Asset Based Language and Communication

September 22, 2022

Honoring Land and Peoples

"We want to acknowledge that we gather as the Northwest Regional ESD on the traditional lands of the Atfalati (Tualatin/ Wapato Lake), Nekalim (Nehalem), Siletz, and Tillamook peoples, past and present and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations."
~Adapted from Delilah Friedler

I Am Naheed Brown (meye/she/her)

I am the Granddaughter of Rahima and Sobhan Bhuiyan, Daughter of Ranu and Enayet, Sister of Shumon and Shoilee, Mother of Reema, Shehtaaz and Raya, wife of Dan

I am an immigrant.

I am an American by Choice

I am multilingual

I am a Bangali

I am a woman

My skin color is dark brown

I am fierce

I am resilient

Instead of What's Wrong, ask What's Strong!

[Embracing Multilingualism and Eradicating Linguistic Bias | Karen Leung | TEDxWWU](#)
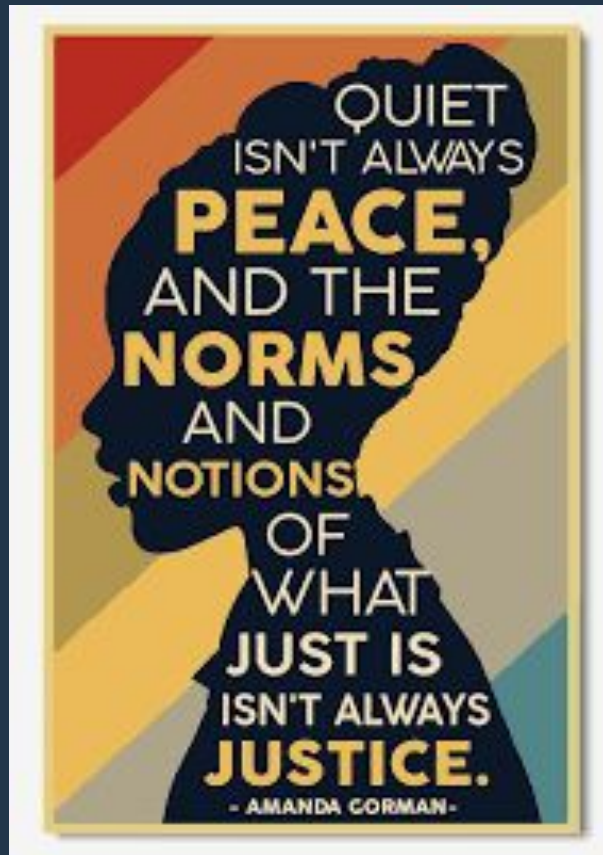
Oregon Equity Lens Companion Tool

An Asset Based Communications Lens

What we say is far more important than how we say it

Equity Lens Core Beliefs

QUIET ISN'T ALWAYS PEACE, AND THE NORMS AND NOTIONS OF WHAT JUST IS ISN'T ALWAYS JUSTICE.
- AMANDA GORMAN -

Equity Lens Core Beliefs

- Every student has the ability to learn
- Speaking multiple languages is an asset
- Special Education Services are an educational responsibility
- Students previously described as "at risk" are the best opportunity to improve outcomes Intentional proven practices must be implemented to return out of school youth to an educational setting
- Supporting great teachers is important
- Ending disparities and gaps in achievement begin with quality delivery
- Resource allocation demonstrates priorities and values
- Shared decision making with communities will improve outcomes
- All students should have access to information about future opportunities
- Community colleges and universities play a critical role in serving diverse, rural and emerging bilingual student (English Language Learners) communities
- Rich history and culture is an asset to celebrate
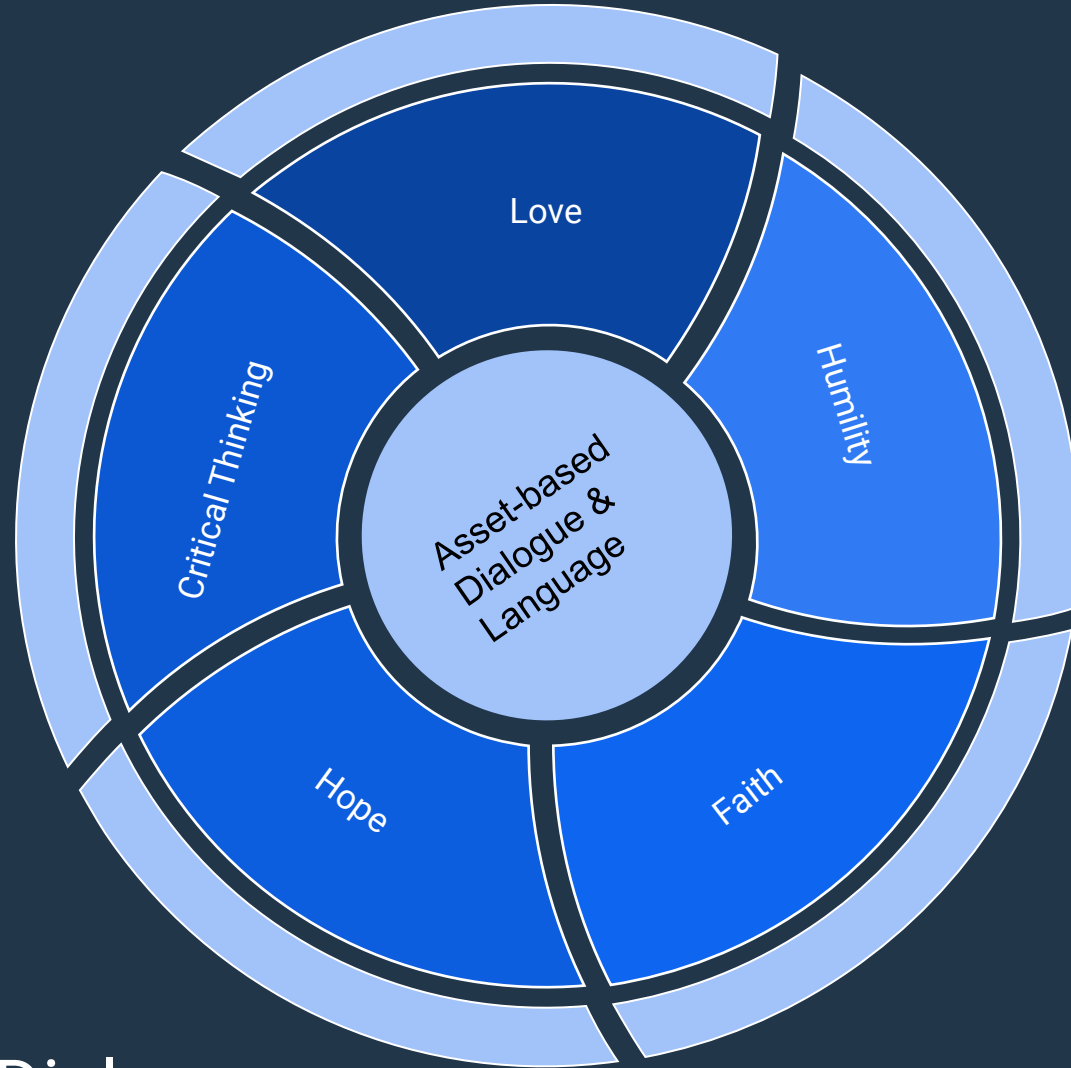
Tenets of Freirean Dialogue

The Tool

Glossary of Terms and Suggested Use

1. The Creation
2. The Reason
3. The Intention
4. The Use
5. The Audience

Let's Practice !

Common Phrase and Usage

Achievement Gap

" I am committed to closing the achievement gap".

Promising Usage

Word Swap: **opportunity and system gaps**

Sentence usage:
1. I am committed to closing all gaps created by our systems that impede opportunities for all students to be successful.
2. This program/investment is designed to support students who our systems have not historically supported adequately in being successful.

Paragraph Usage:
I am committed to working to improve educational outcomes for each student, particularly students of color and emerging bilingual students who have not been adequately supported throughout our systems of education. I am committed to approaching this work from a strength based perspective that focuses accountability on the system to provide culturally and community -specific forms of support.

Let's Practice!

Common Phrase and Usage

At-risk

"Effective interventions should address the needs of at risk students."

Word Swap: Underserved or historically underserved population

Sentence usage:

This initiative targets students who hold tremendous promise but haven't historically benefitted from the services or opportunities to unlock it.

Sentences and Paragraphs with Promising Usage

All students hold promise. Collectively, as an education system, as larger community we must build the kinds of systems and supports to unlock that promise.

We believe every student should have the opportunity to to thrive and be successful.

I am committed to improving systems and practices to ensure that students who have been historically underserved, have the opportunities and support they need to thrive/be successful. I believe that each student has potential and as leaders, it is up to us to design systems to ensure we are harnessing that potential for the good of our students and our state/country/future generation.

Table 3. Traditional (Deficit) Versus Freirean (Asset) Perspectives of Communities.

Issue/Topic	Traditional (Deficit) View	Freirean (Asset) View
Students and families of color from low-income communities	These persons are lazy, they do not work hard, and need to be fixed	These persons live in neighborhoods that are constrained by unequal power dynamics that yield inequity and oppression
Ability of students and families of color from low-income backgrounds	Agentless, recipient of services, must have external, expert assistance	Active change agents who can name and transform their reality
Community conditions	Intergenerational and unchangeable, the result of local actors' maladaptive behaviors	The result of historical oppressive structures and conditions are not immutable but transformable
Role of school leaders and teams	To work *on* and teach students and families how to fit White, middle-class norms, teach parents how to support school-based efforts	To work *with* students, families, and local actors to transform inequitable community *and* school conditions

Traditional (deficit) vs Freirean (Asset) Perspectives of Communities

Children in Poverty > children navigating poverty

Very Deficit Based/Obsolete	Still Deficit based	Step in the right direction	Promising Choice
Welfare Children	Low-income or FRL or low SES children	Children who live in poverty	Children Navigating Poverty

When we limit our description of students to deficit based adjectives, we miss an important opportunity to draw and amplify their assets

English Language Learners>emerging bilinguals/multilinguals

Very Deficit Based/Obsolete	Still Deficit based	Step in the right direction	Promising Choice
N/A	- LEP- Limited English Proficiency - ESL - English as a Second Language	English Language Learners	- emerging bilinguals - simultaneous bilinguals - multilinguals - culturally and linguistically diverse

When we label children as English learners, we de-emphasize /de-center their home language and values. We can achieve the goals of learning a new language and honoring their culture with terms like emerging bilingual students
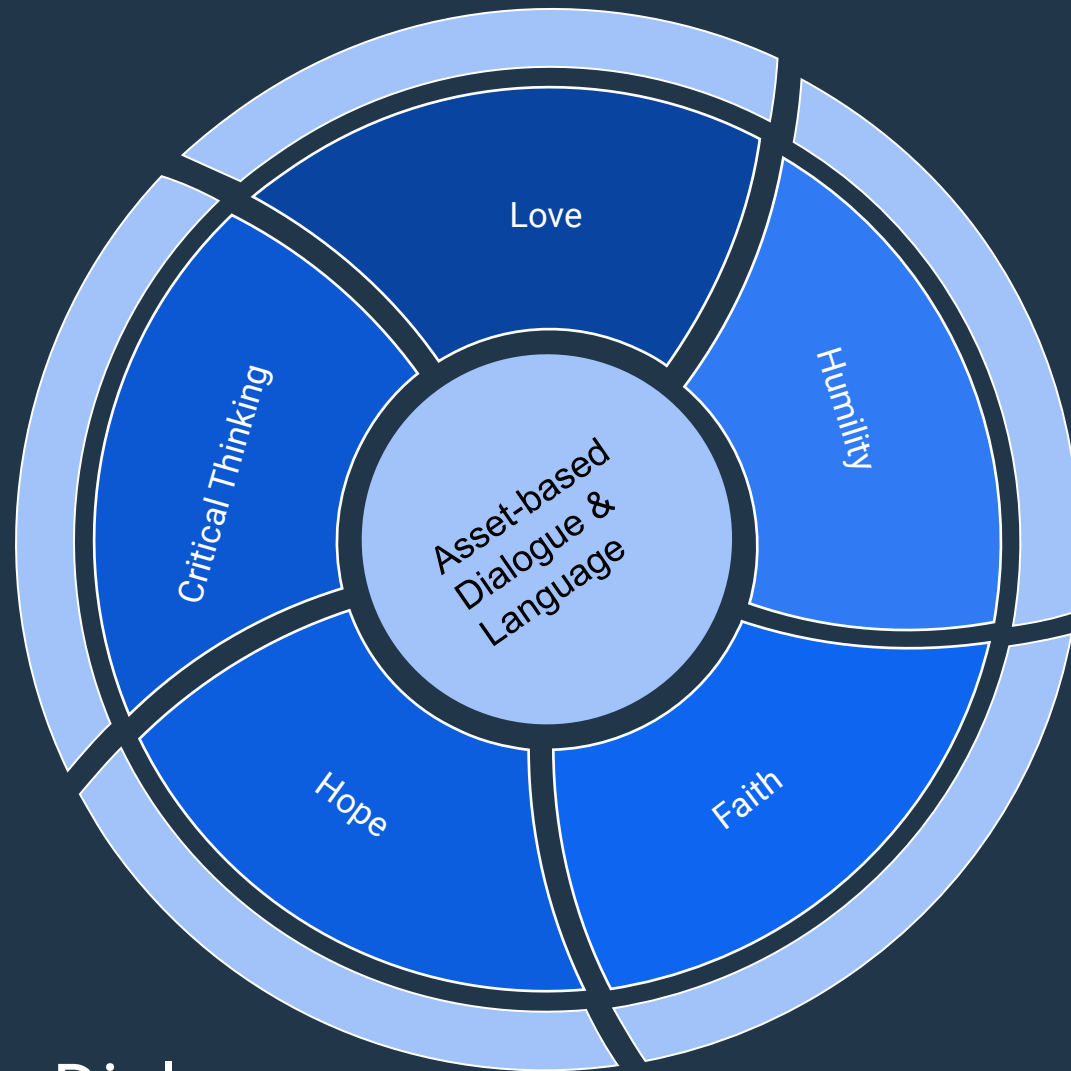
5 Tenets of Freirean Dialogue

Highly Truant> Students experiencing chronic absenteeism

Very Deficit Based/Obsolete	Still Deficit based	Step in the right direction	Promising Choice
	"It is critical that we work with highly truant students or schools who struggle with chronic absenteeism."	Chronic non-attenders/ absentees	Students experiencing chronic absenteeism

It is critical that our systems increasingly see families as vital partners with whom we should meaningfully engage in order to most effectively support students.

Minorities>BIPOC/students of color or culturally and linguistically diverse students/families

Very Deficit Based/Obsolete	Still Deficit based	Step in the right direction	Promising Choice

Oregon/we are dedicated to increasing the numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students/students of color to honor, celebrate and recognize their assets.

Low performing schools>schools that show growth along multiple measures

Very Deficit Based/Obsolete	Still Deficit based	Step in the right direction	Promising Choice

We are committed to never calling schools or students low performing. In order to ensure success of each student, it is critical that we provide targeted support to schools that shw opportunity for growth along multiple measures.

sub groups>groups

Very Deficit Based/Obsolete ▸ Still Deficit based ▸ Step in the right direction ▸ Promising Choice

Disaggregating data is critical. As we focus on examining growth of all groups, it is also important that we expand the measures beyond summative assessments.

Disadvantaged>students who have been historical underserved or under-represented

| Very Deficit Based/Obsolete | Still Deficit based | Step in the right direction | Promising Choice |

Students bring to schools a wealth of social and cultural capital. As educators and leaders, it is our responsibility to foster and nurture those contributions as assets that are vital to the community.

Stakeholders> partners/communities served

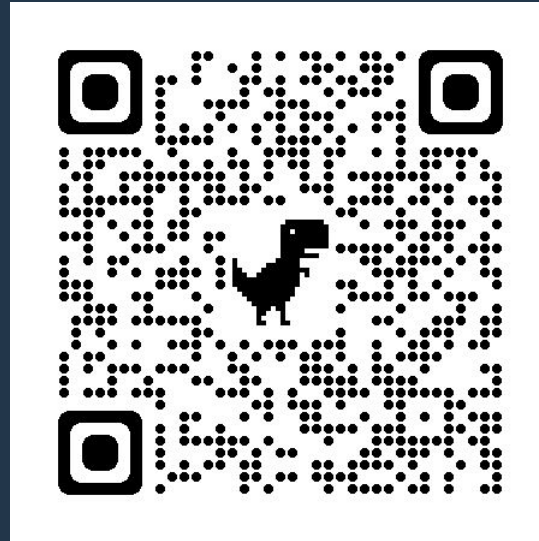Very Deficit Based/Obsolete → Still Deficit based → Step in the right direction → Promising Choice

We have to make sure we have the multiple perspectives of the component districts/partners/ communities we serve

Let's expand our asset based language communication tool

What other words/terms/phrases that are deficit based and we need to change to asset based?

Resources

ODE Equity Lens Companion Tool: An Asset-based Communications Lens

[12 Racist and Offensive Phrases That People Still Use All the Time](#)

[20 Things You're Saying That You Didn't Know Were Offensive](#)

[11 Common English Words And Phrases With Racist Origins](#)

[These 11 everyday words and phrases have racist and offensive backgrounds](#)