

# Teachers & the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) Education Framework

## Principle 1: Creating a Welcoming & Affirming Environment

A **Welcoming and Affirming Environment** feels safe. It is a space where people can find themselves represented and reflected and where they understand that all people are treated with respect and dignity. The environment ensures all cultural identities (i.e., race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, language, religion, socioeconomic background) are affirmed, valued, and used as vehicles for teaching and learning.

### Self-Reflection Categories

✓ = I do this and have evidence.

? = I want to do this. I have no idea where to begin.

\* = This is a strategy that I have not considered before and I want to learn more about it.

### Instructions

Reflect on your practice and complete an honest assessment of your cultural responsiveness journey.

Statement	Rating	Evidence/Reflection	Resource(s)
Assess the physical environment of the classroom and school to determine whether a variety of diverse cultures, languages, orientations, and identities are reflected, represented and valued. Promote a variety of perspectives that represent the diversity of the state of New York beyond designated icons, historical figures, months and holidays.			<a href="#">Equity Rubric (p. 6, 8 &amp; 13)</a> <a href="#">Equitable Classroom Practices (p. 10)</a> <a href="#">Curriculum Audits</a> <a href="#">Equitable Classroom Practices Observation Tool</a> <a href="#">Anti-Bias Checklist for Instructional Materials</a>
Build rapport and develop positive relationships with students, and their families, by learning about their interests and inviting them to share their opinions and concerns. Find opportunities to address and incorporate their opinions and concerns.			<a href="#">Relationship Building Resources</a> <a href="#">A Family is a Family is a Family</a>
Provide multiple opportunities for parents to communicate in their language and method of preference, such as digital and in-person			<a href="#">Equity Rubric (See Family and Community Partnership domain)</a>

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<p>formats, class visits, phone conversations, text message, email, collaborative projects, and impromptu conferences.</p>			<p><a href="#">DEI Style Guide for Inclusive Communications</a></p>
<p>Work with families early and often to gather insight into students' cultures, goals, and learning preferences.</p>			<p><a href="#">Equity Rubric (See Family and Community Partnership domain)</a></p> <p><a href="#">SEL Family Treatment Agreement</a></p>
<p>Enact classroom management strategies that avoid assigning blame or guilt to students based on perceptions about their cultures, differences, or home lives.</p>			<p><a href="#">Equity Rubric (See Rigor and Expectations domain)</a></p>
<p>Work toward creating an environment that establishes mutually agreed-upon norms and encourages students to act out of a sense of personal responsibility to follow those norms, not from a fear of punishment or desire for a reward.</p>			<p><a href="#">The 4 Agreements for Building Classroom Relationships</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sample Lesson Plan: Generating Classroom Shared Agreements</a></p> <p><a href="#">Equity Rubric (See School Culture domain)</a></p>
<p>Meet with families to understand and align the recognition, reward, and incentive practices used in the classroom to the values and cultural norms of families.</p>			<p><a href="#">SEL Family Treatment Agreement</a></p>
<p>Create opportunities to allow different groups and ideas to become part of the fabric of the school community by organizing proactive community-building circles and activities that promote positive relationships among individuals from diverse backgrounds. Include students, teachers, school staff, leaders, families, and community members in these opportunities.</p>			<p><a href="#">Equity Rubric (See Family and Community Partnership domain)</a></p>
<p>Use restorative justice circles and structures to welcome students back into learning when harm has occurred.</p>			<p><a href="#">Restorative Practices in Schools</a></p> <p><a href="#">Restorative Justice in Schools: SEL in Action</a></p>

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<p>Participate in the review of school and district policies (codes of conduct, curriculum reviews, community engagement, etc.).</p>			<p><a href="#">Using a Race Lens in Decision-Making and to Analyze &amp; Revise Policies, Practices, Programs, and Services</a></p> <p><a href="#">ICSD Code of Conduct Advisory Council</a></p>
<p>Attend or volunteer at community events, when possible, to develop relationships with families and the community outside of the classroom setting.</p>			<p><a href="#">Knowing the Community: How do leaders ensure new teachers understand and engage with the communities they serve?.</a></p>
<p>Respond to instances of disrespectful speech about student identities by intervening if hurtful speech or slurs are used, addressing the impact of said language, and discussing appropriate and inappropriate responses when instances of bias occur. Use these moments as opportunities to build classroom environments of acceptance.</p>			<p><a href="#">Responding to Hate and Bias at School</a></p> <p><a href="#">Speak Up At School</a></p> <p><a href="#">Addressing Dehumanizing Language (N-Word Resource)</a></p>
<p>Identify and address implicit bias in the school and community environment.</p>			<p><a href="#">Self-Awareness Resources</a></p> <p><a href="#">Cultural Competency Self-Assessment Checklist</a></p>
<p>Encourage students to take academic risks in order to create an environment that capitalizes on student mistakes as learning opportunities that help students grow academically and emotionally.</p>			<p><a href="#">5 Tips to Engage Students in Courageous Conversations</a></p> <p><a href="#">Cultivating Critical Consciousness by Exploring and Reflecting on a Lesson or Unit</a></p> <p><a href="#">Developing a Growth Mindset</a></p>

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Reflection prompts:

- Identify 1 strategy for each rating (? \*) and commit to enhancing capacity within those 3 strategies for the remaining school year.

### Principle 2: Fostering High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction

**High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction** prepares learners for rigor and independent learning. The environment is academically rigorous and intellectually challenging while also considering the different ways students learn. Instruction includes opportunities to use critical reasoning, take academic risks, and leverage a growth mindset to learn from mistakes. Messages encourage positive self-image and empower others to succeed.

#### Self-Reflection Categories

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#### Instructions

Reflect on your practice and complete an honest assessment of your cultural responsiveness journey.

Statement	Rating	Evidence/Observations	Resource(s)
Have high expectations and deliver rigorous instruction for all students regardless of identity markers, including race, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability, and economic background.			<a href="#">An Asset-Based Approach to Instruction and Assessment</a>  <a href="#">3 Steps to Developing an Asset-Based Approach to Teaching</a>
Reflect on your own implicit bias, how that bias might impact your expectations for student achievement or the decisions you make in the classroom, and the steps you can take to address your biases and their impact on students.			<a href="#">Self-Awareness Resources</a>  <a href="#">Equity Rubric (See Rigor and Expectations; Student Performance; Curriculum and Instruction domains)</a>
Strive to be culturally sustaining by centering the identities of all students in classroom instruction, encouraging cultural pluralism rather than asking students to minimize their identities in order to be successful.			<a href="#">Fostering Identity Safety in Your Classroom</a>  <a href="#">Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy</a>

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			<a href="#">Identity-Related Resources to Foster Meaningful Connections</a>
Provide parents with information about what their child is expected to learn, know, and do at their grade level and ways to reinforce concepts at home (e.g., using the home language; reading with, or monitoring, independent reading).			<a href="#">Classroom Ambassador and Topic Proposal Template</a>  <a href="#">Teacher-Parent Communication Strategies to Start the Year Off Right</a>  <a href="#">How Two-Way Communication Can Boost Parent Engagement</a>
Promote alternative achievement metrics that also support academics (e.g., demonstrating growth, leadership, character development, Social Emotional Learning competencies, or school values).			<a href="#">Time to Pull the Plug on Traditional Grading?</a>  <a href="#">How Can You Measure a School's Success? It's Not Just Through Test Scores</a>
Invite families and community members to speak or read in the classroom as a means to teach about topics that are culturally specific and aligned to the classroom curriculum and/or content area.			<a href="#">Strategies for Equitable Family Engagement</a>
Provide opportunities for students to critically examine topics of power and privilege. These can be planned project-based learning initiatives, instructional activities embedded into the curriculum, or discussion protocols used in response to inequity that occurs in the school and/or classroom.			<a href="#">Teaching Students about Privilege (Resources)</a>  <a href="#">Privilege for Sale (TheSafeZoneProject)</a>
Incorporate current events, even if they are controversial, into instruction. Utilize tools (prompting discussion questions, Socratic seminar, conversation protocols) that encourage students to engage with difficult topics (power, privilege, access, inequity) constructively.			<a href="#">A Talk to Teachers by James Baldwin</a>  <a href="#">Learning for Justice Classroom Resources</a>  <a href="#">Days after Responding to Tragic Events</a>

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			<a href="#">The Past Is Present: Strategies for Bringing Current Events Into the Social Studies Classroom</a>
Be responsive to students' experiences by providing them with a space to process current events.			<a href="#">Teach This: Current Events (Learning for Justice)</a>  <a href="#">Let's Talk! Facilitating Critical Conversations with Students</a>
Help students identify their different learning styles in both classwork and homework and incorporate instructional strategies and assignments that are responsive to those learning styles.			<a href="#">How Learning Happens Framework</a>  <a href="#">The Neuroscience of Information Processing</a>
Provide students with opportunities to present to their peers through project-based or stations-based learning to leverage student experience and expertise.			<a href="#">How a Simple Presentation Framework Helps Students Learn</a>
Co-create explicit classroom expectations that meet the needs of all students.			<a href="#">Co-Creating Classroom Norms with Students</a>  <a href="#">Norm Co-creation</a>

Reflection prompts:

- Identify 1 strategy for each rating (? \*) and commit to enhancing capacity within those 3 strategies for the remaining school year.

**Principle 3: Identifying Inclusive Curriculum & Assessment**

An **Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment** elevates historically marginalized voices. It includes opportunities to learn about power and privilege in the context of various communities and empowers learners to be agents of positive social change. It provides the opportunity to learn about perspectives beyond one’s own scope. It works toward dismantling systems of biases and inequities and decentering dominant ideologies in education.

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**Instructions**

Reflect on your practice and complete an honest assessment of your cultural responsiveness journey.

Statement	Rating	Evidence/Observations	Resource(s)
Feature and highlight resources written and developed by traditionally marginalized voices that offer diverse perspectives on race, culture, language, gender, sexual identity, ability, religion, nationality, migrant/refugee status, socioeconomic status, housing status, and other identities traditionally silenced or omitted from curriculum.			<a href="#">How Do We Teach With Primary Sources When So Many Voices Are Missing?</a>  <a href="#">26 Mini-Films for Exploring Race, Bias and Identity With Students</a>  <a href="#">Curriculum as Window and Mirror</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Windows and Mirrors</a></li> </ul> <a href="#">Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors</a>  <a href="#">Resources for PreK-12 Educators</a>

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<p>Play a role in helping schools to understand and align curriculum to the variety of histories, languages and experiences that reflect the diversity of the State population.</p>			<p><a href="#">A Troubling Lack of Diversity in Educational Materials</a></p> <p><a href="#">Five Activities to Promote Diversity in the Classroom</a></p>
<p>Pair traditional curricular content with digital and other media platforms that provide current and relevant context from youth culture.</p>			<p><a href="#">Creating multimodal texts</a></p> <p><a href="#">Current Events in the Classroom</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sample Zoom In/Out Activities</a></p>
<p>Provide homework, projects, and other classroom materials in multiple languages.</p>			<p><a href="#">Linguistic diversity</a></p> <p><a href="#">Bilingual education prepares children for a multicultural world</a></p>
<p>Provide regular opportunities for social emotional learning strategies within lessons and as discrete learning activities.</p>			<p><a href="#">Getting Started With Integrating SEL Into Lessons</a></p> <p><a href="#">Why SEL Alone Isn't Enough</a></p> <p><a href="#">How to Incorporate Social-Emotional Learning in Your Classroom</a></p> <p><a href="#">SEL in the Classroom</a></p> <p><a href="#">Integration of SEL and Academic Instruction</a></p>

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			<p><a href="#">38 Simple Ways To Integrate Social-Emotional Learning Throughout the Day</a></p> <p><a href="#">How to Integrate Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in the Classroom?</a></p>
<p>Utilize student data points and assessment measures that reflect learning spaces, modalities, and demonstration of proficiency that go beyond metrics traditionally associated with standardized testing.</p>			<p><a href="#">How to Measure Student Progress Without Standardized Tests</a></p> <p><a href="#">Beyond the Standardized Test: Aim Higher</a></p> <p><a href="#">What Does the Research Say About Testing?</a></p> <p><a href="#">Alternatives to Standardized Tests</a>  <a href="https://www.edutopia.org/blog/using-student-data-inform-teaching-rebecca-alber">https://www.edutopia.org/blog/using-student-data-inform-teaching-rebecca-alber</a></p> <p><a href="#">How Educators Can Use Student Data to Drive Instruction</a></p> <p><a href="#">Data-Driven Decision Making in Education: 11 Tips for Teachers &amp; Administration</a></p> <p><a href="#">Top 6 Steps Teachers Can Use To Analyze Student</a></p>

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			<a href="#">Data And Improve Instruction</a>
Engage students in youth participatory action research that empowers youth to be agents of positive change in their community.			<a href="#">NAACP Youth Programs</a> <a href="#">ACLU of New York</a> <a href="#">Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) Hub</a> <a href="#">How to Work With Young People Who Want to Make Change</a>
Connect instructional content with the daily lives of students by using culturally-specific examples (e.g., music, movies, text) that tap into their existing interests, knowledge, and youth culture.			<a href="#">#HipHopEd</a> <a href="#">On Hip Hop and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy</a> <a href="#">Sparking Engagement With Hip-Hop</a> <a href="#">Culturally Responsive Instruction Is ‘Not Just About Adding a Hip Hop Song to Your Lesson Hook’</a> <a href="#">26 Mini-Films for Exploring Race, Bias and Identity With Students</a> <a href="#">Culturally Responsive Instruction Is ‘Not Just About Adding a Hip Hop Song to Your Lesson Hook’</a>
Take field trips to community-learning sites, such as museums, parks, cultural centers, neighborhood recreational centers, and community			<a href="#">Exploring Honest History by Building Partnerships</a>

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<p>centers, to foster students’ cultural understanding and connection to the surrounding community.</p>			<p><a href="#">Elmira/Corning Enslavement in New York Landing Page (Antiracist Curriculum Project)</a></p>
<p>Incorporate cooperative learning activities to encourage understanding of diverse perspectives; support students in working cooperatively toward goals; and highlight students’ unique strengths in the group (e.g., public speaking, note-taking, writing, drawing, etc.).</p>			<p><a href="#">Making Cooperative Learning Work Better</a></p> <p><a href="#">Cooperative Learning in the K-12 Classroom</a></p> <p><a href="#">Cooperative Learning (TeacherVision)</a></p>
<p>Support students in creating and running student-led initiatives.</p>			<p><a href="#">Amplify Student Voices Curriculum</a></p> <p><a href="#">Amplify Student Voices (Leading Equity Center)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Making Space (Learning for Justice)</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Advocacy Room: Creating Affinity Spaces (Learning for Justice)</a></p>

Reflection prompts:

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### Principle 4: Engaging in Ongoing Professional Learning & Support

**Ongoing Professional Learning and Support** is rooted in the idea that teaching and learning is an adaptive process needing constant re-examination. It allows learners to develop and sharpen a critically conscious lens toward instruction, curriculum, assessment, history, culture, and institutions. Learners must be self-directed and take on opportunities that directly impact learning outcomes.

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**Instructions**

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Statement	Rating	Evidence/Observations	Resource(s)
Continuously learn about implicit bias, with attention to identifying and challenging your own biases, and identifying and addressing implicit bias in the school community.			<a href="#">NYSUT Implicit Bias Workshop</a>  <a href="#">Humanity, Healing, and Doing the Work: Honoring our collective humanity will result in an education system in which all children thrive</a>
Use professional learning activities as opportunities to better acquaint oneself with the diverse communities in which their students live.			<a href="#">Confronting Inequity / Healing Black Students' Pain</a>
Set professional goals related to CR-S practices.			<a href="#">We Have to Save Ourselves</a>  <a href="#">If We Aren't Addressing Racism, We Aren't Addressing Trauma</a>
Engage in inquiry groups and professional learning communities with peers and mentors.			<b>Regional Equity Network of Educators</b> (partnership between GST BOCES and Corning Incorporated Office of Racial Equality and Social Unity)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact: Beth Dryer (bdryer@gstboces.org); Debbie Fishbeck (fishbeckd@corning.com); Jarvis Marlow-McCowin (marlowmcj@corning.com); Stephanie Stephens (stephens@gstboces.org)</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">NYSUT (New York State United Teachers) Social Justice</a></p> <p><a href="#">Professional learning communities crucial to build school culture around diversity, inclusion</a></p> <p><a href="#">BOCES of New York DEI Repository</a></p>
<p>Analyze discipline data to determine any trends across sub-groups or bias toward students.</p>			<p><a href="#">Best Practices in Addressing Disproportionality for Students with Disabilities</a></p> <p><a href="#">Disproportionality Workgroup Sessions</a></p> <p><a href="#">Disproportionality in student discipline: Connecting policy to research</a></p> <p><a href="#">School discipline data indicators: A guide for districts and schools</a></p>

Reflection prompts:

- Identify 1 strategy for each rating (✓ ? \*) and commit to enhancing capacity within those 3 strategies for the remaining school year.

Additional Resources related to Culturally Responsive Education		
<b>Academic Achievement</b>	Communication of high expectations	<a href="#">Y Chart for Clear Expectations</a>
	Student-centered instruction	<a href="#">Define Student-Centered Professional Learning</a>
	Reshaping the curriculum	<a href="#">Integrating Inclusive Content</a>
<b>Cultural Competence</b>	Culturally mediated instruction	<a href="#">Workshop for Student-Centered Learning</a>
	Learning with the context of culture	<a href="#">Windows and Mirrors</a>
	Positive perspectives on parents and families	<a href="#">Creating and Implementing a Family Partnership Plan</a>
<b>Sociopolitical Consciousness</b>	Teacher as facilitator	<a href="#">Circle Up: Community Conversations</a> or <a href="#">I Wish My Teacher Knew</a>
<b>Culturally Responsive Teaching and Math</b>		<a href="#">UnBoundEd - Enhance Instruction</a> <a href="#">Resources for grades 3-5 &amp; 6-8</a> <a href="#">Reflecting on the Cultural Responsiveness of a Math Lesson</a> <a href="#">Twelve Ways to Make Math More Culturally Responsive</a>

	<a href="#">Mathematicians of Color (Posters)</a>
<b>Culturally Responsive Teaching and ELA</b>	<a href="#">UnBoundEd - Enhance Instruction</a> <a href="#">4 ways to integrate culturally responsive teaching into the ELA classroom</a> <a href="#">Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecards</a>

Planning for Culturally Relevant Learning Materials (Teacher's Materials)					
Statement	Very Satisfied (+2)	Satisfied (+1)	Unclear (-1)	Not Satisfied (-2)	Average Score (if you are working with a team)
The authors of the teachers' materials are people of diverse identities (race/ethnicity, gender, other identities).					
Guidance is provided to teachers on being aware of one's biases, assumptions, and the gaps between one's own culture and students' cultures (implicit bias).					
Diverse student identities are seen as assets and strengths that can advance individual and group learning, rather than seen as challenges or difficulties to be overcome.					
Guidance is provided on making real-life connections between academic content and the local neighborhood, culture, environment and resources.					
Guidance is provided on giving students opportunities to contribute their prior knowledge and experience with a topic, not just respond to the text and information presented in class.					

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Guidance is provided on engaging students in culturally sensitive experiential learning activities.					
Guidance is provided on opportunities to engage students' families to enhance lessons.					
Guidance includes, for specific lessons, a range of possible student responses that could all be valid, given the range of student experiences and perspectives.					
Guidance is provided on customizing and supplementing the curriculum to reflect the cultures, traditions, backgrounds and interests of the student population.					
Total					

In addition to the resources provided above, check out [eTeachNY](#) for additional resources related to the New York CR-S Education Framework, emerging multilingual learners, families engagement, social-emotional learning, and students with disabilities/neurodiverse learning.

Do you have a go-to resource you would like to share with others?

[Add it via this form.](#)