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Beyond Boundaries: Third Space Leadership in Schools

Corinne Brion, University of Dayton

Introduction:

Research demonstrated that school leaders play a key role in the education of students because they create cultures of learning, influence teacher morale, retention, and well-being (Grissom & Harrington, 2010; Irby, 2021; Khan, 2021; Marzano et al., 2005). Standard number three of the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) calls for equity and cultural responsiveness. As a result, existing leadership preparation programs and/or professional learning post preparation programs instruct teachers and leaders to utilize culturally responsive teaching which is the act or process of imparting knowledge, skills, or information to others in a culturally competent and responsive manner (Gay, 2013; Hammond, 2015). Some programs also coach current and prospective educators on culturally relevant pedagogy, which refers to the theory and practice of teaching-including the principles, methods, and techniques used to guide and support learning. Culturally relevant pedagogy also involves understanding how students learn, designing effective instructional strategies, creating inviting learning environments, reflection, continuous improvement based on evidence-based practices, and assessing learning outcomes (Ladson-Billings, 2005; Paris & Alim, 2017). More and more school leaders are also exposed to culturally responsive or culturally proficient leadership (Gorski & Swalwell, 2023; Khalifa, 2018; Khalifa et al., 2016; Lindsey et al., 2018). Culturally responsive and proficient leadership are essential to create cultures of learning and inclusion, foster equity, and socially just educational systems. Currently, both models are primarily focused on the school itself as an organization, the stakeholders within the organization (leaders, staff, teachers, students, families, communities), and the instruction. However, because learning is a social endeavor (Bandura, 1977), learning and teaching take place in numerous additional spaces, what I call the third

spaces, the spaces/places between school and home, school and before or after school programs, school and extra-curricular activities etc. Bhabha (1994) initially conceptualized Third space theory to explore the fluid, hybrid identities formed at the intersection of different cultures. Other scholars such as Soja (1996) and Anzaldúa (1987) further developed this theoretical framework by emphasizing the significance of spatial and cultural intersections in the construction of identity.

In this teaching case study, I argue that educational leaders, teachers, and staff ought to not only be culturally proficient in their schools and classrooms but also in those third spaces. This case study is relevant to practicing and prospective administrators because it raises issues related to cultural proficiency for equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging in schools and in the third spaces. This teaching case study is based on a combination of lived experiences and fictitious information, as a result all the names are invented. To promote reflection, I pose questions designed to prepare prospective and current educational leaders facing similar situations in both their schools and the third spaces.

Background Information

Blexington

Blexington is a medium size suburban city in the Midwest of the United States. The city is well-known for being a friendly and welcoming place to live because of its well-designed neighborhoods, its quality schools, and growing local economy. The main employers are the school district, the recognized healthcare facilities, and corporations such as the largest electric cooperative in the state. The city is home to approximately 120,000 people. In the last census, the population was 73% White, 17% African American, 1% Native American, 3% Asian, 3% Hispanic or Latino, and 3% biracial.

Blexington School District

The Blexington School District (BSD) is led by Dr. Henry. Dr. Henry was born and raised in the district. He identifies as bi-racial as his mom was from Ghana and his dad from the Midwest. He is in his early sixties and is passionate about diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. BSD consists of 14 buildings: two high schools, three middle schools, seven elementary schools, and two preschools. In the last three years, BSD has been the fastest growing school district in the region and now serves 12,000 students. In a recent board meeting, the superintendent explained:

We are fortunate to have companies that have moved to Blexington, creating jobs for our community members. Blexington also prides itself for having multiple non-profit organizations aiming to make the lives of refugee and immigrant families easier as they arrive in their new community. Recently, due to natural disasters and conflicts, Blexington has welcomed a total of 500 people from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Mexico, and Ukraine. We are fortunate to have a diverse district and are working very hard to serve everyone equitably.

Thanks to a 2021 bond levy, three of the schools were fully renovated to accommodate the influx of students seeking to receive their education in the district. BSD is made up of approximately 65 % White, 21% African American, 3% Asian, 2% Hispanic, 2% American Indian, and 7% multi-racial students. Out of the total student population, 35 % of the students are on a free/reduced lunch program, and 9.6% are students with disabilities.

With the influx of new students, community members questioned the schools' ability to maintain high quality standards. Constituents feared, for example, that the resources spent on English Language Learners (ELL) would take away from their children. To address these concerns, Dr. Henry stated:

I want to assure you that your children are served to the best of our ability just like any other student who attends our schools. We must be cautious about the zero-sum

paradigm: the idea that progress for some must come at the expense of others. The reality is that we need social solidarity because when we have social solidarity, we accrue social dividends, which are the benefits we all gain when people come together across races and other identity markers to accomplish what we simply cannot achieve alone. Research continuously states that the more our students are exposed to different cultures, the more we increase their capacity to think critically, be problem solvers, and become culturally competent, a key skill in today's job market. I will be honest, there are challenges in meeting everyone's needs but I can assure you that our team is working diligently to maintain quality programs.

BSD employs 520 teachers and 1,350 staff. The average student/teacher ratio is one teacher to approximately 20 students. The district has various partnerships with community organizations and businesses, one of these partnerships is with Blexington Bus Company (BBC). BBC has provided transportation for the entire district for five years. The district administrators are proud of the students' 97% average attendance rate, and once made a comment that this outstanding attendance rate was partly due to the "excellent bus services the district has received." However, in the last few months, there has been an increasing number of formal and informal complaints about BBC's bus drivers.

Blexington Bus Company

BBC has been a student transportation provider for more than 100 years. BBC operates 22,500 school buses, serves more than 550 school districts in 33 states, and transports more than 1.3 million students on a daily basis. BBC values safety, customer, people/employees, community, and excellence. BBC also believes in "efficient operations, quality, and culture" (BBC website, 2023). The company advertises: Safe and highly trained drivers, outstanding customer service, financial efficiencies, and eco-friendly practices. BBC prides itself for the technology it uses to ensure safety and transparency. As an example, each vehicle is equipped with a video-based camera that enables the company to address concerns and encourage safe behaviors. BBC welcomes feedback and created a cloud-based feedback tool available to

customers, parents, and members of the community. The tool allows the company to receive real time feedback. As it the case for all Blexington schools, Harvey Middle School (HMS) utilizes BBC to transport its students.

Harvey Middle School

HMS is the second largest middle school in the district. The school benefited from the bond levy and received a complete make-over in 2021. The school serves about 820 students, grades 7 and 8. Minority enrollment is 43% of the student body, which is higher than the state average of 33%. HMS is the instructional home for 26.2 % of African American students, 3.7% Asian or Asian/ Pacific Islander, and 57% White students, 7.1% Hispanic/ Latino; 5.9% two or more races, 0.1% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.1% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. Based on the latest school report card, 54% of HMS students identifies as male and 46% as female. In terms of the academics, the percentage of students achieving proficiency in math is 58% which is higher than the state average of 50%, while the percentage of students achieving proficiency in reading/language arts is 72% compared to the state average of 57%. At HMS, the student-teacher ratio is one teacher to 18 students. The middle school ranks second in the district and 182 in the state. HMS employs 45 teachers, one principal, two vice principals, two counselors, three special education specialists, two secretaries and two janitors. Among the teachers, 70% of them are White and 60% are female.

As any other schools in the district, HMS utilizes BBC for its transportation needs. BBC picks up and drops off approximately 500 HMS students each day. The bus company transports students to and from schools, athletes to and from games, and take students regular to field trips. The administration and teachers have always considered the buses operated by BBC as safe places for students, and they always have perceived the drivers as being professional, friendly,

and dedicated. However, recently various parents have expressed that their children were having negative experiences and interactions with their drivers during their commute. This teaching case study is based on real events that involved an African American student, her grandmother, a bus driver, the bus company and BSD administrators.

HMS Principal

Mr. Peterson is a 45-year-old White man. He has been the principal at HMS for 10 years. Mr. Peterson used to be a social studies teacher in the middle school before moving into administration, as the vice principal first and then becoming the school principal. Before HMS became more racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse, the principal focused on creating a positive school culture and had generally succeeded as the teacher and staff retention was high and most students enjoyed their experience at the school. However, with the recent change in the school's demographics, Mr. Peterson has realized that he lacked practical knowledge and skills to serve the racially and ethnically diverse school population.

The Case

Tiara at BMS

Tiara is a 14-year-old African American girl. She is in 9th grade, and it is her first year at HMC. Prior to coming to Blexington, Tiara lived in the Southern part of the state. Tiara lives with her grandmother (Mrs. Hans), a successful entrepreneur who works full time. Tiara is tall, friendly and is well liked by her peers and most teachers. However, Tiara has had several negative experiences at BMC since she started at the school. In her first two weeks of school, she reported to her grandmother and the vice principal that one of her teachers: "made fun of the way she spoke and dressed." Another time, Tiara informed Mr. Peterson that her math teacher was

“always picking on the Black kids and ELL students and she does not want to re-explain to us when we do not understand something.”

In the span of a few weeks, both the principal and superintendent received several additional complaints from underrepresented parents and students. To create a better and safer environment for underrepresented students, Superintendent Henry connected Mr. Peterson with a university professor whose expertise is culturally proficient leadership. Together, they found time in the administrator’s schedule for regular walkthroughs and to walk around the building, cafeteria and recess areas. They also decided to systematically collect data. The collected data included discipline and academic data disaggregated by topic, topic, and teacher. When Mr. Peterson analyzed the data, it became clear that HMS was not as welcoming as he thought it was, or at least it was welcoming for some at the detriment of others. Data showed that there were more academic detentions and suspensions issued for ELL and students of color, more incident reports filed for underrepresented groups, and as a result, the academic of these students often suffered. Mr. Peterson had not expected such discrepancies and had never questioned the root cause of these discrepancies.

The Cafeteria Incident

As part of his resolution to be more visible in the building, Mr. Peterson signed up for lunch duty. During one of his shifts, he witnessed a cafeteria attendant yelling at Tiara and her friend from Mexico for not making eye contact and he also observed the attendant throwing food on the girls’ trays, spilling half of the content in the process. Tiara immediately approached the principal and said:

You see this happens all the time, we have sports after school and we never have enough to eat, because this attendant does this and refuse to give us more food once she spills it. I do not know but I do not see her doing that to the White students.

When Mr. Peterson asked Gabriella, Tiara's friend, about the incident, she simply replied: "People make fun of my accent and my English all the time, so I find it easier to not make eye contact, in any case that is how my family tells me to act when people are older than me." At that moment, Mr. Peterson realized that the exclusion problem was more than just in the classrooms.

The Bus Incident

Tiara is a formidable athlete. As a result of her multiple talents, Tiara is busy with daily after school basketball or soccer practices. She takes the bus most mornings and every afternoon to and from school to her sport practices. Tiara rides bus 12. Mrs. Terence, a middle-aged White woman, is the bus 12 driver. She has been driving for BBC for 20 years.

One October afternoon after school, Tiara called her grandmother from school to ask if she could go to a friend's house after school so she could get a ride to basketball practice. Her Grandma was unable to take her to the basketball practice due to a work obligation. This sudden change of plan meant a change of bus. Tiara's grandmother followed protocol: She called the school to give permission to her granddaughter to take bus 13 and go to her friend's house. The school office staff reassured Mrs. Hans and said: "These types of last-minute bus changes occur regularly and this one should not cause any problems." The staff member then informed Mrs. Hans that she needed to call the bus company. Mrs. Hans proceeded by leaving several voicemails to BBC. In the past, when Mrs. Hans had tried to get a hold of the bus company, she had not heard back from them in a timely manner, so she went on with her day, assuming that BBC will get the message and all will work as planned. She let Tiara know she had called the school and had left a message for the bus company.

That afternoon, Tiara got on bus 13. She greeted the bus driver and asked where she should sit. The bus driver told her to sit wherever she could find a seat. As she was disembarking from the bus, the bus driver grabbed her and asked her why she was on his bus and that he was going to write her up. The next day, Mrs. Hans received a phone call from the bus company indicating that Tiara was to be suspended from the bus for 3 days for riding the wrong bus. After a call to the school and the bus company and proof that she had called in advance to authorize Tiara to take bus 13, the suspension was rescinded.

The following day, Tiara rode her assigned bus to school and upon arrival, Mrs. Terence had all the students exit the bus except Tiara and proceeded to berate her for riding the wrong bus, saying that she and her grandmother were “both lying.” That afternoon, after boarding the bus, Tiara spotted a staff member that she needed to give a form to and tried to hand it to her. Mrs. Terence demanded that she sit back down and told the staff member that Tiara was a “bad kid” because she had ridden a bus that was not her assigned bus. Tiara responded to the staff member that Mrs. Terence was crazy. Tiara told her grandmother:

The bus driver said what a bad kid I was in front of everyone and said that I had ridden in the wrong bus. I was so embarrassed, and really mad. This is just so unfair. She always picks on me and yells at me not to sit on my bookbag, but I never do.

This incident triggered Mrs. Terence and the following day, she gave Tiara a written warning because she “failed to remain seated, caused a distraction by laughing and showed personal disrespect to the bus driver.” Mrs. Terence indicated the warning was a second warning, as if the original warning had not been rescinded. Upon reading the warning Mrs. Hans immediately sat at her desk and wrote an email to the principal (Mr. Peterson), the Superintendent (Mr. William), the bus company discipline coordinator (Mr. Carter), Mrs.

Terence (bus 12 driver), Mr. Martin (the school transportation coordinator), Mrs. Prast (assistant principal), and Mr. Sam (Tiara's school counselor).

I am not going to sign this write up. Mrs. Terence seems to have something against Tiara. Tiara says she does not sit on her bookbag but because of her height, Mrs. Terence thinks she does. Tiara also indicated that many people were laughing but she was the only one called out. Since the issue about seating on the bag seems to be a recurring problem for Mrs. Terence, please provide me with the video footage so we can all see what Tiara does or does not do, and what she says or does not say. I will not give up on this until I see proof of my child's accusation.

The next day, Mr. Martin responded to the email stating:

Tiara attempted to board a bus she was unauthorized to ride. The write up was rescinded and the procedure for changing buses was shared by BBC staff (i.e. a note from the parent/guardian must be sent to the office and the bus driver notified by school administration). I apologize that you are always having issues speaking with someone at BBC. I have been working to improve call performance (they answer between 88-90% of calls based on acquired data).

Three days passed without overt issues other than Mrs. Terence telling Tiara to not sit on her bookbag. On the fourth day, Mrs. Terence denied Tiara access to her bus for the ride home. Tiara called her grandmother who was working out of town and was unable to provide transportation. Her grandmother called the school and demanded that they resolve the issue, and the solution was for Tiara riding the high school bus home. The high school's dismissal is after the middle school and Tiara was put on the same bus 12 only an hour later. When Tiara boarded the bus, Mrs. Terence asked her to sit next to her. When Tiara asked why, she responded "because I need to keep an eye on you so you can behave and not have other write ups." When Tiara exited the bus, Mrs. Terence put her hand on Tiara's shoulder and said: "Tell your grandmother to sign the write up and it will all go away." To which, Tiara responded: "Please do not touch me."

That evening, Mrs. Hans complained via email again:

I believe these problems are a result of some kind of vendetta by the bus driver. Last Thursday or Friday when Tiara was getting off the bus, Mrs. Terence didn't open the door until she called her a liar about the bus 13 incident and when Tiara told her that her grandma had called the bus company and the school, Mrs. Terence told her that I (her grandma) was a liar too and that Tiara probably got it from me. I hope you can understand how this reinforces my belief that Tiara is telling the truth. The bus 13 incident didn't even involve Mrs. Terence but she had to get ugly with Tiara over it anyway. Mrs. Terence appears to be the only person Tiara has a problem with. Her teachers have all commented on how great she is to have in class. Please resolve this issue quickly. Mrs. Terence is trying to get her removed from the bus and it is unwarranted. Also, Mrs. Terence does not just target Tiara. A parent came to me saying that she witnessed Mrs. Terence refusing to call a transgender student by her pronouns of her choice.

It did not take long for Mr. Martin to respond: "The bus driver's write up was accurate except the video did not provide evidence of "why" Tiara sat high in the seat, only that she was NOT properly seated." He pursued by saying that "Tiara did cause a distraction in some of the videos along with other riders and more than just Tiara were addressed for behavior(s)." Mr. Martin concluded by assuring Tiara's grandmother that if Mrs. Terence had something against Tiara it was not manifested in the videos. Mrs. Hans, unsatisfied with the response called the Principal and made it clear to him that she was not going to give up and wanted to see the video footage. She also told Mr. Peterson that Tiara was coming home every day being the victim of micro-aggressions. Once more, Mr. Peterson, Mr. Martin and the staff at BBC maintained that Tiara was not berated in the videos, she is addressed for behavior like the others. Mr. Peterson continued by stating that they "were unable to speak to the interaction with the person outside the bus, because there were no video records of the interaction. We want to assure you; Mrs. Hans that Tiara is not being abused on the bus. The bus driver also quiets others who do not listen to her or follow the bus rules."

Mr. Martin reached out to Mrs. Hans the next day to meet with the involved parties. At the meeting Mr. Martin indicated that he had found video evidence of the incident where Mrs. Terence called Tiara a liar. The administrator said he would be meeting with Mrs. Terence that

afternoon and that as requested by Mrs. Hans, they would rescind the write-ups and Mrs. Terence would apologize to Tiara. Mrs. Hans assured the school team that she would reinforce the bus rules (Appendix A) and make sure that Tiara would not sit forward in her seat again. The issue was settled to the satisfaction of all parties. Mrs. Terence did tell Tiara she was sorry but failed to say why. Tiara asked her why was sorry and Mrs. Terence told her that she was sorry for calling her a liar and berating her.

While Mrs. Hans was relieved that the situation was mostly resolved for her family, she worried about students who may not have an advocate or someone with the time, energy, and know-how to fight the types of overt and covert injustices that happen in the third spaces. Perplexed by the issues raised by Mrs. Hans, the superintendent asked Mr. Peterson to obtain all the write ups given out by Mrs. Terence. Upon analysis of the documentation, Mr. Peterson concluded that 90% of the write ups were for students who were racially or otherwise marginalized. Feeling like he had failed Tiara, Mr. Peterson admitted to the superintendent that he needed professional development to become culturally proficient in all spaces.

Conclusion

The situation at HMS is far from being resolved. Mr. Peterson and his team still need to investigate what other injustices occurred at HMS, on bus 12, as well as in the cafeteria, and during club activities. Mr. Peterson needs to become culturally proficient to ensure that the school, its programs, places, policies, and people are inviting to all students so that learning occurs, and learners thrive in the classroom and in the third spaces, those spaces in which students' activities and informal learning takes place outside of the classroom. This teaching case study is relevant, and its solutions are applicable to many districts in the United States because the student demographics are rapidly changing, and students are more and more diverse racially,

ethnically, and linguistically, among other aspects of identity. The theory provided in the Teaching Notes aims to explain what TSL is and how this holistic approach can help leaders create intentionally inviting schools and third spaces for all students.

The challenge is for current and future administrators to bridge the gap between theory and practice by using the theory to find lasting solutions to systemic inequities and biases.

Teaching Notes

Bush and Glover (2016) describe leadership as the second most important factor influencing school and student outcomes, the first factor being hiring and retaining quality teachers. According to these authors, leadership accounts for 27% of variation in student learning outcomes. Seminal scholars maintain that school principals play a crucial role in the education of students because they influence teacher morale, retention, and student learning (Grissom & Harrington, 2010; Irby, 2022; Khan, 2021; Leithwood et al., 2004; Marzano et al., 2005;). Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) suggest that educational leaders empower the more effective teachers and that it is through them that they improve student learning. Additionally, principals who are strong, effective, responsive leaders also help to inspire and enhance the abilities of their teachers and other school staff to do excellent work. In short, principals, through their actions, are powerful multipliers of effective teaching and leadership (Manna, 2015).

Third space leadership (TSL) is grounded in adaptive leadership (Heifetz, 1994), cultural proficient leadership (Khalifa, 2018; Khalifa et al., 2016; Lindsay et al., 2018; Irby, 2021), and Invitational Education (Purkey & Novack, 1988). The following Teaching Notes outline key concepts on third space theory, TSL, and invitational education.

Third Space Theory

Third space theory (Bhabha, 1995) is a postcolonial sociolinguistic theory of identity and community. The theory explains the uniqueness of each person or context as a hybrid as people belong to several cultures and those cultures may evolve over time. Bhabha's work primarily focuses on cultural theory, however the concept of third space has influenced discussions on identity and cultural hybridity, which impacts how one leads others and think about leadership.

Scott and Soja (1996) propose another way to think about space and spatiality. According to these authors, the first and second spaces differ and can even conflict with each other. These scholars argue that there are several spatial groupings in which people interact physically and socially. Such spaces include home (everyday knowledge) and school (academic knowledge). Third spaces are the in-between, or hybrid, spaces, where the first and second spaces can work together to generate a third space. Third space theory is helpful for educators because it reminds us that learning and teaching occur in classrooms, at home, but it also happens in additional and various places throughout a student's day.

Third Space Leadership

TSL recognizes the importance of navigating the complex and dynamic interactions between various elements, such as individuals, teams, and organizational cultures (Green et al., 2012). In other words, third space leaders acknowledge the need to operate in the spaces between traditional organizational boundaries and dichotomies, school and classroom for example. Third space leaders bridge gaps and connect disparate parts of an organization by operating in spaces in between teams, departments, perspectives and facilitating collaboration and communication (Green et al., 2012).

Third Space Leaders Are Adaptive Leaders

Third space leaders are adaptive leaders (Heifetz, 1994) as they are able to tackle ill-defined problems occurring in the third spaces. Adaptive problems are difficult to resolve. Tackling adaptive challenges requires that third space leaders change and learn new skills and competencies to solve the issue. Therefore, third space leaders encourage creative thinking and innovative problem-solving. They are open to experimentation and learning from both successes and failures. Additionally, adaptive challenges necessitate that third space leaders mobilize and inspire others to learn new skills. For instance, if a school leader realizes that there is a need to change the bus discipline policy, the principal might write a new policy, and create a committee to brainstorm a new inclusive and socially just policy. The principal would then have to educate and train all stakeholders within that third space on these changes. Because changing an existing bus policy requires a change in mindsets, habits, values, and behaviors, this would be considered an adaptive problem in the third space.

Third Space Leaders Are Culturally Proficient

Third space leaders are culturally proficient (Lindsey et al., 2018). Given the origins of the third space concept, cultural proficiency is a significant aspect of TSL. Administrators must be able to understand, respect, and integrate diverse perspectives and cultural influences within their school. Lindsey et al. (2018) assert that culturally proficient leadership (CPL) is a mindset. In CPL, leaders do not need to know everything about every single culture, but they are willing to learn about cultures in their school communities and are inclusive in their practices. CPL aims to serve the common good in a multicultural society and world. Third space leaders promote inclusivity, collaborative and collective problem-solving, recognizing that the collective intelligence of the group can surpass individual contributions. Finally, third space leaders are action oriented (Gorski & Swalwell, 2023). They recognize inequity, they respond to inequity,

they redress inequity and actively cultivate and sustain cultures of equity (Gorski & Swalwell, 2023). To create cultures of equity, one must first understand and reflect how school cultures are formed.

Educators bring their cultures to school, and these diverse cultures, worldviews and core values affect their relationships with peers and students (Khalifa, 2018; Khalifa et al., 2016; Lindsey et al., 2018). These individual cultures also influence positively or negatively the school culture. In turn, the school culture determines the way people are treated, how places are maintained, and how programs and policies are elaborated and implemented. The culture of a school influences student learning as well as students and teacher retention and well-being (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Gruenert & Whitaker, 2019; Guskey, 2002; Hess 2013; Lindsey et al., 2018; Purkey & Novack, 1988; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Third space leaders aim to create intentionally inviting cultures in all spaces, including the third spaces.

Third Space Leaders Work to Create Intentionally Inviting Schools and Spaces

According to Purkey and Novack (1988), creating an invitational education is key to student learning and students’ and teachers’ well-being. An invitational education means that the school is intentionally inviting as opposed to being unintentionally inviting, inviting by chance, or disinviting (Table 1).

Table 1: Invitational Education: The Four Quadrants (Purkey & Novack, 1988)

<p><i>Intentionally Inviting</i> School</p> <p>You are purposefully—on purpose-- welcoming to children, families, etc.</p>	<p><i>Unintentionally Inviting</i> School</p> <p>You aren’t purposefully welcoming to families and students—you are unaware. You are, <i>just by accident</i>, inviting.</p>
<p><i>Intentionally Disinviting</i> School</p>	<p><i>Unintentionally Disinviting</i> School</p>

You are purposefully disinviting to others.	You are unaware that you/the school is disinviting. You are, <i>just by accident</i> , disinviting. (Perhaps you have just not thought about it before, you have habits that are disinviting to others—your blind side).
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Purkey and Novack (1988) contended that educational leaders should be intentionally inviting in four areas: People, Places, Programs and Policies (The four Ps).

People

When administrators and teachers are inviting with people, they welcome students and each other, call students by name, know about their talents, and are genuinely interested in their cultures. These schools inspire and foster inclusion and respect. In a third space environment, principals play a pivotal role in creating positive relationships with staff members, third parties, students, and families.

Places

Places are visible, and as such can easily be made intentionally inviting. Third spaces can be a bus, a field, a classroom hosting a before or after school program. People working in these third spaces can make those places inviting, welcoming and safe. A bus driver can learn the students' names, get to know them personally, and can provide a comforting smile at the end of the day for example. That person also ensures the safety of the students by respecting driving rules and modeling good behavior in the bus.

Programs

Programs in the third space include extra-curricular activities, before and after school programs, clubs that meet after hours. The invitational model requires educators to monitor programs that could detract from the goals for which they were designed. Leaders need to ask

themselves whether programs welcome everyone or just some students; who is included and who is not.

Policies

Schools operate based on many policies and so does the programs or activities that operate in the third space. Such policies include bus discipline, bus routes, dress code, personnel selection, snow days, attendance, and visitation procedures. These formal or informal policies communicate a strong message to people in the school and the community about how things are to be done and where each person fits in. They also communicate values such as equity, diversity, and inclusion. Although all 4Ps are essential to create intentionally inviting school cultures, people write policies and work in programs within the third spaces, hence the people dimension is key and should be the focus of third space leaders.

The Challenge

The questions and activities below provide administrators with the opportunity to reflect on the case study and apply concepts from third space leadership.

Questions to Consider

1) Think-Pair-Share activity.

Think: Reflect on your school:

- Have equity efforts ever stalled at your school? In the third spaces? Can you identify the root cause of that inaction?
- How can schools better listen to and respond to student concerns about equity and inclusion in schools and in the third spaces?
- What steps has your school or district taken to cultivate and sustain equity and inclusion in schools and in the third spaces?

Pair: Share your reflection with a partner.

Share out with the large group the challenges experienced at your school related to equity and inclusion as well as the possible solutions.

Activities

- 1- In pairs discuss your understanding of the Four Quadrants and discuss the ways in which you could use it in your role as a current or future leader.
- 2- Next using the 4Ps (people, places, programs, and policies) to inform your work, create a matrix of ideas pertaining to what Mr. Peterson can do to create intentionally inviting *third spaces*. Use table 2 to list your ideas.
- 3- Using the same table, write an example relating to what being unintentionally inviting, intentionally disinviting and unintentionally disinviting can look like in *the third spaces*.

Table 2: Invitational Education: The Four Quadrants in the Third Spaces

<i>Intentionally Inviting</i> School	Unintentionally Inviting School
People:	People:
Places:	Places:

<p>Programs:</p> <p>Policies</p>	<p>Programs:</p> <p>Policies:</p>
<p>Intentionally <i>Disinviting</i> School</p> <p>People:</p> <p>Places:</p> <p>Programs:</p> <p>Policies:</p>	<p>Unintentionally <i>Disinviting</i> School</p> <p>People:</p> <p>Places:</p> <p>Programs:</p> <p>Policies:</p>

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Appendix A

Bus rules

Students: Remember to Ride with Pride!

As your professional school transportation provider, we want to make sure your child's trip to and from school is as enjoyable as possible. We all play a role in achieving this goal. In order to get your child to school safe, on-time, and ready to learn, it's important that he or she understands the school bus

safety rules. Please discuss the rules listed below with your child prior to the start of school.

- Stay in your seat.
- Keep the noise level down.
- Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus.
- Don't throw things inside the bus or out the windows.
- No eating or drinking on the bus.
- Keep the bus clean.
- No smoking or tobacco on the bus.
- Don't be destructive.
- Be courteous.
- Cooperate with the driver.
- Stay out of the "Danger Zone"—anywhere within 10 feet of the bus.
- Don't ever try to get anything you left on the bus after you have already gotten off. We'll do our best to ensure personal property is returned.
- Don't try to pick up anything dropped underneath the bus—things can be replaced, children can't.
- Always follow the driver's directions about how to cross the street. Be alert to traffic, look both ways, and always walk in front of the bus.