

Case Study

Malcolm a 16-year-old white male student, who participates in a regional classroom received a notice that next term he would be reintegrated into a general education setting at a nearby neighborhood school with a majority African American student population. Upon entering the school on the first day, Malcolm asked an educator for directions to his class. The response from the educator as they continued to walk past Malcolm was "It's downstairs in the basement. When you get down there take two lefts and a right." The person was gone before Malcolm could ask them to repeat the response. After about 15 minutes, Malcolm found the class. It should be noted that the educator for this course was overheard by students stating "I heard he has a low IQ, and his mom is in rehab. No wonder he must go be in THOSE classes." As he entered the class the educator stated, "You are late. Don't bother coming in go straight to the ISS room." Then said very slowly, "Do you understand what I am saying to you?"

Malcolm responded by yelling obscenities at the educator, which made his African American peers laugh and called him "Meth baby". Malcolm then became physically aggressive and tackled a nearby male student. In turn his peers in the class began to jump Malcolm. Security was called and the students were separated and taken to different rooms in the school.

These questions can be used in staff meetings to help deepen our understanding about bias building relationships with a focus on identity. (The questions have been adapted from *Unearthing Joy*).

1. Knowing that Malcolm as transitioned from a regional classroom, which seems to be a part of his identity, what practices from the school culture frameworks could educators utilize to support this student achieving academic success in the general education learning environment?
2. Please share which injustices were witnessed in this case-study (p. 103)? How can those injustices be addressed to minimize bias and maximize building relationships.
3. Please share how this student experienced marginalization related to their identity (p.105)? How can you minimize that experience while maximizing relationships?