unique situation where the teacher was aware that the author and another student in the class were American Indian, but instead of recognizing our presence as a form of counter-narrative, he tacitly promoted the textbook's narrative by remaining silent. The effect on the author and the other student was to render them and their cultural identity invisible.

The second way in which implicit bias is constructed through this type of narrative erasure is that it distances educators from being able to effectively develop methods of working with American Indian students when they are a recognizable demographic in their classrooms. This was very common with educators that authors

encountered who, despite their enthusiasm and willingness to develop more culturally sensitive material or program offerings for American Indian students, often had no idea what the contemporary American Indian youth experience looked like. In these circumstances, most educators’ implicit bias regarding American Indians is more problematic to deal with because they have only an abstract sense of culture and history that is informed by whatever exposure they have had. Once again, from the personal experiences of the authors, we have examples where for one author, American Indian cultural programming was offered by the school district to all K-12 American Indian students and was run by an instructor who focused on traditional arts and crafts. However, she did not understand that the students collectively were from two different cultural backgrounds and, subsequently, two different stylistic traditions. While arts and crafts were traditional—beadwork and basketry—she taught us styles inappropriate to either of our cultural traditions. For the other author, she was asked to demonstrate her culture in an art project, which was to construct a tipi. The teacher was not aware her tribe did not use tipis for traditional housing.

Each of these examples illustrates the point that, in the absence of appropriate training and resourcing, educators’ earnest and well-meaning efforts can be defined by implicit bias in not just inaccurate manners but ones that can result in harm to the success of K-12 American Indian students. This requires a fundamental shift in practice, which begins with understanding that American Indians are distinct in their place in US history and contemporary society. As discussed in Chap. 5, there are over 560 federally recognized tribal nations in the United States, and the cultural differences between each one are often significant to the point where one cannot develop curricula for a homogenous population of American Indians that would be meaningful and effective. Without a significant effort on the part of educators who serve American Indians in their classrooms to develop informed practices, implicit bias will continue to form a strong barrier to inclusive educational practices. In the next section, we outline examples of training that provide a useful approach to developing, incorporating, or tailor-

ing new and existing resources. These are suggested as a means to develop meaningful and empowering curricula for American Indian students and the larger K-12 student experience in the majority of US school districts.

---

### **Dismantling Implicit Bias for Empowered and Empowering Teaching**

Some promising avenues for school leaders to foster more inclusive classroom environments for Indigenous students are by investing in teacher professional development; co-developed curriculum that includes American Indian knowledges of histories, issues, and narratives; and American Indian family and community outreach and engagement. In using the term “co-develop,” we are referencing the practice of working with local or regional American Indian tribes, which almost all have active education departments. For example, Australian researchers found that increasing district efforts to meaningfully include local Australian Indigenous knowledge can positively impact the educational engagement and outcomes of Indigenous students (Martin, Nakata, Nakata, & Day, 2017). Martin et al. note that there is value in teachers understanding the complex relationship of history, racism, and Indigenous experiences in education. Through application of this type of learning in the United States, teachers will be better equipped to include American Indian issues, knowledge, and narratives into their classrooms and have a deeper understanding about the learning needs of a potentially diverse or regional-specific American Indian student composition (Martin et al., 2017).

In the broader context of inclusive education, opportunities to instruct through a multicultural education lens have a demonstrated ability to erode the cultural capital and racial hierarchies that are often reproduced in schools (Olneck, 2000). The lack of knowledge about American Indian issues is a cycle that, as discussed above, is a persistent narrative replicated in schools. The cultural reproduction of knowledge in schools supports the process of continuously replicating individuals holding similar values, understand-

ings, and knowledge within society (Bourdieu, 1973; Olneck, 2000). Regarding American Indians, this replication of knowledge creates a cycle where the larger K-12 student body is never presented the opportunity to engage with meaningful knowledge, history, or narratives—and therefore never learn about American Indian people from their own region who live either on nearby reservations or as part of the rural or urban community in which they live. And curriculum does not need to be strictly developed with tribes, as urban populations of American Indians and the various community, cultural, and health centers that serve them have developed programs for creating awareness of American Indian history, culture, and contemporary issues that can be adapted to K-12 classrooms.

A lack of this type of understanding impacts teachers' ability to support student learning about American Indian history and culture (McCarthy & Stanton, 2017). The standard pre-service teaching curriculum does not necessarily include direct instruction about Indigenous issues beyond a general multicultural education course, and even at that point, there are state, regional, and institutional differences that shape the course offerings to pre-service teachers (Madden, 2015). Teachers entering the profession through alternative certification routes (i.e., through programs or interim teaching licensures) might not have the opportunity to be exposed to multicultural education professional development opportunities or training on cultivating an inclusive classroom environment—both of which are critical to minimizing bias against American Indian students. Not providing teachers and pre-service teachers the resources necessary to cultivate knowledge about American Indian people results in the unsurprising conclusion that American Indian issues, knowledges, histories, and narratives no matter how prevalent on the landscape or in the media remain absent from the classroom (Bishop et al., 2012; Madden, 2015).

McCarthy and Stanton (2017) published a case study about a district's attempt to include an American Indian-authored children's book into the social studies curriculum in the state of Montana. The purpose of the curricular addition

was to introduce an American Indian counter-narrative to American Indian students as well as the broader student body. The authors interviewed teachers, American Indian students, other students, and community members about the curriculum addition. Non-American Indian participants expressed concerns about the book because it presented only one type of American Indian counter-narrative (i.e., the story of one tribe). Concerned participants argued that American Indian experiences are more complex than one children's book could express. Alternatively, the inclusion of the book was praised by American Indian and other students, parents, and community members for fostering dialogue about American Indian issues. Teachers saw the curricular change as a means to break "curricular racial silence" by providing an opportunity for American Indian students to see themselves represented in the classroom. The teachers reported the curricular change resulted in an increase in student engagement. The case study concludes that the curricular change furthered efforts to create a more inclusive environment in the district.

While co-developed curriculum is important to creating an inclusive classroom environment for American Indian students, it also requires changes to teacher pedagogy and practice (Bishop et al., 2012; Madden, 2015). Engaging in critical reflection through the lens of cultural humility aids teachers in becoming critically reflective about the interplay of race, class, and power dynamics. Each is equally important in the classroom, pedagogical development, and practice (Brookfield, 2017; Singleton & Linton, 2006). The concept of cultural humility is different from cultural competency. Cultural competency implies that an individual can become competent in a culture—specifically, engage in a learning journey with a clear end point. Cultures are ever-morphing, and within a given culture, there is a spectrum of diversity. The notion of an individual achieving cultural competency or becoming an expert in a culture is unrealistic. As is well-known in broader cultural and ethnic studies disciplines, the entirety of a culture does not and cannot reside in an individual.

The fallacy of cultural expertise is a frequent challenge to inclusive teaching because it sets teachers up to assume absolute expertise, when it is neither warranted nor appropriate.

Cultural humility is defined as a continuous learning process of developing an understanding and appreciation for a culture (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). To engage in the practice of cultural humility requires a critical reflection on the complex interplay of culture, power, and privilege as it relates to working in diverse contexts and with diverse populations (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). From a practitioner’s perspective, cultural humility requires an individual to be critically reflected on systems as well as their own identity and practice (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). For teachers working with American Indian students, the pursuit of cultural humility is continuous professional growing process, without an ending because there are always opportunities to learn more, to become more culturally humble and recognize the differences among communities. In the broader work of the authors, this is one of the fundamental introductions we provide when working with educators. Our “expertise” lies in the recognition that we are not experts, but learners as well, and a successful endeavor in working with American Indian tribes in addition to youth begins with this fundamental understanding.

Cultural humility work is an investment requiring teachers to learn and actualize the process of cultural humility in the context of their own identity and realities as a teacher. This type of reflection requires an ongoing commitment to a reflection and revision of practice, from how they conduct themselves within their classroom to the type of classroom climate they create. Teacher engagement requires not a one-time commitment but a career-long commitment to the pursuit of cultural humility regarding the needs, experiences, and identities of the American Indian students they serve. In classrooms that do not serve American Indian students, it is up to the teacher to commit themselves to cultural humility and inclusiveness through teaching about American Indian issues, identities, narratives, and histories.

To engage in cultural humility work, there must be continuous professional development opportunities coupled with professional learning communities for teachers to continuously engage with the support of their peer teachers. Professional learning communities are groups that come together to study, reflect, discuss, and understand an issue as it relates to their profession and has the ability to impact peoples’ understanding of diversity and multicultural issues (Firmin, Warner, Firmin, Johnson, & Firebaugh, 2013). In thinking through how professional learning communities would function regarding the inclusion of American Indian issues, leveraging professional learning community to cultivate teacher knowledge in content areas to strengthen teacher pedagogy and practice is valuable in the K-12 context. Professional learning communities have the potential to foster organizational changes to practice and culture (Goodsell, 2004). Without the appropriate level of investment of resources, the ability for learning communities to strengthen teacher knowledge and practice in the area of American Indian education issues is unlikely. To be impactful, professional learning communities would have to be institutionalized and prioritized at the district levels among district leaders.

Ultimately, teachers must have the time and space built into their schedules to critically reflect on their practice, as it relates to cultivating inclusiveness in the classroom and the diversity that exists within their schools and the communities they serve. In several school districts, time and space for teacher reflection is not always possible. Teachers are often pulled in multiple directions (Coburn, 2001; Kennedy, 2005) and are given few opportunities to critically reflect on their practice. Content standards, testing requirements, and school leadership responsibilities govern how teachers spend their time and energy inside the classroom (Kennedy, 2005). The demands of teaching leave little opportunity to meaningfully implement new curriculum and pedagogical or instructional practices (Kennedy, 2005). In relation to including curricular and pedagogical efforts to combat bias against American Indian students,

there may be fewer opportunities to prioritize the engagement in reflective dialogue in light of broader equity issues related to state and district requirements connected to job security.

---

### **Understanding the Value-Added Experience of the Diverse Classroom**

Any new initiative within a school or district requires buy-in from teachers and administrators (Kennedy, 2005). Without buy-in, new initiatives will likely be ignored or, at best, partially implemented (Kennedy, 2005). Teachers must see the relationship between the new initiative and strengthening their practice and be in alignment with existing initiatives in the district. In our experience, discussions of creating an inclusive classroom for American Indian students are often viewed as a popular option for teachers received with general agreement and enthusiasm. However, changing teacher priorities and practice to harness this enthusiasm is not simple due to the complex commitments teachers face in the classroom. It is easy to imagine that, in the light of the realities of public education, teaching about American Indian issues might get lost in the morass of things that must be completed by teachers in a given day, month, or year.

As an additional part of buy-in, community engagement should play a prominent role in the process of cultivating a more inclusive classroom environment for American Indian students (Kearney, McIntosh, Perry, Dockett, & Clayton, 2014; Madden, Higgins, & Korteweg, 2013). Community engagement is defined as leveraging opportunities for community members to become involved with classroom learning and school activities for the purpose of supporting student success and cultural inclusion (Epstein et al., 2002; Kearney et al., 2014). For schools with the privilege of being located geographically closer to an American Indian community or urban center, this could provide an opportunity for schools to cultivate collaborative efforts around the success of American Indian students. It could also be an opportunity for the community to

share experiences, knowledge, and histories with teachers and students (Madden et al., 2013). Engaging with a community calls for listening to community perspectives about American Indian educational experiences and schools (Hynds et al., 2016; Kearney et al., 2014). Soliciting feedback from the community can foster dialogue between teachers and community members. This dialogue will provide added insight into students' experiences within schools (Delgado-Gaitan, 2001; Epstein et al., 2002; Hynds et al., 2016). Soliciting community feedback will also garner more buy-in from community members about proposed and implemented community-school initiatives around education issues (Hynds et al., 2016; Lynn & McKay, 2001).

The process of developing these relationships with Indigenous communities does take time (Friedel, 1999; Madden et al., 2013), and schools must work to build rapport with parents and community leaders to develop meaningful and impactful collaborations within the classroom, school, and district. Community engagement offers rich opportunities to make classrooms more intellectually dynamic by creating welcoming and “decolonized” spaces for American Indian students and community members to engage with (Friedel, 1999; Madden et al., 2013). While there is no one way to build community relationships, it is critical to establish a process for successful community engagement (Epstein et al., 2002; Kearney et al., 2014; Madden et al., 2013).

A first step to cultivating community engagement is thinking through the questions such as:

- Is there interest among community members to engage with the school?
- How can community members be part of the educational experience of K-12 children?
- At what institutional levels will community members be asked to interact (i.e., classroom, school, district)?
- How much time will we be requesting community members to volunteer?

Asking questions like these will help develop expectations for how schools and classrooms will



interact with community members. It is critical to use different formats of communication to engage a diverse cross section of community members (i.e., mailings, calls, surveys, visits, events). Given that not all guardians and parents share the same lifestyle or home situations, it is important to use diverse methods to contact parents (Epstein et al., 2002). It is equally important to offer parents and community members a diverse set of options to be engaged with schools and classrooms.

## Summary and Key Findings

Although the literature is limited on the impacts of implicit bias on K-12 American Indian students, the existing literature and the practical and anecdotal experiences of the authors presented in this paper demonstrate the overlap between the experiences of diverse students and American Indian students. Namely, when a teacher holds biased views about their students, it can be particularly damaging to Indigenous students’ learning experiences and outcomes. To cultivate an inclusive classroom, teachers must be critically reflective about how schools replicate and promote bias and the marginalization of American Indian students in the larger social narrative of US education. There are a number of promising avenues for school leaders and teachers to leverage to mitigate bias against American Indian students that promote greater instructor awareness of implicit biases and empower American Indian students.

Curricular changes that incorporate American Indian knowledges, histories, narratives, and issues offer a unique opportunity for cross-community dialogue and for American Indian students to see themselves in the curriculum as not just an aspect of history but contemporary society. Opportunities for teachers to engage in added professional development through a stronger emphasis on multicultural education, pursuit of cultural humility, and professional learning communities could add to teachers’ understanding of American Indian issues and support them in feeling more comfortable incorporating new knowledge and

curriculums into their classrooms. Outreach to American Indian families and communities could provide other resources and cross-community learning opportunities. However, to engage in community outreach requires thoughtful reflections on the necessary systems that would need to be in place for the engagement of community members to be successfully implemented in schools and classrooms.

## References

- American Psychological Association. (2005). Recommending the Immediate Retirement of American Indian Mascots, Symbols, Images, and Personalities by Schools, Colleges, and Universities. Athletic Teams, and Organizations. Retrieved from: <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/mascots.pdf>.
- Artiles, A., Harry, B., Reschly, D., & Chinn, P. (2002). Over-identification of students of color in special education: A critical overview. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 4(1), 3–10.
- Banks, J., & Banks, C. (2010). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives, Seventh Edition*. Danvers, MA: Wiley.
- Bishop, R., Berryman, M., Wearmouth, J., Peter, M., & Clapham, S. (2012). Professional development, changes in teacher practice and improvements in indigenous students’ educational performance: A case study from New Zealand. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28(5), 694–705.
- Bodkin-Andrews, G., & Carlson, B. (2016). The legacy of racism and indigenous Australian identity within education. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 19(4), 784–807.
- Bourdieu, P. (1973). Cultural reproduction and social reproduction. In R. Brown (Ed.), *Knowledge, education and cultural change*. London, UK: Travistock.
- Brookfield, S. (2017). *Becoming a critical reflective teacher, Second Edition*. New York, NY: Jossey-Bass.
- Cooper, C. (2003). The detrimental impact of teacher Bias: Lessons learned from the standpoint of African American mothers. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 30(2), 101–116.
- Coburn, C. E. (2001). Collective sensemaking about reading: How teachers mediate reading policy in their professional communities. *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*, 23(2), 145–170.
- Cunningham, W. A., Nezlak, J. B., & Banaji, M. R. (2004). Implicit and explicit ethnocentrism: Revisiting the ideologies of prejudice. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30(2), 1332–1346.
- Dion, S. D. (2007). Disrupting molded images: Identities, responsibilities and relationships – Teachers and

- indigenous subject material. *Teaching Education*, 18(4), 329–342.
- Delgado-Gaitan, C. (2001). *The power of community: Mobilizing for family and schooling*. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Devoe, J. F., Darling-Churchill, K. E., & Snyder, T. D. (2008). *Status and trends in the education of American Indians and Alaska Natives: 2008*. Washington, D.C.: US Government Publishing Office.
- Downey, D., & Pribesh, S. (2004). When race matters: Teachers' evaluations of students' classroom behavior. *Sociology of Education*, 77(4), 267–282.
- Eberhardt, J. L., Goff, P. A., Purdie, V. J., & Davies, P. G. (2004). Seeing black: Race, crime, and visual processing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87(6), 876–893.
- Epstein, J., Sanders, M., Simon, B., Clark Salinas, K., Rodriguez Jansorn, N., & Van Voorhis, F. (2002). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- Firmin, M., Warner, S., Firmin, R., Johnson, C., & Firebaugh, S. (2013). Additional outcomes of a multicultural learning community: Experience: A qualitative analysis. *Learning Communities: Research and Practice*, 1(1), 1–25.
- Friedel, T. L. (1999). The role of aboriginal parents in public education: Barriers to change in an urban setting. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 23(2), 139–225.
- Furness, E. (1999). *The burden of history: Colonialism and the frontier myth in a rural Canadian community*. Vancouver, Canada: University of British Columbia Press.
- Goff, P. A., Jackson, M. C., Di Leone, B. A. L., Culotta, C. M., & DiTomasso, N. A. (2014). The essence of innocence: Consequences of dehumanizing black children. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 106(4), 526–545.
- Goodsell, L. (2004). A campus culture for sustaining learning communities. In J. Laufgaben & N. Shapiro (Eds.), *Sustaining and improving learning communities* (pp. 14–30). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Press.
- Hirschfelder, A., Molin, P. F., Wakim, Y., & Dorris, M. A. (1999). *American Indian stereotypes in the world of children: A reader and bibliography* (2nd ed.). Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc.
- Howard, T. C. (2008). Who really cares? The disenfranchisement of African American males in pre-K-12 schools: A critical race theory perspective. *Teachers College Record*, 110(5), 954–985.
- Huffman, T. (2010). *Theoretical perspectives on American Indian education: Taking a look at academic success and the achievement gap*. New York, NY: AltaMira Press.
- Hynds, A., Hindle, R., Savage, C., Meyer, L., Penetito, W., & Sleeter, C. (2016). The impact of teacher professional development to reposition pedagogy for indigenous students in mainstream schools. *The Teacher Educator*, 51(3), 230–249.
- Johnston-Goodstar, K., & Roholt, K. (2017). “Our kids aren’t dropping out; They’re being pushed out”: Native American students and racial microaggressions in schools. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 26(1), 30–47.
- Kanu, Y. (2006). Getting them through the college pipeline: Critical elements of instruction influencing school success among native Canadian high school students. *Journal of Advanced Academics*, 18(1), 116–145.
- Kanu, Y. (2011). *Integrating aboriginal perspectives into the school curriculum: Purposes, possibilities, and challenges*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Kearney, E., McIntosh, L., Perry, B., Dockett, S., & Clayton, K. (2014). Building positive relationships with indigenous children, families and communities: Learning at the cultural Interface. *Critical Studies in Education*, 55(3), 338–352.
- Kennedy, M. M. (2005). *Inside teaching: How classroom life undermines reform*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Kohli, R., & Solórzano, D. G. (2012). Teachers, please learn our names!: Racial microaggressions and the K-12 classroom. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 15(4), 1–22.
- Lynn, C. J., & McKay, M. M. (2001). Promoting parent-school involvement through collaborative practice models. *School Social Work Journal*, 26(1), 1–14.
- Madden, B. (2015). Pedagogical pathways for indigenous education with/in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 51(1), 1–15.
- Madden, B., Higgins, M., & Korteweg, L. (2013). Role models can’t just be on posters: Re/membering barriers to indigenous community engagement. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 36(2), 212–247.
- Martin, G., Nakata, V., Nakata, M., & Day, A. (2017). Promoting the persistence of indigenous students through teaching at the cultural Interface. *Studies in Higher Education*, 42(7), 1158–1173.
- McCarthy, G., & Stanton, C. (2017). “Let his voice be heard”: A community’s response to inclusion of an indigenous counter-narrative in the district curriculum. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 19(3), 1–22.
- Minderhout, D., & Frantz, A. (2008). Invisible Indians: Native Americans in Pennsylvania. *Human Organization*, 67(1), 61–67.
- Oneck, M. (2000). Can multiculturalism change what counts as cultural capital? *American Educational Research Journal*, 37(2), 317–348.
- Phillips, J., & Luke, A. (2017). Two worlds apart: Indigenous community perspectives and non-indigenous teacher perspectives on Australian schools. In W. Pink & G. Noblit (Eds.), *Second international handbook of urban education*. Cambridge: Springer International Handbooks of Education.
- Pigott, R. L., & Cowen, E. L. (2000). Teacher race, child race, racial congruence, and teacher ratings

- of Children's school adjustment. *Journal of School Psychology*, 38(2), 177–196.
- Singleton, C., & Linton, M. (2006). *A field guide for achieving equity in schools: Courageous conversations about race*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M. B., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *The American Psychologist*, 62(4), 271–286.
- Taylor, V. J., & Walton, G. M. (2011). Stereotype threat undermines academic learning. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 37(8), 1055–1067.
- Tenenbaum, H. R., & Ruck, M. D. (2007). Are teachers' expectations different for racial minority than for European American students? A meta-analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 99(2), 253–273.
- Tervalon, M., & Murray-Garcia, J. (1998). Cultural humility versus cultural competence: A critical distinction in defining physician training outcomes in multicultural education. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor & Underserved*, 9(2), 117–125.
- Turnbull, D., & Chambers, W. (2014). Assembling diverse knowledges: Trails and storied spaces in time. In J. Leach & L. Wilson (Eds.), *Subversion, conversion, development: Cross-cultural knowledge exchange and the politics of design* (pp. 153–182). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Van Den Bergh, L., Densen, E., Hornstra, L., Voeten, M., & Holland, R. (2010). The implicit prejudiced attitudes of teachers: Relations to teacher expectations and the ethnic achievement gap. *American Educational Research Journal*, 47(2), 497–527.
- Vavrus, F., & Cole, K. M. (2002). "I Didn't do Nothin'": The discursive construction of school suspension. *Urban Review*, 34(2), 87–111.
- Walton, G. M., & Spencer, S. J. (2009). Latent ability: Grades and test scores systematically underestimate the intellectual ability of negatively stereotyped students. *Psychological Science*, 20(9), 1132–1139.
- Weaver, H. N. (2015). Intersections of identity and education: The native American experience. In W. Jacob, S. Cheng, & M. Porter (Eds.), *Indigenous education*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer Press.
- Zimmerman, R. S., Khoury, E. L., Vega, W. A., Gil, A. G., & Warheit, G. J. (1995). Teacher and parent perceptions of behavior problems among a sample of African American, Hispanic, and non-Hispanic white students. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 23(2), 181–197.