Pennsylvania's Master Plan for Higher Education: Increasing Postsecondary Attainment Requires Increasing Learners' Sense of Belonging

Western Pennsylvania College Success Roundtable
9th Annual College Success Forum

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for Postsecondary and Higher Education

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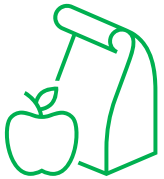
Pennsylvania's Challenges

A declining high school population with greater racial, ethnic, income, and geographic diversity



Postsecondary institutions built for enrolling a high school population that is in decline

A changing economy increasingly dependent on individuals with postsecondary credentials

Pennsylvania's Postsecondary Attainment Goal

Goal:

60 percent of the population ages 25-64 will hold a **postsecondary degree or industry recognized credential** by 2025, with a particular focus on **closing attainment gaps** for historically underrepresented populations.

Current Rate **50.7%**

Source: Pennsylvania State Board of Education. *Postsecondary Attainment Goal*. July 11, 2018. https://www.stateboard.education.pa.gov/Documents/About%20the%20Board/Board%20Actions/2018/Attainment%20Goal%20Memo.pdf

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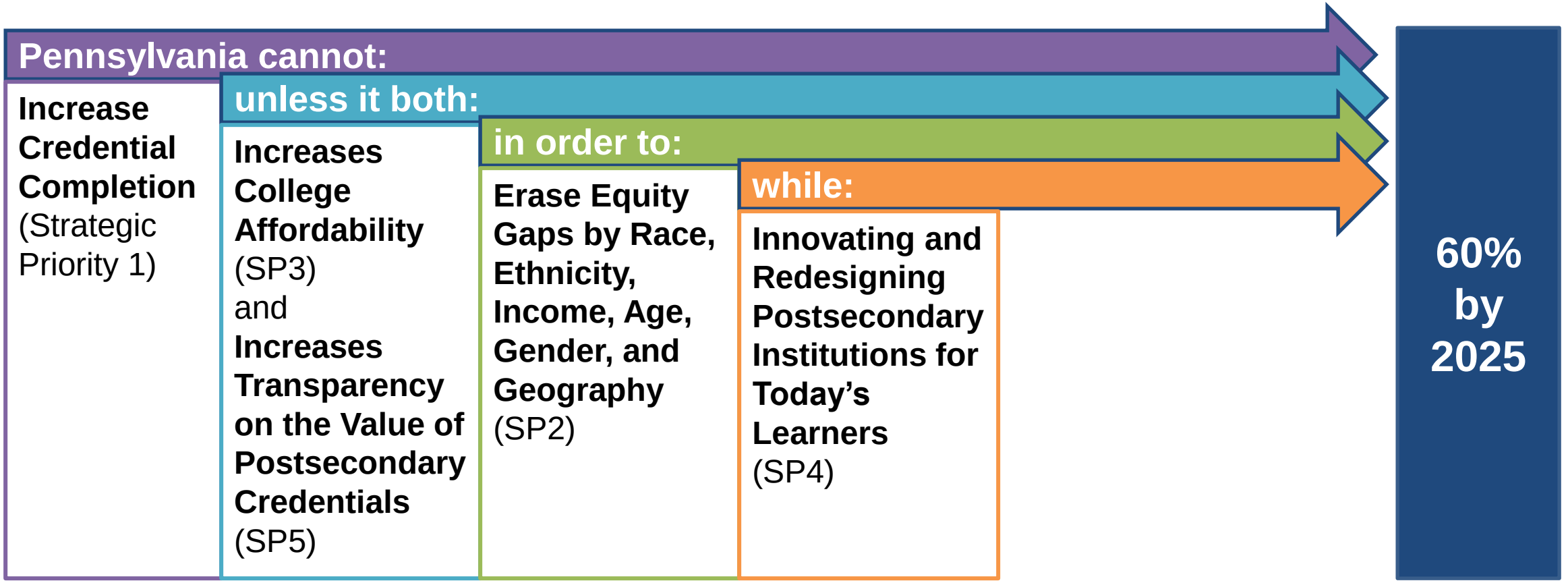
Reaching Pennsylvania's Postsecondary Attainment Goal



Note: The Master Plan for Higher Education Table of Contents, which includes these five strategic priorities, was approved by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education Council of Higher Education on January 13, 2021.

Pennsylvania's Equity Gaps

Enrollment

77%	46%	50%	35%	34%
Asian	White	Native American	Black/African-American	Hispanic/Latinx

18-24 year-olds enrolled in postsecondary (2019)

Attainment

65%	47%	37%	30%	24%
Asian	White	Native American	Black/African-American	Hispanic/Latinx

25–64-year-olds with a postsecondary credential of value (2019)

Not all Pennsylvanians are on a path to economic self-sufficiency and intergenerational wealth creation

Source: Lumina Foundation, *A Stronger Nation: Learning Beyond High School Builds American Talent*. 2021. https://luminafoundation.org/stronger-nation/report/2021/#/progress/state/PA

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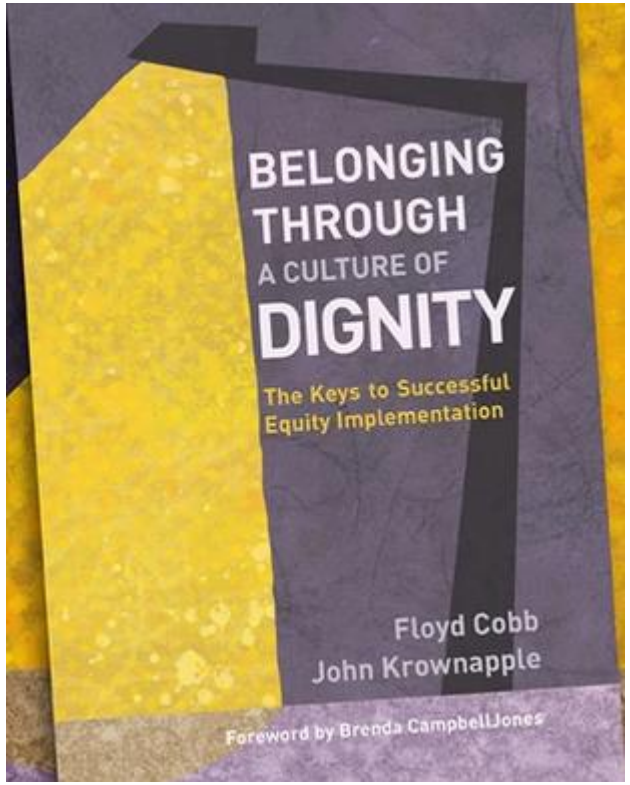
Pennsylvania by the Numbers

1,068,137 Pennsylvanians ages 25-64 with some college, no credential

22% Pennsylvanians ages 25-64 enrolled in postsecondary

Source: Lumina Foundation, *A Stronger Nation: Learning Beyond High School Builds American Talent*. 2021. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 12-month Enrollment, 2018-2019.

What is Belonging?

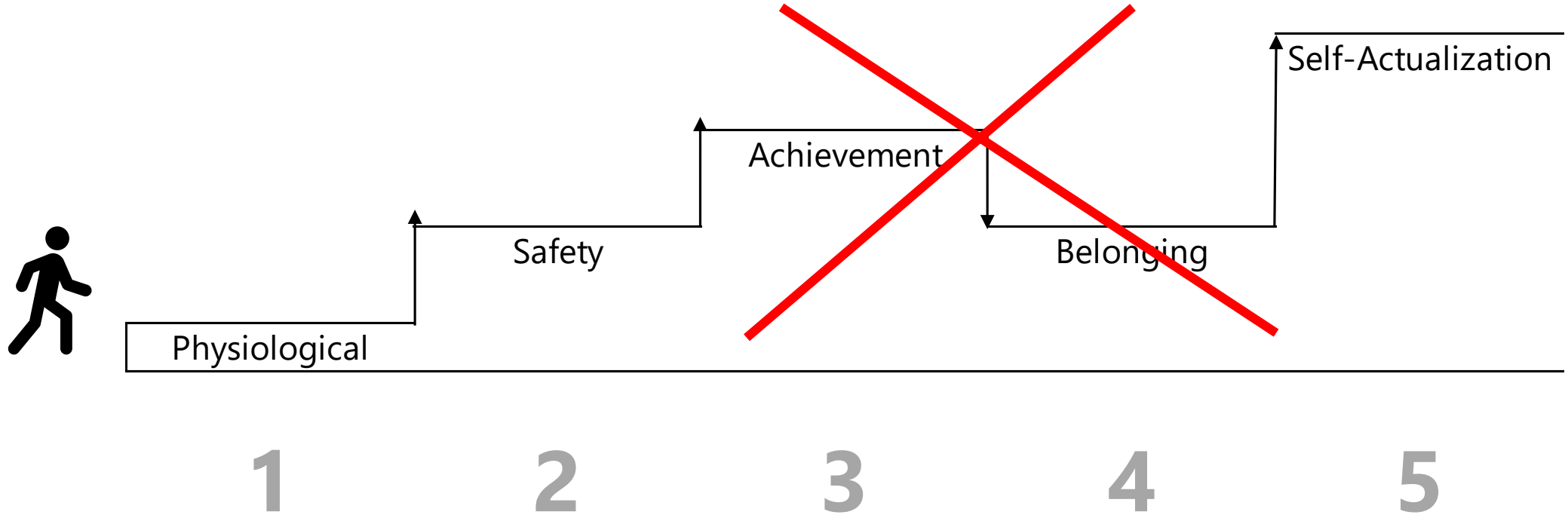


Belonging

Experiencing appreciation, validation, acceptance, and fair treatment within an environment

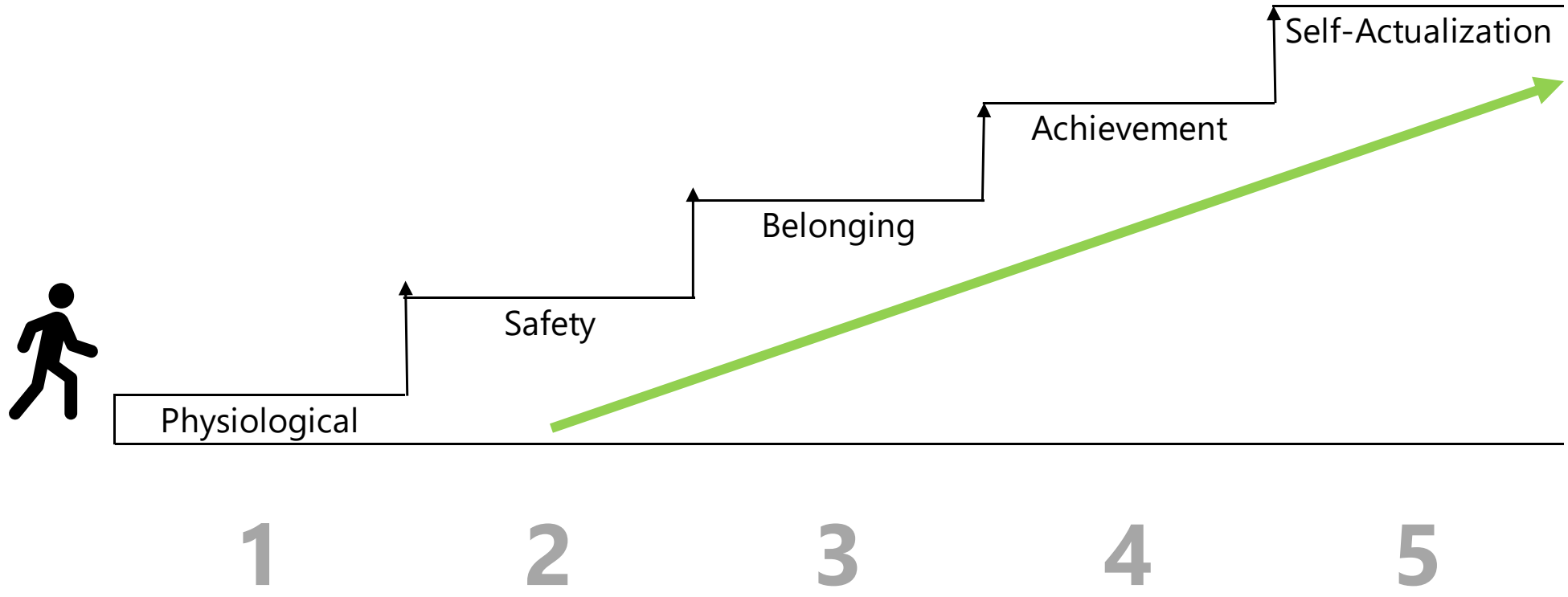
Source: Floyd Cobb and John Krownapple. 2019. *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation*.

Status Quo: Sacrificing Belonging for Access



Source: Floyd Cobb and John Krownapple. 2019. *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation*

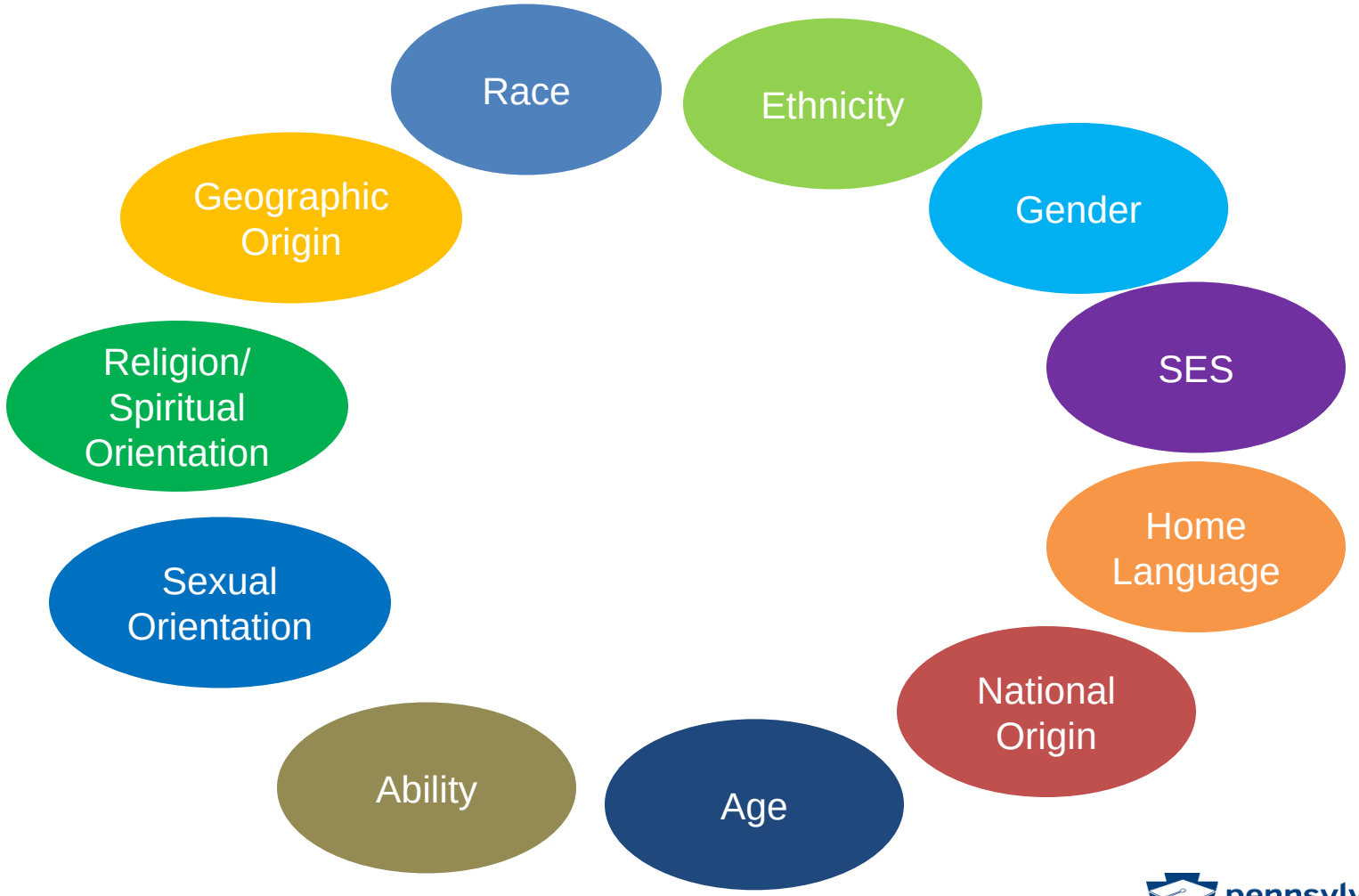
Disrupting the Status Quo: Putting Belonging Where It Belongs



Source: Floyd Cobb and John Krownapple. 2019. *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation*

Acknowledging All Our Social Identities

Which of these aspects of your social identity would you be willing to give up?



Source: Adapted from The College of Literature, Science and the Arts. *Inclusive Teaching at U-M*. Retrieved August 2021, from https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/the-spectrum-activity-questions-of-identity/.

When students with marginalized identities perceive schools and classrooms as unwelcoming, they tend to conclude that “people like me do not belong here.”

Source: Floyd Cobb and John Krownapple. 2019. *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation*.

Creating a Sense of Belonging for Today's Learners

no high school diploma

comebacker

recent high school grad

Hispanic/Latinx

Native American

Black/African-American

immigrant

LGBTQIA+

veteran

rural

suburban

urban

homeless

hungry

poor

parent

working learner

first generation

Belonging is Critical to Postsecondary Attainment

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Thank You!

Questions?