

## Appendix F

### Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Wlodkowski & Ginsberg (1995) borrow Patrick J. Hill's (1991) ideal of "conversations of respect" to illustrate the tone in the process of culturally responsive teaching:

"Conversations of respect between diverse communities are characterized by intellectual reciprocity. They are the ones in which the participants expect to learn from each other, expect to learn non-incident things, expect to change at least intellectually as a result of the encounter. In such conversations, one participant does not treat the other as an illustration of, or variation of, or a dollop upon a truth or insight already fully possessed. There is no will to incorporate the other in any sense into one's belief system. In such conversations, one participant does not presume that the relationship is one of teacher to student (in any traditional sense of that relationship), or parent to child, of developed to underdeveloped. The participants are co-learners" (p. 284).

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy delineates and promotes the achievement of all students. Effective teaching and learning take place "in a culturally supported, learner-centered context, whereby the strengths students bring to school are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student achievement" (Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2004). Culturally Responsive Pedagogy comprises three levels: (a) institutional, (b) personal, and (c) instructional.

#### **Institutional:**

Administration, policies and its values. Little (1999) recommends that educational reforms planning to establish culturally responsive institutions must implement them in three different areas:

1. Organization of the school - This includes the administrative structure and the way it relates to diversity, and the use of physical space in planning schools and arranging classrooms.
2. School policies and procedures - This refers to those policies and practices that impact on the delivery of services to students from diverse backgrounds.
3. Community involvement - This is concerned with the institutional approach to community involvement in which families and communities are expected to find ways to become involved in the school, rather than the school seeking connections with families and communities.

#### **Personal:**

The cognitive and emotional process teachers need to engage in to become culturally responsive. This process comprises two dimensions **self-reflection** and **exploration**.

**Self-reflection** is essential in order for teachers to examine their attitudes and beliefs about themselves and others and understand why they are who they are, with the ultimate goal of confronting biases influencing their value system. This will help teachers "reconcile negative

feelings towards any cultural, language, or ethnic group” (Richards, et al) and diminish the likelihood of reflecting prejudice or racism towards certain groups. Once teachers have successfully rid themselves of their biases, they will be able to create a welcoming and safe environment for their students and their families.

**Self-Exploration** allows teachers the opportunity to “explore their personal histories and experiences, as well as the history and current experiences of their students and families” (Richards, et al). Teachers who have knowledge and understanding about themselves and others are better able to appreciate differences and deliver unbiased instruction, which ultimately will prepare them to address the needs of all their students. Teachers interested in becoming culturally responsive are encouraged to conduct the following eight activities (engage in reflective thinking and writing, explore their personal and family history, acknowledge membership in different groups, learn about the history and experiences of diverse groups, visit students’ families and communities, visit or read about successful teachers in diverse settings, develop an appreciation of diversity and participate in reforming the institution. (For detailed description of recommended activities on becoming a culturally responsive teacher, please go to [www.nccrest.org](http://www.nccrest.org))

**Instructional:**

Materials, strategies and activities that form the basis of instruction.

**Culturally Responsive Instructional Guidelines** (Adapted from Klump, J., McNeir, G. 2005, and Artiles and Ortiz (2002).

- A climate of caring, respect, and the valuing of student’s cultures is fostered in the school and classroom.
- Bridges are built between academic learning and student’s prior understanding, knowledge, native language and values through thematic teaching.
- Educators learn from and about their students’ culture, language, and learning styles to make instruction more meaningful and relevant to their student’s lives.
- Local knowledge, language, and culture are fully integrated into the curriculum, not added on to it. Instruction is delivered in the native language and in English.
- Staff members hold students to high standards and have high expectations for all students.
- Effective classroom practices are challenging, cooperative, and hands-on, with less emphasis on rote memorization and lecture formats.
- School staff builds trust and partnerships with families, especially with families marginalized by schools in the past.
- Meaningful language use across the curriculum.
- Pair auditory with visuals to reinforce concepts and vocabulary.

