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## Report

# The Effects Of Diversity Talks Youth-Led Professional Development On Educators' Level Of Cultural Competence

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[www.diversitytalkspd.com](http://www.diversitytalkspd.com)

### Diversity Talks

We provide the platforms, knowledge, and resources to drive systemic change.

Our aim is to increase cultural competency by fostering a healing space for those in power and those most marginalized to challenge the societal standards upholding white supremacy.

# Our Impact In A Nutshell

- 1 Statistically significant increases in cultural competence for those who attended our youth-led workshops.
- 2 Reduction in Cultural Blindness from 31% to 24% in the Mindset dimension of the PERM.
- 3 46% shifted to a higher level of cultural competence following the workshops in the Mindset dimension of the PERM.
- 4 88% reported behavior shifts as a result of attending our workshops.
- 5 87% likely or very likely to recommend our youth-led workshops to others.



# The PERM Cultural Competence Assessment Dimensions, Levels, and Scoring System

Scores on the PERM Cultural Competence Assessment are organized by PERM dimension and include a numerical score as well as its corresponding level of cultural competence.

There are five distinct levels of cultural competence that reflect the PERM Cultural Competence Rubric which describes what beliefs and behaviors underlie each level of cultural competence in a respective dimension.

Lower levels of cultural competence reflect beliefs and behaviors that deny systemic marginalization, social privilege, and implicit bias. Higher levels reflect acknowledgement and deep appreciation of various identities and perspectives, and the impact they have on each individual human experience. Cultural competence is a lifelong journey of growth and it is not uncommon for a person's score to increase or decrease in the process of reflection and gained self-awareness. Below you will find the definitions of each PERM dimension.

## Definitions of PERM Dimensions



**Power:** The elevation and influence of marginalized populations in order to systematically impact decisions, policies, programs and structures and establish an environment of shared leadership.



**Empathy:** The acknowledgment, appreciation and deep understanding of various identities and the impact they have on each individual human experience, in order to address implicit and explicit biases that affect decisionmaking and interactions with others.



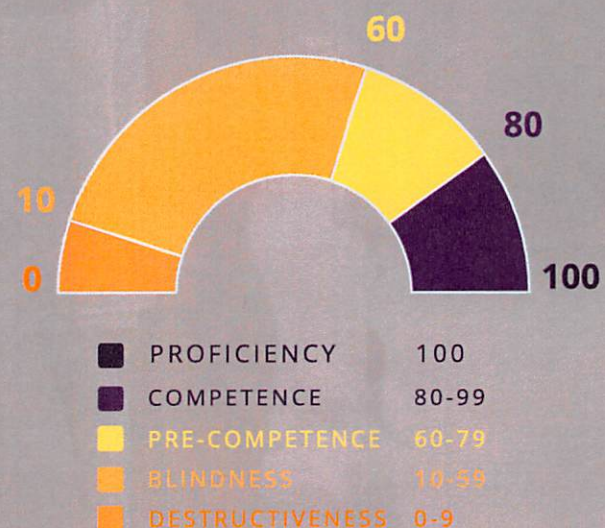
**Relationships:** The fulfillment of the innate human need to genuinely connect with others and establish a sense of belonging in order to foster a safe and accepting atmosphere that is inclusive to all.



**Mindset:** The expansion of cultural knowledge in order to embrace diverse perspectives and experiences through gained self-awareness and ongoing reflection.

## PERM Levels By Score Range

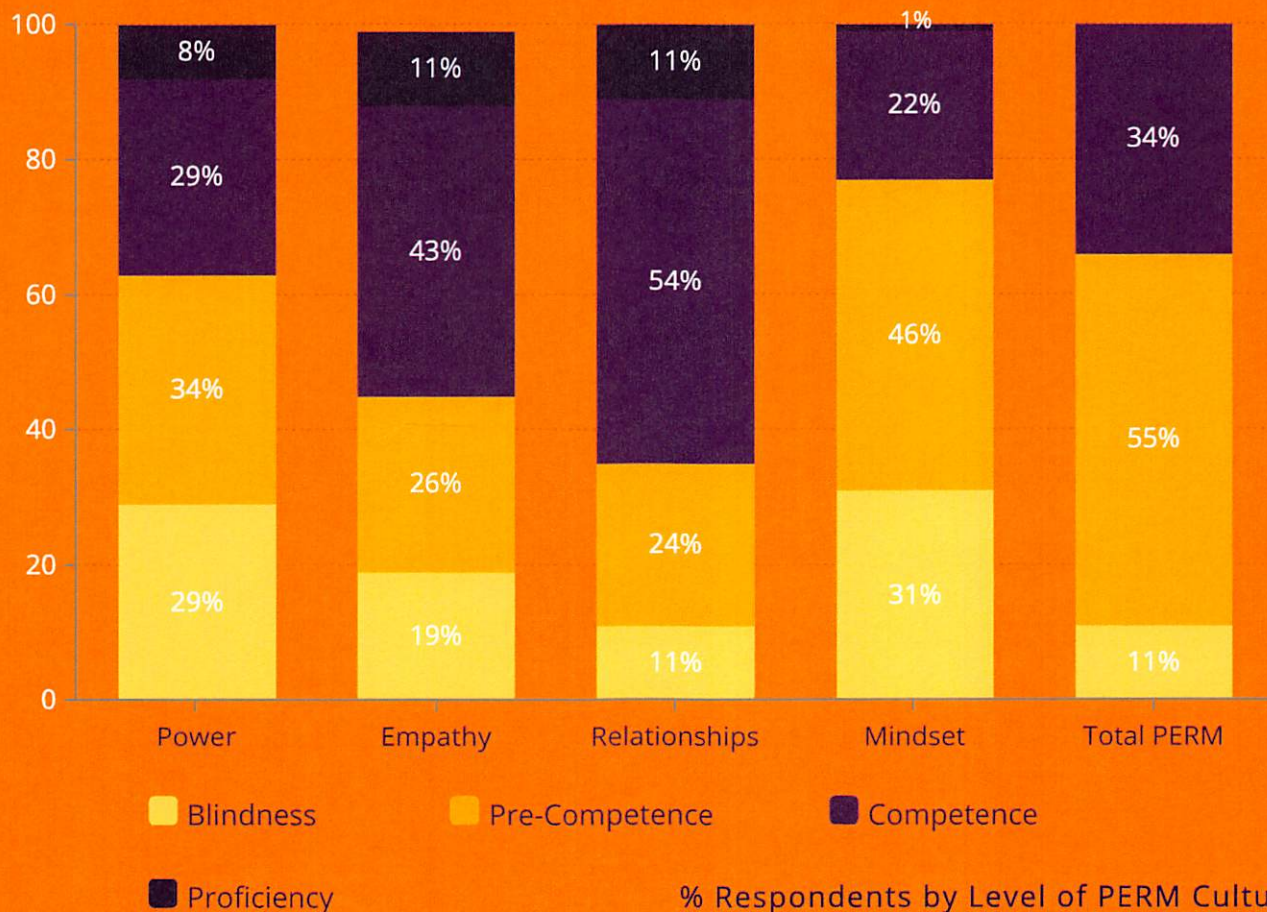
For this study, the treatment group consisted of school personnel who took the PERM Cultural Competence Assessment prior to the start of the cultural competence workshops and again after the workshop series ended. The control group also took the PERM Assessment prior to and after the workshop series, but those respondents did not attend the workshops.



## What Were The Levels of Cultural Competence Among School District Personnel Prior to the Workshops?

### District Profile

Diversity Talks offered a total of 7 youth-led workshops between October 2021 and April 2022 to a suburban school district in the Northeastern United States. The district in question serves over 2,500 students of all ages, from pre-K to 12. Although the local community has over 21% non-white population, including 9% Hispanic/Latinx and 7% Black, the district's faculty is 96% white, 1% Hispanic/Latinx, and 1% Black. This indicates an imbalance in the racial representation of students among faculty.



% Respondents by Level of PERM Cultural Competence for Each Dimension (PRE Workshops)

The bar graph above demonstrates the percentage of respondents who scored within each level of cultural competence by PERM dimension. For Power, Mindset, and Total PERM scores, the majority of respondents fell within the Pre-Competence range. However, for Empathy and Relationships, the majority of respondents scored within the Competence range. There were a total of 184 respondents across the school district with complete data in the pre-workshop assessment.

## Self-Reported Participant Satisfaction

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### Participant Testimonials



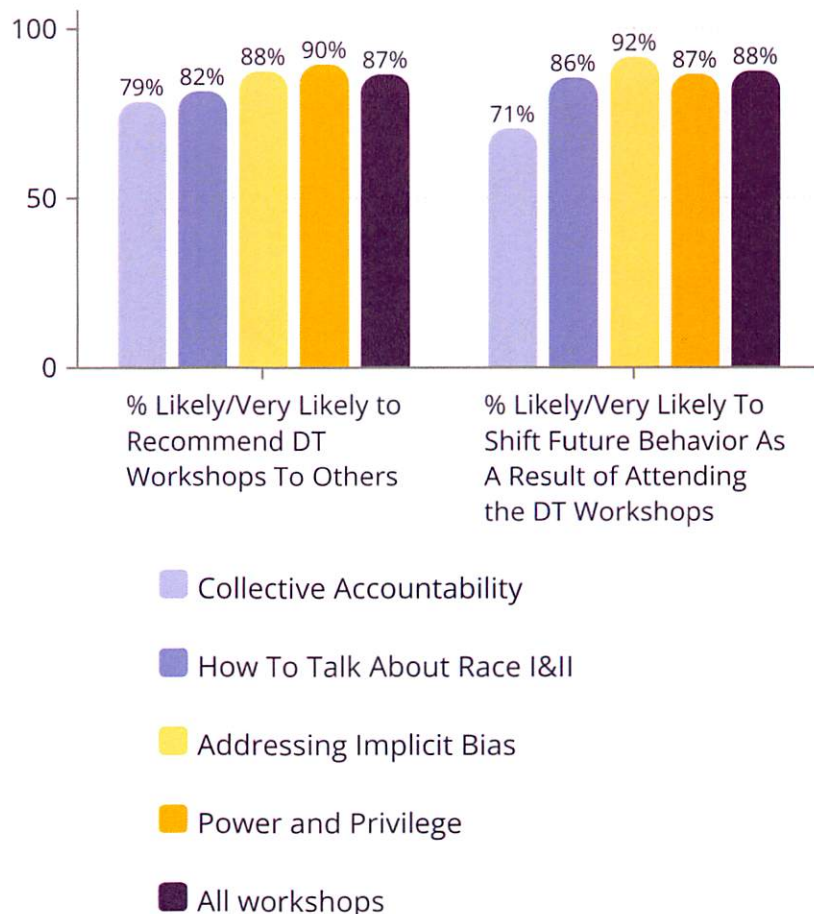
"Overall I thought it was a fun and interactive way to approach different identities."

"I think it was done well and [the two youth facilitators] did a great job!"

"Having students lead the discussions was great. I might recommend bringing in students that we don't directly work with in the classroom."

The two bar graphs below show the percentage of workshop participants who reported they are likely or very likely to recommend our training to others and the percentage of those who feel the workshops are likely or very likely to lead to shifts in their future behavior. The percentages are shown separately for each of the four types of workshops offered by Diversity Talks. Some workshops were offered multiple times with a different set of participants.

% Participants By Type Of Workshop



## Conclusions & Recommendations

In conclusion, this research project found a wide range of cultural competence scores among school district personnel with significant differences in scores based on age, prior DEI training, and role within the district. Prior to the workshop series, the majority of PERM scores fell in the Cultural Blindness or Pre-competent range, indicating a need for cultural competence training. There were significant increases in cultural competence after participating in Diversity Talks youth-led workshops, with certain demographic groups scoring higher after the workshops than others. The following is a list of recommendations based on the results of this project:

- 1 Invest in additional Diversity Talks youth-led professional development opportunities to continue building cultural competence among school personnel. The shifts in scores following the workshops indicate the effectiveness of this type of training.
- 2 Provide targeted opportunities for high school teachers, older teachers, and those without prior DEI training to develop greater competence in the dimensions where their scores are lower than their colleagues'.
- 3 Use the PERM Cultural Competence Assessment to track progress over time and identify additional subgroups among the staff who could most benefit from cultural competence training.
- 4 Incentivize and encourage staff to have a mindset of ongoing reflection and self-awareness in order to embrace diverse perspectives and experiences. Scores in the Mindset dimension of the PERM were the lowest of all the dimensions, indicating a need for targeted interventions.
- 5 Conduct research to examine the role of educator's cultural competence in determining academic, social, and disciplinary outcomes in students. These variables should also be tracked over time to measure changes that occur as a result of ongoing cultural competence training.

