

Glossary to Accompany the Draft Statement on Race, Justice & Equity

Antiracism: The work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach, and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts. *Source: National Education Association*¹

Bigotry: Intolerant prejudice that glorifies one's own group and denigrates members of other groups. *Source: Racial Equity Tools Glossary*²

Discrimination: Treatment of an individual or group based on their actual or perceived membership in a social category, usually used to describe unjust or prejudicial treatment on the grounds of race, age, sex, gender, ability, socioeconomic class, immigration status, national origin, or religion. *Source: National Education Association*

Equity: Equity means fairness and justice and focuses on outcomes that are most appropriate for a given group, recognizing different challenges, needs, and histories. It is distinct from diversity, which can simply mean variety (the presence of individuals with various identities). It is also not equality, or “same treatment,” which doesn’t take differing needs or disparate outcomes into account. Systemic equity involves a robust system and dynamic process consciously designed to create, support and sustain social justice. See “Racial Justice.” *Source: National Education Association*

Implicit Bias: Attitudes that unconsciously affect our decisions and actions. People often think of bias as intentional, i.e. someone wanted to say something racist. However, brain science has shown that people are often unaware of their bias, and the concept of implicit bias helps describe a lot of contemporary racist acts that may not be overt or intentional. Implicit bias is just as harmful, so it is important to talk about race explicitly and to take steps to address it. Institutions are composed of individuals whose biases are replicated, and then produce systemic inequities. It is possible to interrupt implicit bias by adding steps to decision-making processes that thoughtfully consider and address racial impacts. *Source: National Education Association*

Oppression: The systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group. *Source: Racial Equity Tools Glossary*

People of Color: Often the preferred collective term for referring to non-white racial groups, rather than “minorities.” Racial justice advocates have been using the term “people of color” (not to be confused with the pejorative “colored people”) since the late 1970s as an inclusive and

¹ National Education Association, *Racial Justice in Education: Key Terms and Definitions to Sharpen Our Racial Analysis and Conversations about Race*, January 2021, available [here](#).

² Glossary compiled from different sources by *Racial Equity Tools* and offered as a resource by the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, available [here](#).

unifying frame across different racial groups that are not white, to address racial inequities. While “people of color” can be a politically useful term, and describes people with their own attributes (as opposed to what they are not, eg: “non-white”), it is also important whenever possible to identify people through their own racial/ethnic group, as each has its own distinct experience and meaning and may be more appropriate. *Source: National Education Association*

Privilege: A set of advantages systemically conferred on a particular person or group of people. White people are racially privileged, even when they are economically underprivileged. Privilege and oppression go hand-in-hand: They are two sides of the same power relationship, and both sides of the equation must be understood and addressed. People can be disadvantaged by one identity and privileged by another. See also “White supremacy.” *Source: National Education Association*

Race: While often assumed to be a biological classification, based on physical and genetic variation, racial categories do not have a scientific basis. However, the consequences of racial categorization are real, as the ideology of race has become embedded in our identities, institutions, and culture, and is used as a basis for discrimination and racial profiling. How one is racialized is a major determinant of one’s socioeconomic status and life opportunities. *Source: National Education Association*

Racial Justice: The systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all. Racial justice — or racial equity — goes beyond “anti-racism.” It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures. *Source: National Education Association*

Racism: Historically rooted system of power hierarchies based on race — infused in our institutions, policies and culture — that benefits white people and hurts people of color. Racism isn’t limited to individual acts of prejudice, either deliberate or accidental. Rather, the most damaging racism is built into systems and institutions that shape our lives. *Source: National Education Association*

Racist: A person, behavior, or incident that perpetuates racism. *Source: National Education Association*

Systemic Racism: An interlocking and reciprocal relationship between the individual, institutional and structural levels which function as a system of racism. These various levels of racism operate together in a lockstep model and function together as a whole system. These levels are: individual (within interactions between people); institutional (within institutions and systems of power); and, structural or societal (among institutions and across society). *Source: Racial Equity Tools Glossary*

White Supremacy: A form of racism centered upon the belief that white people are superior to people of other racial backgrounds and that whites should politically, economically, and socially

dominate non-whites. While often associated with violence perpetrated by the KKK and other white supremacist groups, it also describes a political ideology and systemic oppression that perpetuates and maintains the social, political, historical and/or industrial white domination.

Source: National Education Association