



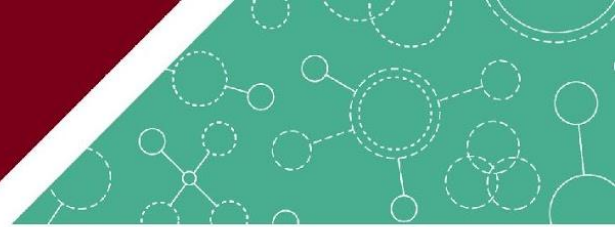
Welcoming and Inclusive Community Assessment Results presentation

Fergus Falls, Minnesota

January 9, 2024

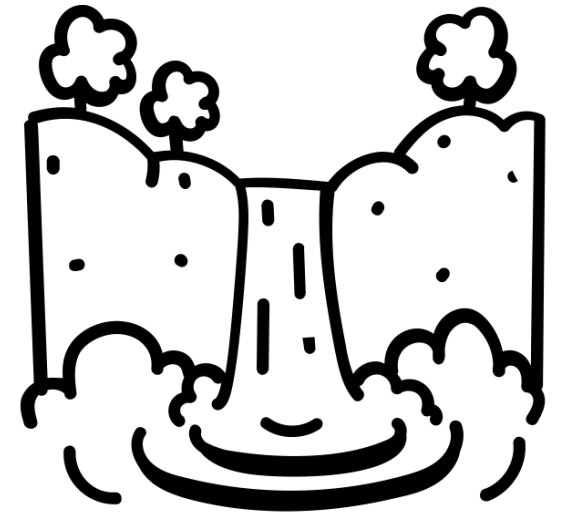


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Department of Community Development - Leadership and Civic Engagement



Chatterfall

1. Type into the chat one thing you are looking forward to in the new year (DO NOT PRESS SEND YET)
2. On the count of 3, we will all press SEND at the same time...



Created by Smashing Stocks
from Noun Project



Why is it important that we are doing this assessment in our community?



Trigger Warning

Our presentation provides an open space for the critical and civil exchange of ideas. Some statements and other content in the presentation may be offensive and/or traumatizing.

If you need to end your participation in this session at any time, *please take care of yourself.*

About the assessment

- Conducted in-person on November 14, 2023
- Open for online responses through December 10, 2023



The screenshot shows the top portion of a webpage. At the top left is the University of Minnesota Extension logo and the text 'UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION'. To the right is the page title 'Fergus Falls Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Assessment'. Further right are links for 'Home' and 'En Español'. Below this is a large dark banner with the title 'Fergus Falls Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Assessment' in white. Underneath the banner, the date 'November/December 2023' is displayed on the left, and the 'City of Fergus Falls' logo is on the right. The main content area is titled 'Social sectors in your community' and includes a paragraph explaining the assessment's purpose and a numbered list of seven social sectors: 1. School system, 2. Health care system, 3. Law enforcement, 4. Local government, 5. Non-profit (includes social services organizations, service clubs, and local foundations), 6. Religious organizations, and 7. Business community/chamber.

Design of the assessment – sectors and dimensions (example from another community)

Sectors	Dimensions of inclusion					
	Leadership energy	Awareness	Engagement	Resources	Sharing power	Policies and practices
School system	Dark Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow
Law enforcement	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Light Green
Health care system	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Yellow
Religious organizations	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Local government	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow
Business	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red
Nonprofit organizations	Light Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red

Average scores for questions in each dimension of inclusion, based on a scale of 1=not at all, 2=to a slight extent, 3=to a moderate extent and 4=to a great extent

Legend:	Moderate to high level of inclusion (3.0 or higher)	Moderate level of inclusion (2.5 to 2.9)	Low to moderate level of inclusion (2.0 to 2.4)	Low level of inclusion (1.9 or lower)
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Dimensions of Inclusion

1.

Awareness
of the importance
of inclusion.

2.

Engagement
of diverse groups
in community
activities.

3.

Resources
to address
inclusion.

4.

**Leadership
Energy**
to promote
inclusion.

5.

**Sharing
Power**
in planning and
decision-making.

6.

**Policies &
Practices**
that promote
inclusion.



Engagement

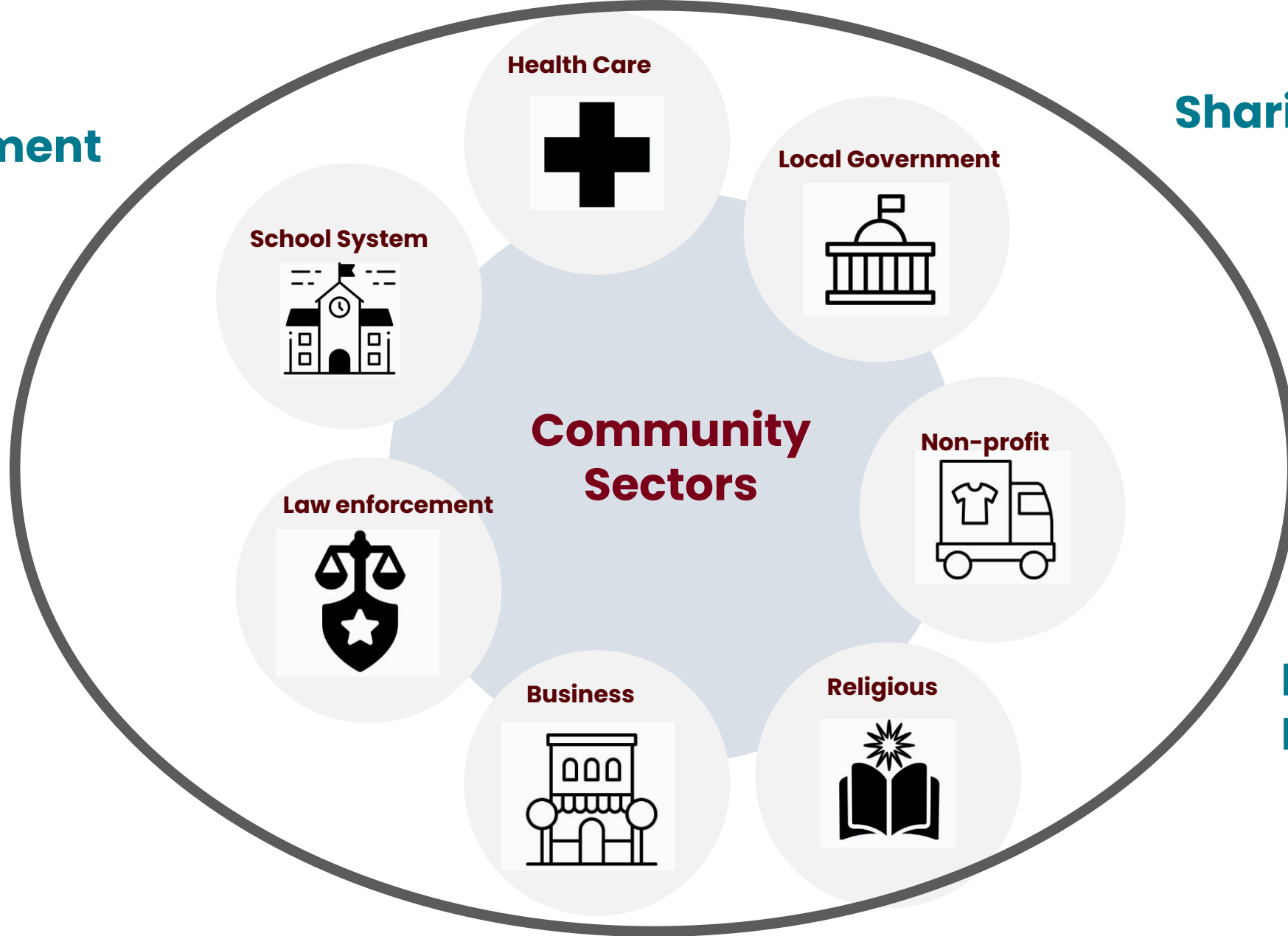
Sharing Power

Awareness

Resources

Policies & Practices

Leadership Energy



What will the assessment tell us about our community?

- Community feedback about how well different sectors in your community are doing at fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment.
- The data are a rich, complex picture of the Fergus Falls community and tell a story about lived experiences across diverse viewpoints.
- The data will be a snapshot in time.



What won't the assessment tell us about our community?

- No assessment is perfect. The data will not represent the entire Fergus Falls community, but rather the stories and experiences of individuals living in your community.
- The lived experiences shared in the assessment may or may not be experienced by people of that same community. There may be additional information and/or perspectives that you want to include or understand.



Measures of each dimension

Awareness	Engagement	Resources	Leadership energy	Sharing power	Policies and Practices
The [sector] is aware that inclusion is important.	People from diverse groups and lived experiences participate in [sector] activities.	The [sector] uses resources from inside <u>and</u> outside the community to support inclusion efforts.	[Sector] leaders understand the importance of inclusion within the [sector].	The [sector] engages diverse groups to provide input into programs and advocacy.	[Sector] leaders make equity and inclusion a priority when developing policies and practices.
The [sector] provides training and learning about the different groups that live and work in our community.	[Sector] leaders look for information to learn about diverse groups and lived experiences of people in the community.	The [sector] has plans in place to address inclusion.	[Sector] leaders are open to looking outside of the [sector] for ways to promote inclusion and equity.	The leadership of the [sector] reflects the demographics of the Glencoe area.	The [sector] measures advancement and retention of people from diverse groups and lived experiences.
The [sector] provides chances for residents with different lived experiences to come together and learn from each other.	The [sector] uses many ways to inform <u>everyone</u> about activities.	[Sector] budgets commit money to inclusion efforts.	[Sector] leaders support the development of future leaders from diverse groups and lived experiences.	The [sector] creates ways for people from diverse groups and lived experiences to lead.	The [sector] regularly measure how policies or practices impact people from diverse groups and lived experiences.

Completed surveys by sector

Sector	Number of completed assessments
Schools	125
Health care	55
Local government	51
Law enforcement	44
Religious/faith organizations	68
Business	48
Nonprofit organizations (includes social services organizations, service clubs, and local foundations)	55
Total	483

Demographics

	Survey Respondents*	Fergus Falls Population Estimates**
Man	26.1% (116)	46.2%
Woman	68.3% (304)	53.8%
Non-binary or Transgender	1.7% (25)	Not available
LGBTQ+	9.1% (45)	Not available
Veteran	6.6% (33)	
Person with Disability	12.1% (60)	20.0%
SNAP (Food Stamp) Recipient	6.2% (31)	Not available
Foreign-born	1.4% (7)	2.1%

*Respondents could mark all that apply.; **Data compiled by Minnesota Compass; <https://www.mncompass.org/profiles/city/fergus-falls>

Demographics

Race/ethnicity	Survey Respondents*	Fergus Falls Population Estimates**
American Indian	4.3%	<1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	2.5%	<1%
Black or African American	3.1%	2.0%
Hispanic or Latino	2.1%	1.3%
White	88.0%	91.2%

*Respondents could mark all that apply.

**Data compiled by Minnesota Compass; <https://www.mncompass.org/profiles/city/fergus-falls>

Demographics of survey participants

Race/ethnicity

(People could mark all that apply, percentages in parentheses are population comparisons from the 2020 census estimates for the City of Fergus Falls)

American Indian	4.3% (<1%)
Asian	2.5% (<1%)
Black or African American	3.1% (1.7%)
Hispanic or Latino	2.1% (2.5%)
White	88% (91.2%)

Demographics of survey participants

Median length of residence	21 years (range 0.25 to 71)
Respondent has paid role in:	
School system	17.3% (86)
Health care	13.3% (66)
Law enforcement	3.2% (16)
Local government	13.1% (65)
Non-profit organization	17.3% (86)
Religious organization	10.7% (53)
Business	19.7% (98)
Respondent has no paid role in community	29% (144)



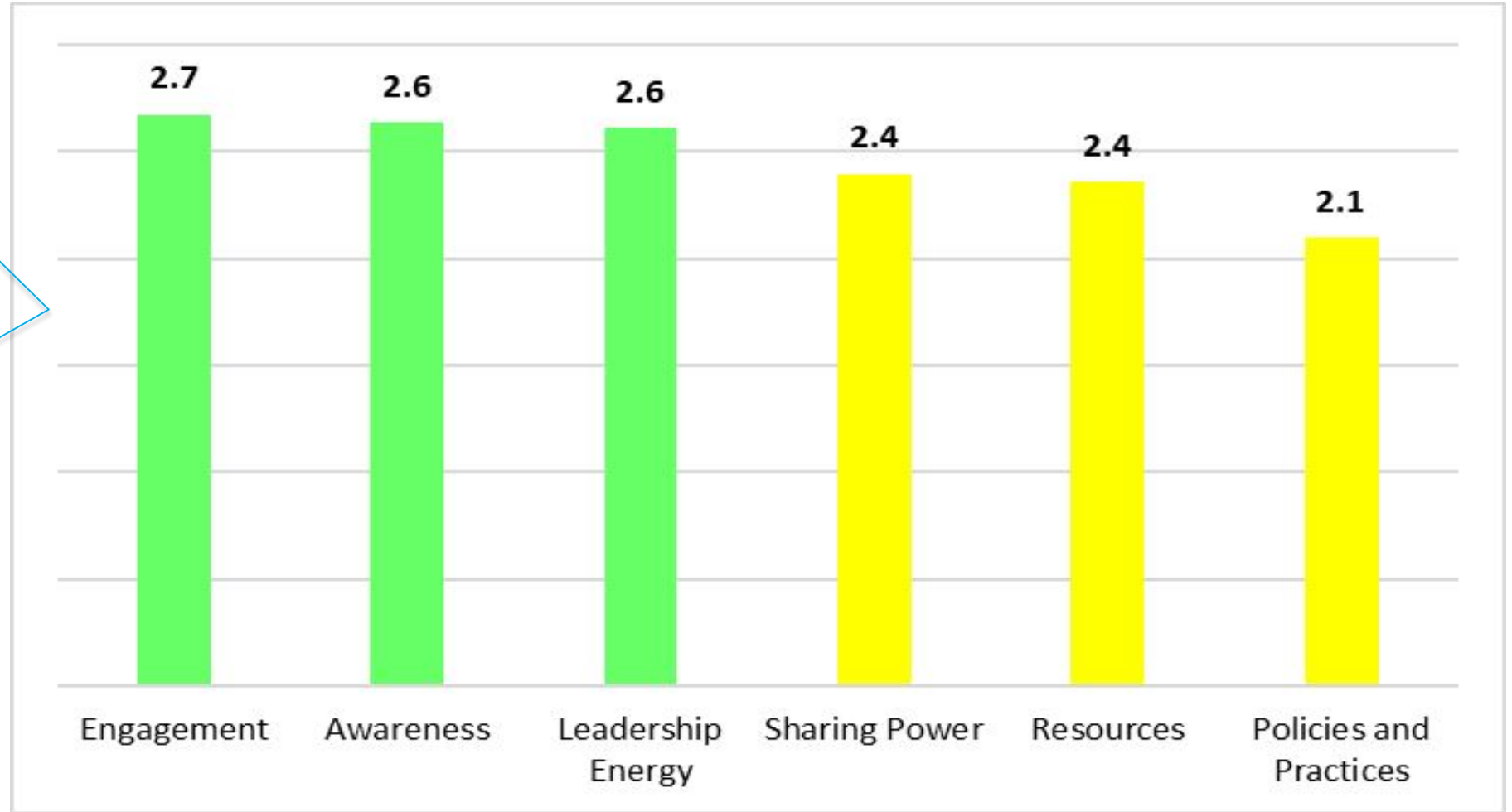
Welcoming and Inclusive Community Assessment Findings



Religious organizations

(68 completed assessments)

Low to moderate levels of inclusion across all dimensions



Average scores for questions in each dimension of inclusion, based on a scale of 1=not at all, 2=to a slight extent, 3=to a moderate extent and 4=to a great extent

Legend:

Moderate to high level of inclusion (3.0 or higher)

Moderate level of inclusion (2.5 to 2.9)

Low to moderate level of inclusion (2.0 to 2.4)

Low level of inclusion (1.9 or lower)

Religious organizations

- The overall feeling of the religious community is that we want to be welcoming but find it difficult to really welcome those who look, think, or act differently than the majority. - white Christian cis, straight
- The church I attend is very aware and focused on diversity and inclusion.
- Our church has a welcoming statement but we don't do much about getting people into our church to read it.
- Anti-white theme now occurring by the state of MN



Religious organizations

- We are to radiate the love of Christ. My church upholds the standards of the Bible. We are very engaged in our neighborhoods, loving and accepting all people. However, if some struggle with God's standards, they are apt to not attend our church.
- Leadership energy seems to be directed more towards survival of the church than growth. Resources are limited due to declining membership. This seems to be a declining spiral situation.
- If the opportunity presents itself the religious organizations and leaders are very willing to include



Religious organizations

- Most of these inclusion efforts seem to focus on those with physical disabilities - not mental health disabilities or LGBTQ+, BIPOC, homeless, etc.
- Honestly we have very little diversity in Fergus Falls (mostly Scandinavians), simply because we lack business and industry to draw people in for jobs.
- I have seen no tangible signs of support towards diversity or including those with different lived experiences.



Religious organizations: Action steps

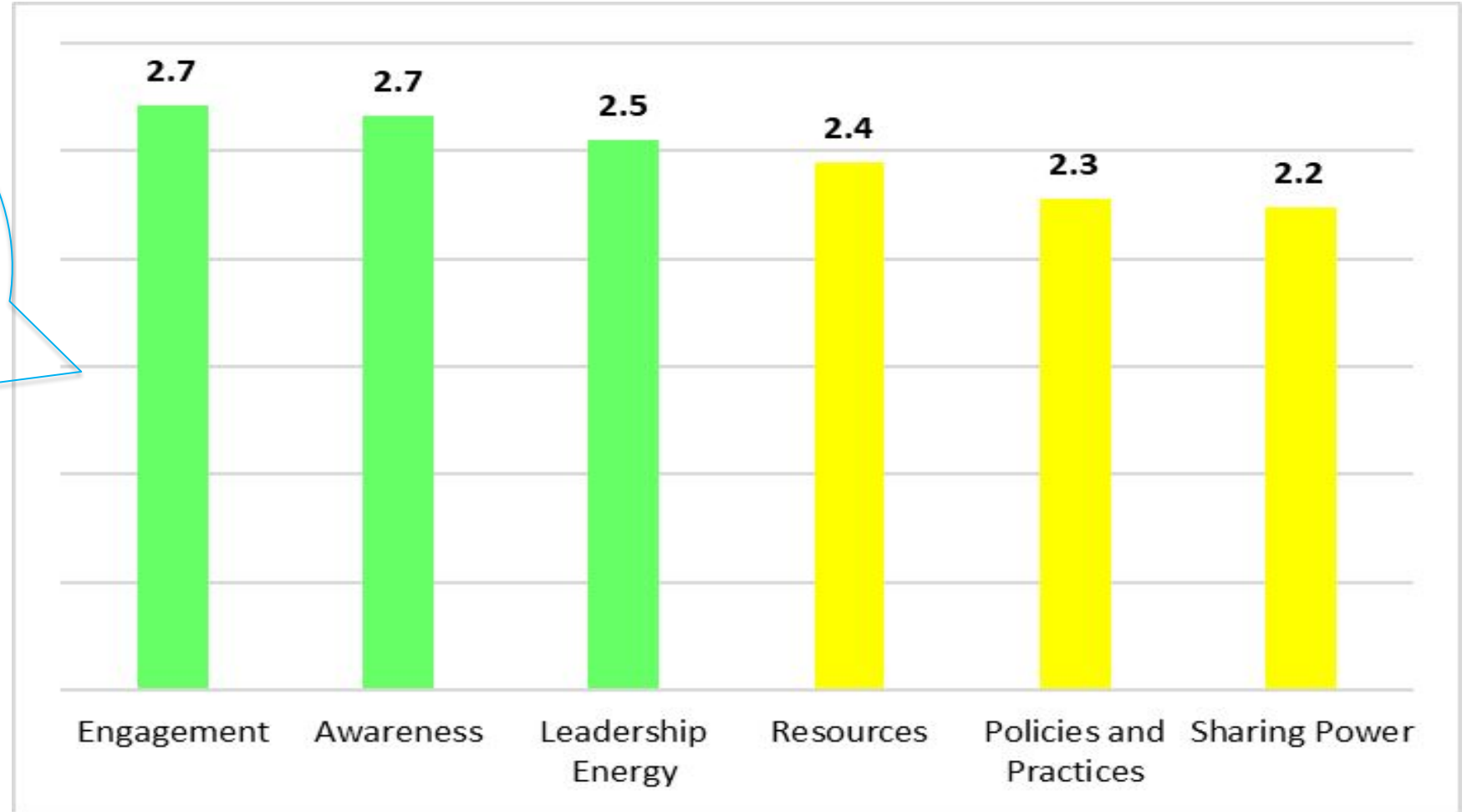
- Extend the welcome and invitation not just wait for people to show up in your place
- Seek to understand people of other faiths for their own value not to convert them
- There is a skill set in true integration of diverse groups (different races, beliefs) – you have to know how to do it
- Churches need to be educated in multicultural welcome



Schools

(125 completed assessments)

Low to moderate levels of inclusion across all dimensions



Average scores for questions in each dimension of inclusion, based on a scale of 1=not at all, 2=to a slight extent, 3=to a moderate extent and 4=to a great extent

Legend:

Moderate to high level of inclusion (3.0 or higher)

Moderate level of inclusion (2.5 to 2.9)

Low to moderate level of inclusion (2.0 to 2.4)

Low level of inclusion (1.9 or lower)

School system

- Our school system leans too giving too much credence to inclusion. Catering to the desires and wants of the few to the detriment of the majority is not great and that already happens to a small extent more than it should.
- I think the school system does a good job of allowing everyone to have space to practice what they believe, without changing the whole paradigm to cater to the few by taking it away from the majority.
- We have made progress but there is a long way to go. Our students of color face daily discrimination. Our LGBTQ+ students do as well. We have affinity groups but it's not enough.



School system

- Too many of our students of color end up at the ALC. 544 teachers are offered an LGBTQ+ training but they don't have to attend, so most don't.
- School leaders look to the demographic group with the "loudest voice" and this is usually white privileged families, and not families from Indigenous/Black/LatinX culture.
- White European descendants have a rich history and sacrificed to settle in this area. They are/were NOT privileged. They are still working to build a better community.
- This inclusion and awareness is our government continuing to take more control of our lives. STOP IT



School system

- Boys need to be taught how to be strong confident men, they should not be told they are bad people simply because of gender.
- Recently, there was a Native American scholar who visited KSS middle school. I've been told by my student that it's now become a trend to mock Ojibwe culture by chanting made up songs as a way to denigrate Native people.
- I think leaders are aware of the needs and do try, but often are met with outside barriers and groups that try to influence their decisions. I have heard stories of program leaders who are trying to implement new curriculum or a specific training for staff, and they fear backlash from outside groups, such as Moms for Liberty.



School system: Action steps

- I think Minnesota is going down a dangerous path if it's going to make all white kids think they are oppressors. I'm afraid if we push for inclusion it's going to cause a lot of problems. I've taught in schools where kids were half black and half white. It's going to drive a wedge in between them. To suggest that this is a racist community, I resent having that said. This has been a kind community forever.
- Listen to the people with their lived experiences. If they're telling you they've had uninclusive, racist experiences, you need to believe them.



School system: Action steps

- We need budget line items in the school system to hire third parties for accountability and consultation with policies, procedures and practices for inclusiveness and feedback from the lived experience from diverse populations. Everyone has a right to be.

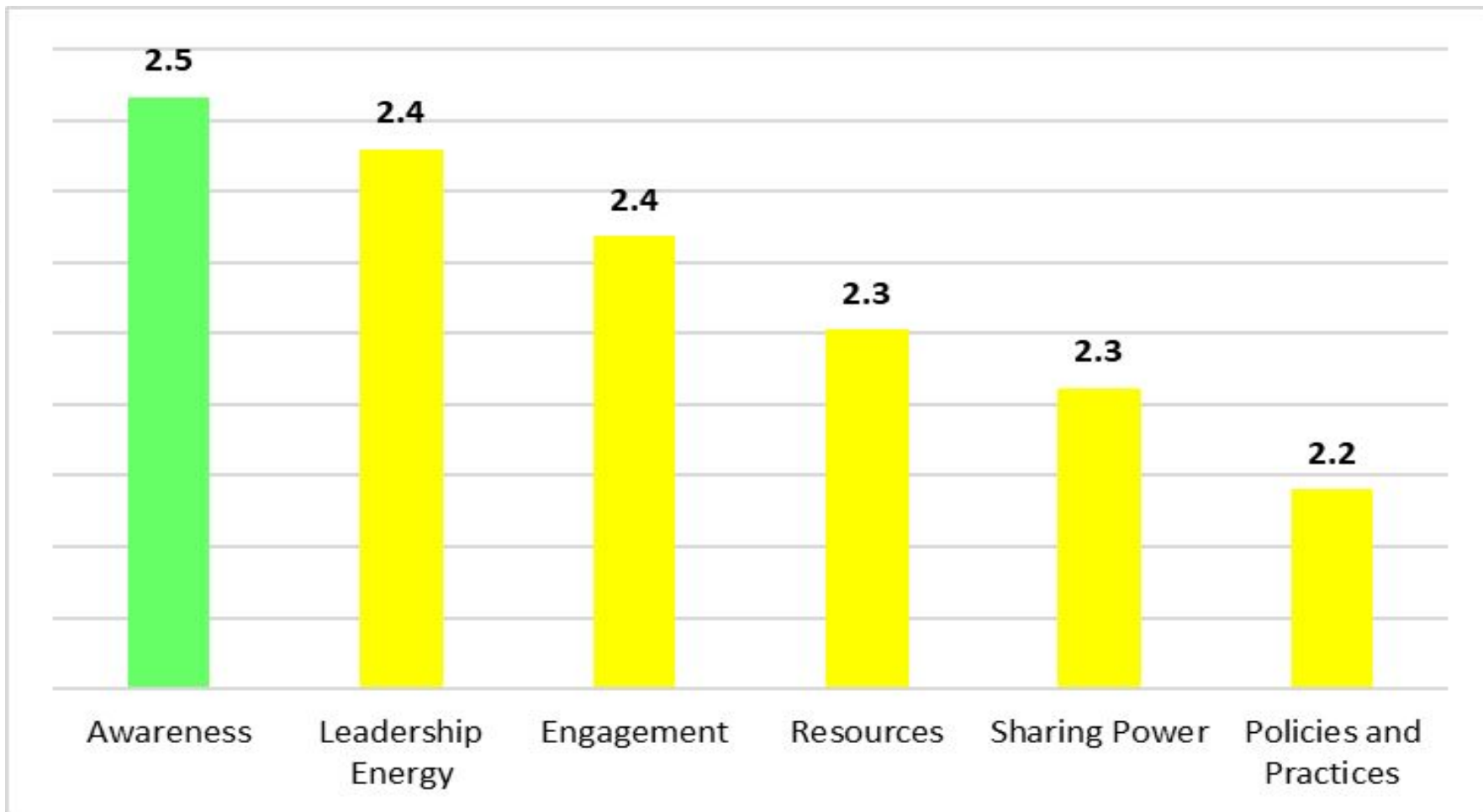


Health care

(55 completed assessments)

Low to moderate levels of inclusion across most dimensions

Average scores for questions in each dimension of inclusion, based on a scale of 1=not at all, 2=to a slight extent, 3=to a moderate extent and 4=to a great extent



Legend:

Moderate to high level of inclusion (3.0 or higher)

Moderate level of inclusion (2.5 to 2.9)

Low to moderate level of inclusion (2.0 to 2.4)

Low level of inclusion (1.9 or lower)

Health care

- They are starting to learn more about the LGBTQ+ community, but they still don't understand much about disability or class issues.
- There was an advertising campaign a few years ago and we could have done a better job with inclusion and representation of different communities. I would not feel as comfortable and open coming to this health care system because I did not see people of different representation.
- There's only one Asian doctor (that I know of), and very few female doctors. The rest are all straight white cisgender able-bodied male doctors.



Health care

- Recently was looking for LGBTQ supported care and searched the hospital website, but it turned up no results.
- I grew up in Pelican Rapids and there was so much diversity. Perham has done so much to increase their workforce and attract international health care workers. In Fergus Falls, I can't tell you where that's happening. Seems we are a full decade or more behind.
- If Black folks are late to an appointment, how the system would respond—would not be as likely to reschedule. Whereas if a white person, then they are more likely to reschedule.



Health care

- The workforce issues—there is desire and then reality. We want to do better, but do we have the allocated resources to do better? There's good intent and then there's the pace at which we move and the work we do.
- There are discrepancies in the way that we provide care to marginalized communities. This is an area that needs improvement. For trans patients, clinicians would dictate notes and would use terminology that was judgmental and not inclusive and not open to treatment options.



Health care: Action Steps

- Signs in English, Dakota, and Ojibwe. Land acknowledgment statement at facilities created in relationship with tribes.
- Making transportation available to pick up patients so they can make appointments.
- To feel welcoming and included you need to have your own space and own practices where others who are not white and christian are—places where folks can be themselves and not have to assimilate.



Health care: Action steps

- If we're to be more inclusive, we might have to experience some discomfort for ourselves and let folks be different. What does it feel like to be in a relationship with people who are different?
- The Minneapolis VA has a forum where folks can come in and discuss their lived experiences as a patient and what lived experience have you had as a patient from your experience.

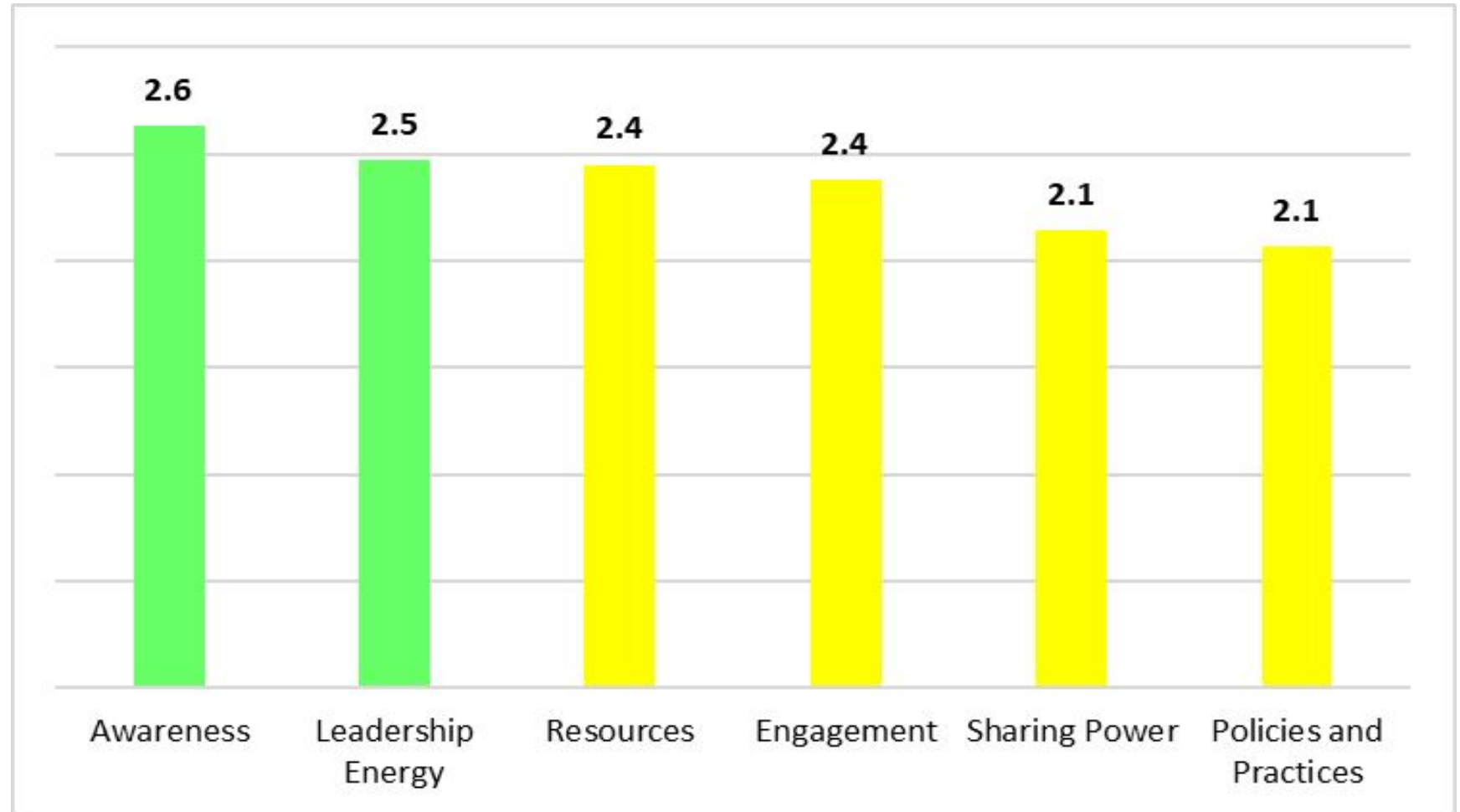


Local government

(51 completed assessments)

Low to moderate levels of inclusion across all dimensions

Average scores for questions in each dimension of inclusion, based on a scale of 1=not at all, 2=to a slight extent, 3=to a moderate extent and 4=to a great extent



Legend:

Moderate to high level of inclusion (3.0 or higher)

Moderate level of inclusion (2.5 to 2.9)

Low to moderate level of inclusion (2.0 to 2.4)

Low level of inclusion (1.9 or lower)

Local government

- They provide information in many places (news, social media, web, utility inserts, etc.) but all is in English. Are they missing a group? Or knowing most Fergus Falls residents speak English (even if not their primary language) that is what they offer?
- I heard that someone started a steering committee for diversity and inclusion issues in our local community, but I have no idea how to get involved. Furthermore, no one gets into office around here unless they are straight, white, cisgender, able-bodied, and Christian around here. As a result, this demographic is the only demographic that has any say in government affairs.



Local government

- Local government uses our money foolishly and is constantly raising "fees", and taxes. I'm sure we've paid for things that as a community we would never be involved in.
- The structure for public inclusion in decision-making is in place in committees and boards but is generally ignored by the city administration.
- Stop worrying about a small specialized group, make the town better for the majority
- Non white, non locals have been hired and appreciated in recent years.



Local government

- Regardless of the level, it feels like there is a "what's in it for me" attitude towards implementing change.
- Maybe there are more outlets that I am unaware of, to my knowledge local government tends to stay in rotation of the same groups of people. Not a lot of diversity in local government.
- City council leadership doesn't really reflect the demographics of the area with a mainly older white male group, only one woman and no BIPOC. BIPOC and women have run but not been elected.
- This is the first EDI experience in which I have seen elected officials attending.



Local government: Action steps

- I realize that we need to look at how we structure what we look for -certain traits- we need to expand leadership opportunities to fit diverse people
- County board meetings are scheduled at a time that would be extremely difficult for a single woman or even a working person to serve in the role
- I think decisions happen at committee level, so lets diversify committee participants

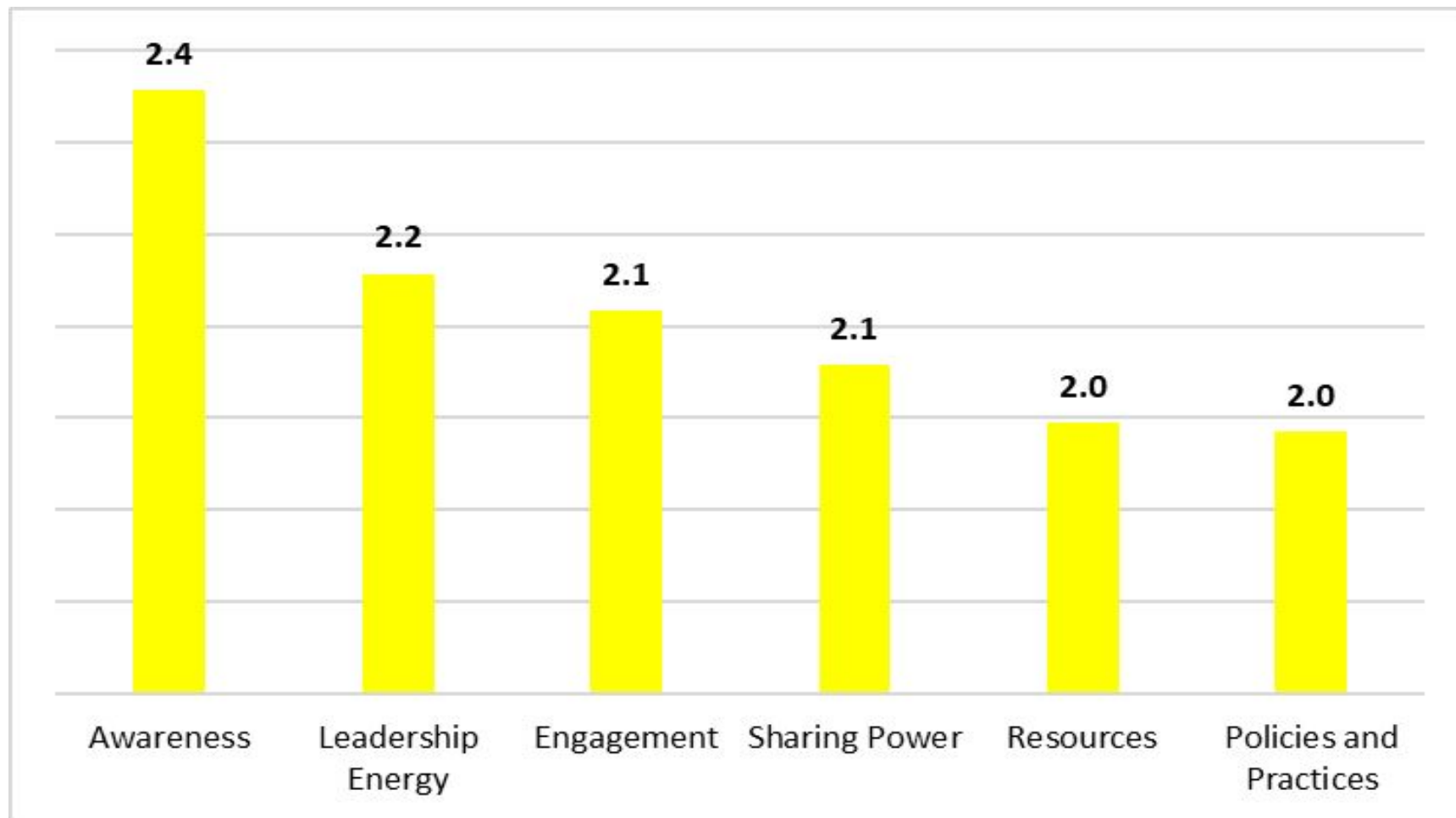


Law enforcement

(44 completed assessments)

Low to moderate levels of inclusion across all dimensions

Average scores for questions in each dimension of inclusion, based on a scale of 1=not at all, 2=to a slight extent, 3=to a moderate extent and 4=to a great extent



Legend:

Moderate to high level of inclusion (3.0 or higher)

Moderate level of inclusion (2.5 to 2.9)

Low to moderate level of inclusion (2.0 to 2.4)

Low level of inclusion (1.9 or lower)

Law enforcement

- Some are aware of some inclusion issues to a slight degree, but not others. I've seen police officers in my town who support racial equality and the legalization of Marijuana lead a hate rally against the LGBTQ+ community. I've also seen officers (not necessarily in my community) post comments online about how all neurodivergent and disabled people should be removed from society, stripped of voting and autonomy rights, and locked away in institutions against their will. It was extraordinarily upsetting.
- Our law enforcement does a great job. They do a good job of enforcing the law that connects with reality. They prosecute real crimes and do not waste their time and the community's time on insignificant things.



Law enforcement

- Attempts in recruitment to diversify the workforce understand the necessity and importance of training.
- They don't ask any of the minority groups I belong to for input. This community is mostly white, but there are a few racial minorities. Even so, I don't know if there is any on the force. I think there's some women, but there's utterly no LGBTQ+ or neurodivergent people.
- Law officer is stationed in the central office area of the senior/middle school - so very visible.



Law enforcement: Action steps

- Community engagement - law enforcement has tried to recruit more women and people of color into careers but it has been difficult. We try to get a more diverse workforce - hard to do this in rural Minnesota. Hard to get people to even apply and think about moving out here.
- There are good services in place for translation. There's a language line that officers can call. There's a different level for courts vs. law enforcement. It's used at other offices in county government as well.
- Our police chief was instrumental in getting this going. There was a presentation at the city council meeting. The sheriff's office is involved as well.

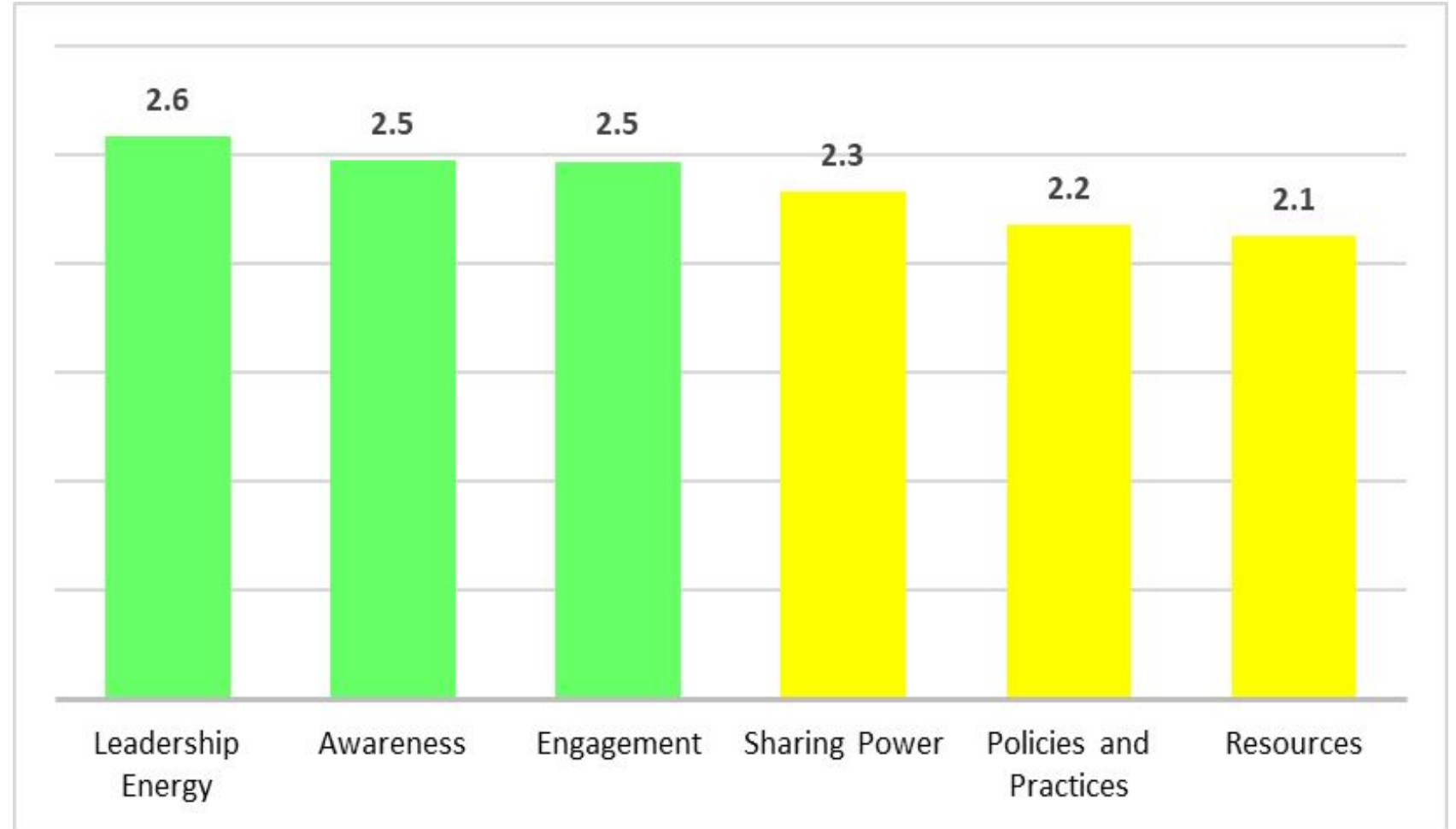


Business

(48 completed assessments)

Low to moderate levels of inclusion across all dimensions

Average scores for questions in each dimension of inclusion, based on a scale of 1=not at all, 2=to a slight extent, 3=to a moderate extent and 4=to a great extent



Legend:

Moderate to high level of inclusion (3.0 or higher)

Moderate level of inclusion (2.5 to 2.9)

Low to moderate level of inclusion (2.0 to 2.4)

Low level of inclusion (1.9 or lower)

Business

- After George Floyd, almost every business owner I talked to was much more concerned about the riots spreading and the damage it could cause than the loss of innocent black lives; there's not a big push for inclusion in the business community. Ask people of color how they're treated in retail spaces here....
- The Mexican store in town is a key location - the Latino community knows they can go there and get help. Attorneys put their cards there. Going online isn't their strength.



Business

- I do agree there are ways small businesses in Fergus Falls can communicate although I don't believe they include all ethnicity and diverse businesses
- I am very new to the region but my experience with many businesses is a sense of neighborliness.
- It's been my experience as an employee or prospective employee for some local businesses that equity and inclusion isn't usually a priority.



Business

- I think we all live in our own little bubbles and aren't forced outside of them much so are unaware of the benefits of developing leaders that don't look like us.
- This summer, when construction was taking place on Lincoln Ave to make the sidewalks handicap accessible, all I heard was negativity about how this was hurting businesses. The messaging could have been spun to celebrate what the construction was trying to accomplish and encourage people to patronize downtown amidst construction. It wasn't.



Business: Action steps

- After George Floyd, almost every business owner I talked to was much more concerned about the riots spreading and the damage it could cause than the loss of innocent black lives; there's not a big push for inclusion in the business community. Ask people of color how they're treated in retail spaces here....
- The Mexican store in town is a key location - the Latino community knows they can go there and get help. Attorneys put their cards there. Going online isn't their strength.
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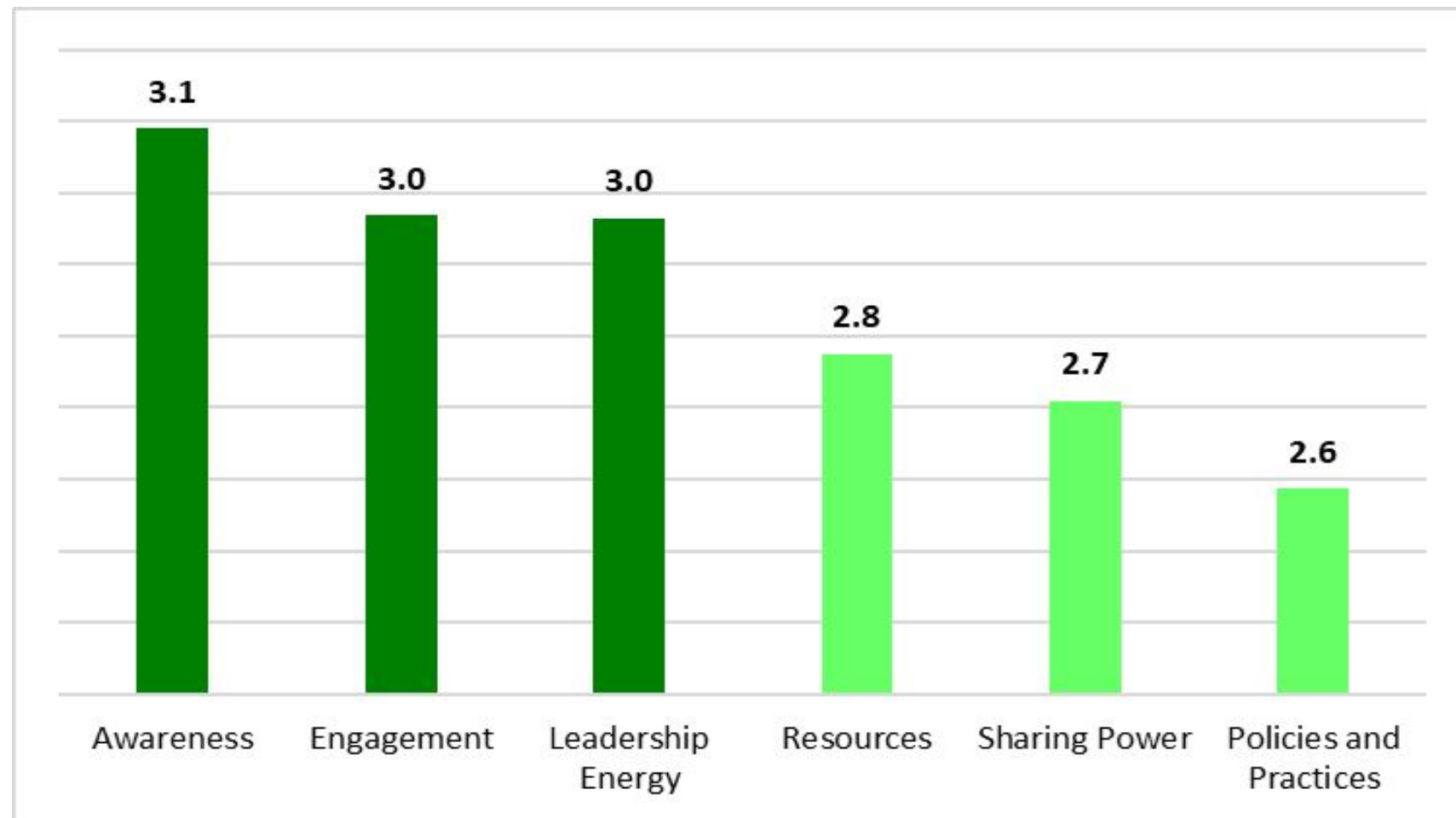


Nonprofit organizations

(55 completed assessments)

Strong in several dimensions of inclusion

Average scores for questions in each dimension of inclusion, based on a scale of 1=not at all, 2=to a slight extent, 3=to a moderate extent and 4=to a great extent



Legend:

Moderate to high level of inclusion (3.0 or higher)

Moderate level of inclusion (2.5 to 2.9)

Low to moderate level of inclusion (2.0 to 2.4)

Low level of inclusion (1.9 or lower)

Nonprofit organizations

- I work for a community foundation and see the collaborations with other nonprofits, businesses, government entities and know that inclusivity is of highest priority.
- Most local nonprofits have a basic understanding of inclusion, but few understand intersectional issues. I frequently find that where I'm included for disability issues, I'm still excluded for LGBTQ+ issues and where I'm included for LGBTQ+ issues, I'm still excluded for disability issues.
- The ones I know of are generally White and male and older and are not concerned about diversity and inclusion but their own missions.



Nonprofit organizations

- We need to learn how to communicate beyond the dominant cultural norm
- Finding ways to disburse funding, yet holding people accountable, while working to be more inclusive is challenging. Cultural norms of the dominant sector are perceived as "common sense" rather than a norm which could be creating barriers.
- Stop forcing inclusion down our throats!
- It is difficult to recruit diverse volunteer leadership when one's social capital is not diverse



Nonprofit organizations

- Would likely welcome any capable diverse individual to leadership
- The leadership at the nonprofit I work has been asked repeatedly to include persons from diverse groups to serve on the board of directors, recruit volunteers . Zero has been done
- Head Start is one of the emerging non-profits, NGOs to require inclusion of their targeted population on their boards
- Creating educational programs or partnering with organizations that support people to adjust to the social norms such as infrastructure use, etc.



Nonprofit organizations: Action steps

- Applying grants that require diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Learn from Pelican Rapids, learn from one another.
- Nonprofits missions are to seek out inclusivity. The Challenge is leadership isn't very diverse. Boards need to be intentional about recruitment and those they serve. The way we have always done and being open to new ways or cultural norms.
- Seeking people out and not wait for people to come to them.
- Remove conditions for services (esp. religious conditions)

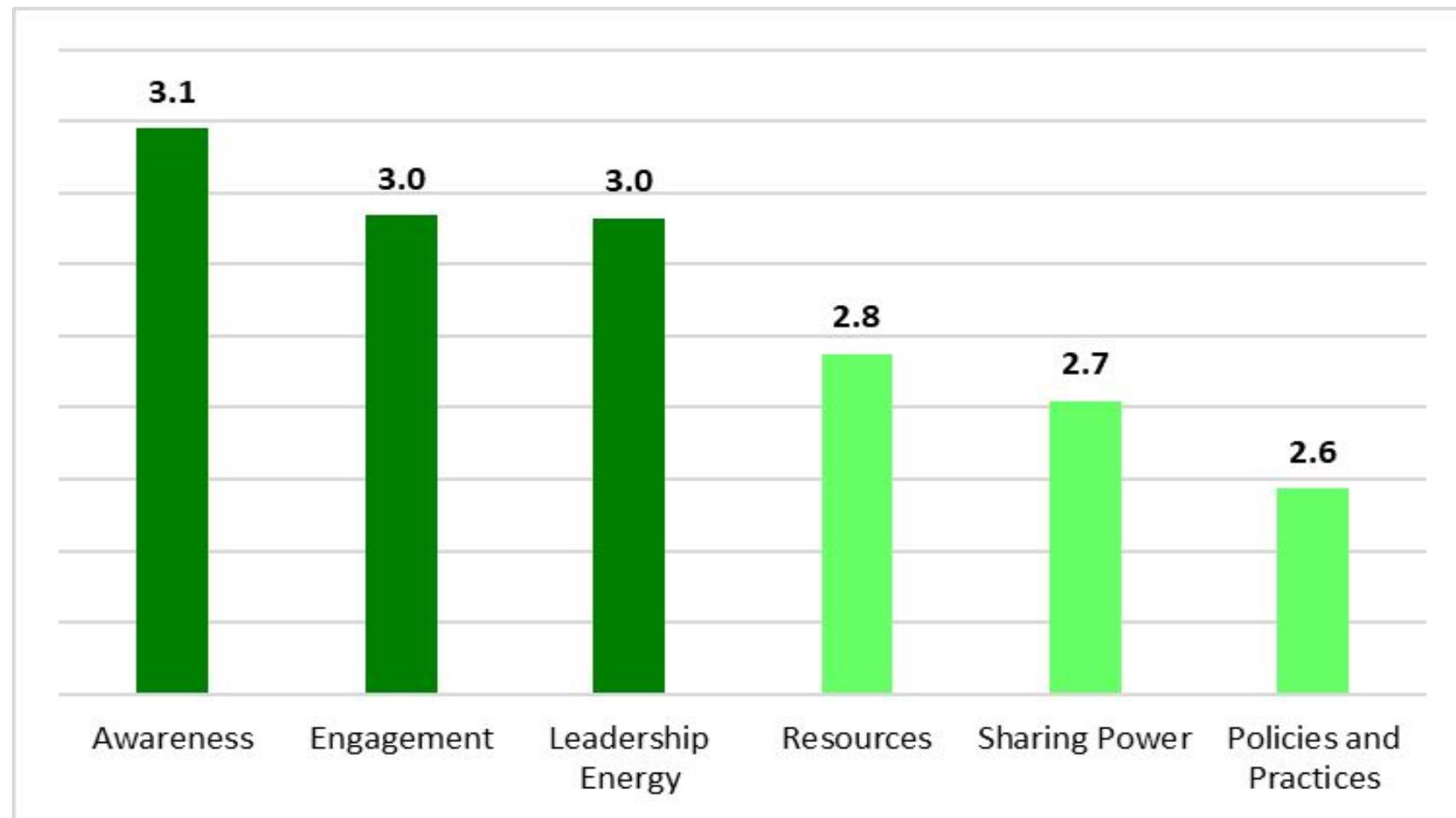


Nonprofit organizations

(55 completed assessments)

Strong in several dimensions of inclusion

Average scores for questions in each dimension of inclusion, based on a scale of 1=not at all, 2=to a slight extent, 3=to a moderate extent and 4=to a great extent



Legend:

Moderate to high level of inclusion (3.0 or higher)

Moderate level of inclusion (2.5 to 2.9)

Low to moderate level of inclusion (2.0 to 2.4)

Low level of inclusion (1.9 or lower)

The big picture

Sectors	Dimensions of inclusion					
	Awareness	Leadership Energy	Engagement	Resources	Sharing Power	Policies and Practices
Nonprofit organizations	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
School system	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Religious organizations	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Business	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Local government	Light Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Health care	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Law enforcement	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow

Average scores for questions in each dimension of inclusion, based on a scale of 1=not at all, 2=to a slight extent, 3=to a moderate extent and 4=to a great extent

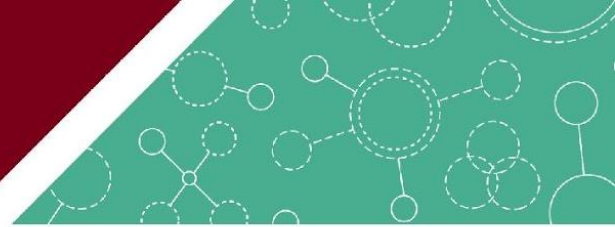
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Questions & Curiosities

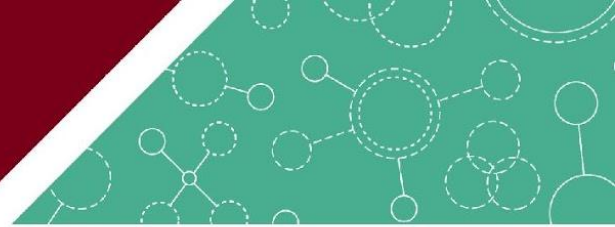
Guidelines

- Practice “both/and” thinking
- Don't freeze each other in time
- Be aware of intent and impact
- Expect/Accept discomfort and unfinished business

From Coming Together for Racial Understanding, 2023

If behaviors escalate to physical or psychological violence/abuse or bullying, you will be muted and asked to leave the Zoom.





Questions & Curiosities



Thanks for your work to make Fergus Falls a place where everyone belongs!

You are welcome to attend the next learning cohort:
February 13, 2024 @ Community Education

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