



*Culturally Responsive Teaching, Culturally
Responsive Schools*
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**Meridian Public School District
Professional Development Training**

*Moving Toward a Culturally and
Linguistically Competent
School District*

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STTAC

OJJDP State Training and
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Session Outline

- Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) defined
- Goal of CRT and thoughts from the field
- Conditions for learning and social emotional learning
- Culturally responsive practices
- Educators recognized for excellence in CRT
- Improving our intercultural skills
- Activity

What is Culturally Responsive Teaching?

Culturally responsive teaching is using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them; it teaches to and through the strengths of these students.

Gay, 2000

What is the Goal of Culturally Responsive Teaching?

“The goal of culturally responsive teaching is to create a learning environment conducive to all student, no matter their ethnic, cultural, or linguistic backgrounds.”

Frey, 2010

Culturally Responsive Teaching

In her 2000 book *Culturally Responsive Teaching*,
Geneva Gay,
defined CRT as teaching that is:

- Validating the values, prior experiences, and cultural knowledge of students
- Comprehensive
- Transformative
- Emancipatory



Thoughts on Cultural and Linguistic Competency

- *Culturally responsive teaching is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning .*

–Gloria Ladson Billings (University of Wisconsin)

- *Educators have a moral and ethical responsibility to help all children reach their potential . . . No child should sit on the margins, feeling either physically or socially isolated from the rewards of learning and educational challenge*

–Donna Ford (University of Virginia)

Thoughts on Cultural and Linguistic Competency (CLC)

- Teachers are culturally responsive when they:
 - Hold all students to high standards.
 - Make learning challenging.
 - Engage all learners.
 - Have an understanding and incorporate students' various cultural backgrounds .
 - Make connections between classroom and the world beyond.

Barnes, 2006

Thoughts on CLC (continued)

- *Culturally responsive teaching reflects democracy at the highest level. It means doing whatever it takes to ensure that every child is achieving and ever moving towards realizing her or his potential*
 - Joyce Taylor Gibson (University of Massachusetts)
- *Schools must take a serious look at their curriculum, pedagogy, and hiring practices and all other policies that create a school climate that is either empowering or disempowering . . .*
 - Sonia Neto (Association of Independent Schools of South Australia)

Thoughts on CLC (continued)

- Benefits of using culturally responsive teaching methods when compared to classrooms without these practices:
 - A more positive classroom learning environment
 - More efficient use of class time and human resources
 - Higher quality instruction
 - Higher percentage of on-task students
 - Greater student engagement

Burns, et al., 2005

Improving Conditions for Learners

- Learning is both a cognitive and ***social and emotional process***
 - Relationships, Relationships, Relationships
 - School climate
 - Supports needed to provide teachers/staff and students
 - Skill development for both teachers/staff and students

Critical Pillars of Conditions for Learning

- **Safety** - Learners must be, and feel, safe.
- **Support** - Learners must feel connected to teachers and the learning setting.
- **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)** - Learners need to learn to manage their emotions and relationships.
- **Engagement and Challenge** - Learners need to be actively engaged in learning endeavors.

Osher, Sidana, and Kelly, 2008

Conditions for Learning: CLC in the School and Classroom

- Provide a learning environment inclusive of diverse learning needs and styles.
- Provide an environment free from prejudice and stereotyping.
- Involve parents and other individuals/groups from the wider community into the life of the school.
- Ensure school policy reflects a commitment to supporting a culturally inclusive curriculum and that its' implementation is formally monitored.

Willis-Darpoh, 2013

Culturally Responsive Practices

- Involving all students in the construction of knowledge:
 - Inquiry projects
 - Having students working collaboratively in small groups of mixed ability
 - Authentic dialogues
 - Having students assume increasing responsibility for their learning

Villegos & Lucas, 2003

Culturally Responsive Practices (continued)

Building on students' personal and cultural strengths

- Helping students access prior knowledge and beliefs.
- Building on students' interests.
- Building on students' linguistic resources.
- Using examples and analogies from students' lives.

Villegos & Lucas, 2003

Culturally Responsive Practices (continued)

Building on students' personal and cultural strengths (continued)

- Using appropriate instructional materials.
- Tapping community resources.
- Creating different paths to learning by using varied instructional activities.

Villegos & Lucas, 2003

Culturally Responsive Practices (continued)

Helping students examine the curriculum from multiple perspectives

- Review the curriculum to see if it contains multiple perspectives and is relevant to youth.
- Review curriculum resources to see if they provide multiple perspectives.
- Review teaching to see if it includes different cultural perspectives.

Villegos & Lucas, 2003

Culturally Responsive Practices (continued)

Using varied assessment practices that promote learning

- Use authentic assessments that take advantage of cultural differences.
- Include such assessments as:
 - Exhibits or portfolios.
 - Oral presentations.
 - Debates.

Villegos & Lucas, 2003

Culturally Responsive Practices (continued)

Making the culture of the classroom inclusive of all students

- Reflect on teaching experiences to determine what works.
- Don't automatically misinterpret cultural differences as misbehaviors (e.g., explain speaking out and turn-taking rules).
- Set and provide clear expectations.
- Provide meaningful feedback.

Villegos & Lucas, 2003

Conditions for Learning: Strategies for Teaching Students of Color

Teachers and school staff can:

- Learn things about the students, individually and collectively, including cultural and individual life circumstances.
- Provide a structured, but flexible learning environment.
- Make education relevant and useful.
- Develop an awareness of the impact of culture on learning.
- Help students succeed without losing their cultural identity.

Willis-Darpoh, 2013

Conditions for Learning: Strategies for Teaching Students of Color (continued)

Teachers and school staff can:

- Respect cultural differences and understand that these differences are not deficits.
- Provide hands-on, activity-based instruction.
- Recognize efforts as well as accomplishments.
- Use alternative testing methods.

Willis-Darpoh, 2013

Educators Honored for Excellence in Culturally Responsive Teaching

- Silvestre Arcos—New York—Middle School – cross cultural learning
- Sonia Galaviz—Idaho—Upper Elementary— authentic materials and experiences, family
- Kathy Lacroiz—Michigan—Elementary—equity team

Education Week: TEACHER Teaching
Tolerance, 2013

Educators Honored for Excellence in Culturally Responsive Teaching (continued)

- Amber Makaiau—Hawaii—High School—course on ethnic studies
- Tracy Oliver-Gray—Maryland—High School—intentional teaching and student voice

Education Week: TEACHER
Teaching Tolerance, 2013

Conditions for Learning: Improving Teachers' Intercultural Skills

- Be aware of your own cultural characteristics and communication style.
- Learn about your own culture and about other cultures.
- Develop relationships with those who can be cultural informants.
- Attend cultural events in your community.
- Be flexible in your intercultural interactions – reserve judgments about behaviors and intentions until you understand the cultural context.

Willis-Darpoh, 2013

Culturally Responsive Education Environments and Practices

Activity:

Green Dots: Which two practices or approaches do you currently employ in your work for the school district in promoting culturally responsive environments for youth to achieve and grow?

Red Dots: Which two approaches have you not seen practiced in the school district or feel would be very difficult to implement in promoting culturally responsive environments for youth to achieve and grow?

Culturally Responsive School Environments

- Create an environment that reflects cultural and linguistic diversity
- Enact instruction through different learning styles and modalities
- Know that failure of any children is not an option

Willis-Darpoh, 2013

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