



WILLAMETTE RIVER
INITIATIVE

Culturally Relevant Education Needs Assessment & Gap Analysis



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**Culturally Relevant Environmental Education and Youth Workforce
Development Consultant**

Welcome

➤ Introductions:

- (Name/ Race and Ethnicity/ Gender Pronoun)
- What's one thing you look forward to doing in the Winter Time?

GOALS OF

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Identify the current state of education connected to the Willamette River System in order to:

- **Evaluate the extent to which local organization provide culturally relevant education rooted in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI).**

Goals of Needs Assessment



Demographic of
students and program
educators



Engagement efforts
around Equity,
Diversity, and
Inclusion within
Education Programs



General understanding
of culturally relevant
education and the
barriers



Individual interest and
needs around
participating in a
learning community

METHODOLOGY

Interviews

Informal setting



45 and 90 minutes



Conversational



Surveys

On-line survey



Focused on obtaining information from education programs connected to the environmental field, community based organizations, and the Willamette River System

Survey opened from March 12th to March 26th



Key Findings

OF

Assessment

- Community Based Organizations understand and practice culturally relevant education
- Limited Understanding Around Culturally Relevant Education
- Desire to Learn about Culturally Relevant Education
- Lack of Racial and Ethnic Diversity within Mainstream Environmental Organizations.

Key Findings (Interviews)

What is Culturally Relevant Education?

Community Based Organizations (Led by People of Color)	Mainstream Environmental Org. (White Led Organizations)
Train community members to lead efforts	Limited understanding
Importance of Bi-lingual and bi-Cultural Staff	Materials and program translation (into Spanish)
Work with whole families	Include families in some programming
Balance curriculum with community building	Having bi-lingual volunteers
Flexible classes that are experiential	Need more diversity within organization
Make curriculum relevant beyond translation	Partner with Latinx communities to help translate
Communication is key and involves commitment and time	Sensitivity other cultures
Connect materials to personal identity in food and culture	Language barriers are a challenge

Community Based Organizations & People of color led efforts

Community Based Organizations
Train community members to lead efforts
Importance of Bi-lingual and bi-Cultural Staff
Work with whole families
Balance curriculum with community building
Flexible classes that are experiential
Make curriculum relevant beyond translation
Connect materials to personal identity in food and culture
Communication is key and involves commitment and time



Mainstream Environmental Organizations (Led by White people)

Mainstream Environmental Org. (White Led Organizations)

Limited understanding

Materials and program translation (into Spanish)

Include families in some programming

Having bi-lingual volunteers

Need more diversity within organization

Partner with Latinx communities to help translate

Sensitivity other cultures

Language barriers are a challenge

Key Findings of Interviews: Barriers

Funding (all interviewees reported lack of funding as an issue)

Better understanding around equity, diversity, and inclusion and culturally relevant education strategies



Staff capacity

Increase staff of color

- Bi-lingual and bi-cultural educators

How does this data relate to you or your organization? (Any Surprises?)

- In groups of 4-5, please discuss this question.

Key Findings (Interviews)

What is Culturally Relevant Education?

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Key Findings

OF

Assessment

Surveys

- Preliminary demographic information suggest lack in racial and ethnic diversity
- Data suggest respondents understand culturally relevant education but lack actionable steps in creating programming that is inclusive and equitable
- Need and desire in a shared learning community

Key Findings of Surveys

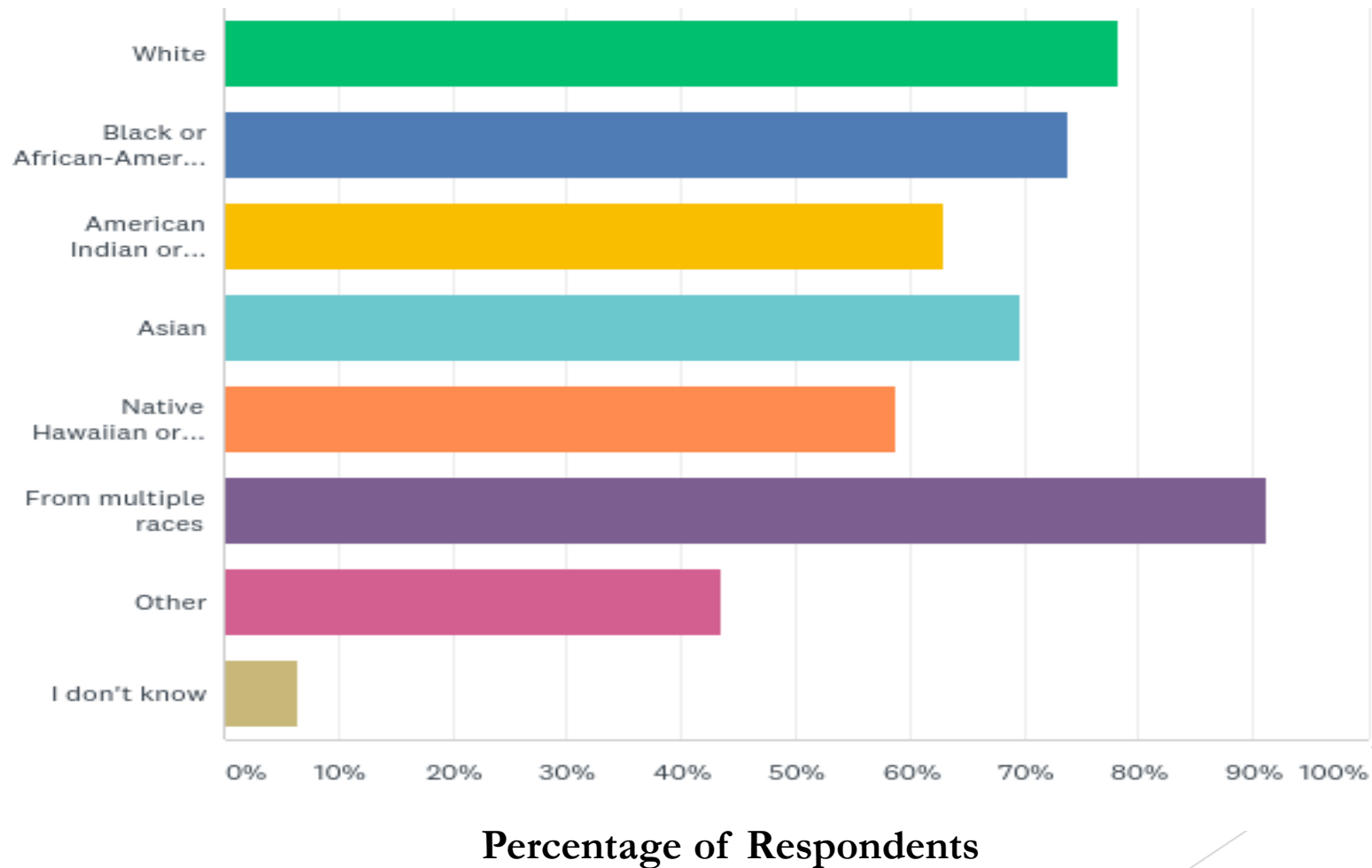
Demographics of Oregon Students

- ▶ During the 2016-17 school year, Oregon's Educator Equity report shared that 577,379 K-12 students were enrolled in Oregon's public school.
- ▶ Of these students, **across 31 counties**, 213,630 were students of color (37%). This report also shared that in comparison, only **10.1%** of teacher throughout Oregon, were teachers of color.

Key Findings of Surveys

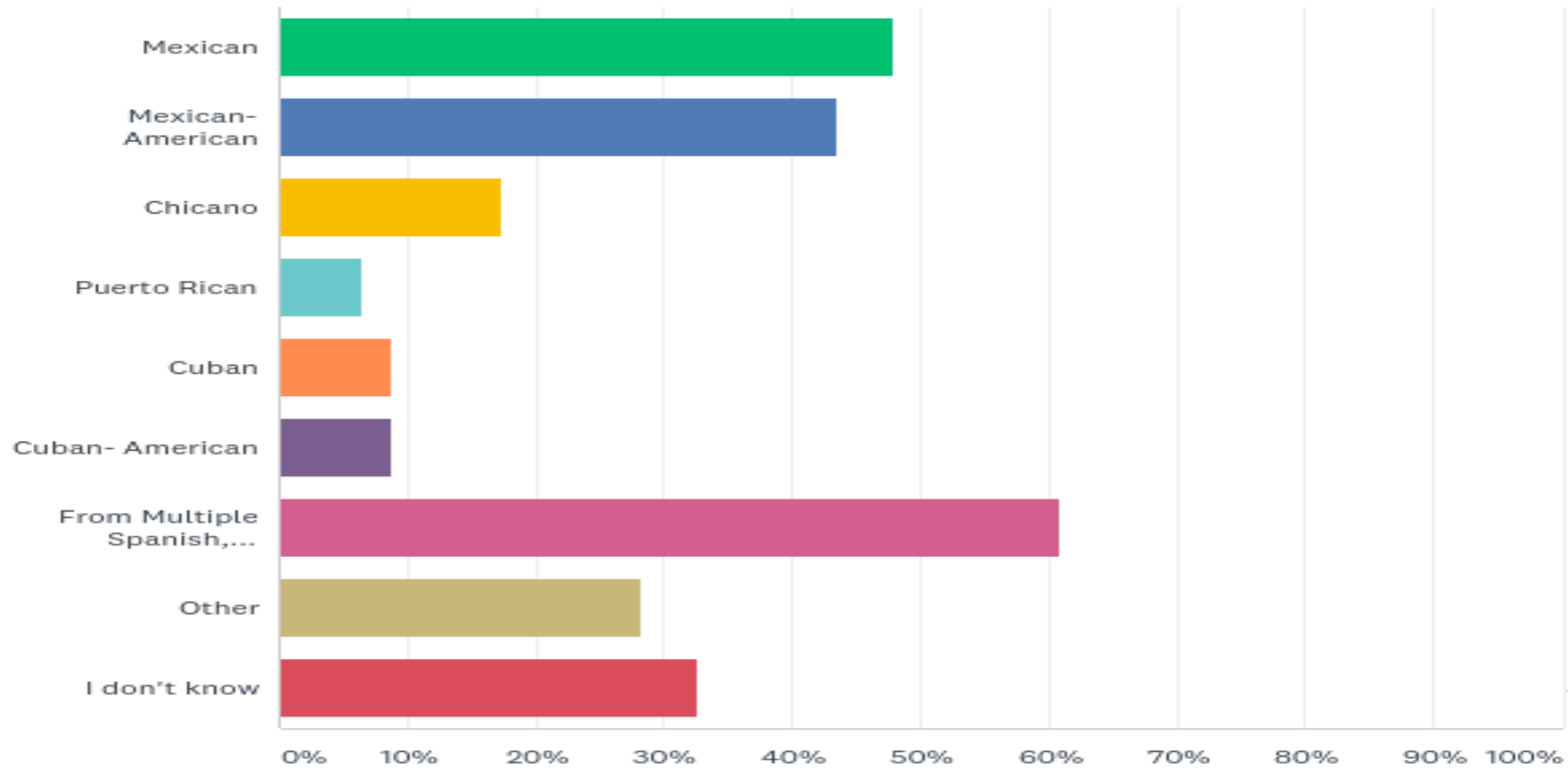
Demographics of Program Participants

Race



Demographics of Program Participants

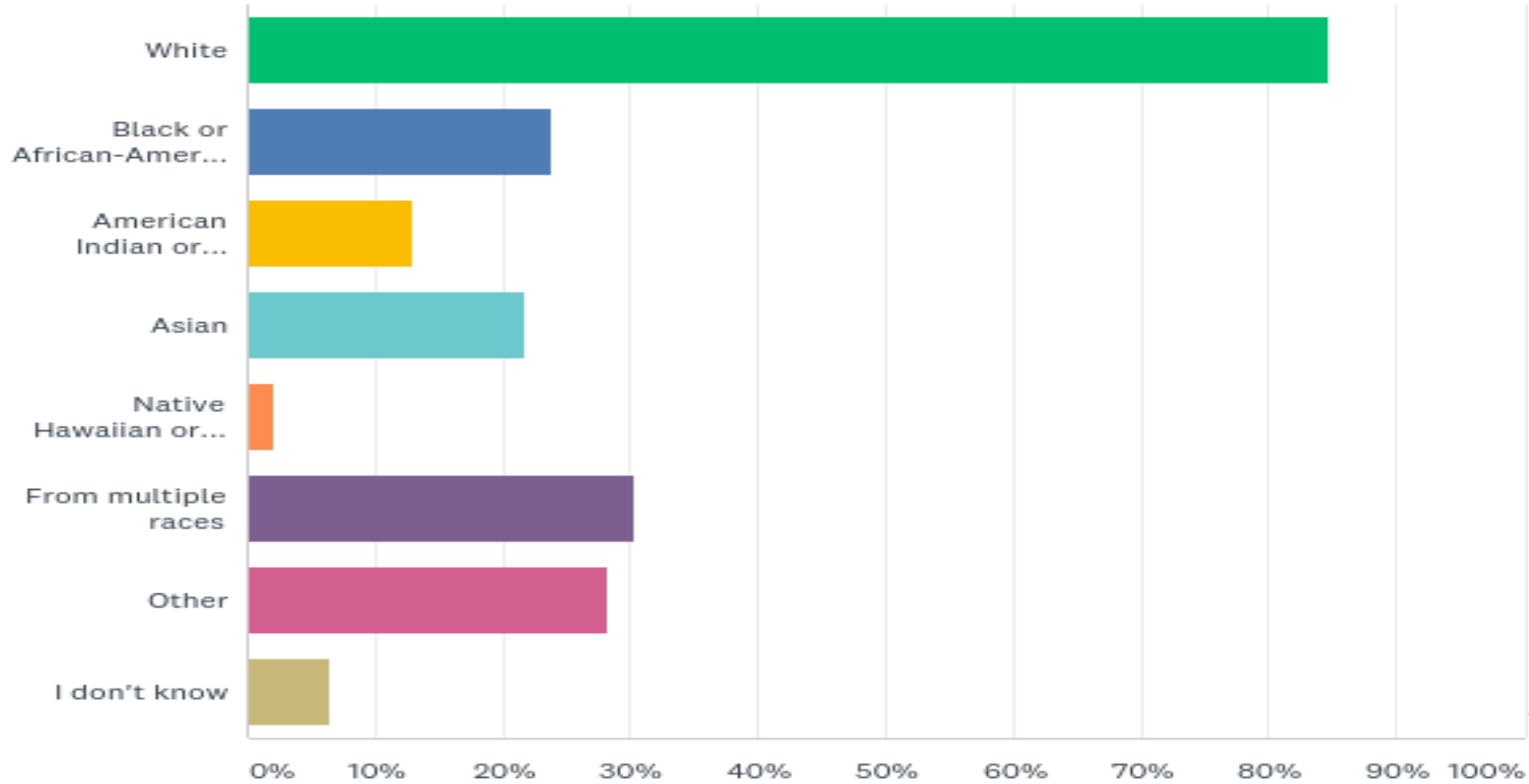
Ethnicity



Percentage of Respondents

Demographics of Education Staff

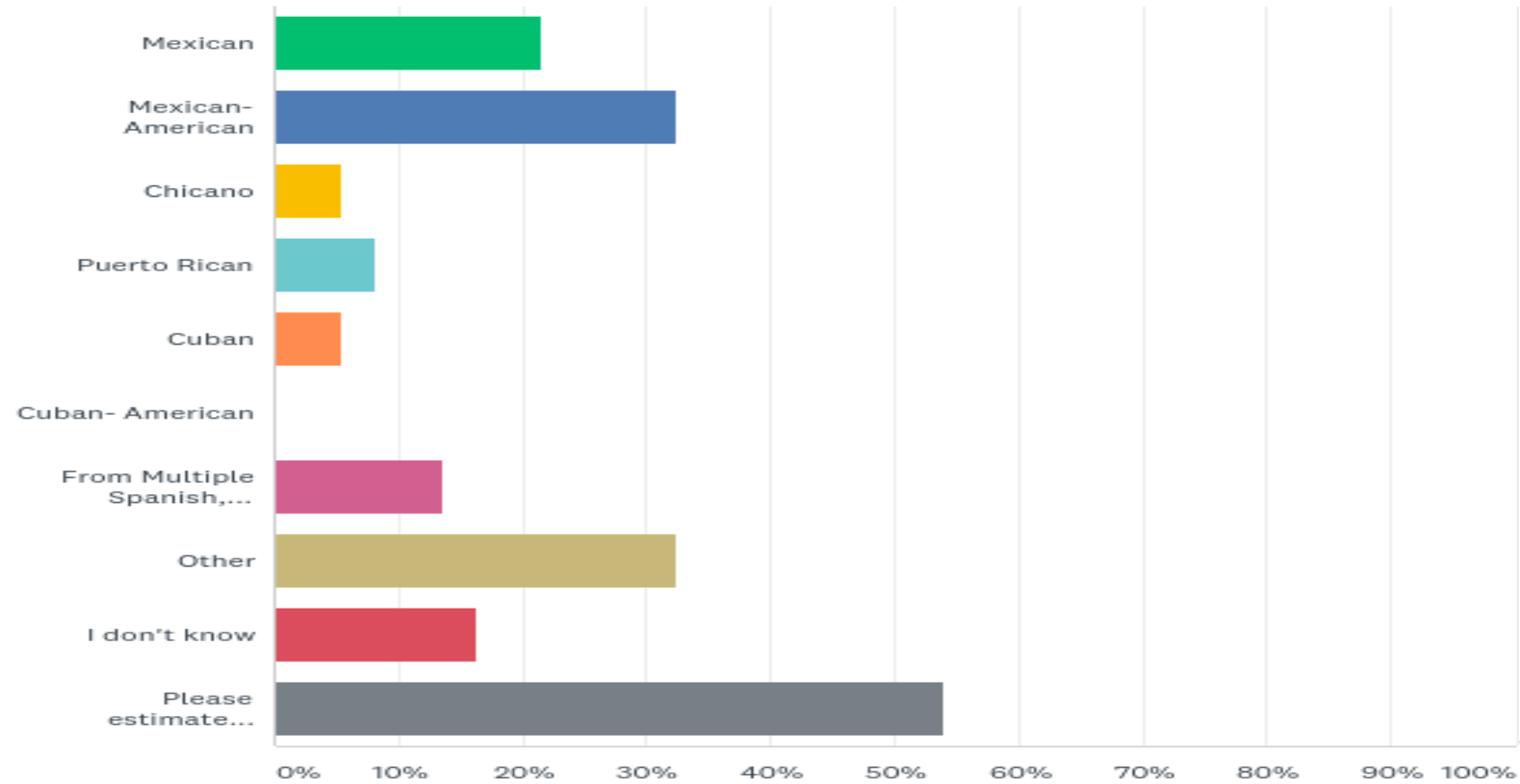
Race



Percentage of Respondents

Demographics of staff

Ethnicity



Percentage of Respondents

Themes From Survey Respondents

What does the phrase "Culturally Relevant Education" mean to you?

(Most used words)



A word cloud of survey responses. The words are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape, with 'Culturally Relevant Education Means' and 'Specific Cultural' at the bottom, and 'Audience', 'Sharing', 'Programming', and 'Empowering' at the top. The words are in various shades of green and blue, with some words being larger than others. The background is white with green geometric shapes on the right side.

Audience Sharing Programming Empowering
Experiences Appropriate Learning Activities
Backgrounds Consideration Teaching
Representation
Culturally Relevant Education Means
Specific Cultural

Top 5 Themes (High to Low)

What does the phrase "Culturally Relevant Education" mean to you?



Relatable Information on a Personal Level



Incorporates People's Own Experiences and Ways of Knowing



Limited Understanding of Culturally Relevant Education



See Themselves Represented and Reflected



Individualized Curriculum/Flexible Program

Top 5 Themes (High to Low)

What actions does your organization take to make your programs racially, ethnically and culturally inclusive?”



Outreach and Recruitment (Program specific)



Unclear/ Just Started



Translate Materials and/or Programs (Spanish)



Partner with Culturally Specific Organizations



People of Color on Staff

Themes From Survey Respondents

“What are the barriers to making your programs more racially, ethnically and culturally inclusive?”

(Most used words)



A word cloud of survey responses. The words are arranged in three rows. The top row contains 'Staff Capacity', 'Think', 'Barriers', 'Place', 'White', and 'Education'. The middle row contains 'Culturally', 'Connections', 'Programs', and 'Groups'. The bottom row contains 'Funding', 'Relevant', 'Money', and 'Communities'. The words are in various shades of blue and green, with 'Barriers', 'White', 'Programs', and 'Funding' being the largest and most prominent.

Staff Capacity Think Barriers Place White Education
Culturally Connections Programs Groups
Funding Relevant Money Communities

Top 5 Themes (High to Low)

What are the barriers to making your programs more racially, ethnically and culturally inclusive?”



Funding for trainings, staff, programs



Lack of staff diversity



Time and staff capacity



Lack of knowledge or know how



Lack of support or leadership within organization

Themes From Survey Respondents

“Interest in Shared Learning Community”

(Most used words)



A word cloud of survey responses. The words are arranged in three rows. The top row contains 'Meeting', 'Ideas', 'Limited', 'Training', 'Important', and 'Support'. The middle row contains 'Education', 'Organization', 'Learning', and 'Topic'. The bottom row contains 'Doing', 'White', 'Think', and 'Happen'. The word 'Learning' is the largest and most prominent.

Meeting Ideas Limited Training Important Support
Education Organization Learning Topic
Doing White Think Happen

Concerns Around Shared Learning Community

- **Inequitable Burden of teaching**
- **Fear of Co-option of work**
- **Prioritization of Transactional vs. Personal relationships**
- **Reactionary vs. Intentionally planned partnerships**

Conclusion

- Needs Assessment provided unique opportunity to build relationships across the Willamette River Basin
- Communities of color lead efforts, understand, and practice culturally relevant education (But not always)
- Move beyond Outreach and Translation into Culturally Relevant rooted in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (**Multicultural Educational Practices**).

Multicultural Education

- Multicultural education demands an integration of multiple cultures and ways of thinking and knowing into educational context.
- Is grounded in the lives of our students.
- Embraces and recognizes the value of students' home languages.
- Critiques school knowledge, knowledge that has been historically Eurocentric.
- Is rooted in an anti-racist struggle about which knowledge and experiences should be included in the curriculum.
- Celebrates social movements and the fight against nativism, xenophobia, and white supremacy.

Where are you on the Continuum?



Monocultural

Multicultural

- ▶ **How did your Organization get started?**
- ▶ **How did your Educational program get started?**
- ▶ **How is it funded? (Education)**
- ▶ **How does your organization/education team make decisions?**
- ▶ **Who do you partner with?/ How do you partner?**

Recommendations

Financially support communities of color led, community-based organizations in their existing work.

Support community building between communities of color led community-based organizations and mainstream environmental organizations.



Begin the process of creating a multi-cultural shared learning community

Support truly equitable partnerships between communities of color led, community-based organizations and mainstream environmental organizations that intentionally co-create programs

Next Steps

Create space for Community- Based Organization lead by people of color to come together to discuss their experiences, share strategies, build bridges.

Provide options for social gatherings where community building between communities of color led organizations and mainstream environmental organizations can occur.



Support the intersection of work occurring within Upper Willamette Stewardship Equity Engagement Strategy other regional effort to provide concrete ways to authentically engage with community-based organizations

Provide support to organizations working on integrating Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion into their programming.

Questions?

