



Innovations in Leadership Cultural Competency in Leadership

Dated Approach(es)

- Primary focus on content, pedagogy, and day-to-day management
- Little thought to addressing the cultural, racial, ethnic, gender, or sexual orientation differences of students in preparing our education leaders
- Treat all students the same - One size student fits all

One Innovative Approach

- *Cultural Competency* is a critical skill for all leaders to lead in the 21st Century.

Consider these ideas and questions as we guide you through the next hour:

Education leaders promote the success of all students by working with school communities to develop, articulate, and implement a shared vision of learning. *How do principals communicate and model cultural competency for teachers and students? How do they set this tone for the entire school community?*

Principals face persistent challenges related to transferring the school vision into accountable practices that have an impact on teaching and learning. *What actions must leaders consistently employ to promote cultural competency to increase achievement for all students?*

What is the issue?

- Great school leadership *does* count!
- School demographics *are* changing!
- District and school leadership skills *must* adapt to the changing diversity within the school walls.

At your tables, discuss the following questions. Record notes and reflections as you each share thoughts and ideas. Choose a reporter to summarize your conversations for the group.

- What does cultural competency/equity literacy mean to you?
- What does it mean for principals to lead with cultural competency?

What is cultural competency?

- The ability of principals and teachers to successfully educate students of all backgrounds and cultures. (Wallace Foundation)
- Equity Literacy (Dr. Paul Gorski)
 - The ability to recognize subtle and not-so-subtle biases and inequities
 - The ability to respond effectively and in an equitable fashion to school and classroom inequities
 - Committed to the elimination of inequities in classrooms, schools, and communities
 - Endeavor to create and sustain equitable schools and classrooms

Innovations in Leadership in Action

Oregon's Innovative Program

- In 2004 Oregon hosted a statewide summit focused on beginning the work of defining “cultural competence” as well as establishing the indicators of cultural competence for inclusion into administrator licensing standards
- **Cultural competency is now a large piece of the state’s educational policy and administrator licensing standards**

Innovations in Leadership in Action

Vose Elementary, Beaverton, Oregon (May 2014)

- K-5, 669 Students
- 75% Hispanic, 18% Caucasian, remaining include Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Asian Pacific Islander
- 84% Free and Reduced Lunch
- 75% English Language Learners
- 12 Languages Spoken

Innovations in Leadership in Action

Video Vignette - *Closing the Achievement Gap: Oregon's Bold Plan*

- Oregon responded to its rapidly increasing student demographics.
- State leaders recognized the need to rethink how their leaders are prepared to serve this oftentimes underserved and vulnerable student population.
- District and state leaders share their perspectives on the importance of cultural competency for school leaders.

As you watch the vignette, use your handout to record your thoughts, reflections, concerns, and questions in the space below.

AFTER the Video Vignette

- Refer to the Conversation Questions in your handout on Pages 4-5.
- Choose a reporter.
- Each table is assigned one question.
- Engage in conversations with your colleagues about this question.
- The C3/SC3 staff member at your table will help facilitate your conversations.
- Write a one sentence summary reflection to share out with the group.
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Write down any action steps you would like to take back with you to your state to consider and/or take action on.

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Conversation Questions

1. How are student demographics changing in your school and district? What are some of the challenges and issues that surround these shifts?
2. Should training leaders and educators in cultural competency be a statewide priority? What is needed for this priority to be effective in preparing leaders who can reduce academic inequalities at both the system and classroom levels?
3. How does or might your state or district define cultural competency? What other issues may need to be explored in your state or district, and what type of training will be needed for leaders to address these issues?
4. Is it realistic to expect that leaders can create an environment where all students feel equally comfortable, particularly when students have many different backgrounds? How can a principal of a different background than the majority of his/her students effectively lead a school? What specific behaviors should district leaders, community members, and parents expect from “culturally competent” principals?
5. What are some of the major hurdles for students of diverse cultures, races, ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientations in school? How can cultural competency training help superintendents and principals better address these challenges?
6. What might be necessary to improve leadership training in your state or district so education leaders are better able to create a strong learning environment for students of all backgrounds?
7. What initial challenges and barriers do state leaders face in integrating cultural competency into their leadership agenda? How can they overcome these challenges?
8. How can your state begin to integrate cultural competency into state leadership standards, leadership preparation programs, mentoring programs for leaders and ongoing training and support for school and district leaders? Are the climates in your state, district, and school receptive to such an initiative? What are your reservations about the project?
9. How should districts evaluate the cultural competence proficiency levels of district and school leaders?

Resources:

- www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=711
- www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=220
- <http://www.ode.state.or.us/wma/teachlearn/educatoreffectiveness/or-admin-standards.pdf>
- http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2008/Performance_Indicators_2008.pdf
- http://gse.pdx.edu/handbooks/instructor/stkdl/10_oregon_standards_administrators.pdf

References:

- <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/principal-story/vignettes-and-conversationguides/Documents/Conversation%20Guide%20Closing%20Achievement%20Gap%20Oregon%20FINAL.pdf>
- www.tolerance.org/author/paul-c-gorski