

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR A CULTURALLY RELEVANT AND
RESPONSIVE EDUCATIONAL MODEL**

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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR A CULTURALLY RELEVANT AND RESPONSIVE EDUCATIONAL MODEL

Executive summary

The term “culture” has been defined from many different practical and theoretical perspectives, presenting a challenge to educators seeking to design and implement a Culturally Relevant and Responsive Educational (CRRE) Program. From an educational perspective CRRE can be defined as *educating all students by incorporating their cultural, emotional, and social experiences into the teaching and learning process.*

The main objectives of this document are:

1. To clarify the conceptual and practical meaning of the term “Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE).”
2. To identify the major domains of a culturally relevant educational program and their theoretical and practical components.
3. To help to build a comprehensive CRRE model for instruction and training for practitioners responsible for program and staff development.
4. To synthesize numerous views about CRRE for Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) educators and decision makers.
5. To provide a blueprint for the evaluators interested in examining their educational practices and program in light of a culturally relevant educational model.

The major issues attributed to a CRRE program by national and local experts and visionaries, are clarified under the following nine inter-related domains:

- *Knowledge and experience.* The more teachers understand their students' cultural, ethnic, religious, class, neighborhood and family backgrounds and experiences, the better able they are to teach their students effectively.
- *Social and emotional elements.* Respect for and acceptance of students' cultures and affirmation of students is of prime importance in a CRRE program. Students need to understand the negative effects of stereotypes, recognize values shared across groups, and learn social skills that foster effective interaction across groups. Schools should provide educational activities with crosscutting group memberships. Students also need a safe and protective learning community in which they feel they belong. Such an environment will be fostered by teachers having high expectations of students, building students' confidence, addressing their needs in a positive and rewarding manner, eliminating discriminatory institutional practices, and by schools having positive role models who represent students' cultures.
- *Equitable and relevant educational opportunities and resources.* Instructional materials, school and classroom environments, and décor should reflect the diversity of the students within the classroom and within the school. Providing equal access to educational opportunities and educational resources for all students should be the governing rule of any educational institution.
- *Instructional quality and curriculum.* Besides having multicultural content in all subject areas, diversity should be taught while emphasizing unity. Art education provides a viable instructional vehicle for a multicultural and diverse education. Civic education, wherein students are taught mutual responsibility for one another, and authentic democracy should be another important part of the instructional curriculum. High

expectations of students, a rigorous instructional curriculum, emphasis on enrichment, attention to specific language needs, and opportunities for advanced learning for all students are essential in order to adequately prepare all students for both college and employment.

- *Instructional strategies.* Varied and multiple educational and pedagogical approaches such as cooperative learning, active learning, apprenticeship, applied learning, instructional conversations, constructive learning, scaffolding of knowledge, and holistic child development are needed to reach all students.
- *Assessment and Diagnosis.* Culturally appropriate testing strategies and materials are needed for diverse groups of students. Time limits on testing need to be replaced by the recognition that some students may need more time to perform at their best. Assessment should be looked at as a diagnostic mechanism to improve teaching and learning. Multiple sources of assessment may be needed for different groups of students.
- *Professional development.* CRRE must be understood in order to be meaningfully implemented. This involves on-going, on-site training for instructors and administrators. All instructional and supporting staff member must develop cultural awareness and learn to interrogate their own belief systems and world views. One approach to accomplish this objective is through deep inquiry and shared conversations. There are model teachers, progressive schools, and appropriate programs and strategies present within each school district which can be observed, copied and enhanced.
- *Parent and community involvement.* Parent and community involvement are crucial and should be encouraged and structured. Communication between parents, community members and school staff must be meaningful and on-going. Every student needs an

effective educational advocate. Parents and community members should participate in evaluating the effectiveness of the schools in their areas.

- *Policy and monitoring.* A specific and explicit monitorial and financial policy must be in place to demonstrate support from the leadership, along with an evaluation and accountability system to supervise students' progress and to help embed a culturally relevant and responsive education in the school system.

DOMAINS AND COMPONENTS OF A CULTURALLY RELEVANT AND RESPONSIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Relevance and Importance

In spite of a large number of government-supported educational reforms, an alarming and persistent achievement gap exists among different ethnic and racial groups in our nation. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the gaps between average scores for Black and White students decreased between the early 1970s and the late 1980s but since then have stopped or even increased. For example, in reading, 1 in 100 African American 17 year-olds can read and gain information from specialized tests compared to 1 in 12 white students (Haycock 2001). Educational data reveal that most school districts across the country are not adequately serving the African American and Latino student populations (Educational Trust, Inc. 2002/2003). LAUSD is no exception. In LAUSD, the norm-referenced mean scores of African American students are close to the 30th percentile, while the mean scores of white students are principally above the 50th percentile (LAUSD 2002).¹

A large number of educators and philosophers argue that educational systems must be responsive and relevant to the emotional, psychological and educational needs of all students, and to US minority students in particular. Many cite accumulated research evidence that demonstrates the link between cognitive performance and cultural context (D'Andrade 1990, Rogoff 1990, Darling-Hammond 1997, Wang, et al. 1993/1994).

The development and implementation of a culturally relevant and responsive instructional program was recommended as the best approach to ameliorate the achievement gap. However,

¹ 2001 to 2002 Stanford 9 Matched Individual Student NCE Gains by District, School, and Grade Level. Los Angeles Unified School District (Program Evaluation and Research Branch), October 2002.

the scope and nature of a CRRE instruction program is complex and elusive largely because the definition of culture is complex and elusive.

The following paper was developed to define the concept and domains of a Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE) to assist LAUSD educators and others in the development, implementation and monitoring of a comprehensive CRRE instructional program. It aims to construct a comprehensive framework containing the critical elements of a culturally relevant and responsive education in an attempt to provide District staff with an explicit definition and cohesive model on which to build, implement and evaluate CRRE. The goal of developing and implementing a culturally relevant and responsive instructional program is to improve education outcomes for *all* LAUSD students and to lower the achievement gap between groups of students, particularly those disenfranchised groups who may not have had access to quality education.

Purpose of the Study

The main objectives of this document are:

1. To clarify the conceptual and practical meaning of the term “Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE).”
2. To identify the major domains of a culturally relevant and responsive educational program and their theoretical and practical components.
3. To help to build a comprehensive CRRE model for instruction and training for practitioners responsible for program and staff development.
4. To synthesize numerous views about CRRE for Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) educators and decision makers.

5. To provide a blueprint for the evaluators interested in examining their educational practices and program in light of a culturally relevant educational model.

What is Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education?

According to the *American Heritage Dictionary* the word “culture” has many definitions including the following that pertain to our work as educators. Here the word culture has been delineated as:

- The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, beliefs, arts, and all other products of human work and thought characteristics of a specific group of people.
- A style of social and artistic expression peculiar to a specific group.
- The act of developing the social, moral, and intellectual faculties through (informal) education.

Analyzing these definitions carefully reveals the difficulty of defining culture. The word culture includes:

- Behavior patterns,
- Belief systems,
- Human work products,
- Human thought products,
- Art forms, and
- Social, moral, and intellectual development through learning.

Since culture is attributed to a particular group of people, it also denotes that people coming from different cultures may behave differently in a similar situation, may have a different set of values about the same condition, may learn the same issue in different ways, and may demonstrate their learning in different modes. People coming from different racial, religious, and geographical backgrounds have different cultures, different ways of learning, and different ways of making sense of the world around them. Thus, it is essential for educational systems and educators to not only respect and value students’ cultural backgrounds and histories,

but also to build instructional strategies that benefit from students' life experiences and learning styles.

Teachers need to have sociocultural awareness to be able to both understand the students in the classroom and to build a classroom culture in which all are comfortable and feel they belong. Without sociocultural awareness, teachers will judge students according to their own cultural lenses. In a culturally relevant and responsive educational environment, the values of and cultural experiences of all should be understood and have a place in the learning process. Therefore, a Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE) can be defined as: *“educating all children by incorporating their emotional, social, and cognitive cultural experiences into the teaching and learning process.”*

The main purpose of this manuscript is to clarify the critical domains of CRRE and their underlying components. Our hope is that the following conceptual review helps educational researchers and practitioners to understand the importance and role of culture in educational programs and practices since culture and education are two sides of one coin: one is based more on informal learning and interactions at home, in the community and at social gatherings; the other is based more on formal learning and socialization in a formal educational setting.

Method

This paper utilizes a qualitative, multi-source analytical approach that reviews, compares and contrasts issues related to CRRE. The sources utilized here include:

- A review of the existing literature on CRRE;
- A review of national expert presentations for a conference organized by the Los Angeles Unified School District;
- Interviews with Los Angeles Unified District visionary educators; and
- Interviews with Los Angeles community visionary members.

The last two groups are selected members from the African American Students' Resolution Committee. (See Appendix A for interviewee background information.) Their opinions were taken from the transcripts of in-depth, semi-structured oral interviews conducted by Program Evaluation and Research Branch (PERB) evaluators. This process provided the possibility of identifying agreement upon the basic underlying elements of a culturally relevant and responsive education as presented, advocated, argued and clarified by a relatively large number of national and local experts. Opinions of all three groups (national experts, local visionaries, and local experts) were compared and common elements suggested by at least two groups are presented in the following table.

Table 1. CRRE Salient Domains and their Related Components

<i>1. Knowledge and experience domain</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on students' prior experiences and knowledge • Awareness of alternative sources of knowledge • Knowledge construction practices • Knowledge of learning modalities and social protocols • Build on students' strengths
<i>2. Social and emotional elements domain</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care for and affirmation of students • Mutual respect and rapport • Respect for cultural diversity • High expectations • Build students' confidence • Institutionalize equality of treatment • Emphasize intergroup relations* • Safe and protective environment • Classroom management • Positive role models
<i>3. Equitable and relevant educational opportunities and resources domain</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of an environment that reflects students' cultural diversity • Fair and equitable access to educational opportunities and resources for all

* This aspect was advocated solely by the national experts.

Table 1. Continued

<p><i>4. Instructional quality and curriculum domain</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigorous instructional environment • Emphasize enrichment • Multicultural content • Teach diversity • Address poverty • College and vocational preparation • Civic education • Art education • Focus on language needs
<p><i>5. Instructional strategies domain</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative learning • Active learning and apprenticeship • Instructional conversations • Constructive learning • Applied learning • Scaffolding • Targeted teaching • Holistic development
<p><i>6. Diagnosis and assessment domain</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic use of tests • Multiple assessment strategies • Ample assessment time* • Intelligence as an effort-based phenomenon* • Revision of monocultural tests • Use of alternative approaches to tracking system
<p><i>7. Professional development domain</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reflection and cultural awareness • Promotion of issues inherent in a culturally relevant and responsive education • On-going training for all who are involved in educating a child • Cultural and language development and training • Collaborative teaching environment • Use of exemplary models in the development of a district structure
<p><i>8. Parent and community involvement domain</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform parents • Improvement of school-parent interaction • Meaningful access to school authorities for parents • Use of community evaluators who are aware of CRRE's concepts and meaning • Community collaboration and parental participation • Educational advocacy

* This aspect was advocated solely by the national experts.

Table 1. Continued

<i>9. Policy and monitoring domain</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explicit policy and support for implementation• Evaluation and accountability system

Salient Domains of CRRE

One of the major the major objectives of this work was to present a comprehensive and exhaustive framework for a culturally relevant and responsive educational program. After spending considerable time, we admit that what we are presenting here is neither a comprehensive nor an exhaustive model since the issue of culture is so vast and multidimensional. However, we believe that it is a good start in the right direction. This is an attempt to look at this issue from both theoretical and practical angles since our sources had different foci and various points of view. Some were more concerned about the theoretical aspects of CRRE, while others were more interested in practical issues and implementation of CRRE in educational policies and practices. The following nine interrelated domains of CRRE and their corresponding components are presented in greater detail in this section. Each Domain is described and its related components are summarized in tabular format. Footnotes are included for those who are interested in obtaining more information about individual components of the model.

First Domain - Knowledge and Experience

Since there is a strong relationship between cognitive performance and cultural context, it is essential for teachers to know about their students’ cultures, life experiences, and their learning modalities. In the multicultural classrooms of LAUSD, with students coming from almost every corner of the world, it seems a difficult task to accomplish. However, that is our challenge. At a

minimum, teachers must know their students, what skills and content each student has already mastered. Teachers should also recognize different learning styles for different group of students and incorporate these styles in classroom teaching in order to facilitate learning.

Cultural understanding can come from visiting and knowing the students’ neighborhoods and homes, knowing the ideals held by different groups, recognizing differences in language patterns, and noticing the dynamics of human interaction for different groups. Students construct knowledge inside and outside the classroom setting. Recognizing students’ skills of observation, evaluation and information synthesis and understanding how information gathering and analysis is created and refined outside of the classroom is useful to facilitate learning within the classroom. Thus, in a typical multicultural LAUSD classroom students need to be encouraged to bring in examples, experiences, and stories from their daily lives. Table 2 presents a summary of issues related to this domain.

Table 2. Components of the Knowledge and Experience Domain

<i>Build on students’ prior experiences and knowledge²</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand and know the students as much as possible, their cultural backgrounds, their neighborhoods, their homes, how they learn, how they construct knowledge or make sense of the world, how they use and understand language. A learner’s previous life experiences and daily life will significantly influence the meaning the learner imposes on new experiences and will shape how and whether the new learning will be stored in their long-term memory. 2. Incorporate students’ contexts, economic situations, cultural and ethnic backgrounds and integrate their historical, cultural and ethnic information in the regular classroom teaching process.
<i>Awareness of alternative sources of knowledge³</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a global cultural environment not only dependent on classroom texts or teachers’ knowledge as sole source of authentic academic discourse. 2. Develop schools where both students and teachers are an integral part of instruction. 3. Include stories and experiences from student’s daily life, social experiences and cultural cues in the curriculum.

² For more information see Campione and Armbruster 1985, Palincsar and Klenk 1991, Giroux 1992.

³ For more information see Lee 1993, 1995, 1997, 2000, Ladson-Billings 1990, Barba and Bowers 1997, Kessler and Quinn 1980, Rodriguez and Bethel 1983, Williams, Fast, Berestiansky, Turner and Debreuil 1979, Cummins 1979, Ehindero 1980, Walberg 1984.

Table 2. Continued

<i>Knowledge construction practices</i> ⁴
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identify forms of knowledge that student construct through their participation in routine cultural practices at home.2. Recognize the skills in observation, assimilation, synthesis, evaluation and generalization of information that students bring to the classroom.
<i>Knowledge of learning modalities and social protocols</i> ⁵
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Modify teaching styles to be consistent with learning styles and cultural characteristics of learners, balance differences in the social context and protocols for learning, cultural differences for adult-child relationships, individual and group learning, differences in culturally appropriate rules and discipline, and differences in student maturity levels.2. Understand and utilize cognitive, affective, participatory, and emotive approaches to reach all learners.3. Use authentic or intermittent culturally mediated instruction when possible; that is, use negotiation and mediation to facilitate learning using insider knowledge of the culture. Use cultural accommodation when authentic instruction is not possible. To practice cultural accommodation notice and learn language patterns, engage main cultural ideas of different groups, and recognize the dynamics of human interaction particular to a group.
<i>Build on students' strengths</i> ⁶
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Build on the strengths and previous knowledge that the student brings to the classroom.2. Focus on a dynamic or synergetic relationship between home-community culture and school culture.

Second Domain - Social and Emotional Elements

A culturally relevant and responsive education is built on respect for and affirmation of students' cultures. Students must know that educators care for and understand them. This contributes to student self-confidence, to their potential as leaders and contributors in their communities, and fosters mutual respect and rapport within the classroom.

A safe and protective environment for all students is needed. Safe means a welcoming, encouraging, understanding ambiance where classroom management is done in a positive way that protects the student. High expectations and belief in *all* students should be readily apparent.

⁴ For more information see Villegas 2002.

⁵ For more information see Smitherman 1977 and 2000, Cazden & Mehan 1989, Irvine and York 1995, Nieto and Rolon 1997, Villegas 1991.

⁶ For more information see Villegas 2002, Ladson-Billings 1995.

Classroom management strategies work jointly with other elements of CRRE: instructional strategies, the creation of opportunities to learn, and existence of a curriculum that is relevant and responsive to students' lives, values and needs.

One specific social issue that must be addressed is *institutional equity*. Institutional school culture and structure need to be transformed to give equal status to every student. This includes providing a non-segregated educational environment, and eliminating practices of racism and sexism such as labeling, tracking, sport participation, and disproportional enrollment in gifted and special education programs. It also includes providing positive role models who resemble the cultural groups of all students and who work in all professions.

The Center for Multicultural Education (Banks et. al. 2001) emphasizes intergroup relations as the central aspect of a culturally relevant and responsive education. Students need specific knowledge and skills to facilitate cross-group relations, including understanding about the negative effects of stereotypes, recognition of shared values, and social skills that foster interaction across groups. Schools should provide a positive and encouraging environment for social interaction across groups by providing meaningful activities with crosscutting group memberships. Table 3 presents a summary of issues related to this domain.

Table 3. Components of the Social and Emotional Elements Domain

<i>Care for and affirmation of students</i> ⁷
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Affirm and value students and their cultures. 2. Have empathy and respect for the students; students know they are accepted and understood.
<i>Mutual respect and rapport</i> ⁸
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish teacher-student rapport, meaningful communication, and mutual respect. 2. Respect teachers as professionals and students as able learners.

⁷ For more information see Villegas 2002.

⁸ For more information see Tiberius and Billson 1991, Tatting 2001.

Table 3. Continued

<i>Respect for cultural diversity</i> ⁹
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know and respect students' cultures, their racial, cultural and ethnic identities, their values and their communities. 2. Understand and respect cultural behaviors. 3. Eradicate negative attitudes toward different ethnic and racial groups through the inclusion of ever-present, positive images of student ethnic groups within course content and materials.
<i>High expectations</i> ¹⁰
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate the same high and clear expectations for all students. 2. Believe that students can learn.
<i>Build students' confidence</i> ¹¹
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give students feelings of confidence and competence. 2. Teach children to see themselves as contributors and leaders.
<i>Institutionalize equality of treatment</i> ¹²
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transform school organization to give equal status to every student. 2. Examine the school's grouping and labeling practices. 3. Ensure that children of diverse cultures are educated in a non-segregated environment. 4. Incorporate all students in the learning process and drop assumptions associated with race and gender.
<i>Emphasize intergroup relations</i> ¹³
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide opportunities to participate in mixed-group co- and extracurricular educational activities. 2. Teach about values shared by all cultural groups and stereotyping. 3. Teach social skills needed to interact effectively across racial, ethnic, language or cultural groups.

⁹ For more information see Visser 1999, Phillips & Crowell 1994.

¹⁰ For more information see Irvine 1990, Grymes et al. 1993, Haycock 2001, Tauber 1997, Banks-Beane 1988, Schmoker 1999.

¹¹ For more information see Boykin 1994, Lee 1994.

¹² For more information see Brattesani, Weinstein and Marshall 1984, Dusek and Joseph 1985, Ladson-Billings 1999, Darling-Hammond 1995, Dreeban & Gamoran 1986, Nieto 1999.

¹³ For more information see Banks et. al. 2001, Braddock 1991, Eccles & Barber 1999, Gutiérrez et. al. 1999, Jordan 1999, Mahiri 1998, Allport 1954, Cohen E. 1986, Freiberg 1993, McCaslin & Good 1992.

Table 3. Continued

<i>Safe and protective environment</i> ¹⁴
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Develop schools as communities where students feel a sense of belonging.2. Create a safe and inviting school environment, where all students are welcomed and expected to excel.3. Correct students in a positive way that disapproves of the behavior but not of the child.4. Understand cultural linkages between disciplinary and classroom management concepts.5. Personalize the schools to the students who attend them (ie. make changes in the master schedule, hire teachers who have knowledge about the students' cultures and experiences, include time in the schedule for tutoring and mentoring).
<i>Classroom management</i> ¹⁵
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Support teachers with classroom management and student discipline through school-wide programs such as <i>consistency management</i>, which builds on shared responsibilities between students and teachers.2. Promote students' abilities to manage complex variables of curriculum, time, space, and human interactions.3. Include classroom management for working with African American boys in professional development programs.
<i>Positive role models</i> ¹⁶
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provide positive role models from all professions and all cultural/ethnic groups represented by students.2. Emphasize that teachers act as role models to students.3. Dignify different types of life work.

Third Domain - Equitable and Relevant Educational Opportunities and Resources

School and classroom materials and décor should reflect the diversity of the students within the school. Examples include positive images of diversity in decorations, bulletin boards, class projects, instructional materials and examples, and texts. At the district level, resource inequities need to be addressed which include the lack of local schools, inadequate facilities, health and nutritional needs of students, and the assignment of the most qualified teachers to the

¹⁴ For more information see Spencer 1987, Spencer, Swanson and Cunningham 1991, Madhubuti 1990.

¹⁵ For more information see Agnew 2001, Opuni 1996, 1998, 2001, Olatokunbo & Slavin 1997, Freiberg, Prokosch, Treister & Stein 1990, Freiberg & Huang 1994, Freiberg 1999, 1995, 1989, Wang, Haertel and Walberg 1993/1994, Knapp 1997, Freiberg, Stein & Ruban 2001, Frieberg, Connell & Lorentz 2001.

¹⁶ For more information see Gagne 1977, Hill, Pettus and Hedin 1990, Barba and Bowers 1993, Malcom 1983, Banks-Beane 1988, Gordon 1986.

schools with the greatest needs. Qualified teachers who can provide advanced placement and honors classes need to be present in the schools. Table 4 presents a summary of issues related to this domain.

Table 4. Components of the Equitable and Relevant Educational Opportunities and Resources Domain

<i>Creation of an environment that reflects students' diversity¹⁷</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide and utilize authentic culturally relevant materials and artifacts that represent all the children in the classroom, 2. Include examples and authentic content from a variety of cultures and groups (especially marginal and excluded voices) in teaching key concepts, principles, generalization and theories in a subject area. 3. Assign classroom projects that reflect the balance of students. 4. Utilize decorations in the school and classroom that reflect the diversity of students.
<i>Fair and equitable access to educational opportunities and resources for all¹⁸</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide adequate facilities and other resources to meet the nutritional, social and academic needs of the students. 2. Distribute resources across the district so that the schools with the most needy students receive the most resources and the best and most experienced teachers. 3. Provide qualified teachers for advanced placement (AP) classes and direct priority staffing to schools without AP classes. 4. Build well-trained, well-qualified teaching and administrative staff.

Fourth Domain – Instructional Quality and Curriculum

This domain includes providing high quality instruction for all students in all schools by implementing a rigorous academic environment of effective teaching, strong structure, and meaningful pedagogy. Enrichment, gifted and talented programs, and advanced placement courses should be emphasized and provided to all. Students from diverse groups should be identified and provided the opportunity to participate in these programs. Academic excellence should be rewarded and encouraged. A culturally relevant instructional program should enable all students to attend college by schools providing access to an academically challenging

¹⁷ For more information see Barba and Bowers 1993.

¹⁸ For more information see Dreeben and Gamoran 1986, Hedges, Laine & Greenwald 1995, Kozol 1991, McCall 1996, Clark 2001.

curriculum. It should also emphasize vocational and professional education for those who face immediate employment needs in order to support themselves and their families.

CRRE should be embedded across all subjects. Course content should be multicultural, representing the historical backgrounds and contributions of all to human civilization. Examples of resilience, overcoming adversity, and excellence from all cultures should be included. Teaching diversity should include not only multicultural content but also cross-cultural comparison: ways to think and analyze from different perspectives. The arts can be used as an effective venue for multicultural learning.

A culturally relevant educational curriculum should also address poverty and provide civic education. Issues and experiences of impoverishment, struggles, and social injustice need to be addressed in school as well as strategies to engage all students in these issues and to provide opportunities for children of the working class and poor. A culturally relevant education develops moral, active and reflective students who are engaged in authentic democracy. This aspect of multicultural education fosters student responsibility for the good of the whole and prepares them to be global citizens (Banks and Banks 1995).

Differing language needs of the students need to be understood and explicitly addressed. Both English Language Learners (ELL) and Standard English Learners (SEL) students have specific but different language needs, and strategies to address and facilitate learning for both types of students are needed. Specific recommendations for addressing the language needs of African American students are highlighted. Table 5 summarizes the issues related to instructional quality and curriculum.

Table 5. Components of the Instructional Quality and Curriculum Domain

<i>Rigorous instructional environment</i> ¹⁹
1. Establish an effective teaching environment with academic rigor, strong structure, meaningful pedagogy, high expectations for both teachers and students, and high quality teaching with clear standards.
<i>Emphasize enrichment</i> ²⁰
1. Emphasize enrichment by providing more advanced and honors classes. 2. Identify minority students for, and evaluate the performance and participation of minority students in Advanced Placement and gifted classes. 3. Train teachers to identify gifted students through alternative approaches – especially gifted children in poverty.
<i>Multicultural content</i> ²¹
1. Have instructional materials that affirm, advocate and legitimize the cultural experiences of all students. 2. Teach historical examples of resilience, overcoming adversity, excellence and contributions from student cultures. 3. Embed or include racial, ethnic, class and cultural literacy into all aspects of the curriculum. 4. Expose students to a rich variety of cultures. 5. Utilize specific cultural references in a positive manner.
<i>Teach diversity</i> ²²
1. Teach diversity and unity within diversity. 2. Teach how to think from different perspectives: show how various cultures deal with the same issues, and discuss how cultures are similar or different.
<i>Address poverty</i> ²³
1. Address issues of class, poverty, injustice, and the struggles of the students. 2. Talk about experiences of working class within communities of color, income inequities, and impoverishment. 3. Know how to engage poor children.
<i>College and vocational preparation</i> ²⁴
1. Provide fair and equitable educational opportunities, and a rich and challenging academic curriculum that prepares students for life and enables all students to continue their post-secondary education. 2. Believe that students will attend college and prepare them to do so. 3. Teach students about the need for post-secondary education in a timely manner. 4. Provide access to programs district-wide and allow for movement in and out.

¹⁹ For more information see Bond 1996, Stevens 1993, Darling-Hammond and Hudson 1990, Cohen, McLaughlin and Talbert 1993, Wang, Haertel and Walberg 1993/1994, Adelman 1999, Jones and Bouie 2000, Jones 2001, University of California Task Force on Black Student Eligibility 1989, Delpit 1995.

²⁰ For more information see Braddock and Slavin 1992.

²¹ For more information see Banks 1993, 1997a, Banks and Banks 2001, Bennett 1995.

²² For more information see Sleeter & Grant 1991, Banks 1996.

²³ For more information see Bethune 1939.

²⁴ For more information see Winfield 1993.

Table 5. Continued

<i>Art education</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Include art as a venue for learning.2. Use art, especially performing arts, to promote cultural understanding.
<i>Civic education</i> ²⁵
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Educate students to be reflective, moral and active citizens engaged in authentic democracy.2. Teach students how to be global citizens.3. Teach students mutual responsibility for one another.
<i>Focus on language needs</i> ²⁶
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Enhance teachers' knowledge about and respect for students' home languages and dialects.2. Understand the need for and how to assist both ELL and SEL learners.3. Understand and teach to differing language needs without negative connotations of difference.4. Help children make the transition from their home language to standard English language.5. Provide linkages between Ebonics and standard English.6. Allow use of home languages or dialects in small group learning activities.

Fifth Domain - Instructional Strategies

A number of instructional approaches advocated by CRRE experts including *cooperative learning, active learning, apprenticeship, conversational learning, applied learning, scaffolding of knowledge, constructive learning, and targeted teaching*. These approaches overlap and thus are recommended jointly, as a means to approach learning in multiple ways. Many of these approaches use small groups and provide opportunities for active practice of a skill. Constructive learning emphasizes teaching generative concepts and strategies that enable students to address a wide range of subject matter problems. It and other approaches allow students to apply knowledge to address their everyday life needs.

²⁵ For more information see Shujaa 1994, Darling-Hammond 1997, Cooper 1988, Howe 1965, Ladson-Billings 1990, 1994, 1995, Foster 1997, Banks 1997b, Banks & Banks 1995.

²⁶ For more information see Labov 1969, Piestrup 1973, Rickford & Rickford 2000, Harris-Wright 1999, LeMoine 2001, Taylor 1989, Michaels 1981, Lippi-Green 1997, Crowell et. al. 1974, Wolfram et. al. 1999.

Child development should be approached in a holistic manner, simultaneously addressing children’s cognitive, social, emotional, cultural, physical, linguistic and political needs. Table 6 presents a summary of the issues relating to instructional approaches and strategies.

Table 6. Components of the Instructional Strategies Domain

<i>Cooperative learning</i> ²⁷
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Cooperative learning, apprenticeship, and peer coaching</i> are three vehicles for joint learning. 2. Students collaborate to bridge gaps of race, ethnicity and class.
<i>Active learning and apprenticeship</i> ²⁸
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teach through active application of facts and skills, interaction with other students, and use of computers and other multi-media. 2. Teach through modeling and observation, hands-on laboratory experiences, active practice, and guided reflection with coaching of students, graduated responsibilities, and supportive scaffolding 3. Utilize methods that employ rhyme and music to enhance retention of ideas.
<i>Instructional conversations</i> ²⁹
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create joint understanding through <i>instructional conversations</i>. 2. Provide ample opportunities for students to read, write and speak, and to receive feedback.
<i>Constructive learning</i> ³⁰
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use <i>constructivist</i> and <i>activist</i> learning approaches. 2. Place emphasis on developing generative competencies such as higher order thinking, critical learning skills, and creative problem solving. 3. Enable students to read, write, process information, to analyze, and to make conclusions and inferences from a broad vision of world events. 4. Discuss their everyday experiences and enable students to understand how they can shape their neighborhoods. 5. Use the subject to address student needs beyond its content.
<i>Applied learning</i> ³¹
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relate students’ learning to their everyday knowledge. 2. Build on students’ prior knowledge and experiences, on their home languages and on the school context. 3. Use multiple means to present knowledge, content and learning experiences.

²⁷ For more information see Lee 1992, Joyce, Weil and Showers 1992, Treisman 1992, Tudge 1992, Cohen 1994, 1986, Johnson & Johnson 1988.

²⁸ For more information see Greenwood, Carta & Kamps 1990, Becker 1990, Lave 1996.

²⁹ For more information see Tharp et al. 2000, Zúñiga & Nadga 1993.

³⁰ For more information see Gordon 1986, Knapp 1997, Malcom 1983, Banks 2001.

³¹ For more information see Bruer 1993.

Table 6. Continued

<i>Scaffolding</i> ³²
1. Provide support to student learning by breaking a complex task into smaller tasks, modeling the desired learning strategy or task, and then gradually retreat that support so that the student becomes self-reliant.
<i>Targeted teaching</i> ³³
1. Modify curriculum-learning activities for diverse students. 2. Recognize and target students' problem areas.
<i>Holistic development</i> ³⁴
1. Address a child's total development. First order needs of hunger, malnutrition and basic healthcare must be addressed before learning or intellectual achievement can be addressed. 2. Holistically educate students without separation of political, social justice and cultural issues. 3. Understand that students are different linguistically, behaviorally, culturally, emotionally and address their needs.

Sixth Domain - Diagnosis and Assessment

Multiple sources of assessment including traditional means along with alternative forms of assessment are advocated and should be prevalent. Fixed time testing and learning should be replaced with alternative approaches that give students ample opportunity and time to perform. Intelligence is recognized as an effort-based phenomenon. For both teachers and students, tests become diagnostic mechanisms. The diagnostic use of testing helps teachers to adjust their teaching strategies and to improve overall educational quality. Additionally, monocultural tests should be revised to be multicultural or culturally non-specific and tracking practices should be replaced with fluid alternative practices. Table 7 summarizes the issues related to diagnosis and assessment.

³² For more information see Ball and Bass 2000, Pearson and Fielding 1991, Moses et al. 1989.

³³ For more information Malcom 1983, Epstein and Salinas 1992, Oakes 1986.

³⁴ For more information see Jung 1954, Miller 1993, Forbes 2003.

Table 7. Components of the Diagnosis and Assessment Domain

<i>Diagnostic use of tests</i> ³⁵
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use testing measurements for diagnostic purposes. 2. Use periodic assessment as formative assessment to assist teachers. 3. Tie assessment of children’s mastery of standards to professional development training. 4. Use students’ data to derive decisions and monitor reforms.
<i>Multiple assessment strategies</i> ³⁶
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use alternative and multiple assessment tools and strategies such as portfolios and activities. 2. Include both traditional and non-traditional ways to assess students’ learning. 3. Develop alternative assessment procedures to current grading practices that penalize students’ poor performance without guiding their improvement.
<i>Ample assessment time</i> ³⁷
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seek alternative approaches to fixed time schedules for testing students who need more time. 2. Recognize that some students need more time and support than others without changing the expectations or standards for those students.
<i>Intelligence as an effort-based phenomenon</i> ³⁸
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assume that intelligence is a set of beliefs about one’s self, one’s rights and obligations to make sense of the world, and one’s capacity to figure things out over time, as well as a set of problem solving skills and strategies that can be learned. 2. Willingness to work is the primary requirement for admission when there are special opportunities.
<i>Revision of monocultural tests</i> ³⁹
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate students of different backgrounds by standards appropriate to them and not to a standard based on a single class and cultural experience. 2. Modify tests to make them culturally relevant. 3. Include the cultural knowledge of all students on tests or make tests culturally non-specific. 4. Allow teachers to supplement the curriculum with more multi-cultural and rigorous tests.
<i>Use of alternative approaches to tracking</i> ⁴⁰
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce or eliminate unfair tracking systems by implementing alternatives to grouping practices that allow students to develop at their own stage. 2. Replace tracking with mechanisms that are fluid and provide constant assessment for movement among groups.

³⁵ For more information see MacIver 1991, Beady et. al 1981.

³⁶ For more information see de la Rocha 1986, Lave 1988, Shade 1989, Barbe and Swassing 1979, Lazear 1994, Losardo & Notari-Syverson 2001.

³⁷ For more information see Lee 2001.

³⁸ For more information see Friere 1973, Mac Iver 1991.

³⁹ For more information see Williams 1979.

⁴⁰ For more information see Jones 1999, 1998, 1997, Darling-Hammond 1996, Oakes 1985, 1990, Braddock and Slavin 1992, Braddock and Dawkins 1993, Herbert and Hauser 1998, Bloom 1976, Levine & Lezotte 1995, Epstein and Mac Iver 1990, Slavin 1987, 1989.

Seventh Domain - Professional Development: Content and Structure

The content of the professional development program should address two specific areas: cultural awareness and cultural knowledge. To attain cultural awareness one must first deconstruct and reconstruct one's own worldview, and question notions of class, race, gender, meritocracy, equity and institutional practices. Deep inquiry or reflective practice is integral to developing cultural awareness. Educators also need to learn about the cultures, languages, and learning experiences of the students.

A professional development program for CRRE should include defining the nature, domains and components of CRRE, exploring why it is important, discussing why and how it works, and learning how to do it. The program should contain many clear and specific examples with information about students' lives and experiences, and demonstrations of multiple strategies to try to reach students.

CRRE professional development should be tailored to specific responsibilities of different groups of educators such as teachers, principals, counselors, and coaches. It should provide a collaborative environment that promotes sharing and exchange of ideas. CRRE professional development must be integrated into professional development for subject matter. A coherent professional development structure with continuity and follow-up should be implemented throughout the district in conjunction with other programs such as AEMP,⁴¹ SDAIE,⁴² and the pyramid field trip.⁴³ Observation of both model schools and model teachers should be part of the district-wide professional development structure. Table 8 presents a summary of the issues relating to the content and structure of professional development.

⁴¹ Academic English Mastery Program.

⁴² Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English.

⁴³ A culturally relevant reading program that utilizes stories from Western Africa and culminates in a visit to a pyramid located the campus of California State University, Long Beach.

Table 8. Components of the Professional Development Domain

<p><i>Self-reflection and cultural awareness</i>⁴⁴</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop teacher’s understanding of her or his own world vision through <i>reflective practice</i> in order to better understand the world views of others. 2. Examine notions of class, race, meritocracy, equity, gender and institutional practices. 3. Hold in-depth, regular sessions at every level regarding belief systems, expectations of students, and one’s own practices.
<p><i>Promotion of issues inherent in a culturally relevant and responsive education</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide CRRE staff development that defines the nature of CRRE, its domains and related components, its philosophy and underlying theories, and how to embed it in routine instructional practices. 2. Provide strategies to meet the needs of all students; especially children of color, children of poverty, and children of the inner city.
<p><i>On-going training for all who are involved in educating a child</i>⁴⁵</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide ongoing professional development on subjects, instructional techniques, pedagogical issues, cultural awareness, equity, and expectations. 2. Integrate training into course content development. 3. Provide on-site training.
<p><i>Cultural and language development and training</i>⁴⁶</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide support for teachers and principals to better understand the cultures and languages of their students. 2. Sensitize teachers, administrators, and all involved to the learning experiences of the students and to those of African American students in particular.
<p><i>Collaborative teaching environment</i>⁴⁷</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a collaborative environment or network among the teachers so that they can learn from each other, receive support and exchange ideas and information. 2. Provide staff development that nurtures and gives teachers an opportunity to share.
<p><i>Use of exemplary models in the development of a district structure</i>⁴⁸</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Embed a coherent structure and instructional program throughout the district with continuity, follow-up and observation of visionary or model schools. 2. Build on existing programs, strategies and formats (such as AEMP, SDAIE and the pyramid field trip) and increase the knowledge base for the utilization of those strategies. 3. Identify and observe model teachers to help other teachers develop strategies. 4. Model co-operative learning and other instructional approaches mentioned in the instructional strategies domain above.

⁴⁴ For more information see Villegas 2002, Banks et. al. 2001, Cummins 1989.

⁴⁵ For more information see Huberman and Miles 1984.

⁴⁶ For more information see Hoover 1979, Johnson 1969.

⁴⁷ For more information see Freiberg 2001, Agnew 2001.

⁴⁸ For more information see Pink 1989.

Eighth Domain - Parent and Community Involvement

Fostering positive teacher-parent and administrator-parent interaction and communication can facilitate increased parental involvement in schools. Two obstacles to parental involvement include the need to build trust, and difficulties of access to school due to work or family structures. Parents need to be informed about their children's educational process at every level of their children's development, through centers and programs specifically oriented toward parents. Parents need information on educational issues including buying educational materials that help their children learn language and vocabulary, how to advocate for academic achievement, how to socialize their children to the classroom, how to prepare their children for college, and how to finance their children's post-secondary education. Every student should have an effective educational advocate, whether it be a parent, a community member, a school teacher or a principal. Parents have the greatest motivation to advocate for their children.

Community organizations and members are also included in CRRE. This is made possible through on-going communication with stakeholders that allows for the evolution of policy while respecting and including all voices. The community-district relationship should foster collaboration and partnership. Community members and parents should be included in the evaluation of the implementation of the school program and of school effectiveness overall. Table 9 summarizes the issues relating to the parent and community involvement domain of CRRE.

Table 9. Components of the Parent and Community Involvement Domain

<i>Inform parents⁴⁹</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide training and education to parents on educational issues such as how to motivate their children to come to school, how to advocate for academic achievement, and how parents can participate in their children’s education at home and at school. 2. Educate parents to understand the consequence of the decisions made for their children, what college requirements are, and how to finance their children’s post-secondary education.
<i>Improvement of school-parent interaction⁵⁰</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain convenient channels of two-way communication between parents and teachers. 2. Establish relationships wherein parents feel comfortable talking to the principals, through quarterly principal-parent meetings and through principal to parent communications regarding positive aspects of their children’s education. 3. Build relationships of trust between parents and schools. 4. Provide teachers with professional development and consistent policies to build their capacity for working with parents and to reinforce schools’ clear expectations of parents. 5. Reach out to parents and visit their homes.
<i>Meaningful access to school authorities for parents⁵¹</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Address difficulties of access of parents to the school by scheduling meetings after work hours and by providing transportation and child-care. 2. Take into consideration changes in the family structure such as working parent and single-family homes, which require a much more flexible approach to parent and community involvement.
<i>Use of community evaluators who are aware of CRRE’s concepts and meaning</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include the community in evaluating implementation of CRRE. 2. Parents and concerned community members collectively evaluate the effectiveness of their school.

⁴⁹ For more information see Redding 2001, Clark 1989.

⁵⁰ For more information see Fletcher 1998, Comer 1984, Sanders and Epstein 1998, Redding 2001, Henderson and Berla 1994.

⁵¹ For more information see Calabrese 1987, Jencks and Phillips 1998.

Table 9. Continued

<i>Community collaboration and parental participation</i> ⁵²
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Include and encourage parent involvement in the schools and communicate to parents the importance of their contribution.2. Foster collaboration between district authorities (administrators, teachers) and community members (parents, leaders, Summit⁵³).3. Establish partnerships with community-based organizations.4. Establish on-going communication with all stakeholders.5. Include all stakeholders' responses in documentation and include the evolution of policies and programs while maintaining consistent language. Include and respect the participation of small voices.
<i>Educational advocacy</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Create an educational advocate for every student by developing practical guidelines on what is meant by advocacy and how it is done.2. Create a structure to make sure every student has an advocate.

Ninth Domain - Policy and Monitoring

In order for Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education to be implemented, an explicit policy for CRRE must have support from all levels of leadership as well as an integral evaluation and monitoring system. This monitoring system will serve the dual purpose of 1) helping to implement CRRE policy and 2) providing accountability. Table 10 presents a summary of the issues relating to the policy and monitoring domain.

Table 10. Components of the Policy and Monitoring Domain

<i>Explicit policy and support for implementation</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Develop an explicit policy on CRRE.2. Demonstrate support for CRRE implementation.
<i>Evaluation and accountability system</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Establish a self-energizing accountability and evaluation system. Copy successes, incorporate changes and recommendations, maintain accountability, use indicators, and assure internal and external comprehensive, continuous monitoring.

⁵² For more information see Redding & Weisberg 2001, Biggs & Colesante 2000, Fruchter, Galleta & White 1992, Klimes-Dougan, Lopez, Nelson & Adelman 1992, Wang, Haertel, & Walberg 1993/1994, Jencks & Phillips 1998, Sanders 2000, Epstein 1995, Epstein & Lee 1995, Lee 2001, Freire 1985, Fine 1991.

⁵³ Summit of African American Leaders on the Crisis in the Education of African American Student.

Conclusion

A culturally relevant and responsive education consists of ideological, structural, procedural and material components. From the ideological perspective, CRRE implementers need a deep understanding of students' backgrounds, cultures, values, socioeconomic classes, home experiences, learning modalities, and ways of constructing knowledge. The need for respect for students as contributors to knowledge and to society, and acceptance and affirmation of students' values and views of the world cannot be overstated. High expectations and enrichment for all students is also stressed. The need to promote equity is highlighted in every aspect of education from course content, testing, the curriculum, classroom seating, sports participation, and college preparation, to opportunities for advanced learning.

To achieve equity in course content, students, parents and community members would provide examples, applications, stories and experiences for classroom learning. Thus, both the idea and the structure of the teacher as the sole portrayer of academic knowledge would be replaced with multiple understandings of and approaches to knowledge. Tests would be revised to become more multicultural or culturally non-specific. Testing would serve as a diagnostic mechanism for school effectiveness, teacher effectiveness and individual performance. Parents and community members would also evaluate the effectiveness of the educational institutions serving them. The process of learning would change as teachers use multiple instructional strategies such as cooperative learning, active learning, art education, conversational learning, apprenticeship and constructive learning to reach all the students in the classroom. The subject matter would be taught in a way that is applicable and valuable to students' everyday lives. The child as a whole person with cognitive, emotional, physical, cultural, political and social needs would be taught and assessed.

The implementation of equity calls for structural and procedural changes. To implement structural and procedural changes at the district level first an explicit policy with an accountability system needs to be created. Resources need to be denoted to professional development and to build human resources at the school with students with the highest needs. Professional development would assist teachers and all staff to gain the knowledge and skills needed to implement CRRE, including a deep understanding of their own belief systems.

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