



Illinois State Board of Education

Key Terms

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards

The following key terms can help individuals understand concepts included throughout the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards

Academia: The educational environment in its entirety, tasked with the pursuit of education and learning; the life, community, or world of teachers, schools, and education (Merriam-Webster, 2021). Accessibility Ways in which educational institutions and policies ensure — or at least strive to ensure — that students have equal and equitable opportunities to take full advantage of their education (Partnership, Great Schools, 2014).

Affirm: To offer support or encouragement to confirm validity; to confirm or ratify (Cornell Law School, 2020).
Allyship: A relationship that values each individual's cultural values and experiences (Merriam-Webster, 2019a).

Asset Thinking: An approach that focuses on strengths of each student and views diversity in thought, culture, and traits as positive assets; students are valued for what they bring into the classroom (University of Memphis, 2019).

Consciousness: A developmental process that makes people aware of systems of oppression (J Med Life, 2014)

Counternarrative: Story going against that of the majority culture as expressed in educational text, print, or digital form (Center for Intercultural Dialogue, 2014)

Cross-Cultural: Dealing with or offering comparison between two or more different cultures or culture areas (Cambridge, 2021)

Cultural Mismatch: The incongruence in beliefs or ways of being between people or groups of people based on their cultural heritage, age, region, etc.; when cultural norms in mainstream institutions do not match the norms prevalent among social groups which are underrepresented in those institutions (Stephens, Townsend, 2001).

Culture: The customs, traditions, arts, and beliefs of a racial, religious, or other social group; that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired...as a member of society (Tylor, 1870).

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: It is an approach that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Ladson-Billings).

Curriculum: The aggregate of courses of study, including all components of material and resources used to instruct and facilitate student learning; a standards-based sequence of planned experiences where students practice and achieve proficiency in content and applied learning skills (RIDE, 2021).

Deficit Thinking: A paradigm by which educators attribute the academic or behavioral difficulties of some students to the students themselves, their families, communities, and cultures; [the concept] holds students from historically oppressed populations responsible for the challenges and inequalities that they face (Davis, 2019).

Digital Literacy: An ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information. This ability requires both cognitive and technical skills; the ability to understand and use information in multiple formats from a wide range of sources when it is presented via computers (University of Illinois, 2016a).

Dominant Culture: Majority culture represented within a group setting; [a cultural group] whose values, language, and ways of behaving are imposed on a subordinate culture or cultures through economic or political power... achieved through legal or political suppression of other sets of values and patterns of behavior, or by monopolizing the media of communication (Oxford, 2021).

Equity: Creating equal opportunity for access, success, and representation for all students in our classrooms by respecting and attending to the diverse strengths and challenges of each student; recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances. [A dynamic] process that is ongoing, requiring us to identify and overcome intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures (NACE, 2021).

Identity: The relationship established by psychological and societal identification, which includes the distinguishing characteristics or personality of an individual; who a person is, or the qualities of a person or group that make them different from others (Cambridge, 2021).

Implicit Biases: An individual's unconscious attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and stereotypes that impact their behavior and interactions with another individual (Yale: Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning, 2019).
Intersectionality: A lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects, the manner in which multiple forms of discrimination or prejudice combine, overlap, or intersect in the experiences of individuals (Crenshaw, Columbia Law School, June 8).

-isms: Prejudice or discrimination about another person or people on the basis of a specified characteristic. Examples include racism (race), sexism (sex or gender), ableism (disability status), Eurocentrism (non-Western country of origin) (Merriam-Webster, 2021).

Marginalization: A lived experience for an individual that includes persistent disadvantages or lack of access to resources and opportunities in society; [Marginalized populations] are groups and communities that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political, and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social and cultural dimensions (NCCDH, 2021).

Native: Associated with a person's origin or birth; belonging to or associated with one by birth; innate (Merriam-Webster, 2021).

Novice: Someone in a professional education setting who is new to the practice of education; someone who is just beginning to learn a skill or subject (Macmillan, 2021).

Oppression: a combination of prejudice and institutional power that creates a system that regularly and severely discriminates against some groups and benefits other groups. Systems, relations, or behaviors which disadvantage groups or individuals through formal institutions or informal attitudes and behaviors; Oppression fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry, and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures (National Museum of African American History and Culture, 2021).

Periodic: Occurring during set intervals of time (Merriam-Webster, 2021)

Privilege: An advantage, immunity, permission, right, or benefit granted or available only to a particular person or group of people (American Heritage Dictionary, 2004).

Restorative Justice: An effective alternative to punitive responses to wrongdoing. Inspired by indigenous traditions, it brings together persons harmed with persons responsible for harm in a safe and respectful space, promoting dialogue, accountability, and a stronger sense of community (Davis, 2014).

Self-Advocacy: One's advocacy for oneself (Merriam-Webster, (2019c).

Self-Interest: One's own interest (Merriam-Webster, 2019b).