**[Nice White Parents](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/learning/lesson-plans/nice-white-parents-discussion-guide.html) Discussion Guide**

*Please complete this document and email it to* [*Monet Reilly*](mailto:mreilly@psea.org?subject=Nice%20White%20Parents%20Discussion%20Guide)*, Associate UniServ, prior to the professional learning opportunity on Monday, November 30.* Questions adapted from the [New York Times Discussion Guide](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/learning/lesson-plans/nice-white-parents-discussion-guide.html)

**Pre-listening activities:**

* What should be the goal of public education, and why?
* What does it mean for schools to be truly integrated? Who benefits from integration, and in what ways?
* Why do you think every child in the United States does not have access to a quality education? What can we do to change that inequality?

**Episode 1: The Book of Statuses**

By the end of Episode One, white, Black and brown children are attending the same school. The parents are in the same room. But as the podcast describes, everyone didn’t feel equal. Race, social class and power got in the way. Does that ever happen in your school or district? How?

### ****Episode Two: ‘I Still Believe in It’****

When you reflect on this episode, do you think the white parents did anything wrong? And if yes, was their mistake writing the letters in the first place? Was it not communicating with the local Black and Puerto Rican families who lived just a few blocks away? Was it not sending their children to the new school after it was built closer to their neighborhood? Was it being naïve about what integration actually meant?

### ****Episode Three: ‘This Is Our School, How Dare You?’****

How much choice have you — or your family — had in your education? How has your identity (your race, social class and more) affected your ability to make important choices — or not — about your education?

### ****Episode Four: ‘Here’s Another Fun Thing You Can Do’****

The host makes a clear distinction between equality and equity: “Equality means everyone gets the same thing. Equity means everyone gets what they need.” Do you think this distinction is important? Do you think one goal is more important than the other? Can a school achieve equality without also achieving equity? Why? What examples of equality or equity do you observe or experience in your school?

### Episode Five: ‘We Know It When We See It’

During one of the District 15 working group workshops, a white dad said, “Isn’t it good that the system rewards working hard and merit?” To which a Latina mom asked, “But does it reward merit? Doesn’t it just reward access to resources? If you audition for the Performing Arts school and your kid has been getting dance programming since she was 3 — my kid never had that at her elementary school.” To what extent, if any, do you believe access to a good public education should be based on merit? What are the strengths of a merit-based system and what are the limitations? How do merit-based systems in schools perpetuate inequalities, and are there any ways to rectify that?

**Post-listening activity:**

* Review the answers you provided before listening to the podcast. In what way have your own viewpoints been validated or changed by listening to this work?