

The AGB Board of Directors Statement on Justice Equity and Inclusion: A Conversation

Board of Visitors Orientation



**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER
EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA**

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Board Member Responsibilities

For

Justice, Equity, Inclusion

Objectives

- Review Board and Board Member responsibilities for justice, equity and inclusion (JEI).
- Review strategies to assist Boards and Board members effectively fulfill JEI responsibilities.

Why Is Justice, Equity and Inclusion a Board Member's Concern

- Legal Issues
- Social and Moral Imperatives
- Demographic Changes
- Market-Economics
- Mission-Educational Richness



A group of approximately ten people are seated around a long, light-colored wooden conference table in a modern office setting. They are all looking towards the camera. Several laptops are open on the table in front of them. The room features large windows on the left side, providing a view of an urban environment with buildings and a street. The lighting is bright and even, suggesting an indoor or well-lit outdoor space. The overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

Is Justice, Equity and Inclusion a
Fiduciary Responsibility ?

Fiduciary Responsibilities

Duty of Care

- Mission
- Promise
- Sustainability
- Brand

Duty of Obedience

- Federal nondiscrimination laws and regulations
- State laws and regulations

Justice, Equity and Inclusion is a Fiduciary Responsibility!

Significant Fiduciary Responsibilities

- Board's duty to support institutional mission
- Board's duty to support the President
- Board's ultimate accountability for:
 - Ensuring public trust (incl. social and moral imperatives)
 - Institutional quality
 - Student, faculty, and staff well-being
 - Financial well-being
 - Risk management imperative
 - Institutional reputation



**Do you feel
competent to fulfill
the fiduciary
responsibilities of
justice, equity and
inclusion ?**



WHY NOT?



**WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO
DO ABOUT IT?**

EXERCISE: Difficult Conversations



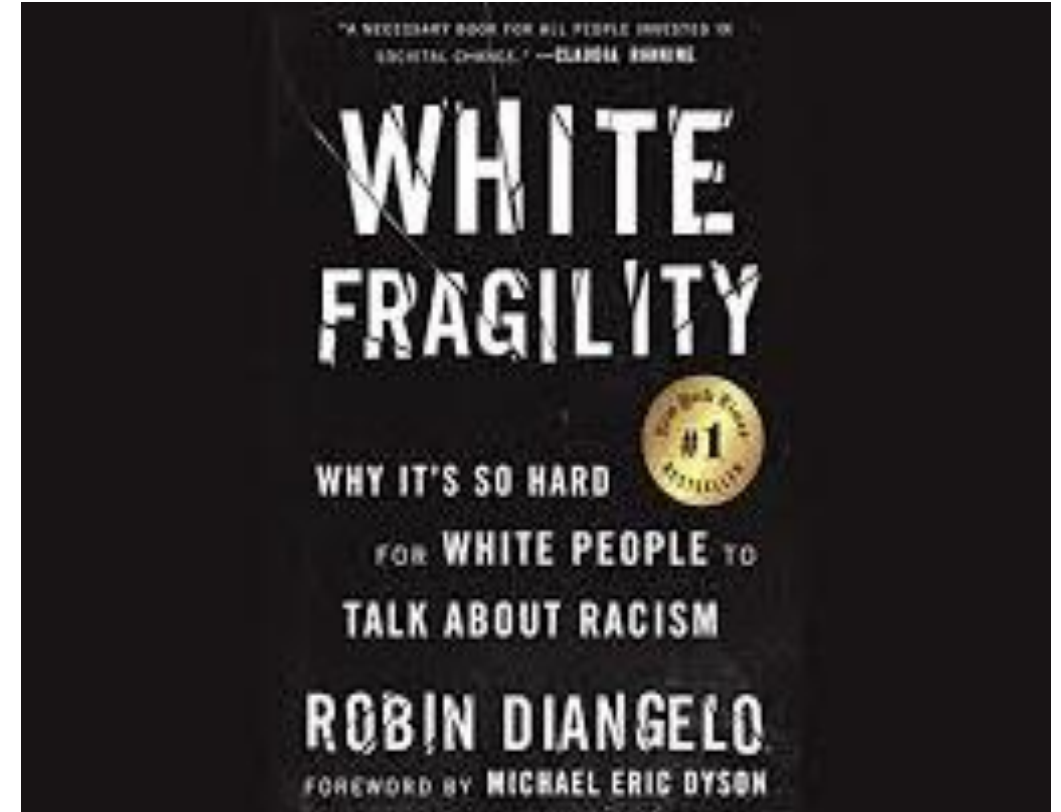
Why is it difficult to have conversations about justice, diversity equity and inclusion?



Why is it difficult for Boards to have such conversations?

Accept and Commit to the Tensions

- It will be uncomfortable.
- Institutions that take on these tasks in earnest will see clashes of beliefs and culture.
- If there are no clashes there is insufficient dialogue and effort or insufficient diversity on the Board.
- The goal is to maintain civility and learn throughout the dialogue.



The Diversity Conversation is an Act of Stewardship

“The stewardship responsibility assigned to boards demands that they care deeply about the institution on whose behalf they serve... Caring about our institution enough so that we take on the challenge of diversity conversation is a leadership calling to which we must respond.”

Larry Roper, Trustee
Heidelberg University and
Oregon State University Professor

What Board Members Should Do To Develop The Competencies



***COMMIT TO
A PERSONAL
JOURNEY***



LISTEN



LEARN



***ASK
QUESTIONS***

An Invitation to a Personal Journey to Inclusion:

1. **Know Self First** – Who am I? What do I stand for? What makes me “me”?
2. **Value Self** – What are my unique gifts? Who is my best self?
3. **Acknowledge Your Prejudices** – In what ways do I exclude? How do I contribute to intolerance? What are my blind spots?
4. **Open Self to Change** – What are my opportunities to grow? ...to be my best self?
5. **Learn About Others** – How are other individuals/groups different from me? How are they the same?
6. **Value Differences** – How do differences enhance who I am and can become? What can I learn from differences?
7. **Include Others** – Expand your circle to optimize diversity.
8. **Embrace Personal Growth** – Constantly ask yourself, where am I now? Am I growing in my journey to be more inclusive? What changes do I need to make?

WHAT Should the Board Do?

Examine Itself

Learn

Lead

Assess

Monitor Campus Climate

LEAD:BOARDS IN THE MIRROR

- **What dynamics exist in the board room related to justice, equity, inclusion, civility and diversity?**
- **Where are we, as a board, lacking in our own comfort, competencies and composition? What can we do about this?**



LEARN: Understand Key Terms

Understanding the meaning of certain terms is essential for this work. It is foundational to constructive discussion and framing of the issues. This list is not offered as finite .

- **Antiracism**
- **Diversity includes:** Race, Gender, Identity and Expression, Ethnicity, National Origin, Religion, Sexual orientation and expression, Age, Socio-economic Background and Status, Physical Ability and Disability, Neurodiversity, Student and Faculty Intellectual and Political Beliefs
- **Equity**
- **Inclusion**
- **Justice**
- **Sense of Belonging**
- **Social Justice**
- **Structural Racism**

Powerful Tool: Board Assessment Beyond Enrollment and Numbers.

Board inquiry should test if JEI efforts are:

Intentional

- Beyond integration (i.e., mixing of races), how do we ensure that homogenous and diverse populations benefit from each other not just co-exist?

Pervasive

- The responsibility is shared among students, staff, faculty and administration. Examine the place most critical to learning -- the classroom.

Visible

- Leadership matters. It influences culture and ultimately the climate.

Assessment Sample : Student Outcomes Data



Academic Achievement:

retention, graduation rates, success in gateway courses, persistence in selected fields



Academic Engagement :

participation in high impact practices



Postgraduation Outcomes:

debt at graduation, graduate school/college acceptance rates, career placement, earnings, etc.

Assessment Sample: Institution, Faculty and Staff Data

General Data

- Campus Climate Surveys
- Bias Incidence Reports
- Diversity: Students, Faculty, Staff, Leadership Team

Faculty and Staff Data

- Racial/ethnic/gender differential patterns
- Promotion and tenure
- Faculty and staff retention

Why Climate Matters

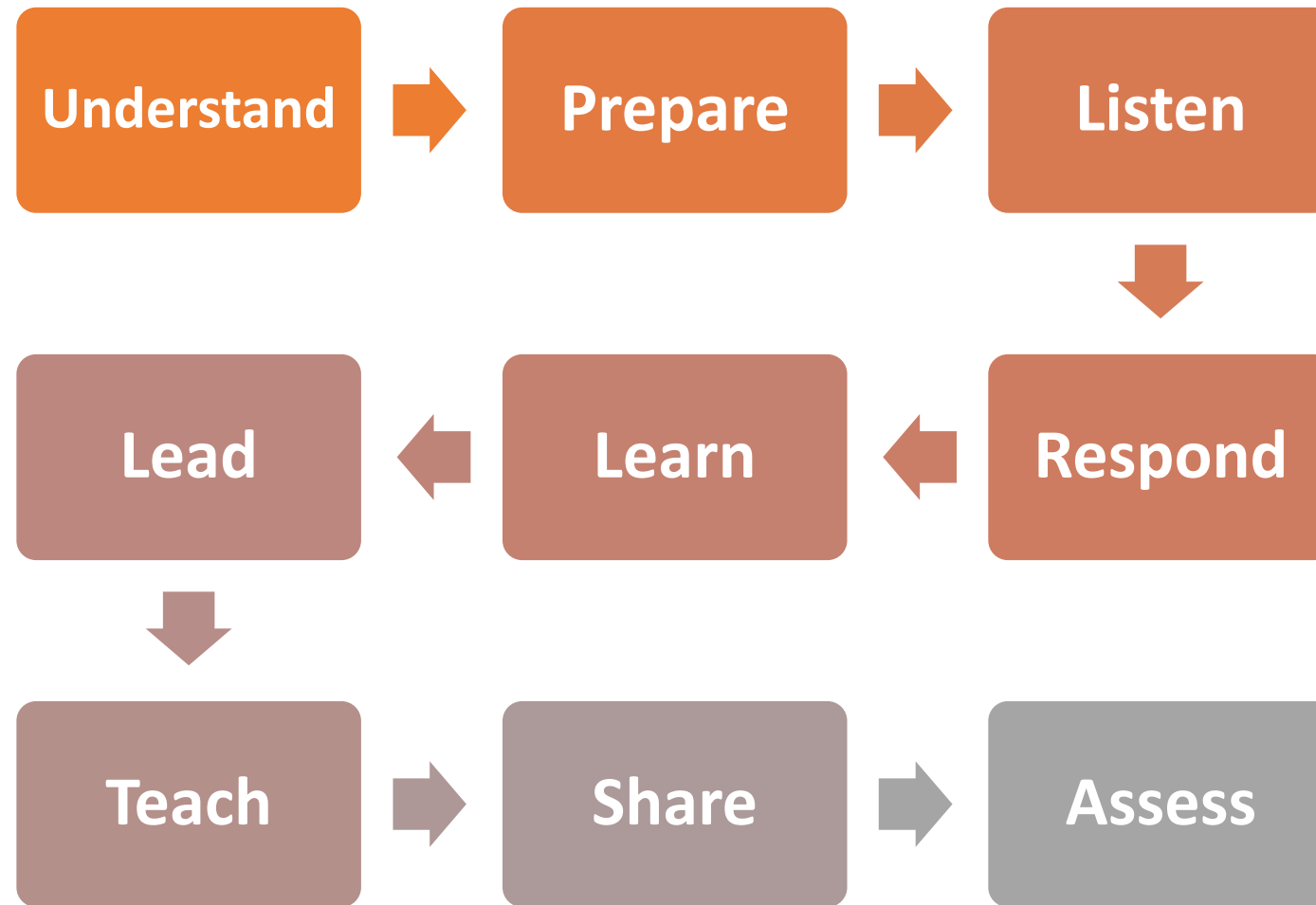
- Attracts and retains students
- Attract and retain faculty and staff
- Enhances well-being of all
- Produces sense of community and deeper engagement in campus life
- Provides concrete evidence of institutional progress and success
- Allows students to model the respectful environment society seeks and enables them to create it.

Boards Should Be Attentive to Campus Climate

Climate can be impacted by the Board:

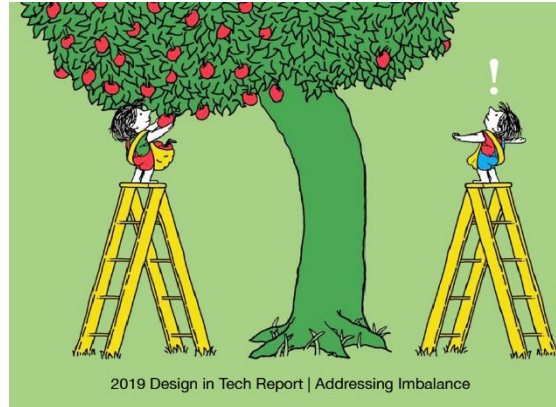
- Fulfilling fiduciary responsibilities
- Affirming JEI's relationship to Goals, Missions and Values
- Committing to monitor and measure progress
- Articulating expectations of engagement
- Assigning ownership and responsibility
- Celebrating successes and acknowledging shortfalls
- Creating opportunities for the community to collaborate

Board's JDEI Journey

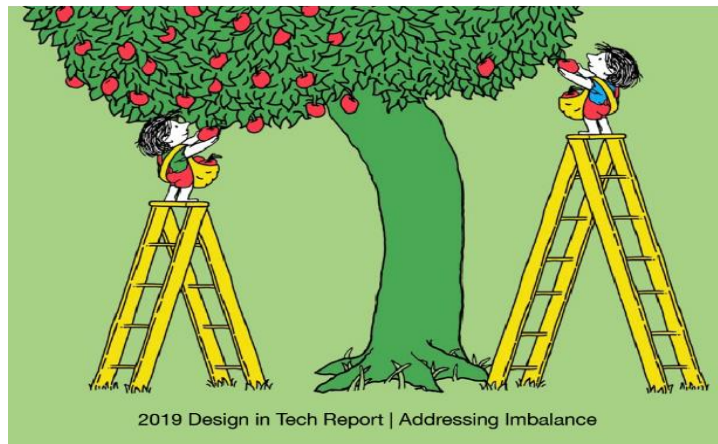


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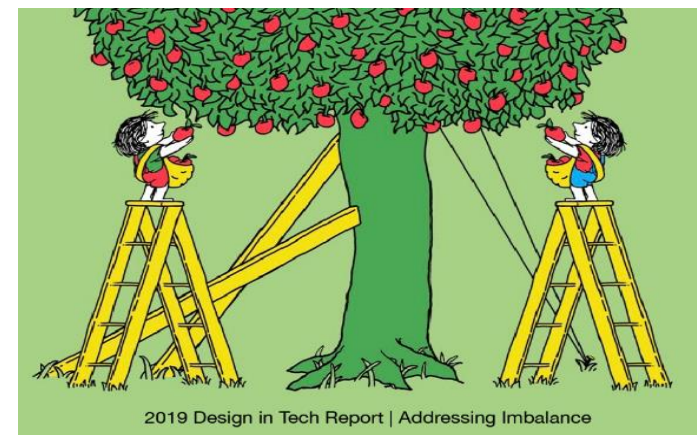
Equity as Fundamental Fairness



EQUALITY



EQUITY



JUSTICE



Racial Justice, Equity and Inclusion

AGB Board of Directors'
Statement on Justice,
Equity, and Inclusion
*A catalyst for important
conversations and action*

Three recommended strategies executed comprehensively:

- *Develop and apply an equity lens in the board's governance structures and processes.*
- *Apply a justice, equity, and inclusion lens throughout the institution.*
- *Contribute to social justice and equity in the communities where the institution is located.*

Dimensions of Equity

Diverse

Students, Faculty,
Staff

Inclusive

Welcoming,
Belonging, Bias-Free

Equitable

Access, Opportunity,
Outcomes

The Board's Work - Strategy 1

MODEL

Develop and apply an Equity Lens in the Board's Governance, Structure and Process

- Diverse Membership
- Incorporate JEI into Long-Term Work of the Board
- Commit to Learning
- Set Expectation of Leadership

Question

Have the VA state system and local college governing boards clearly articulated metrics related to justice, equity, and inclusion and incorporated these into its institutional strategic priorities and into the annual assessment of the chancellor, presidents, and the leadership team to ensure accountability?

The Board's Work - Strategy 2

Comprehensive

Develop and apply an JEI Lens throughout the Institution.

- Clarify values, expectations
- Provide resources
- Establish benchmarks
- Monitor policies, practices and progress
- Work collaboratively with institutional leadership

Question: Have the VA state system and local college governing boards affirmed that closing achievement gaps are an institutional priority that will be demonstrated by evidence that race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and gender are no longer predictors of academic success?

The Board To Do - Strategy 3

Lead: Through Community Investment

Contributing to social justice and equity in the locality

- Hospitable Communities
- Business Practices
- Scholarship & Community Engagement
- Expanding Access
- Investing in K-12

Question: Working with their chancellor and presidents, do the VA state and local college governing boards seek opportunities to acknowledge and reward scholarly work and community engagement that address intractable problems associated with inequality and injustice?

- [AGB FAQ](#) – Fiduciary Duties for Institutional Board Members
- [AGB Board Statement](#) on Campus Climate, Inclusion and Civility
- [Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – Microsite](#)
 - [Tool kit](#)
 - [AGB Board Statement](#) on Justice, Equity, and Inclusion Implementation
 - [FAQ](#)
 - [AGB Trusteeship magazine articles](#)
 - [Customized services](#)

Thank you for your Stewardship!

AGB

***ARE YOU THE TRUSTEE TO ENSURE
YOUR INSTITUTION'S FUTURE?***