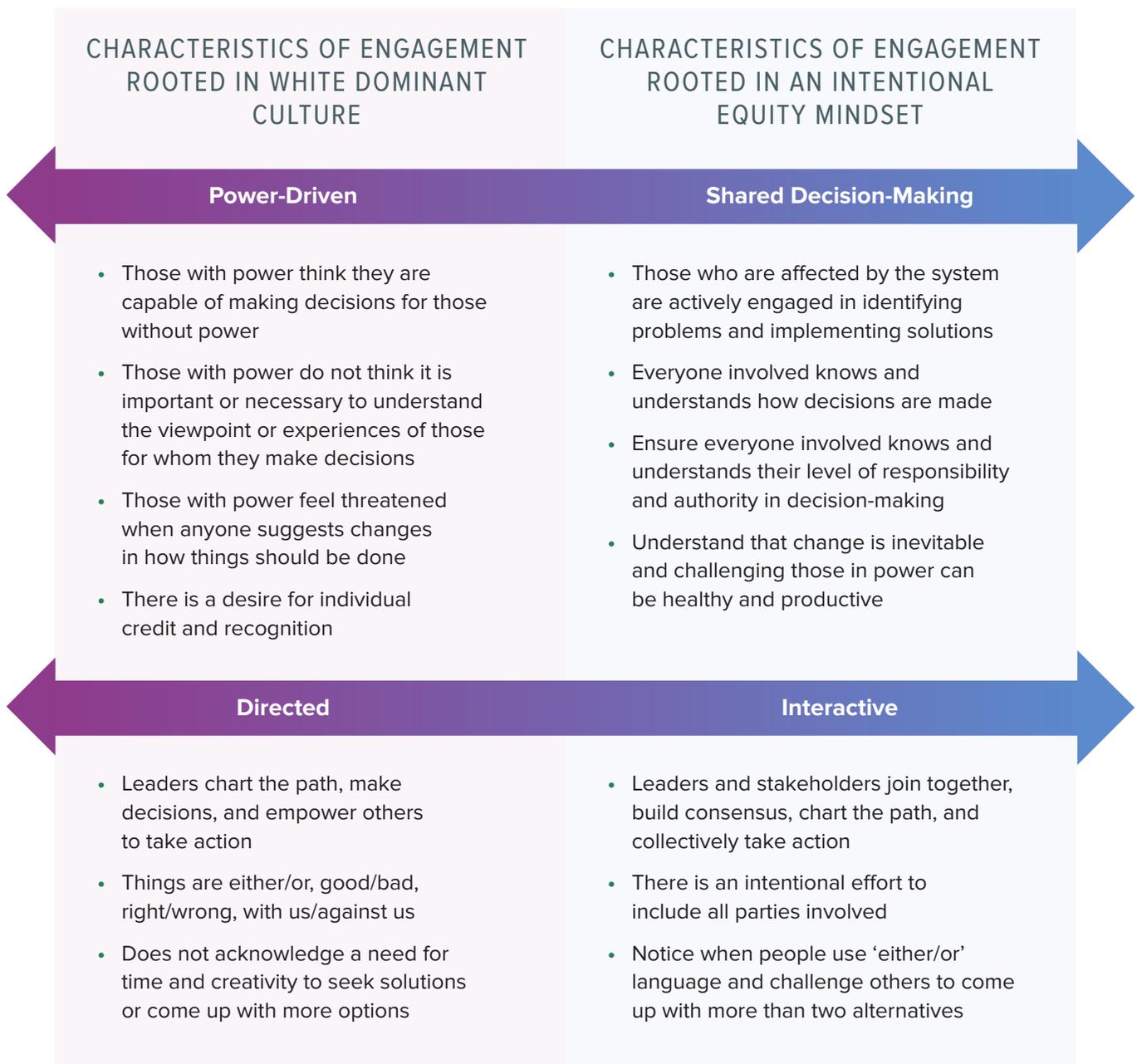


Creating Authentic Partnerships with Historically Marginalized Families and Other Stakeholders: Embracing an Equity Mindset

Educational systems in this country have been shaped by the influence of White dominant culture, frequently precluding the authentic partnership of families and stakeholders who are vested in the success of historically marginalized students in their communities. The continuum below demonstrates characteristics associated with White dominant culture on the left and characteristics that are rooted in an intentional equity mindset on the right. This continuum can be used to assess the cultural norms that currently exist and to think about what changes are needed to create authentic opportunities for partnership that can improve learning conditions and outcomes for historically marginalized populations.



CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGAGEMENT
ROOTED IN WHITE DOMINANT
CULTURE

CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGAGEMENT
ROOTED IN AN INTENTIONAL
EQUITY MINDSET

Traditional

Progressive

- Values strong documentation and writing skills over non-traditional methods of communication
- Does not take into account or value other ways information can be shared

- Take the time to analyze how people get and share information
- Be open to alternative ways of communicating
- Value the contributions and efforts of every person on the team
- Use language free of technical terms, acronyms, and buzz words

Authoritative

Shared Responsibility

- Belief in solving problems alone
- Those in power drive decisions and carry out the work in a technical approach
- Belief there is only one right way to do things
- Belief that when others do not adapt or change, something is wrong with them

- Make people accountable as a group rather than as individuals
- Accept that there are many ways to get to the same goal
- Respect the decisions that others make
- Always be clear that you have something to learn
- Never assume you know what is best

Objective

Empathetic

- Maintain a strong belief in objectivity or neutrality
- Belief that emotions are inherently destructive and irrational, and should not play a role in decision-making
- Invalidate people who show emotion
- Ignore or invalidate those who do not think in a linear manner

- Understand that everyone has a worldview and that it affects the way they understand things
- Sit with discomfort when people express themselves in ways that are unfamiliar
- Assume that everyone has a valid point, and it is your job to understand what that point is

This document was created by Alexandria Harvey (National Center for Systemic Improvement), cooperative agreement #H326R190001 from the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education using the Dismantling Racism workbook (www.dismantlingracism.org). Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government. Project Officer: Perry Williams. February 2021.