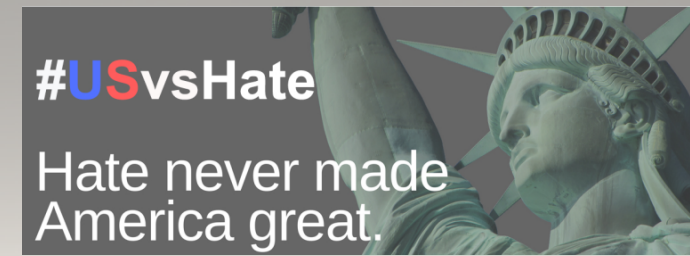
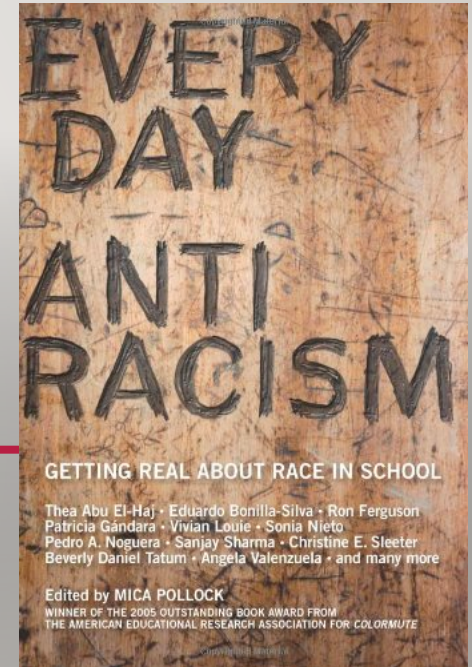


# ONRAMPS: DESIGNING TALK TOOLS FOR ANTIRACISM & EQUITY IN SCHOOLS

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MICA POLLOCK, UC SAN DIEGO

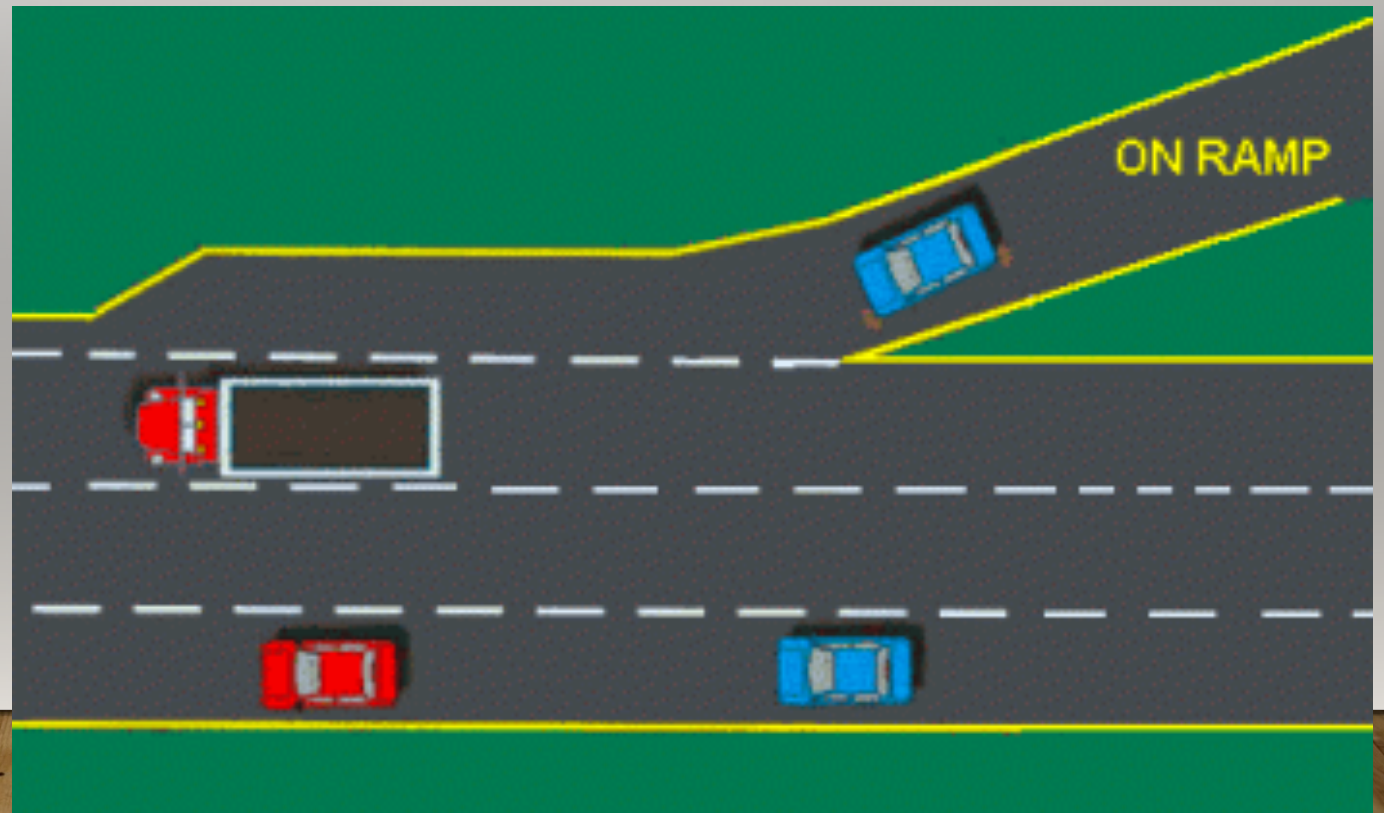


# ONRAMP

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A structured invitation to enter collective efforts.

If the collective effort is a highway full of travelers going in a shared direction, an “onramp” supports people to enter work where they are.





# A RELATED METAPHOR



*"I sometimes visualize the ongoing cycle of racism as a moving walkway at the airport... the conveyor belt moves the bystanders along to the same destination as those who are actively walking.... **unless they are actively antiracist – they will find themselves carried along with the others.**"*

*-Beverly Tatum (1997)*

# LOTS OF PEOPLE ARE NOW SAYING THEY WANT ONRAMP

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<https://bit.ly/WhileYouRead>

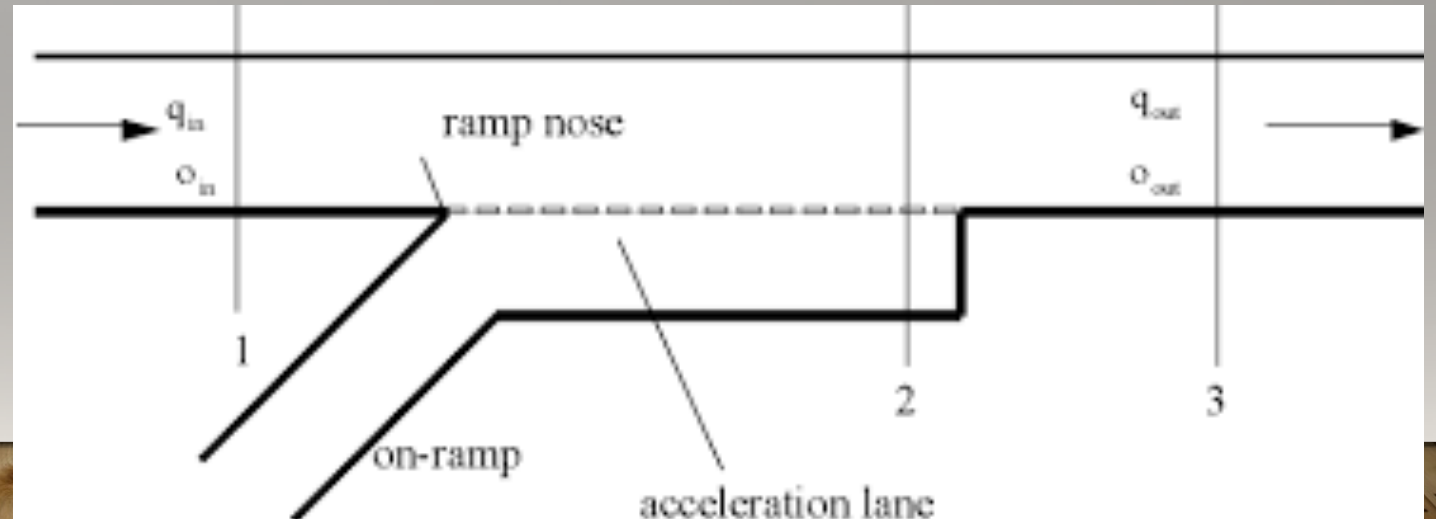


*"Actually, we're just getting started."*



# ONRAMPS NEED TO BE *DESIGNED*.

- Given our audience
- Given our moment in history
- Given specific local situations as well as national patterns
- To lead to reflection, refusal, *and repair*



# WE TAKE AN ONRAMP WITH OTHERS

- Some then go right to their fast lane; others stay “slower”
- Staying “on” rather than getting “off”
- Shared transportation whenever possible!

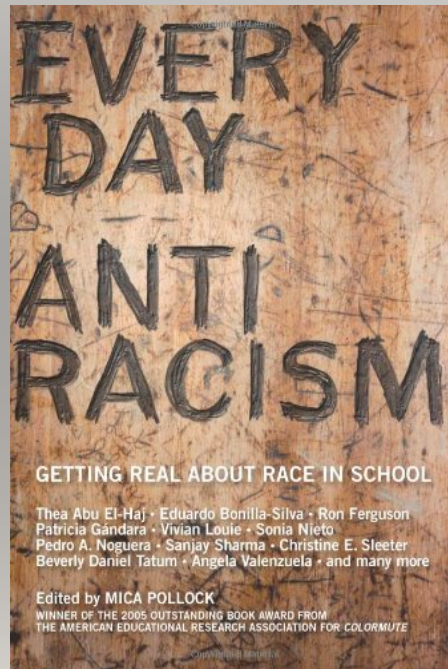




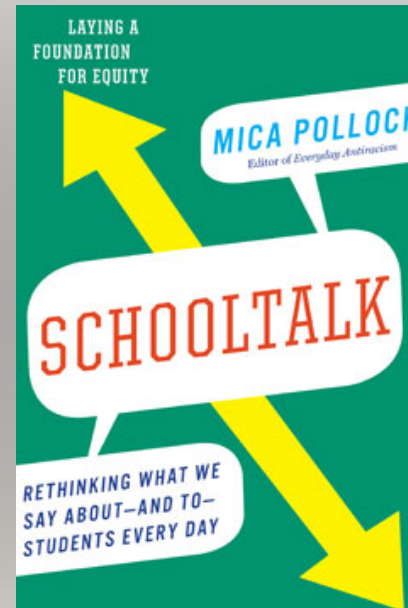
# 3 ONRAMPS

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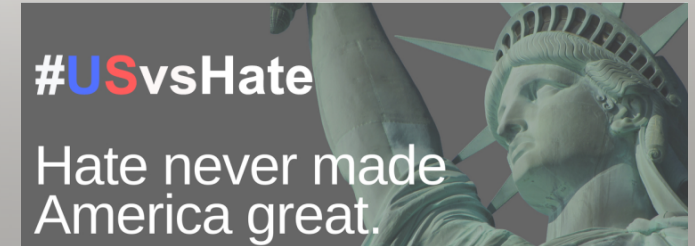
“ANTIRACISM”



“EQUITY”

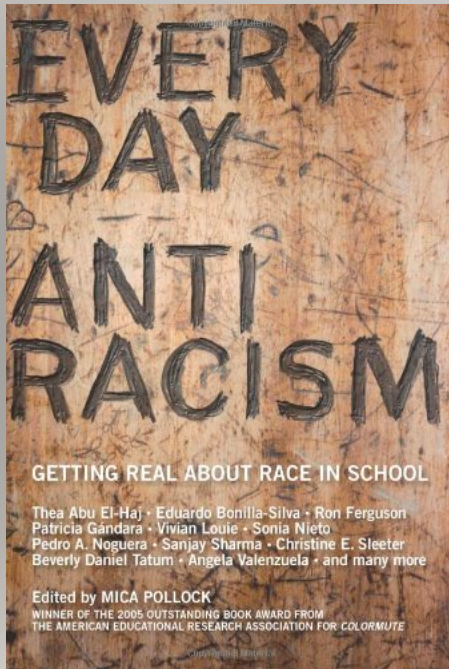


“ANTI-HATE”



# 'EVERYDAY ANTIRACISM' AS ONRAMP

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“Today, in schools and districts, racism is present in **any act or situation** that, even unwittingly,

- tolerates, accepts, or reinforces racially unequal opportunities for children to learn and thrive;
- allows racial inequalities in opportunity as if they are normal and acceptable;
- or treats people of color as less worthy or less complex than ‘white’ people.”

[http://usvshate.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Everyday-Antiracism\\_Complete-List-of-Everyday-Antiracist-Strategies-I.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2dzWHFg3gd7uaEO6Tb-ljUlsdxjoXyFyFe6gRdsVzCzellSSXpfmyjgwc](http://usvshate.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Everyday-Antiracism_Complete-List-of-Everyday-Antiracist-Strategies-I.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2dzWHFg3gd7uaEO6Tb-ljUlsdxjoXyFyFe6gRdsVzCzellSSXpfmyjgwc)



# KEY TALK TOOL: THE 'LINE'

We proactively ask ourselves and others whether current situations move students toward necessary opportunity, or away. We:

- reject false notions of human difference
- acknowledge lived experiences shaped along racial lines
- learn from diverse forms of knowledge and experience
- \*\*\*\*\*challenge systems of racial and class inequality.

Guiding  
Question

AWAY from opportunity

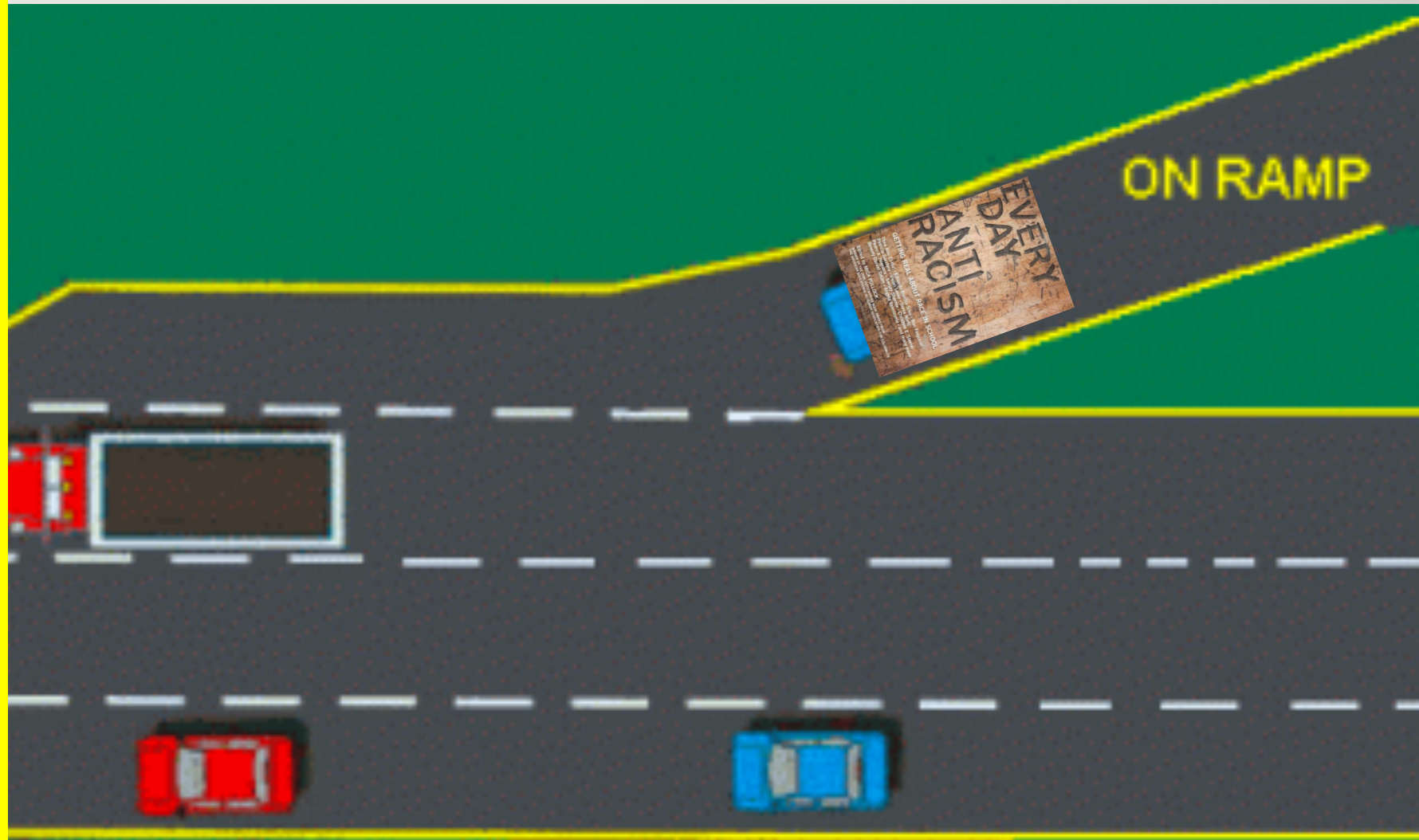
TOWARD opportunity

# STUDYING FOLKS TAKING THE ONRAMP

“But What Can I Do?” (w  
Deckman, Mira, Shalaby, 2010)

“Caricature and Hyperbole” (w  
Bocala, Deckman, Dickstein-  
Staub, 2015)

“these tensions require  
explicit and ongoing  
attention . **not engaging  
these tensions leaves  
educators refusing to  
engage or inquire**, a  
stance that itself inhibits  
professional learning”

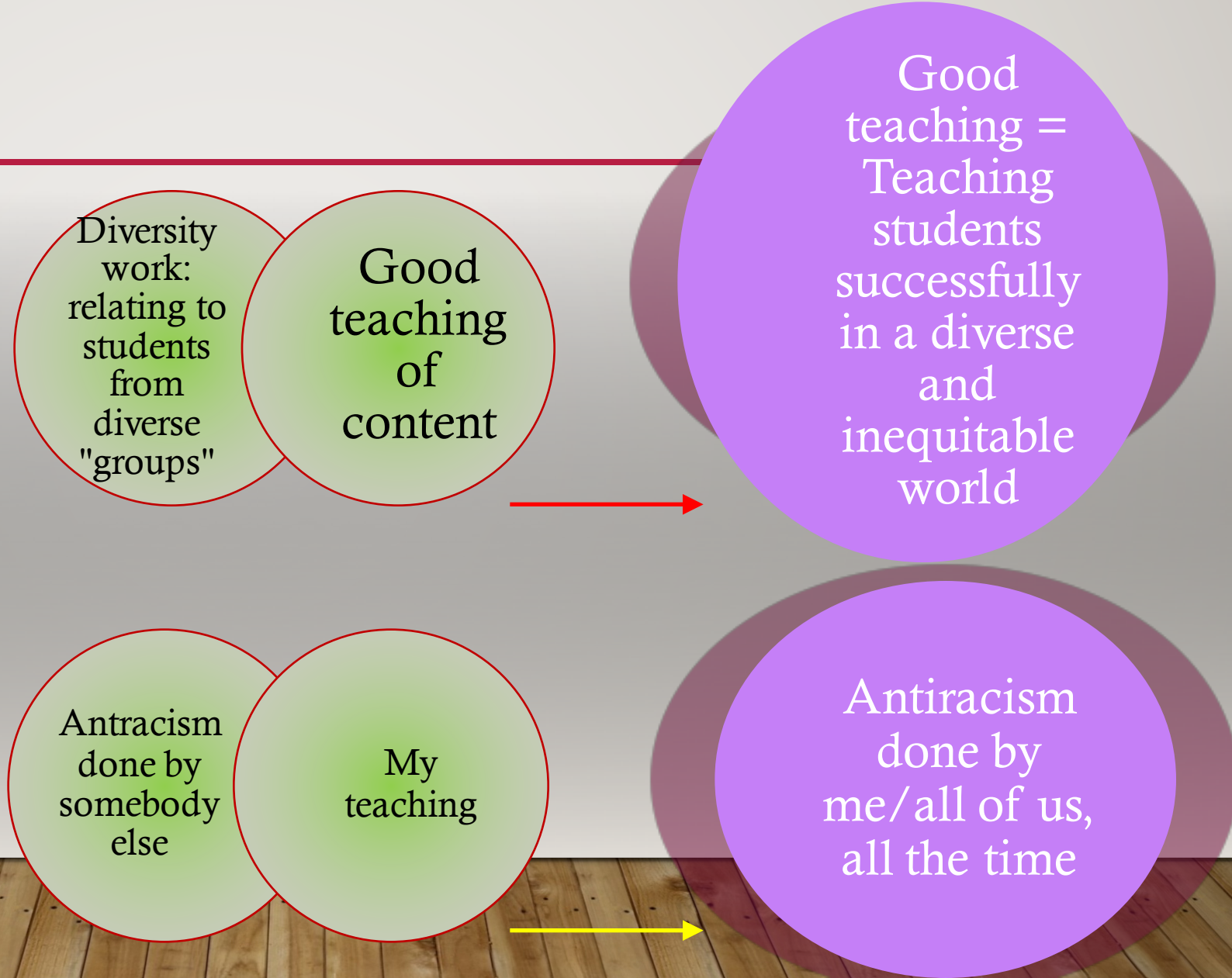




# DESIGNING A NEXT ONRAMP TO NORMALIZE ANTIRACISM

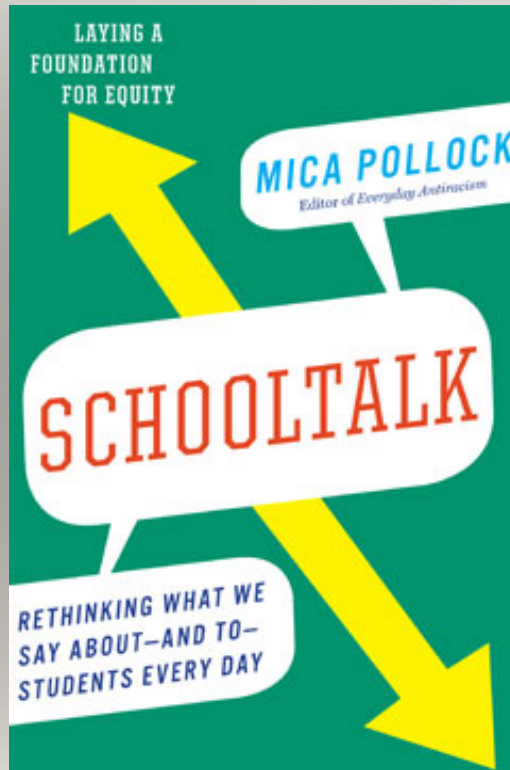
## Next goals:

- Design an onramp that the ~~non-choir~~ would take
- **Embed** antiracism in everything
- **Constant** inquiry into practice
- Neutralize resistance
- Insist on **ongoing application every day**
- (Offer **background info** and **personal reflection** missing from EAR)



# “EQUITY” AS ONRAMP

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\*\* (From PD presentations for *Schooltalk*)

# WHY USE *SCHOOLTALK* TO LAY A FOUNDATION FOR EQUITY?

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Because everybody talks.

“It brings a level of ownership to equity work that nobody can disavow. We all talk.”

—Education leader (p. 9)

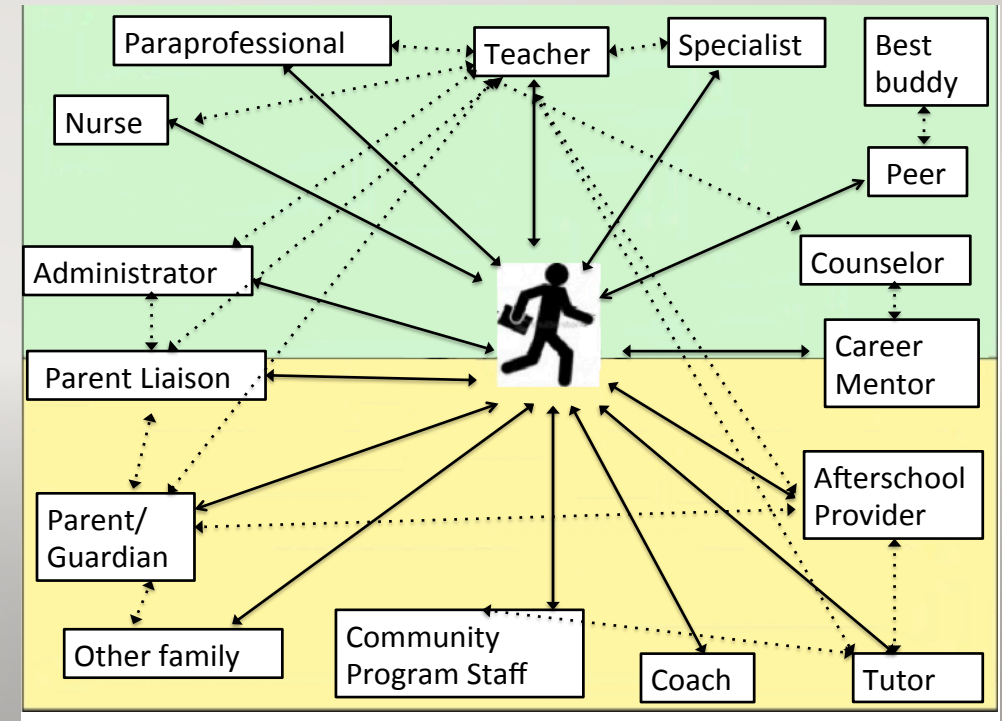
Schooltalk seeks to support us to redesign the most basic thing people do in education: talk about young people and with them.

And because communication is action: talk about (and with) young people shapes their lives.

(Introduction, p. 2)

“every word we say, or *don't* say, about young people in schools has consequences for how young people are treated.” (p. 15)

“Words lead to treatment and self-concepts, to expectations internalized by adults and students, and to the distribution of material resources by adults” (p. 4)



**THINK/DISCUSS:** *Can **you** recall one comment or routine communication about **yourself** that was helpful or harmful to your success in school?*

\*\* (From PD presentations for *Schooltalk*)



“We can derail young people significantly when our schooltalk harms them, or when we fail to say things that can help them.” (p. 7).

**THINK/DISCUSS:** Have you ever explicitly challenged a common comment as harmful to young people? What was the comment, and how did you challenge it? Did your strategy work? (Can you think of a common comment that you did not challenge, even though it bothered you? Why didn't you?)

**THINK/DISCUSS:** Have you ever seen a piece of missing information be harmful to a young person? Have you ever insisted that others add a crucial piece of information to the record of a young person you know, or circulate a key piece of information? Why? How did people respond?

\*\* (From PD presentations for *Schooltalk*)

# WAY TOO OFTEN, OUR SCHOOLTALK GETS IN THE WAY.

## SCHOOLTALK'S EQUITY LINE (P. 8)

Guiding  
Question

Does this **communication** help support **equity** (the full human talent development of every student and *all groups* of students)?  
Or not?

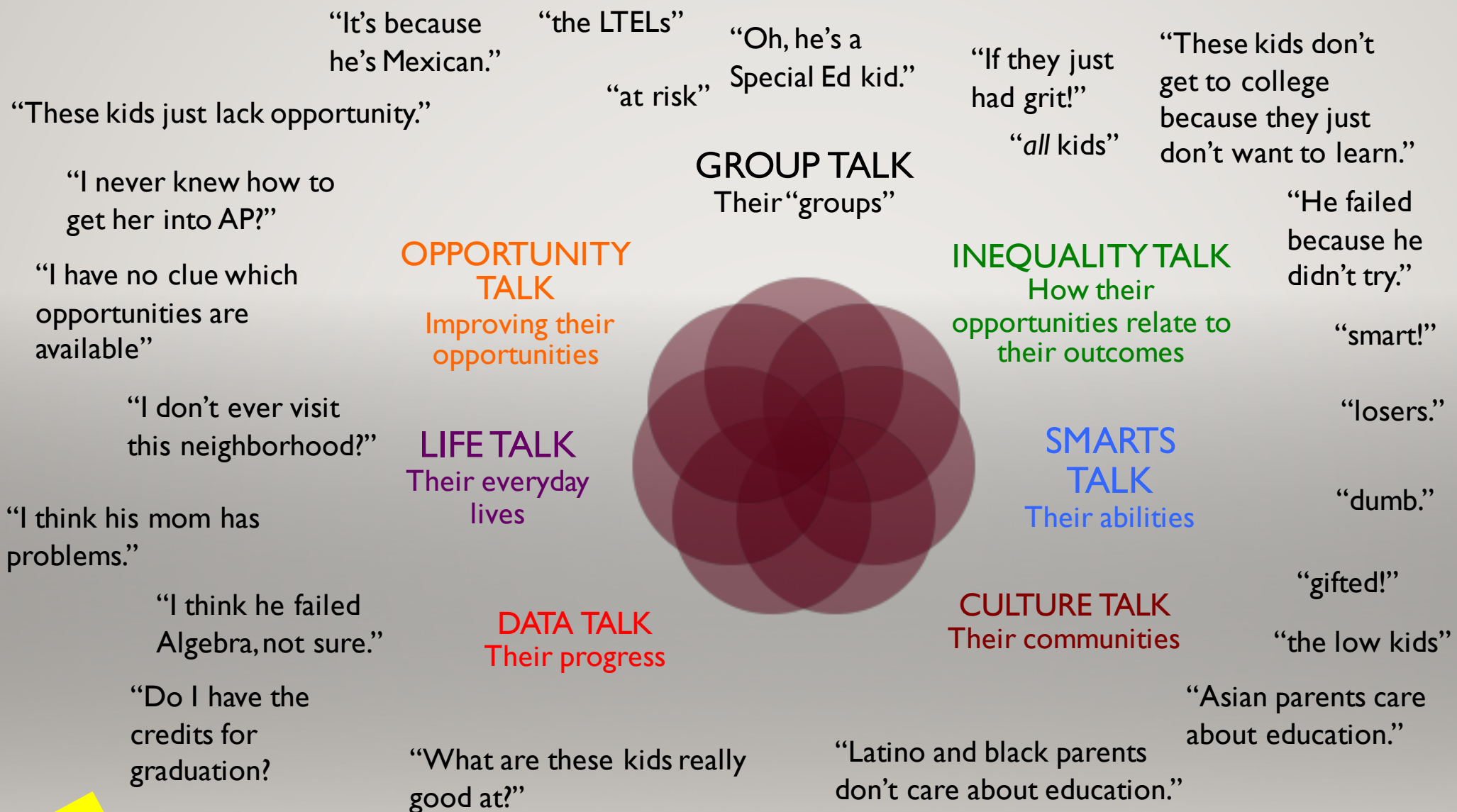
NOT supporting each/all  
students' talent development

SUPPORTING each/all students'  
talent development

**Equity effort** = “active effort by **individuals & institutions** to **arrange necessary supports & opportunities** so **each person & all communities of people** get a true chance to develop **their full human ‘capacities’** and **potential contributions.**” (12)

“This is about rethinking – and then redesigning – the most foundational ways our daily words support young people or don’t.” (p. 11)



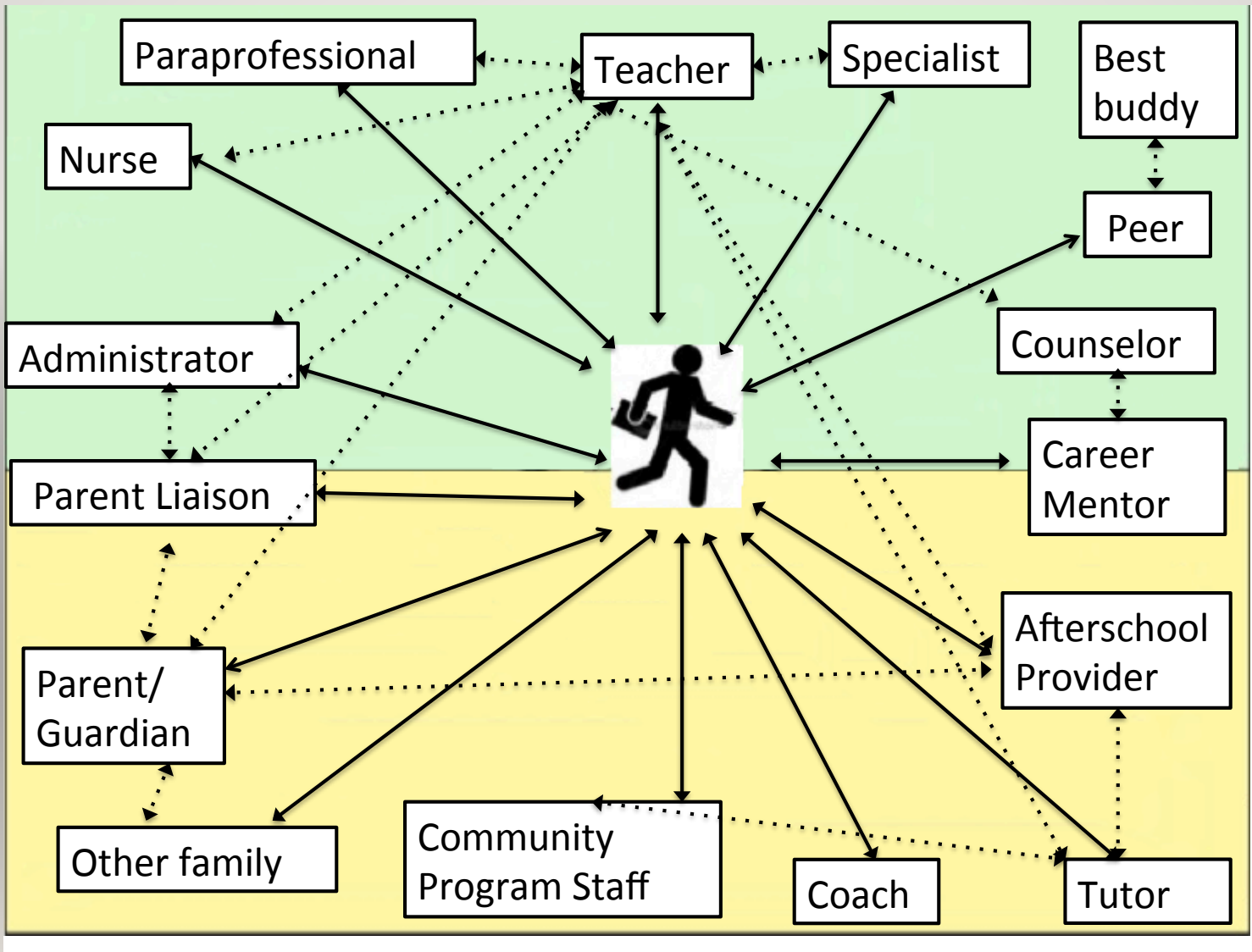


Equity Line

NOT supporting each/all students' talent development

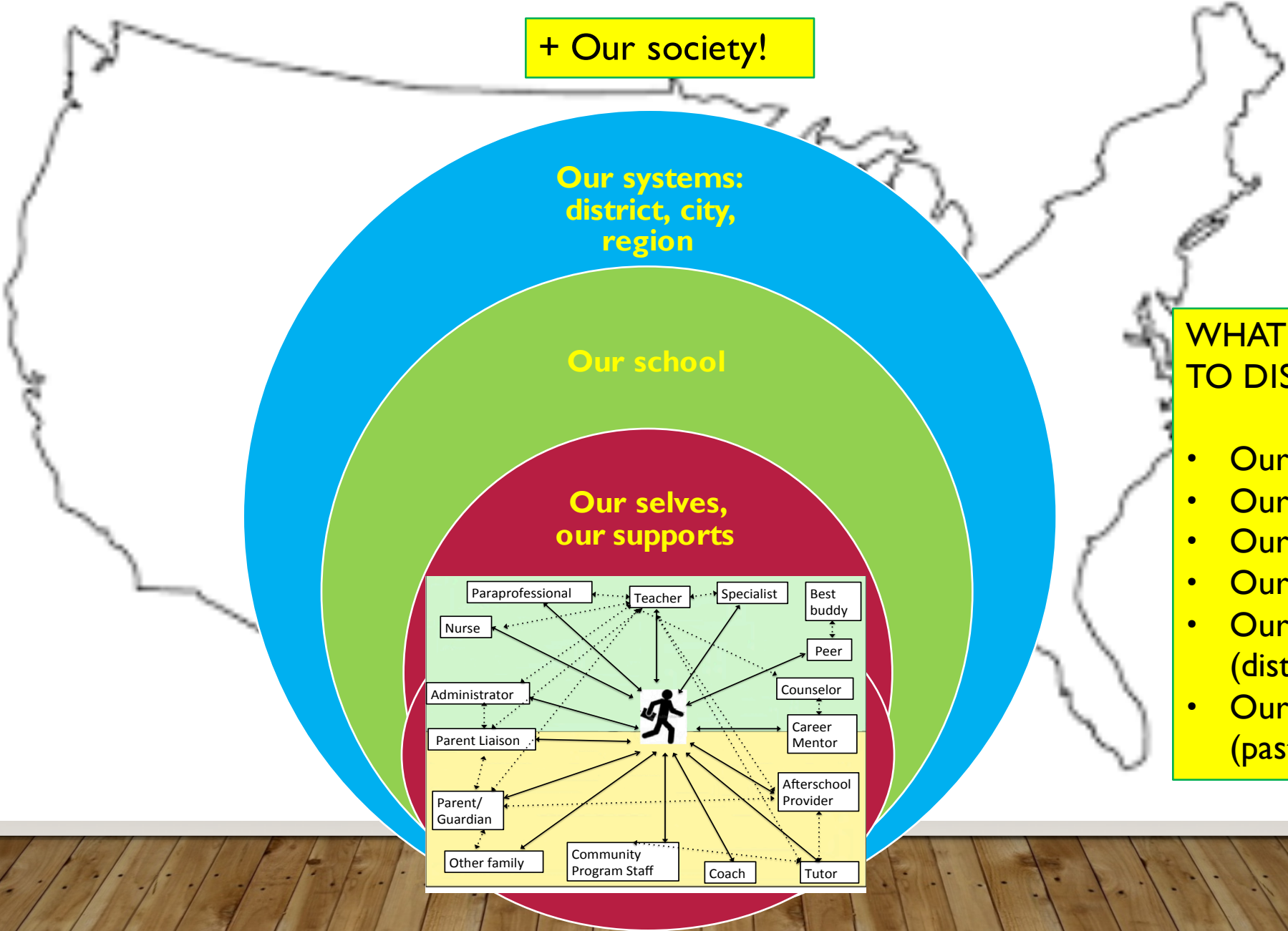
SUPPORTING each/all students' talent development

**FOR EQUITY, WHAT DO YOU WANT THESE FOLKS TALKING ABOUT?**





# FOR EQUITY, WHAT DO YOU WANT THESE FOLKS TALKING ABOUT?

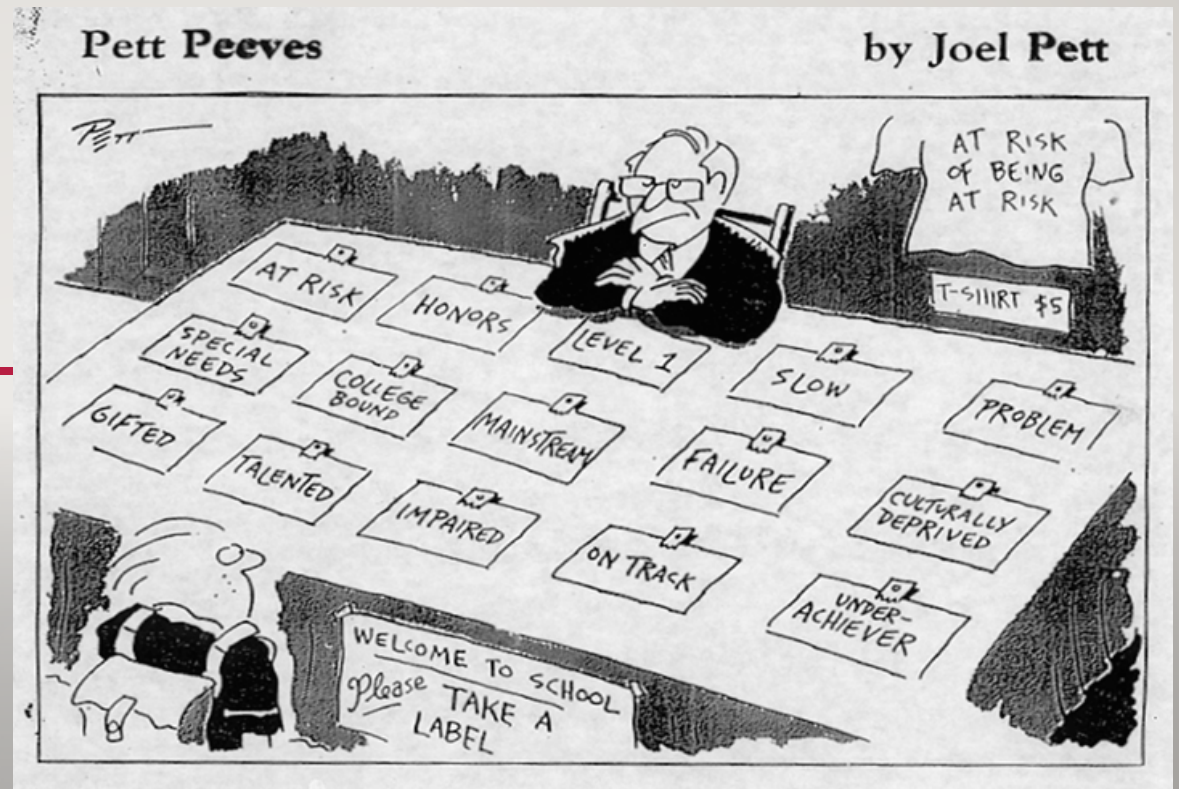


- WHAT DO WE NEED TO DISCUSS,ABOUT:
- Our **STUDENTS**,
  - Our **SELVES**
  - Our **SUPPORTS**
  - Our **SCHOOL**
  - Our **SYSTEMS** (district, city, region),
  - Our **SOCIETY** (past and present)?

# GROUP TALK

“It’s because he’s Mexican”  
“Oh, he’s a Special Ed kid”  
“Yeah, that LTEL”

**PRINCIPLE:** Wield words only to support young people.  
Consider when labels for “types of kids” enable student support and when they get in the way.



Foundational  
Principles

- Conveys belief in all young people’s equal human value and potential, and care and respect for their development and well-being;
- Describes young people more accurately as individuals and members of communities, including their experiences with others in opportunity contexts;
- Pinpoints and collectively addresses students’ needs precisely, not vaguely, and regularly and rapidly, not rarely;
- Shares opportunities to learn widely (and to meet needs), not just with some.

NOT supporting each/all  
students’ talent development

SUPPORTING each/all students’ talent  
development

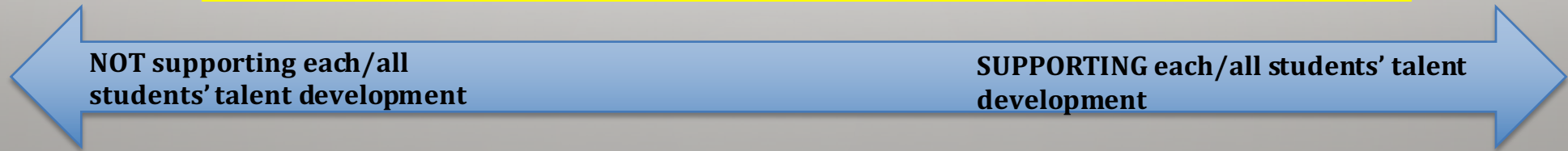


# SCHOOLTALK DISCUSSION MODEL

**Discuss** a real-world e.g. of schooltalk affecting young people.

**Evaluate** existing situation or possible actions using the Equity Line, considering the pros and cons for young people. Ask for perspectives:

Does this communication help support **equity** (the full human talent development of every student, and all groups of students)? Or not?



**Pinpoint:** As you go and definitely before ending the conversation, restate some clarifying takeaways and possible actions regarding equity effort.

**Discuss**  
**Evaluate**  
**Pinpoint**

- **Great Quote**
- **Principle/Strategy/Try Tomorrow**
- **Core Tension**

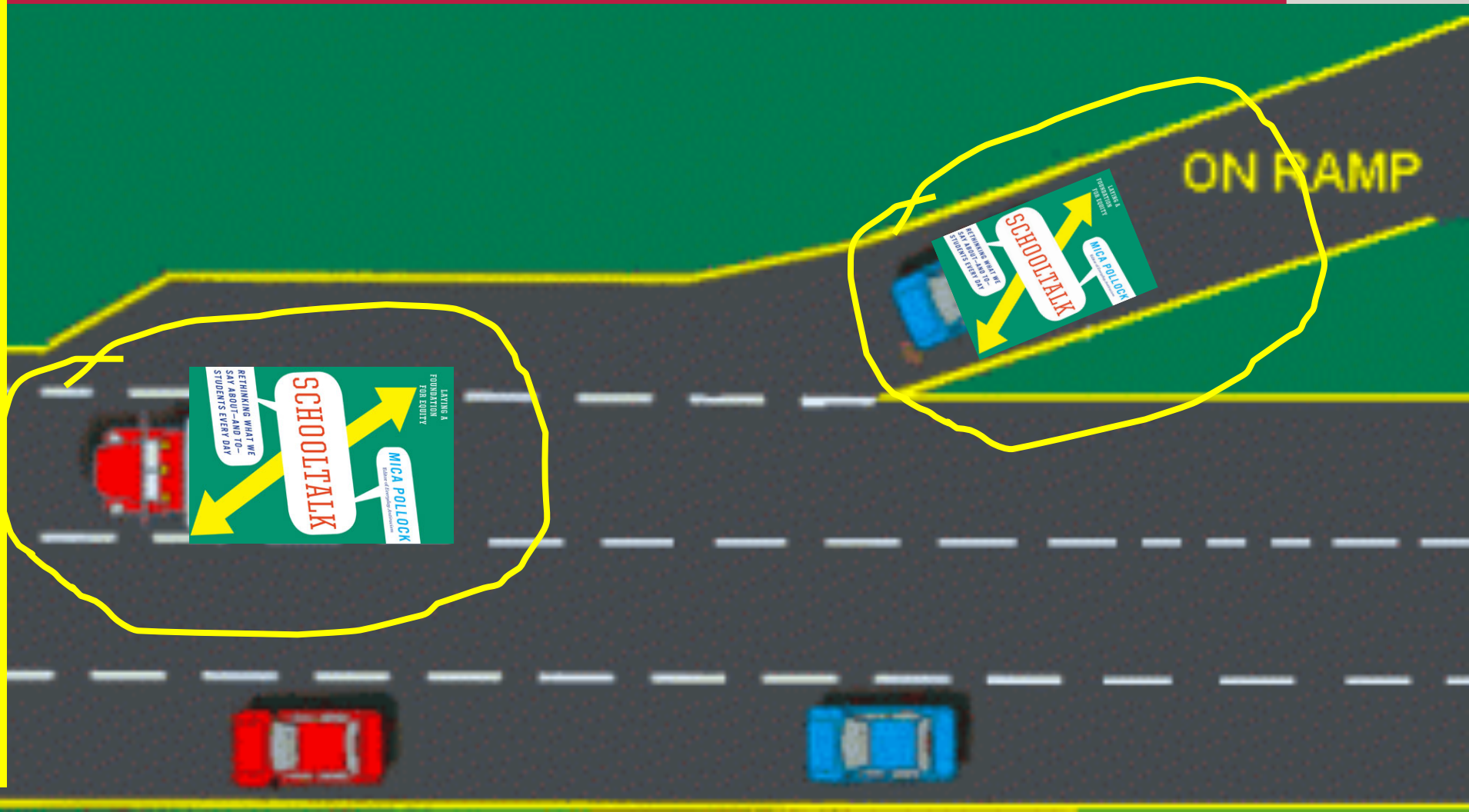
**DESIGN A SCHOOLTALK IMPROVEMENT!**

# STUDYING FOLKS TAKING THE ONRAMP

Studies in Pennsylvania,  
Virginia, San Diego,  
informally nationally

“Setting Goals Beyond  
Overcoming Resistance in  
Inservice Professional  
Development on Race with  
White Teachers” (w  
Matschiner, forthcoming)

The need to **design**  
**PD to actively**  
**expect** collective and  
sustained action as an  
outcome.



# STAYING ON THE HIGHWAY: AN “ACTION PLANNER” FOR PD

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10HhdGBVMWEQVIXZIIInNJ8wzqU-i-5WS-/view>

Updated  
Guiding  
Question?

**Does this action/situation pursue *antiracist equity*?**

(Does it provide necessary supports for the full human talent development of every student and all groups of students, *particularly students of color denied opportunities*?)

**IF NOT, WHAT WILL I DO NEXT?**

Toward inequity and racism

TOWARD antiracist equity



# “ANTI-HATE” AS ONRAMP

Inviting students to “insist publicly that all people are equally valuable”

#USvsHate

Hate never made  
America great.

usvshate.org



#USvsHate



A new program lifts the voices of students fighting hate in their communities.

BY ADRIENNE VAN DER VALK ILLUSTRATION BY SHANNON ANDERSON

# #USVSHATE PROJECT AIMS

**#USvsHate is a collective action project to counter bigotry and create safe, inclusive and welcoming schools.**

**Support youth empowerment through the creation and amplification of anti-hate/pro-inclusion public messages**



**Support teachers in responding to the increase in hate and harassment through facilitating anti-hate/pro-inclusion lessons**

**Check out  
[usvshate.org](https://usvshate.org)!**



# ANTI-HATE MESSAGING GOALS

## IN ANY MEDIA, #USvsHate messages can:

- explicitly address, explore, and refuse racism, xenophobia, homophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, sexism, or other forms of hate, bias and injustice in schools and society;
- communicate that people across lines of difference contribute to our communities, regions, and nation, are equally valuable, and deserve access to opportunity and well-being;
- bust a myth (challenge a stereotype) about a “type of” kid too often misrepresented;
- ask people to treat each other kindly, fairly and respectfully, so schools stay safe for learning and society includes us all.



NOT supporting each/all  
students' talent development

SUPPORTING each/all students' talent development

*In San Diego*



# DESIGNING THE ONRAMP: DEFINING “HATE” DEEPLY

We define “hate” as any time people denigrate, disrespect or harm an individual or group as if their identity makes them an inferior or less valuable type of person. See [Definitions and Concepts](#) for more!

We think “hate” includes:

- Creating or spreading hateful speech or symbols that demean and hurt people.
- Repeating false ideas that some “types of people” are inferior or superior.
- Denying some groups opportunity or well-being as if they are less valuable.
- Taking cruel actions that fuel more hate. (E.g., bullying, harassment)
- Accepting or allowing such harm to others.

#USvsHate is about standing up when people get hurt, whether that hurt is subtle or not.

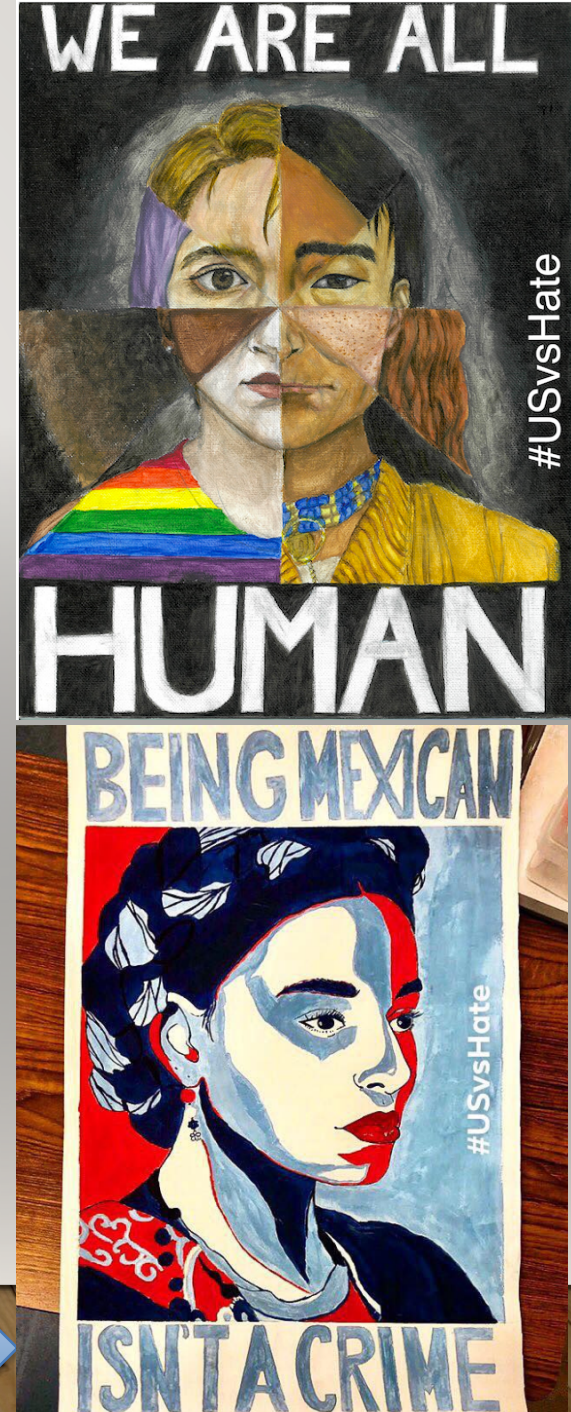


Away from antiracist equity

Toward antiracist equity

# DESIGNING THE ONRAMP: “ANTI-HATE” PRINCIPLES

- **We reject false ideas about “inferior” and “superior” people.** Every person and each community is equally valuable and deserving of respect. We can be proud of whoever we are without putting anyone else down. (**Identity**)
- **We refuse misinformation about other people’s lives.** Instead, we build relationships and aim to more accurately describe people’s life experiences as individuals and as members of communities. We value everyone’s contribution to our society. We clarify that diversity makes us strong. (**Diversity**)
- **We call for inclusion and opportunity for all “types of people” across our society.** We reject any situation or action that treats some “types of people” as inherently more valuable than others. (**Justice**)
- **We stand up against harmful treatment or opportunity denial.** Through our anti-hate messages, we insist that all people should be respected, fairly treated, and supported. We ask others to act, as one 3<sup>rd</sup> grader put it, like “everyone belongs.” (**Action**)



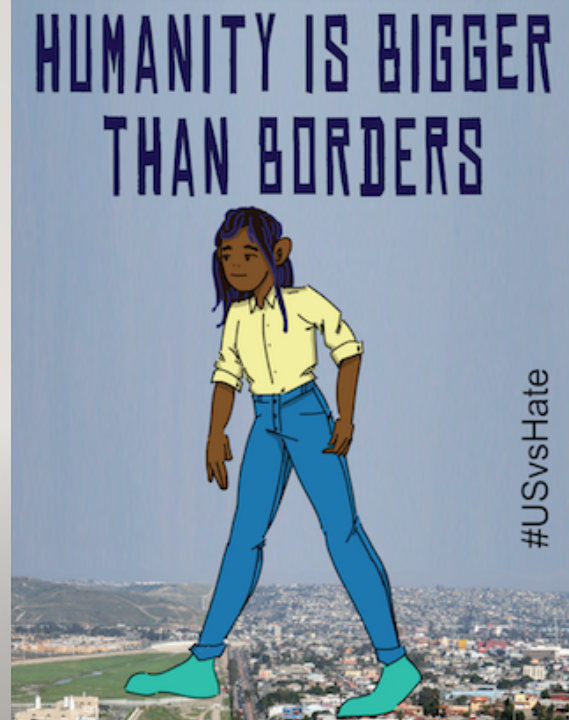
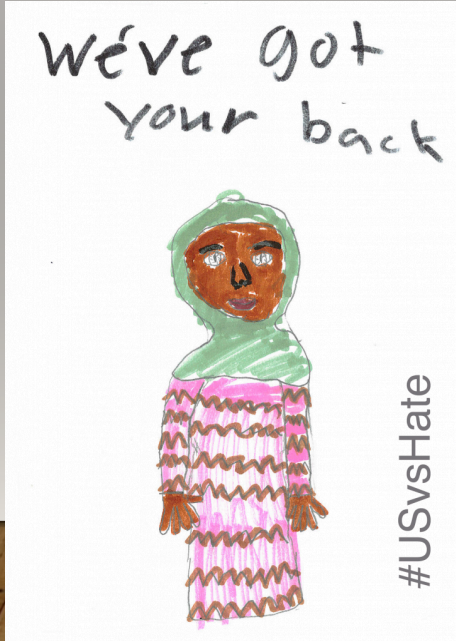
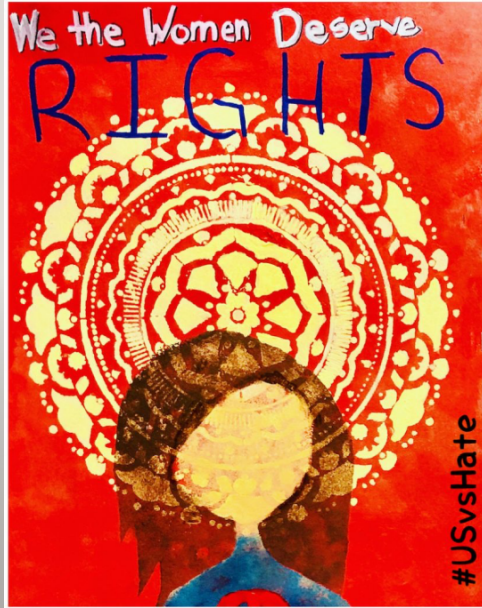
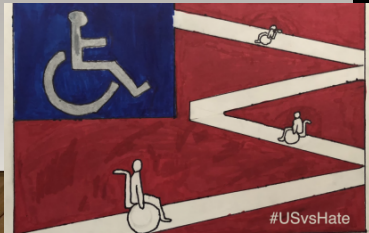
Away from antiracist equity

Toward antiracist equity

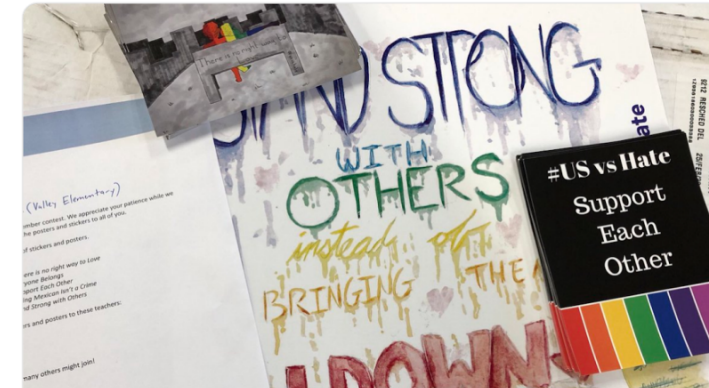


# TAKING THE ONRAMP

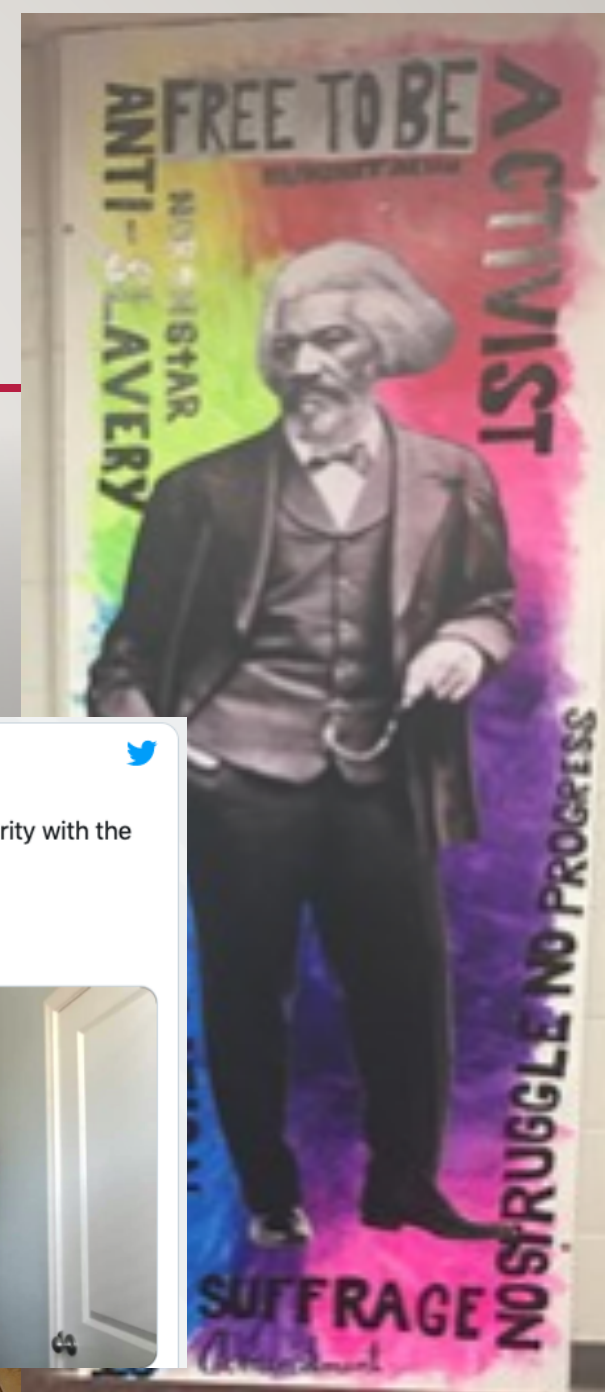
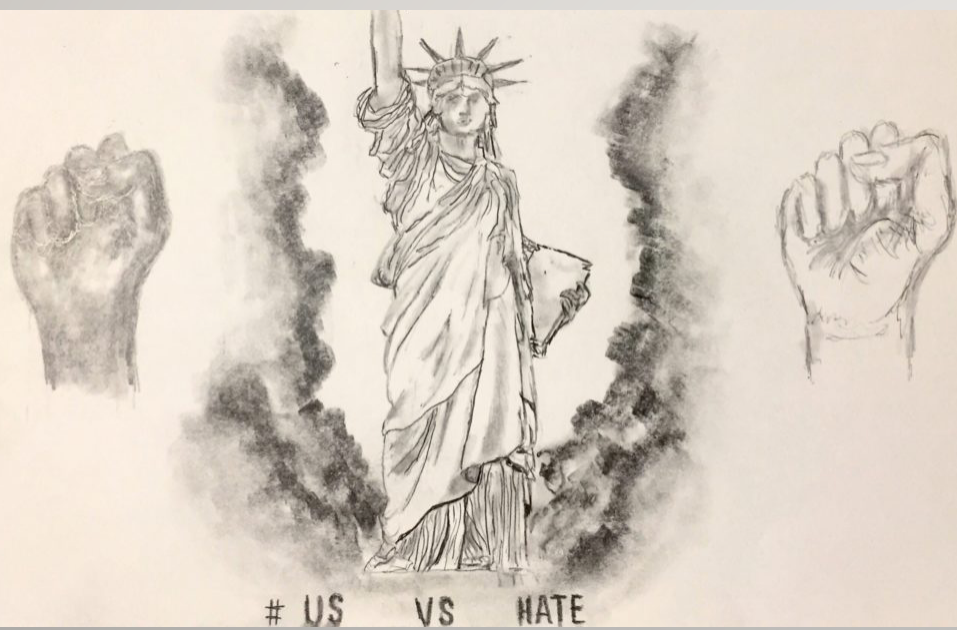
usvshate.org



My class was so happy to open up the box of posters and stickers from the Nov. #UsVsHate contest winners! Ideas: "Let's give them to the office so people see them on the way in!", "Put them in the hallways!" and "Let's do a march with them!" 🥰  
#kidsthesedays









# ONGOING STUDY OF PEOPLE TAKING THE ONRAMP

- w Yoshisato, Kendall, Lopez, & Reece

During the crucial years between the 2016 and 2020 elections, in an era marked by an explosion of explicit bigotry, nationwide reckoning over racism, and toxic political divides, I have asked a single question relentlessly: *How are K12 educators AND STUDENTS experiencing antiracist equity and inclusion efforts in the current political climate, and what support do they need to engage in such work right now?*



\*\*\*\*NEXT STEPS:

Combine the onramps; put youth in the driver's seat.

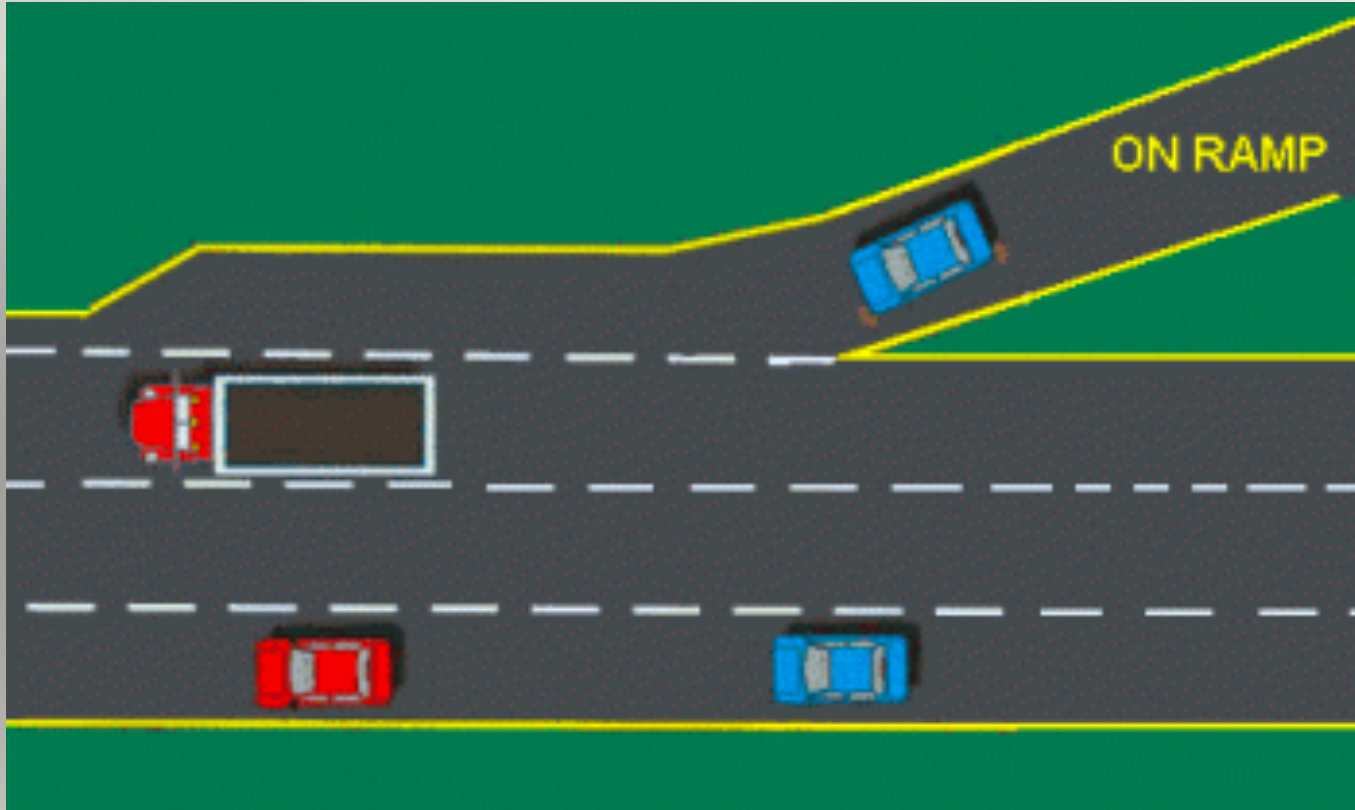
*SCHOOLTALK + EVERYDAY ANTIRACISM + #USVSHATE*





# WHICH OF THESE ONRAMPS INTEREST YOU? WHY?

## QUESTIONS AND CRITIQUES?



**JOIN US!**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/schooltalking/>

#schooltalking on Twitter

usvshate.org

**\*\*\*DEADLINES DEC 11  
AND MARCH 12!**

micapollock@uscd.edu