TUSD Integrating the Framework for Teaching with SAIL (Supportive and Inclusive Learning Environments for All Students

Background: As part of the desegregation case, TUSD has a Unitary Status Plan that must be implemented. One of the requirements of the USP is that the evaluation plan for teachers is aligned with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy. In response to this USP, TUSD created an initiative called SAIL (Supportive and Inclusive Learning Environments for Learners) with the following mission:

> *All members of the TUSD community have a responsibility to create equitable learning environments emphasizing students' cultural asset, backgrounds and individuals strengths. All students are respected, included and valued in a culture of high expectations for behavior and learning.*

This initiative has the goal of supporting each student in TUSD and students cultural background is one of the many characteristics of students that must be integrated into the instructional programming in the TUSD classrooms.

On January 29, 30 and 31, I met with a committee comprised of the TUSD Cultural Responsive Pedagogical experts, 3 members from Curriculum Instruction and Professional Development support staff who support teachers and principals, the director of Professional Development, a Language Acquisition Specialist and Exceptional Education Program Coordinator met to begin an analysis of the Framework through the lends of CRP and the larger goals of SAIL. We incorporated the "Suggestions from Teaching Tolerance Panel for Teaching with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy" in our analysis.

Our process consisted of the following:
- We read the narrative of a selected component in the book, Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching (ASCD 2007).
- We compared the information in the book with the information included in the 2013 Evaluation Instrument to identify any gaps in the information.
- We identified key ideas in the component, information gaps in the 2013 Evaluation Instrument, alignment of the component with SAIL, and additional information/ideas needed.
- We reviewed the "Suggestions from Teaching Tolerance Panel for Enriching the Framework for Teaching with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy" to evaluate how that information aligned with our analysis and to consider ideas that might enhance the evaluation tool.
- We reviewed the TUSD Tenets of CRP and made connections between the FfT and each tenet.

We began the work with an analysis of component **1b: Knowledge of Students.** Knowledge of Students defined by the FfT includes the following:

- Stages of development

- Language proficiency
- Learning styles
- Interests and talents
- Activities outside of school
- Cultural heritage/traditions
- Misunderstandings/misconceptions
- Special needs
- Medical/Physical needs
- Perceived place in school and the world
- Prior experience
- Parents opinions
- Interventions to acquire learning
- Adaptations to demonstrate learning

The 2013 Evaluation Instrument specifically references student interests, knowledge, skills, cultural heritage, approaches to learning, background, and language proficiency. Seeking information from multiple sources including students' families is also emphasized. Finally, incorporating this knowledge into the instructional programming is a central idea.

The committee felt that this was a comprehensive definition of "knowing students" at that looking at the Framework through this lens allowed us to make many connections to CRP and the larger lens of Support and Inclusive Learning Environments for All Students, even when culture is not explicitly stated.   The committee discussed the importance of providing professional development to help teachers gain a deeper understanding of this component and to provide tools for accessing this information.

"Suggestions from Teaching Tolerance Panel for Teaching with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy":

The committee felt that the suggestions for the narrative and the critical attributes to explicitly call out cultural backgrounds of students reduce the focus on each student to some students. They also felt the Framework's description of knowing students is comprehensive and inclusive of all students.

The committee felt the examples provided in the 2013 instrument are adequate and additional examples are not necessary. However, one idea for a professional development activity would be the construction of examples by teachers that reflect their individual practice would be meaningful.
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Other Domain 1 components:
1a: Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

Ideas related to SAIL
- Focus on flexibility
- Creating meaningful learning experiences

- Critical questions
- Knowledge of the discipline evolving from diverse cultural and global perspectives

"Suggestions from Teaching Tolerance Panel for Teaching with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy":

Looking at concepts through more than one cultural point of view is an important idea but would be better addressed in the district curricular initiatives and that providing professional development for teachers would be important. They felt the language referring to diverse cultural and global perspectives did not need to be changed.

Professional Development Ideas:
Culturally Relevant Pedagogical Skills

1c: Setting Instructional Outcomes

Ideas related to SAIL
- All students
- Suitability for diverse learners
- Balance: Knowledge, skills, predispositions
- Challenging
- Differentiating

"Suggestions from Teaching Tolerance Panel for Teaching with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy":

Narrative seemed to be changed for semantics rather than meaning.
The ideas presented in the third paragraph are already included in 1b, 1a, and 1c.

The examples are aligned with components in Domains 2 and 3 and describe practice in the classroom rather than in the planning process.

1d: Knowledge of Resources

Ideas related to SAIL
- Appropriate levels
- External human resources
- Refers to every student all students

"Suggestions from Teaching Tolerance Panel for Teaching with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy":

Domain 2: Classroom Environment

TUSD has implemented both PBIS and Restorative Practices. As we analyzed the domain 2 components, we considered their alignment with these initiatives, which are incorporated into SAIL.

The committee recognized the interrelatedness of the domain 2 components and how they impact one another, as well as the connection to domain 3 and setting the stage for student engagement. The definition of knowing students 1b was also an important lens as we explored these components.

We also reviewed the theme "Student Assumption of Responsibility" and discussed the importance of student ownership and shared responsibility in a classroom environment characterized by high expectations for all students.

2a Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport

Ideas related to SAIL
- Positive and supportive relationships
- Knowledge of life outside of school
- Interact with students as individuals
- Students feel valued and safe to take risks
- Dignity
- Respecting a wide variety of backgrounds
- Response to students (verbal and non verbal communication)
- Ground rules for interactions

Not explicit in 2013
- Boundaries-teacher is a special friend
- Humor

"Suggestions from Teaching Tolerance Panel for Teaching with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy":

Adding language about students as members of cultural groups is not needed as this is already defined in 1b.
The committee was unsure about the meaning of "equal status contact".
Asking "why" questions is not a restorative practice principal.

2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning
Ideas related to SAIL
- High expectations for all students
- Culture of hard work
- Shared belief by teachers and students that work is important
- Safe environment for risk taking

- Teacher has high regard for students abilities
- Students believe teacher has confidence in their abilities
- Manifestation of teacher beliefs in students' motivation

"Suggestions from Teaching Tolerance Panel for Teaching with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy":

- The suggested language change on p. 9, second paragraph aligns with 1b: Knowledge of Students
- The committee agreed that clarity is needed about the precise use of language. The inference made is that this would be about the use of academic language and that at times a student may explain his/her ideas more clearly in a less formal dialect or register, or may not have a comprehensive vocabulary. Teachers want to respect this about their students and at the same time capitalize on teachable moments related to vocabulary/fluency.

2c: Managing Classroom Procedures- Not part of the panel's suggestions

Key Ideas:
- Meaningful routines must be established before diving into teaching to enhance student learning.
- Students should function well in the groups and teachers should group students thoughtfully. This aligns with Domain 1.
- Students take ownership of smooth operation of the classroom.
- Students are able to work independently is critical to the learning process.

Not explicit in the 2013 Instrument
- Students need to understand procedures before the learning occurs.
- When students understand the routines they are more likely to take ownership.
- Students working well together in groups.

Professional Development Ideas:
Teachers need to know importance of establishing routines, designing groups, and students taking ownership of the classroom.
Refugee students may need to understand autonomy and ownership of classroom.
What are the roadblocks to students taking ownership in the classroom? -Relate to knowing students, 1b.

Ideas Related to SAIL:
Need to know students' social cultural reality
Independent work is an equity piece-all students should have work that allows them to engage with the content autonomously at least some of the time. This links to the other domains.

Cultural values differ and there are soft skills that are a part of American culture getting along with others stating the purpose of collaboration as a skill.

2d Managing Student Behavior

Key ideas:
- Expectations are clear
- Positive behavior is a prerequisite for student engagement
- Student engaged reduces misbehavior
- Respect students /dignity
- Address behavior early

Aligned with SAIL
- Students feel respected
- Students empowered by creating rules about behavior not child
- Teacher seeks to understand

Not explicit in 2013
- Developmental appropriateness
- Teaching students to engage in self-reflection
- Cultural norms of students

Ideas for Professional Development
- Classroom management-behavior basics
- Relationship building
- Creating and maintaining classroom rules
- Developing school-wide norms and expectations
- Teacher as facilitator/Fostering student assumption of responsibility

2e: Organizing Physical Space
Ideas related to SAIL
- Learning must be accessible to all students

Domain 3: Instruction

3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
Key Ideas:
- Students need time to process
- Equity-all voices all perspectives
- Students prior understanding and experience is implied
- Challenging thinking-align with 2a-proactive circle/classroom expectations

2013 instrument
- Argumentation added/precise use of language

Ideas related to SAIL
Level of questioning needs to meet the needs of the students
Equity-all voices all perspectives
Appropriate wait time
Teacher draws everyone in
Students' responses are valued

Professional Development Ideas
Teaching questioning to teachers so that their students can ask high level questions
Blooms Taxonomy-teachers don't understand and don't align level of questioning with level of knowledge
Implications for Domain 1-planning for questioning and discussion

"Suggestions from Teaching Tolerance Panel for Teaching with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy":