Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework

CULTURALLY

The **CR-S** framework helps educators create student-centered learning environments that: affirm racial, linguistic

RESPONSIVE-

and cultural identities; prepare students for rigor and independent learning, develop students' abilities to connect

SUSTAINING

across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; and empower students as agents of social change.

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For more than a century, education providers throughout the United States have strived and struggled to meet the diverse needs of American children and families. A complex system of biases and structural inequities is at play, deeply rooted in our country's history, culture, and institutions. This system of inequity — which routinely confers advantage and disadvantage based on linguistic background, gender, skin color, and other characteristics — must be clearly understood, directly challenged, and fundamentally transformed. The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has come to understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved without incorporating an equity and inclusion lens in every facet of our work (see also New York State's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan). This understanding has created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, but also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages and ways of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and imperiled by years of educational, social, political, economic neglect and other forms of oppression.

In January 2018, the New York State Board of Regents directed the Office of P-12 Education and Higher Education to convene a panel of experts, engage with stakeholders, and develop from the ground up a framework for culturally responsive-sustaining education. The New York University Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, under the leadership of Dr. David Kirkland, drafted a robust guidance document that served as a springboard for this initiative. The New York State Education Department presented this guidance document to students, teachers, parents, school and district leaders, higher education faculty, community advocates, and policymakers. The guidelines in this document represent the collective insight of this work.

The Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) framework is intended to help education stakeholders create student-centered learning environments that affirm cultural identities; foster positive academic outcomes; develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices;

empower students as agents of social change; and contribute to individual student engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking. The framework was designed to support education stakeholders in developing and implementing policies that educate all students effectively and equitably, as well as provide appropriate supports and services to promote positive student outcomes.

Historically, education debates have been polarized, with difference sometimes being viewed as an individual deficit. The CR-S Framework marks our journey forward and begins the evolution toward leveraging difference as an asset. The framework is grounded in four principles*:

- **Welcoming and Affirming Environment**
- **High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction**
- **Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment**
- **Ongoing Professional Learning**

Each principle is illustrated by a set of features rooted in elements of quality education that illustrate how CR-S might look in practice across a range of domains, from the State Education Department to the classroom. The framework represents an opportunity for stakeholders to continue to work together and plan for the unique needs of their communities.

The New York State Education Department recognizes much of this work is already happening across the state and looks forward to an even deeper understanding of culturally responsive-sustaining education in New York State schools, districts, and communities. This framework reflects the State's commitment to improving learning results for all students by creating well-developed, culturally responsive-sustaining, equitable systems of support for achieving dramatic gains in student outcomes.

* The 4 principles that organize State Education Department's CR-S Framework were inspired by the 4 high leverage strategies that emerged from Buffalo Public School's work on Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Education.

The New York State guidelines for culturally responsive-sustaining education are grounded in a **VISION** of an education system that creates:

I. Students who experience academic success

Students are prepared for rigor and independent learning. Students understand themselves as contributing members of an academically-rigorous, intellectually-challenging school and classroom community. Students demonstrate an ability to use critical reasoning, take academic risks, and leverage a growth mindset to learn from mistakes. Students are self-motivated, setting and revising academic personal goals to drive their own learning and growth.

II. Students who are sociopolitically conscious and socioculturally responsive

Students acknowledge the limitations of their own perspectives. They have empathy for others while they appreciate and respect others' differences. They demonstrate cooperation and teamwork, using active listening and communication skills to resolve conflict. They use interpersonal skills to build and maintain strong relationships, including those along lines of difference, in their class and school communities.

All layers of the environment in which students learn (classroom, school, family, and community) affirm and value the various aspects of students' cultural identities (i.e. race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, socioeconomic background). Role models in the classroom, school, family, and community recognize student strengths and offer opportunities for students to grow and learn.

III. Students who have a critical lens through which they challenge inequitable systems of access, power, and privilege.

Students bring a critical lens to the world as they study historical and contemporary conditions of inequity and learn from historically marginalized voices. Students learn about power and privilege in the context of various communities and are empowered as agents of positive social change.

This vision is grounded in Gloria Ladson-Billings' early work on culturally relevant teaching, specifically the three criteria for culturally relevant pedagogy she puts forth in Ladson-Billings (1995). The New York State Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework includes guidelines for students, teachers, school leaders, district leaders, families and community members, higher education faculty, and Education Department policymakers. For guidelines to be effective, all stakeholders must work together, prioritize and implement systems and structures that facilitate the scale of culturally responsive-sustaining practices, and hold each other accountable to short- and long-term goals.

When stakeholders work together to implement culturally responsive-sustaining practices, educators will grow in their ability to be:

SOCIOPOLITICALLY CONSCIOUS	SOCIOCULTURALLY RESPONSIVE
Demonstrate excellence by being inclusive-minded and asset-focused	Commit to understanding the role of culture in education as flexible, local, and global
Identify and critically examine both historical and contemporary power structures	Act as agents of social change to redress historical and contemporary oppression
Reflect, honor, value, and center various identity perspectives as assets in policies and practices (Sue, 2001)	Build alliances across difference to eradicate all forms of discrimination
Engage in critical conversations	Engage current and historical issues
Recognize that personal, cultural, and institutionalized discrimination creates and sustains privileges for some while creating and sustaining disadvantage for others	Practice mutual respect for qualities and experiences that are different from one's own

New York State Education Department Definition

Culturally responsive-sustaining (CR-S) education is grounded in a cultural view of learning and human development in which multiple expressions of diversity (e.g., race, social class, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, ability) are recognized and regarded as assets for teaching and learning.

CR-S education explores the relationship between historical and contemporary conditions of inequality and ideas that shape access, participation, and outcomes for learners.

The goal of the CR-S framework is to help educators design and implement a student-centered learning environment that:

- **affirms racial and cultural identities and fosters positive academic outcomes**
- **develops students' abilities to connect across cultures**
- **empowers students as agents of social change**
- **contributes to an individual's engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking.**

To make this a reality, the Department, under the Board of Regents, has created a framework for CR-S practices. The framework is intended to be used by a variety of education stakeholders, including but not limited to students, teachers, school and district leaders, families and community members, higher education faculty and administrators, and Education Department policymakers.

This definition was created by the NYSED Expert Committee: Alfredo Artiles, Jeff Duncan-Andrade, David Kirkland, Gloria Ladson-Billings, Joyce Moy, Django Paris, Carla Shedd-Guild, Amy Stuart-Wells, Mariana Souto-Manning, Zoila Morrell.

What is culture?

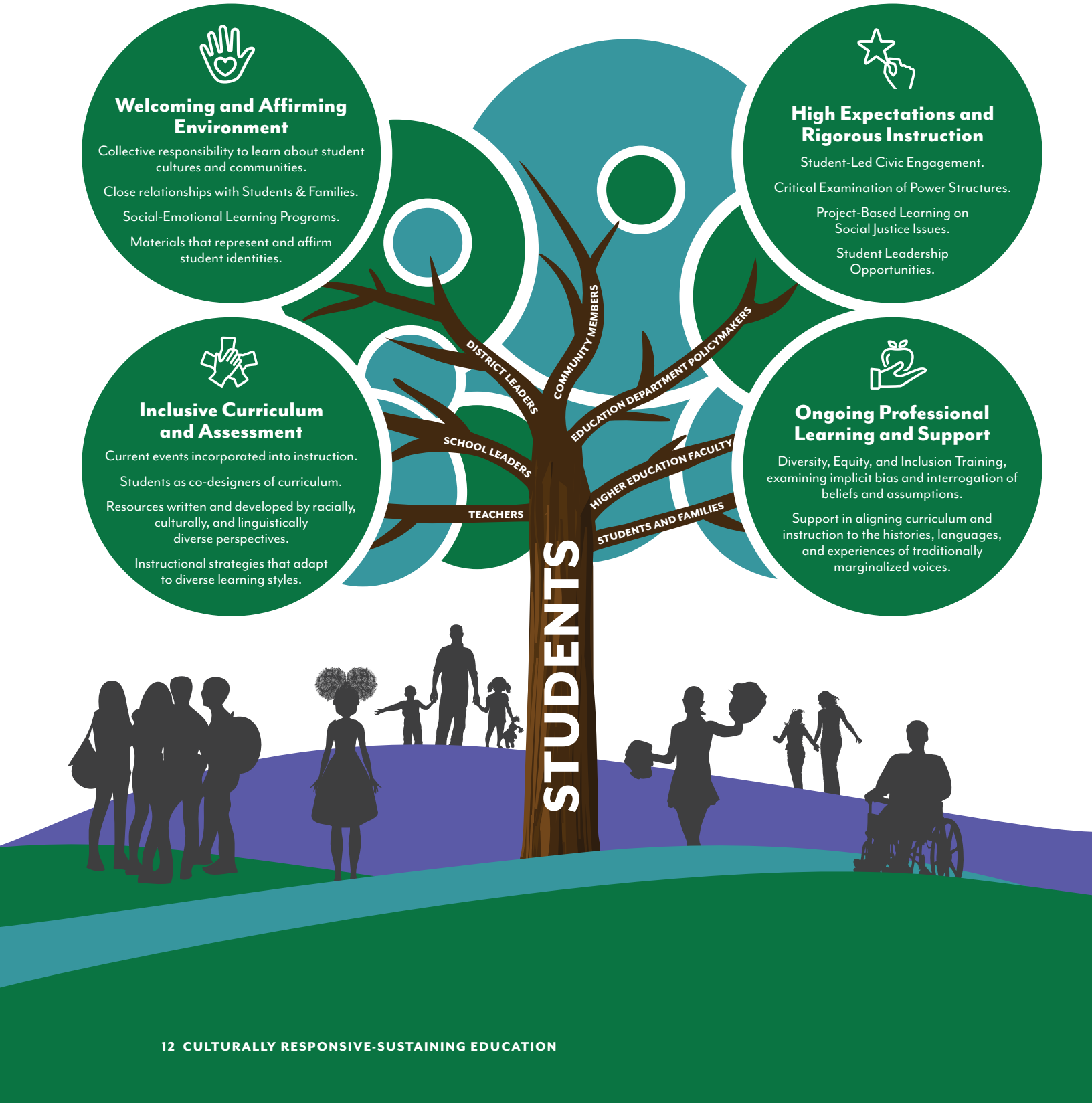
The New York State Education Department understands culture as the multiple components of one's identity, including but not limited to: race, economic background, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, and ability. Culture far transcends practices such as cuisines, art, music, and celebrations to also include ways of thinking, values, and forms of expression. These ways and forms are in constant flux, renegotiation, and evolution. Schools then become a meeting point for cultures, containing children and adults who bring with them multiple facets of their identity, along with unique experiences and perspectives.

From this perspective, learning is rooted in the lives and experiences of people and cultivated through activities that people find meaningful. When teaching is not rooted in students' lives, student learning suffers. Perhaps worst, biases take hold and deficit perspectives become normalized throughout our schools and classrooms, structuring entire systems that blame students for failure.

The school community is representative of many cultures, and therefore culture has consequences on how students experience schools. The framework is intentional about the relationship between culture and education, presenting a multi-tiered systems approach for cultural inclusion that broadens what ethnic groups, classes, sexualities, and abilities are privileged in the creation and maintenance of traditional education.

Research suggests that many students whose cultures are more closely aligned with the "cultural fabric" of schools experience praise and are viewed as more dedicated than those whose home cultures differ. Educators committed to understanding both the concept of culture and many different cultures can refocus their lens for viewing students' cultures not as "deficiencies to overcome" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 87), but as assets who possess vibrant realities and rich reservoirs of knowledge. By making all cultures matter, our students' cultures can be positioned as strengths and as the foundation of empowering, rigorous, and innovative learning.

The CR-S framework helps educators create student-centered learning environments that: affirm racial, linguistic and cultural identities; prepare students for rigor and independent learning; develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; and empower students as agents of social change.



What is Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education?

Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) Education draws on decades of research in asset-based pedagogies that recognize that cultural difference (including racial, ethnic, linguistic, gender, sexuality and ability) should be treated as assets for teaching and learning. This approach to education counters dominant narratives about difference as deficits or as characteristics of students and families that should be remediated or assimilated. Using this approach to education, all families are believed to have cultural capital, or knowledge, abilities, and networks, that can, and should, be leveraged in classrooms. While schooling has traditionally privileged the capital of families from dominant backgrounds, CR-S positions educators to acknowledge, value, and leverage the wealth of knowledge found in communities that have been marginalized.

Culturally responsive education is about teaching the students in front of you. To do this requires that one work to get to know their students and develop meaningful relationships with students while engaging in the students' communities. However, culturally responsive education must also be sustaining, that is it must work to encourage cultural pluralism and not cultural assimilation. Home and youth culture should be welcomed into the classroom as areas ripe for discussion. Differences should not just be seen as strengths, but they should also be maintained because they are what make students and families unique. How educators understand culture has real consequences for our children as a limited understanding of culture has the power to disadvantage some while privileging others (Kirkland, 2012).

What is the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework?

The CR-S framework is an initiative by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) that establishes culturally responsive-sustaining guidelines for student, teachers, school and district leadership, families and community advocates, higher education, and the State Education Department. This initiative is both urgent and timely, as it responds to many of the public forum comments about Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), one of which is the necessity of including culturally responsive-sustaining education into all aspects of public education. The State Education Department worked closely with various academic experts, renowned in their respective fields, to draft a NYSED definition of culturally responsive-sustaining education. New York University Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools (Metro Center) used these conversations to draft a robust guidance document from which this framework was created. The framework was then built from the ground up, drawing on feedback from stakeholders across the state who generously gave of their time and insight. After three rounds of feedback, this framework incorporates the collective insight of these stakeholders.

This document is intended for use across stakeholder groups. A guiding principle of asset-based pedagogies is that a culturally responsive-sustaining approach to teaching and learning benefits a broad range of stakeholders. In the design of this framework, we thought about those who work in urban, suburban and rural communities. We considered the unique needs of each of these environments and encourage educators to take up this framework, recognizing the unique needs of their teaching contexts and the plethora of diversity that exists in all educational environments.

NYSED recognizes that for culturally responsive-sustaining education to thrive, the impetus cannot be placed solely on student, teachers, and school leaders; all stakeholders must work together to create the conditions under which this vision of education can flourish. NYSED believes that we must incorporate an equity and inclusion lens in every facet of the state's work to achieve student success outcomes for all students. Thus, the framework aligns closely with other NYSED policies, including The New York State Board of Regents and the NYSED Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA plan), specifically:

- **Recognize the effect of school environment on student academic performance and support efforts to improve the climate of all schools.**
- **Promote a relationship of trust and respect between schools and families, recognizing that student achievement and school improvement are shared responsibilities.**
- **Provide educators with opportunities for continual professional learning in the areas of equity, anti-bias, multicultural, and culturally responsive-sustaining pedagogies.**
- **Support districts and their communities in engaging in critical conversations about culturally responsive-sustaining educational systems.**

The 4 Principles of Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education

The 4 principles that organize the New York State Education Department's CR-S Framework are inspired by the 4 high leverage strategies that emerged from Buffalo Public School's work on Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Education.

Welcoming and affirming environment

High expectations and rigorous instruction

Inclusive curriculum and assessment

Ongoing professional learning

Welcoming and affirming environment

SYMBOL

DESCRIPTION

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.

RESOURCES

School Climate and Culture Index

Mental Health Education Literacy Schools: Linking to a Continuum of Well-Being

English Language Learner/Multilingual Learner Parent Resources

Social Emotional Learning: Essential for Learning, Essential for Life

Guidelines and Resources for Social and Emotional Development and Learning (SEDL) in New York State

NYSED Information and Resources Regarding Restorative Justice and Trauma Sensitivity Training

The New York State Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)

High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction

SYMBOL

DESCRIPTION

High expectations and rigorous instruction prepare the community 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.

RESOURCES

New York State Board of Regents Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA Plan)

New York State Next Generation English Language Arts and Mathematics Learning Standards

New York State My Brother's Keeper (Initiative)

New York State Early Learning Standards

Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities

State Systemic Improvement Plan Multi-tiered Systems of Support Model

Blueprint for English Language Learner/Multilingual Learner Success

Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks

Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment

SYMBOL

DESCRIPTION

Inclusive curriculum and assessment elevate 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.

RESOURCES

Teacher Test Development and Participation Opportunities

Civic Readiness Initiative

The New York State K-12 Social Studies Framework and Toolkits

Ongoing Professional Learning

SYMBOL

DESCRIPTION

Ongoing professional learning is rooted in the idea that teaching and learning is an adaptive process needing constant reexamination (Moll, et al., 1992; Gay, 2010). 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.

RESOURCES

Diverse and Learner-Ready Teachers Initiative

Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSELs)

New York State Teaching Standards

NYU Metro TAC-D 2018-2019 Regional Workshops

Culturally Responsive-Sustaining **Mindsets**

All stakeholders (students, teachers, school leaders, district leaders, families and community members, higher education faculty and administrators, and Education Department Policymakers) can adopt these culturally responsive-sustaining aligned mindsets as a lens through which to implement the CR-S guidelines outlined in this framework.

New York State **EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS** can contribute to a Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education for students by:

Believing that culture is not an addition but is a critical component of education.

Believing that students and their families are individuals with their own assets, knowledge, and abilities who should be valued and consulted.

- Student and community assets should be sustained and leveraged for academic achievement.
- Consider students as co-designers of curriculum and drivers of instruction (Jenkins & Healey, 2009)
- Embed community input into curriculum to reflect diversity of the local and global community.

Believing that critical and continuous self-reflection is required to dismantle systems of biases and inequities rooted in our country's history, culture, and institutions.

- Employ a critical pedagogy that empowers students to see themselves as agents of social change and architects of their own destinies (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008).
- Employ a critical lens (racial, gender, sexual identity, linguistic, religious, ability, socioeconomic, or other salient cultural identities) when developing resources and intervention frameworks to de-center dominant ideologies and pedagogies that ignore or marginalize diverse students.
- Identify and one's own implicit biases, reflecting on how they may shape one's feelings, actions, academic expectations, or behavioral expectations of students based on particular aspects of their identities (race, gender, social class, nationality, language, sexual orientation, abiilty, etc.)
- Assess and reflect on one's racial literacy skills, "the ability to read, discuss, and write about situations that involve race or racism" (Sealey-Ruiz, 2013), and seek opportunities to practice and develop racial literacy with peers and students.

Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Guidelines

All stakeholders (students, teachers, school leaders, district leaders, families and community members, higher education faculty and administrators, and Education Department Policymakers) can consider implementing the following CR-S guidelines as a means to achieve a more culturally responsive-sustaining education system.

The following section is organized by stakeholder group. Each stakeholder group is provided with guidelines that serve as recommendations according to the four principles of culturally responsive-sustaining education.

We recognize that much of this work is already happening across the state. The following guidelines are intended to offer a bank of strategies, with other perspectives for your community to consider. This is in no way meant to be an exhaustive list. Collaborate with stakeholders to prioritize and plan for the local needs of your community.

New York State **STUDENTS** can contribute to a Culturally Responsive-Sustaining educational environment by:

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

- Maintain knowledge and awareness that everyone reacts to situations differently based on their own experiences, cultural backgrounds, and perspectives.
- Practice empathy during all interactions. Think about others' feelings, taking into account their experiences and imagining what it feels like to be in another person's shoes.
- Respectfully, and with care, engage in difficult conversations, particularly those that challenge power and privilege in our society.
- Choose kind words over put-down language. Strive to accept others rather than impose negative judgment, in order to create a safe and supportive learning environment that allows for other students to think critically, share honestly, and take academic risks.
- Support and accept classmates. Hold peers accountable to following the mutually-agreed upon norms and assume the responsibility of creating an educational environment in which others feel affirmed and valued.
- Express respectful agreement or disagreement with opinions, validating the knowledge of peers, or challenging their viewpoints in constructive ways.
- Acknowledge and try to incorporate the ideas of peers respectfully, recognizing that other students may have vastly different perspectives, experiences, strengths, needs, and opinions.
- Lean into discomfort, taking emotional and academic risks by engaging in critical conversations.
- Support classmates when in need and work to help mediate through discussion and restorative practices.
- Collaborate with teachers and trusted adults to repair harm when harm is caused.
- Take risks and view mistakes as opportunities to grow academically and emotionally.
- Create collective norms about how to take care of the physical space and materials in the classroom and school community.

Express respectful agreement or disagreement with opinions, validating the knowledge of peers, or challenging their viewpoints in constructive ways.

- Create opportunities for others to join the conversation by asking questions, listening to and acknowledging the opinions of others, and being open-minded to peers.
- Make an effort to build strong relationships across groups, talking to and getting to know a variety of peers and their perspectives.
- Consider the physical environment of the classroom to determine what cultures, languages, and identities are reflected, represented and valued. Collaboratively advocate for the representation of the cultural backgrounds of all students across New York State, ensuring that diverse backgrounds are reflected and valued in the school community throughout the year, not only on designated holidays.
- Advocate for diversity of art, food, and activities in the building that represent the vast diversity of the state and that incorporate relevant cultural and historical context.
- Work with teachers to create an environment that establishes mutually agreed-upon norms. Act out of a sense of personal responsibility to follow these norms, and not from a fear of punishment or desire for a reward.
- Build respect and mutual understanding across the school community, including with teachers, administrators, counselors, school aides, custodial staff, lunch and recess staff, etc.
- Take ownership of the physical space and learning environment in the school community, welcoming others, taking on leadership roles as school ambassadors, and creating and engaging in activities that improve the school climate and culture for students of diverse backgrounds.
- Participate in the creation of, and review of, school codes of conduct. Be a collaborating member of these existing committees.
- Address implicit bias in the school and community environment.
- Take risks and learn from your mistakes, in order to grow academically and emotionally.
- Identify inequity and challenge it when you see it.

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Challenge oneself to do more than what feels academically comfortable. Set high goals and continuously revise them to push yourself out of your academic comfort zone.
- Collaborate with teachers to develop tools for persevering in difficult social and academic situations, i.e. growth mindset tools that help students view challenges and failures as opportunities to grow, and view their brain as a muscle that continues to get stronger over time when they take on new challenges and try new things.
- Draw upon your past learning, prior experiences, and the richness of your cultural background to make meaning of new concepts and apply learning on an ongoing basis.
- Strive and take pride in producing high quality work, using feedback to revise work, continuously improve, and set new goals.
- Voice and express the need for challenging work and extension activities after achieving a goal.
- Promote the group's success and support the participation of everyone in the learning task.
- Take responsibility for one's role in group activities, balancing group and individual accountability.
- Work cooperatively toward goals and hold each other accountable in supportive ways.
- Develop or sustain the mindset that having high expectations means caring about more than just a grade, but also personal growth and character development.
- Participate, when possible, in student leadership opportunities, such as student-led workshops, peer-led discussion, and student-run school-wide initiatives.
- Advocate for varied ways of learning (i.e. project-based learning, presentations, station work, small group work) that accommodate the diverse learning styles and interests of those in the class community.
- Continuously learn about implicit bias, with attention to identifying and addressing implicit bias in the school community.
- Advocate for the physical access of all differently-abled members of the school community.

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

- Identify, discuss and dismantle implicit bias in curriculum and assessment.
- Advocate for the opportunity for all students to actively give input and share their opinions on the curriculum (book selection, course offerings, elective offerings).
- Identify gaps where the current curriculum does not address multiple perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds. Advocate for fair representation of these absent perspectives.
- Challenge power and privilege where present, or absent, in the curriculum by locating other resources or requesting curriculum that is inclusive of multiple perspectives.
- Generate ideas about people or concepts that peers may like to learn about and share these ideas with your teachers and school leaders.
- Ask questions about self, community, and society that may serve as opportunities to connect in-school learning with the world outside the classroom. Share these questions and any related ideas with your teachers and school leaders.
- Collaborate with teachers to connect events deemed relevant by your community to the classroom.
- Actively engage in service learning opportunities, when available, to expand learning beyond the classroom. Encourage peers to collaborate with you in these learning opportunities.
- Collaborate with teachers, peers, and administrators to create opportunities for meaningful long-term projects, project-based learning activities, and field visits that allow all students to demonstrate their knowledge and growth over time, and align to the varied learning styles and interests of those in the class community.
- Collaborate with teachers, peers, and administrators to create multiple ways of assessing in-classroom learning that allow all students to demonstrate their knowledge and growth over time, and align to the varied learning styles and interests of those in the class community.
- Look critically at the course offerings, extracurricular activities, and student-led organizations. Challenge the current system to make changes that ensure equitable access and participation, especially if the environment offers limited options in which the same students participate and hold leadership opportunities.

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Set goals toward future aspirations and collaborate with teachers and families to make plans about achieving them. Work daily toward accomplishing these goals.
- Apply for out-of-school programs and learning opportunities, when possible.
- Seek help and guidance, when needed, from broader support networks such as peers, family, and trusted adults.
- Take ownership and accountability after making mistakes, using your mistake as an opportunity to learn and further academic and emotional growth.
- Continuously learn about implicit bias, with attention to identifying and challenging your own biases, and identifying and addressing implicit bias in the school community.
- Challenge yourself to learn about people, cultures, languages, orientations, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds different than your own.

Develop or sustain the mindset that having high expectations means caring about more than just a grade, but also personal growth and character development.

New York State **TEACHERS** can cultivate a Culturally Responsive-Sustaining education for students by:

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

- 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.
- 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.
- Provide multiple opportunities for parents to communicate in their language and method of preference, such as digital and in-person formats, class visits, phone conversations, text message, email, collaborative projects, and impromptu conferences.
- Work with families early and often to gather insight into students' cultures, goals, and learning preferences.
- Enact classroom management strategies that avoid assigning blame or guilt to students based on perceptions about their cultures, differences, or home lives.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Use restorative justice circles and structures to welcome students back into learning when harm has occurred.
- Participate in the review of school and district policies (codes of conduct, curriculum reviews, community engagement, etc.).
- Attend or volunteer at community events, when possible, to develop relationships with families and the community outside of the classroom setting.
- 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.
- Identify and address implicit bias in the school and community environment.
- 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.

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Have high expectations and deliver rigorous instruction for all students regardless of identity markers, including race, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability, and economic background.
- 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.
- 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.
- Provide parents with information about what their child is expected to learn, know, and do at his/her grade level and ways to reinforce concepts at home (e.g., using the home language; reading with, or monitoring, independent reading).
- Promote alternative achievement metrics that also support academics (e.g., demonstrating growth, leadership, character development, Social Emotional Learning competencies, or school values).
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Be responsive to students' experiences by providing them with a space to process current events.

Have high expectations and deliver rigorous instruction for all students regardless of identity markers, including race, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability, and economic background.

- 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.
- Provide students with opportunities to present to their peers through project-based or stations-based learning to leverage student experience and expertise.
- Co-create explicit classroom expectations that meet the needs of all students.

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

- 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.

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.

- 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.
- Pair traditional curricular content with digital and other media platforms that provide current and relevant context from youth culture.
- Provide homework, projects, and other classroom materials in multiple languages.
- Provide regular opportunities for social emotional learning strategies within lessons and as discrete learning activities.
- 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.
- Engage students in youth participatory action research that empowers youth to be agents of positive change in their community.
- 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.
- Take field trips to community-learning sites, such as museums, parks, cultural centers, neighborhood recreational centers, and community centers, to foster students' cultural understanding and connection to the surrounding community.
- 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.).
- Support students in creating and running student-led initiatives.

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Continuously learn about implicit bias, with attention to identifying and challenging your own biases, and identifying and addressing implicit bias in the school community.
- Use professional learning activities as opportunities to better acquaint oneself with the diverse communities in which their students live.
- Set professional goals related to CR-S practices.
- Engage in inquiry groups and professional learning communities with peers and mentors.
- Analyze discipline data to determine any trends across sub-groups or bias toward students.

New York State **SCHOOL LEADERS** can cultivate Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education for students by:

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

- Conduct periodic review of school policies (i.e. dress code, discipline code, conduct code), by collaborating with parents, teachers, community members and incorporating research-based best practices such as restorative justice, positive behavior interventions and supports.
- Assess school climate using a variety of measures (i.e. surveys, interviews, focus groups, informal gatherings) to collect diverse stakeholder impressions and experiences, using questions that consider issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Disaggregate data (i.e. discipline, attendance, enrollment in advanced coursework, special education, and gifted and talented programs) by sub-group, evaluate trends, and create a strategic plan to address disproportionality.
- Provide space for teachers and staff to process and determine how to engage with students and families after social and political events that impact the wider community.
- Support formal and informal structures for families to receive information about grade-level standards and expectations, developmentally appropriate social emotional tools, and strategies to support academic and social growth at home.

- Provide interpretation services at family meetings (i.e. parent organization meetings, community events, during the enrollment process, during the provision of special education services, etc.), to ensure family engagement includes meaningful two-way communication and offers families the opportunity to share (not just receive) in their home language.

- Develop multiple means of ongoing family engagement (i.e. apps and online systems of communication, parent leadership opportunities, parent family liaison positions, opportunities for families to serve as active co-creators of policies and programs, parent organizing bodies, and holding meetings at varied hours, possibly providing transportation and childcare, outreach at community meetings).
- Create advisory groups consisting of various education stakeholders (families, teachers, students, community members) to work collaboratively to set school norms, establish school goals, and build alignment between the families' expectations and values, and the school's expectations and values.
- Work with cultural and community centers to identify needs and provide services to families by offering classes such as parenting, financial literacy, computer literacy, or English language at the school.
- Highlight works of art designed by students and members of the broader community that incorporate relevant cultural and historical context.
- Create a visibly multilingual and multicultural environment by posting signs, banners, and other materials throughout the school that acknowledge and celebrate the identities of students.
- Post high-quality work in the physical environment that is not limited to the display of correct answers, but also demonstrates students' critical thinking, conceptual understanding, reasoning, and application of content to meaningful real-world situations. Work to ensure high-quality work is equitably represented from students across sub-groups.
- Create "listening conferences" or "peacemaking circles" led by a trained facilitator through which all stakeholders can discuss cultural and social values and resolve conflict.
- Develop peer mediation programs where trained student mediators assist their peers in settling disputes.
- Incorporate time in the school day when formal restorative practices can occur.
- Provide the time and resources for students to create cultural clubs to learn more about their culture as well as other students' cultures.

Incorporate parent and community voices into the hiring process.

- Develop interview questions when hiring new staff that provide opportunities for candidates to identify ways they share (or don't share) experiences with the local student populations and to explain the implications of those experiences for their professional practices.
- Incorporate parent and community voices into the hiring process.

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Have high expectations and ensure rigorous instruction for all students regardless of identity markers, including race, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability, and economic background.
- Reflect on your own implicit bias, how that bias might impact your expectations for student achievement or the decisions you make in the school, and the steps you can take to address your biases and their impact on students.
- Develop in-school inquiry-based teams to address instructional rigor, cultural responsiveness, achievement disparities, and student engagement.
- Embed cognitive and instructional strategies into teacher coaching that enables students to strengthen learning capacity.
- Embed cognitive and instructional strategies into the teacher coaching model that pushes teachers to put the cognitive lift on students. Coach teachers to deliver high-quality instruction that enables students to grow as independent learners, think critically, make meaning of new concepts in multiple ways, and apply learning to meaningful, real-world situations.
- Promote alternative achievement metrics that also supports academics (e.g., demonstrating school values, strong attendance, leadership, growth).

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

Conduct periodic review of school policies (i.e. dress code, discipline code, conduct code), by collaborating with parents, teachers, community members and incorporating research-based best practices such as restorative justice, positive behavior interventions and supports.

- Support staff in embedding grade-level, standards-aligned resources that emphasize cultural pluralism; social justice; and current events into curriculum across content areas.
- Partner with teachers to audit curriculum, materials, and school or classroom libraries to assess: whether they properly represent, value, and develop students' cultures; presence of implicit bias; or omission of cultural (race, class, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, ability) perspectives.
- Support the design and implementation of multiple forms of assessment that consider personalized student needs (i.e. learning style, learning preferences, language proficiency).
- Invest in curricular resources that reflect diverse cultures and voices of marginalized people.
- Invest in community leaders and family members as contributors to instruction by actively seeking and welcoming their history and knowledge.
- Incorporate social emotional learning (SEL) materials, resources, and strategies into the school day and broader learning environment that consider and plan for topics of equity and inclusion.
- Expose students to the world beyond the home community while affirming their own identities (i.e. community mentor programs, guest speakers, field trips, cross-district partnerships).

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Support teachers in building capacity to leverage community context in curriculum.
- Create learning communities (i.e., professional learning communities, book study, discussion groups, online webinars, digital subscriptions) for teachers and students to engage in topics that directly address educator and student identities and understand and unpack privilege.
- Provide opportunities for teachers and leaders to receive trainings on topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, such as: critical self-reflection, disproportionality, anti-bias, developing racial literacy, combating racism and microaggressions, etc.
- Use data and research to identify teachers with strong culturally responsive-sustaining practices and racial literacy skills and allow time for them to share their practices (i.e. peer observations, professional learning, etc.)
- Support teachers in conducting cross-curricular culturally responsive-sustaining planning sessions by providing forums for collaborative planning, drafting, mapping, and aligning.

New York State **DISTRICT LEADERS** can cultivate Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education for students by:

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

- Create a policy statement about your commitment to culturally responsive-sustaining education, and include staff (teachers, school safety officers, counselors, lunch and recess staff) in its creation, development, and ongoing training.
- Conduct periodic review of school policies (i.e. dress code, discipline code, conduct code), by collaborating with parents, teachers, community members and incorporating research-based best practices such as restorative justice, positive behavior interventions and supports.
- Encourage and incentivize school leaders to hold spaces (i.e. community forums, social events) that foster collaboration among teachers, families, and community members that provide insight into the assets that exist among the school community.
- Provide resources to schools (i.e. shared language, online resources, questions for discussion, etc.) for incorporating and responding to current events and events that impact the community.
- Formalize structures for school and district-wide parent collaboration, such as parent-teacher associations/ organizations (PTA/PTO) or academic parent-teacher teams (APTT).
- Assess school climate using a variety of measures (i.e. surveys, interviews, focus groups, informal gatherings) to collect diverse stakeholder impressions and experiences, using questions that consider issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Disaggregate data (i.e. discipline, attendance, enrollment in advanced coursework, special education, and gifted and talented programs) by sub-group, evaluate trends, and create a strategic plan to address disproportionality.
- Make accessible and readable information readily available to families in a variety of modes, including translations and accommodations for those with disabilities.
- Provide interpretation services at family meetings (i.e. parent organization meetings, community events, during the enrollment process, during the provision of special education services, etc.), to ensure family engagement includes meaningful two-way communication and offers families the opportunity to share (not just receive) in their home language.
- Gather family and community feedback on district-wide policies before implementation and provide transparent updates during and after implementation.
- Develop multiple means of ongoing family engagement (i.e. apps and online systems of communication, holding meetings at varied hours, possibly providing transportation and childcare, outreach at community meetings or other places the community gathers).
- Stay current on wider social and political issues that affect communities served by the district (i.e. hold regular meetings with community-based organizations and advocacy groups, create a community liaison role to gather information from the field).
- Work to improve the recruitment and retention of a diverse teacher workforce (i.e. teachers who identify as people of color, LGBTQIA+, differently-abled) by strengthening pipelines for teacher education and cultivating relationships with local and national partners (i.e. historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic association of colleges and universities, alliance organizations).
- Identify, cultivate, and support students who are interested in joining the district in the future as a classroom teacher or school professional (school counselor, occupational and speech pathologist, etc.) by partnering with higher education and other professional organizations that could provide scholarships, internships, externships, and mentorship opportunities, as a means to strengthen teacher education pipelines.
- Work with cultural and community centers and organizations to identify needs and provide services to families by offering classes such as parenting, financial literacy, computer literacy, or English language at the school.

Create a policy statement about your commitment to culturally responsive-sustaining education, and include staff (teachers, school safety officers, counselors, lunch and recess staff) in its creation, development, and ongoing training

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Strategize instructional methods to disrupt any disparities in student success outcomes that exist across lines of difference, highlighting and sharing best practices from the field.
- Incorporate adaptive learning methods that encourage differentiation, exploration and curiosity as opposed to scripted, one-size-fits-all instructional programs.
- Partner with experts in the field (i.e. professional learning organizations, higher education, consultants) to identify research-based, instructional strategies that are most effective in advancing student academic success.
- Use tools to identify and recognize instructional methods that high-performing, culturally responsive-sustaining teachers are using across content areas.
- Facilitate structures for teacher collaboration across school and district teams, i.e. peer observations, school visits, purposeful partnerships, mentor teachers.

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

- Adopt curriculum that includes culturally authentic learning experiences that mirror students' ways of learning, understanding, communicating, and demonstrating curiosity and knowledge.
- Adopt curriculum that highlights contributions and includes texts reflective of the diverse identities of students and reframes the monocultural framework that privileges the historically advantaged at the expense of other groups.
- Invest in research to determine assessments geared toward academic achievement for underrepresented and underserved students of diverse identities.
- Formally disseminate existing research on best practices from the field regarding culturally responsive-sustaining curriculum, instruction, and assessment to stakeholders in the district.
- Partner with higher education institutions on curriculum development, coaching, and consultation around issues of diversity, equity and inclusion (e.g., immigration, integration, diversification of curriculum).
- Create courses district-wide about the diversity of cultures representative of the state of New York (e.g., Native Americans, African Americans, Latinx Studies, Asian American Studies, Gender Studies) in a way that is comprehensive (e.g., across grade levels and not relegated to one specific month) and empowering (e.g., African American history does not begin with slavery, but with African history).

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Train and build the capacity of instructional leaders to support teachers in delivering instruction that is rigorous, student-centered, and promotes students as agents of positive social change.
- Disseminate existing, or develop new, self-assessment tools and resources for educators to assess and reflect on their implicit biases.
- Ensure schools have evidence-based trainings and planning time supportive of CR-S, including space for collaborative curriculum drafting, mapping, and aligning (Carter & Welner, 2013).
- Provide Professional Learning Communities and other professional learning structures to address bias, develop racial literacy skills, etc.
- Use data and research to identify teachers with strong CR-S practices and racial literacy skills and allow time/space for them to share their practices with other district teachers.

New York State FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS can cultivate a Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education for students by:

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

Set goals with your children toward their future aspirations and collaborate with teachers to make plans about achieving them.

- Communicate with your child's teachers using your preferred language and means of communication (e.g., in-person, phone, email, texts, notes) from the variety of methods of participation offered (in-class, in-school, at-home, community-based). When a variety of communication methods is not offered, advocate for increased means of communication.
- Advocate for the right to receive communications in the language and format desired.
- Advocate to ensure that school culture and environment is safe and responsive to children's needs.
- Partner with teachers and school leaders to inform them of, and assist with, school community needs.

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Be aware of, and collaboratively advocate for, children having access to a wide range of educational coursework and programming.
- Share knowledge about your child's interests, learning style, learning preferences, and prior educational experiences with trusted teachers and leaders in the school community.
- Share traditions and cultural assets with teachers to support the integration of these values within curriculum.
- Support students in engaging with their local community (i.e. youth participatory action research [Y-PAR] and other community-based inquiry) that encourages student engagement with their local contexts.
- Be open to opportunities for service learning, outreach, field trips, and other educational opportunities in the school community, toward the end of helping students develop a sense of identity and belonging and provide a support system in the school community.
- Ask teacher and school leaders what is being taught in each class, and periodically inquire about children's progress toward achieving learning goals.
- Support students in achieving progress toward learning goals, to the extent possible. Seek help and guidance from trusted teachers, leaders, and families in the school community, when needed.

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

- Generate ideas about concepts that your children and their peers may like to learn about.
- Ask questions of your children about self, community, and society that may serve as opportunities to connect in-school learning with the world outside the classroom.
- Collaborate with teachers to connect events deemed relevant by the community to the classroom.
- Actively engage your children in service learning opportunities, when available, to expand learning beyond the classroom.

Share knowledge about your child's interests, learning style, learning preferences, and prior educational experiences with trusted teachers and leaders in the school community.

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Participate in decision-making around programs, policies, and learning activities that impact the school community.
- Work with parent organizations to ensure that parents are represented in the school across various identities including race, family orientation, social class, profession, religious backgrounds.
- Offer time and talents to school events and trainings, to the extent possible.
- Leverage the knowledge of other parents to create strong parental in-school community.
- Set goals with your children toward their future aspirations and collaborate with teachers to make plans about achieving them.
- Support your children in applying for out-of-school programs and learning opportunities, when possible.

New York State HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS can cultivate a Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education for students by:

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

- Create a policy statement about your institution's commitment to culturally responsive-sustaining education that includes a definition, shared language, and short and term-long goals. Include administrators, faculty, staff, and students in its creation and ongoing implementation.
- Identify school codes of conduct and discipline policies that disproportionately impact persons of color, students who are English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners, students with disabilities, students of different religions, gender identities, sexual identities, nationalities, socioeconomic backgrounds, housing status, migrant/refugee status, and other diverse identities.
- Collaborate with teacher and leader candidates to address inequitable policies, and expand the development of tools to do so.
- Work to expand the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body and staff with identities and experiences that reflect the varied experiences of the student population. (i.e. educators and staff who identify as people of color, LGBTQIA+, differently-abled; educators and staff with experience in both rural and urban populations).

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Have high expectations and deliver rigorous instruction for all teacher and leader candidates regardless of identity markers, including race, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability, and economic background.
- Reflect on your own implicit bias, and how that bias might impact your expectations for teacher and leader candidate achievement, and the decisions you make as a faculty member or administrator.
- Create a course, or embed into existing courses, the opportunity for teacher and leader candidates to identify and address their own implicit bias.
- Train and build the capacity of teacher and leader candidates to deliver instruction that meets the needs of a diverse population; values multiple components of student identity (race, economic background, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, and ability); counters deficit-based policies; and promotes students as agents of positive social change.
- Review and update faculty pedagogical practices for culturally responsive-sustaining teaching across disciplines and support faculty in implementing said instruction.
- Invest in research to determine the educational policies and reforms geared toward academic achievement for underrepresented and underserviced students of diverse identities and support faculty in implementing these practices in their teacher and leader preparation courses.
- Formally disseminate existing research on best practices from the field regarding culturally responsive-sustaining instruction to stakeholders in the district.

Invest in research to determine the educational policies and reforms geared toward academic achievement for underrepresented and underserviced students of diverse identities and support faculty in implementing these practices in their teacher and leader preparation courses.

- Document and share examples from the field of culturally responsive-sustaining instruction and school leadership beyond the academic community to reach all education stakeholders.
- Place teaching candidates in student teaching placements across a range of diverse settings (urban, rural, suburban, small, large, traditional, nontraditional), supporting teachers to work along lines of difference with students of diverse backgrounds (race, language, economic background, ability).

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

- Integrate CR-S education into teacher and education leadership preparation programs as both a standalone class and an infused aspect of all teacher preparation classes.
- Prioritize social emotional learning approaches that are culturally responsive-sustaining as essential to quality teaching and learning throughout New York State.
- Partner with districts on curriculum development, coaching, and assessment consultation with regard to issues of diversity, disproportionality, equity, and inclusion.
- Partner with teachers, school leaders, and district leaders to create materials to help in CR-S strategic planning and implementation at the classroom, school, and district level.
- Conduct curriculum audits within teacher and education leadership preparation programs to identify the levels of bias existing in current resource selection and staff capacity. Work with teacher and education leadership to use this data to better inform or advocate for different curricular choices.
- Invest in research to identify culturally responsive-sustaining methods of assessment that consider personalized student needs (i.e. learning style, learning preferences, language proficiency, interests) and allow all students to demonstrate their knowledge and growth over time.
- Formally disseminate existing research on best practices from the field regarding culturally responsive-sustaining curriculum and assessment to stakeholders in the district.
- Support school districts in creating courses about the diversity of cultures representative of the state of New York, (e.g., Native Americans, African Americans, Latinx Studies, Asian American, Gender Studies) in a way that is comprehensive (e.g., across grade levels and not relegated to one specific month) and empowering (e.g., African American history does not begin with slavery, but with African history).

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Prioritize teacher and leader professional learning opportunities that align with New York State Professional Learning Standards and build educators' capacities to deliver CR-S instruction. Work with school leaders and districts to engage teachers and school support staff in these opportunities both as in-school, job-embedded professional development and as out-of-school, college/university-based professional learning. Opportunities might be remote, in-person, short-term, or long-term.
- Create pipelines between the district and college/universities by identifying, cultivating, and supporting high school students of diverse backgrounds from the district who are interested in returning to the district as classroom teachers or school professional personnel (school counselors, occupational and speech pathologists, etc.).
- Disseminate existing, or develop new, self-assessment tools and resources for educators to assess and reflect on their implicit biases.

Create pipelines between the district and college/universities by identifying, cultivating, and supporting high school students of diverse backgrounds from the district who are interested in returning to the district as classroom teachers or school professional personnel (school counselors, occupational and speech pathologists, etc.).

New York State EDUCATION DEPARTMENT POLICYMAKERS can cultivate Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education for students by:

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

EDUCATION BUILDING

Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

- Strive to be sustaining by centering the identities of all students in our educational policies, encouraging cultural pluralism rather than creating policies that ask students to minimize their identities in order to be successful.
- Strive to be responsive to the needs of students, teachers, school and district leaders, parents, and families.
- Work to expand the recruitment and retention of a diverse staff with identities and experiences that reflect the varied experiences of the student population in New York State (i.e. staff who identify as people of color, LGBTQIA+, differently-abled; staff with experience in both rural and urban populations).
- Make accessible and readable information readily available, in multiple languages, to parents and families.
- Develop guidance on ways schools can respond to local and global events, as well as prominent community concerns.
- Provide resources families need to be engaged advocates for their children's sense of belonging in school, with particular regard to the opportunities and challenges associated with having marginalized identity markers (i.e. race, sexuality, gender identity, ability, language, etc.)
- Recognize the effect of school environment on student achievement and continue to expand the development of tools that assess, address, and support the improvement of school climate.
- Engage families and communities in a respectful way, as outlined in the first commitment of New York State's My Brother's Keeper (MBK) initiative.

Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Create different pathways for educational success and life readiness, including college, career, technical education, and vocational pathways, etc.
- Create high-quality resources that allow teachers, school leaders, and district leaders to plan and implement culturally responsive-sustaining practices in their respective communities.
- Align existing resources to the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) frameworks.
- Align existing state standards to CR-S guidelines.
- Adhere to the six commitments set by the New York State My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Initiative that incorporate strategies to help boys and young men of color—and all students—realize their full potential.

Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

- Identify and share resources in every content area that allow teachers, school leaders, and district leaders to embed equitable representations of diverse cultures, celebrate the voices of underrepresented identities, and accurately represent historical events into curriculum.
- Promote the design of multiple forms of assessment that consider personalized student needs (i.e. learning style, learning preferences, language proficiency).
- Promote and utilize asset-based research on the academic achievement of underrepresented and underserved students to determine educational policies and reforms related to standards, curriculum, and assessment.
- Use differentiated approaches to instruction based on need and culture, as outlined in the third commitment of New York State's MBK initiative.

Strive to be sustaining by centering the identities of all students in our educational policies, encouraging cultural pluralism rather than creating policies that ask students to minimize their identities in order to be successful.

Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Build internal staff capacity to engage in continuous professional learning and growth around culturally responsive-sustaining practices that will be reflected in policies.
- Provide supports, opportunities, and resources that build stakeholders' capacity to implement CR-S practices.
- Continuously engage staff members in professional learning about implicit bias, with particular attention to allowing staff members to identify and challenge their own biases, and training them on identifying and addressing implicit bias in the workplace.
- Provide educators with opportunities for professional learning in the areas of equity, anti-bias, multicultural, and culturally responsive-sustaining pedagogies.
- Identify and share research practices proven effective and highlight examples of best practices from the field.

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ASSET-BASED PERSPECTIVE is a transformational perspective that recognizes and values the rich cultural practices embedded in all communities. Asset-based teaching is a strengths-based approach that leverages students' knowledge, experiences, skills, values, and perspectives as assets for learning. Asset-based educators see cultural differences as assets, create caring learning communities in which social, cultural, and linguistic diversities are valued, use the cultural knowledges of diverse cultures, families, and communities to guide curriculum development, classroom climates, instructional strategies, and relationships with students, and challenge racial, linguistic, and cultural stereotypes, prejudices, racism, and other forms of intolerance, injustice, and oppression.

DEFICIT-BASED PERSPECTIVE implies that students are flawed or deficient and that the role of the school is to fix the student. Deficit-based teaching seeks to teach to students' weaknesses instead of teaching to their strengths. It views students as needed to be fixed or remediated, and often attributes their school failures to perceived deficits that lie within the student, their family, community or culture.

DIVERSITY is a reality created by individuals and groups from a broad spectrum of demographic and philosophical differences. These differences can exist along dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, language heritage, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of difference contained within everyone. Finally, we acknowledge that categories of difference are not always fixed but can be fluid, and we respect individual rights to self-identification, as no one culture is intrinsically superior to another.

EQUITY is the state, quality, or ideal of being just, impartial, and fair. The concept of equity is synonymous with fairness and justice. To be achieved and sustained, equity needs to be thought of as a structural and systemic concept, and not as idealistic. Equity is a robust system and dynamic process that reinforces and replicates equitable ideas, power, resources, strategies, conditions, habits, and outcomes.

SYSTEMATIC EQUITY is a complex combination of interrelated elements designed to create, support and sustain social justice.

GENDER implies a non-binary association of characteristics within the broad spectrum between masculinities and femininities. In New York State, gender is identified by the student. In the case of very young transgender students not yet able to advocate for themselves, gender may be identified by the parent or guardian.

INCLUSIVE more than simply diversity and numerical representation, being inclusive involves authentic and empowered participation and a true sense of belonging. In an inclusive school, the social and instructional space is designed such that all students have access to the curriculum and there are many opportunities for students to be successful.

INTERNALIZED RACISM describes the private racial beliefs held by and within individuals. The way we absorb social messages about race and adopt them as personal beliefs, biases, and prejudices are all within the realm of internalized racism. For people of color, internalized oppression can involve believing in negative messages about oneself or one's racial group. For Whites, internalized privilege can involve feeling a sense of superiority and entitlement or holding negative beliefs about people of color.

INTERPERSONAL RACISM is how our private beliefs about race become public when we interact with others. When we act upon our prejudices or unconscious bias — whether intentionally, visibly, verbally — we engage in interpersonal racism. Interpersonal racism also can be willful and overt, taking the form of bigotry, hate speech or racial violence.

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM is racial inequity baked into our institutions, connoting a system of power that produces racial disparities in domains such as law, health, employment, education, and so on. It can take the form of unfair policies and practices, discriminatory treatment and inequitable opportunities and outcomes. A school system that concentrates people of color in the most overcrowded and under-resourced schools with the least qualified teachers, compared to the educational opportunities of more advantaged students, is an example of institutional racism.

MICROAGGRESSIONS are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership. In many cases, these hidden messages may invalidate the group identity or experiential reality of targeted persons, demean them on a personal or group level, communicate the perception that they are lesser human beings, suggest they do not belong with the majority group, threaten and intimidate, or relegate them to inferior status and treatment.

MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS (MLs) are students who, by reason of foreign birth or ancestry, speak or understand languages other than English, speak or

understand little or no English, require support in order to become proficient in English, and are identified pursuant to Section 154.3 of New York State's Commissioner's Regulations.

PLURALISM is a socially constructed system in which members of an identity group maintain participation in this group even as they belong to a larger cultural group. Educational pluralism is when students can leverage aspects of their cultural background as assets for learning and sustain those assets throughout their schooling. They are not required to minimize their unique cultural strengths in order to experience social and academic success or acceptance because no one culture is not valued as standard or dominant.

RACE is a socially constructed system of categorizing humans largely based on observable physical features (phenotypes) such as skin color and ancestry. There is no scientific basis for or discernible distinction between racial categories. The ideology of race has become embedded in our identities, institutions, and culture and is used as a basis for discrimination and domination.

RACIAL JUSTICE is the systematic fair treatment of people of all races that results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. All people are able to achieve their full potential in life, regardless of race, ethnicity or the community in which they live. Racial justice — or racial equity —goes beyond "anti-racism." It's not just about what we are against, but also what we are for. A CR-S education framework should move us from a reactive posture to a more powerful, proactive and even preventative approach.

The concept of **RACISM** is widely thought of as simply personal prejudice, but, in fact, it is a complex system of racial hierarchies and inequities. At the micro level of racism, or individual level, are internalized and interpersonal systems of engrained bias. At the macro level of racism, we focus beyond individuals to the broader dynamics, including symbolic, ideological, institutional, and structural systems of racial hierarchies and inequities.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS is the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation. Examinations of socioeconomic status often reveal inequities in access to resources, as well as issues related to privilege, power, and control. In New York State, a student's socioeconomic status is determined by family participation in economic assistance programs, such as the Free or Reduced Price Lunch Programs; Social Security Insurance (SSI); Food Stamps; Foster Care; Refugee Assistance (cash or medical assistance); Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP); Safety Net Assistance (SNA); Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA); or Family Assistance: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). If one student in a family is identified as low income, all students from that household or economic unit may be identified as low income.

SOCIOCULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS involves the active sensitivity to what all students need to be successful academically, psychologically, emotionally, and socially. Such responsiveness recognizes that all students are different and must be uniquely responded to, challenged and stimulated, and strategies must be adapted to meet the needs of individual and groups of students.

SOCIO-POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS involves an awareness to both the social and political factors at play in the workings of complex societal systems. This consciousness is necessary for navigating complex systems based on a unity of thought and performance, reflective practice and deliberative action, skills that are meaningful and necessary for participation in expanding global economies and democracies.

STRUCTURAL RACISM (or structural racialization) is the operation of racial bias across institutions and society. It describes the cumulative and compounding effects of an array of factors that systematically privilege one group over another. Since the word "racism" often is understood as a conscious belief, "racialization" may be a better way to describe a process that does not require intentionality. Race equity expert John A. Powell writes: "'Racialization' connotes a process rather than a static event. It underscores the fluid and dynamic nature of race... 'Structural racialization' is a set of processes that may generate disparities or depress life outcomes without any racist actors."

SYSTEMATIC EQUITY is a complex combination of interrelated elements consciously designed to create, support, and sustain social justice. It is a robust system and dynamic process that reinforces and replicates equitable ideas, power, resources, strategies, conditions, habits, and outcomes.

SYSTEMIC RACIALIZATION describes a dynamic system that produces and replicates racial ideologies, identities, and inequities. Systemic racialization is the deeply-institutionalized pattern of discrimination that cuts across major political, economic and social organizations in a society. Public attention to racism is generally focused on the symptoms (such as a racist slur by an individual) rather than the system of racial inequality. Like two sides of the same coin, racial privilege describes race-based advantages and preferential treatment based on skin color, while racial oppression refers to race-based disadvantages, discrimination and exploitation based on skin color.

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Gretchen Rymarchyk
Deputy Executive Director at Rural Schools Association of New York

Kim Sykes
Director of Education Policy at New York Immigration Coalition

Jamaica Miles
Lead Organizer/Parent: Schenectady

Jasmine Gripper
Legislative Director at Alliance for Quality Education

Susan Lafond
Assistant in Educational Services at New York State United Teachers

Roberta Clements
School Psychologist at Beacon City School District

Lauren R. French
Superintendent at Gouverneur Central School District

Vanessa Leung
Co-Executive Director Coalition for Asian American Children and Families

Diana Noriega
Chief Program Officer at the Committee for Hispanic Children and Families

Alexsandra Lopez
Bilingual Special Education Specialist at Erie 1 BOCES

Elaine Gross
President of ERASE Racism

Jessica Karnes
Coordinator of Staff Development at Erie 1 BOCES

Sheena Jacob
K-12 Social Studies Coordinator at Glen Cove City School District

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Educator at NYC DOE

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New Principal Coach at NYC DOE

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Director of Instructional Support Services at Sullivan County BOCES

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Social Studies Curriculum and Staff Development Specialist at Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES

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Teacher at NYC DOE

Laurie Rabinowitz
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Superintendent at Monticello School District

George Jenkim
Teacher at Schenectady City School District

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Retired Teacher at Berlin Central School District

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Assistant Director of Pupil and Personnel Services at Onteora Central School District

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Director at RBERN

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Executive Director at Parent Network of Western New York

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The **CR-S** framework helps educators create student-centered learning environments that: affirm racial, linguistic and cultural identities; prepare students for rigor and independent learning, develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; and empower students as agents of social change.