

The Conflict of Message: Discussions on Diversity

"Racial isolation remains far too common in America's classrooms today and it is increasing," said Education Secretary Arne Duncan. "This denies our children the experiences they need to succeed in a global economy, where employers, co-workers, and customers will be increasingly diverse. It also breeds educational inequity, which is inconsistent with America's core values."

The guidance is primarily based on three Supreme Court decisions, *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1*, *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*, which specifically addressed the consideration of race by educational institutions.

U.S. Department of Education. <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/new-guidance-supports-voluntary-efforts-promote-diversity-and-reduce-racial-isol>

"We understand that the purpose of education is not only related to *you* but it is also related to *us* – to the community, to the other people. The infant- toddler centers and preschools are places of living together between generations. They are public common spaces where the multitudes aim to become a community of people growing together with a strong sense of the future.

Children appreciate and are stimulated by diversity. Children are our teachers in their belief that difference is not a problem but a gift."

The Hundred Languages of Children pg. 84-85

Small Group Discussion Assignment:

Although both messages are valid, they are different from each other. Discuss what each message conveys to you about diversity in our classrooms and communities.

Race refers to a person's physical appearance, such as skin color, eye color, hair color, bone/jaw structure etc.

Ethnicity relates to cultural factors such as nationality, culture, ancestry, language and beliefs.