



Thank you

FOR YOUR
INTEREST IN
CORWIN

Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from
*Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field
Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools and Beyond*,
Third Edition by Glenn E. Singleton.

LEARN MORE about this title!

Contents

Acknowledgments	xiii
About the Author	xv
Introduction	1
1. Breaking the Silence: Ushering in Courageous Conversation About Race	13
Racial Achievement Disparities and Other Systemic Racial Inequities	14
Three Critical Factors	18
The Courageous Conversation Strategy and Protocol	19
PART 1. PASSION: AN ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTIC OF RACIAL EQUITY LEADERSHIP	23
2. What's So Courageous About This Conversation?	27
Courageous Conversation	29
A Difficult Conversation	35
3. Why Race?	39
The Problem of the Color Line	40
Racial Disparity	43
Race as a Factor in Education and Beyond	49
Dealing With Race	52
Establishing Common Language Around Race	54
Do We Have the Will?	62
RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY, PART 1: Glenn E. Singleton	66
RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY: Kat Poi	70
4. Agreeing to Talk About Race	75
Racial Consciousness	76
Four Agreements of Courageous Conversation	80
RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY: Courtney Caldwell	90

PART 2. PRACTICE: THE FOUNDATION OF RACIAL EQUITY LEADERSHIP	93
5. The First Condition: Getting Personal, Right Here and Right Now	97
Personal, Local, and Immediate	98
The Impact of Race on My Life	100
Degree of Racial Consciousness	102
Racial Consciousness Versus Racial Unconsciousness	103
RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY, PART 2: Glenn E. Singleton	107
6. The Second Condition: Keeping the Spotlight on Race	109
Isolating Race	110
Unpacking Race	116
RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY: David Gonzales	122
7. The Third Condition: Engaging Multiple Racial Perspectives	127
Social Construction of Knowledge	128
Surfacing Critical Perspectives	129
RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY: UnSuk Zucker	135
8. The Fourth Condition: Keeping Us All at the Table	139
Interracial Dialogue	141
Creating Safety	149
The Courageous Conversation Compass	157
RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY: Andrea Johnson	175
9. The Fifth Condition: What Do You Mean By “Race”?	179
A Brief History of Race	180
A Working Definition of Race	188
RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY: Luis Versalles	200
10. The Sixth Condition: Let’s Talk About Whiteness	205
White Is a Color	206
White Privilege	206
White Is a Culture	212
White Consciousness	215
Whiteness as Examined in the Five Conditions	219
White Racial Identity Development	225
RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY: Melissa Krull	230

PART 3. PERSISTENCE: THE KEY TO RACIAL EQUITY LEADERSHIP	233
11. How Racial Equity Leaders Eliminate Systemic Racial Disparities	235
Invisibility Versus Hypervisibility	236
Understanding Students of Color and Indigenous Students Within a White School	240
Understanding Systemic White Racism	242
The Injustice of Gradualism and Incremental Change	246
RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY: Courtlandt Butts	249
12. Exploring a Systemic Framework for Achieving Equity in Schools	253
A Vision of Equity	254
Systemic Racial Equity Transformation	256
13. Courageous Conversation as a Strategy for Achieving Equity in Schools	267
Personal Racial Equity Leadership	268
Individual Teacher Racial Equity Leadership	270
Whole-School Racial Equity Leadership	271
Systemic Racial Equity Leadership	273
RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY, PART 3: Glenn E. Singleton	274
References and Selected Bibliography	279
Index	285



To access the video clips, please visit <https://resources.corwin.com/CCAR3E> or scan the QR codes located throughout the book. To read a QR code, you must have a smartphone or tablet with a camera. We recommend that you download a QR code reader app that is made specifically for your phone or tablet brand.

Introduction

Race matters. Race matters in part because of the long history of racial minorities being denied access to the political process. . . . Race also matters because of persistent racial inequality in society—inequality that cannot be ignored and that has produced stark socioeconomic disparities. . . . This refusal to accept the stark reality that race matters is regrettable. The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to speak openly and candidly on the subject of race, and to apply the Constitution with eyes open to the unfortunate effects of centuries of racial discrimination. . . . As members of the judiciary tasked with intervening to carry out the guarantee of equal protection, we ought not sit back and wish away, rather than confront, the racial inequality that exists in our society.

—Hon. Sonya Sotomayor, Supreme Court Justice (2014)

In 2005, I dedicated the first edition of *Courageous Conversations About Race* to Wendell “EJ” Singleton, the youngest member of my extended family. Then, I spoke of how my family lovingly sent a precocious, inquisitive boy off to school for the first time. EJ started school with pride and joy, but—like so many young African American boys—he was greeted by a system that did not expect much from him and had already determined much for him. In two short years of formal schooling, EJ had been labeled a failure, special needs, at risk, and as having attention deficit disorder (ADD). History suggested that EJ would find it virtually impossible to shake loose from these deficit descriptors. A decade later, as I sat down to revise *Courageous Conversations About Race*, EJ, then a senior in the Baltimore public school system, was poised to graduate after a long and perilous journey through institutions determined to make him an unfortunate statistic.

More than 15 years since writing the first edition of *Courageous Conversations About Race*, I have returned to my desk to offer this third edition. Then and now, my reasons for writing this book remain the same. By the time this edition goes to press, EJ will be a college graduate, having proudly earned cum laude distinction at a Hispanic-serving institution (HSI), but other Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) will continue to attend US public schools, and they deserve qualified and skilled teachers who love them instead of fear them. These

students deserve competent instructors who understand, value, and affirm their colorful African American, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian, and other cultures. They are owed a procession of teachers and administrators who will be skilled in drawing out their innate brilliance, curiosity, and creativity.

Roughly 45 years ago, also in the Baltimore public school system, Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Sandifer, and Mrs. Thomas, to name only a few, effectively taught me in the way that *all* students deserved to be instructed. Why is it, then, that more often than not, professional educators have proved to be incapable of meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of Black, Indigenous, and other students of color? Rather than point out all that is wrong with our schools and the adults who inhabit them, however, this book has been written to support educators and assist them in meeting the needs of the millions of Black, Indigenous, and other students of color like him.



Given the increasing number of Black young men growing up in Baltimore, Chicago, New York City, and other places across the United States who have not lived to see their high school graduation day, I feel the greatest sense of relief that EJ is alive, and my family is also relieved that he is finally done with a traumatic, protracted episode in compulsory schooling. Thus, the untimely and unexplainable killings of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, Daunte Wright, and Adam Toledo reveal America's most despicable racial circumstance and perhaps the boldest indication that our society is not advancing toward an end to racial injustice. In this wealthy, technologically advanced, highly educated nation, more and more of our darkest children are dying on the streets—literally. Still, this uncontested reality polarizes adults along racial lines, not as we attempt to discover meaningful solutions to these brutal slaughters but in our racially balkanized expression of beliefs and determinations regarding the cause of these senseless deaths. I am fed up with this aspiring beacon of the free world being positioned in an interracial holding pattern, in which our highest leaders across the various sectors practice, as Dr. Barbara Sizemore wrote, “walking in circles.” This book is my contribution toward breaking that cycle of cross-racial silence, ignorance, mistrust, judgment, and assassination.

MORE WALKING IN CIRCLES: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Back in 2003, when I began writing the first edition of *Courageous Conversations About Race*, the US Supreme Court had just ruled on its latest challenge to the use of Affirmative Action in university admissions processes. *Grutter v. Bollinger* involved a racial discrimination claim by Barbara Grutter, a White female applicant who was denied admission to the University of Michigan Law School. The court ruled that race could be considered in the admissions process

when other factors were being evaluated and that such consideration did not amount to the kind of racial quota system that was determined to be unconstitutional under the 1978 *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*.

Persistent legal attacks on Affirmative Action, espousing the belief that such policies award preferential treatment to students of color, fail to acknowledge and calculate the benefit White students receive from university systems steeped in residual racism. By this I mean institutions in which the faculty composition, perspective, teaching method, and culture are decidedly and overwhelmingly White. A decade later, as I completed writing the second edition of *Courageous Conversations About Race*, the most threatened federal policy impacting the educational trajectory of Black, Indigenous, and other students of color in our nation continued to be Affirmative Action. And while I celebrated our first Latinx Supreme Court Justice, the Honorable Sonia Sotomayor, being confirmed to the bench, her lone voice clearly did not ring loud and strong enough to roll back the tide or calm the resistance of those intent on abolishing the only regulatory process that successfully challenges systemic racism and offers remedy to the resulting centuries of racial inequality sponsored and perpetuated by the federal government.

As another part of the backdrop for the second edition, on June 24, 2013, the Supreme Court decided on the case of *Fisher v. University of Texas*, in which two female high school students argued that they had been unfairly denied admission to the university's entering freshman class because they were White. Ms. Fisher's case was the latest claim that follows the growing and predictable assaults on the use of Affirmative Action in higher education, often by White women, who may be failing to recognize the importance of racially diverse perspectives and experiences in the nation's undergraduate, graduate, and professional schools. In that case, the unexpected ruling of a soon-to-be-retiring, Ronald Reagan-appointed justice, Anthony Kennedy, left Affirmative Action policies in higher education alive but truly on life support.

I maintain that Affirmative Action is the only systemic remedy to combat centuries of endemic anti-Black racism and White supremacy in the United States of America. As I finish this third edition of *Courageous Conversations About Race* in 2021, the most conservative Supreme Court of my lifetime prepares to hear yet another case challenging the constitutionality of Affirmative Action. In *Students for Fair Admissions v. President & Fellows of Harvard College*, the plaintiffs argue that Harvard's race-conscious admission policy discriminates against Asian students and allows the university to grant admission to equally qualified Black and Latinx students over their White and Asian counterparts, due exclusively to the race of the applicant. At a university that received 35,000 applications for roughly 1,600 first-year students' seats in 2019, conservative lawyers for a class of Asian applicants argue that the rejection rate for Asian students is unconstitutional (Millhiser, 2021). Although on the surface, this appears to be a case of a few Asian families challenging one premier institution of higher education, the outcome of this ruling truly will impact the entire system of selective colleges, all students attending these schools, and their professions for generations to come.

As a former Ivy League student and later admissions director, I suspect that Harvard will argue the importance of creating a racially diverse learning environment, as well as the importance of its process correcting for racial biases and disparities, ranging from standardized testing to school quality, all of which line the process of K–12 schooling in the United States. Still, the argument is that Asian students, who are already disproportionately represented in Harvard’s entering class, deserve a “fair” process. Unique to this battle against Affirmative Action, this most conservative court will need to determine which students of color deserve a “fair” chance. Is it generations of Black, Latinx, and Indigenous students and their families, who have suffered the residual effects of centuries of systemic racial injustice and inequality but, through gaining access to the lifetime preserve of power and prosperity, will change the trajectory of all undergraduates and the world of work beyond? Or should the law recognize a relatively small number of Asian (and White) applicants, who may not gain admission to their first-choice colleges but still will likely enter into an undergraduate experience and then a profession that offer them inherent advantages and the omnipresent benefit of the doubt, merely because of their racial status?

Without a vigorous Affirmative Action mandate, not only would BIPOC possibly not be serving as justices on the highest court in the land; more personally, I definitely would not be in a position to write this book today. And despite the indisputably positive impact of affirmative action, BIPOC who persist through to graduation more than pay the fullest price each day in the academy, as we stare down predictably low institutional expectations, isolation from family and peers, and racial humiliation by students, faculty, and administrators. Simply put, race matters, and racism is alive and well in 2021 as I am writing this third edition, just as it was in 2005 and 2015, when the first and second editions of *Courageous Conversations About Race* were published. Still true is what Justice Sotomayor states: “The only way to stop discrimination based on race is to talk openly and candidly on the subject of race. . . . We ought not sit back and wish away, rather than confront, the racial inequality that exists in our society.”

A persistent consequence of federal legislation in the “millennial” era, such as the No Child Left Behind Act, Race to the Top, the Common Core State Standards, and the most recent inability to reauthorize the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), has been a heightened awareness among educators and the general public of the statistical gaps in achievement between White students and Black, Indigenous, and other students of color. To be clear, so-called “achievement gaps” based on inherently biased standardized testing and other structures built on and into an already racially biased system do not indicate student ability or potential. Conversely, these gaps are evidence of systemic racism baked into the American educational process. Still, I believe a primary and essential way of addressing these gaps is to create a culture and provide structures that encourage *all* educators, students, and their families to discuss race openly, honestly, and as safely as possible in the school and community environments. Contrary to popular assumption, this is an issue of concern not only for educators and families who are Black, Indigenous, or other people of color but for all; the

welfare of all students—no matter their race—depends on *all of us* succeeding at this conversation.

THE BACKDROP FOR THE THIRD EDITION

Unfortunately, the national and global backdrop for this third edition of *Courageous Conversations About Race* is even more devastating for our most marginalized student and employee cohorts. For nearly five years, the omnipresent voice of White nationalism and White supremacy, already known to reverberate from remote Southern and Midwestern American towns and cities, found its residency once again in the White House, US Capitol, and courts. The racist rhetoric of our elected officials galvanized and amplified the ignorant and frightened voices of the masses that had begun to somewhat retreat during the Obama years. I am not suggesting that from 2008 to 2016, we had advanced into a mythical postracial state in the United States. Indeed, then and now, racism remains a permanent fixture in our personal, interpersonal, and institutional engagements. But while we had not transcended racism, the election of the nation's first African American president was indeed an inching toward racial equity and, at the very least, a slowing of the pace of racial injustice. Conversely, I am challenged to name a single way in which this nation's 45th president offered any relief to the centuries of racial oppression BIPOC have experienced here. Furthermore, it appears that the 45th US president, his congressional allies, and authoritarian bystanders at home and abroad fostered an executive, legislative, and judicial culture and environment that has clearly reversed the few trends of racial progress achieved over the previous centuries. On the brighter side, literally, it is precisely this darkness of the past five years that has shined a blinding spotlight on the problems of race in our nation and around the world.

Coupled with the destructive people, practices, and policies in government, the year 2020 illuminated the persistent unwillingness of elected officials and voting citizens to address the senseless violence experienced by BIPOC at the hands of those we entrust to protect and serve us. The brutal and gruesome murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, as well as the killing of Breonna Taylor by Louisville police detective Myles Cosgrove, offered the entire world a view of a reality that generations of people of color have endured in this violent nation. Why is it that it took such a murder being caught on tape, as in the case of George Floyd, for collective belief and credibility to be granted to Black Lives Matter activists?

As if the daily actions of a blatantly racist government regime and the cold-blooded murders of the country's most marginalized people weren't enough, along came a global coronavirus pandemic to accentuate and exacerbate the extraordinary racial inequities and injustices already present in our nation. Unfortunately, the actual health, economic, and educational implications of COVID-19 for marginalized communities of color will be felt for generations

to come. Suffice it to say that what hospitalization and mortality statistics point to today is radical disproportionality stemming from decades of institutional neglect, medical experimentation, and malpractice. For those who wonder why communities of color remain suspicious of this latest government vaccination campaign, one need only stroll back to the 1970s and rediscover the 40-year Tuskegee Experiment. While refreshing our memories of government-led genocide of Black men through deceitful public health initiatives, we might also remind ourselves of simultaneous episodes of forced sterilization policies in the United States aimed at BIPOC, which also spanned a half-century.

As the deadly virus weighed down on a nation, resulting in an alarming rate of destruction and death to BIPOC, these same communities disproportionately were being required to perform essential duties for a gravely ill and panicked society. With schools closed to protect students and educators, virtual schooling quickly became the standard. As I finished writing this third edition, the US Department of Education reported that 14%, or 9.4 million, of the nation's more than 50 million children were without internet. When we disaggregate that number, 37% of Indigenous children, 19% of Black children, and 17% of Latinx children lack access to the internet, as compared to 12% of White and Asian children (Camera, 2020). Clearly, the achievement implications of being absent from school for more than a year will cause even graver challenges for students who were never served well by our formal education system. In short, the achievement disparities are evidence of broader systemic racism in education and beyond, which compelled me to write the first and second editions of *Courageous Conversations About Race* in 2005 and 2015, respectively; these disparities are even more advanced today after recent years of racially charged government actions, violent policing of people of color, and a deadly global pandemic.

The years 2020 and 2021 have, by far, been the most difficult period for me to revisit and revise *Courageous Conversations About Race*. In studying the manuscript that I initially began crafting at the dawn of the 21st century, I can't help but be emotionally moved by how, with respect to racial equity, diversity and inclusion, progress, regression, and standstill are all truths about where we are nearly a quarter of the way into this era. One need not look much farther past the election of the nation's first Black president and the confirmation of our first Brown Supreme Court justice to witness progress. Indeed, we have also seen a proliferation of voices and experiences of BIPOC rising to higher levels of prominence in fields such as healthcare, education, media, entertainment, science, and technology. But these racial triumphs have been somewhat quieted by the persistent, senseless killings of BIPOC by those we have entrusted to serve and protect us. Similarly, C-suites, boardrooms, and the corresponding economic strata continue to fall woefully short of matching national racial demographics. Not to mention, challenges to national safeguard legislation, such as voter rights, Affirmative Action, and healthcare, have never been more present in my lifetime. As my Nana would often say, it seems that the more things change, the more they stay the same. With respect to race, race relations,

and systemic racism . . . have we taken two steps forward only to take one, two, or three steps backward?

Given this as my reality, when reviewing the second edition, I often felt it to be my author's responsibility to update citations or replace references by virtue of their dates. In some cases, I located more contemporary research and found new language, ideas, or data to include within. In other instances, I discovered a first- or second-edition quote from the late 1990s or early 2000s to be as powerful and relevant today as ever. Rather than simply swapping out these citations, I found it more telling and honest to leave in older quotes, studies, and data, thus revealing the pernicious and seemingly permanent problem of racism and evidence of an unending struggle for racial justice and equality. I want you, the reader, to know that my editorial choices in this third revision are quite intentional. I want you to experience heightened discomfort due to the slow pace of racial progress, at least partly due to the ever-growing yet often publicly denied fight for protecting White supremacy and White supremacists in the United States and various places around the globe. Mostly, I want this third edition to serve as a clarion call to each of us, to authentically determine our racial feelings, thoughts, and beliefs, and to enter those feelings, beliefs, and thoughts into meaningful, impactful, and sustained action.

This is a book about race and, specifically, talking about race. In schools, as well as in other agencies and institutions, race plays a primary role in sustaining if not widening the omnipresent achievement gaps. But educators, as well as corporate and community leaders, have not been willing to enter into discussion about this extraordinarily complex and emotionally charged topic. Thus, collectively, we as educators have also not become skillful at talking about race, and therefore we have failed to develop the requisite capacity to examine and address the impact of race on learning—neither our own learning nor that of our students. I write this book to provide a protocol and strategy—*Courageous Conversation*—that educators and leaders of other sectors can use to engage, sustain, and deepen the conversation about race in their schools and beyond.

With so much written in the area of achievement disparity, the last thing the field needs is another book pointing out the obvious—that we have not quite figured out how to educate all children well. What I offer instead is a detailed, thoughtful, ongoing, and influential strategy for having conversations about race that advances our understanding of how and why the racial achievement gap persists in most schools, across all economic levels, and among native speakers of English and English learners alike. It is precisely because few educators have explicitly and unapologetically investigated the taboo intersection of race and achievement that I offer this book. My rationale is quite simple: We will never eliminate racial achievement disparities unless we have meaningful, impactful conversations about race.

I have been keenly aware of my own racial identity as a Black American since I was in the seventh grade, but many of my White classmates I grew up with, a handful of whom have become my closest friends, were unaware of their equally powerful racial identity until they read my book. Because of our

decades of inauthentic interracial interaction, some of my closest White friends were shocked by my racial voice and experience espoused within this volume. I suggest that it is not because I failed to inform them of the racial traumas; in fact, they often bore witness to these situations. On these occasions, their desire to practice colorblindness and their insistence on living in a mythically race-neutral society often blurred their vision when it came to recognizing their own White privilege, power, and advantages. Thus, they were quick to also distort what was racially real for me. Because my White friends also lacked previous experiences and thus the requisite skills to learn from a Black person, no matter how much they may have loved or respected me, they categorically denied the impact of race in my life, as well as in their own lives.

I believe this to be true for many White people I encounter; thus, I want all readers to consider that much of the slow racial progress in the United States is precisely due to White people's inability and/or unwillingness to listen to and learn from BIPOC about what afflicts and affects us on a daily basis. Through our personal and professional acquaintances, my friends and clients have discovered that for many White people—teachers and corporate leaders alike—another significant challenge to becoming racially conscious and ultimately anti-racist is their overall lack of trust in BIPOC, especially in our ability to honestly share our truths about race. When making this discovery, my White associates develop a more expansive, less distorted personal racial consciousness. Simply because they choose to start believing me, as a Black man, and my narratives depicting race and racism in my life, my White “allies” are able to understand, in a more profound way, how race impacts their lives and the lives of their family and coworkers.



In this latest edition of *Courageous Conversations About Race*, I am purposely insisting that all readers, BIPOC and White, develop greater proficiency in learning from Black people. Today, everyone in my personal and professional communities uses this very important Courageous Conversation protocol to guide us in our mutual racial discoveries, as well as in our racial equity leadership development. Within this context, we work closely to come to a better understanding of our own separate and interdependent racial experiences.

Since publication of the first and second editions of *Courageous Conversations About Race*, I have guided hundreds of thousands of educators, corporate leaders, community activists, and government officials all over the world in examining themselves racially. I have helped leaders develop the culture and structures necessary to eliminate racial achievement disparities in schools, workplaces, and community centers. I have guided my talented and skilled team at Pacific Educational Group (PEG), the Courageous Conversation South Pacific Institute (CCSPI), the Courageous Conversation Global Foundation (CCGF), the Courageous Conversation Aotearoa Foundation (CCAF), and Courageous Labs to focus exclusively on discovering ways to perfect this method for talking about

race and to determine how it gets incorporated as a framework in systems of education and beyond. Today, our network of organizations develops and leads Courageous Conversation communities of practice throughout the sectors in the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Europe.



To provide some background information about my work, I introduced Courageous Conversation in a two-day seminar called *Beyond Diversity*, which I developed and first facilitated in 1995. Nearly three decades later, despite COVID-19 restrictions on our movement about the world, thousands of people have continued to enroll in the virtual format of the *Beyond Diversity* seminar each week. For many, whether in a training room in New Zealand or online in the United States, it is the first time they have ever been encouraged to openly and honestly discuss race with someone of a skin color different from their own. At the seminar's conclusion, the facilitator offers participants some concluding thoughts to answer some predictable yet unspoken queries. Many White people, emotionally moved by what they have heard, ask, "So what do I do now?" "How can I stop being racist?" "How can you forgive me for having been racist?" "How can I fix this?" My answer in 1995 and now, almost 30 years later, is still quite simple and still viewed as profound: "Just believe me."

Just believe me—is that all? Believe me when I say that I experience racial profiling almost daily. Believe me when I say that my White neighbors treat me differently or, more accurately, "deficitly." Believe that I am a victim of lowered expectations, that I am accused of succeeding *only* because of Affirmative Action, and that I actually have a lifetime of accumulated racist and racially discriminatory experiences.

As a strategy, Courageous Conversation begins with the premise that initially leaders of schools, corporations, government offices, and community programs collectively view themselves and their enterprises as inherently non-racist. In fact, their tightly held beliefs and understandings regarding the significance of race make it difficult for educators, business leaders, and community activists to comprehend, examine, and rectify the very ways in which race dramatically impacts performance outcomes.

Unfortunately, the racial situation in schools (and companies) only mirrors what takes place in the larger society. John Dewey suggested that schools must be the engine of social transformation. In this third edition of *Courageous Conversations About Race*, I have set out to redefine the educational context and then provide the content and process for educators to grapple personally with race as a critical sociopolitical construct. In our work with a variety of schools, districts, universities, agencies, and regional programs, my team and I have found that Courageous Conversation effectively enables leaders to develop and operate from a transformed racial philosophy that guides their policy analysis, institutional restructuring, and programmatic reform. Such exceptional racial

equity work, beginning with Courageous Conversation in education systems—and beyond—will certainly have a dramatic and positive impact on the broader society and our larger world.

As educators and other sector leaders engage in, sustain, and deepen inter-racial dialogue about race with each other and with students, colleagues, and families, systems then can truly support all people in achieving at higher levels. As institutions and organizations work toward equity, they will narrow the gaps between the highest- and lowest-performing groups and eliminate the racial predictability regarding which groups fall in the highest- and lowest-performing categories.

A DECADE OF LEARNING: THE NEW EDITION OF *COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACE*

Courageous Conversations About Race is divided into three parts reflecting the three essential characteristics of racial equity leadership: *passion*, *practice*, and *persistence*. In the first part, “Passion,” the book begins by exploring the landscape of educational reform and exposing the issue of race as a most devastating phenomenon impacting the lives and learning of all children. I urge my readers to maintain an unwavering focus on race, rather than income level or other variables of difference that may be more comfortable topics of discussion. The next series of chapters, “Practice,” takes the reader on a step-by-step journey into the race conversation, providing the language, markers, tools, and insights necessary to begin and stay in the dialogue. Finally, in “Persistence,” educators learn about the leadership that is necessary to eliminate racial achievement gaps.

This book provides a foundation for educational leaders at the system and school level who are willing and ready to begin or accelerate their journey toward educational equity and excellence for all children. This includes superintendents, board members, district administrators, principals, teacher leaders, and members of the broader community. It is designed to assist in facilitating effective dialogue about the racial issues that impact student achievement. Over the years, it is this same process designed for educators that I have applied to my work with corporate and community leaders in a variety of industries, including advertising, media, technology, healthcare, finance, and nonprofit. Beyond education, having effective, impactful Courageous Conversations about race improves the human experience and elevates human productivity.

As you progress through each chapter, you will be prompted to reflect on your learning and, in particular, your own racial experience. At the end of each chapter, you will find implementation activities that you can use with your colleagues to lead them in discussing the impact of race in the academy, company, or community. If you are a leader, whether at the school or district level, in the C-Suite, in the boardroom, or in the locker room, this book will guide you in

engaging others in a conversation about race as a first step in dismantling racism and eliminating racial disparities.

As you address the prompts and complete the exercises I have carefully embedded in each chapter, you will feel a surge in your own will, skill, knowledge, and capacity to lead others through the same journey. Although I urge you to avoid involving others too soon in your own developmental process, I realize and predict that at some point you will not be able to resist ushering your friends, family, and colleagues into a Courageous Conversation. I have witnessed this process unfold for thousands of leaders over the past three decades.

Eliminating racial disparities and eradicating racism in schools and beyond requires that we all think about our crafts differently. As EJ graduates from college, his former educators, namely, certainly have their work cut out for them, as many of them need to envision and practice pedagogy in ways that they have never seen or experienced before. But teachers' faith in undiscovered potential, along with an unwavering belief that our families really do want the best schooling for our children, can sustain them in this work.

I am writing a third edition of this book in the hope that readers embrace what I view as a moral imperative to arrive at a deeper understanding of race and racism. I suspect that most leaders in education and beyond already believe that racism is morally wrong. The challenge for us is to advance our shared moral position into a realizable and comprehensive foundation for challenging systemic racism each day, whenever and wherever it appears. Our students, our colleagues, and our families deserve nothing less.

Given the magnitude of race as a topic and the long history of racial disparities, no one book can solve this educational problem and address the broader societal issues underlying it. What this book can do is get us pointed in the right direction by engaging, sustaining, and deepening the conversation about race, racial identity development, and systemic racism. In contrast to the first and second editions of *Courageous Conversations About Race*, the book you now hold offers more than three decades of developed insight from working around the world with educators, corporate leaders, community activists, students, and families at differing levels of will, skill, knowledge, and capacity to talk about race. From this inspiring work, I have been able to craft new ways in which Courageous Conversation practitioners, facilitators, and coaches can bolster our courage, enhance our skills, and accelerate our achievement of results. The third edition offers more focused and relevant voices from a diverse group of racial equity leaders in the form of racial autobiographies. Finally, in this edition, I shine a light on the once impressive, pacesetting racial equity efforts of Portland Public Schools, an Oregon school system that stayed on track with Courageous Conversation and consistently implemented our Systemic Racial Equity Transformation framework with fidelity for more than four years. Peering into this system will enable the reader to formulate important insight and questions surrounding persistence and the sustainability of systemic equity transformation work. More than ever, it is my hope and belief that by thoroughly immersing yourself in this text and practicing Courageous Conversation, you will create the

lasting foundation on which magnificent new relationships are built between educators and students and between people managers and talent—and through which higher achievement is gained.

To my ancestors and elders who have provided the historic foundation on which my contemporary understanding and insights about race are built, I thank you. I also recognize that without the passion, practice, and persistence of our partner districts, corporations, and governmental agencies throughout this nation and around the world, I could have never discovered the deep and lasting impact of Courageous Conversation in today's institutions. My most sincere acknowledgment of the many who have contributed greatly to this book is seen in my efforts to capture their work and words in a thoughtful and thorough way. Writing about these transformative dialogues represents my hardest and most important work yet. But the greatest learning occurs as we engage, sustain, and deepen the interracial conversation about race in schools and beyond. Through this transformative work, human success and capability will increase, racial disparities will decrease, and you will personally be moved and even inspired as you deepen your discovery about the impact of race in your life. And now it is time for you to join me on this journey to a new possibility!