APPENDIX V-37

Tucson Unified School District

Multi-Year Plan for Professional Learning

Culturally Responsive Practices[1]

In collaboration with experts in culturally responsive pedagogy, TUSD and the department of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy & Instruction (CRPI) has developed a comprehensive Professional Development plan for the implementation of culturally responsive practices district wide. This comprehensive plan consists of a three-tiered training series for administrators, certificated staff (including instructional support and paraprofessionals) and classified staff. This training is to be implemented in three phases. Each phase contains several sessions or modules.

A.   Implementation

Plan implementation will include three cohorts and three phases of training.
See Attachment A, Training Schedules and Focus Areas. Identified cohorts for training include:

- Trainer Cohort(s)
- Administrators: Site and central administration
- Teachers: Certificated staff and instructional support (including teacher aides)
- Paraprofessionals: Operations and site support

For each phase of the training, the district will identify and recruit staff that is knowledgeable and experienced in the implementation of culturally responsive practices and culturally relevant curriculum. This group will form the CRP Trainer Cohort for each respective phase and cohort. While the first phase is theory based and can be provided by a general CRP Trainer, the others are much more job-specific. In an effort to provide authentic and practical training on culturally responsive best practices, different CRP Trainer cohorts will be developed, depending on the classification and job duties of each cohort.

Beginning in the fall of 2017, participants will receive professional development in implementing research-based culturally responsive practices to positively impact student achievement. **I**n collaboration with Instructional Technology, CRPI will develop professional development training modules and courses through True North Logic and the professional learning portal. Implementation of CRP Phase II professional development will begin **fall 2018**. In this Professional Practices phase, training will be

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[1] This "plan" operates as a "living document" that will be updated periodically. The Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Instruction (CRPI) department will create the initial draft; central administration and other departments will meet to help further develop plan components and implementation detail including, but not limited to, critical points of alignment where cross-departmental collaboration might be most effectively utilized.

provided during designated professional development time (i.e., ILAs and MTSS professional development time).

Each of the training phases will be provided to the three cohorts in varying intervals. See schedule below.

1. **Phase I: - Foundations**

Participants gain an understanding of foundational concepts related to CRP and how the practice and presence of some of these concepts contribute to the "achievement gap" while others seek to eliminate achievement disparities. Each module will begin at an introductory level, incrementally developing in complexity. The modules will emphasize a transition from cultural deficit theories to asset-based theories and practices.

Areas of focus:

Biases

This 2-part sequence will develop participants' understanding of (1) biases (including an examination of participants' own biases); (2) the various sources that inform biases; and (3) how socially transmitted messages influence our beliefs and behaviors. Building on prior professional development, this sequence will provide a deeper exploration of microaggressions, stereotype threat, bias identification and correction, and the social contexts that can mitigate social biases.

Student Attachment, Belonging, and Resistance

In this 2-part sequence, participants will develop an understanding of (1) how students develop attachment and a sense of belonging across the developmental trajectory spanning early childhood to late adolescence; (2) the various ways contexts can provide students with socially transmitted messages that hinder attachment and belonging; and (3) the explicit dimensions of students' resistance, both detrimental and productive. By understanding the developmental trajectory of attachment and belonging, as well as the ways students express their feelings of attachment and belonging, participants will have the requisite background to engage in behaviors that promote attachment and belonging, as well as productive resistance, as well as with knowledge that can assist in evaluating the sources of students' resistance.

Identity formation

Building on the knowledge acquired in the prior module, this 2-part sequence will foster participants' understanding of (1) how identities develop across the K-12 context; (2) the specific the influence of cultural and social identities, as well as historical-social identities, on the development of academic identity; and (3) the research base on how identities can promote or hinder academic motivation and achievement. By understanding how identities are central to academic achievement, this sequence will provide participants with the necessary background to understand the importance and rationale for behaviors that promote identities consistent with achievement.

Cultural Wealth and Cultural Asset Approaches

In this 2-part sequence (which may extend into subsequent sessions), participants will acquire fundamental knowledge regarding (1) the role of economics and politics on power and stratification which promote cultural deficit beliefs; (2) the differences and advantages of various asset-based approaches. Asset-based approaches explored include those related to language, family, curriculum, and pedagogy. By understanding the role of cultural asset approaches in altering the trajectory of historically marginalized students, participants will have the requisite background to engage in behaviors that reduce the transmission of biases, promote students' identity and sense of belonging, and promote achievement.

2. **Phase II: - Professional Practices PD**

Culturally responsive practices require strategies that are specific to the duties of each position. Culturally appropriate and responsive approaches should drive site expectations of how school staff should interact with students, parents and community members. To this end, the district has developed representative committees of each of the three identified cohorts. These committees will work with CRPI and the designated expert to identify indicators of culturally responsive practices in their respective areas. From this feedback, job specific professional development sessions will be created. These sessions provide training in culturally responsive, research-based, and proven practices in education.

Teachers will receive training on incorporating a cultural asset approaches in their specific grade levels.

Areas of Focus

Academic Interventions & Instruction- MTSS (Tier I & Tier II), PBIS: Strong MTSS Tier 1 instruction, provided by the classroom teacher, is the

key to student academic success. Teachers must know their students to respond to their social, emotional and academic needs. Students will thrive in a positive and loving environment where the teacher has high expectations, the curriculum is rigorous and the classroom management system in implemented with fidelity. Positive Behavior Intervention & Support (PBIS) System is the foundation for the Culture and Climate of the School

Restorative Practices: System of reflection and problem-solving for minor infractions (Levels1&2) by a student. The focus of this training is to provide educators the tools to revise policy and practices for dealing with inappropriate student behavior. The explicit goal is to disrupt the punitive approach that directly contributes to the school to prison pipeline disproportionately effecting male students of color.

Critical Thinking Skills: Strategies devoted to the development of cognitive skills that allow for the systemic analysis and critique of power, through policy, government and practice.

Cultural and Linguistic Asset based Strategies focused on Student Engagement: Teachers will be trained in the development of curriculum and activities that draw on cultural wealth and interests of students they serve. For instance, the use of the counter narrative through journals, essays and poetry is an effective method of including student voice that often challenges misconceptions of their lived experience.

Civic Engagement, Capstone Projects & Critical Praxis: The application of the "scientific method" or the cycle of praxis to the social realities of students and their communities in an effort to effect positive social change.

TUSD 6 Tenets of Culturally Responsive Education: (*See narrative attached) Key tenets of Culturally Responsive Education as referenced by TUSD, provide the theoretical framework upon which educators can effectively build upon.*

Classified (School safety monitors, Food Service, Office Personnel) staff will undergo training on interactions with students, community members and parents on campus.

Culture and Climate- Site-based student, parent and community interactions

Community and Site Resources: Classified staff is often the first to have contact with students. This interaction can create or contribute to a positive or negative disposition for students. This disposition can have significant impact on the learning process. The initial contact also presents an opportunity to identify issues with the student. A specific training for identification of warning flags to look for and community or site resources that are better equipped to handle aforementioned issues.

Administrators will explore ways of incorporating culturally responsive practices to all aspects of school business, including;

Community Engagement- Community schools, health and public services, communications

Culture and Climate- inclusive and multicultural

Restorative Practices- Student- and community-centered discipline models

Participants will receive training in implementing research-based proven culturally responsive practices to positively impact student achievement.

Phase III: Observation and Evaluation PD

Participants will be trained in the use of the District's existing observation/evaluation tools in evaluation and coaching of culturally responsive practices. Modifications to the district evaluative tools will be conducted to purposefully include CRP, as needed. Administrators will be trained in the calibration of the tool to assess staff and faculty performance. The evaluation cycle will be adjusted to allow for a soft evaluation including the criteria outlined in the comprehensive CRP plan. Full implementation of this evaluation is to begin at the start of the subsequent academic year.

B.   Monitoring

The district will utilize existing school quality protocols to monitor progress in the area of culturally responsive practices. These existing practices include central walkthroughs, unannounced site walkthroughs, intermittent school community

feedback surveys, etc. Additionally, the district will form a CRP Monitoring Committee. This committee will conduct periodic observations of sample sites at the various levels. These sample sites will be chosen at random and should provide insight into the systemic implementation of CRP throughout the district. Information generated from these monitoring mechanisms will be provided in the form of a report to the administration at the site. This information should be used to make necessary modifications where needed. The data collected through these monitoring processes will be presented to administrators in the form of an update report.

CRPI, in conjunction with expert consultants, will collaborate with district's assessment department to identify formative and summative methods of assessment of progress in the area of student and community responsiveness. Possible methods of assessment include; student surveys, evaluative rubrics, analysis of quantifiable measures such as attendance, GPA, graduation, etc. Evaluation should measure instructional practice effectiveness as well as community satisfaction in the areas of academics, student safety, & school climate. These measures will be used as additional evidence in determining principal effectiveness.

C.   Student surveys

Student surveys are utilized as part of the teacher evaluation process. The district will collaborate with the designated consultant to review and revise the current evaluation tools for each of the cohort groups. The district will identify indicators (through a student taskforce) or qualities of teacher effectiveness to include in the overall formula of teacher evaluation. This data will be utilized in the development of Phase II and III of this plan. This taskforce will be initiated in the spring of 2017 and will be reconstituted through the duration of this plan.

D.   CRP Trainer Cohort

Through the department of CRPI, and in collaboration with the expert(s) in CRP, the district will train a core group of staff to conduct regularly scheduled professional development training at sites throughout the district. These district trainers may consist of site and district staff including CRPI staff, teacher coaches, CSP, MTSS, etc.

E.   Multi-Tiered Intervention and Support

Prior to full implementation of CRP, the district will develop an intervention plan for employees needing additional support in implementing CRP. Borrowing the MTSS

model, Tier I Culturally Responsive (CR) training consists of the content in the CRP. Staff members who have been identified (through monitoring or evaluation) as needing additional support will have Tier II and/or Tier III intervention options available. Novice teachers inexperienced in CRP will also have this opportunity for further training.

F.   Peer Observations:

Through this experiential training method, identified teachers have the opportunity to visit cooperating teachers across a range of mastery in the area of culturally responsive pedagogy. These visits are conducted in tandem with a mentor teacher. After the visit, the observer engages in critical dialog with the CRP mentor teacher. After the guided observation, critical reflection, and dialog, the observing team engages in discussion with the host teacher. This conversation is intended to extract important contextual information that may provide insight into the implementation of the CR pedagogy.

While full implementation of this comprehensive plan takes two years, implementation of the peer observation component in the 2017-18 SY is expected to increase teacher effectiveness and exponentially increase student achievement throughout the district.

G.   CRP Training Modules

Based on the CRP training, video training modules will be created. These modules will be available for district professional development through the district's online learning portal.

H.   Additional Supports

The district will implement additional support for employees as needed.

I.   Implementation Format & Differentiation

Administration: Site and central administration will be the first to begin the training and will receive more training than other staff. Admin training will be more intense due to the need to effectively coach, support and evaluate site staff. District administrators should be well versed in all training materials provided to site personnel. Administrator specific modules will be provided.

Certificated Staff: Teachers and instructional support will receive the same

training modules. Administrators will receive this training 2 months (minimum) before it is rolled out to teachers. This grace period allows administrators time to modify site practices to facilitate the transition to culturally responsive practices.

Classified: Classified personnel will receive training through a combination of in-person training and mandated video module(s) through the learning portal. These modules will focus on job-specific interactions with students and parents at the site.

J.   Assessment of the Effectiveness of Professional Learning:

To determine the effectiveness of this process, the District will use a mixed methods approach in assessment.   In the short-term, assessment of the training provided is determined by the use of qualitative methods such as (pre/post, exit, & satisfaction) surveys, measuring the perceived usefulness of the content shared. This data can be substantiated by observable behaviors of practitioners in the field. Further triangulation can be established by student responses to surveys or interviews conducted with focus groups or random site audits.

Collection of this data utilizes the existing structures to maximize efficiency. Pre and post surveys measure growth in understanding over a period of time. Exit surveys measure the effectiveness of the specific presentation or presenter on the topic.   Walk-through observations provide evidence of the levels of implementation of the materials presented in the CRE. The CRE walk-through instrument is an amalgamation of various tools previously used throughout the district to measure a variety of elements, including teacher use of culturally responsive practices. The primary sources most evident in the walk-through instrument are TUSD's Revised Danielson Framework and the District's culturally responsive practices framework for teaching referred to as SPARKS.

In alignment with the districts requirements for grants and federal programs, regular walk-through observations are conducted. This data provide necessary feedback to sites as well as capturing an overall assessment of district CRE initiatives. Teams including members of C&I, Grants and Federal Programs, Student Services, and CRPI are deployed to audit sites by conducting walk-through observations. Prior to the observation, teams undergo a norming and orientation process. Upon completion of the observation, teams debrief, scores are negotiated and an average is determined for each of the categories in the tool. This data is then used to inform future modifications or developments.

Tucson Unified School District
Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Instruction Department
Framework for Student Academic Achievement

Given the persistence of the "achievement gap" *(Gay, 2013; Landson-Billings,2006; Valenzuela, 2016;)* between African American students, Mexican American students and their counter, European American students, at the national and local level, it is incumbent upon Tucson Unified School District's Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Instruction Department (CRPI) to seek research based pedagogical strategies that have proven to disrupt typical education programs that perpetuate the achievement gap *(Darder,1998)* to bring about educational equity. Educational scholars such as Antonia Darder (1991), Geneva Gay (2013), Gloria Landson-Billings(2006), Christine Sleeter (2014), Angela Valenzuela (2016) and many others have comprehensively written about a culturally relevant *(Gay, 2002)* and culturally responsive *(Arellano et al, 2016; Gay 2002; Hammond, 2015; Landon-Billings, 1995; Sleeter, 2016; Valenzuela, 2016)* pedagogy and instruction as key in closing the persistent achievement gap. Cabrera et al. *(2014)* highlights the unprecedented academic success of an academic approach by the Mexican American Studies (MAS) program in Tucson Unified School District, centered on culturally responsive and relevant teaching that effectively closed the achievement gap, whereby African American and Mexican American students taking MAS courses outperformed all other groups academically.

In alignment to what the research highlights, the CRPI department has operationalized a pedagogical framework that specifically addresses the educational needs of our African American and Mexican American students and has produced academic achievement for all students.

A critical assumption that underlies this pedagogical framework for student academic achievement is that educators must undergo a paradigm shift *(Arellano et al, 2016, Gonzalez et al, 1995; Hammond, 2015)* from a deficit based paradigm *(Valencia, 1997)* which views students as responsible for their underachievement *(Landson-Billings, 2006)* and attributes this to their membership in a minoritized group, to an asset based paradigm which views students as possessing experiential knowledge *(Solorzano et al, 2001; Yosso, 2003)* from which to build curriculum on *(Gay, 2013; Gonzalez et al, 1995)* through the use of "Funds of Knowledge" *(Moll et al, 2005)*. Another critical assumption is that educators must seek to utilize curriculum and pedagogical strategies that are relevant to the cultures of their students *(Au & Kawakami, 1994; Gay, 2002; Hammond, 2015)*. Having made this paradigm shift, culturally responsive and relevant educators will acquire and develop various other skills and strategies, through professional

development, to ensure academic achievement.

Culturally responsive and relevant educators interested in disrupting educational inequity will take inventory of and question their own bias *(Arellano et al, 2016),* identify and interrogate the manifestation of bias as microaggressions *(Solorzano et al, 2001; Sue et al, 2009)*, seek to understand the worldviews of their students; feel compelled to increase their cultural awareness regarding the students they serve; have a willingness to seek individual student abilities and talents; and have an understanding that students have diverse learning needs. Moreover a culturally responsive and relevant educator must be responsive to the cultural, social, emotional, physical and educational needs of the children they teach. The culturally responsive and relevant educator invests their time in becoming experts in the social, historical, cultural, economic needs and realities of their students' lives. Successful culturally responsive and relevant educators, such as those in the Mexican American Studies (MAS) program, as stated by Cabrera et al. (2014), labored to build and to instill a pride in student's identity, parents, and community through the implementation of culturally responsive teaching.

The Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Instruction Framework for Academic Success operationalizes a responsive and relevant pedagogy through the implementation of the following six key tenets. This approach is necessary for supporting students in developing their individual processes, supported by the teacher, whereby they can acquire a sense of empowerment throughout their schooling to cultivate academic success. The implementation of these six tenets will serve to dramatically shift the typical *teacher-student* dynamic in the classroom from a teacher-centered orientation to an academic environment where the traditional hierarchical relationship is supplanted with a more egalitarian, *learner- learner* relationship. In this environment, learners collaboratively construct knowledge through critical inquiry with the purpose of working toward a more just society. This approach has shown great promise in eliminating the disparity in student achievement and is a step toward reconciling the *"educational debt" (Ladson-Billings)* that our country has accrued over the generations.

Student Engagement via the Six Tenets of Culturally Responsive Education	
Tenet	*Student Need*
1. Student Centered Dialog	*Social*
2. Academic and Cultural Safe-Space	*Emotional/Affective*
3. Critical Thinking	*Intellectual*
4. Identity Development: Academic and Cultural	*Orientational*

5. Community and Family Engagement	*Contextual*
6. Social Justice/Civic Engagement	*Effective*

Student-Centered Dialogue (Social needs)

Conventional educational experiences of students of color are that of silencing them literally and figuratively. Students are silenced when their experiential knowledge is not validated and they are required to leave their culture outside the classroom. In an equitable classroom, students' experiential knowledge is validated and as such **student voice is nurtured.** In a culturally responsive classroom student dialog is encourage, cultivated, and developed as it is through dialogue that students are able to negotiate and construct knowledge. The **teacher serves as a facilitator** in the process of student dialogue and intervening to clarify moments of confusion within a dialogue.

A critical element that ensures positive and progressive student-centered dialogue is the establishment of a **humanizing classroom** where there is an understanding among all students and teachers that engaging in this process will be done in a respectful manner that seeks to promote growth. As such a distinction is made between dialogue and debate. Debate insinuates the need to "be right" dialog centers what "is right" regarding issues of injustice.

Academic "Safe" Space (Affective/Emotional needs)

Due to the marginalization of minoritized students they often times get "silenced" through the implementation of a pedagogy that does not validate their existence as cultural people.
Moreover the typical curriculum is not relevant (Gay, 2013) thus; minoritized students will experience inequity in treatment and access to the curriculum perpetuating the achievement gap.

An academic safe space encompasses two critical elements: the creation of an academic space and a safe space combined for an optimal environment to assist students to reach their academic potential.

An academic space is where culturally responsive and relevant educators are providing the necessary elements conducive to authentic and rigorous scholarship. That is the

educator has a deep command of the curriculum that they are teaching as such can provide depth in the subject area. Moreover culturally responsive and relevant educators have established classroom procedures that will ensure student academic engagement. They will scaffold learning to meet the diverse learning needs of all students. This academic space requires educators to see their students as scholars and provide rich and rigorous opportunities for students to engage in learning as scholars. Moreover teacher and student relationships are respectful and equitable in that they work collaboratively to co-create knowledge (Arellano, 2016). Finally the culturally responsive and relevant educator has a sincere respect for students are capable of learning and thus the educator has a sincere belief in that ability within the student.

A safe space is one in which students' "experiential knowledge," described by Solorzano (2001) as the students lived experiences, is validated by the culturally responsive and relevant educator. This safe space is free of racial microaggressions (Allen et al, 2013, Sue et al, 2009), thus creating a space where students are supported in their academic development. In a safe space students view themselves positively through a curriculum that reflects them as positive contributors to society.

An Academic "Safe" Space requires a supportive and inclusive environment where students' academic growth is fostered by supporting students in their social, emotional and academic needs. In this space student voice is nourished by grounding the content on the experiences of the students and validating those experiences. This safe space requires an atmosphere that fosters risk-taking. Finally students' emotional needs are addressed in this manner priming their hearts and minds for authentic learning to take place.

Critical Thinking

(Intellectual needs)

Critical in building student intellectual capacity is the development of student critical thinking through a framework that fosters a systemic analysis of power. Through the implementation of these critical thinking frameworks students can articulate how certain groups in society have power while others do not. This cannot be clearer then in an educational setting where historically European American students academically out perform students of color. Moreover without that systemic analysis students will not understand the reasons for their "place" in that power structure and might fall victims to internalize deficit thinking about themselves and not conceptualize a more equitable society. Finally a framework that provides a systemic analysis will inevitably provides potential for systemic change.

To analyze at the systemic level Paulo Freire's framework of *Levels of Consciousness* is

implemented by culturally responsive and relevant educators whereby students can problematize negative issues and form a critical consciousness to work to identify and to eliminate root causes of those negative issues. This framework requires metacognitive thought and self reflection. Metacognition – self reflection is a reflective process that engages students in thinking about their thinking, a critical component of concientization that allows students to identify and analyze the root causes of negative issues. Moreover meeting the intellectual needs of students requires that culturally responsive and relevant educators have assessed the cognitive capacities of students and provide rigorous and relevant materials, have high expectations of all students and provide challenging opportunities to foster their intellectual empowerment (Arellano et al, 2016).

Another framework for systemic analysis that is utilized to build intellectual capacity is Critical Race Theory (Landson-Billiings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano et al, 2001). Critical Race Theory in education serves as a lens by which to view inequities whereby students can articulate reasons for inequities and thus work towards creating action to address inequities. Through this lens students are able to examine issues through multiple intersections of race, gender, immigration and socio economics.

A final framework is that of counter-stories utilized by culturally responsive and relevant educators in providing students a tool to redefine their experiences in a manner that is positive and potentially transformative. By creating counter-stories minoritized students can create narratives that present their experiences in a positive manner.

Culturally responsive and relevant educators must create a safe space whereby students have the capacity to "grow their intelligence" (Hammond, 2015). In this space students are exposed to the various steps critical to information processing in that the information presented is made relevant to them. In line with brain-based (Hammond, 2015) culturally responsive learning relevant information then will become meaningful and finally through problem-posing education (Freire, 1999) students can apply this new knowledge in a manner that is relevant to their lives (Hammond, 2015).

Identity   Development (Orientational needs)

Critical educator and scholar Pizzaro (2011) illustrates identity formation for students of color in the following context stating that racial profiling in schools is a dysconscious and conscious act on the part of the teacher who will "determine who will and will not benefit from opportunities to excel in school." In other words student academic achievement has already been determined based on students' membership

of an ethnic group. Coupled with that is institutionalized racial hegemony that creates inequality in schools in an insidious manner specifically through a Eurocentric curriculum where students of color do not see their existence in the curriculum.

Culturally responsive and relevant educators must foster academic identity development in an environment that views students' identity as positive. Moreover where the culturally responsive and relevant educator is intentional in simultaneously developing the students cultural identity using the students' ideas, beliefs, values, knowledge, language, and way of life in an effort to foster and develop their gifts and talents to their potential. As such the curriculum must be relevant and must be centered on developing a positive cultural and academic identity. The culturally responsive and relevant educator is providing materials that present people in their students' culture as positive role models provide cultural and historical relevancy as this promotes engagement and motivation for authentic learning in the classroom.

Positive academic identity formation requires a respectful teacher-student relationship. Marcus Garvey used a simile to describe the connection: "A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots." The culturally responsive and relevant educator must work vigorously to find literature and historical accounts that are reflective of their students' ethnic backgrounds, filling a void that traditional textbooks often neglect to address. When students begin to learn, within the school curriculum, about the contributions that their people have made to the United States, students begin to feel good about themselves, their families, and their ethnic group. This new-found appreciation for self gives rise to a new cultural, historical and academic identity. The combination of academic skills and a positive, self-determinant identity helps to "provide opportunities that enhance student learning" (Cabrera, 2015).

As students are learning about their peoples' contribution in texts that are academically challenging, they are building a positive ethnic identity while at the same time building their academic identity. This constant building of the students' confidence is critical to the self- actualizing belief that they are scholars.

Family & Community Engagement (Contextual needs)

Critical to all students' academic experience is building the bridge between home and school (Gonzalez, 1995). Helping to make connections between the knowledge that students bring from home and the knowledge that is learned in school will increase

student engagement and academic outcomes. As culturally responsive and relevant educators seek to operate from a cultural assets paradigm extrapolating the "Funds of Knowledge" (Gonzalez, et al, 2005) that exists in their students' home is key in building that bridge from home to school.

Moreover sharing the students', in collaboration with the teachers, constructed school knowledge with parents also helps in the fluidity of the school home connection.

One prominent example of the school to home connection is articulated in the CRPI department through Parent *Encuentros,* an academic space created that is reserved for students, educators and parents to communicate with respect to what students are learning in school. This space is co-organized by educators and students that include the following opportunities for all families: "breaking-bread" together; that is a potluck kicks off the Parent *Encuentro* so that families can come together in this social space. Then students are provided the opportunity to present a recent research project to their parents in an effort to keep parents informed as to the knowledge that they are creating. A final component is the opportunity for collaboration between parents, students and educators regarding the topics that were presented as well as collaboration in future topics and events that are taking place in their community. Through the collaborative effort of the Parent *Encuentros* educators will be provided the opportunity to hear parents express their aspirations for their child as well as concerns that they might have regarding their child.

Learning-Community resources are also critical in incorporating into the classroom setting. Culturally responsive and relevant educators are constantly seeking ways to bring in community resources in the classroom and moreover embedding these resources into the classroom so as to make those connections. Examples of Learning-Community resources include collaborative curricular development in conjunction with community organizations and community leaders that could visit classrooms.

Based on the work of Dr. Moll, culturally responsive and relevant educators must be responsive to the "funds of knowledge" that their students bring to the classroom. Culturally responsive and relevant educators do this by incorporating students' cultural assets as well as culturally responsive strategies into the classroom in both curriculum and pedagogy. The byproducts of this cultural assets approach to education are that students become engaged in what they learn and begin to see themselves as scholars. Student engagement becomes infectious and classroom disruption and student discipline problems become nonexistent.

Academic instruction must be informed by the lived experiences of the students being taught. Dr. Angela Valenzuela defines this as "authentic caring".

Social
Justice
(Effective
needs)

Students are faced with issues of justice and injustice daily and in getting to know students culturally responsive educators embrace those lived experiences (Solorzano et al,), validate them and . By focusing on the issues of injustice we are validating our students' existence and by moving to act on these injustices we are giving **purpose to the students' education**.

Moreover a culturally responsive and relevant educator will seek to contribute to the development of a student's civic engagement as "productive and contributing citizens" (Arellano, 2016) which requires that

Social Justice Education is centered on the concept of equity that is focused on exposing and ending social inequalities such as sexism, racism, homophobia, poverty, etc. and for **inclusivity. Social Justice Education is transformational education** centered on a pedagogy rooted in **activism** and in the **pursuit of social justice** that seeks to end injustice. It is essential to provide students with the opportunity to develop and utilize their gifts and talents in a positive light that will allow for individual transformation and subsequently societal transformation that is working towards our **civic responsibility** to make this world a better place. Through social justice education students develop agency and create action through meaningful application.

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