



Cultivating Belonging in Students of Color

Who Are We?

Equal Opportunity Schools

Upgrading learning. Closing gaps. Transforming lives.



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Who's In The Room?

- Introduce yourself!
 - Name
 - Pronoun
 - Title
 - What's your passion?



640,000 low-income students and students of color are missing from challenging classes in their school each year.

Takeaways From This Session

- Gain an understanding of belonging and stereotype threat through EOS' national data and learnings
- Recognize why belonging is particularly important for students of color
- Review research-based practices that educators can use to promote belonging for students of color

What is one thing your school or organization does really well to create a warm, trusting climate for staff and students of color?

Framework of Young Adulthood Success



What does it mean to belong?

When students feel...
like they are part of
the school

When students feel...
that teachers and
other students care
about them

When students feel...
that they are being
treated fairly

When students feel...
that they are safe

What is Stereotype Threat?



Anxiety or poor performance resulting from the fear of conforming to a negative stereotype about one's own social group



What is Stereotype Threat?

Stereotype Threat explains:

28%

of the latin@-white
achievement gap
in SAT scores.



20%

of the black-white
achievement gap
in SAT scores.



56%

of the female-male
achievement gap in
math SAT scores.



Small Group Share

Share a time when you've observed an underrepresented student feeling like they didn't belong in your school?

How did you identify what was happening?

Why does
belonging matter
for learning?

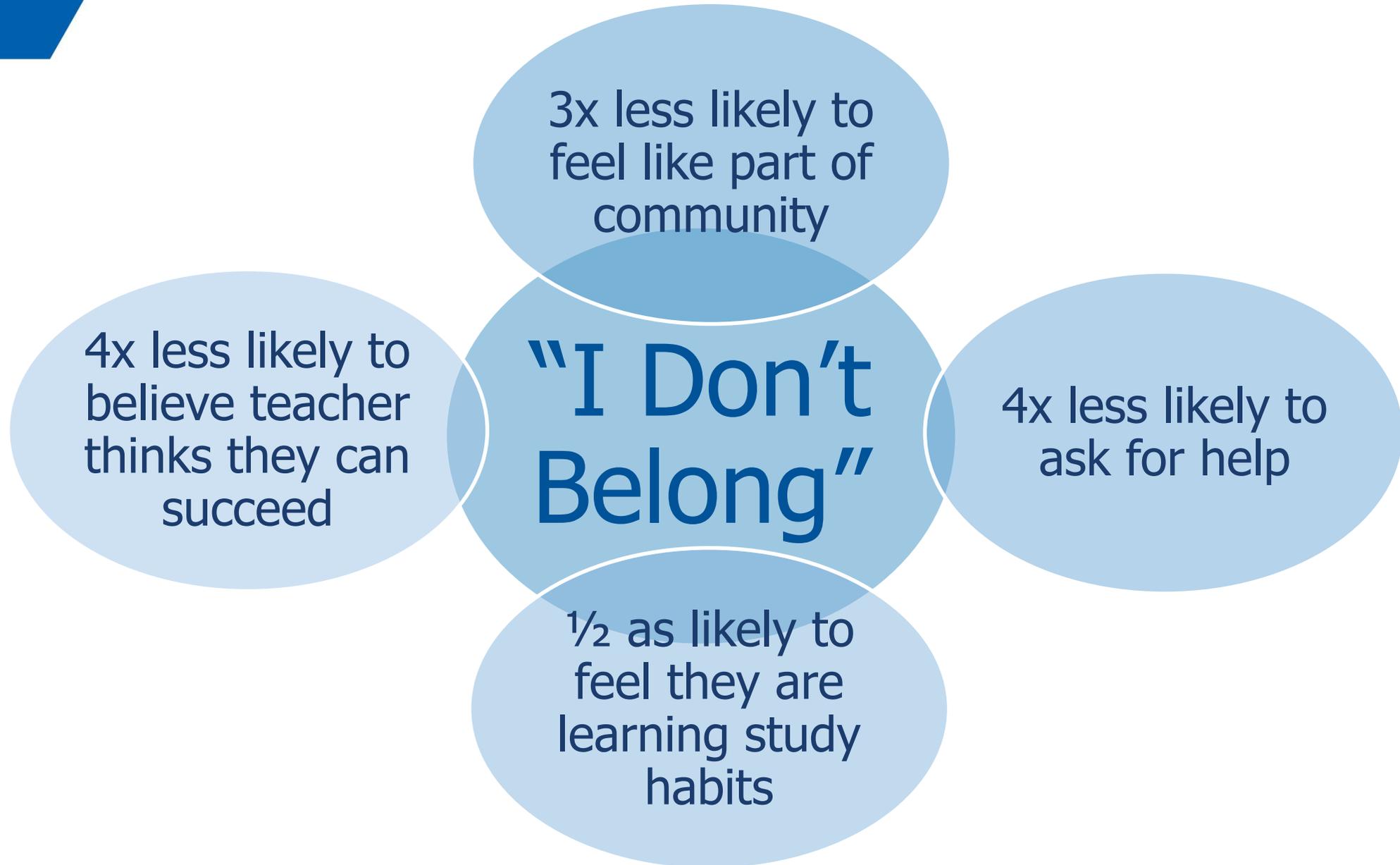
Feeling like “I don’t belong” changes
the classroom experience
significantly for students of color &
low income students.

The first semester, when I walked into my AP class, it was, I was, there were only two Hispanics and it was intimidating. None of my friends are there, so I was kind of uncomfortable...I guess kids that take a lot of AP classes, they obviously move as a group, because they're all taking the same AP classes. So, when there's someone like myself that takes one AP class it's like, "Oh, they all know each other, it's just me...I guess it was more you felt like you aren't supposed to be there. Why are you here? This isn't for you..."

Why are we focusing
on underrepresented
students?

52%

Over half of all students of color & low income students taking AP or IB for the first time report that they sometimes, frequently, or all the time wonder, “maybe I don’t belong” in AP or IB.



Think of a time when you felt like you didn't belong somewhere.

Why might those students be less likely to believe or do the things listed?

Overall, I believe that the encouragement that was given helped me a lot, especially because it was my first AP class. The moment you feel like you do not belong or that you can't do the class, is when you start to feel like you shouldn't take AP classes...I think for me it was the welcome part, feeling welcome and encouraged and not discouraged...I don't know, [my teacher] he didn't have, I guess, a favorite student so it made you feel-- I don't know, I don't know how to say it... Made you feel welcome.

Good news! There are simple things you can do to assure students of color they DO belong.

Postcards to
a Peer

Role Models

Values
Affirmation

Stereotype
Threat
Lesson

Student
Stories

“Postcard to a Peer” Activity

Dear new AP student,

Before I started, AP classes were intimidating because they seemed like scary, difficult classes that only really smart kids took. I was nervous but I decided to take my first AP class anyway. At times, class discussions and readings felt over my head, and I worried about whether I could hold my own with the other students. But after a while, I saw that it's not about holding your own. We're here to learn and because we're willing to work for it, not because we're "so smart". Everybody here has a common goal—to share knowledge and to do cool things in the future. We are all part of that. We all bring something to the discussion, a different perspective or new ideas. I benefit from other students' perspectives and they benefit from mine.



After I realized this, I started working with a couple people from class in a little study group. Now it feels like we are a team going through this together. I feel more confident participating in discussions and sharing my opinions. I really feel like AP classes are preparing us for what's coming next.

Good luck! -- Mia

Mia Jones

Junior

Centennial High School

Short belonging activities, such as Postcard to Peer, have been shown to improve GPAs of African American students.

Values Affirmation Activity

athletic ability

music

being good at art

politics

being smart or getting good grades

relationships with friends or family

creativity

religious values

sense of humor

independence

living in the moment

membership in a social group (such as your community, racial group, or school club)

40%

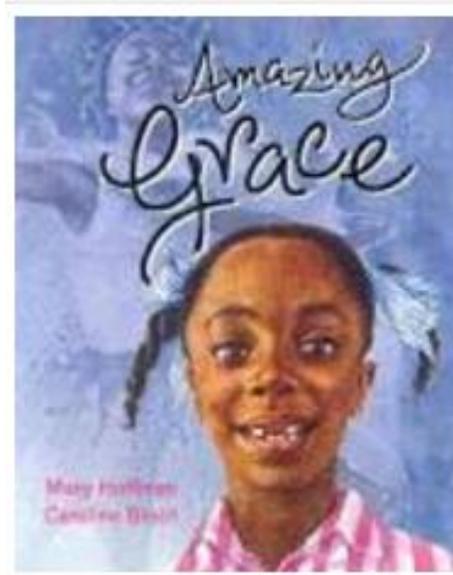
The proportion of the achievement gap closed by a 15 minute activity designed to strengthen self-integrity.

Role Models & Experienced Student Testimonies

- Consider the role models (both adults in the community and experienced students in your school) who are culturally relevant to your students.
- How can you invite them intentionally to address the **challenges that they have faced**, ultimately leading to successes?
 - Panel discussion, written stories, one-on-ones?

Teach Students about Stereotype Threat

Name It in Your Classroom or Space



Have Conversations about Negative Stereotypes—They're Everywhere.

Create an action plan

Please choose at least one practice or intervention that you will take back to your school.

Use the Action Plan handout to describe which practice, how you will likely implement it, and any barriers that you think may in the way of implementing.

Pair Share

With your shoulder partner, please briefly discuss:

Which activity did you choose? What is one thing that your school or organization could do to create an even warmer, more trusting climate for staff and students of color?

What was **one insight** you
gained from participation in
today's session?