

# *What is Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Teaching with VABB?*

**Michelle Belnavis**

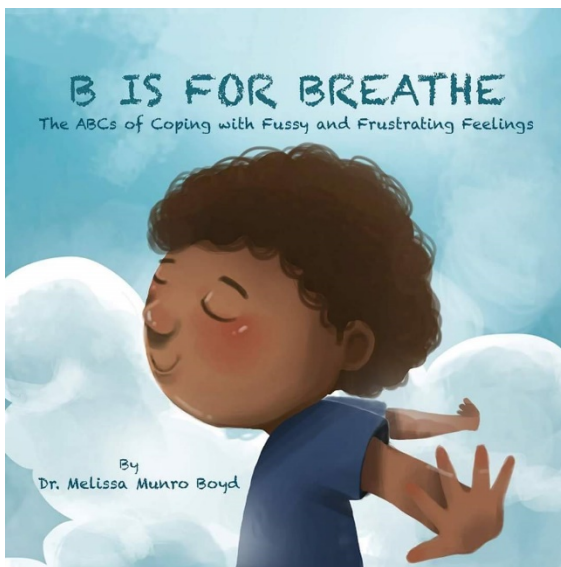
**Wisconsin RtI Center, Technical Assistance Coordinator**

**Question:**

I am an autistic adult and I am very interested in ways that are being developed to support students with atypical needs (Alice S.)

**Answer:**

- Yoga
- Art
- Waterfall room
- Calming cove
- “Just me” programming
- Breathing space
- Sensory activities
- Responsive/ relevant social skills texts



**Question:**

In your opinion, what are some of the more damaging practices, culturally and linguistically speaking, teachers and schools use without realizing they are hurting students? (Heather M.)

**Answer:**

- Low expectations
- Blaming the students/families for lack of engagement
- Compared to lack of involvement
- "At risk" labeling
- Media biases
- "Fixing" our most striving to succeed students as
- Prejudging based on economic status, single parent households
- Individualism rather than collectivism teaching techniques

**Question:**

Do you have ideas for how to get people to attend to their "mindful" identity reflection? I tried to help them find fun engaging ways to do that - but nothing happened. Will they do it for their students if they don't do it for themselves? (Tiffany C.)

**Answer:**

Highly encourage the use of the Implicit Association Test, Playspent, student interviews, community mapping activities which open minds to what essentials are accessible or not accessible to the population of students and families that you are serving.

**Question:**

How do we address the issues of having these continued conversations, but it seems things are still lagging behind with our teachers? (Andre D.)

**Answer:**

Review you data and disparities, set an equity goal, make innovation and common language familiar to them from the beginning, ensure training, bring in staff with fresh ideas and new energy, new personnel are an integral part of teams, practice deep listening, speak truths, address conflicts respectfully, and clarify for understanding.

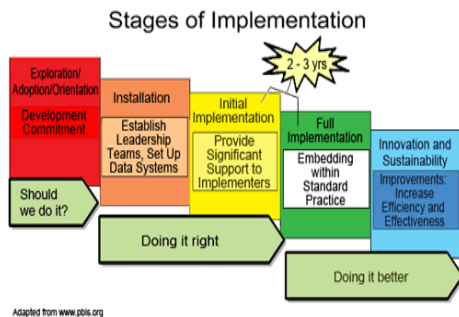
**Question:**

What does state level support look like in assuring VABB implementation? (Monica H.)

**Answer:**

Listen with eyes, ears and heart, notice moments of discomfort, lean in and stay curious, accept and expect non closure, speak truth without blame or judgement.



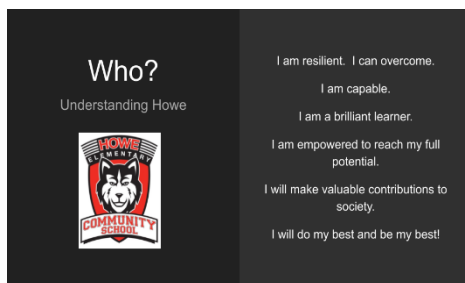


**Question:**

Not moving closer to the teacher, but moving closer to the student - can you give an example? (Stephanie B.)

**Answer:**

Validate and affirm student identity, cultural values and beliefs and recognize the impact that a cultural mismatch can have on building relationships and influencing home/school connections, purposefully build on cultural gifts that students and their families bring and bridge learning from home to expected behaviors at school, in order to ensure success for ALL students, GIVE OUTRAGEOUS LOVE to all students, as if they were your own child/ren, listen to student voice, build strong, trusting relationships, ASK what supports would be helpful, rather than TELLING what we think is needed, make students feel wanted, valued, appreciated with a sense of freedom and belonging, use affirmations EVERY DAY... "I AM SOMEBODY." Change our environment and our culture to reflect positive identity development and a sense of belonging for the students and families that we serve.



**Question:**

What examples or advice would you give PBIS school teams to authentically engage with parents/families to VAAB and enhance systems and practices? (Tricia H.)

**Answer:**

Attend to and evaluate the attitude, atmosphere and approach that is created to embrace, engage and empower ALL students. Involve parents as decision makers, publicly value their input, survey parents and intentionally consider their feedback, LISTEN, rather than TELL, and suspend judgement. We can change systems if we really want to, like we

are for covid-19, [access Wisconsin RtI Center culturally responsive classroom managementmodules](#) and [TFI Culturally Responsive Companion Guide](#).

**Question:**

How do we create capacity for staff to embrace "Courageous Conversations"? (Vicki H.)

**Answer:**

Use your data to identify areas of need, address disproportionate data, Interrupt inequities, lead, model and advocate for equity, inequities never intend to harm, but they always do. We need to stop expecting our students and families to adapt to us, we must begin to adapt our practices to meet the needs of our students and families.

**Question:**

Does the presenter have more student perspective examples like shown in the presentation? (Jonathan P.)

**Answer:**

There are three examples within my presentation PowerPoint posted on MTSS FEST website.

- [Because of Them We Can by Eunique Jones](#)
- [Racism Forum 2017 - Student Panel](#)

