

A Closer Look at Diversity & Inclusion

Pope High School's PTSA **Diversity and Inclusion Committee** is seeking to create and promote an awareness, knowledge, and understanding of our diverse community for our students and their families.

As mentioned in a previous article, for many, diversity and inclusion means: "valuing differences and similarities in people through actions and accountability" (from the Georgia PTA website). These differences and similarities can include age, ethnicity, language and culture, economic status, educational background, gender, geographic location, marital status, mental ability, national origin, parental status, physical ability, political philosophy, race, religion, sexual orientation, and work experience.

Dimensions of Diversity*

A closer look at diversity can also be shown through the Dimensions of Diversity** -- four concentric circles, sub-categories, or Layers of Diversity -- originally developed by authors and Consultants, Gardenswartz & Rowe. A graphic depiction is shown below, and each circle or layer is described here:

- **Personality** -- In the center or core of the circle is Personality, which is the "innately unique aspect that gives us each our own particular style. This core aspect permeates all other layers."
- **Internal Dimensions** -- The next circle, outside the center, includes the internal factors which Marilyn Loden and Judy Rosener*** consider as the primary dimensions of diversity. These are dimensions that may not be easily changed by individuals, such as gender, age, and race. They have a powerful effect on behavior and attitudes about others.
- **External Dimensions** -- The next layer of factors, is referred to by Loden and Rosener as secondary dimensions. It is made up of those external influences such as where you grew up or live now, how your religious affiliation guides you, and one's experiences in the world.
- **Organizational Dimensions** -- The last or outer layer includes work-place influences such as seniority, the kind of work you do, your level within the company, and your work location.

Diversity Filters*

These four layers together form diversity filters, through which we process information. This in turn leads to the assumptions we make (usually about the behaviors of other people), which ultimately drive our own behaviors, which in turn have an impact on others.* When you consider all four Dimensions of Diversity, what components have had a significant impact on your actions and beliefs? Which ones play a central role in your life today?



What's next?

This Committee is in the process of creating a link on the Pope PTSA website, where this information along with other resources will be housed. We would love to hear your ideas and suggestions, and give you an opportunity to be involved. If you are looking for a way to get involved with the PTSA, this could be it! If you have questions about the **Diversity and Inclusion Committee**, please contact Charlene Noble at popehs@gmail.com

*From "Diverse Teams at Work - Capitalizing on the Power of Diversity", Gardenswartz & Rowe, SHRM 2003

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***Internal Dimensions and External Dimensions are adapted from Marilyn Loden and Julie Rosener, "Workforce America!" (Business One Irwin, 1991).