CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

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LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
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BUILDING CAPACITY FOR EQUITY AND ACCESS THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY
WHEN A TEACHER TRIES TO TEACH SOMETHING TO THE ENTIRE CLASS AT THE SAME TIME, “CHANCES ARE, ONE-THIRD OF THE KIDS ALREADY KNOW IT; ONE-THIRD WILL GET IT; AND THE REMAINING THIRD WON’T. SO TWO-THIRDS OF THE CHILDREN ARE WASTING THEIR TIME.”

- LILIAN KATZ

Reflect and consider…

As a student, I was in the 1/3 who…
As a teacher, I am in the 1/3 who…
As a parent, my child is in the 1/3 who…
To ensure a fair selection, you all get the same test. You must all climb the tree.
Culturally Responsive Differentiated Instruction: Foregrounding Equity

People who are considered different by those in the majority have a long history of exclusion & denied access.

Differentiated Instruction = Equitable opportunities & access to information & participation
Differentiated Instruction: a Definition

“Differentiated instruction is a teaching philosophy based on the premise that teachers should adapt instruction to student differences....”

Carol Ann Tomlinson
Culturally responsive differentiated instruction is a philosophy of teaching that:

- honoring
- OPTIONS
- Groups
- personalized
- individual
- student centered
- Choice
- Celebratory
- EMPOWERING
- responsive
- Standards based
- Maximizes student growth
The need for differentiation

Which is true?

All students can:

- Learn the same thing
- Learn the same way
- Learn in the same amount of time
- None of the above

http://www.differentiationcentral.com/
Why culturally responsive differentiation?

**People learn in different ways** - we have various learning styles, learning strengths, abilities, and interests.

**We also learn in fundamentally similar ways** - we need to find meaning and make sense of what we study. We learn best from work that demands we stretch ourselves, but does not intimidate us.
Theoretical and research foundation

- There are three underlying areas:
  - Beliefs about teaching and learning
  - Educational theories and the research behind them that support differentiation
  - Research looking at differentiation as a whole model

**Bottom line:** Strong research support and student achievement gains for differentiated instruction
Why are students failing?

How are the learning experiences provided by our district, school, or classroom failing these students?

If we seek to improve student performance we must focus on the work or learning experiences we provide to students (Schlechty, 2002).
Engaged Learning

All students are…

Aware of their importance & that they matter

Teachers’ identities

But, it depends on…

Students’ identities

Classroom elements
Teacher Identity:
What you know, like, & believe shapes how you teach

- I don’t know?
- Makes me uncomfortable?
- I don’t believe?
- Is my knowledge?
- Is my preference?
- I do believe?
Students’ Identities

“Recognizing that everyone has unique traditions, values, and beliefs that are important to them (ethnic identity, language, religion and formal/informal community, neighborhood, and family connections) helps us to see how we are connected.”
For whom is your classroom differentiated?

Questions to guide your thoughts:

- Does your classroom have evidence of your heritage?
- What might show your religious beliefs in the classroom?
- Do you have accurate and respectful representations of your gender exemplified?
- Are your students’ cultural traditions reflected on the walls or in classroom literature?
“CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND” APPROACH NOT RECOMMENDED

Avoiding the tourist approach to student identities
## Comparing traditional and differentiated approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Classroom</th>
<th>Differentiated Classroom</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Assessment at the end of a unit of study</td>
<td>1. Assessment is ongoing, diagnostics and influences instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Dominance of whole class instruction</td>
<td>2. Variety of instructional strategies used within a classroom</td>
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<td>3. Adapted textbooks are the main instructional resource</td>
<td>3. Multiple types of materials are utilized as resources</td>
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<td>4. The teacher is the main problem solver and holds the knowledge to &quot;deposit&quot; to students</td>
<td>4. Students are engaged in problem solving and inquiry</td>
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<td>5. Quantitative focus to assignments</td>
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# Adding Culturally Responsiveness to Differentiated Instruction

**Differentiated Classroom**

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<th>Culturally Responsive and Differentiated Classroom is transformative</th>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Assessment, climate, instruction, and curricula use students’ strengths, interests, background, home life, and lived experiences to validate student identities</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Recognizes culture’s influence and then uses cultural resources to mediate instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Includes resources that legitimate the cultural and historical legacies of all cultural and ethnic groups by including these legacies in the materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Students are active in all aspects of learning and teaching</td>
</tr>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Assignments are meaningful and purposeful to students, families, and teachers</td>
</tr>
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School & Classroom Cultures:
What is already there shapes teaching & learning

Teaching
&
Learning

Q: Which of my actions today moved specific students toward educational opportunity and which actions moved them farther away?
Differentiating Climate in a culturally responsive way

Materials and Space

- Decorations
- Use of physical space
- Use of time
- Lighting
- Temperature

Ideological

- Learning from individuals’ differences
- Fail-safe culture
- Democratic decision making
- Relationship building
- Addressing & resolving conflict
- Involving parents and community
Who determines rules?
How are procedures articulated and enforced?
How is your furniture arranged?

What feeling do you get when you walk in the classroom?
How do you address prejudice or discrimination?
Focus on Multiple Means for Action and Expression

How does the social environment in the classroom or school support multiple means of student participation?
Curriculum

- Curriculum is still designed to serve core group of students (Who?)
- What about….
  - English language learners/standard English learners
  - Native Americans
  - Students with Disabilities

- These students are often thought of as “exceptions to the norm”

- The assumption that one curriculum fits most students with modifications for a small few is faulty
Questions to guide culturally responsive differentiated curriculum

- Is the curriculum geared towards supporting students’ learning styles?
- How does the curriculum incorporate students’ lives?
- What are my students’ cultures?
- How does the curriculum introduce students to “ordinary” role models?
Differentiate Content

- What is the essential content?
- Relevance to real-life

- What do the students know?
- What experiences do they have?

- Background Knowledge & Skills
- Summarize main points
- Provides more access for some
- Emphasizes points for others

- Big Ideas

- Specific Skills Instruction
- Teach essential skills
- Give extra opportunities to apply skills

- Authentic Knowledge & Skills

Teaching & Learning

www.equityallianceatasu.org
Still linked to content standards!

- All strategies are aligned with instructional goals and objectives.

- Specific strategy selection based on
  - Focus of instruction
  - Focus of differentiation
Differentiate Media & Materials

Alternate and multiple representations, print alternatives

Use of digital content

Presentation of concepts in multiple ways
Differentiate Process and Product

Variable Format
- Verbal
- Written
- Drawn
- Gestured
- Technological
Differentiating Assessment

- Ongoing
- Instruction-dependent
- Student-dependent
- Use to inform instruction
- Consider how to differentiate both assessment content and product
Questions to Guide Creation of Culturally Responsive Differentiated Assessment

- How are assessments designed to allow students multiple ways of demonstrating progress? Mastery? Content?

- How do I balance the use of formative & summative assessment?

- How do I adjust what and how I teach, based on the assessment data?
REFLECT AND CONSIDER

What are you already doing to differentiate in your classroom?
Differentiate...

For instruction

Because students have

Content

Process

Product

Different readiness

Different interests

Different learning profiles
Are they Ready?
Readiness

- Know where you want students to be
- Begin where the students are
  *Not where you think they are or what their “label” says*
- Continually assess your students
Mediation and scaffolding

- Let’s talk about ZPD briefly
  - How can we move students’ zones?
- Regulate difficulty
- Provide varying contexts
- Provide feedback
- Increase student responsibility
- Provide independent practice
Speak their language!

Different interests

Attention Dog Guardians
Pick up after your dogs. Thank you.

Attention Dogs
Grrrr, bark, woof. Good dog.

District of North Vancouver.
Bylaw 5981-11(i)
Ways to incorporate interest

- Create interest within a lesson
  - Give choice within content
  - Give choice for the final product

- Use general interests
  - Incorporate interests outside of school

- Hook student interest through relevance
To what extent is your learning style reflected in your teaching style?
What are *students’* primary learning styles?
“As we start a new school year, Mr. Smith, I just want you to know that I’m an Abstract-Sequential learner and trust that you’ll conduct yourself accordingly!”
“Have some respect for my learning style!”
Learning Style

- Conduct surveys to collect data
  - Multiple intelligences: musical, verbal/linguistic, logical interpersonal, intrapersonal, kinesthetic, visual/spatial
  - Sternberg: creative, practical, analytical
  - Modality: visual, verbal, kinesthetic
  - Jung, 4MAT, Array: social interaction and personality

- Use data to purposefully group students
  - Like grouping
  - Unlike grouping
  - Whole group
Addressing a Continuum of Learners

- What’s the standard?
- What’s the “big idea”? 
- What adaptations might need to be made in:
  - Planning?
  - Process?
  - Product?
BORING IS BAD!!

How will you “mix it up” to keep it engaging and help learners retain the information?
Connected to what you already do

- Professional learning communities
- Guided reading
- Book clubs
- Cooperative learning
- Co-teaching
- Zone of proximal development
- Multiple intelligences
The Hidden Curriculum
(Lavoie, 1994)

- The unwritten, unspoken rules of school
  - It’s not cool to wear your dad’s old clothes to school.
  - Teachers like you to speak to them in a quiet, respectful way.
  - Real friends won’t ask you to do things that will get you in trouble.
  - Not all teachers have the same rules.
  - Don’t interrupt the teacher when she’s talking to someone about something important.
  - Don’t stand up and get a drink in the middle of a lesson.
  - And many, many more…
Examples of differentiated activities

- Curriculum compacting
- Independent studies
- Interest centers
- Flexible grouping
- Adapting questioning
- Cubing
- Webquests
- Jigsaws
- Role playing

- Choice menu
- Tic tac toe board
- Choice boards
- Tiered activities
- Learning contracts
- Flexible scheduling
- Flexible environments
Culturally Responsive Differentiated Instruction...

**IS**
- Different, not less
- About kids, not labels
- STUDENT CENTERED
- Personalized: An acknowledgment of who the student is, not who he/she is not
- About incorporating the students’ values, beliefs, interests, learning style, families, and perspectives
- a BLEND of whole class, group, and individual instruction.

**IS NOT**
- Individual instruction
- Just modifying grading systems and reducing work loads
- More work for the "good" students and less and different for the "poor" students
- Substituting access to grade level curriculum
Differentiate Instruction helps educators to REACH and TEACH…

That's cool Carmen
I hate to read Harriet

I love to learn LeBron

Never in school NANCY

What if Willie

I already know this Ignacio

This sucks SAM

www.equityallianceatasu.org
The biggest mistake of past centuries in teaching has been to treat all children as if they were variants of the same individual and thus to feel justified in teaching them all the same subjects in the same way.

-Howard Gardner
Post-Session Activities

Visit
http://urbanschools.org/professional/module_4.html to access the Professional Learning Module on Universal Designs for Learning

- Explore the activities provided in the Participant Handouts of each academy with colleagues or individually
- Consider leading an in-service on UDL at your school
Online Engagement
Questions? Training needs? Research interests?
Contact Information: Jennifer J. Huber, Ph.D.
Jennifer.huber@asu.edu

Other helpful tools at:
www.equityallianceatasu.org
www.nccrest.org
www.niusileadscape.org
www.urbanschools.org