Culturally Responsive Schools

Tyrone C. Howard, Ph.D.
UCLA—Pritzker Center
September 17, 2018
Who are the students that we are serving every day?
Why is Cultural Responsiveness Needed?
4-Year High School Graduation Rates

Source: California Department of Education, 2015-16 graduation rates, accessed April 2017
LAUSD K-12 out of school suspensions by race and ethnicity

LAUSD K-12 expulsions by race and ethnicity

Culture Matters...But what is it?

- The customary ways in which humans live in response to an environment and survive. Includes beliefs, *forms of communication, family arrangements, spiritual convictions, ways of knowing/doing, values*. These characteristics are usually passed from generation-to-generation.
How do students live culturally?

What patterns do students use to interpret reality?

How does culture shape and influence cognition and learning?

(Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff, 2003; Cole, 2000)

Culture is a complex constellation of values, morals, norms, customs, and traditions that provides a general design for living, and a pattern for interpreting reality.
TEACHING WITH A CULTURALLY-RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY ALLOWS ME TO:

- Hold high expectations
- Teach challenging material in a way that is student-centered
- Create real world ties between home and content
- Use “bridges” and scaffolding to increase my students’ interest and knowledge
- Keep myself growing and learning as a teacher
LINGUISTIC MICRO-AGGRESSIONS

Denial of Primary Language
Belittling Primary Language
Failure to recognize non-linear forms of discourse
Devaluing Non-Standard Forms of Language
RACE & CULTURE
Colorblind

• This ideology is rooted in a belief that in order to end racial prejudice and discrimination that we don’t see people’s color, and that we just see them as people. If we remove race from our mental make up, and we just see people as human beings and then racial prejudice will disappear.
What is Culturally Responsive Teaching?

Culture is central to student learning.

Empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically.

Recognizes, respects, and uses students' identities and backgrounds as meaningful sources by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
Cultural Humility

• “An acknowledgement of one’s own barriers to true intercultural understanding”
• The “difference between intellectually knowing another culture and being able to truly relate to it”
• Examining & suspending assumptions & beliefs
  – Requires self-reflection, awareness & critique
  – An ongoing process that never STOPS!
High Leverage Teaching Practices Critical to *Relationship* Building

- Know your students & their socio-cultural realities
- **Understand trauma**
- Build trust
- **Recognize resilience & strengths**
- Listen without judgment
- **Ask “what happened” instead of “what’s wrong?”**
- Accommodate a measure of opposition
- **Develop cultural competence**
- Understand that race matters to many students
Essential Elements of Culturally Responsive Teaching

1) The **eradication of deficit based** ideologies of culturally diverse students

2) Disrupting the idea that Eurocentric or middle class forms of discourse, **knowledge, culture, and historical interpretations** are normal

3) A **critical consciousness** and sociopolitical awareness that reflects an ongoing commitment to challenging injustice, and disrupting inequities and oppression of any groups of people

4) An authentic and **culturally informed notion of care** for students, wherein their academic, social, emotional, psychological and cultural well being are adhered to

5) A recognition of the **complexity of culture**, wherein educators enabling students to use their personal culture to be used as an enhancement in their quest for educational excellence.
• **Micro-affirmations** are small acts that can have a big impact on an individual’s success.

• **Micro-affirmations** have the power to counteract the negative impact of micro-aggressions or inequities.

• **Micro-affirmations** involves more than simply being nice. They are used intentionally as part of a strengths-based approach to a talent development philosophy.
THANK YOU!

Tyrone C. Howard, Ph.D
UCLA—Pritzker Center
email: tyrone.howard06@gmail.com
twitter: @TyroneCHoward