



New York State Education Department  
Office of Special Education  
**Educational Partnership**





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# Family Engagement

## Communication and Culture

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Developed by the Technical Assistance Partnership for Equity at Bank Street College of Education

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# Disclaimer

The resources shown are designed to provide helpful information. Resources are provided for instructional use purposes only and do not constitute NYSED endorsement of any vendor, author, or other sources. To the best of our knowledge, the resources provided are true and complete.

# Our Team



# Facilitators

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# Opening Reflection

- What Broad goals do you have for working with families this year?
- How do these goals drive the way you communicate with families to support students?



# Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities



## Self-Advocacy

Students engage in self-advocacy and are involved in determining their own educational goals and plan.



## Family Partnership

Parents, and other family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child.



## Specially-Designed Instruction

Teachers design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide students with disabilities with access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.



## Research-Based Instruction

Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities.



## Multi-tiered Support

Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.



## Inclusive Activities

Schools provide high-quality inclusive programs and activities.



## Transition Support

Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.



# Learning Objectives

- Examine the impact of culture & communication in our practice as educators
- Explore the concept of culture & connect with the idea of Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education
- Explore strategies for effective collaboration between families, caregivers, and schools to support students



# Norms and Community Agreements

- Participate to the Best of Your Abilities
- Speak your truth- Use “I” statements
- Ask clarifying questions and provide feedback
- Listen with respect
- Honor Confidentiality (What’s said here stays here, what’s learned here leaves here)
- Expect and Accept a lack of closure
- Push your growing edge

# Impact of Communication



I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

*Maya Angelou*

# Communication and Culture

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**Body Language**



**Verbal**



**Tone**

# Communication and Culture: Listening

“Two people from different cultures can look at the same event and have very different reactions because of the meaning they attach to the event...”

(Jackson & Hammond, 2015 p. 23)



# Reflection



**Connect Compare Recall**



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# What Is Culture?





# A Definition of Culture

The way of life of a particular people, especially as shown in their ordinary behavior and habits, their attitudes toward each other, and their moral and religious beliefs.

Cambridge English Dictionary

# Culture

Culture is more than food, art, music, and celebrations. It includes way of thinking, values, and forms of expression.

- Race
- Economic Background
- Gender
- Language
- Sexual Orientation
- Nationality
- Religion
- Ability





An iceberg floating in the ocean. The top part of the iceberg is above the water surface, and the much larger bottom part is submerged. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is light blue with some clouds. The iceberg is white and has some texture. A line connects the 'SURFACE CULTURE' label to the top of the iceberg, and another line connects the 'DEEP CULTURE' label to the submerged part of the iceberg.

## SURFACE CULTURE

Observable and concrete elements of culture

## DEEP CULTURE

Unspoken knowledge and unconscious assumptions that influence our worldview and how we learn information

# CULTURE

Source: Hammond, Z. 2015. *Culturally responsive teaching and the brain.: Promoting authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

# SURFACE CULTURE

Languages  
Dress  
Holiday customs  
Festivals  
Literature  
Visual arts  
Performing arts  
Food  
Games  
Flags

# DEEP CULTURE

Nature of friendships  
Values  
Rules  
Notions of modesty  
Attitudes towards age  
Thought processes  
Norms  
Importance of space  
Expectations  
Learning styles  
Views on raising children  
Leadership styles  
Notions of self  
Religious beliefs  
Hygiene practices  
Attitudes towards social status  
Gender roles  
Concept of fairness  
Etiquette  
Approaches to problem-solving  
Importance of time  
Perceptions  
Assumptions  
Notions of beauty  
Body language

Includes information from: Hammond, Z. 2015. *Culturally responsive teaching and the brain: Promoting authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.



# The Cultural Iceberg in Practice



“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.”

(NYSED, 2019)

# Activity: The Cultural Iceberg in Practice



- Recall a situation
- Consider the role of culture
- Reflect on the situation
- Apply a cultural lens

# Break

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**Pause**  
**Breathe**  
**Stretch**



# Culturally Responsive- Sustaining Education

What comes to mind  
when you think of  
***Culturally Responsive  
Education?***



# Culturally Responsive- Sustaining Education

Culturally Responsive approaches center student, family, and community voices.

**CULTURALLY**

The CR-SE 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.

**EDUCATION**



# Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education

CRSE requires educators to value differences in culture & identity and use them to facilitate learning.



**Welcoming  
and affirming  
environment**



**High  
expectations  
and rigorous  
instruction**



**Inclusive  
curriculum and  
assessment**



**Ongoing  
professional  
learning**

# The CRSE Framework



- Individually Review Page 2 of the CRSE Framework Handout
- Consider Communication and Culture
- Select at least:
  - 1 strategy that you're doing/have done
  - 1 strategy you could do tomorrow
  - 1 strategy that you find challenging
- Reflection:
  - What strategies did you choose and why?
  - Where do you need support?



# Closing

- Revisit Your Take Home Question:
  - What systems and practices can you build to honor the communication styles and culture of the families and students you serve?
- What is one closing commitment you have?

# Contact Us

## TAP for Equity

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