

Buford Middle School is one of four schools in the Buford City School System. It has a population of nearly one thousand students from many different ethnic backgrounds. The staff is majority white, and Hispanic students represent the majority minority group. Students belong to either an affluent family or a very poor family, but very few students are truly middle class.

After observing my school for a week, I found very few racist practices. However, the few racist practices significantly affect minority students.

Gollnick and Chin (2013) argued, “Discriminatory practices have protected the superior status of the dominant group for centuries” (p. 60). The state of Georgia flagged Buford City Schools in the past for over identifying minority students for special education services. The state department seeks to protect minority students from having an unfair label. Special needs students receive many support services so they can access the curriculum despite their disabilities. Currently, Buford Middle School will not recommend a minority student for special education services. Many students need these services, but, no matter the need, Buford Middle will not recommend the minority students for services. The leadership uses the state mandate, originally created to protect minorities, to maintain the superiority of the dominant group. Without the special education services, the minority students continue to struggle with the curriculum and are not successful in school.

Gollnick and Chin describe the six stages of racial development in African Americans in the text, and these developmental stages apply to many Latino Americans. Gollnick and Chin (2013) stated during one period of development students “may be angry about the stereotyping and racism they are experiencing or seeing others experience” (p. 54). Many of our minority students are loud and outspoken in school. They laugh and talk the loudest during downtimes,

and many teachers spend a great deal of time trying to silence the students. The students think the teachers are out to “get them” because they are black or Hispanic. When I am present during these times, I try to remind the other teachers that the students are only being loud and that is not against the rules.

Gollnick and Chin (2013) stated, “If teachers believe that people of color are intellectually inferior, they will find it difficult to harbor high expectations for the academic achievement of those students” (p. 64). I co-teach a math class, and the other teacher will not allow two boys to participate. The two boys have recently arrived in our country and only speak Spanish. My co-teacher thinks the boys cannot understand math, but she is mistaken. The boys cannot understand English well not math. I allowed the students to participate in class Friday, and they could successfully answer all my questions after another student translated the questions into Spanish.

Our school system employees have had many trainings on poverty and ethnicity to help solve problems with racism. It is important to know that I am the only Black teacher at my school, and my peers hide many racist practices from me. Most of my peers do not think they are racist. If we could point out the practices as racist, then I feel many of my peers would not do these things.

Resources

Gollnick, D., & Chinn, P. (2013). *Multicultural education in a pluralistic society* (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education.