



Coaching for Educational Equity *A Journey of Interruption, Transition, and Transformation*

What is CFEE?

“Traditional educational practices are maintained with no critique of existing inequities in any aspect of the school or the education system. Curricula, pedagogies, counseling practices, and all other aspect of education continue to reflect primarily White, male, upper middle class, Christian, and other privileged perspectives and approaches.”

Paul Gorski , Stages of Multicultural School Transformation

Confronting our history of oppression is no simple or unemotional task, but one that requires support and understanding. Both Whites and People of Color require support to guide them through the dynamics inherent in addressing issues of racial oppression and privilege.

When we interrupt inequitable practices, we often surface both conscious and unconscious beliefs, biases, and emotions that we’ve kept under the surface for years. We begin placing the elephant on the table. And when we do, we experience sighs of relief from those that have been watching the elephants for years along with cries of outrage from those that still don’t want to believe they’re there and/or have competing interests in seeing them remain. To successfully keep the elephants on the table, we must be able to negotiate difficult conversations with people that believe differently than we do and/or have a vested interest in getting them back under the table. We have to be strategic and we have to have support at all levels in our organizations. And we can’t give up.

The CFEE curriculum provides opportunities for reflection and dialogue in a safe, productive, facilitated setting, paired with direct instruction in the components of institutional racism and their impact on student achievement. Participants learn tools and protocols to ask honest questions of themselves and each other and to listen deeply to, and trust, the uncomfortable responses. Engaging in this work together deepens our cross-racial alliances, and when we bring our heads and hearts together we have a deeper capacity to problem solve, interrupt, and transform institutional racism through authentic dialogue about the roadblocks.

Most white people have no idea that our schools are immersed in white culture and are uncomfortable and harmful to our students of color, while also reinforcing the dominant nature of white culture in our white students and families. They perpetuate institutional racism through ignorance of its presence rather than a malicious intent.

Our process engages participants on both personal and institutional levels, both intellectually and emotionally, towards healing and action. When we create a safe space for the experiences, the emotions, and the ignorance of our participants and combine that with the history and big picture of systemic racial oppression, we can begin to process the impact of racism on each of us and from there we can collectively take action to interrupt and transform our systems.



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What do participants say?

- My journey has been an exploration of myself and my belief system. The examination has brought me to where I can recognize that I am a white male racist with power and an inherent stake in the dominant culture for that is what has allowed and given me social and financial success.
- It wasn't easy. It was emotional, eye, ear, heart, and mind opening. It has been freeing. I can now say I am a white woman and therefore racist and I am anti-racist. I can admit more openly to my colleagues of color that I am (unconsciously) a racist, and (willing to be) an ally.
- When I walked in on Monday evening, I came with a sense of 'something's not right' with how we are working with our students of color, but no good language or understanding of what it is and what to do about it. The week was an emotional, sometimes painful journey of discovery on a much deeper level what that 'something' is and my responsibility for why it looks the way it does. I now have a more clear picture and understanding of the complexities around racism, although this is certainly a work in progress. The lens through which I view myself (first) and others has changed greatly. I've also connected emotionally to why I am an educator.
- The way it was taught was exceptional, I felt there was no aha, gotcha, you know, you son of a bitch. It was gentle. It was like, it was with love that I was taught, and I really felt that. I admired that a lot, and it really made me listen a lot better when I felt like my voice was not denied and that I had my point of view, my racial heritage, my cultural background was not going to be denied, but that it was important to understand the racial implications of things. I thought it was very well taught.
- I had lost my passion, my will and my vision. I had gone to a place of comfort and let myself stop fighting. I was tired... and am still tired. The tiredness will stop me no more. I will rest for today and rise up again to speak out. I have found new focus, new life, and new breath. I now know this isn't a journey I must take alone and for me but journey for kids like I was once and the grownups who touch their lives. My pain has helped me, my tears have helped me, my love, my laughter... yet what is strange is that all that has hindered me as well. So I must learn to use these things to help me in my journey. Pain cannot paralyze me, tears cannot blind me, laughter cannot distract me, and love must guide me.
- When I came back, one of the things I remember thinking, I have to do more listening, I have to ask better questions and I have to listen more, I have to understand who someone is and what their fears are, because they're not going to trust me. They don't know where my circle overlaps their circle; they don't know where my experiences are similar to theirs. And so we have to find that common ground before I'm going to have any trust.
- I sought out this training for my personal mental and spiritual health. I was counting down the days to be here to help me deal with my job situation given the skin I'm in and my role at work. I needed to connect with other people of color doing leadership work in schools. I was at my wits end on the brink of giving up the work, my armor was badly tarnished and dented. High expectations, high need for this training. My expectations and needs were met.



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How does CFEE work?

In ideal conditions, CFEE is a 5 day residential seminar, which gives participants enough space to step out of the status quo of their usual interactions around race and step into a deeper, reflective space where new norms for difficult cross-racial dialogues can be established and experienced. We have also had success in doing it as a 4 day training that is not residential, but creates a deliberate space for people to step in and out of. We recommend at least 30% participants of color in order to support the work we need to do across race and the perspectives we need to share through our different experiences and lens. An ideal group size is 20-30 participants.

We bring a multi-racial, gender, and socio-economic group of facilitators who come from a variety of school-based backgrounds. Within the curriculum there is a balance of set materials, incorporated local context, and structured space for deep and challenging conversations around issues of race in your local school community. This is not a training which articulates “the answers” to racism in our schools, but instead helps each of us locate the roadblocks to addressing those issues in our local context and creates new strategies for engaging and problem-solving the issues.

How much does CFEE cost?

The cost of CFEE varies based on structure, context and local needs. If you are attending one of our local seminars, the cost is \$1350/person, which includes food and lodging for the 5 day seminar. If we are designing a seminar for your community, we provide here one scenario to give you a sense of the potential cost. If an organization is supplying meeting space and meals, and we’re providing a 5 day seminar for up to 30 participants:

Facilitation: \$22,000

Materials: \$600

General Prep/planning: \$2000

Prep for local context: \$2000 (this piece is a one-time charge in a new district and disappears for repeat seminars in the same area)

Please direct further inquiries to Kim Feicke, feicke@edequityoregon.com or 503-788-3500.