

A Gender Lens for School Leaders

Address implicit bias to create equitable opportunities for students and teachers



IMPLICIT BIASES—ABOUT RACE, GENDER, ABILITY, ETC.—may be at work in every aspect of the school experience, from “dress-coding” that can contribute to Black girls being five times as likely to be suspended from school as white girls, to the perception that male elementary teachers—already a rarity—are disciplinarians and therefore are not given

opportunities to deepen their instructional practice. This issue of *Principal* magazine addresses gender biases, including those that impact the leadership pipeline: Even though women make up the majority of teachers, female assistant principals and principals face disadvantages in getting promoted into higher leadership roles.

And because we know that gender doesn't exist in a vacuum, this issue also addresses examples of intersectional identity. “It's important for educators to accept that they can't and won't understand everything about a student and their experiences,” write Jules Csillag and Allie Sayre in their article, “Advocating for Intersectional Inclusion” (page 22), which explores supports for disabled students who have atypical gender identities. “Build inclusive policies that evolve as you learn more, and be transparent about it,” they advise.

This issue of *Principal* magazine will help school leaders polish their gender lenses to break down some of the biases that put students at a disadvantage and prevent educators from reaching their fullest potential. Consider the following essential questions as you read the articles:

1. How can I increase my own self-awareness about gender, implicit bias, and intersectional identities?
2. Are there individual students or groups of students who experience unfair exclusions or who can benefit from different supports?
3. What are examples of unconscious biases at work among teachers and staff, and how might they impact recruitment and retention?

LEADING LESSONS

Look to the latest issue of *Leading Lessons* for actionable strategies that can help take this issue of *Principal* magazine into practice. Download at www.naesp.org/leading-lessons.

We're excited about the learnings offered in this issue of *Principal* magazine, and we hope that you are, too.

—**Kaylen Tucker, Ph.D.**



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