

12-2016

# The Case For Cultural Proficiency For Teachers Of Students Of Color Who Live In Poverty: A Policy Advocacy Document

Perry A. Finch

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.nl.edu/diss>

Part of the [Educational Administration and Supervision Commons](#), and the [Educational Leadership Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Finch, Perry A., "The Case For Cultural Proficiency For Teachers Of Students Of Color Who Live In Poverty: A Policy Advocacy Document" (2016). *Dissertations*. 221.  
<https://digitalcommons.nl.edu/diss/221>

This Dissertation - Public Access is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons@NLU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@NLU. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@nl.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@nl.edu).

THE CASE FOR CULTURAL PROFICIENCY FOR TEACHERS OF  
STUDENTS OF COLOR WHO LIVE IN POVERTY: A POLICY ADVOCACY  
DOCUMENT

Perry A. Finch

Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirement of  
Doctor of Education  
in the Foster G. McGaw Graduate School

National College of Education

National Louis University

December 2016

## Document Origination Statement Digital Commons @ NLU

---

This document was created as *one* part of the three-part dissertation requirement of the National Louis University (NLU) Educational Leadership (EDL) Doctoral Program. The National Louis Educational Leadership EdD is a professional practice degree program (Shulman et al., 2006).

For the dissertation requirement, doctoral candidates are required to plan, research, and implement three major projects, one each year, within their school or district with a focus on professional practice. The three projects are:

- Program Evaluation
- Change Leadership Plan
- Policy Advocacy Document

For the **Program Evaluation** candidates are required to identify and evaluate a program or practice within their school or district. The “program” can be a current initiative; a grant project; a common practice; or a movement. Focused on utilization, the evaluation can be formative, summative, or developmental (Patton, 2008). The candidate must demonstrate how the evaluation directly relates to student learning.

In the **Change Leadership Plan** candidates develop a plan that considers organizational possibilities for renewal. The plan for organizational change may be at the building or district level. It must be related to an area in need of improvement, and have a clear target in mind. The candidate must be able to identify noticeable and feasible differences that should exist as a result of the change plan (Wagner et al., 2006).

In the **Policy Advocacy Document** candidates develop and advocate for a policy at the local, state or national level using reflective practice and research as a means for supporting and promoting reforms in education. Policy advocacy dissertations use critical theory to address moral and ethical issues of policy formation and administrative decision making (i.e., what ought to be). The purpose is to develop reflective, humane and social critics, moral leaders, and competent professionals, guided by a critical practical rational model (Browder, 1995).

### Works Cited

- Browder, L.H. (1995). An alternative to the doctoral dissertation: The policy advocacy concept and the policy document. *Journal of School Leadership*, 5, 40-69.
- Patton, M. Q. (2008). *Utilization-focused evaluation* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Shulman, L.S., Golde, C.M., Bueschel, A.C., & Garabedian, K.J. (2006). Reclaiming education’s doctorates: A critique and a proposal. *Educational Researcher*, 35(3), 25-32.
- Wagner, T., et al. (2006). *Change leadership: A practical guide to transforming our schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

## ABSTRACT

This document explores how expanding educators' cultural proficiency leads to increased learning opportunities for students of color who live in poverty. Through the development of culturally responsive curriculum and instruction, teachers might increase their abilities to meet the needs of previously disenfranchised students. A connection exists between differentiated instruction and culturally responsive instruction, as both require a heightened understanding of students' schema, interests, and culture. This policy argues that increasing educators' cultural proficiency should not be done simply to increase teacher effectiveness with instruction but rather because it is a moral obligation of schools.

## PREFACE

One of the reasons I chose to explore cultural proficiency and culturally responsive curriculum and instruction was because I have limited experience with this topic. Being an educator who has worked only in schools with a predominately minority population, I found this a palpable professional deficit in my growth as an educator. After learning how crafting instruction to match students' cultural characteristics might increase learning with students of color who live in poverty, it became a natural interest of mine. The district in which I work as a middle school principal is predominately Latino students whose socioeconomic status categorizes them as students living in poverty. Though my district is very progressive with its approach to curriculum, instruction, and assessment, we have never seriously discussed incorporating students' culture into our teaching practice.

What we have studied is the work of Carol Anne Tomlinson and her efforts in differentiated instruction. We value this approach to teaching as it meets students' individual needs. One of the ways in which Tomlinson professes to best teach children is to tap into their interests and their background and culture. District 32 (pseudonyms are used in this document) seems to have stopped at the first two without incorporating student culture. Another noted name in education that we have woven into our regular conversations regarding instruction is Charlotte Danielson and her rubric for evaluating teachers. A noteworthy component of Danielson's rubric is "knowledge of students" (Danielson, 2013). Part of knowledge of students is knowledge of their culture—again, an area we have not deeply explored.

The idea of measuring students of color who live in poverty against their White mainstream counterparts using curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices drawn solely from the White mainstream culture is not only unfair but also unethical. I've come to realize that applying only components of some students' native culture into the educational presentation while denying other students that same advantage is morally indefensible. Using elements of someone's culture in the teaching process naturally produces greater results, increased confidence, and stronger motivation for the learner. It is wrong to use a cultural advantage as a basis for assuming intellectual superiority for certain students. It makes me think of the decades-old quote by former University of Oklahoma and Dallas Cowboys football coach Barry Switzer, "There are many people who don't know what real pressure is. Some people are born on third base and go through life thinking they hit a triple" (Shatel, 1986). Of course Switzer wasn't talking about culturally responsive instruction, but his words ring true here nonetheless. If students of the mainstream culture are born advantaged toward the instruction they receive in school—in essence entering school on third base—why wouldn't we alter our instruction to provide all students with that same advantage? Let's make it so all students end up on third base.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
PREFACE.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xi
SECTION ONE: VISION STATEMENT.....	1
Awareness of Issue.....	1
Critical Issues.....	3
Students' Culture.....	5
<i>Differentiated Instruction</i> .....	8
<i>High Expectations</i> .....	9
<i>Students' Interest</i> .....	11
Students' Socioeconomic Status.....	12
Context.....	13
Recommended Policy and Envisioned Effect.....	17
SECTION TWO: ANALYSIS OF NEED.....	19
Introduction.....	19
Educational Analysis.....	19
Economic Analysis.....	21
Social Analysis.....	25
Political Analysis.....	25
Moral and Ethical Analysis.....	27

SECTION THREE: ADVOCATED POLICY STATEMENT.....	30
Goals and Objectives.....	30
Maximize Learning for All Students.....	30
Provide Equitable Learning Experience for All Students.....	31
Increase Confidence and Motivation of All Students.....	31
Stakeholders’ Needs, Values, and Preferences.....	32
Students.....	32
Teachers.....	33
Parents.....	34
Community.....	36
Rationale for Validity of the Policy.....	36
SECTION FOUR: POLICY ARGUMENT.....	38
Introduction.....	38
Argument.....	38
Counter-Argument.....	40
SECTION FIVE: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.....	43
Educational Activities.....	43
Needs Assessments.....	43
Conferences and Workshops.....	43
Internal Professional Development.....	44
Guest Presenters.....	44
Group Text Readings.....	45
Staff Development Plan.....	46



Presentation of Need to Administration.....	46
External Conferences and Workshops.....	47
Presentation of Need to Teachers.....	47
Guest Presenters.....	48
Group Text Readings.....	49
Consulting Teacher Support.....	49
Curriculum Reviews.....	50
Progress Monitoring of Plan.....	51
Time Schedules.....	52
Program Budgets.....	55
Progress Monitoring Activities.....	58
Teacher Self-Assessments.....	59
Curriculum Reviews.....	59
Classroom Observations.....	59
Student Surveys.....	60
SECTION SIX: POLICY ASSESSMENT PLAN.....	62
Assessment of Implementation and Outcomes.....	62
Teacher Knowledge and Perceptions of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.....	62
Student Achievement and Perception Data.....	63
Curriculum Monitoring Data.....	64
Instructional Observation Data.....	65
Responsible Stakeholders.....	66
Teachers' Responsibilities.....	67

Building Administrators' Responsibilities.....	69
District Administrators' Responsibilities.....	70
SECTION SEVEN: SUMMARY IMPACT STATEMENT.....	72
Appropriateness of the Policy.....	72
Needs and Values at the Core of the Policy.....	74
Students.....	74
Teachers.....	75
Parents.....	75
Community.....	75
References.....	77
Appendix A.....	83
Appendix B.....	86
Appendix C.....	92
Appendix D.....	93

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Students' Subgroup Results On ISAT Reading Exams.....	13
Table 2 Students' Subgroup Results On ISAT Math Exams.....	14
Table 3 Students' Subgroup Results On PARCC ELA Exams.....	15
Table 4 Students' Subgroup Results On PARCC Math Exams.....	16
Table 5 Year-One Implementation Activities.....	52
Table 6 Year-Two Implementation Activities.....	54
Table 7 Estimated Cost of Policy Events.....	58

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 PDSA Cycle.....	61
--------------------------	----

## SECTION ONE: VISION STATEMENT

### Awareness of Issue

I have spent my entire career educating students of color who are living in poverty. Students in these circumstances face challenges navigating our educational system, which often lead to challenges navigating the demands of society later in life. I've always considered my growth mindset—viewing all kids the same as I strive to provide equal learning experiences for all types of students regardless of race or socioeconomic status—as part of the solution. I now realize that my perspective, beliefs, and actions, though well intended, have helped perpetuate the divide between students of the majority and those of the minority in our society.

This realization that I am more the problem than solution came to fruition during a recent hiring season at our school. We were looking to add a new English language arts (ELA) teacher to our staff, which is approximately 98% White. With a student population that was approximately 70% Latino, I had intentions of lessening this imbalance and was driven to hire great teachers of color to establish role models for our Latino students. This is where my noble objective reached its limit and diminished the value of my valid intention.

Why would such a teacher be a good role model only for Latino students? Why would a Latino ELA teacher not be an outstanding role model for *all* students? Beyond that, hiring a Latino teacher would be a worthwhile occurrence for the adults in our school as well as our students' parents. As I reflected on this epiphany, I had to stop patting myself on the back for my liberal perspective and recognize this area of growth

for myself. If I were liable to make such a basic well-intended mistake, what might be the perspective of those with a less progressive view on equality, race, and poverty?

After recovering from the realization that I am not actually effectively leading the fight to provide equitable learning experiences for students of color who live in poverty, I uncovered yet another shortcoming in my views. Like many educators who claim to be committed to racial and socioeconomic equality for disenfranchised students, I clung to the concept of being colorblind in dealing with students. Milner (2015) expressed, “Educators are either fighting for equitable education for all students, or they are fighting against it. *There is no neutral space in this work*” (p. 11). I now realize my neutrality was actually a stance against progress in the struggle to provide an equitable learning circumstances for certain students. Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell (2009) depicted a continuum of enlightenment to respond to how individuals view this issue. The progression of the enlightenment chain from the bottom to the top goes as follows: (a) cultural destructiveness, (b) cultural incapacity, (c) cultural blindness, (d) cultural precompetence, (e) cultural competence, and (f) cultural proficiency (pp. 6-7).

In this continuum, cultural destructiveness is much like it sounds: individuals are interested in eliminating cultures that differ from their own. Cultural incapacity involves the belittling or stereotyping of other cultures in an attempt to make them appear invalid. Cultural blindness may actually be perceived as a positive attribute known as color-blindness; however, it actually involves ignoring others’ cultures in an attempt to treat everyone the same. Doing so does not recognize the collective needs of different cultural groups.

Cultural precompetence starts the trek on the positive side of the continuum. The concept involves an increase in awareness of self-ignorance about other cultures. Cultural competence entails an alignment of individuals' and their group's values and behaviors to include all other cultures' values and behaviors. Cultural proficiency includes creating a socially just democracy that effectively serves the needs of all cultural groups (Lindsey et al., 2009, pp. 6-7). This continuum of enlightenment illustrates yet more areas in which I need to grow.

Being an enthusiast of progressive instruction and assessment practices, I view myself as "secure" in understanding the practices that increase learning. However, I feel I'm in a "developing" state for creating and promoting culturally responsive learning opportunities for students of color who live in poverty. According to Lindsey et al. (2009), "People and organizations that view cultural difference as something to overcome are often surprised that it is they who have to change to be effective in cross-cultural situations" (p. 5). I have become aware of this need for improvement within myself and within both my school and district.

### Critical Issues

One historical purpose of the American school system is to sort students into groups—those who have talent and those who do not—in order to determine individuals' benefit to society (Wagner, 2008, p. xxiii-xxiv; Chappuis & Chappuis, 2006, p. 6). This type of school system functioned on the premise that not all citizens needed to receive an education in order to contribute to society. Additionally, the archaic structure of our school year was set on the agrarian schedule that allowed for children to be home during the harvest season (Lyttle, 2011, p. 6; Walker, 2009, p. 1). Our society has become much

different since this system was established. The ever-increasing presence of technology in the workforce, the development of the global economy, and the immediacy of information transfer from the introduction of satellites, cable news, and social media create a world in which virtually all workers need to have a higher degree of skills. These skills can start to be developed in our schools by increasing tailored instruction to meet the students' educational needs.

Similarly antiquated perspectives on school promulgated near the turn of the twentieth century promoted school as a place for students to assimilate into the dominant Anglo-European culture (Moretti, 2015, pp. 651-652). Though America is referred to as the great melting pot, it seems that American society only accepts certain culture's contributions to its blend of traits and traditions. School was not only designed to sort its students, but also to advantage those students whose culture and schema favored the majority: English speaking Whites of European descent. This favoritism toward certain cultures in schools exists today. It is not respectful of all people and does not promote an equitable educational experience for all students. This is why educators must take a hard look at what school offers students of color who live in poverty.

In order to increase the cultural proficiency of teachers in District 32, it is necessary to have a solid understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy and the curriculum that supports that instruction. Educators need to take into account students' interests, culture, and socioeconomic statuses. This is often the default occurrence for students whose cultural background and experiences are reflected in the dominant culture of society. Just like their mainstream counterparts, students of color who live in poverty are expected to scale the wall of academic skill acquisition that school rightfully presents,



but in doing so these students might not have the necessary tools to make the climb. Since a student's schema can be beneficial to skill acquisition, it is our responsibility as educators to understand each student's cultural orientation and to use educational content that aligns with their experiences. Doing so can prevent handicapping learning for students of certain backgrounds or worldviews. It is a moral imperative for schools to be culturally proficient in order to effectively educate a student of any background and socioeconomic status.

### *Students' Culture*

Instruction that is tailored to the culture of students is not a new concept. In fact, related literature uses several different terms specific to this topic. According to Sleeter (2011), "There are many studies that illustrate culturally responsive pedagogy in practice, sometimes going under different terms such as multicultural teaching, equity pedagogy, sociocultural teaching, or social justice teaching" (p. 16). The theme that all of these references have in common is a student-culture focus in instruction. This document advocates for increasing the cultural proficiency of District 32 teachers. Developing an educators' understanding and ability to write culturally responsive curriculum and deliver culturally responsive instruction can increase cultural proficiency.

The terms *culturally responsive* and *culturally relevant* were both considered as terms to describe the pedagogy and curriculum needed to increase educators' cultural proficiency. The first has been determined to be the most accurate and preferred term used to increase cultural proficiency in the teachers of District 32. This is because according to Brown University's Knowledge Loom, culturally responsive instruction includes:

- Communication of high expectations: the overt belief by educators in the school that all students are capable of success
- Active teaching methods: instructional design that promotes and requires student engagement by requiring students voice in curriculum and instructional practice
- Reshaping the curriculum: curriculum that is culturally responsive to the background of students
- Culturally mediated instruction: instruction that reflects culturally mediated cognition and appropriate social situations as well as culturally valued knowledge in curriculum content
- Student-controlled classroom discourse: student-influenced lessons that are providing teachers with insight into the ways that speech and negotiation are used in the home and community
- Small-group instruction and academically related discourse: instruction that is organized around low-pressure, student-controlled learning groups that can assist in the development of academic language. (The Education Alliance at Brown University).

The term culturally relevant contains similar ramifications as culturally responsive with some noted differences. According to Ladsen-Billings (1995),

Culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria or propositions: (a) Students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order. (p. 160)

After considering both of these defined terms, culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum is the most accurate expression to increase District 32 teachers' cultural proficiency. Advocating for a culturally responsive approach to instruction and curriculum as opposed to a culturally relevant one meets students' needs and has greater potential for success in District 32 because it has less of a political emphasis without the cultural activism component described by Ladson-Billings.

A student's culture affects the way that child views the world. Behaviorist Reuven Feuerstein, found that some students lacked the essential background knowledge or prerequisites to make the necessary meaning needed to learn. Feuerstein introduced the concept of mediation of meaning in the learning process as facilitated by a mediator. According to Rodriguez, Bellanca, and Esparaza (2017), "This mediator is a person who captures the many stimuli that bombard a learner every day, strains the stimuli and helps children develop their own way of filtering those stimuli that promote learning from those that distract" (p. 26). Feuerstein's work can be directly associated with educating students of color who live in poverty as the mediator is viewed as a highly valuable part of meaning making:

The value Feuerstein speaks of is grounded in the students' culture and daily life, he notes that it is the mediator's task to connect students to the inherent relevance of their culture and their community, and to celebrate the richness and significance of their heritage as it relates to the topic they are examining.

(Rodriguez, et al. p. 81)

Increased learning can result when educators introduce cultural connections and values into the learning equation. Rodriguez, et al. stated, "The teacher as mediator, therefore, is

the person who initiates active learning, the mental processing that transforms incidental learners into students grounded in the prerequisites for learning, and leads students to success in each and every content area” (p. 28). By honoring students’ culture and real-life circumstances, learning becomes connected to their schema, which aids meaning making.

*Differentiated Instruction.*

Culturally responsive instruction and assessment at its core has roots in other instructional best practices. The concept of differentiation, crystalized by Dr. Carol Ann Tomlinson, espouses the value of in-depth knowledge of students as a necessity to meet their needs. According to Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010), “It is essential that teachers study the diverse cultures of students they teach so they can achieve a more multidimensional understanding of the relationship between culture and learning” (p. 18). A breakdown of the major components of differentiation can help an educator become more culturally proficient. For years, Tomlinson and her colleagues have stated that knowledge of students, including their interests and learning styles is paramount to providing learning experiences that maximize achievement. According to Tomlinson and Imbeau, “It is the classroom teacher who taps into hidden motivations, builds bridges to span damaged trust, and reveals to each student how the learning process makes us fully human” (p. 9). Recognizing that students of color who live in poverty may have trust issues with respect to learning can help teachers consider ways to mend damaged relationships between students and school.

### *High Expectations.*

In his work for the Los Angeles County School Board of Education in the 1970s, Samuel Kermin identified 15 teacher behaviors that benefitted low-performing students. These teaching behaviors primarily centered on the incorporation of high expectations for students. Kermin's work was referred to as TESA, Teacher Expectations, Student Achievement (Rodriguez, Bellanca, & Esparaza, 2017, p. 19). The research behind the TESA teacher behaviors proved particularly beneficial for students of color living in poverty. Rodriguez et al. stated, "High expectations, as implemented through the 15 teacher behaviors, showed that poverty and race were not inseparable barriers to learning" (p. 19).

Kermin's work with the 15 teacher behaviors encapsulated in TESA demonstrated that when teachers hold high expectations for students, students can reach high levels of achievement in spite of their ethnicity or socioeconomic background. The 15 teacher behaviors that produced results with low-achieving students include many pedagogical best practices previously implemented in District 32 classrooms. However some of these instructional choices might be new to these teachers and thus could help increase their collective cultural proficiency as a whole. The TESA teacher behaviors that benefit students of color who live in poverty can be categorized into behavioral and instructional domains.

Behavioral dispositions included in TESA are as follows:

- Proximity: the teacher's use of physical closeness to students to increase time on task behavior

- Courtesy: Maintaining courteous interactions with students of low-performance, both teacher-to-students and students-to-other-students
- Reasons for praise: the conscious effort by the teacher to provide an equal distribution of praise that attaches meaning for the praise
- Personal regard: the conscious effort by the teacher to equally distribute smiles and eye contact to all students and to formulate content-based questions connected to students' interests
- Touching: the use of physical contact such as a teacher's hand on a student's shoulder to redirect students or correct misbehaviors
- Desisting: directly addressing off-task or non-productive learning behaviors in an effort to preserve a positive and effective learning environment. (Rodriguez, Bellanca, & Esparaza, 2017, pp. 21-24).

These behavioral dispositions are the foundation for building a supportive learning environment that fosters learning. Establishing strong relationships with students creates a connection and trust between the student and teacher, which is so important for educating students of color who are living in poverty.

Instructional dispositions included in TESA are as follows:

- Equitable distribution: the conscious effort by the teacher to vary the students who are called upon to participate in classroom discussion
- Affirm/correct: the conscious effort by the teacher to provide detailed feedback to students even those of low achievement
- Individual help: the conscious effort by the teacher to provide one-on-one help with the two to three lowest-achieving students in the class

- Praise: the concentration of attention by the teacher to low-achieving students, not shielding such students from critical feedback regarding accuracy of work
- Wait time: the conscious effort by the teacher to add two or more seconds to the time following questions posed to student and the avoidance of teachers answering their own questions
- Delving: the conscious effort by the teacher to ask two to three follow up questions during discussions to encourage students to explore their thinking more deeply
- Listening: Decreasing the amount of talking teachers do *at* students of color who live in poverty and increasing the listening with these students
- High-level questions: the conscious use of tiered questions based on *Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. (Rodriguez, Bellanca, & Esparaza, 2017, pp. 21-24).

These instructional dispositions when stacked upon the behavioral dispositions create optimal conditions for student learning. Kerman's research with student achievement and teacher training demonstrates that with high expectations and structure in a classroom, students of color who live in poverty can overcome the learning obstacles that sometimes are seen by teachers as overwhelming and unendurable.

#### *Students' Interests.*

Another noted expert in the field of education, Charlotte Danielson, included a teacher's understanding of students' abilities, limitations, and cultures in her evaluation metric for judging quality instruction. Domain 1 of Danielson's framework for teacher evaluation, component B, Demonstrating Knowledge of Students stated:

Students have lives beyond school—lives that include athletic and musical pursuits, activities in their neighborhoods, and family and cultural traditions.

Students whose first language is not English, as well as students with other special needs, must be considered when a teacher is planning lessons and identifying resources to ensure that all students will be able to learn. (Danielson, 2013, p. 13)

Ensuring a solid understanding of students' backgrounds is an essential element of providing quality instruction and assessments for students. By seeing students as unique individuals whose ability to learn is impacted by their culture, color, and socioeconomic status, educators can increase their own cultural proficiency and maximize student learning.

#### *Students' Socioeconomic Status*

Another important component that greatly improves learning for students of color and those with socioeconomic challenges involves an in-depth understanding of poverty and its impact on learning. According to Payne (2005), "Increasingly, students, mostly from poverty, are coming to school without the concepts, but more importantly, without cognitive strategies" (p. 89). This suggests that in order for teachers to be prepared to effectively educate students living in poverty, they need to have an understanding of what deficits this condition might produce. With a focus of poverty's neurological impact on students, Jensen (2009) stated:

Kids raised in poverty have more cells in their body "under siege" than do kids from middle- or upper-income families. The consequent adaptations of these kids' immune systems may diminish their ability to concentrate, learn, and behave appropriately. (p. 41)



Clearly poverty has significant effects on students. A teacher's understanding of those effects and how to counteract them is needed to provide these students with the most appropriate and effective instruction and assessment opportunities.

#### Context

District 32 serves a highly diverse student population with 67.5% of its students being Hispanic and 73.8% being of low-income status (Illinois Interactive Report Card). These data suggest District 32 teachers must be well equipped to meet the needs of students of color who live in poverty. The achievement deficits of these students are exemplified by their performance on the now defunct Illinois State Achievement Test (ISAT) and the achievement gap this assessment has produced over the past three years.

Table 1

*Student subgroup results on ISAT reading exams*

<b>Demographic group</b>	<b>% students</b>	<b>Meets/ Exceeds</b>	<b>Achievement gap 2012</b>	<b>Achievement gap 2013</b>	<b>Achievement gap 2014</b>
Hispanic	66.1	45	11	18	22
White	24.1	67	N/A	N/A	N/A
Asian	3.6	78	N/A	N/A	N/A
Black	3.4	26	30	40	41
Two or more	2.9	46	N/A	N/A	N/A
IEP	13.3	8	65	49	48
LEP	34.9	9	45	49	53
Low income	64.3	51	12	20	22

These standardized ELA assessment data indicate marked increases in the achievement gap between Hispanic and White students as well as Black and White students. Similarly, students of low-income status also demonstrate a gap in achievement as compared to the White demographic group. Though the discrepancy for mastery of learning standards decreases from the 2013 to 2014 school year between the two groups, the level of achievement gap is noteworthy.

The following table illustrates standardized math assessment data performance for students of color who live in poverty.

Table 2

*Student subgroup results on ISAT math exams*

<b>Demographic group</b>	<b>% students</b>	<b>Meets/ Exceeds</b>	<b>Achievement gap 2012</b>	<b>Achievement gap 2013</b>	<b>Achievement gap 2014</b>
Hispanic	66.1	53	7	19	20
White	24.1	73	N/A	N/A	N/A
Asian	3.6	86	N/A	N/A	N/A
Black	3.4	34	22	45	39
Two or more	2.9	49	N/A	N/A	N/A
IEP	13.3	14	52	49	50
LEP	34.9	18	26	49	51
Low income	64.3	51	5	23	20

These data suggest similar trends with respect to the achievement gap for Hispanic students with a slight increase in the gap between 2013 and 2014. Black students showed a decrease in the achievement gap from 2013 to 2014. However, the degree of deficit as

compared to the White student population is the highest amount in all of these ISAT data. Students who live in poverty also experienced a reduction in the achievement gap from 2013 to 2014 but none-the-less had a sizable deficit in which to close as compared to the White students.

With the onset of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test, a new baseline has been established for this new standardized assessment. Though trend data cannot be established to evaluate achievement gaps with students of color who live in poverty, this information sets the stage for what work needs to be done to prepare these disadvantaged groups of students for their future.

Table 3

*Student subgroup results on PARCC ELA exams*

<b>Demographic (total N 1299)</b>	<b>Sub group n</b>	<b>Subgroup %</b>	<b>Subgroup meets/ exceeds (total n 429)</b>	<b>% of subgroup meets/ exceeds</b>	<b>Achievement gap %</b>
Hispanic	870	67.5	234	27	21
White	298	23.4	143	48	N/A
Asian	52	3.3	36	69	N/A
Black	39	3.2	10	26	22
Two or more	26	2.6	6	23	25
IEP	143	13.9	5	4	44
LEP	273	36.7	15	6	42
Low income	935	73.8	259	28	20

These new ELA standardized assessment data for the PARCC test reinforces a consistent achievement gap hovering around slightly more than 20% for Hispanic, Black, and students of low-income as compared to the White student population.

PARCC results for the math assessments reveal data that also suggests the existence of an achievement gap for Hispanic, Black, and students living in poverty.

Table 4

*Student subgroup results on PARCC math exams*

<b>Demographic (total N 1308)</b>	<b>Sub group n</b>	<b>Subgroup %</b>	<b>Subgroup meets/ exceeds (total n 298)</b>	<b>% of subgroup meets/ exceeds</b>	<b>Achievement gap %</b>
Hispanic	876	67.5	155	18	16
White	301	23.4	102	34	N/A
Asian	52	3.3	33	64	N/A
Black	39	3.2	4	10	24
Two or more	26	2.6	4	15	19
IEP	144	13.9	7	5	29
LEP	288	36.7	14	5	29
Low income	942	73.8	173	18	16

These data show that Hispanic students and students living in poverty maintain a 16% deficit compared to the White student population. The deficit of the Black student population is even more significant at 24%.

Students of color who live in poverty need to have curriculum that is presented with a specific purpose that enhances their worldviews, their academic and social skills,

and their perceptions of themselves and their cultures. A culturally proficient teaching and administrative staff can help bring about those types of positive learning experiences for all students.

#### Recommended Policy and Envisioned Effect

The policy in which I advocate for District 32 is the development of a culturally proficient teaching staff that recognizes the value of understanding students as individuals, as members of specific cultures with specific socioeconomic circumstances and that have specific learning needs. Additionally, educators must understand the degree to which poverty affects their students' lives. A culturally proficient teaching staff will have respect for students and their cultures and strive to provide students with culturally responsive learning experiences with meaningful curriculum and resources that promote student interest in learning. The activities supporting these curricula will also contain activities that appeal to the unique needs of students of color who live in poverty. These culturally responsive curricula and this pedagogy will be assessed with a variety of assessment methods that may include traditional tests and quizzes but will also feature more progressive methods of assessment such as projects, portfolios, conversation, and observation.

In order to meet the complete needs of all students, it is necessary to provide students with the necessary study skills and tools to succeed in school. Without that foundation, the work in culturally responsive instruction and curriculum will be diminished. To a certain extent, students of color who live in poverty need to be taught how to *do school* (Milner, 2015, p. 104). Though traditional school practices need to be adjusted to meet the needs of students of color who live in poverty, these students will

still need direct instruction and practice with how to effectively participate in their own learning. This could be greatly enhanced through instruction in time management, note taking, test-taking skills and preparation, and other study-related skills.

## SECTION TWO: ANALYSIS OF NEED

### Introduction

After reflecting on the needs of the students of District 32, I have uncovered areas of growth for myself as a school leader. There is a significant need to increase my cultural proficiency and my support and promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy. Similarly, fellow administrators and our teaching staff fall short of meeting our highly diverse student population's needs through the implementation of culturally responsive instruction. To determine the need for this policy, an in-depth analysis must be made of this issue in five specific areas. These areas of analysis include (1) educational analysis, (2) economic analysis, (3) social analysis, (4) political analysis, and a (5) moral and ethical analysis.

### Educational Analysis

The implementation of a policy supporting the advancement of District 32 administrators' and teachers' understanding and practice of culturally responsive pedagogy stands to increase student learning. Research suggested this type of instruction had a significant impact and value to students of color who live in poverty (Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Ladson-Billings, 1995b; Feger, 2006; Martell, 2012). Educators must proceed with caution whenever they categorize students of any kind, but that is particularly true when doing so with students of color who live in poverty. Generalizations for similar types of students regarding the success of instructional methods and interventions were not recommended as the individual results may vary from one student to another within the same demographic group (Shealey, 2007, p. 12; Clark, 2011, p. 170; Taylor, 2010, p. 25).

The literature related to culturally responsive instructional practice suggested a potential benefit for student learning. According to Martell (2012), “Students of color can be empowered by a curriculum that connects to their ethnic and racial backgrounds” (p. 23). Similarly, one teacher account from Feger (2006) stated, “The more I had incorporated culturally responsive literature and non-fiction into the curriculum, the more my students’ engagement in reading had increased, and my students’ reaction was a resolute announcement of this preference” (p. 18). The incorporation of culturally responsive and sensitive instructional practices may produce increased engagement, which creates opportunities for increased student learning.

A review of relevant literature found several common instructional practices that increased student achievement. One of the prominent elements of effective culturally responsive instruction involved consistent high expectations for students (Martell, 2012, p. 4; Rozansky, 2010, p. 8; Shealey, 2007, p. 12). According to Schmidt (2005), “Culturally relevant teachers’ conception of self and others include a belief that their students are capable of success...” (p. 30). Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell (2009) suggested, “Culturally proficient school leaders redirect conversations *from* explaining why groups of students fail *to* engaging colleagues in collaborative dialogue about creating powerful teaching-learning environments that ensure student success” (p. 56). This placed the onus of increasing teachers’ cultural proficiency on school leaders. Another pronounced component of effective culturally responsive instruction included teacher modeling of desired skills and competencies (Feger, 2006, p. 19; Rozansky, 2010, p. 8; Shealey, 2007, p. 13). A third factor in the culturally responsive instructional literature pertained to how this type of teaching honored students’ cultural backgrounds



and prior experiences, thus increasing their performance (Rozansky, 2010, p. 7; Shealey, 2007, p. 9; Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 2009, p. 129). Milner (2015) added the importance of flexibility with culturally responsive teaching: “Leading thinkers about reforming the curriculum for students of color who live in poverty have stressed the importance of the curriculum’s flexibility, relevance, and responsiveness in mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts” (p. 62).

Though there are suggestions that culturally responsive instruction produced increases in student understandings, dissenting views did exist. Some critics called attention to the lack of focus on results from culturally responsive teaching. According to Sleeter (2011):

Although there is quite a bit of research on culturally responsive pedagogy, far too little systemically documents its impact on student learning, and clarifies what practices most strongly on students, and in what contexts. This limited research makes advocating for culturally responsive pedagogy difficult. (p. 16)

This cautionary description of the limits of the instruction from culturally proficient teachers should establish an expectation of results. However, it is important to acknowledge that student understanding can be measured through various methods. Quality assessment methods such as teacher observations, student portfolios, and anecdotal evidence should be part of the array of data collected.

### Economic Analysis

When considering the adoption of any new initiative or policy, resources must be secured, new skills must be learned, and teachers must be compensated for their time. All of these components create a financial scenario that must be addressed in order to

advocate for a policy that promotes cultural proficiency with educators. Some of the areas that create a financial burden include the provision of professional development for staff through in-services provided by external consultants. Other professional development opportunities through external conferences and workshops further teachers' levels of cultural proficiency. Supplementary professional development opportunities compensated through stipends in the evening, on the weekends, or in the summer can provide additional learning options for teachers.

Some methods for fostering growth with teachers' cultural proficiency can occur within the school day contract. Regular meetings resulting from the early release of students created opportunities for teachers to collaborate and discuss culturally responsive curriculum, instruction, and assessments. Another economical option for increasing teachers' understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy includes professional development for staff through in-services provided by internal personnel within the district. This is a necessary alternative for some cash-strapped districts that have students of color and who live in poverty with high needs. According to Schmidt (2005), "Unfortunately, school districts from high-poverty areas may not have the financial ability, infrastructure, or human capital necessary to offer or coordinate in-depth in-service research programs" (p. 5).

Different instruments can be used to determine teachers' degree of cultural proficiency. An understanding of teachers' levels of development with cultural proficiency can help inform a plan to improve the collective understanding of how to meet the needs of students of color who live in poverty. Some examples of these tools include: (a) the Culturally Responsive Preparedness Scale (Hsiao, 2015); (b) *ABC's of*

*Cultural Understanding and Communication* (Schmidt, 2005); and (c) the Adult Development Theory (Eberly, Rand, & O'Connor, 2007, p. 31). The financial impact of measuring teachers' cultural proficiency is minimal with these instruments.

An area that districts can consider in order to increase the cultural proficiency of its teaching and administrative staff entails purposefully hiring educators who have a thorough understanding of culturally responsive instruction and effective experience implementing it. The literature on this topic offered conflicting opinions regarding the value of teacher pre-service training. One belief was that teacher training was increasingly getting better at preparing pre-service teachers to become culturally proficient (Schmidt, 2005, p.31). However, other authors found teacher pre-service programs to be inadequate when it came to culturally proficient preparedness (Fitchett, Starker, & Good, 2010, p. 15; Taylor, 2010, p. 25). Milner (2015) stated, "Some teacher education programs do not see the need to even offer courses on 'classroom management,' 'race,' or 'poverty,' and teachers are left to figure out (or not) how to work with students with a range of needs" (p. 125). Milner continued, "Taking one course on multi-cultural education, culture, poverty, or race does not equip teachers to meet the needs of children living in poverty" (p. 145). According to Shealey (2007), "A large number of teacher preparation programs address diversity in their mission statements. Yet, a commitment to diversity is not evidenced in course content or field experiences which represent the core of teacher preparation programs" (p. 16). Hiring teachers who already possess cultural proficiency can save districts money in the long run both because they will not need to be trained in this area and because they might provide guidance and leadership in this realm.

## Social Analysis

Increasing the cultural proficiency of the teachers and administrators of District 32 will benefit our schools and district. Learning about the cultures and heritage of our students demonstrates a respect for them and establishes needed trust between students and educators. Meeting students more than half way when it comes to incorporating an understanding of culture and socioeconomic status into curriculum and instruction diminishes barriers and establishes respect. Both results could serve to reduce student anxiety and increase student confidence. By creating more confident, successful learners, our community benefits from an increase in well-informed, well-educated, and self-actualized lifelong learners. This creates the foundation for an effective school system, a more connected community, and a stronger society. According to Martell (2012), “When teachers enable their students to examine historical events through diverse ethnic and racial lenses, they open numerous worlds to their students” (p. 24).

Students of color who live in poverty need support to overcome the overt and covert oppression in our society. Educators must make sure that what is being taught in the classroom is not reinforcing negative images or perceptions of students of color who live in poverty. According to Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell (2009),

Entitlement creates either unawareness or denial of the reality that not all U. S. citizens have a common base of inalienable rights. These beliefs and denials are supported by curricula that are silent about the pluralistic nature of our country’s history and development. (p. 73)

School leaders and teachers must maintain a respectful and relevant learning environment that doesn’t just recognize past injustices perpetuated on certain people, but instead

creates a learning environment that is designed to benefit such students and the community.

### Political Analysis

Like with any change in policy, some level of conflict may result. Incorporating elements of students' culture and socioeconomic statuses into teaching has the potential to create both support for the movement and opposition. Those who support increasing educators' knowledge and skills in this regard feel this concept is long over due as it levels the playing field for historically disenfranchised students. Those who might oppose this policy could feel it challenges the concept of assimilation upon which our country has developed in many ways. The premise of culturally responsive teaching provides a platform of hope and equality for students who have been marginalized by society and its framework. According to Sleeter (2011), "Culturally responsive pedagogy is not only about teaching but also a political endeavor directed toward equity and justice" (p. 19).

One of the most prominent ways in which cultural proficiency can be viewed politically involves the teaching of the social sciences. A common theme in the related literature discussed the perspective from which the social sciences are taught. The point of view taken in social science is often the traditional White Anglo-European perspective that does not reflect all of American society (Fitchett, Starker, & Good, 2010, p. 2). The determination to, for the most part, exclude historical figures of color in mainstream history and social science instruction reinforces the White-dominated culture from our past. This could be seen as a power play to maintain our society's status quo.

Some authors in the related literature directly addressed the dominance of White Americans in our history. This literature suggested that White teachers must recognize

their entitlement in society and how it has affected our history. According to Martell (2012), “Without understanding the institutionalized power that privileges White Americans, White teachers will continue to teach primarily ‘White history’ to the detriment of their students” (p. 24). Furthermore, it is suggested that White educators reflect on their own culture to help them better understand how to conceptualize the culture of others. Matias (2013) contended, “Until White teachers learn how to be culturally responsive to themselves in a non-dominant recycling manner, they cannot be masters of cultural responsiveness because they have yet to learn this process” (p. 70). Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell (2009) stated,

When women and people of color have been recognized for the contributions to the development of our country, history textbooks have recorded their contributions as exceptions. This sends an insidious message to students about who is valued in this country. (p. 77)

Teaching students through the lens of cultural proficiency affords them the opportunity to appreciate their heritage and its value to society, which can greater connect them to learning.

Considering the ways in which a change can affect different stakeholders is imperative when implementing a policy to increase educators’ cultural proficiency. The very nature of culturally responsive instruction—increasing the emphasis of one culture and lessening the emphasis of another—is a political action. Gay (2005) stated:

Politics is an inevitable result when different sets of stakeholders, issues, values, ideologies, and actions surface with regard to critical concerns, jockeying for

positions of influence and trying to claim the distinction of having found ‘the answer to the problem.’ (p. 227)

Sensitivity and understanding must play a perceptible role in presenting and implementing all matters of culture, prominence, and change.

### Moral and Ethical Analysis

The purpose behind advocating for a policy to increase the cultural proficiency of District 32 educators involves addressing how instructional practices and philosophies are disconnected from the needs of almost 70% of our students. An analysis of student performance on standardized assessments suggests that students of color who live in poverty are not learning at the same level as the White commensurate student population. Something different must be done to bridge this achievement gap and better educate the students of District 32. According to Rozansky (2010), “Culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) offers the promise of increased success for students who have been historically marginalized by inequitable education systems” (p. 2). Similarly, Milner (2015) professed, “Poverty does not and should not define a person or a group of people—there is not a ‘culture of poverty’—but it can define a stratified system in which a person or a group of people may live” (p. 13). Defining groups of students based on conditions that are beyond their control is unethical and should not occur. Increasing the collective cultural proficiency of educators in District 32 is the moral and ethical responsibility of our school system.

Increasing District 32 teachers’ cultural proficiency can achieve another moral and ethical obligation: broadening all students’ perspectives beyond that of the historical mainstream. Through culturally responsive instruction, students may receive an

understanding of multiple views, not just those of the majority or the mainstream (Martell, 2012, p. 13). Presenting learning opportunities in a way that respects students' cultural differences creates new perspectives that could pique interest and increase motivation for learning. Gallavan (2005) contended, "Exploring democratic principles, educational equity, and social justice realistically both within the classroom and among society at large creates an awareness of and a responsibility for one another and the world around us—locally to globally" (p. 36).

Some of the pertinent literature regarding cultural proficiency depicted culturally responsive instruction to be the solution to providing justice to the underserved students of color. According to Matias (2013):

It is a rationally-emotional revolution based on the humanizing project of racial justice for all; and not just about cultures of Black and Brown students but about how these students were racially positioned in a racist system that made and continues to make culturally responsive teaching an avenue for fighting back. (p. 71)

It is important to recognize that these circumstances of oppression go beyond racial bounds and included students who live in poverty. Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell (2009) suggested,

This holds true for socioeconomic status as well: oppressed people are denied access to the middle class, and then are rebuked for failing to show middle-class values, attitudes, and behaviors. They are marginalized into a socio-cultural-economic caste and then rebuked for it. (p. 81)



It is unethical to deny a group of people access to elements of our society and then penalize them for not benefiting from or reflecting these very same elements of our society. It is the moral and ethical responsibility of schools to increase students' perspectives beyond the common mainstream views and to use individuals' cultural views to foster greater student connection to their learning and possibly increase student achievement.

## SECTION THREE: ADVOCATED POLICY STATEMENT

### Goals and Objectives

Education is an important aspect of a young person's life that is affected by the school system that has access to students each school day. The goals of this policy involve maximizing this time through equitable learning experiences for all students and increasing the confidence and motivation of all students. These two goals cannot exist in isolation but instead are connected and build off of each other.

#### *Maximize Learning for All Students*

In order to maximize learning for all students, the District 32 teaching staff needs to increase its knowledge of developing differentiated curriculum and implementing differentiated instruction. Through differentiated instruction, students' needs are assessed and instruction is tailored to fit those individual needs. This type of quality instruction can help close the gap that exists between students of color who live in poverty and their White student counterparts. Likewise, differentiated curriculum can increase both levels of student engagement and overall student learning.

Six years ago, District 32 began traveling to the University of Virginia to study with Dr. Carol Ann Tomlinson at her Summer Institute of Academic Diversity (SIAD). These experiences challenged the instruction delivered to District 32 students creating the realization that it had to be more individualized. Over the three years of attendance at SIAD, close to 50 teachers and administrators were given the opportunity to immerse themselves in the philosophy of differentiated instruction. Because of the high number of teacher turnover occurring in District 32, many of these teachers who received firsthand

experience in differentiated instruction are now gone. It would be beneficial for District 32 teachers to return to SAID—or attend it for the first time.

*Provide Equitable Learning Experiences for All Students*

Building off the first goal, the second goal—providing equitable learning experiences—expands on specific elements of differentiated instruction. The equity of students’ educational experience can be increased through instruction that is sensitive to both their culture and socioeconomic status. In order to increase teacher awareness of the unique needs of all students, teachers and administrators need to take a layered approach to professional development. That is to say professional development offerings need to range from informative reading materials to attending conferences and workshops all of which can expand District 32 educators’ perceptions of understanding students of color who live in poverty. Moving beyond that, educators in District 32 need to gain experience in applying these understandings into the instruction they provide. An increase in the cultural proficiency of District 32 educators will create the foundation to provide equitable learning experiences and maximize learning for all students.

*Increase Confidence and Motivation of All Students*

In order to increase confidence and motivation of all students, educators in District 32 need to adopt a supportive mindset for learning. The beginning stage of creating such a supportive mindset involves providing educators with the tools needed to effectively provide students with feedback that supports and encourages learning.

Teachers and administrators of District 32 have traveled to Portland, Oregon to the Assessment Training Institute (ATI) to study with Rick Stiggins, Ken O’Connor, and Tom Guskey regarding improving the application of sound assessment practices. By

attending these conferences, teachers have developed what the presenters at ATI call *assessment literacy*. This term refers to an educator's level of understanding of assessment best practice (Chappuis, Stiggins, Chappuis, & Arter, 2012, p. 2). The attrition of teachers in District 32 has persisted over the years. Knowledge of assessment options for students beyond standardized test data is imperative for accurately measuring learning in students of color who live in poverty. The language and schema referenced in standardized assessments often reflect the mainstream culture and thus may not always provide reliable data on student understandings when students are not from the dominant culture. Exposure to assessment choices of informal means such as teacher observations or alternative formal assessment options such as student portfolios are options for effective differentiated assessments. In order to maximize learning for all students, provide equitable learning experiences for all students, and increase student confidence and motivation, District 32 must return to studying sound assessment practices that are found at such places as ATI.

#### Stakeholders' Needs, Values, and Preferences

In order to fully understand the impact this policy will have on a system, it is necessary to consider the effect the policy will have on all stakeholders. With that in mind, the adoption of a policy that increases the cultural proficiency levels of the educators in District 32 makes it necessary to consider the effect it will have on students, teachers, parents, and community.

#### *Students*

When considering the adoption of a new policy for increasing learning, there is no more important stakeholder than the students. It is our moral obligation as educators to

provide a robust learning experience for all students. A one-size-fits-all cookie-cutter approach to instruction is passé at best and ineffective and unethical at worst. Students currently in our schools have challenges unlike any other generation of children. Some of these challenges such as the prevalence of social media and the breakdown of the nuclear family may not be avoided through school experiences. However, the cultural diversity of District 32 students' is not a new phenomenon to American schools. Perhaps the specific cultures are different, but the idea of cultural multiplicity has been a part of our society's fabric for centuries.

Our instructional approach to this array of cultures has not been addressed or used as an advantage to elevate student learning. The increased demands of the CCSS have highlighted the deficits students bring to the learning table each day. With the adoption of these new standards by many U. S. states, the needs of most students became more apparent. But no group's deficits surfaced more than students of color who live in poverty. These students' learning requirements can best be met through the implementation of instruction and curriculum that taps into their cultures and recognizes their socioeconomic circumstances. Incorporating students' cultures or values makes learning more relevant and increases their motivation to learn. This in turn may increase student accountability in learning. By including a student's culture and socioeconomic status, educator's can adapt learning to student preference and schema so differentiated instruction can occur with fidelity.

### *Teachers*

Other stakeholders that need to be considered in this policy proposal are teachers and other members of the education system. Most teachers' values include a desire to

provide a fulfilling learning experience for their students. That type of experience includes learning opportunities that promote individual growth for students not just academically but socially and emotionally as well. Teachers often provide educational experiences for students that allow them to attain grade-level mastery of learning standards. Though this may not be an immediate, realistic goal for all students, teachers are aware of this challenge and need support in closing the gap between students who attain grade-level learning standards and those who do not. In general, teachers are people who care about kids. Because of this, teachers possess values that reflect a need to improve learning opportunities for all students, including students of color who live in poverty.

Though some teachers may prefer to teach in a traditional fashion that may have proven successful in the past, instructional choices must be determined based on student outcomes. Teachers' various instructional preferences, though important and worthy of respect, are not to be considered if they do not benefit student learning. Other members of the educational system—boards of education, district administrators, and building administrators—have similar needs, values, and preferences to that of teachers. Their choices too must be governed by what produces results with students such as this proposal for implementing research-based instructional practices incorporating differentiated instruction to increase learning with all students, including students of color who live in poverty.

### *Parents*

Parents' needs are based on their desire to have their children develop fully through learning experiences in school. Their child's development, much like the

perspective of teachers, involves both the academic and social/emotional progress of students. Academic and social/emotional growth help fulfill a further need of parents, which is to develop children who can grow into productive and self-sufficient members of society. Parents' values are steeped in the love they have for their children. They value the development of their whole child, both intellectually and socially. Parents also value happiness in their child. With the current pressures our society places on students (e.g., increased divorce rates, domestic and international terrorism, social media), schools have a responsibility to partner with parents to also promote happiness in students. A policy that advocates for implementing culturally responsive curriculum and instruction may foster this.

Because school is compulsory in the United States, it can be presumed that most parents attended school in their youth. This experience helps shape their preferences about their children's education. Many parents expect school to be the same as when they attended school. Such preferences can sometimes occur out of ignorance as to how the field of education like all other aspects of the world has evolved over the years. With some acquisition of knowledge regarding the progression of education and instruction, most parents can see the value of differentiation and how it helps meet their needs as parents. However, other parents might hold strong to their opposition of infusing elements of students' culture into instruction. This might be because it occurred by default if they were of the White majority population. Other parents may possess a more strident opinion that differentiating instruction to the benefit of students of color who live in poverty goes counter to their values regarding how our schools produce future citizens

for our society. Parents who hold these preferences that oppose differentiating instruction may disagree with this proposed policy based on their perceptions related to education.

### *Community*

A community needs citizens who are educated, well-adjusted, productive members of society. In order to fulfill this need, a community must support educational programs that produce accountable citizens who are a benefit to the community. The support for such educational programs must be more than financial in nature. A community that needs well-rounded citizens must support proposals such as this by recognizing its value. A community can highlight the achievement of students of color who live in poverty by actively employing these students and/or seeking their efforts through community service work. Welcoming students of color who live in poverty as functioning members of society illustrates that a community values equality and the inclusion of diversified people.

The preferences of a community may reflect that of teachers and/or parents. A community can prefer educational programs that reflect what its members experienced when they were in school. A more progressive community, however, might recognize that in order to meet the needs of all students, including those of color and who live in poverty, a differentiated approach to education may be the preferred option.

### *Rationale for Validity of the Policy*

Increasing the cultural proficiency of our school system is a worthwhile policy for which to advocate for because culturally responsive instruction may provide the necessary base for increased learning. By appealing to students' cultural tendencies, students may experience an increased connection and motivation to the educational



material presented. This relevancy in instruction can create equitable learning opportunities, allowing for students of color who live in poverty to have the same learning experiences as the White student population. This increased learning experience may be a factor to close the achievement gap that exists with our Hispanic, Black, and low-income populations that exist in District 32 schools.

A review of mission statements for the Illinois State Board of Education and Broadview School District 32 reveal what these two organizations prioritize in their work with students. According to the Illinois State Board of Education's mission: "Illinois is a state of whole, healthy children nested in whole, healthy systems supporting communities wherein all citizens are socially and economically secure" (Illinois State Board of Education). This mission statement suggests the social/emotional health of students is of paramount importance in Illinois. A culturally proficient staff delivering culturally responsive instruction can help produce this type of a student. According to the District 32 mission statement, its goal is to: "Maximize the unique potential of each child by honoring a natural curiosity and igniting a desire to learn" (Bensenville School District 2). Not relying on the dominant culture in our society to be the linchpin in our educational perspective is a fresh way to approach an old problem of engaging students that do not fall within the mainstream culture. To truly ignite a desire to learn, it is necessary to provide a menu of learning opportunities for students that tap into their cultures and schema.

## SECTION FOUR: POLICY ARGUMENT

### Introduction

An educational stakeholder should understand the value of this proposed policy that increases teachers' and administrators' cultural proficiency. To do this in a balanced fashion, it is essential to explore the impact of this proposed policy from both perspectives—those for it and those against it.

### Argument

The primary benefit of this proposal is the upsurge in learning that it affords all students. Through an increase in differentiated instruction, the educators of District 32 will be more suited to meet the unique learning needs of all students. This boost in the ability to understand the individual learning needs of all students will be of specific benefit to students of color who live in poverty—a much needed area of focus for the District 32 school system. Meeting the unique learning needs of all students, though difficult, creates the expectation for learning. This proposed policy demonstrates respect for all learners regardless of their cultural or socioeconomic backgrounds.

Increasing the cultural proficiency of educators in District 32 will bring about greater student learning through an increase in student efficacy. Teachers' understanding of students' academic and social emotional needs, including factors related to color and poverty, can impact student success. This in turn can increase students' confidence and motivation. This motivation can increase exponentially as students continue to produce higher levels of achievement, which establishes an increase in confidence, which is the key to unlocking maximum learning (Schimmer, 2016, p. 26). This increase in student efficacy strengthens the innate feeling in all students that they are *a learner* and that all

students learning is not just possible but expected. This type of instruction reinforces a feeling of value for the students as they view themselves as capable, confident individuals.

An increase in student efficacy as learners holds the potential to increase accountability for learning in students. Instructing students in ways they can relate to through a rich understanding of culture and poverty may increase students' chances for success. This increase in efficacy can provide the foundation that empowers students, imbuing them with a sense of control over their own learning. The increase in student accountability in learning can potentially lead to more confident learners. Increased efficacy, accountability, and confidence create a cycle of success as these three components build off each other in beneficial ways. This progression continues to the betterment of all students—particularly students of color who live in poverty.

The macro benefit of implementing this educational policy involves the impact it might have on society. By providing instruction to students that is tailored to their learning needs and cultural backgrounds, we increase the chance of producing more well-rounded, civic-minded citizens who make a positive contribution to society. Developing confident, self-actualized learners through exposure to culturally responsive curriculum and instruction creates the potential for a new generation of citizens. These new citizens could conceivably help break down barriers that limit the progression of non-White cultures in our country. This new generation of citizens can create an optimistic cycle of hope for future students of color who live in poverty as they work to further instill equitable learning opportunities. These scenarios may be brought to fruition by increasing the cultural proficiency of the educators in District 32.

Just recently, the National Policy Board for Education Administration approved 10 standards that promote what the field of education expects from schools. Standard three in this list, “Equity and Cultural Responsiveness” reads: “Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote *each* student’s academic success and well-being” (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2015). The justification of this policy may be viewed by some as a compassionate approach to teaching different types of students. This policy is more than just a kind idea to help kids learn. It goes beyond an individual school or district’s progressive perspective on education. We have the moral obligation to provide equitable learning experiences for all students. Even if leaders in the field of educational governance did not deem this policy compulsory, it still should be adopted.

#### Counter-Argument

When considering the counter perspective as it relates to this policy, it is important to take into consideration people’s natural emotional reaction to change of any kind. When new ideas are brought forth, people often resist simply because the concepts are not familiar and might require some degree of processing. In addition, change has a strong correlation with loss for some individuals (Heifeltz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009, p.96; Reeves, 2009, p. 46). A particular challenge of changing anything that relates to school involves most adults’ perspective from having experienced school earlier in their own lives. Because of this perspective, some stakeholders might find any change in the educational approach unnecessary because it was not what was done to them (Guskey & Bailey, 2010, p. 4).

Other objections to this proposed policy to instruct students with heightened awareness of culture and socioeconomic status may stem from a belief in maintaining and protecting certain aspects of our mainstream culture. A break from traditional resources used in schools to diversify and meet multi-cultural demands through differentiated instruction may produce opposition from stakeholders. A shift from the American mainstream culture may fly counter to some stakeholders' belief that schools are part of the American *assimilation machine*. Any departure from the presentation of materials and resources in languages other than English may cause some stakeholders to take offense. Shifts from traditional resources and book titles may be perceived as disrespectful to the canon of American literature that has been established and taught over the centuries in our country.

Another dissenting view with respect to this proposed policy is that this level of new work is too much to expect from teachers. In the wake of the new expectations set upon teachers through the recent implementation of the CCSS, skeptics of this proposal might think this level of effort is unrealistic to extend onto teachers. In addition to the CCSS are new standardized assessments such as the PARCC and Smarter Balance, which often require teachers to elevate their instruction. Expecting teachers to do additional alterations to instruction may overwhelm them. Some stakeholders may feel it is not fair to expect teachers to adapt to even more change.

Furthermore, a financial burden comes with most elements of change. Many states like Illinois are struggling to balance state budgets and efforts to solve those issues often come at public schools' expense. This same financial crunch can be felt at the local level as well. As students' needs increase, (as evident from the new rigorous PARCC and

Smarter Balance assessments), many districts are spending money on instructional programs during the day as well as learning experiences after school. All of these efforts cost money and some districts might not be able to afford such things as tutoring opportunities after school *and* the professional development and resources needed to increase teachers' cultural proficiency.

## SECTION FIVE: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### Educational Activities

In order to implement this advocated policy, it is necessary to determine what educational activities would be needed to bring the policy to fruition. To do this requires a systemic review of various learning opportunities for stakeholders. The types of educational activities needed for this plan to succeed include a teacher needs assessment, professional development opportunities for teachers, informative guest presenters, group text readings, and various presentations to different stakeholders.

#### *Needs Assessments*

Conducting a needs assessment for educators in District 32 is the initial activity required to secure a successful implementation of this policy. The purpose of this needs assessment is to detect the strengths and areas of growth related to the cultural proficiency of our teachers and administrators. Embedded in these needs assessments is a measure of educators' understanding of culturally responsive curriculum and instruction as well as differentiated instruction. A measurement of District 32 educators' understanding of the connection between differentiated instruction and culturally responsive instruction is a desired outcome from the needs assessment.

#### *Conferences and Workshops*

In order to increase teachers' cultural proficiency, they first need to understand this work. Professional development activities can help ensure this is the case. To support the implementation of culturally responsive instruction, workshops and conferences explaining the purpose and procedures of best practice in this field need to be made available to administrators and teacher-leaders. Conferences featuring prominent

presenters addressing culturally responsive and differentiated instruction need to be considered. Often the most effective conferences such as these are located out of town and require travel and lodging costs.

#### *Internal Professional Development*

Because District 32 teachers and administrators have previously attended some of these conferences that focus on differentiation, it is feasible that some of our own educators could provide internal professional development opportunities for other District 32 teachers. Though these internal professional development experiences would not be received firsthand from the industry experts, they would none-the-less prove beneficial for increasing District 32 teachers' understanding of differentiation and sound assessment practices. Because District 32 educators would be providing this professional development, the cost would be reduced. These internal professional development opportunities might occur during student release times, teacher institute days, during the summer, or as after-school learning experiences.

#### *Guest Presenters*

A proven, effective method for bringing about change in District 32 educators' minds is the practiced involvement of guest presenters. In the past, informative presenters from ATI and SIAD have visited District 32 to help increase teachers' understanding of important best practices and thus challenged the instructional status quo. A guest presenter who addresses the value of culturally responsive instruction will help increase the cultural proficiency of all educators in District 32.



### *Group Text Readings*

Another method to bring an increase in the cultural proficiency of the educators in District 32 is to conduct group readings of professional literature that promotes cultural proficiency. An effective activity such as a book study can promote uniformity of messaging used to influence perceptions of instructional practices. The right book is important for maximizing this impact on changing the cultural proficiency of teachers. Effective activities for discussing these books are necessary to produce the greatest gains in teachers' cultural proficiency. In order to create an effective learning environment for a book discussion, the grouping of teachers needs to be carefully considered. District 32 teachers are in natural groups by grade-level in all schools as these are the professional learning communities (PLCs) that meet regularly. Sometimes it is effective to create new PLC groupings that help cross-pollinate beyond grade-level and department conversations. On a smaller scale, professional articles can serve the same purpose as a book study and be less time-consuming and less expensive. Articles can create increased opportunities for greater cultural proficiency when used alone or as a supplement to a book study.

Once a foundation of purpose for increasing District 32 teachers' and administrators' cultural proficiency has been established, other district stakeholders will need to be involved. Sharing this intention of increasing the cultural proficiency of all District 32 educators through a greater understanding of culturally responsive curriculum and instruction is important for students, parents, and the community. Conversation talking points, frequently asked questions, and periodic meetings with these different

stakeholders will help solidify the importance of this work and how it can benefit students.

### Staff Development Plan

In order to increase the cultural proficiency of all of the educators in District 32, a carefully organized plan needs to be designed and followed. Components of this plan include the presentation of need to administration, external conferences and workshops, presentation of need to teachers, guest presenters, group text readings, consulting teacher support, curriculum reviews, and regular progress monitoring.

#### *Presentation of Need to Administration*

In order to fully implement a policy advocating for the increase in cultural proficiency of the educators in District 32, a plan for doing so has to exist. To establish a foundation for success, administrators need to be provided with research and student data that supports the value of this policy as well as strategies for increasing learning for students of color who live in poverty. Research such as that of Ladson-Billings (1995a), Ladson-Billings (1995b), Feger (2006), and Martell (2012) can provide administrators with information about the value of implementing culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum. The student data in Tables 1 through 4 of this document illustrate a significant achievement gap for students of color who live in poverty. These data reinforce the need and urgency for the creation of this plan. A foundational understanding of culturally responsive instruction must be established with district- and building-level administrators to ensure cultural proficiency increases district-wide. Once administrators are acclimated to the value of this policy, teacher-leaders must learn of this plan. An

overall increase in cultural proficiency of District 32 leadership is essential to secure an understanding of the value of this concept for all educators.

#### *External Conferences and Workshops*

To increase the cultural proficiency of the educators in District 32, it is necessary to provide professional development opportunities offered by prominent leaders in the field of cultural proficiency. Possible conferences include the Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment (CREA) Conference and New York University's Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality (TAC-D) Summer Institute. A differentiation conference that District 32 teachers have attended in the past includes Carol Anne Tomlinson's Summer Institute for Academic Diversity (SIAD) held at the University of Virginia. This weeklong conference allows teachers to dive deeply into the pool of differentiated instruction and its benefits to learning. A very informative conference that District 32 teachers have also attended in the past is Pearson's Assessment Training Institute in Portland, Oregon. This conference discusses sound assessment and feedback practices that lead to greater learning for students. Conferences such as these are needed to increase the cultural proficiency of District 32 educators.

#### *Presentation of Need to Teachers*

Once teacher-leaders and administrators have been informed of the policy and have received training to increase their cultural proficiency, it is necessary present the policy and the need for the growth of all District 32 teachers' cultural proficiency. Just as district leadership was presented with research, student data, and strategies for increasing cultural proficiency, every District 32 educator needs this same information. To establish a foundation for success, it is necessary to provide teachers with research and student

data that supports the value of this policy, as well as strategies for increasing learning for students of color who live in poverty. Research such as that of Ladson-Billings (1995a), Ladson-Billings (1995b), Feger (2006), and Martell (2012) can provide teachers with information about the value of implementing culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum. The student achievement gap data from Tables 1 through 4 in this document illustrate to teachers the urgent need for this policy. After they learn of this student performance deficit, teachers should complete a needs assessment that measures their cultural proficiency.

#### *Guest Presenters*

Past District 32 teacher survey data state that teachers value presentations from experts in specific fields of education. Presenters such as Richard Milner, author of *Rac(e)ing to Class* and *Start Where You Are but Don't Stay There* would be beneficial for educators to experience. Dr. Milner is a compelling speaker who includes his research in his presentations and offers solutions to meeting the needs of students of color who live in poverty. Other guest speakers who could help raise the cultural proficiency of the District 32 staff might be Diane C. Watkins and Dr. Stephanie D. B. Johnson. These educators have presented a program at the National Assessment of Education Progress entitled "What Is It About Me You Can't Teach?" A third speaker who would help increase the cultural proficiency of the educators in District 32 is Dr. Sonya Whitaker, author of the book *Is There Anyone That Can Teach Me How to Read?* A presenter would be asked to focus on research-based, tangible instructional practices that have been proven effective for increasing learning with students of color who live in poverty.

### *Group Text Readings*

Another activity to broaden District 32 educators' perspective on cultural proficiency is collective text readings. Possible texts can include any books or articles that convey pertinent information about pedagogy that improves learning for students of color who live in poverty. One suggested title, *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders* by Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell, contains foundational information to increase an educators' cultural proficiency as well as advance their levels of support to develop a deep understanding of this needed instruction. A similar book entitled *Cultural Proficiency: A Guide for People Who Teach* by Nuri-Robins and Lindsey would also serve this purpose well. A third option with similar attributes is *What Is It About Me You Can't Teach?: Culturally Responsive Instruction in Deeper Learning Classrooms* by Rodriguez, Bellanca, and Esparza. Many articles on culturally responsive instruction could also serve to increase the cultural proficiency of District 32 educators. The article, "How to Create a Culturally Responsive Classroom," by Thompson (2015), would be a beneficial text for District 32 teachers to read and discuss. Another impactful article, "Inviting All Students to Learn" by Dack and Tomlinson (2015) would similarly benefit all District 32 teachers. A third such article that could increase District 32 educators' cultural proficiency is Ladsen-Billing (2006), "It's Not the Culture of Poverty, It's the Poverty of Culture: The Problem with Teacher Education."

### *Consulting Teacher Support*

District 32 currently has four teachers on special assignment as consulting teachers (CTs) as part of a Peer Assistance and Review Program (Bensenville School District 2 High Impact Guide, 2016). Because CTs are not usually allotted teaching

assignments, they are available to mentor teachers and model feedback to teachers regarding the implementation of instructional methods and practices. District 32, one of the few districts in the state to utilize such a program, has the capacity to allow these exemplary teachers to provide specific and focused professional development in curriculum design, instructional delivery, use of data in instruction, and sound assessment practices. CTs are a prominent feature to help increase the cultural proficiency of teachers in District 32.

### *Curriculum Reviews*

Once an abundance of quality professional development has been provided to educators, District 32 must begin implementing culturally responsive instruction. Quality lessons and units function as the basis for all effective instructional delivery. All District 32 curricula are written by teachers and are never considered complete. Consistent curricular review and adjustments invites an assessment of lessons and units for adequate and effective elements of culturally responsive instruction. One resource to help bolster the cultural responsiveness of District 32 curriculum is Ruth Culhan's book *Dream Walkers: Mentor Texts That Celebrate Latino Culture*. This resource provides many options for increasing the connection between student culture and curriculum. Beyond lesson plans with resources that reflect knowledge of students' culture and socioeconomic status, these instructional units must contain methods that meet the unique needs of students of color who live in poverty. Resources such as Pete and Fogarty's *Close the Achievement Gap: Simple Strategies That Work*, can help inform best practices for teaching these students. Planning to include culturally responsive instruction into the District 32 curricula will help increase the cultural proficiency of District 32 teachers.

Teacher-leaders and CTs who experienced the cultural proficiency professional development opportunities during the previous summer are sources of support for this effort to increase the cultural responsiveness of District 32 curricula.

#### *Progress Monitoring of Plan*

The district must ensure that this curriculum and instruction are being implemented with fidelity. Progress in this regard can be monitored in various ways. In District 32, curriculum is consistently reviewed and adjusted to ensure its quality and effectiveness for increasing student learning. As a necessity, curriculum and instruction would now be monitored to ensure they include culturally responsive pedagogy as well as critical elements of differentiation. Monitoring the conversations that take place in academic team and content department meetings will also yield qualitative data to inform levels of cultural proficiency. By keeping culturally responsive pedagogy a standing agenda item in various teacher meetings, this proposed policy's focus will remain strong. Classroom observations by administrators, CTs, and teacher-leaders, serve as the impetus for reflective conversations with individual teachers to help support this policy. Additionally, the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Instructional Rounds (City, Elmore, Fiarman, & Teitel, 2011) can be used to check the increase in District 32's cultural proficiency. Establishing a *problem of practice* that defines the need to increase culturally responsive instruction can bring about a global review of progress toward increasing District 32 schools' cultural proficiency as a whole.

Not only does culturally responsive instruction need to be consistently discussed in teacher meetings, it needs to remain a part of administrative meetings as well.

## Time Schedules

In order to effectively fulfill and implement this policy of increasing the cultural proficiency of the educators in District 32, a detailed timeline must first be established. The purpose of the timeline is to help organize the delivery of the components discussed in the Policy Implementation Plan in section five of this document. Because of the depth of this professional development work, the scope of activities will need to span two school years. This timeline must contain information about the activities to be completed, the year and season the activities will take place, the parties responsible for leading the activities, and any necessary resources.

The activities involved in the first year of this plan can be found in Table 5 below.

Table 5

### *Year-one scheduled implementation activities*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Season</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Organizer</b>	<b>Resources</b>
One	Winter	Presentation of need to all administration and consulting teachers	District administration	Student data Research studies
One	Spring	Presentation of need to teacher-leaders	District/building administration	Student data Research studies
One	Summer	Conferences/workshops ( <i>differentiation/culturally responsive instruction</i> ) for administration, teacher-leaders, consulting teachers	District administration	Conference choices travel accommodations/ itinerary

The activities in the first year of this plan provide foundational information and support for District 32 leadership. The establishment of need to district administration, building-level administration, and teacher-leaders is the first step in implementing this policy plan.



The activities for year two in Table 6 provide the necessary supports to increase the cultural proficiency in the teachers of District 32. Some of these activities mirror the introduction that was presented to district leadership during the previous year. A noted difference is that year-one support opportunities are provided by primary sources in the field of educational professional development while the support opportunities in year-two are provided by District 32 educators.

Table 6

*Year-two scheduled implementation activities*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Season</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Organizer</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Two	Fall	Presentation of need to teachers	Building administration	Student data Research studies Conference findings/discoveries
Two	Fall	Teachers' needs assessment	Building administration	Needs assessment
Two	Fall	Teacher institute day guest presenter	District administration	Guest presenter choices Guest presenter accommodations itinerary
Two	Fall-Spring	Group text readings all teachers	District/building administration Teacher-leaders	Book choices Research studies/articles
Two	Fall-Spring	Consulting teachers provide professional development for differentiation and culturally responsive instruction	Consulting teachers	Student data Book choices Research studies/articles District 32 curriculum
Two	Winter-Spring	Curriculum reviews-sub release with stipend	District/building administration Teacher-leaders/teachers	Student data Book choices Research studies/articles District 32 curriculum
Two	Winter-Spring	Consulting teachers model and co-teach culturally responsive pedagogy	Consulting teachers	Student data District 32 curriculum
Two	Winter-Spring	Progress-monitoring: classroom observations/walk-throughs Instructional Rounds	Administrators Instructional Rounds Team	Student data Classroom observation/walk-through/Instructional Rounds training and protocols

Year two of this plan offers activities that address how to increase the cultural proficiency of all District 32 educators. In addition, progress-monitoring activities are identified.

## Program Budgets

Many of the proposed activities for implementing this program in District 32 create no additional costs. Some of the activities will have a moderate financial impact on the district while a select few will bear significant financial cost.

Needs assessments are extremely informative when attempting to raise the cultural proficiency of District 32 teachers. The professional development that the CTs provide teachers and the needs assessments for teachers are examples in this policy that are not financially impactful. However, the use of CTs for this and any other work does have a cost to the district beyond a monetary one. Currently the district has five teachers pulled from the classroom as CTs. Increasing the number of certified teaching staff created none of these positions. For instance, three of these CT positions were created by reducing the number of reading specialists while the other two came from reducing one English learner and one specials teaching position. The CT program does not pose a direct financial cost; however, its true cost in this situation exists as a reduction in direct services to students.

For the past six years, the teachers in District 32 have been writing their own curriculum. Revisiting previously constructed curriculum and writing new curriculum is constantly happening in daily teacher meetings. This type of curriculum review would be necessary for this policy to be successful. Because this work for the most part is done within the regular contracted teaching day, such work would not produce any additional cost for the district. In the past, when any major revamping or initial writing of curriculum occurred, teachers were compensated with a stipend for their work beyond their teacher contract. This curriculum writing can be done after school hours, on the

weekends, or during the summer. Increasing the degree of culturally responsive instruction offered in the curriculum is a large task that promises a lot of work. An estimated one-quarter of the entire certified teaching staff in the district would participate in such stipend work for approximately 10 hours a year each on average. This would result in approximately 40 of the 162 certified teachers receiving 10 hours of stipend compensation at approximately \$30 an hour, for a total of \$12,150. In addition, another 25% of the district staff may opt for substitute teacher release time in which teachers are removed from teaching in order to write and review curriculum. Though this can be cheaper, it requires hiring a substitute teacher for the day, and substitute teachers are not always available in bulk for District 32 schools. The current rate of compensation for certified substitute teachers in District 32 is \$140 a day after their tenth day of employment. Many substitute teachers currently in District 32 hold a teaching credential. If 40 teachers need substitute teachers for a full day of coverage, the total cost is \$5,600. This brings the combined total cost of curriculum review and writing to increase the level of culturally responsive instruction offered to be approximately \$18,100.

District 32 has always believed in getting professional development from the primary sources in the field of education. An example of past professional development experiences as previously mentioned was the week-long Summer Institute for Academic Diversity hosted by Carol Anne Tomlinson on the campus of the University of Virginia. Some budgetary predictions can be made going off past expenditures from this professional development experience. If 15 District 32 employees go to a weeklong conference out of town, it can be calculated to cost approximately \$30,750. This figure is deduced from the 15 educators' conference fees of approximately \$800, transportation

charges of approximately \$500, lodging charges of approximately \$600, and five days worth of per diems at \$30 each day.

District 32 has booked guest presenters to address the teaching staff during institute days for the past few years. These speakers have spoken on a variety of topics from teacher motivation to sound assessment practice. In order to increase the cultural proficiency of teachers in District 32, it is proposed that a guest presenter address the teaching staff at the start of year two in this plan. In the past, the guest presenters have been compensated between \$3,000 and \$6,000 for a single morning appearance. For this policy proposal, it is estimated that \$5,000 will be needed to compensate a high-quality presenter on the subject of cultural proficiency.

In order to increase the cultural proficiency of the educators in District 32, this proposal suggests choosing texts for professional reading on the topic of culturally responsive pedagogy. Professional articles are an inexpensive way to provide teachers with a deeper understanding of this topic. A more in-depth approach to increasing cultural proficiency with teachers and administrators is through a book study. Books that would provide the professional development needed to increase teachers' cultural proficiency cost approximately \$40 per copy. The estimated cost of all 162 certified teachers plus 12 administrators receiving a copy of the same book would be \$6,960.

Table 7

*Estimated cost of policy implementation activities*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Season</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
One	Winter	Presentation of need to all administration and consulting teachers	No cost
One	Spring	Presentation of need to teacher-leaders	No cost
One	Summer	Conferences/workshops ( <i>differentiation/ culturally responsive instruction</i> ) for administration teacher-leaders Consulting teachers	\$30,750
Two	Fall	Presentation of need to teachers	No cost
Two	Fall	Teachers' needs assessment	No cost
Two	Fall	Teacher institute day guest presenter	\$5,000
Two	Fall-Spring	Group text readings all teachers	\$6,960
Two	Fall-Spring	Curriculum reviews-sub release with stipend	\$18,100
Two	Winter-Spring	Consulting teachers provide professional development for differentiation and culturally responsive instruction	No cost
Two	Winter-Spring	Consulting teachers model and co-teach as well as partake in Instructional Rounds walk-throughs	No cost
One-Two	<b>Total Cost</b>		<b>\$58,110</b>

Achieving a higher level of cultural proficiency with the teachers of District 32 is going to take a financial commitment. This breakdown of expenditures reveals some events that will come with elevated expenses as well as other valuable activities that will cost the district nothing. The total estimated cost of this proposed policy is \$58,110.

#### Progress Monitoring Activities

In order to assure a successful increase in District 32 teachers' cultural proficiency, processes must be established to monitor progress toward that goal. Some ways in which progress might be monitored include periodic teacher self-assessments,

consistent and ongoing curriculum reviews, classroom walk-throughs and observations, and periodic student surveys.

#### *Teacher Self-Assessments*

After this policy implementation has begun, it will be valuable to ask teachers to periodically self-assess their level of cultural proficiency. These teacher self-assessments will have multiple-choice questions with room for additional comments that probe teachers' perceptions of their abilities to effectively understand students' academic, emotional, and cultural needs. In addition these teacher self-assessments will explore teachers' perceptions regarding their ability to provide differentiated instruction for their students. Self-assessments will not only keep the idea of maximizing culturally responsive instruction in the spotlight for District 32 teachers, it will also build teacher efficacy as they see their collective and personal cultural proficiency grow.

#### *Curriculum Reviews*

During year two of this policy implementation, administrators and teacher-leaders will conduct periodic curriculum reviews with teacher teams that check for increased levels of culturally responsive instruction. Enabling professional learning communities to dissect and review curricular units provides the impetus for ongoing conversations about culturally responsive instruction. These curriculum reviews enhance teachers' understanding of differentiated instruction, which is vital for teaching students of color living in poverty.

#### *Classroom Observations*

A further way in which teachers' progress in developing cultural proficiency can be monitored is through classroom observations such as the Instructional Rounds process.

This methodical process with instructional practice provides an opportunity for districts to choose a desired instructional approach to observe and evaluate as a system. This type of program can help provide the foundation for witnessing a greater degree of differentiated and culturally responsive instruction in the classroom. The debriefs after the classroom visits serve as professional development for teachers, increasing their personal cultural proficiency with every Instructional Rounds event. The findings from these events are then shared with all teachers in the building, raising the collective cultural proficiency of the entire staff.

#### *Student Surveys*

A final way in which District 32 teachers' cultural proficiency may be measured is through the implementation of student surveys. The focus of these surveys is to allow students the chance to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the instruction they experience. Additionally these surveys measure if students feel connected to or isolated from the curriculum and instruction offered to them.



Figure 1

*PDSA cycle*



In order to fully monitor the progress of this proposed policy of increasing the cultural proficiency of the educators in District 32, a systemic review and renew process must be adopted as outlined in Figure 1. W. Edwards Deming's PDSA (plan, do, study, act) cycle is an ideal method for monitoring the progress of this policy, ensuring that cultural proficiency is constantly under surveillance and nurtured to grow (The W. Edwards Deming's Institute, 2016).

## SECTION SIX: POLICY ASSESSMENT PLAN

### Assessment of Implementation and Outcomes

In order to have this policy effectively implemented, an evaluation of outcomes and results must occur. Progress of the assessment plan must be continuously monitored. The areas in which close monitoring needs to occur include the following: teacher knowledge and perceptions of culturally responsive pedagogy, student achievement and perceptions data, curriculum monitoring data, and instructional observation data.

#### *Teacher Knowledge and Perceptions of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy*

In order to accurately gauge cultural proficiency in District 32, it is necessary to collect multiple types of data related to teachers' understanding of cultural proficiency. One such instrument that could be used to gather teacher self-perceptions is the *Self-Audit of Your Culturally Competent Classroom* as is used in the Greensboro, North Carolina School System. This self-audit asks teachers to consider environmental style, interactional style, instructional strategies for cognitive style, instructional design for cognitive style responsiveness, and assessment style (Shade, Kelly, & Olber, 1998, pp. 5-6) (Appendix A).

Another potential resource to assist in determining teachers' competency with cultural proficiency is the *Culturally Responsive Beliefs and Practices of Schools and General Education Classrooms* rubric as used by the Madison Wisconsin Metropolitan School District (Appendix B). This tool asks teachers to consider such questions as "Does the Instructional Team incorporate culturally responsive materials and content in the curricula and use culturally responsive teaching practices?" (Madison Wisconsin Metropolitan School District, 2007).

### *Student Achievement and Perception Data*

PARCC assessment data served as the primary means to determine the achievement gap between students of color who live in poverty and their commensurate White peers. Though these tests are extremely rigorous, this assessment is a good source of data because the PARCC is based on the CCSS, which is the foundation for the units of instruction created by District 32 teachers. Because the PARCC assessment is criterion-referenced, the scores allow for longitudinal data to be gathered and compared to measure growth by district, schools, or sub-sections of the student population such as students of color who live in poverty. In addition, these tests provide data in both ELA and math strands to allow for analysis of specific strengths and weaknesses to inform future instruction and curricular improvements. With all of these stated advantages of the PARCC assessments, a major drawback is the slow return of the student assessment data to schools and districts. These data provide information about student performance, which is valuable, but they are received well past the point of affecting instruction within the same school year.

Though PARCC assessment data is valid, there is the possibility that the language and cultural perspective of these assessments is that of the mainstream culture of our society. Because of this possibility, alternative academic data should be gathered incorporating assessment methods that meet the needs of individual students. Some of these assessment methods may be informal such as anecdotal notes collected by teachers or teacher observations. A more formal alternative method for recording student achievement could be a student portfolio that is a collection of various artifacts that

demonstrate student understanding of the CCSS. These alternative data combined with the standardized PARCC results should better inform student achievement levels.

Other student data are worthy of collecting in order to help measure the cultural proficiency of the teachers of District 32. Students' perceptions regarding the type of instruction they experience can be valuable when a school system is measuring the level of multi-cultural learning experiences offered to students. Some areas in which student insight might be gathered on surveys include measuring if instructional activities:

(a) include high expectations, (b) are tailored to student's individual needs, (c) are based on students' individual interests, (d) incorporate multi-cultural perspectives, (e) incorporate the student's own cultural perspective, and (f) incorporate student voice, influence, and preferences.

#### *Curriculum Monitoring Data*

In order to secure that students of color who live in poverty are offered opportunities that encourage learning and engagement, it is necessary to measure the type of curriculum being created for these students. Monitoring the degree to which this curriculum is culturally responsive can be done with tools such as the *Multi-Cultural Dimensions of Curriculum* table found in the National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems' *Mississippi Multicultural Responsivity Matrix*. This graphic depicts four dimensions of curriculum that can help define the inclusion of culturally responsive pedagogy in lesson design:

1. Contributions: the inclusion of books and resources that reflect a multi-cultural perspective

2. Diversity additive: the recognition of a variety of ethnic heroes, holidays, and perspectives
3. Transformational: curriculum provides opportunities to bridge and embrace different views
4. Social action: the development of critical lenses that allow students to analyze and synthesize different perspectives (The National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational System, 2006, p. 12) (Appendix C).

#### *Instructional Observation Data*

In order to fully measure the cultural proficiency of teachers in District 32, it is necessary to observe the instruction being implemented in the classrooms. There are numerous approaches to instructional observations and tools used to gather instructional data in classroom visits. Sometimes it is valuable to explore micro-level views of instruction (e.g., individual teachers), while the macro-level view (e.g., entire educational systems) can also prove advantageous.

Instruments such as Clayton State University's *CSU Diversity Rubric* help school systems evaluate their level of cultural proficiency. This rubric provides both guidance in measuring culturally responsive assessment techniques used by teachers and describes different levels of culturally responsive curriculum development. The *CSU Diversity Rubric* also measures the incorporation of cultural learning styles in instruction and educators' knowledge of multicultural and sociocultural influences (Clayton State University, 2012). (Appendix D).

One classroom observation protocol that has its roots in the medical profession's training of doctors is Instructional Rounds in Education. Made popular by Dr. Richard

Elmore of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, this process provides schools and districts with global observations of the instructional practices taking place. Systems that conduct Instructional Rounds must create a *theory of action* stating what is important and valued by the system with respect to instruction and learning. The school or district must create a *problem of practice* or the element of instruction in which the system wishes to improve (City et al., 2011). This process easily lends itself to assisting educators in increasing cultural proficiency as a whole. An example of a problem of practice that focuses on cultural proficiency might be:

We are not engaging our students in their learning through the use of a variety cultural perspectives and resources. Our approach to instruction does not reflect the cultural diversity of our student body. We want to offer our students learning opportunities that celebrate their diversity and motivate students to become self-actualized learners.

Armed with this instructional expectation, classroom observers gather data noting what they see and hear students and teachers saying during the learning process. In addition, these observers look for visual signs of culturally responsive instruction from wall-mounted images to the types of activities students experience in class.

#### Responsible Stakeholders

In order to have this policy effectively implemented, it is necessary to determine who will be accountable for monitoring the progress of the assessment plan. The stakeholders responsible for implementation and monitoring the plan include teachers, building administrators, and district administrators.

### *Teachers' Responsibilities*

One of the primary responsibilities of teachers in this proposed policy involves self-assessment of their own level of cultural proficiency. Teachers will use the instruments determined by administration to measure their understanding and ability to implement culturally responsive curriculum and instruction. Once teachers gather this information, they will analyze the data to build upon their own and the collective cultural proficiencies of their school as well as the district. In addition, teachers will participate in professional development activities offered by District 32 in order to help increase their cultural proficiency.

Teachers are responsible for adhering to all of the guidelines explained within the PARCC administrators' manual in order to gather accurate academic data on District 32 students. Teachers are accountable for the micro-level details of accurate assessment administration of PARCC. This includes a thorough understanding of the handling of assessment materials as well as the detailed test administration protocols. Teachers will partake in any professional development activities offered to assure the implementation of PARCC assessments are done with accuracy. Once the PARCC data are made available, teachers are answerable to the analysis of these data. In this proposed policy, teachers are specifically expected to quantify the performance of students of color who live in poverty as District 32 attempts to close the achievement gap for this population.

Teachers will also have the responsibility of gathering other student data as well. They will administer a survey that probes student perceptions regarding the degree to which the curriculum and instruction offered to them is culturally responsive. With assistance from administrators, teachers will analyze these data in order to improve upon

the curriculum and instruction offered to students of color who live in poverty. Teachers will undergo any professional development necessary to prepare them for analyzing these data.

This proposed policy involves teachers increasing their cultural proficiency through deep analysis of the curriculum created by District 32 teachers. Through the use of curriculum-monitoring rubrics, teachers will ensure that culturally responsive curriculum is being offered to students. Additionally, teachers will make sure the curriculum they write in the future will entail instructional practices that are culturally responsive to students of color who live in poverty. Along with administrators' guidance, teachers are accountable for utilizing the determined rubrics that will help measure the cultural proficiency of District 32 instruction, as detected during classroom observations. These rubrics will be used as a measure of culturally responsive instruction offered to students as well a guide to the expectations of culturally responsive instruction. Similar shared responsibilities between administrators and teachers are expected for implementing Instructional Rounds. The teachers on the Instructional Rounds team and both school and district administrators share the responsibility for creating the problem of practice for individual schools (City et al., 2011). Every teacher is expected to understand the problem of practice established for their school and to make the appropriate adjustments in instruction to improve this instructional condition in their school. Teachers are responsible for participating and implementing any professional development concepts made available regarding increasing their cultural proficiency through instructional observations.



### *Building Administrators' Responsibilities*

Administrators at both the building and district level are responsible for selecting the self-assessment instruments to assist educators in measuring their own levels of cultural proficiency. Building administrators are expected to provide professional development to teachers on the administration of the self-assessments. Building administrators will also play a part in supporting teachers as they analyze their own cultural proficiency data. Once these data reveal areas of growth for teachers with cultural proficiency, building administrators will be responsible for supporting teachers' understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy through professional development opportunities. Building administrators are responsible for selecting the survey used by students to measure the level of culturally responsive instruction that students experience. Building administrators will also be accountable for supporting teachers with the analysis of survey data depicting students' perceptions of the instruction they receive.

Student achievement data gathered through PARCC testing is an activity for which the building-level administrators are answerable. Administering this assessment accurately and within the guidelines of the test creators (Pearson Education) falls on district and school administrators as outlined in the PARCC administrator's manual. Building administrators are accountable for providing teachers with all of the professional development to allow for accurate administration of these assessments. In an attempt to close the achievement gap for students of color who live in poverty, building-level administrators are responsible for the analysis of the PARCC data. Building administrators are also accountable for providing the appropriate professional development to teachers with respect to PARCC data analysis.

Building administrators will be expected to take part in the selection process for rubrics, checklists, and other resources needed to evaluate the level of cultural responsiveness of the curriculum being created by District 32 teachers. Building administrators will also be accountable for providing teachers with the necessary professional development to accurately use curriculum measurement tools and help evaluate the District 32 curriculum. Additionally, building administration will be responsible for supporting teachers when classroom observations determine what adjustments need to be made in instruction. With input from the District 32 administration, the responsibility for creating the problem of practice for Instructional Rounds falls on the building-level administrators and the teachers who are members of each schools' Instructional Rounds Team.

#### *District Administrators' Responsibilities*

Along with building-level administrators, district administrators are responsible for selecting the self-assessment instruments to assist educators in measuring their own levels of cultural proficiency. District administrators are responsible for supporting building administrators in efforts to analyze the data gathered in the teacher self-assessments of culturally proficiency. Likewise, district administration is responsible for selecting the student survey that will be used to measure student perceptions of the cultural responsiveness of curriculum offered.

District administration has the responsibility of making sure the administration of the PARCC assessments adhere to all rules and regulations from Pearson Education. Also, district administration must be involved in the analysis of PARCC data to create a

unified evaluation and to make sure data analysis emphasizes the performance of students of color who live in poverty.

In order to ensure that the curriculum being presented to students contains culturally responsive elements, district and building administrators share the responsibility of selecting the rubrics, checklists, and resources used in classroom observations. District administration is responsible for supporting building administrators in analyzing curriculum for elements of cultural responsiveness. It is the district administration's responsibility to create the theory of action for Instructional Rounds that will encompass the entire district.

## SECTION SEVEN: SUMMARY IMPACT STATEMENT

As society's demands change with time, so too do the skills students need to be successful in life. Because of this, the way we educate children must change as well. The student demographics in District 32 schools have grown more diversified in recent decades. In the past, this diversity might have been viewed as more of an urban issue. Broadridge School District 32, a suburban school system, is now approximately 70% students of color who live in poverty. This document argues that the curriculum and instruction offered to these students is not in the best interest of their academic success. In order to effectively educate students of color who live in poverty, their unique learning needs, cultures, and interests must be taken into consideration when planning for learning.

### Appropriateness of the Policy

Advocating for an increase in District 32 educators' cultural proficiency is valid and necessary in order to improve learning conditions for all students. The academic data presented in this document in Tables 1 and 2 suggest an achievement gap for students of color who live in poverty that cannot be ignored. Remaining neutral and "colorblind" may seem to be the equitable perspective to take when addressing the struggles that students of color who live in poverty face in their academic endeavors. Treating all students equally may appear to be the approach that reduces racial or socioeconomic stereotyping in our schools. However, this "colorblind" philosophy, though well intended, does nothing to offset the innate advantage of students whose cultural backgrounds align with the mainstream culture traditionally presented to students in our curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. Remaining neutral in this

circumstance, ensuring students access only curricula and an instructional practice steeped in the Anglo-European dominated culture does nothing to level the playing field. If we are to truly provide educational experiences that ignite children's natural curiosity to learn, the outcome should not be dependent on whether the students were lucky enough to share the same culture and values of the instructional opportunities being presented. In order to provide equitable educational opportunities, we must climb the ladder of cultural awareness as described in Lindsey et al. (2009), to move beyond *cultural blindness* to that of *cultural proficiency*.

This policy is appropriate for the students of District 32 as it advocates for increasing the cultural proficiency of all District 32 educators. By accomplishing this, nothing will be taken away from students who align with the current mainstream culture in our society. No one is giving anything up in order to provide the necessary gains that students are afforded with this policy. This policy suggests cultural proficiency can be elevated through increasing the knowledge of differentiation and culturally responsive curriculum and instruction created by the educators of District 32.

Because this type of work with culturally responsive curriculum and instruction is new for these teachers and administrators, this plan realistically provides a foundational base of professional development for the leadership in the district before providing this same professional development for all teachers. And because a focus on cultural proficiency is new and very important, making that focus a reality takes time. As such, the timeline for implementation of this plan is two years. However, a cyclical review process is inherent in this work in order to assure that continuous attention is applied to further increase the cultural proficiency of all educators. The embedded progress-

monitoring metrics in this policy are appropriate for increasing the cultural proficiency of District 32 educators.

This policy helps address a potential new purpose of school. School no longer has the archaic focus of sorting students into groups of those who are worthy of continued education and those who are not, any more than it is designed around the harvest schedule of our former agrarian society. Instead, school's new purpose is designed to meet the unique needs of individuals, preparing students for the changing demands of our society. Students enter our schools with a wide range of skills, some higher than their current grade-level and some well below. Understanding students and differentiating learning experiences is non-negotiable. When considering the educational needs of students of color who live in poverty, it is clear that learning can increase through accurate differentiated instruction that incorporates students' cultures and that instills consistently high expectations for all students. This policy does just that for all students, particularly students of color who live in poverty.

#### Needs and Values at the Core of the Policy

In order for this policy to be effective, the needs of all stakeholders must be taken into consideration. The stakeholders who are affected by the implementation of this policy include students, teachers, parents, and the community.

##### *Students*

When this policy is implemented, the students of District 32 will have their needs met regardless of their academic acumen or familiarity with the mainstream culture. When students are afforded the opportunity to learn, utilizing elements of their culture as a motivator, their needs are being met. When students are not penalized for their lack of

background knowledge and understanding of the context in which curriculum and instruction are based, then their needs are being met.

### *Teachers*

The needs of teachers are being considered with the execution of this policy because the educational philosophy allows for appropriate learning opportunities for all students. In addition, the teachers of District 32 are being supported in the implementation of this new policy. They will have access to continued professional development opportunities, allowing them to pursue their growth with the best practice of differentiation. New learning for teachers is expected in this policy as teachers begin to explore the concept of culturally responsive curriculum and instruction. Tiered levels of professional development are offered to teachers to expose them to the components needed to increase their cultural proficiency. Learning experiences ranging from conferences to guest presenters to group text readings support teachers' needs in the implementation of this policy.

### *Parents*

Parents' needs first and foremost are for their children to have valuable learning experiences, and the implementation of this policy accomplishes that for all students in District 32. Elements of this policy create opportunities for greater student motivation and engagement in learning. The needs of the parents of District 32 children are being met because this policy educates in a manner that considers all students as individuals.

### *Community*

The community of Broadridge benefits from the implementation of this policy because it increases the possibility of students receiving more meaningful learning

experiences. When students are offered differentiated instruction and culturally responsive curriculum and instruction, they stand to become more educated citizens that can benefit our local community. These benefits to the students of District 32 will meet the needs of the Broadridge community.



## References

- Bensenville School District 2. (20016). *High Impact Guide*.
- Bensenville School District 2. (n.d.). Our vision, our mission, our beliefs. Retrieved from <http://www.bsd2.org/index.aspx?NID=266>.
- City, E. A., Elmore, R., F., Fiarman, S. E., & Teitel, L. (2011). *Instructional rounds in education: A network approach to improving teaching and learning*. Cambridge MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Chappuis, J., Stiggins, R., Chappuis, S., & Arter, J. (2012). *Classroom assessment for student learning: Doing it right—using it well*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Clayton State University. (2012). CSU Diversity Rubric. Retrieved from <http://www.clayton.edu/search-results?Search=csu+diversity+outcome+observation+rubric>.
- Clark, I. (2011). Formative assessment: Policy, perspectives and practice. *Florida Journal of Education Administrative and Policy* 4(2), 158-180.
- Council of Chief State School Officers. (2015). Professional Standards for Educational Leaders 2015. Washington DC.
- Culham, R. (2016). *Dream walkers: Mentor texts that celebrate Latino culture*. Portland, MN: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Culturally Responsive Teaching. Retrieved from: <http://crt-cc.org/>.
- Dak, H., & Tomlinson, C. A. (2015). Inviting all students to learn. *Educational Leadership*. (72)2, 10-15.
- Danielson, C. (2013). *The framework for teaching evaluation instrument*. Princeton, NJ: The Danielson Group.

- Eberly, J. L., Rand, M. K., & O'Connor, T. (2007). Analyzing teachers' dispositions towards diversity: Using adult development theory. *Multicultural Education, 14*(4), 31-36.
- Feger, M. V. (2006). "I want to read: How culturally relevant texts increase student engagement in reading. *Multicultural Education 13*(3),18-19.
- Fitchett, P. G., Starker, T. V., & Good, A. J. (2010). Review, reflect, and react: A culturally responsive model for pre-service secondary social study teachers. *Social Studies Research and Practice, 5*(3), 1-20.
- Gallavan, N. P. (2005). Helping teachers unpack their "invisible knapsacks." *Multicultural Education, 13*(1), 36.
- Gay, G. (2005). Politics of multicultural teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, (56)*3, 221-228.
- Guskey, T. R., & Bailey, J. M. (2010). *Developing standards-based report cards*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Heifetz, R., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009). *The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Hsiao, Y. (2015). The culturally responsive teacher preparedness scale: An exploratory study. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research, 8*(4), 241-250.
- Illinois Interactive Report Card. Retrieved from <http://iirc.niu.edu/Classic/District.aspx?districtID=19022002002>.
- Illinois State Board of Education. Retrieved from [http://www.isbe.net/board/pdf/mission\\_statement.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/board/pdf/mission_statement.pdf).

- Jensen, E. (2009). *Teaching with poverty in mind*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995a). But that is just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy. *Theory Into Practice*. 34(3), 159-165.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995b). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*. 32(3), 465-491.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). It's not the culture of poverty, it's the poverty of culture: The problem with teacher education. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*. 37(2), 104-109.
- Learning Point Associates (2005). *Culturally responsive instruction: Promoting literacy in secondary content areas*. Naperville, IL: Schmidt, P. R.
- Lindsey, R. B., Nuri-Robins, K., & Terrell, R. D. (2009). *Cultural proficiency: A manual for school leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Little, L. (2011). Year-round versus traditional schools. Retrieved from <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED516966>.
- Madison Wisconsin Metropolitan School District (2007). *Culturally responsive beliefs and practices of schools and general education classrooms*. Retrieved from <https://www.google.com/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#safe=active&q=Culturally+Responsive+Beliefs+and+Practices+of+Schools+and+General+Education+Classrooms.+Madison+Wisconsin+Metropolitan+School+District>.

- Martell, C. C. (2012). Proceedings from The Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association: *Investigating the intersection of race and histories in the classroom*. Vancouver, BC.
- Matias, C. E. (2013). Check yo'self before you wreck yo'self and our kids: Counterstories from culturally responsive White teachers?...to culturally responsive White teachers! *Interdisciplinary Journal of Teaching and Learning* 3(2), 68-81.
- Milner, H. R. (2015). *Rac(e)ing to class*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Moretti, E. (2015). Teaching to be American: The quest for integrating the Italian-American child. *History of Education*. 44(5), 651-666.
- Nuri-Robins, K., & Lindsey, R. B. (2011). *Culturally proficient instruction: A guide for people who teach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Pete, B. M., & Fogarty, R. J. (2005). *Close the achievement gap: Simple strategies that work*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Reeves, D. B. (2009). *Leading change in your school: How to conquer myths, build commitment, and get results*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Rodriguez, E. R., Bellanca, J. A., & Esparaza D. R. (2017). *What is it about me you can't teach: Culturally responsive instruction in deeper learning classrooms*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Rozansky, C. L. (2010). A bumpy journey to culturally relevant pedagogy in an urban middle school: Are we there yet? *Journal of Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research*, 6 1-13.

- Shealey, M. W. (2007). Urban teachers examine reading instruction through culturally responsive pedagogy. *Journal of Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research*, 3, 127-146.
- Schimmer, T. (2016). *Grading from the inside out: Bringing accuracy to student assessment through a standards-based mindset*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.
- Shade, B. J., Kelly, C., & Oberg, M. (1998). Creating culturally responsive classrooms. Washington, D.C: American Psychological Association. Retrieved from [http://pbissmissouri.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/6A\\_HO2\\_-Culturally-Responsive-lessonplans1.pdf](http://pbissmissouri.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/6A_HO2_-Culturally-Responsive-lessonplans1.pdf).
- Shatel, T. (1986, December 14). The unknown Barry Switzer: Poverty, tragedy built Oklahoma coach into a winner. *Kansas City Star and Times*. p. 6.
- Sleeter, C. E. (2011). An agenda to strengthen culturally responsive pedagogy. *English Teaching: Practices and Critique*, (10)2, 7-23.
- Taylor, R. W. (2010). The role of teacher education programs in creating culturally competent teachers. *Multicultural Education*, (17)3, 24-28.
- The Education Alliance at Brown University. *Culturally Responsive Teaching*. The Knowledge Loom Web Site. Retrieved from <http://knowledgeloom.org/adlit/>.
- The National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational System. (2006). The Mississippi Cultural Responsivity Matrix. Retrieved from <http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/uploads/004/678/NCCREStMississippiTool%201.4.pdf>.

- The Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality. Retrieved from  
<http://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2016/april/nyu-conference-focuses-on-culturally-responsive-education-may-20.html>.
- Tomlinson, A. C., & Imbeau, M. B. (2010). *Leading and managing a differentiated classroom*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- W. Edwards Deming Institute. (2016) Retrieved from  
<https://www.deming.org/theman/theories/pdsacycle>.
- Wagner, T. (2008). *The global achievement gap*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Walker, K. (2009). Year-round school. Research brief. Retrieved from  
<http://www.educationpartnership.org/>.

## Appendix A

### Self-Audit Of Your Culturally Competent Classroom

<b>Environmental Style:</b>	<b>1 Seeking Understandin g</b>	<b>3 Starting to put into practice</b>	<b>5 Making corrections/cultura lly responsive</b>
1. Are your visuals representative of all cultural groups?			
2. Do you have learning centers that capitalize and focus on the different modalities/intelligences?			
3. Do you establish a routine and daily schedule to provide some important structure?			
4. Do you encourage interpersonal interactions and a sense of family and community?			
5. How would you rate your understanding of the cultural ways of thinking, acting, and believing of the following groups? (1=low,3=average,5=high)			
African Americans			
American Indians/German			
Americans Hispanic/Latino			
Americans Hmong			
Americans			
Italian Americans			
Mexican Americans			

<b>Interactional Style:</b>	<b>1 Never</b>	<b>3 Sometimes</b>	<b>5 Always</b>
1. When you use cooperative groups, are you certain everyone understands their role in the performance of the task?			
2. Are you prone to heterogeneously group by race, gender and ability unless the task specifically demands another type of grouping?			
3. Do you find ways to engage all			

students in each lesson?			
4. Do you encourage formality with role definitions and appropriate etiquette?			
5. Do you allow students to help each other or to work together even when reading text?			

<b>Instructional Strategies for Cognitive Style:</b>	<b>1 Never</b>	<b>3 Sometimes</b>	<b>5 Always</b>
1. When giving an assignment, do you provide a global view of the task as well as a step-by-step plan for what groups or individuals are to accomplish?			
2. Do you operate in the classroom as a guide and facilitator rather than a “performer” in front of an audience?			
3. Does engagement mean more to you than asking and responding to questions or worksheets?			
4. Do you model and schedule opportunities to practice the ideas or concepts before you require students to demonstrate or test their understanding?			
5. If you use lectures to convey information, do you limit your presentation to 5-10 minutes and have visuals and examples as models of the concept about which you are speaking?			
6. Do you plan ways of helping students process and internalize the information that has been presented?			
7. When you use films, videos, guest speakers, or lengthy readings, do you design ways to assist students to think about and understand the information?			



<b>Instructional Design for Cognitive Style Responsiveness:</b>	<b>1 Never</b>	<b>3 Sometimes</b>	<b>5 Always</b>
1. Do you have each day/lesson carefully planned?			
2. Do you plan a lesson or unit with specific activities, themes, or concepts that include material or information to demonstrate connections across disciplines?			
3. Do you use the knowledge of fine arts (art, music, literature) as other ways in which students can gain knowledge about concepts or ideas?			

<b>Assessment Style:</b>	<b>1 Never</b>	<b>3 Sometimes</b>	<b>5 Always</b>
1. Do you include both qualitative and quantitative data in your assessment of individuals? Your class? Yourself as a teacher?			
2. Have you analyzed the tests given you or the school district to ensure that the questions have an assumption of knowledge with which students are familiar or of which they will become familiar through your instruction?			

**Source: Shade, B.J., Kelly, C., & Oberg, M. (1998). *Creating Culturally Responsive Classrooms*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association**

## Appendix B

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*(This form should be completed and electronically submitted to your Assistant Superintendent by October 30, 2009.)*

### **I. Culturally Responsive Beliefs and Practices of Schools and General Education Classrooms**

**Respondents:** LT= Leadership team (may also include school equity team), IT= Instruction Team, TST=Teacher Support Team, SSIT= Student Support and Intervention Team, IEP= IEP team, PA= Principal/Administration

**Parents/Family Members:** To be as inclusive as possible, references to families within this checklist may refer to biological parents, step-parents, adoptive or foster parents, legal guardians, other family members such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. and to “social family members.” Social family members are not biologically related members of the student’s family, but, nevertheless, play an important part in the student’s family life and upbringing.

**Quality Indicators:** Examples of best practices are offered to illustrate appropriate responses to the critical questions.

**Rubrics:** A rubric is provided for each critical question to assess to what degree the school has addressed each item.

<b>Critical Questions</b>	<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Quality Indicators</b>	<b>Rubric (Check the # most applicable)</b>
<b>School culture and Supports</b>			
1. Does the school culture support and celebrate diversity and view students of RCLD ( <b>racial, cultural and linguistic diversity</b> ) as assets?	<b>LT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* School environment contains evidence of contributions/work from individuals with diverse racial and cultural backgrounds on a regular basis, not just during a special week or month</li> <li>* Classrooms contain evidence of contributions/work from individuals with diverse racial and cultural backgrounds</li> <li>* Students of RCLD are regularly recognized and honored for their work</li> <li>* Bilingual programming</li> <li>* After school language classes</li> <li>* Materials translated for non-English speaking families</li> <li>* Instructional materials contain contributions of diverse individuals</li> <li>* The Instructional Team regularly incorporates culturally responsive materials, content, and teaching practices and school staff.</li> <li>* School staff constantly seek to add to their knowledge of culturally responsive practices and the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1= The school makes little or no attempt to acknowledge and celebrate diversity.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2= The school acknowledges and celebrates diversity during a special time of the school year.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 3= The school and classrooms acknowledge and celebrate diversity on a regular basis.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 4= Acknowledgement and celebration of diversity permeates the school and classrooms with frequent and varied examples (e.g., RCLD students’ work is prominently displayed, instructional materials contain contributions of diverse individuals, school materials translated for non-English speaking families, bilingual programming).</li> </ul>

Critical Questions	Respondent	Quality Indicators	Rubric (Check the # most applicable)
		academic performance data of RCLD students in general education classrooms is systematically reviewed and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of staff practices. *Instructional use of multiple intelligences	
2. Does the school have a positive behavioral management system for ALL students that has had a positive impact on schools?	LT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* School has established procedures that emphasize positive behaviors and regularly recognizes students for displaying appropriate behaviors</li> <li>* School staff have been trained in the implementation of the positive behavioral support system</li> <li>* Emphasis is placed on explaining and directing “above-the-line” behavior</li> <li>* Classroom incentive plans for positive behavior</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1= The school has begun to implement a positive management support system for all students. <input type="checkbox"/> 2= The school has implemented a positive management support system for all students and staff have been trained in its use. <input type="checkbox"/> 3= The school has implemented a positive management system that has resulted in a decline in referrals and suspensions. <input type="checkbox"/> 4= The school has implemented a positive management support system for all students, staff have been trained in its use, and school staff regularly engage in monitoring and problem solving discussions in an effort to enhance the effectiveness of school-wide positive behavioral support interventions because they understand and believe in its purpose.
3. Do principal and staff (, general education, ESL, special education) work collaboratively to support all students in the classroom?	LT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Classroom time in general education settings is devoted to social skills instruction</li> <li>* When necessary, students of RCLD in general education classrooms have behavioral management systems that address individual cultural differences</li> <li>* Peer support mentors are provided</li> <li>* Co-teaching observed</li> <li>* Co-planning observed</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1= There is little or no collaboration between general education teachers, special education teachers, and other support staff (e.g., related services, ESL). <input type="checkbox"/> 2= There is minimal collaboration between general education teachers, special education teachers, and other support staff. <input type="checkbox"/> 3= There is regular collaboration between general education teachers, special education teachers, and other support staff. <input type="checkbox"/> 4= There is extensive and effective collaboration between general education teachers, special education teachers, and other support staff.
4. Has the school adopted approach that values ongoing assessment to drive instructional decisions and track progress?	LT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* IT, TST, and SSIT are active and engaged in problem solving discussions on a regular basis</li> <li>* Examples of IT, TST, and SSIT implemented interventions with data on targeted behavior(s) of a student of RCLD for a minimum of two weeks</li> <li>* IT, TST, or SSIT provided follow-</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1= The school has not implemented a problem solving process to review the academic performance of RCLD students. <input type="checkbox"/> 2= The school has implemented a problem solving process to review the academic performance of RCLD students. Systematic implementation and monitoring of recommended interventions is usually lacking.

Critical Questions	Respondent	Quality Indicators	Rubric (Check the # most applicable)
		up support and monitoring of planned interventions * Families encouraged to participate in problem solving discussions * Data from general education classroom interventions designed to provide academic and/or behavioral support to a student of RCLD * Use of SIMS * Use of Elementary Assessment Walls	<input type="checkbox"/> 3= The school has implemented a problem solving process to review the academic performance of RCLD students. Systematic implementation and monitoring of recommended interventions is usually provided. <input type="checkbox"/> 4= The school has implemented a problem solving process to review the academic performance of RCLD students. Systematic implementation and monitoring of recommended interventions is always provided and there is ample evidence of revisions to interventions based upon analyzed performance data.
5. Are school resources structured so that school teams receive sufficient administrative support when expressing concerns about meeting the needs of ALL students?	LT	* Principal aligns resources to address the needs of a student of RCLD * IT, TST, and SSIT regularly shares concerns with the administration about issues/resources impacting students of RCLD * Professional development support is provided to assist general education teachers in meeting the needs of students of RCLD * School/Home connection activities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1= There is little or no realignment of resources provided to address the needs of RCLD students. <input type="checkbox"/> 2= On an infrequent basis there is some realignment of resources provided to address the needs of RCLD students. <input type="checkbox"/> 3= On a regular basis there is some realignment of resources provided to address the needs of RCLD students. <input type="checkbox"/> 4= On a regular basis there is effective, creative realignment of resources provided to address the needs of RCLD students. School teams can count on administrative advocacy and creative problem solving in attempts to address the needs of RCLD students.
6. Has the school established a multi-tiered model of intervention services within or beyond the classroom?	LT	* School examples of services available to ALL students (e.g., school-wide positive behavioral support system, instructional strategies in reading and math, differentiated curriculum, test taking strategies) * School examples of time limited specialized services for students of RCLD (e.g., extra support in the classroom, small group or 1:1 instruction, Reading Recovery, home support, tutors, after school programs) * School examples of long term intensive specialized support services for students of RCLD (e.g., collaboration with community programs, crisis response plan) * Clear guidelines and criteria have	<input type="checkbox"/> 1= The school has not implemented a multi-tiered (e.g., prevention, intervention, and specialized support) model of intervention services. <input type="checkbox"/> 2= The school has implemented a multi-tiered model of intervention services but differentiated interventions for RCLD students in need are sporadic and inconsistent. <input type="checkbox"/> 3= The school has implemented a multi-tiered model of intervention services and there are numerous examples of differentiated interventions for RCLD students in need. <input type="checkbox"/> 4= The school has implemented a multi-tiered model of intervention services and the extent of differentiated interventions for RCLD students has been exhausted prior to special education referral.

Critical Questions	Respondent	Quality Indicators	Rubric (Check the # most applicable)
		<p>been established to move students from one tier to another</p> <p>* Peer support</p>	
<b>Instructional Team Teacher Beliefs</b>			
7. School teams actively consider other possible explanations (e.g., insufficient instruction, limited English proficiency, absence, mobility and crisis) for the RCLD student's low achievement, before assuming a disability?	<b>LT IT</b>	<p>* School (e.g., recess and other areas) and classroom environmental assessment is conducted to determine possible explanations for the problems experienced by the student of RCLD</p> <p>* Systematic use of curriculum-based assessment and error analyses data</p> <p>* IT, TST, SSIT recommendations focus more on positive behavioral interventions, Social Worker/Psychologist support for absence, mobility and crisis</p> <p>* IT, TST, SSIT recommendations note the strengths of a student of RCLD</p> <p>* Delineated and comprehensive referral process</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1= School teams believe that general education classroom performance problems of RCLD students primarily stem from student deficits and special education referral is the preferred option.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2= School teams believe that general education classroom performance problems of RCLD students may not always stem from student deficits but special education referral tends to be the preferred option.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3= School teams believe that general education classroom performance problems of RCLD students may stem from multiple issues (e.g., student deficits, cultural/linguistic, and mismatch between instructional and learning styles) and numerous general education classroom interventions are employed prior to special education referral.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4= School teams believe that general education classroom performance problems of RCLD students may stem from multiple issues. Based upon a thorough analysis of the instructional environment, an extensive array of general education classroom and school interventions are implemented prior to special education referral.</p>
8. The Instructional Team makes concerted efforts to reach out to parents/family members of some students by fostering collaboration, mutual trust, and respect	<b>LT IT</b>	<p>* School staff host events for parents/families of RCLD students on a regular basis</p> <p>* School staff provide opportunities for parents/family members of students of RCLD to participate in regularly scheduled meetings outside the school setting (e.g., community centers)</p> <p>* School administration promotes staff knowledge of diverse cultures</p> <p>* IT and SSIT include parents/family members of students of RCLD in meeting discussions to formulate instructional and behavioral recommendations</p> <p>* Staff members offer to meet with parents outside the school setting (home visits)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1= The school staff recognizes the need to work in this area.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2= The school staff has made some effort to collaborate with families of RCLD students by inviting them to school team meetings.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3= The school staff regularly reaches out to families of RCLD students by actively involving them in school team meetings and problem solving discussions.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4= The school staff actively seeks the involvement and decision making input of families of RCLD students and is committed to learning about the culture of those families and empowering them.</p>

Critical Questions	Respondent	Quality Indicators	Rubric (Check the # most applicable)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Room parents</li> <li>* Parent empowerment groups</li> <li>* Class potlucks</li> </ul>	
<b>Instructional Team Practices</b>			
9. Does the Instructional Team use culturally responsive behavior management practices by considering the impact of a RCLD student's culture on various behaviors?	<b>LT IT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* General education classroom examples of understanding behavioral differences of students of RCLD (e.g., expressed preference for working individually or in groups, listening and responding style, peer interaction patterns, responses to authority, verbal and nonverbal communication, turn taking behaviors, eye contact).</li> <li>* General education classroom rules and procedures are accommodating to diverse student behavioral styles</li> <li>* Staff confer with family about home expectations and behavior management practices</li> <li>* Staff engage in self-assessments of their own cultural expectations and practices</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1= The Instructional Team does not consider the impact of a RCLD student's culture on behavioral performance. <input type="checkbox"/> 2= The Instructional Team discussed the student's culture but no systematic analysis of its impact on a RCLD student's behavioral performance was conducted. <input type="checkbox"/> 3= The Instructional Team discussed the student's culture and conducted a systematic analysis of its impact on a RCLD student's behavioral performance. <input type="checkbox"/> 4= The Instructional Team discussed the student's culture and conducted a systematic analysis of its impact on a RCLD student's behavioral performance. The systematic analysis of the student's culture and potential impact on behavioral performance included staff discussions with the family about home expectations and behavior management practices and staff self-assessments of their own cultural expectations and practices.
10. Does the Instructional Team set high expectations and standards for ALL students?	<b>LT IT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* General education teacher's expectations for academic achievement for students of RCLD are the same as other students</li> <li>* Standards-based curriculum for all students</li> <li>* Behavioral</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1= The Instructional Team quite often does not maintain high expectations for the academic achievement of ALL students. <input type="checkbox"/> 2= The Instructional Team usually maintains high expectations for the academic achievement of ALL students but quite often those high expectations are unrealistic because the Instructional Team does not regularly engage in culturally responsive teaching practices. <input type="checkbox"/> 3= The Instructional Team regularly maintains high expectations for the academic achievement of ALL students. High expectations for ALL students are periodically supported by culturally responsive teaching practices. <input type="checkbox"/> 4= The Instructional Team regularly maintains high expectations for the academic achievement of ALL students. High expectations for ALL students are regularly supported by culturally responsive teaching practices.

Critical Questions	Respondent	Quality Indicators	Rubric (Check the # most applicable)
11. Does the Instructional Team accommodate the needs of ALL students through differentiated instruction that reflects the interests and experiences of ALL students?	<b>LT IT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Thinking skills are explicitly taught and modeled</li> <li>* General education classroom teacher regularly explains how and why student's responses are correct and incorrect</li> <li>* Specific learning strategies are explicitly taught to ALL students</li> <li>* 4 block instruction in math aimed at teaching understanding</li> <li>* Balanced literacy instruction with thinking skills explicitly taught</li> <li>* General/Special education teacher employs a variety of teaching methods and materials</li> <li>* General education classroom teacher engages in direct, frequent, and continuous monitoring of instruction and student progress performance</li> <li>* General education classroom examples of differentiated instruction to address the needs of ALL students</li> <li>* General education classroom examples of individualized behavioral supports to address the needs of ALL students</li> <li>* Instruction builds upon student pre-existing knowledge and experiences</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1= The school staff recognizes the need to work in this area. <input type="checkbox"/> 2= The Instructional Team regularly provides differentiated instruction in at least one of the five factors of instruction (1)content = what is taught, (2) process = how content is taught, (3) product = how students demonstrate content mastery, (4) affect = how students connect their thinking and feelings, and (5) learning environment = how the classroom is designed and students are grouped). <input type="checkbox"/> 3= The Instructional Team regularly provides differentiated instruction in 2 or 3 of the five factors of instruction (see #2 above). <input type="checkbox"/> 4= The Instructional Team regularly provides differentiated instruction in 4 or 5 of the five factors of instruction (see #2 above).

Based on an analysis of the above statements, it is recommended that the following goals should be addressed in the improvement action plan.

Contributions	Diversity Additive	Transformational	Social Action
<p>The curriculum structure, goals and characteristics reflect mainstream constructions of knowledge. Ethnic heroes and their contributions are noted. Ethnic holidays and themes are incorporated into the curriculum to acknowledge ethnic holidays and celebrations. Books, bulletin boards, videos and other teaching materials are chosen because they portray people from multiple cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, and language groups in a variety of roles interacting across stereotypical lines.</p>	<p>Teachers consistently reference the multicultural nature of their teaching tools, noting the contributions and accomplishments of distinguished individuals from a variety of cultural, racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds.</p> <p>In addition to acknowledging heroes and holidays, concepts, themes, authors, and perspectives from a variety of ethnic and cultural groups are added to the curriculum without changing its basic structure and assumption. For example, in this approach, the Westward Expansion curricula is taught from the perspective of the westward movement of hunters, trappers, pioneers, and the advent of the industrial age and its impact on harnessing the resources of the western U.S. Concepts and themes that explore the impact of expansion on American Indians is a substantial portion of the curriculum but the focus is on the movement west.</p>	<p>Teachers consistently provide opportunities for their students to work together across cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, language, and ability lines. Academic and social opportunities are created throughout the course of each academic year so that students form friendships and mutually supportive connections across cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, and ability groups. The curriculum, including concepts, issues, themes, and problems is taught from several ethnic and cultural perspectives and points of view. Texts and other teaching materials offer multiple perspectives and are told from multiple perspectives.</p> <p>Rather than study the Western Expansion, students explore the history of the West during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and its impact and outcomes on multiple groups. The emphasis is on the complexities of diverse cultures and the role of government and other institutions in achieving specific outcomes. Classroom practices are congruent with the curriculum so that, regardless of the content area, the curricula create opportunities to examine the influence of multiple perspectives and knowledge generation on the content area.</p>	<p>Teachers enact curricula that explore multiple perspectives, ideas, and outcomes. Students are able to develop critical lenses that require analysis, synthesis, and perspective taking within each content area. Teachers assess student outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills, and critical perspectives as well as social advocacy.</p> <p>Teachers infuse their curriculum with opportunities for students to explore questions of fairness and equity as they relate to classroom practices such as grouping, rule setting, consequences for conduct, and grading. The teacher mediates these discussions by encouraging students to take the perspective of others. The curricula include learning experiences and assignments that encourage students to investigate the status quo and to generate actions that combat or improve equity within the school or local community.</p>



## Appendix D

### From: CSU TEACHER EDUCATION UNIT DIVERSITY OUTCOMES OBSERVATION RUBRIC

**Demonstrates Appropriate Knowledge** - Candidate is knowledgeable of multiculturalism (race, gender, class, ethnicity, special needs, religion) and socio-cultural influences on subject-specific learning. (Reflects Teacher Education Unit Outcome 4)

Standard	NO/RI	1 - Unsatisfactory	2 - Developing	3 – Target	4 = Exceeds Standard
<b>Demonstrates Appropriate Knowledge of Varied Perspectives</b>		Candidate rarely displays or does not display knowledge and acceptance regarding various perspectives/voices in or out of content area <b>(4c)</b> .	Candidate inconsistently or ineffectively displays knowledge and acceptance regarding various perspectives/voices in or out of content area <b>(4c)</b> .	Candidate consistently and proficiently displays knowledge or acceptance regarding various perspectives/voices in or out of content area <b>(4c)</b> .	Candidate consistently and proficiently displays knowledge <u>and</u> acceptance regarding various perspectives/voices in or out of content area <b>(4c)</b> .
<b>Demonstrates Appropriate Knowledge of Students' Cultural Backgrounds</b>		Candidate rarely displays or does not display knowledge of cultural diversity in general, and/or students' cultural backgrounds in particular <b>(4c)</b> .	Candidate inconsistently or ineffectively displays knowledge of cultural diversity in general, and students' cultural backgrounds in particular <b>(4c)</b> .	Candidate consistently and proficiently displays knowledge of cultural diversity in general, and students' cultural backgrounds in particular <b>(4c)</b> .	Candidate consistently and proficiently goes above and beyond expectations in displaying knowledge of cultural diversity in general, and students' cultural backgrounds in particular <b>(4c)</b> .
<b>Demonstrates Appropriate Knowledge of Socio-Cultural Influences on Learning</b>		Candidate rarely displays or does not display awareness of socio-cultural influences on subject-specific learning <b>(4b,d)</b> .	Candidate inconsistently or ineffectively displays awareness of socio-cultural influences on subject-specific learning <b>(4b,d)</b> .	Candidate consistently and proficiently displays awareness of socio-cultural influences on subject-specific learning <b>(4b,d)</b> .	Candidate consistently and proficiently goes above and beyond expectations in displaying awareness of socio-cultural influences on subject-specific learning <b>(4b,d)</b> .