Indicator Explanation

Academic
Development
Institute

ADI
Est 1984

Ingenuity and Service

DOMAIN	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INDICATOR
Instruction	Remove barriers and provide opportunities	3C.8 Teachers promote an understanding and value for various cultures in their classroom displays, including cultures represented by students in the school and classroom.

Chou (2007) cites reasons why preservice preparation and continuing professional development for teachers of culturally diverse students is important. Looking at current statistics on the students enrolled in elementary and secondary schools, students of color make up about 46% of the current school population, with those numbers growing every year. In contrast, the majority (90%) of the teaching force is made up of a "white woman with two children" (p. 140). The question becomes, how do we prepare teachers for a culturally diverse student population? Chou suggests that "it is imperative to provide an empowering and equitable education for all students in the United States. Within the context of teacher preparation, one of the highest priorities is to help prospective teachers acquire the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and dispositions to work effectively with culturally diverse students. Schools, colleges, and departments of education must assume the responsibility of preparing all teachers, regardless of race, to teach in culturally diverse classrooms" (p. 140). Even after pre-service, to teach in culturally diverse classrooms, teachers need to be "prepared to take on a difficult task that requires continuous critical thought, action, and rethinking both individually, collaboratively with other teachers, and with the families and members of the communities in which they teach" (p. 147). Schools also need to hire teachers which reflect the demographics of the population in which they are serving to "serve as role models for all students" (Villegas & Clewell, 1998). Chou makes the point that schools "are not only the place where knowledge and skill are transmitted but also the place where values and social expectations are formed. The children of minority would believe that minorities are not deserved or good enough for professional work if racial minorities are under-represented in that area (Mercer & Mercer, 1986)" (p. 147).

Demmert et al., (2008) provides some broad definitions of what is meant by including culture in the classroom. The definitions are as follows:

Language: Recognition and use of languages (this may include use bilingually or as a first or second language).
Pedagogy: Pedagogy that stresses traditional cultural characteristics and adult-child interactions as the starting place for education (mores that are currently practiced in the community and that may differ from community to community). Pedagogy in which teaching strategies are congruent with the traditional culture as well as contemporary ways of knowing and learning (opportunities to observe, opportunities to practice, and opportunities to demonstrate skills).
Curriculum: Based on traditional culture that recognizes the importance of native spirituality and places the education of young children in a contemporary context (e.g. use and understanding of the visual arts, legends, oral histories, and fundamental beliefs of the community).

Leadership: Strong community participation (including parents, elders, other community resources) in educating children and in the planning and operation of school activities.
Assessment: Knowledge and use of the social and political mores of the community.

Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasized that the students' culture does matter in teaching and learning environments. Learning cannot take place in the classroom when students experience a discontinuity, or a mismatch between their home culture and the school culture (Gay, 2000; Nieto, 2002). Teachers' basic assumptions determine how they will implement curriculum in their classrooms (Fine & Weis, 2003; Sleeter, 2001). Teachers who believe that students bring to school a wealth of information, prior knowledge, and a heritage language demonstrate an additive belief (Cummins, 1996; Freeman, 2004; Nieto, 2002). These teachers believe that their programs will enrich their students' lives as they continue the learning process. Teachers who believe that students come to school without knowing English and have to be taught everything demonstrate a deficit belief (Cummins; Freeman; Nieto). These teachers believe that they have a big job ahead of them because their students are behind and may never catch up. The teachers' additive or deficit perspectives determine how they will approach teaching and learning with culturally diverse students.

Gay (2000) suggested that the reasons for the academic achievement gap between students of color and White students was that a cultural disconnect exists between students' home and school language. She called for a culturally responsive curriculum that represents the cultural differences of all students. Gay suggested changes in the implementation of curriculum and instruction in schools by the teachers and administrators. As teachers recognize the cultural disconnect between what is taught in schools (curriculum), how it is taught (instruction), and the students' home environment, they can make a real difference in the educational achievement of all students. Changes can happen when teachers choose a culturally responsive teaching pedagogy by demonstrating that they value the cultural differences of their students.

Cummins (1996) suggested that students' relationships with their teachers are an important aspect of the children's education. Teachers' interactions with students are critical for the students' success in the classroom. In the diverse and changing populations of schools in the United States (Fry, 2008), many White teachers are teaching culturally diverse students (Sleeter, 2008). According to Cummins (1996), these teachers reflect their cultural perspectives and beliefs in their relationships with their students. They tell their students what they believe about the different cultures by the way they teach, their attitudes, and their assumptions about learning. Teachers tend to implement their own cultural beliefs into the curriculum, and they ignore the cultural differences of their students (Gay, 2000; Reed, 1996; Sleeter, 2008).

Banks (1988) believed that teachers who developed cross-cultural competency improved their teaching abilities, attitudes, and understandings in diverse cultural settings. He stated that the "Global Competency" (p. 69) that individuals develop enables them to act within the global society. They internalize the values and principles of humankind, and they know how to act on those values.

Gudykunst and Kim (1984) described the intercultural person "as a facilitator and catalyst for contacts between cultures" (p. 230). They believed that intercultural people are equipped to function effectively in more than one culture. Intercultural people possess cultural empathy, which is linked to the flexibility of being able to imagine other worldviews. Intercultural people demonstrate cultural competence in more than one culture, and they are able to navigate between different cultures because they have developed competence in social communication. Most importantly, Gudykunst and Kim believed that intercultural people develop a "third-culture perspective" (p. 231). This perspective gives intercultural persons the capabilities to act as communication links between two or more cultures.

Bennett (2007) described a person with multicultural competence as one who "develops competencies in multiple ways of perceiving, evaluating, believing, and doing" (p. 9). People who live in two or more cultures discover an intercultural relationship with others. They demonstrate the ability to encounter different cultures, in addition to their own, serve as

facilitators between cultures, act as communication links for others, and show cultural empathy for others. As a major goal of multicultural teacher education, teachers help culturally diverse students to "retain their own cultural identity while functioning in a different cultural milieu; for example, the school" (Bennett, 2007, p. 9).

Use curricula and teaching and learning materials that:
- build upon the diverse systems of knowledge and experiences of the learners;
- incorporate their histories, knowledge and technologies, value systems and further social, economic and cultural aspirations;
- introduce the learners to an understanding and an appreciation of their cultural heritage;
- aim at developing respect for the learners' cultural identity, language and values;
- make use of local resources.

Develop teaching methods that:
- are culturally appropriate, for example through the integration of traditional pedagogies and the use of traditional forms of media, such as story-telling, drama, poetry and song;
- are based on practical, participatory and contextualized learning techniques that inclu: activities resulting from collaboration with cultural institutions; study trips and visits to sites and monuments; and productive activities that are linked to the community's social, cultural and economic needs.

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