Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards: Curriculum and Learning Environments

Illinois Administrative Rule Part 24
Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards for All Illinois Educators

Section 24.50
(b) Systems of Oppression
Culturally responsive teachers and leaders understand that there are systems in our society, especially, but not limited to, our school system, that create and reinforce inequities, thereby creating oppressive conditions. Educators work actively against these systems in their everyday roles in educational institutions.

(d) Students as Co-Creators
Culturally responsive teachers and leaders (who fundamentally believe all students are capable) center learning around students' experiences and position them as co-creators, with emphasis on prioritizing historically marginalized students.

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Section 24.50
(e) Leveraging Student Advocacy
Culturally responsive teachers and leaders will support and create opportunities for student advocacy and representation in the content and classroom

(g) Content Selections in All Curricula
Culturally responsive teachers and leaders intentionally embrace student identities and prioritize representation in the curriculum. In turn, students are not only given a chance to identify with the curriculum, they become exposed to other cultures within their schools and both their local and global communities.

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Section 24.50

(h) Student Representation in the Learning Environment
Culturally responsive teachers and leaders will partner with families and communities to build rapport, form collaborative and mutual relationships, and engage in effective cross-cultural communication.

Agreements help maintain a safe, supportive, and active learning environment.

Our agreements	What they look like in action
Be engaged and maintain confidentiality	Make the personal commitment to remain emotionally, intellectually, and socially involved in the dialogue. Seek to understand, not to agree. Honor privacy by avoiding "who said what."
Speak to and listen for one's own truth	Be open about your feelings and experiences – not just saying what you think others want to hear. Be open to the experiences of others, not comparing them to your own. Consider your own power dynamics and how it shapes what you see/hear and what you do not see/hear.
Experience discomfort	Stay focused on disrupting institutional oppression and building inclusive leadership skills. It is through dialogue — even when uncomfortable — that awareness happens and change begins.
Expect and accept non-closure	This work is ongoing. Be willing to take risks, sit through silence, and accept that this is about changing yourself and not others.

Avoid Communication Roadblocks

Problem-Solving	"Have you tried x, y, or z?"
Blame	"Do you think it might be because of the way you …?"
Coldness	"It's for your own good." "You'll be better for it."
False Assurance	"Oh, I'm sure it's nothing." "It will all turn out fine."
Judgment	"You're being overly sensitive."
Questioning	"Did that really happen?" "Are you sure you heard him correctly?" "Are you sure you are remembering that correctly?"

Silence Breakers* are prompts we may use to address common challenges in cross-racial discussions.

1   Talking about race makes me feel...

2   From my experience/perspective as (identity) ...

3   This perspective is new to me, but I'm wondering if it is accurate to say that...?

4   I'm still working through / processing this, but right now where I am at is...

5   Can you help me understand whether what I'm thinking right now might be problematic?

*Excerpt from Sensoy and DiAngelo. Adapted from Anika Nailah and DiAngelo.

Reflection Question Framework

How does (perspective shared) challenge or expand the way I see the world?

How does this issue relate to my own experience? How have I been shaped by the issues being addressed?

Why is it hard for me to accept this as true? What about my life in relation to my race/class/gender might make it difficult for me to see or validate this new perspective?

What are my reactions? What do my reactions reveal about what I perceive is at risk were I to accept this information?

What do I need to do differently? If I were to accept this information as valid, what am I called to do?

Source: http://theoatmcleanhttp://theoatmeal.com/comics/believe_cleaneal.com/comics/believe_clean

Objectives

- Explore the ways students relate to curricular materials.
- Identify forms of bias in instructional materials.
- Plan for how to make culturally responsive curriculum choices.
- Hear and explain the importance of student voices.
- Explore ways to increase opportunities for student voice in our classrooms.

What are windows and mirrors?

- What does Grace Lin believe about the books children should be reading?
- What are windows, according this video? What are mirrors?

Curriculum should provide students with both windows and mirrors.

Students look out through **windows** to see the experiences of others.

Students look into **mirrors** to see reflections of her/himself.

Source: Michie, Gregory. "On the Importance of Mirrors for Students (and Teachers)."

Reflect on the questions independently and then discuss with a partner or small group.

- How would you describe your own windows and mirrors? Consider your racial, cultural, linguistic, and economic background.
- How were your windows and mirrors represented in the curriculum you experienced in preK-12 education or college?
- How did this shape your learning experience?

Window or mirror?

Do you view these posters as a window or a mirror? Why?

Pink and Say — Patricia Polacco

Do you view *Pink and Say* as a window or a mirror? Why?

Should we infuse our curriculum with an equal number of windows and mirrors? What else should we consider?
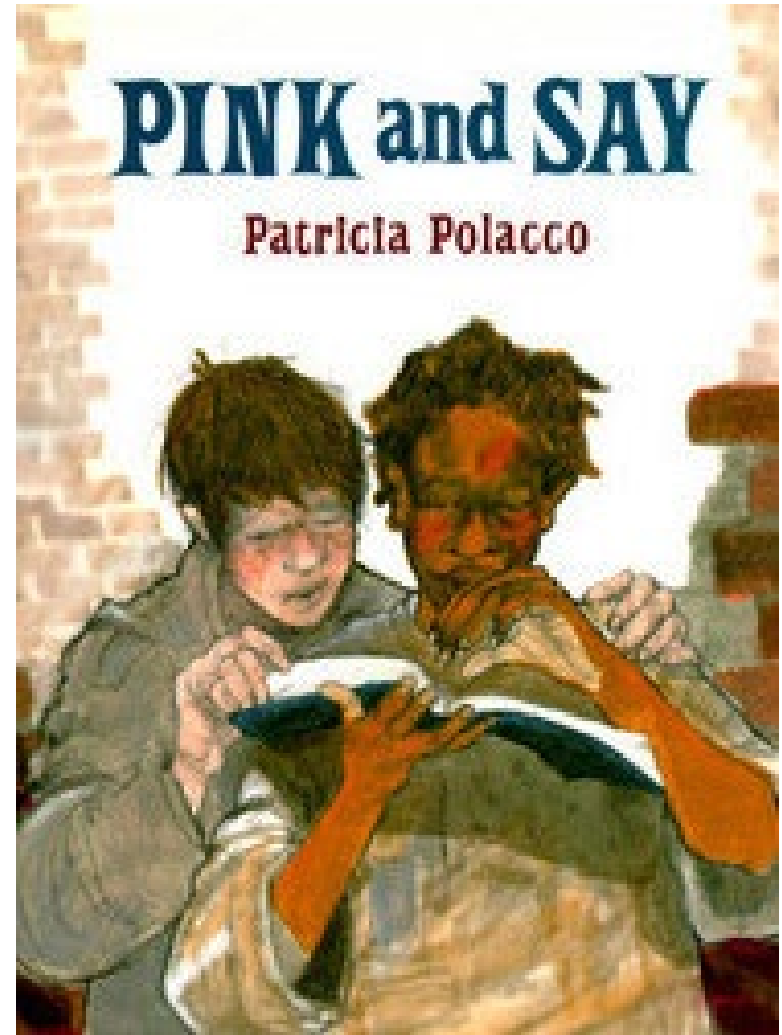
Why are both windows and mirrors powerful for our students?

- Mirrors are particularly powerful for students whose racial, cultural, linguistic, and economic backgrounds differ significantly from the dominant culture.
- Sometimes when we interact with others, listen to their experience, and look through their window, we see ourselves reflected in the glass of their window.
- "In Western education, the gendered perspective of the White male has presented itself as 'universal' for so long that the limitations of this curriculum are often still invisible."

Source: Style, Emily. "Curriculum as Window & Mirror."

Why do ALL of our students need windows and mirrors? How does the concept of sliding glass doors expand the metaphor?

Rudine Sims Bishop
Professor Emerita

Teach worthwhile content and make it meaningful

"As teachers we must present counter narratives that allow students to see their potential, seek strengths rather than deficits, and present models for what is possible."

— Christina Brown

"The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story."

— Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

"For each skill the instructors conveyed its importance and confirmed our ability to perform it independently. They also made sure that our learning connected to our larger purpose."

— Christina Brown

"The most effective urban educators, in every discipline at every grade level, connect the academic rigor of content areas with their students' lives."

— Jeffrey Duncan-Andrade

Teaching counternarratives

- What are some narratives our students have about school? What about literacy and math? What about race and ethnicity?
- How can we go about teaching counternarratives for some of their narratives?

Connecting text selections to the goals of Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading

- Do these books serve as a window or a mirror for your students? Why?
- What narratives do these books construct that confirm or complicate their existing narratives?
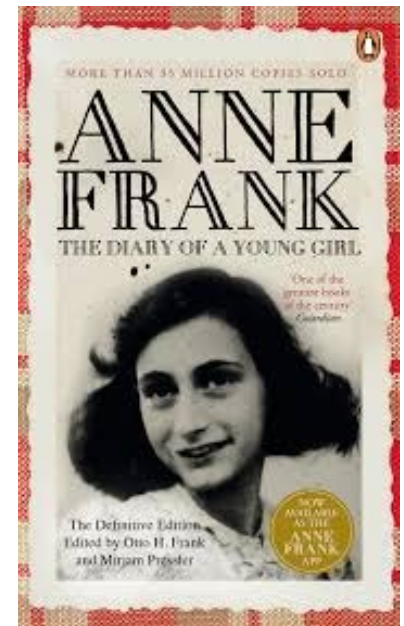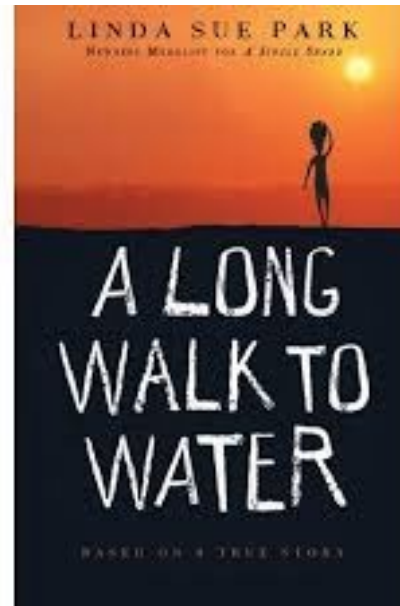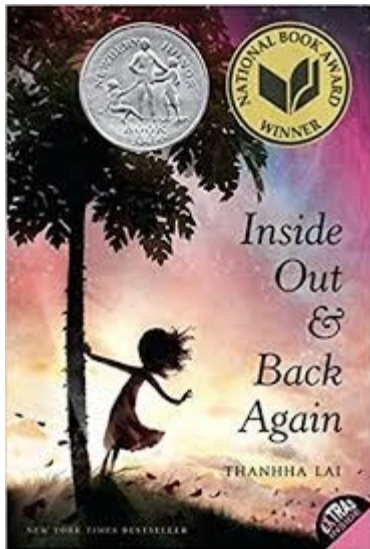
Different Forms of Bias in Instructional Materials

Invisibility

Stereotyping

Imbalance and Selectivity

Unreality

Fragmentation and Isolation

Linguistic Bias

Cosmetic Bias

Gatekeeping

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading in Action

What is student voice?

- Student voice refers to students' input on what happens within the school and classroom.
- Student voice reflects a student's identity, and comes from a student's experiences, ideals, and knowledge.
- Student experience, opinions, and ideas should be valued in all aspects of school life.
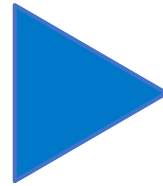
Why is student voice important?

Student Individuality
Teachers explore student identity in the spirit of discovery and out of authentic caring for each student as a whole person.

Student Voice
Students contribute their unique perspectives based on their experiences.

Increased Student Engagement

Academic Excellence

Share one strategy you use (or have seen others use) to explore student individuality.

Students Voices – Listening Activity

"Equity is **hearing somebody's voice** about what they need **and providing them with that**."

— Christopher Emdin

Activity

- We will name what we heard the student say in each story.
- What assumptions are we making about the students and their context? What additional information do the students provide about how their sociopolitical context could influence their learning and experiences in school?
- Design/practice probing questions to help us better understand the student's perspective.

BOSTON Public Schools Focus on Children   BPS Teaching Fellowship

Students Voices – Station One

Published by SchoolBook

These Muslim Teens Say Election Leaves Them Emboldened

▶ Listen 3 min   + Queue   ...

Students Voices – Station Two

Students Voices – Station Three

My Story of Immigration | Miriam Martinez |
TEDxCarverMilitaryAcademy

Envisioning Student Voice: Four Levels

Partnership: Students take the lead in identifying issues they want to learn about and address, and educators facilitate the learning process.

Participation: Student involvement in planning, decision-making, and implementation is key.

Consultation: Teachers look beyond student work to student engagement and invite student discussion and dialogue about learning.

Expression: Teachers use information about student progress and well-being to inform teaching decisions.

Partnership

Participation

Consultation

Expression

Informed by Ontario collaborative inquiry participants and by the work of Michael Fielding (2012), "Beyond Student Voice: Patterns of Partnership and the Demands of Deep Democracy"; Eric Toshalis & Michael J. Nakkula (2012), "Motivation, Engagement and Student Voice"; Roger Hart (1992). Children's participation from tokenism to citizenship.

Video Model: Poetry Open Mic

As you watch the video, listen for the types of interactions that define "Levels of Envisioning Student Voice" and take notes on how students are:

- Seen as a whole person.
- Display more dimensions than just the academic.
- Play an active role in their learning.
- Also look for:
- The modeling the teacher does for her students.
- The culture of learning fostered by the teacher.
- The way the teacher cultivates the individuality of the students.

Actively Soliciting Student Voice: Student Surveys

Student surveys are a unique source of data that:

- Paint a holistic picture of classroom practice by assessing factors that are not measured by traditional assessments, such as care, control and challenge.

- Provide teachers with actionable information about their practice.

- Engage students by showing them that their feedback is valuable.

"The average student knows effective teaching when he or she sees it."

"Learning about Teaching: Initial Findings from the Measures of Effective Teaching," Gates Foundation, December 2010

Discovering/Uncovering Student Voice: Service Learning

Service learning is a powerful approach to teaching that:

- Accomplishes academic goals through community engagement.
- Provides students with authentic learning experiences in which they have freedom to apply academic content to their real-life, real-world context.
- Allows both the student and teacher to develop relationships, responsibility, and connections to the community.

Service learning projects allow students an opportunity to apply instruction and practice civic engagement.

Direct Service	• Tutoring students • Volunteering with community partners
Indirect Service	• Compiling a neighborhood history • Restoring dilapidated housing
Research Based	• Gathering data and creating websites or brochures for nonprofits • Mapping state lands
Advocacy	• Working with school/community leaders on issues important to students • Planning a student forum

Reflections and Share Out

Reflect and post

5-minute individual reflection and post to activity feed

Reflect on the difference between actively soliciting student voice vs. discovering/uncovering student voice.

- What are some examples you've used for each approach?
- What specific strategies will you begin to incorporate in your classroom?

Share

3 minutes with the group

What are some ways you can:

- Discover or uncover the voices of the students you currently teach.
- Incorporate methods into your instruction that actively solicit student voice to improve your practice.