



ACSES is a classroom observation tool with a focus on racial equity. Teacher-student interactions are measured across 6 dimensions consisting of 40 items to provide an overall view of what the learning environment is like for racially and ethnically diverse children.

### **Challenging Status Quo Knowledge**

Dimension 1 focuses on how teachers incorporate lessons, conversations, and materials relating to social justice and equity, specifically challenging male-dominated, Eurocentric history, and knowledge.

#### **What does this look like in the classroom?**

- Storybooks with characters of color in a position of power, for example, a Black female scientist
- Conversations about historical events or figures such as segregation, Jim Crow, Ruby Bridges etc.

### **Equitable Learning Opportunities**

Dimension 2 specifically focuses on how teachers engage in conversation with students of color, foster their critical thinking, show interest in what they say, and provide opportunities for students of color to speak.

#### **What does this look like in the classroom?**

- Teachers make eye contact with students of color while they respond and ask questions
- Open ended questions, for example, “Why do you think that?”, “How can we solve this problem?”
- Hints guiding students of color towards the correct answer such as sounding out the first letter of the word

### **(In)equitable Discipline**

Dimension 3 measures disciplinary practices that are unfair, racially or gender biased, or overly harsh or punitive. Unlike the other dimensions, high scores for Dimension 3 are not ideal and are a cause for concern.

#### **What does this look like in the classroom?**

- Teachers’ use of harsh tone or rude language
- Singling out students of color for misbehavior
- Dismissing students of color from the lesson or threatening to do so

### **Connections to Home Life**

Dimension 4 examines how teachers incorporate home lives, traditions, and identities of students of color into the classroom.

#### **What does this look like in the classroom?**

- Teacher asking students of color questions about their relatives, holidays, or what they did during the weekend

### **Personalized Learning Opportunities**

Dimension 5 measures how teachers tailor the lesson to all children to promote critical thinking, creativity, and expressive language skills.

#### **What does this look like in the classroom?**

- Instruction with the use of materials and/or different learning modalities
- Conversations between teachers and students with multiple back-and-forth exchanges
- Positive, non-punitive, collective discipline such as “Everyone’s eyes should be up here”

### **Participation & Engagement**

Dimension 6 focuses on how students of color participate and engage in the classroom and interact with their peers.

#### **What does this look like in the classroom?**

- Students of color follow directions or respond spontaneously to questions
- Students of color smile, laugh, or engage in sidebar conversations with their peers