Embracing Cultural Pluralism

In an equitable learning environment that celebrates diversity, cultural pluralism—and not cultural assimilation—is encouraged. Cultural pluralism is the concept that individual ethnic groups have a right to exist on their own terms within the larger society while retaining their unique cultural heritages. Embracing cultural pluralism means that not only is there a presence of multiple ethnic or cultural groups in a society, but their cultural values and practices are accepted and appreciated by the society, as long as they are consistent with the laws and values of the wider society.



Educators know that diversity supports the building of new knowledge. Teachers can provide opportunities for students to share cultural values and practices in order for them to build their cultural understanding. Educators should also prioritize time for students to ask questions so they can embrace differences.

Cultural pluralism in the classroom means that students coexist with their unique cultures, backgrounds, experiences, and identities. Students feel the identities of all students are welcomed, and high expectations are set to advance academic achievement for all learners.

How can you as a teacher embrace cultural pluralism in your classroom? Consider the tips below:

- Provide examples of different races, genders, religions, family structures, languages, abilities, and ages in images in the classroom and student-facing materials.
- Provide activities and materials that provide access to curriculum for those with different learning styles.
- Provide many opportunities for students to engage in group projects.
- Ensure that you have translators and interpreters at school events and meetings.
- Schedule field trips to expose students to different cultures.
- Provide opportunities for reflection often.

Embracing cultural pluralism will contribute to students feeling valued and accepted. Consider how you will embrace cultural pluralism in your equitable learning environment.

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