



**Improving educational equity through cultural responsiveness in schools and educator preparation programs: A virtual workshop series**

**Webinar #4: Developing culturally responsive educators in pre-service programs**

*October 30, 2019*

*3:30–4:30 p.m. Eastern*

Workshop transcript

*Webinar producer:* Hello everyone and thank you for attending today's webinar. Before we begin, we'd like to go over a few housekeeping items.

At the bottom of your console are multiple application widgets you can use. To explain each widget, please click on the maximum icon at the top right of the widget, or you can drag the bottom right corner of the widget panel. Additional resources are available in the resource list widget indicated by the green file at the bottom of your screen. If you have any questions during the webcast, click on the purple question and answer (Q&A) widget at the bottom and submit your questions.

We will have a question and answer session at the end of the webinar, but you can submit any questions throughout the webinar, you don't have to wait until the very end.

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Finally, an on-demand version of this webcast will be available one day after the webcast using the same audience link used to join today's event. At the end of the event, please fill out the survey and when you're done, press submit.

Now, I'd like to introduce Amy Johnson. Amy, you have the floor.

*Amy Johnson:*

Thanks, Brian, and thank you all for joining us for today's webinar titled Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Educator Preparation Programs.

Today's webinar is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education's Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory, and I'm Amy Johnson from Mathematica, which leads the work for this Regional Educational Lab.

This is the final webinar in our four-part series. Our goal for the series has been that it will prompt audience members either individually or ideally with a team of your colleagues to put what you hear into action in one way or another. We think of this webinar series as a workshop to provide you with valuable guidance on how to create more equitable education environments that include culturally responsive practices.

Before I introduce today's speaker, I want to point audience members to an action plan that you all should have received electronically via email. The action plan is intended to be a starting point for the critical conversations and strategic planning that we hope each of you and your colleagues will begin in working toward culturally responsive pedagogy. Feel free to jot down thoughts, ideas, or questions related to the prompts in the action plan throughout the webinar. But most of all, please take this with you after today's session is over and take action. Please do something with the information you hear today and what you have heard throughout the series.

Our speaker today is Dr. Conra Gist. Dr. Gist is an associate professor of teaching and teacher education at the University of Houston. Thank you, Dr. Gist, for joining us, and I turn it over to you.

*Conra Gist:*

Thank you, Amy. It really is a privilege to be able to present today on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Educator Preparation Programs.

When I was preparing to give this talk, I was remembering that it was almost 10 years ago when I first did my initial dissertation work trying to understand what some of the core dimensions of culturally responsible pedagogy were. It's really just an honor and a treat to be able to talk about some of that research today.

Before I get started, I wanted to make sure that I give an overview of how we come to explore this topic of culturally responsible educator preparation. And really the previous presentations talked very specifically about the nuts and bolts of the framework and how it shows up in schools.

But the real reason we're talking about it as it relates to culturally responsive educator preparation is the tension between these two ideas of thinking about teacher effectiveness and teacher retention.

In particular, thinking about this notion that culturally responsive educators are more likely to be effective with the students that they work with, and not only in the context of academic outcomes but also nonacademic factors that are associated with absenteeism, nonparticipation in after-school, the kinds of factors that really make a difference in terms of whether or not students actually show up and are truly engaged.

This notion of culturally responsible pedagogy is also very much connected to retention. The ability of teachers to be able to connect with students and to be effective in the classroom impacts whether or not they actually decide to stay in the profession, in the schools that they originally placed, and—or make a determination to move onto schools that may be a better fit for their dispositions and backgrounds.

And so this brings us to the idea of thinking about the ways in which culturally responsive educator preparation programs are designed in such a way to reach and teach all students. Really, it's just taking the time to understand the ways in which our programs equip teachers to do that or don't do that work. And so the importance of that work is clear, there are certain design challenges that really complicate that work.

And what I'd like to talk through today are some of the research-based strategies to develop culturally responsive teachers. And so the questions that we'll be focusing on, the guiding questions for this session are how are programs preparing future teachers to

understand and effectively support culturally responsible pedagogy? What are the core implementation considerations to address? And then finally, what do current programs consider to be most effective in preparing future educators to deliver culturally responsive pedagogy?

In thinking about this work, I thought it was really important to make sure that we anchor this idea of culturally responsive pedagogy in educator preparation around two core frameworks that are approaching this work. They're not the only frameworks, but to me they're really important in terms of anchoring our understanding.

The first is seminal scholarship published by Ana Maria Villegas and Tamara Lucas. And I call it seminal because it's been around for some time out of Montclair State University but it's really important because what they do is they move beyond just a theoretical definition of what CRP [culturally responsive pedagogy] may look like in schools to thinking very specifically about the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that teacher candidates must be able to exhibit by the time they graduate from our programs in order to truly be culturally responsive.

So they break this down based on six core facets, the first of which is thinking about the importance of sociocultural and political consciousness. It's thinking about the ways in which we have students interrogate the intersection, for example, between race, power, and privilege, this notion that students really have to be critically aware of what's happening in their environment, and to be able to look at it from multiple critical lens and perspectives. So part of the work in terms of our preparation of these teachers is to make sure that we're cultivating that type of consciousness.

The second piece around this work is thinking about this idea of affirming attitudes towards diversity. And this, just to clarify, as I'm sure some of the previous presenters have alluded to, moves beyond just a simple affirmation to have a cultural celebration today, and really thinks about how we can use this notion of affirmation of diversity to reimagine the type of curriculum that we're actually offering to students and also think about the implications for shifting practices schoolwide. And so James Banks is commonly referred to as the godfather of multicultural education and one of the things that I think he does really well in talking about diversity is to really think about this affirmation as something that extends beyond the

curriculum to really penetrating and like reimagining the school structures that are currently in place.

So that directly connects to the third point in terms of thinking about acting as a change agent. And I will say that even in 2019, this is still a contentious point in some ways, unfortunately. And it's this notion that we are intentionally preparing our teachers to be change agents and it's not just about the content knowledge, but it's really about making sure that they're kind of prepared to enact some of those changes to challenge taken for granted school practices that may be disproportionately impacting certain group of students. So that part of the work is doing, asking those difficult questions and advocating and being on the front line for change.

This is directly connected also to the idea of thinking about constructivist approaches in terms of the ways in which teachers think about working with students, and it's beyond the basic level of just saying that we're using prior knowledge to kind of feed into students' connection with the content that we're teaching, to really thinking about reimagining the knowledge systems that are actually valued in our curriculum and making sure that they are diverse perspectives from which they can actually draw.

And I think it's also important to mention here, when we're talking about culturally responsive pedagogy, also bearing in mind some of Django Paris's work around this notion of culturally sustaining pedagogy too so that it's not just about the integration of these cultural knowledge systems without any critical perspectives or pushback.

And an example of that would be in terms of constructivist approaches and thinking about the ways in which we teachers may be interested in incorporating hip-hop in the classroom as a way to kind of ignite and engage in it with students. And so, on the one hand, we say great, that's excellent work in terms of thinking about constructivist approaches. But one of the things that I would push on here in terms of how we would engage teachers is also at the same time teaching them to critique any sexist or homophobic lyrics that may be present within that particular cultural resource as well.

And what Django Paris actually does in talking about this idea of culturally sustaining pedagogy is just to say that culture isn't reified, it's not this firm thing that isn't nimble, that's without critique, that doesn't change and become fluid over time.

And so I think the ways in which that we engage students, to construct connections with students, to build on their knowledge, also has to create room for critique.

That also connects to the next point around learning about students, families, and communities. So making sure that part of our work in the context of the program is giving them an opportunity to be grounded in the context of the community. And I'll say a little bit more about that later.

And then finally, the last dimension is thinking about cultivating culturally responsive practices, which is really looking at how to integrate all of these principles into the future culturally responsive teacher.

So I start off here just for two reasons. One, so that it's really clear that aside from all the theoretical frameworks around CRP, is that we can be really intentional about defining what culturally responsive pedagogy is for our teacher candidates. And this is one example of a framework that does that work. Not only does it do that work in terms of some of the core attributes, but in the context of the book, for each of the dimensions it also tries to, on a continuum, give a brief description of what that would look like in practice and also what it would not look like across these different faces. That's the first point.

The second point that they make with this text is that all of these different features of CRP should actually be integrated throughout the entire teacher education curriculum. It's not necessarily the work of one multicultural education classroom to do this work. But what they argue, and provide an example for toward the end of their text, is thinking about how systematically we can interrogate the coursework that we have, our students take, from entry to graduation and look at points in which we're actually emphasizing and giving opportunity for students to develop—to deepen their knowledge and skills across these different areas.

So this is the first framework that I wanted to open with.

The second one is thinking about this idea of the culturally efficacious educator. And this comes from the work of Dr. Belinda Bustos Flores from the University of Texas San Antonio. I think that this is really interesting because she pushes the notion of culturally

responsive relevant teaching, to really think about it as this culturally efficacious practice as what teachers are actually able to realize is an act in their work with students. It's not just something that they're writing a reflection about. It's something that they're actually doing and enacting in some way.

And so it's an important principle because she didn't just come up with this idea and say that it was relevant, but she used it as a framework for the educator preparation program. And so, I think it is a really important point because if you look at the five areas listed on the left side of the screen, she really sees the teacher's consciousness developing and evolving over time. And that this is something that's being nurtured throughout the entire educator preparation program.

So building on what I shared in the previous slide, if you could have had this critical perspective anchoring the program, then that's what you're actually using to drive all of the experiences that happen in the context of the teachers' preparation.

Now, what I think is really interesting about her work is that basically she takes this general framework of thinking about how teachers develop and become efficacious over time, and I think logically you should be able to see the flow here, right, in terms of thinking about the awakening cultural consciousness. So the kinds of activities that allow students to become woke to critical perspectives, so to speak. And so, this in-teacher education often involves activities that are very much about personal identity and reflection and trying to understand how they come to this work of thinking about being an educator. So activities that are very much about inside me and reflection.

And then we move to the acquiring cultural competence and really thinking about exploring more deeply how this actually intersects with different power relations and dynamics that actually happen, right. So it's not just this personal reflection, but really looking at the interaction between power and privilege, how it's actually influenced, how they were educated, and how that's also influencing the way that they see teaching and learning.

And then over time, in the second half of the continuum, it's really about looking to develop that proficiency over time to point at which it becomes actualized.

Now, on the right-hand side, what you'll see there is it says culturally efficacious evolution model. And so what Dr. Flores and her team did is to take the concept of culturally efficacious dimensions—you'll see them in the outer circle—and on the inner circle they begin to identify elements of each one of these dimensions, right.

So, for example, awakening cultural consciousness is connected to dimensions of developing consciousness and understanding ethnic identity development. Acquiring cultural competence is connected to social interactions and interpersonal relationships. Developing cultural proficiency is connected to creating conditions for language learning and expanding knowledge acquisition. And then finally, actually cultural and critical responsiveness is connected to critical reasoning skills, advancing self-regulated learning, and encouraging students' self-evaluations. And then realizing the cultural efficaciousness is really about actualizing ethical and enduring professional responsibilities. And so these are all kinds of elements of the culturally efficacious model.

Now, what I think is really interesting is that they took this particular framework and then converted it into an observation protocol. And so, what I think—why this is really important—is it's really about thinking about how do these ideas come to life in practice?

So in this case, they had the framework that really anchors their program. They thought about how they would actually operationalize it with very clear elements for each one of the dimensions, and they developed this observation protocol which actually lists not only the elements but the kinds of teacher behaviors that would show up and student behaviors that would actually show up.

And this protocol is actually used by the mentor teachers from the university side of the work, and it's also realized by the school-based teachers who are also supporting teachers. And so it becomes this anchoring tool that the teachers are able to use to really think about how they are or not enacting culturally efficacious practices.

Okay, so with that in mind, in terms of thinking about the key frameworks that you might imagine that would anchor a program, the next thing that I will spend some time talking about are the core implementation components for culturally responsive pedagogy. This actually comes from an article that my colleagues and I worked on. It's in the *Encyclopedia of Teacher Education* and it's just simply titled Culturally Responsive Teacher Education.



Essentially, what we argue is that if you want to think about implementing culturally responsive preparation in your program, it roughly involves these four components. One is program structure; the second, curriculum and pedagogical practice; the third, interrogating belief systems and dispositions; and then finally the teacher educators.

So first off, in terms of thinking about culturally responsive pedagogy in the program structure, there are several factors to keep in mind. The first is thinking about how the admission and selection criteria actually encourage teacher candidates and faculty who have disposition toward critical sociocultural consciousness to be engaged with your program.

And so what I mean by that is if a program says that it values culturally responsive pedagogy, which includes some of the aspects that I mentioned in the very first slide, how does that show up in some of the selection criteria for admittance into the program? If there's a value in a sociocultural critical consciousness, where does that show up in the selection process for teacher candidates?

Also, in the context of faculty as well, and I'll talk about that in a little bit more detail. But if we either want to make sure that our programs are embodying a type of sociopolitical or cultural consciousness, then a lot of that comes from the teacher educators who engage in that work. So we think about faculty that we're onboarding in terms of our structure. Where is there a place for really valuing that work, right?

The other thing is thinking about this idea of cultural responsiveness to teacher candidates. How do we address this teacher diversity issue? So in terms of the program structure, it's also who the structure is designed to support. So if we think about this idea of wanting to diversify the educator workforce—and not to say that the teacher candidates that we have are not necessarily who we want, but we want to broaden this. So we want to open it to other people who don't currently have access.

What is it about our program structure that could be more responsive? For example, if we have folks who are working full-time and need to take night classes? Is our structure going to be more responsive to be available to them at certain times of the day?

Or, for example, there's a program in California, it's called the California Mini-Corps Program, and this program is specifically designed to recruit children of migrant workers and children who come from migrant communities. And the idea is that because they know that they're recruiting these students, they go and intentionally recruit them in high schools where we know that they're going to be in high numbers. They make sure that the teacher candidates who are part of the program are serving in those particular schools, so their placements are intentionally positioned there. And they also have support structures that give them financial support, flexible admission structures—so we know that some of them may come from academic backgrounds that weren't every supportive, so they give them extra tutoring support to make sure that they're actually able to enter in the program. And then finally, there's an agreement to make sure that those same students are actually placed back in either the same school or similar schools, within that district. And so there was a lot of shifting that had to happen in the context of the educator preparation program to be responsive to this particular group of students.

And so, in sum, this notion of thinking about program structure and the kinds of things that need to be addressed in ways that will recruit people who wouldn't typically have access or value critical dispositions is really important and it's not just a one-two process, but there are multiple things to consider at that level.

And then the second point is thinking about it as it relates to curriculum and pedagogical practices. So one of the things that you see repeatedly in the literature around thinking about culturally responsive pedagogy in educator preparation, is this notion that it only takes place in the context of one course.

So I talked about that in the very opening slide in terms of thinking about how this is actually integrated throughout the entire teacher education curriculum, right? So as a first step, it's thinking about what are the curriculum mapping activities that need to take place to see where are you currently, is there a real value around this idea of thinking about preparing culturally responsive teachers? And what is it that we need to do differently in terms of the kinds of learning opportunities the students actually have had access to?

One of the ways that teacher educators think about preparing teachers to be more culturally responsive as it relates to curriculum pedagogical practices is to make sure that their students have

learning experiences that are actually embedded in the community. So some of the work that Dr. Zigmont has been doing out of Ball State University is really interesting because of their whole teacher education program in terms of the curriculum and pedagogical practices, they're rooted and grounded in the concept of the community teacher. And so, the learning experiences are about having service learning partnerships with community-based organizations, making sure that the methods courses are actually taking place in the context of schools or in the partnership with other school leaders.

So a way to really think about this, beyond just thinking about mapping are we doing the work, is also thinking about where the curriculum pedagogical practices actually take place and are they happening in collaboration and partnership and solidarity with communities.

The other point is thinking about this notion of interrogating belief systems and dispositions. And this is really huge because at the end of the day we're still talking about a culturally responsive educator preparation program because equity issues remain an issue in our society. We still cannot guarantee yet that all students will have access to equitable educational experiences. And so, one of the ways in which we challenge—to challenge that as being the continual narrative is taking teachers, and program leaders, for that matter, through the process of interrogating belief systems and dispositions.

So at the most basic level, that involves thinking about the critical questions and critical reflection opportunities that we're actually designing for teacher candidates. So when I say basic, what I mean by that is always interrogating and asking questions about whose voices are missing or not added to the conversation? Whose knowledge is actually being valued and centered? Where are the perspectives and backgrounds of communities of color around this particular work? And then more fundamentally, asking the question about whether or not as it relates to our educator preparation programs, the sequence of learning activities that we're designing for them, give them an opportunity to actually interrogate belief systems and dispositions.

So a concrete example of taking up this work in the context of teacher education is giving students an opportunity to do critical ethnography work, for example. Or engage in some type of critical inquiry project that's really unpacking and understanding a school

neighborhood community. And not just from—I mean clearly, I guess I should just say—not from a deficit perspective, but from a community cultural wealth perspective. So thinking about what it means to engage in community mapping practices that allow students to be able to see resources, to be able to see genius and possibility in the students that they're going to be serving by doing a critical investigation of what's happening in the context of that particular community, and designing a set of critical questions that require them to face the hard questions around race, power, and privilege. Why is it the case that this particular school community has this set of academic results? What it is about the context that is helping to push and shape this? And then, what are the strength-based positive assets that are available within this community to challenge this negative narrative around academic achievement?

And so the main point with this is making sure that students are prepared with a critical mindset in general. And then, in particular, thinking about the set of instructional opportunities and assignments that we give them to take up that work.

Now, that is directly connected to the next point, which is focused very specifically on the teacher educators. And this is important because basically every—the first three points that I just talked about in terms of the program structure, curriculum pedagogical practices, interrogating belief systems and dispositions—really hang on the practices and commitments of teacher educators to engage in this work, to take it up, to lead, to be vulnerable in ways that may be challenging for them.

And there are several different factors that complicate this work in some ways. So part of it is just thinking about the ethno-racial diversity of teacher educators in general. So, if you think about us having a national pipeline issue in terms of ethno-racial representation, that also carries over in terms of teacher educator representation. And so there's this tension between how is it that we might engage teacher educators that may not necessarily have these kinds of commitments, recognizing that if we don't do that work then our students may not get the preparation that they actually need.

The other thing that I think is really important here is also expanding our notion of how we think about or define the teacher educator. An example that I just gave is really thinking about the university-based teacher educator, and part of what culturally responsive educator preparation coaches us to do is to expand beyond thinking about the

teacher educator as just based in the university, but also thinking about school-based teacher educators too are fundamental to the teaching and learning experiences of teacher candidates in our programs.

And thinking about the role of community-based teacher educators. An example of a community-based educator: one of my other research interests is looking at how we develop grow-your-own programs. And a program that I studied when I first started doing the work was a grow-your-own program in Illinois. One of the reasons I was captivated by that program at the time was because part of their preparation work for folks who were invited to join this program, was that they were actually placed in school community neighborhoods. These were schools or neighborhoods where they were likely to teach and, best-case scenario, where they actually lived. They were in these neighborhood communities and they were connected to a community-based organization, and there was a leader at that organization who was in charge of conducting these weekly teacher candidate sessions. What they would do is they would come together, talk about key issues that were taking place that were community-specific, not just in the context of the school but these neighborhood issues that were impacting the lives of students whenever they showed up in the classrooms. It really, for me, having an opportunity to go and to observe some of those meetings, shifted the role of just thinking about teacher education as living in the context of the university teacher educator, to thinking about how community teacher educators play a role in this work too.

And so in thinking about culturally responsive preparation around teacher educators, it's really expanding the definition of who that educator is.

And so, I think that, unfortunately, the challenges are well known in terms of—and I'll just go through them quickly and give a couple of examples. First, in thinking about limited diversity, whether or not this work is relevant, a lack of criticality anchoring the programs, and then rigid and inflexible program structures.

So in terms of the first point, limited diversity of instructors, I touched on that before and I think that it's a challenge but there's also just so much possibility because I think part of it is about expanding who we think deserves to teach our children. And for so long I think the narrative of best and brightest has dominated the

discourse and not necessarily local nontraditional cultural-linguistic folks coming to this work.

So I think what's really interesting about this current shift of thinking very much about ethno-racial and cultural-linguistic diversity is the ways in which those students actually challenge our program structures. So just by the very nature of shifting who it is that we're preparing, I think in many ways it will force us to be much more culturally responsive in our preparation.

The other thing is thinking about relevance and responsivity in schools, to schools, children, and communities. And I think, I want to share this example under the challenges because one of the premier teacher education scholars for many, many years, Ken Zeichner over the last couple of years published some work that they were doing around community-based teacher education. And in particular, thinking about how to identify community leaders and partners to work in the preparation of teacher candidates.

And in this particular case, that pilot program, they actually were having community leaders serve as mentors in that work. So teacher candidates were actually partnered with community mentors to learn a little bit more about their perspective on students in schools and what they thought some of the educational issues were.

And one of the things that came up in that work, which is not necessarily surprising but I think important as a challenge, is the tension between power and who thinks they own the knowledge of what teachers to know and be able to do. And what it means whenever we expand teacher educator to mean not just university, but community, as in school-based. And how expertise is affirmed outside the power constructs of whether or not someone works at a university or not.

And what they found in that work is unless we're really intentional about a collective understanding of preparing teachers in ways that are responsive, which means in some ways that some teacher educators have to expand notions of expertise beyond the way that they traditionally see it, it's very difficult to bring in those community-based leaders and therefore it continues to exacerbate this issue of not necessarily being relevant.

So, the next point in terms of thinking about lack of criticality in anchoring programs, I think, is clear and straight-forward. I tried to

show that on the second slide that I showed which is really thinking about this notion of culturally efficacious dimensions and how, with the work of Dr. Belinda Bustos Flores at the University of Texas San Antonio, that framework anchored the entire program. It wasn't like a side pet research project. That was the foundation in the educator preparation program. They were tasked to develop culturally efficacious teachers. This is the framework that they used, and that framework actually extended all the way through the operation protocols that they use.

And then finally, the last point, rigid and inflexible program structure. That, in some ways, is connected to the first point about limited diversity. Whenever we think about educator preparation programs traditionally being for white middle-class females who are going through our programs in four to five years, and who are going to school full-time, our current structure really makes sense in terms of the times that we offer courses, what we think are appropriate community learning experiences.

But if you started to shift to it as that we think it's coming to our program—and don't misunderstand me—I'm definitely not saying that we lower standards. But it's really thinking about how we make sure that our structures are more fluid so that there's opportunity for everybody who wants to become an educator, in particular culturally and linguistically diverse educators.

These are challenges that in introducing them, I also tried to say ways that we might think about addressing them as well.

So finally, thinking about key takeaways in advancing culturally responsive preparation, I don't think that these are surprising. These principles, my colleagues and I, we talk about this in our chapter on culturally responsive teacher education. We try to, in the chapter, talk about these principles. And I guess I would say that these principles are like ground zero. So this is like you know that your program is not doing this work, or you know that colleagues that you like to partner with are not doing this work. And these are some of the basic principles to begin thinking about should you really want to take seriously this idea of culturally responsive preparation.

The first is thinking about this principle of preservice teachers' critical openness and reflection. So, the question here is, how are teachers encouraged to engage in critical openness and reflection, and not



just from the context of one class, but throughout their entire preparation program.

And then I guess more importantly, how is that being assessed? And so, work that I have gone to early on has been by the late Peter Morrell, who has a book out of Harvard Ed Press along with some other colleagues, talking about how to go about nurturing and really identifying and nurturing the dispositions of teachers. And I think that's important because there are a lot of different activities that we could actually do, but at the end of the day, we also need assessment protocols to really see if that work is moving the needle. Is this work deepening the critical consciousness of our teachers, and do we have an end in mind? What is that set of dispositions that we definitely expect teacher candidates to be able to exhibit? And I think that his framework is really useful for that.

The second principle is thinking about administrator and faculty culturally responsive commitments. So how are administrators and faculty selected, evaluated, or rewarded for their culturally responsive commitments?

And so in this particular case, and I'll just talk about it from a faculty perspective for a second, we all have our annual evaluations that talk about how we're doing in terms of our teaching and engagement with teacher candidates. But where is culturally responsive pedagogy in that? Like values in that evaluation process? On the one hand, it's part of—it should be connected to whether or not we're actually engaging in culturally responsive practices with our teacher candidates, and how that shows up in the context of our work with teacher candidates of color, in particular.

And that's actually a topic that really got me interested in this work from the very beginning is that what does it mean for a teacher educator to actually be culturally responsive? What are the dimensions of that? If you were to be reflective, well how would we assess in terms of our own practice whether or not we're actually being culturally responsive in our work?

And then the other thing, again as I mentioned before, is also thinking about bringing in people who actually value culturally responsive commitment. Not just as a I like diversity and it's interesting, but bringing a critical perspective that actually would push the program and move it further along.



The third principle is thinking about culturally responsive clinical experiences: How are preservice teachers supported and held accountable for implementing culturally responsive practices in schools? And so I think that all of this work, we can like talk about it, but how do we make sense of it in practice?

And to be honest, most of the programs that I think do really strong work, like the University of Texas San Antonio [UTSA], the California Mini-Corps, GYO [Grow Your Own] Illinois, and the folks out of the University of San Francisco, the people who are doing that program, it's not like they had this one perfect model where they have everything figured out, but they've made the commitment that they are going to push themselves through iterative refinement in clinical practices to figure how they can make sure that they're doing the best that they can to prepare teachers to be culturally responsive.

And then the example that I use from UTSA in terms of the culturally efficacious observation protocol. That's an example of taking a framework, it wasn't like she had someone else that she was drawing on at that time. She used the theoretical, the research that was used to underlay the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy, and she used it to shape that framework.

And that framework then, not just what was happening in terms of discussions in the teacher education classroom that also influenced the feedback that teachers received in schools. And it also influenced the kinds of things that school-based teacher educators were looking at, which also influenced their practice. And it becomes a space where culturally responsive clinical experiences are not just about preparing the teacher candidate, but it's also a way of pushing the commitment of all of the teacher educators who are involved in the process, and the schools in which the teacher candidates are situated because as the teachers begin to see the importance and affirmation of this practice, these observation tools become a source of dialogue with them around how to take up culturally efficacious work.

Then finally the last principle is integration of culturally responsive pedagogy in the program, so I think I've made this point, which is how is culturally responsive pedagogy integrated into all preparation coursework, curriculum, and instruction? So really thinking about the integration, not just the context of one individual class but thinking about it throughout the entire program.

And this brings us to the very last slide, which is really connected to your action plans, which is around supporting culturally responsive preparation: critical questions for action. And I hope that part I've shared has caused you to think a little bit about "What might I do differently in terms of my work with schools and districts?"

So how might you work with educator preparation programs and support your current and new teacher workforce in implementing culturally responsive pedagogies? What might those partnerships look like? What opportunities and challenges might emerge as a result of pursuing culturally responsive preparation for all teacher candidates? And then finally, what other organizations in your community might provide support to help new and continuing teachers improve culturally responsive pedagogy in schools?

To give one example of the very last point, I had an opportunity to work with some folks in San Antonio who are connected to the UTSA program, and the Institute of Texan Cultures, which is a museum there, and a group of teachers, in-service and pre-service, who were just interested in learning more about culturally responsive pedagogy. And so, we started doing a book study on this idea of culturally efficacious practice and what happened in this conversation—and this is an organic partnership—the teachers really became interested in how they would infuse the ideas into a unit of study.

And so we developed a partnership with the museum, in this case, it was the Institute of Texan Cultures, to develop these culturally efficacious units of study that teachers will be implementing this fall into the spring, and they will actually be featured as a museum exhibit in downtown San Antonio. And so I'm sure that's to say that through this partnership with the museum, the teachers have access to resources they didn't necessarily otherwise have and can push themselves in terms of taking up culturally efficacious practices. And the students are having an opportunity to talk about really juicy and compelling topics around critical social justice work that they didn't necessarily have access to because part of the work of what's taking place in those units of study is thinking about critical action research projects that they would take up.

So I just offer that as one example of how this idea could actually come to life through a partnership with a museum or a local community-based organization. And I think that we're right at time. So now, I'll open it up for Q&A.

*Amy Johnson:* Great, thanks. That was wonderful. We have some questions in. I'm just going to remind folks that you can submit your questions.

Conra, we're going to start with one that's hopefully an easy one, but one that I think somebody would like the answer to, so it's a quick one. Could you provide the name of the scholar who focuses on the community teacher again? It sounds like you mentioned someone who focuses on the community.

*Conra Gist:* Oh yeah. So I said the late Peter Morrell. He has a book called *The Community Teacher: A New Framework for Effective Urban Teaching*.

*Amy Johnson:* Great, thanks. Okay.

The next question is the following: If we're honest, there are some learners who may not be able to or willing to grow in terms of cultural respect and culturally responsive dispositions and behaviors. Where does this fit into the key principles you presented?

*Conra Gist:* Yeah. Oh, I love that. Yeah, so it fits. I mean I think, yeah, if we're honest, that's right.

So one thing, I think that this really comes in in terms of a program structure. It's more like thinking about the components of our program, so thinking about who we actually admit into our programs. I think that part of—our programs are really, at least in a traditional sense—are really designed, like I mentioned before, for white female middle-class teacher candidates.

But one of the things I've been challenging my colleagues to think about is to make sure that we're not necessarily just thinking about, this is who we're working with, but really the question is: Are we bringing in folks who have a critical disposition to work with communities of color? And if we are saying that we value this as a disposition and as an exit marker of being able to leave our program as being able to exhibit this culturally responsive practice, then it seems to me that we should be thinking more about it, and not just as, but not as like an ignorance of it, but more about how in our selection and our recruitment practices we're recruiting folks who already have a type of critical disposition.

I was talking with some of my **SIM**[define? explain?] colleagues who were trying to think about this idea of CRP in SIM, and one of the things that we are piloting is how in our selection model we may ask a series of questions that are about critical consciousness because, recognize that, ultimately that's the key component in terms of being able to do this work. And that we're really focusing on bringing people who already have a disposition leaning in that direction because, as you say, if we're honest, there has to be some willingness to take up this critical perspective.

And so, to me, part of the way of getting around that so to speak is to think about the importance of bringing in people who have that type of critical perspective. And we do that by thinking about how we create opportunities and pathways for folks who have traditionally been denied access to the profession. And so that's, in fact, that's one of the reasons why I've become very interested in grow-your-own programs, not as *the* solution, but as one of the solutions, essentially, that bring in folks who are more likely to take up on these critical competencies.

And the other way that I would answer that is to say that we, regardless of who we have entering our programs, there should be some framework for thinking about dispositions. So the same scholar that I just mentioned, Peter Morrell, and I can't say the exact title of the book, but if you were to look up Harvard Ed. Press, it's dispositions for teacher candidates, something along those lines. One of the things that he does with his colleagues with the edited volume, is that there are different chapters for how programs have thought about measuring teacher dispositions, and if teachers are not able to exhibit certain dispositions at a particular point, they're encouraged to be counseled out of the program.

And so, part of that work is not just like, "Oh, you know that as long as they don't say anything completely ridiculous about students, we're just going to allow them to move through." But it's really thinking about critical hard questions that we might ask students to consider where we can really see how their belief systems come to life and based on those kinds of questions, and looking at development over time, you use that as a potential instrument as to whether or not you keep someone in the program or think about counseling them out.

And I will say that that, and finally in answering the question, and I know that is not the norm. But it is, I think, the work that needs to

be done, is having those kinds of conversations with our colleagues about where our values lie in terms of the folks we want coming through our program and what is it that we might need to do differently to address some of those issues.

*Amy Johnson:* Great, thanks. The next question we're going to switch a little bit. You did talk about some programs that are exemplars in this area, but certainly many programs maybe still need to move in this direction.

So the question is: How might districts actually work with their local educator preparation programs to improve their culturally responsive training if they're not already prioritizing this?

*Conra Gist:* Yeah, I like that, district partnerships.

*Amy Johnson:* Right.

*Conra Gist:* Yeah, so a program that I think has transformed into something else now, but originally it was called Teach Tomorrow Oakland. And this particular program really started from within the Oakland Unified School District which was really concerned about making sure that there were culturally responsive educators. It formulated as an alternative program originally, but then transitioned into more of a traditional program.

But so what matters here is one, that the district recognized that the caliber of teachers that they were receiving, in particular as it related to CRP and ethno-racial diversity, were not where they wanted it to be. And so they engaged the university in conversation to think about what they might do differently.

Now, what the partnership looks like that I think is/was really interesting, is that for the selection model—and this is what I'm saying is important in terms of innovation—is that in a traditional educator preparation program the selection of the teacher candidates who matriculate through the program really is owned by the ed prep program and the faculty are doing that work. But in this particular model, teachers were not only—potential teachers not only recommended for the community but whenever they had to do their teaching examples that you typically have to do, that teaching example number one was based specifically in the school district. And the people who were observing and giving feedback were not just the teaching faculty, but there were also teachers from that particular school district, parents, and students.

And so when they made decisions about who was being admitted into the program for further preparation to become teachers, it was actually a collaborative conversation about what was actually being valued across that community of practitioners. So it wasn't just the teacher educator voice that was sort overpowering the conversation, but there were school leaders involved in that work and the part that I think is really innovative is that community members and students were part of that process as well.

And so, I think, I mean know of, from my own perspective, being a University of Houston professor that if a university is really committed to CRP and wants to remain relevant and not outdated, the partners with the districts are exactly what we want.

And I think also another place, especially for research-intensive institutions that are really committed to grant funding and so on, is from a district perspective just saying, "Hey, you know, I know that you want to partner around these different research grants in terms of lifting your own profile at the university level, but we're not really going to engage in any partnerships that don't center CRP or culturally sustaining work as a fundamental work in our district." I think that districts have significantly more power than they realize.

And I guess the last thing that I'll add to that is that districts can also operate, and this is the extreme, especially maybe if you don't have the capacity and resources, but school districts can also offer their own alternative certification preparation programs. And I say that not because I think that we shouldn't have traditional educator preparation programs, and I don't see the value of them, because I do and I'm employed in one. But I offer that because, to me, what it signals is that it shouldn't be that the districts don't have a voice in what's happening with the development of teachers. And in having that leverage to do that work, they may say, "Hey, you know, we're really—we have this ridiculous teacher shortage and attrition problem that will not go away, we want to develop this structure for alt prep but we can't do it without making sure that we have folks from—who are experts from traditional programs working, preparing and pushing these folks, making sure that we admit people who are culturally responsive.

And so a partnership could be formed in that way that's driven by the district need, but also draws upon the CRP expertise from the educator preparation programs. And I share that as an example

because that's something that we're actually pursuing currently at my university.

*Amy Johnson:* Great. Conra, the next question, we might have time for one or two more, we'll see.

You mentioned a couple of programs, but the question is are there university education programs and/or teacher residencies that excel in this model? Can you just talk about where there are some exemplars here?

*Conra Gist:* Yeah. Well, I think first of all the residence program in general, in my mind, excels because it's about doing a lot of the teaching and learning as based and grounded in schools. So that the residency is taking place in schools with mentor teachers who are doing, with mentor teachers and having teacher educators who come from that school community, so that it's really responsive and embedded in the school context.

Early on, I think I said the Boston Teacher Residency Program was really a premier and leader in that work. The University of Chicago Teacher Residency Program has been, I think, doing exceptional work for some time.

I know that there is, and I'm talking at a national level and I'm talking at the residency from the understanding of the types of graduate residency programs where folks already have undergraduate degrees and then are going into teaching by getting their master's degree grounded in a school context. But I also know that at the national level in terms of the residency model, that there's a particular commitment to ethno-racial diversity, and I saw that they recently awarded a partnership with some residency programs in the state of Tennessee to really think about doing this critical education work.

I would also say—I haven't mentioned this yet—that there is a group called Grants Alliance for Educator Diversity, and they have a collective of universities that they're working with to take up this idea of what it means to prepare culturally responsive educators. And I think that group in of itself is a resource of probably 10 or 15 other universities that are really committed and unpacking this work. And what they do, which I do think is something important to consider, is they use the framework of a minority-serving institution in thinking about the way that they approach working with teacher candidates



and the kinds of experiences, the clinical experiences, that they offer students as a way to redefine how we approach culturally responsive pedagogy in traditional teacher education. And so they have an approach that's very much practice-based. It's about operating within a community of learners and driven by data. And so I think that as a collective, that would be a really interesting group to explore should you be interested in partnering with other universities committed to CRP.

*Amy Johnson:* Great, thank you so much.

Conra, I probably won't pose any more questions for you now because we're just about out of time, but there are a number of questions related to some of the tools or the resources that you've mentioned throughout the webinar. So I think what we'd like to do is after this webinar maybe put together a resource list for folks and send that out. Would that be okay for us to do?

*Conra Gist:* Yeah, that would be wonderful.

*Amy Johnson:* Okay. So we will circulate something because I know there's been a lot of really rich information here and you've pointed folks to other resources. So we'll put that together and circulate that.

But at this point, I'm going to draw things to a close. First and foremost, thank you, Conra, for today's webinar and fielding these various questions.

I want to again encourage the audience to take the action plan with you. It has the questions that were posed at the end of the webinar on it and a prompt and space to start developing your own responses. So have this be the beginning of your own action plan around CRP and educator preparation.

And lastly, I want to thank everyone for joining us both for today's webinar and any previous webinars you might have been able to join.

Please look for information about upcoming relevance webinars on our website. This includes a webinar coming up in November on chronic absenteeism in the early grades. We don't have a date set for that yet, so look for an invitation coming soon.



And that is going to conclude things. Brian, I'm going to turn it back to you.

*Webinar producer:* Thank you. As a reminder, the on-demand recording will be available approximately one day after the webcast using the same audience link you used to join today's event. The recording and the transcript will be posted on the REL Mid-Atlantic website in the coming weeks. Don't forget to fill out the survey and hit submit. Thank you and have a great afternoon. This concludes today's webinar.

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