



# MILE HIGH EARLY LEARNING

2018 Framework for Race & Equity Professional Development

February 2018



# MILE HIGH EARLY LEARNING 2018 FRAMEWORK FOR RACE & EQUITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Over the last two years, select members of the Mile High Early Learning (MHEL) staff have built sufficient foundational knowledge and skills to allow them to participate in race and equity conversations with one another, and to lead these conversations with willing colleagues. They have had opportunities to explore their own implicit biases and how these impact their work, and to take action by interrupting hurtful or biased language and behaviors of others. It is the goal of the MHEL leadership to enable and support all staff as they work to exemplify MHEL's vision for equitable policies and procedures, respectful interactions, and a strengths-based approach to including staff, children and families from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

Four phases, as described below, have been designed for all staff to develop essential knowledge, skills, and awareness, enabling them to participate in ongoing conversations and critical reflection around race and equity within the MHEL learning community and beyond.

## 2018 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**THE LEADERSHIP TEAM** provides guidance and support throughout this process. Through their active participation, the Leadership Team will:

- Contribute additional context and competency around race and equity topics through their exploration of Courageous Conversations about Race, and associated discussion and application
- Lead and contextualize ongoing analysis and alignment of policies and procedures to reflect the program's race and equity mission
- Clearly define the program's race and equity mission, and be able to communicate the mission and associated goals and activities with a broad stakeholder group

**THE RACE AND EQUITY LEADERS** take ownership of the facets of the work that face the rest of the MHEL community. Through their participation, the Race and Equity Leaders will:

- Continue to build and enhance their own knowledge and skills, and build capacity among all staff, to discuss issues of race and equity and mitigate injustice
- Examine challenges experienced by staff and families through an equity lens, and be able to observe and discuss various perspectives in solution-oriented ways to inform decision-making
- Establishing a 'safe space' for colleagues to continuously build awareness, knowledge and skills to address race and equity issues

**MEMBERS OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE** take on the roles of ambassadors and collaborators. Through their participation, the Steering Committee will:

- Share what they encounter and observe in their daily work to continue to help drive and contextualize MHEL's race and equity work throughout the year
- Build their own knowledge of and capacity to discuss the nuances of race and equity, and the impact on the MHEL community.

**THE STAFF**, including teachers and all support personnel of MHEL will ultimately be both implementers and benefactors of enhanced race and equity-focused practices. Through their participation, the Staff will:

- Engage in communities of practice throughout the year to continue to construct awareness, knowledge and skills to discuss and address issues of race and equity
- Reflect MHEL's race and equity mission in their interactions with families, children and staff members
- Engage in self-assessment of the learning environment and practices in partnership with the Race and Equity Leaders

# MILE HIGH EARLY LEARNING

## Our Vision for Equity

Children, families and staff of all racial, cultural, economic, and social backgrounds, are joyfully welcomed into a learning community that prioritizes equity, and finds strength in diversity.

### Shared Leadership

Equal voice and leadership opportunity at all levels of the organization



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### An Anti-Bias Atmosphere

High regard for processes that systematically name, address and work to mitigate bias as it occurs at all levels of the learning community



### A Growth Mindset

Respect for each individual's entry point to the race and equity conversation, and a shared commitment to continual learning



### A Focus on Inclusivity

Opportunities for all children, families and staff to engage deeply and participate fully, through responsive planning and individual support



### Freedom to Express & Develop Identities

An enthusiastic invitation for all staff, families and children to live out all facets of their identities with the support of the learning community

## 4 Phases of Adult Race & Equity Learning

### PHASE 1: Identity & Self-Awareness

Goal: Each individual will demonstrate an understanding of how self-awareness and personal, social and cultural elements of identity impact his/her daily work.

### PHASE 3: Power & Privilege

Goal: Each individual will identify how s/he has been advantaged or disadvantaged by "isms" and the stereotypes or prejudices s/he have absorbed about themselves or others.

### PHASE 2: Human Difference

Goal: Each individual will respectfully identify and discuss human differences, and demonstrate interpersonal responsiveness that leads to deep caring human connections with adults and children.

### PHASE 4: Action for Justice

Goal: Each individual will demonstrate empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against unjust, discriminatory, and/or exclusionary actions.

# MILE HIGH EARLY LEARNING ROLE DESCRIPTION

## STEERING COMMITTEE, RACE AND EQUITY (SC)

### Description:

The Steering Committee is made up of: 1) Leadership Team members, 2) staff serving as Race and Equity Leaders (RELs), and 3) staff members from different parts of the MH community. A Steering Committee member is any staff willing to actively participate in Mile High's Race and Equity Initiative by serving as a representative for their MH position (e.g. director, coach, FCA, teacher, central office administrator, mental health/disabilities, etc.). The Steering Committee meets quarterly throughout the school year. Members should plan to participate in the Race & Equity Community of Learning to further develop their knowledge and take action around race and equity issues.

As a SC member you will have an advisory role, providing feedback from your colleagues and the MHEL community to the Committee about what you have noticed or heard in your daily work that could inform dialogue, problem-solving, decision-making or direct action as it relates to issues of equity for children, staff and families within the organization. Additionally, SC members will act as a sounding board and audience as RELs preview and practice race and equity activities they are considering facilitating with the larger MH community.

### Responsibilities:

The following are a list of responsibilities of a Steering Committee member. Responsibilities could be added or modified over time as the Initiative evolves.

- Attend and participate in regular Steering Committee meetings, and scheduled Race & Equity focus professional development activities
- Be open, sensitive and continue to learn about race and equity issues by reading, viewing recordings, participating in professional development trainings, and engaging in conversations or dialogues with peers, colleagues and families, as appropriate
- Willingness and ability to share information with the larger MHEL community about the Race and Equity Initiative Actively attend to, document and share with the Committee, language and/or behavior in your context and role that reflects or relates to issues of race and equity at MHEL
- Make space during meetings, by actively listening, for a variety of voices, multiple perspectives and ideas as the Committee provides feedback and brainstorms possible actions to be taken
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively with all Committee members
- Take a leadership role in ongoing race & equity focused program evaluation and review

# MILE HIGH EARLY LEARNING

## ROLE DESCRIPTION

### RACE AND EQUITY LEADER (REL)

#### Description:

A Race and Equity Leader is a staff member that actively participates in the ongoing study of race and equity issues, within and outside of the program, and engages in actions that support and further the social justice mission of Mile High Early Learning (MHEL). An REL, in partnership with the Leadership Team, takes ownership of the work, as defined by the Race & Equity Steering Committee, and moves it forward in centers and across the program. RELs are the trained "face and voice" of race and equity work in MHEL, acting as a resource and keeping the work central in professional development, staff meetings, family engagement strategies, the physical environment, and policies and procedures as outlined in the employee and family handbooks/manuals and during employee and family orientation.

The Race and Equity Leader is a member of the Steering Committee and reports to the Leadership Team. As this is a new role for MHEL staff, RELs will be provided time during work hours to participate in trainings and support activities to build their capacity to lead race and equity work in MHEL.

**Requirements:** These are some foundational knowledge and skills that RELs need to already possess in order to function most effectively in this role. This isn't an exhaustive list and other knowledge and skills may be added as the role evolves.

- Supervisor has endorsed your participation as an REL
- High degree of comfort discussing race, equity and related issues and willingness to interrupt hurtful or prejudiced language and discriminatory behaviors
- Heightened self-awareness and self-monitoring of own biases (implicit and explicit)
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively with colleagues from different racial or cultural background
- Knowledgeable and able to share how race has impacted your professional experiences

**Responsibilities:** The following are the initial responsibilities of a Race and Equity Leader. It is anticipated that responsibilities may be modified or added over time as the position evolves.

- Continue to construct knowledge and skills in addressing issues around race and equity by participating in a Community of Learning, other professional development training and as a member of the Steering Committee
- Work effectively with colleagues from different racial or cultural backgrounds
- Create safe space to raise and discuss issues of race and equity with colleagues, informally and formally, individually and in groups with the goal of deepening the quality of dialogue and relationships necessary to impact change in the program
- Facilitate meaningful and accessible race and equity activities at staff and family meetings and events to keep the work visible and relevant
- Work collaboratively with the Leadership Team to plan activities focused on race and equity for the annual Professional Development Institute (PDI)
- Identify and examine core equity challenges experienced by staff and families and work with the Leadership Team to develop a plan to address the challenge

## PHASE 1

	LEADERSHIP TEAM	RACE & EQUITY LEADERS	STEERING COMMITTEE	MHEL STAFF	OUTCOMES
<p><b>Topic:</b> Self-Awareness and personal, Social and Cultural Identity</p> <p><b>Timeline:</b> January 2018 – March 2018</p>	<p>Ongoing discussion of Courageous Conversations</p> <p>Participate in (1) 90-minute webinar</p>	<p>Participate in (1) 90-minute webinar</p> <p>Participate in (1) Community of Learning (CoL) with other REL(s) and SRC coaches</p> <p>Co-plan and co-facilitate Race &amp; Equity Breakout Session during PDI with SRC staff</p>	<p>Participate in (1) 90-minute webinar</p> <p>Take a leadership role in developing a protocol for ongoing program evaluation</p>	<p>Attend Race &amp; Equity Sessions at PDI</p>	<p><b>Participants will:</b></p> <p>Understand the impact of their personal/social/cultural identities on their work and relational interactions</p> <p>Become aware of how bias shows up in their work in multiple ways</p>

## PHASE 2

	LEADERSHIP TEAM	RACE & EQUITY LEADERS	STEERING COMMITTEE	MHEL STAFF	OUTCOMES
<p><b>Topic:</b> Human Differences and Intersectionality</p> <p><b>Timeline:</b> April 2018 – June 2018</p>	<p>Ongoing discussion of Courageous Conversations</p> <p>Participate in (1) 90-minute webinar</p>	<p>Participate in (1) 90-minute webinar</p> <p>Participate in (1) CoL with other REL(s) and SRC coaches</p> <p>Plan and facilitate (1) center-based CoL and other PD activities</p>	<p>Participate in (1) 90-minute webinars</p> <p>Take an advisory role in ongoing planning and program evaluation</p> <p>Attend Race and Equity Sessions at PDI</p> <p>Take leadership role in conducting program evaluation activities</p>	<p>Participate in (1) center-based CoL and other planned PD activities</p> <p>Participate in program evaluation activities</p>	<p><b>Participants will:</b></p> <p>Understand what makes people different, and how it impacts the way they move in the world</p> <p>Explore implicit and explicit biases</p> <p>Understand what intersecting identities are and how to acknowledge them in others to build trust and respect</p>

### PHASE 3

	LEADERSHIP TEAM	RACE & EQUITY LEADERS	STEERING COMMITTEE	MHEL STAFF	OUTCOMES
<p><b>Topic:</b> Positional Power and Privilege</p> <p><b>Timeline:</b> July 2018 – September 2018</p>	<p>Ongoing discussion of Courageous Conversations</p> <p>Participate in (1) 90-minute webinar</p>	<p>Participate in (1) 90-minute webinar</p> <p>Participate in (1) CoLs with other REL(s) and SEC coaches</p> <p>Plan and facilitate (1) center-based CoL, OR co-facilitate an all-staff PD session with SRC staff</p>	<p>Participate in (1) 90-minute webinar</p> <p>Participate in a Program Review Meeting to review program evaluation findings and determine next steps</p>	<p>Participate in (1) center-based CoL OR all-staff PD session, and other planned PD activities</p> <p>Create action plans with RELs to set goals for race &amp; equity conscious practices in their daily work</p>	<p><b>Participants will:</b></p> <p>Understand the impacts of a) individual, institutional and organizational injustice, b) racism, and c) uses of power</p> <p>Understand how each of these areas impact their roles</p> <p>Understand what privileges they possess and how it impacts their leadership work</p> <p>Understand how biases have affected the program, staff interactions, and family interactions</p>

### PHASE 4

	LEADERSHIP TEAM	RACE & EQUITY LEADERS	STEERING COMMITTEE	MHEL STAFF	OUTCOMES
<p><b>Topic:</b> Empowerment and Advocacy</p> <p><b>Timeline:</b> October 2018 – December 2018</p>	<p>Ongoing discussion of Courageous Conversations</p> <p>Participate in (1) 90-minute webinar</p>	<p>Participate in (1) 90-minute webinar</p> <p>Participate in (1) CoL with other REL(s)</p> <p>Plan and facilitate (1) center-based CoL and additional PD activities</p>	<p>Participate in (1) 90-minute webinar</p> <p>Take an advisory role in ongoing planning and program evaluation</p>	<p>Participate in a center-based CoL and other planned PD activities</p>	<p><b>Participants will:</b></p> <p>Define what action will look like and entail for Mile High</p> <p>Identify skills that still need to be gained in order to feel empowered to act, and to help others feel empowered to act</p> <p>Identify strategies of advocacy that can be implemented in each member's role</p>

Activity	Description	Planning/Leadership Responsibility	Potential SRC Support
<b>Courageous Conversations</b>	On an ongoing basis, the LT will meet to continue their study of "Courageous Conversations About Race"	Alternating among LT members, with support from SRC	Co-develop meeting agendas for the first 2-3 meetings, and provide TA as needed going forward
<b>REL Initial PD</b>	Annual, 3-hour professional development session will help RELs to better understand their role and develop skills needed to plan and facilitate meetings with different stakeholders.	SRC	Planning and facilitation
<b>Webinar/Guided Discussion</b>	Quarterly, 90-minute webinars will present an equity topic	SRC	Planning and facilitation
<b>REL Community of Learning (CoL)</b>	Quarterly, 90-minute sessions pair RELs in a Race and Equity Community of Learning (REL-CoL) for participants to expand and deepen their knowledge of webinar content, apply learnings in the context of MHCL, and plan for upcoming center-based CoL sessions and other PD activities	Alternating within each REL pair	Provide co-planning and technical assistance for center-based CoL
<b>Lead Center-based Equity CoL</b>	Quarterly, 1-hour meetings at each center, led by RELs, to engage in dialogue around race and equity issues. Topics expand upon webinar/guided discussion topics	RELs	Provide TA as needed to RELs
<b>Learning Cycle Debrief</b>	At the end of each learning cycle, the SC will convene a debrief meeting with RELs to support one another and troubleshoot the learning process overall.	SC, with significant REL contribution on agenda topics	Co-develop meeting agendas for the first 2-3 meetings, and provide TA for planning as needed going forward. Participate via phone.
<b>Program-wide self-assessment</b>	In April through June, the SC will engage in program-wide self-assessment, including observations, discussions with RELs, review of program policies	SC	Work with the SC to develop a plan for self-assessment. Provide TA as needed to SC as they develop protocols and conduct assessment activities
<b>Center-based environmental assessment</b>	In April through June, staff engage in an environmental self-assessment process, to include checklist, anecdotal observations, family surveys, and center-based staff interviews/surveys	RELs (with LT support)	Plan with RELs for ongoing self-evaluation activities by month. Provide support to develop/select equity-focused program evaluation tools.
<b>Program Review Meeting</b>	Following the program-wide assessment period, collectively review self-assessment results, identify needed policy updates, and determine next steps	SC	Co-planning and in-person facilitation
<b>PDI</b>	Annual week-long PD with center-wide race and equity PD segments	SRC	Planning and facilitation
<b>PDI co-facilitation (and prep)</b>	SRC staff will build in opportunities for RELs to co-plan and co-facilitate segments of the race and equity PD during PDI	SRC/RELs	Lead the development of race and equity PD and provide opportunities and support for RELs to co-facilitate
<b>PDI Planning and Implementation Support</b>	The steering committee will share resources, help to generate ideas and provide consultation for PDI	SC members, as requested by RELs and LT	





# QUARTERLY LEARNING CYCLE

	WEEK 1*	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6	WEEK 7	WEEK 8	WEEK 9	WEEK 10	WEEK 11	WEEK 12
SRC	Plan and facilitate 90-minute Race and Equity webinar			Provide coaching (co-planning and/or feedback) for Center-based CoL plans			Provide co-facilitation and/or TA as needed to support center-based CoL				Facilitate learning cycle debrief discussions. Provide co-planning and/or TA for program review	
LT	Participate in periodic discussions of Courageous Conversations										Participate in a learning cycle debrief discussion. Participate in program review meeting in July/August	
RELS	Participate in 90-minute Race and Equity Webinar			REL CoL			Center-based CoL, Led by RELs					
SC												
All Staff	Participate in learning activities that reflect the webinar/CoL topic. Participate in program evaluation activities led by SC in April-June											

\* Week 1 will be the first full week of the month starting each 3-month cycle. Each activity will occur once within the highlighted timeframes, allowing flexibility for scheduling