

Race and Ethnicity Form Guidance

Purpose

This is a required form used to collect data on the children enrolled in the program by race and ethnicity. This form is meant to provide required data reporting to funding sources and to provide PSESD with information that will aid in closing the Opportunity Gap.

Guidance

Our Early Learning program (Head Start/ECEAP) is historically rooted in race and equity. Our program aims to serve children and families that are marginalized and find themselves impacted by the Opportunity Gap due to their race, economic status, language and abilities.

Research has shown that data pertaining to race, ethnicity and language is most accurate when people are allowed to describe their own identity and their language in their own words. The intent of this guidance is to support the face to face conversation with parents/guardians on this topic during the enrollment appointment.

The question of one's race and ethnicity is an uncomfortable topic for most people. People find it hard to talk about race without feeling blame, shame, or guilt. Often, people of color fear that the information they share will be used against them. It is important to be clear that we ask for this information to help us to focus on the causes, effects, systems and the solutions to eliminating the Opportunity Gap. A gap that affects the following children more than others:

- Children of color;
- Dual Language learners;
- Children with special needs;
- Families lacking financial resources.

Because children of color are impacted more by the opportunity gap, critical examination of educational challenges can help us deliver culturally relevant instruction and services to all children.

Procedure

This form is to be completed and filled out in conversation with Family Support staff and the child's parent/guardian at the Enrollment appointment.

Before the face to face Enrollment appointment with the parent/guardian

Take time to reflect on your own ethnicity and racial identity and how it has impact your worldview. Sharing your background with parent/guardian can be one way to begin the dialogue.

- Expressing an interest in the parent/guardian background facilitates the foundation of a relationship, partnership and the development of an individualize program that best meets the well-being of the child and family.
- Be sensitive and aware that some parents/guardians may refuse or may be unable to identify their heritage due to limited access to genetic history, adoption, raised in foster home or by extended family.

Script During the Enrollment Appointment

Family Support staff introduces the elimination of the "Opportunity Gap" as one of our Early Learning program goals.

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Suggested Script: “We want to make sure that all our families get the best care possible. If you would feel comfortable doing so, we would like you to tell us your racial and ethnic background. Collecting this information helps us determine the most culturally appropriate services and supports unique to your child and family. For us, this information will help to identify policies and practices that cause unintended consequences or have a negative impact on any particular family. Here is the governmental/census definitions of race and ethnicity (found at the top of the form). We know that this definition of race is more about geographic origin and may not necessarily reflect who you are. Please know that providing this information is voluntary. Services to your child and family will not be affected if you decide not to provide this information.”

Using the Form

Using the form, ask the parent/guardian the first question (Ethnicity). Mark either “no” or “yes” and check the appropriate ethnicity they indicate.

IMPORTANT: You must move on to question 2 (Race) regardless of the answer to question 1. This form is **INCOMPLETE** if either of the two questions are unanswered.

Related forms

Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework
Puget Sound ESD Racial Equity Policy
ERSEA policy

Definitions

Race- A socially constructed system of categorizing humans largely based on observable physical features, such as skin color and on ancestry. There is no scientific basis for or discernable distinction between racial categories. The ideology of race has become embedded in our identities, institutions and culture and used as a basis for discrimination and domination

Cultural Proficiency- A mind-set, a worldview, a way a person or organization makes assumptions for effectively describing, responding to and planning for issues that arise in diverse environments. For some people, cultural proficiency is a paradigm shift from viewing cultural differences as problematic to learning how to interact effectively with other cultures.

Opportunity Gap- Access gaps that arise from the inequities in the education system that pose as barriers to student academic success. All students can succeed, but they need highly effective teachers, exemplary curriculum and materials, and appropriate academic and social support-resources that are often missing today for students of color (students of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds).

Diversity- Individual differences for the following (i.e. Personality, language, learning style and life experience) and group-social differences (i.e. Race, ethnicity, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, sexual identity, country of origin and ability status, as well as cultural, political, religious and other affiliations).

Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino origin- A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or Dominican, Nicaraguan, El Salvador, Chile, Columbia, Honduras, Guatemala or other Spanish cultures.

Bi-Racial/Multi-Racial- A person of two or more races.

Unspecified- A person whose race is unknown or whose parents/guardian declined to identify their race.