

# Solving the Integration Problem:

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## **From Confusion to Public Support**

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# CONFUSION over INTEGRATION...

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*“What is Integration?”*

*“Why is it important?”*



**...DISSIPATES ENERGY and  
SUPPORT !**

# CONFUSION in Legal Discourse:

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- Chief Justice Roberts: ***“The Constitution is not violated by racial imbalance in the schools.”***
- Justice Thomas: ***“Racial imbalance is not segregation, and the mere incantation of terms like resegregation and remediation cannot make up the difference...integration” is merely racial balancing.***
- Justice Kennedy: ***“And when de facto discrimination is at issue, our tradition has been that the remedial rules are different.”***

# **CONFUSION in Civic Discourse :**



- **We no longer think of education as a public, democratic function; it is now viewed as a private and trade function.**
- **We ask whether race can be taken into account or whether we are now a post-racial nation.**
- **We conflate integration with desegregation, affirmative action, diversity and multiculturalism...**



# **CONFUSION in Educational Discourse:**

- **Schools often claim to be integrated when what's happening is assimilation, or segregation within the building.**
- **We set up excellence in competition with integration. We also set up a binary between free and reduced lunch (SES) and racial integration.**
- **We see integration as something for children of color, especially black children, failing to effectively pull the Latino community into this discussion.**



# TRANSFORMING CONFUSION:

1. **Understand and Stress the Importance of *True Integration*.**
  - **Segregation makes it very difficult to develop effective citizens and maintain social cohesion.**
  - **Bringing together students of different backgrounds to learn from one another should remain a central objective of American education, especially as we move toward a majority minority society in a globalizing world.**
  - **If we fail at this, the country fails.**

# *True Integration*

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*“Although the terms desegregation and integration are often used interchangeably, there is a great deal of difference between the two. Desegregation is eliminative and negative, for it simply removes legal and social prohibitions.*

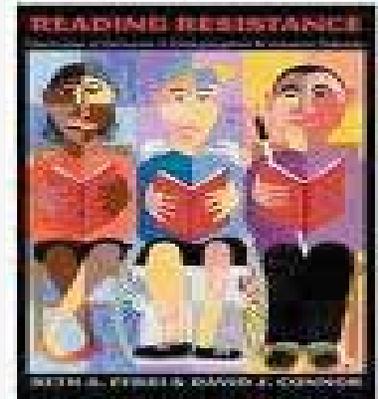
*Integration is the positive acceptance of desegregation and the welcomed participation of [nonwhites] into the total range of human activities. Integration is genuine intergroup, interpersonal doing. Desegregation then, rightly is only a short-range goal. Integration is the ultimate goal of our national community.”*

*Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,  
The Ethical Demands for Integration*

# *True Integration also....*

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- **Improves critical thinking skills**
- **Raises academic achievement and graduation rates**
- **Increases parental involvement**
- **Reduces residential segregation**



***These benefits are maximized in schools that foster respectful inter-group contact - NO TRACKING!***

# TRANSFORMING CONFUSION:

## 2. Better understand how and what people think of integration.

- We have made great progress toward equality.
- But, harboring *Implicit Bias* can lead to internal conflict, activate resentment, and undermine our reach.
- We need to learn more about implicit racial bias and how it impacts integration thinking.

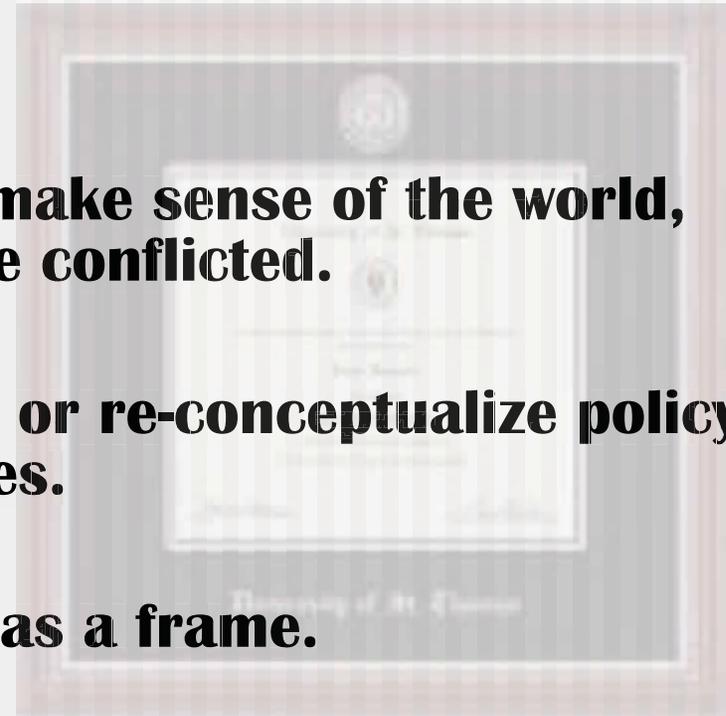


# TRANSFORMING CONFUSION:

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## 3. Talk about excellence, integration, and socio-economic status in different ways.

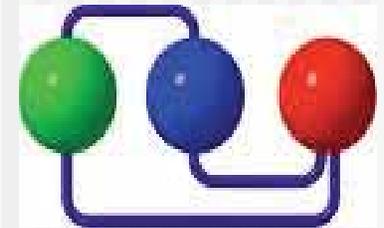
- ***Framing* matters.**
- **It satisfies our need to make sense of the world, particularly when we are conflicted.**
- **It can entrench, uproot, or re-conceptualize policy preferences and attitudes.**
- **Try “Democratic Merit” as a frame.**



# TRANSFORMING CONFUSION:

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## 4. Adopt a *Systems Approach*



- **We cannot achieve integration by approaching education as a separate institution.**
- **The “school” system is really part of a larger, connected system, or web, of inter-institutional agents and arrangements.**
- **We must look clearly at the relationship of school policy, housing policy, and fiscal policy, to fashion an integration strategy.**

# SUPPORT INTEGRATION and BUILD DEMOCRACY

## Develop and Deploy Models that:

1. Push for *True Integration*.
2. Attack *Implicit Racial Bias*.
3. Use “Democratic Merit” to *Reframe* discourse.
4. Link education, housing and other agents in a *Systems* approach.

