Culturally Relevant and Responsive Interventions for Maximizing Access to Educational Opportunities for Challenged Populations

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Culturally Relevant and Responsive Educational Service Delivery
For Challenging and Challenged Students and Families

“Excellence without equity is a hollow prize indeed…
A school district that sends one-third of its students to the most prestigious universities, provides a mediocre education for another third, and has a one-third dropout rate is not an excellent school district, no matter how many National Merit Scholars it produces. As educators, we have a responsibility to provide a quality instructional program for all of our students- even those who come to us differentially prepared to profit from the offerings typically provided in the traditional school setting. If we adopt a philosophy of inclusion, our goal necessarily becomes one of seeking a variety of approaches to accommodate the needs of the diverse populations we must serve, for adopting standards that encourage and reward excellence in the context of equity and incorporate strategies that provide multiple ways for demonstrating competence. Serving culturally different students who come with a wide range of cultural norms that shape their ways of being in the world can present challenges to educators, not just because of the characteristics of the students and families but also because of the failure of educators to accept, accommodate and affirm the cultural capital that these populations bring to the teaching/learning process.

The fact that certain subgroups have significant disparities in achievement when compared with their more “advantaged” peers, are overrepresented in special education and disciplinary referrals and underrepresented in accelerated programs is not surprising given the unique characteristics that many young people and families bring to traditional school and societal environments that are designed to sort and stratify. The inability of educators to properly address the needs of those who have had a different journey than theirs is often not the result of an unwillingness to ensure excellence for all but precisely because of the mismatch in the unique experiences that have shaped their respective journeys.

This presentation will provide opportunities for participants to reshape their visions of the young people and families that they serve as well as the characteristics of the learning environments that they create so that they are more effective in learning situations where diversity is the norm. Participants will engage in a journey of self-exploration and introspection that prepares them to provide more culturally relevant services to those students who may present challenges to them in the school environment.

…So also is equity that only encourages mediocrity…”
Reflecting on Our Journey

If we do not know what a person’s journey is, it is difficult to understand their motivations, their priorities, their behaviors.

What Shaped My Vision/Perspective?
• Racial and Ethnic Minority
• Culture of Oppression
• Culture of Poverty
• Parent and Grandparent
• Child of Empowered Parent
• Advocate for the Underserved

American Dream: A Nightmare?
So many perceive that the dream is beyond their reach…

ASSUMPTIONS

➢ All students are entitled to the education that they need at any given time in the developmental process; sometimes it is not the one in our lesson plans!
➢ Students as well as adults, have learning, behavioral and communication styles that affect their ability to profit from the teaching/learning process.
➢ Students are differentially prepared academically, emotionally, socially, and psychologically to profit from what the school has to offer them at any specific stage of development.
➢ The requirements for success in the educational system become increasingly more dependent upon specific ways of being and schools tend to favor those pupils whose abilities are consistent with this manner of learning and behaving.
➢ To a significant degree, success is determined by the student’s ability and willingness to negotiate the system, to adapt and adjust satisfactorily to the academic, social and behavioral norms and expectations of school personnel.
   The process of instruction is just as important to students’ success as the content of instruction and strategies must be used that incorporate the behavioral, learning and communication styles of the learner.
➢ The goal of the school should be one of inclusion rather than exclusion –to offer experiences that reach as diverse a population as possible.

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Some Definitions: Defining a Common Ground for Our Work

• **Disproportionality**: The *inappropriate* overrepresentation and over-identification of ethnic minority groups (*certain subgroups*) in special education and the disciplinary system (as well as the underrepresentation of these groups in advanced coursework offered.)

• **Culture**: The collective customs, arts, social institutions and achievements of a particular nation, people or other social group and the attitudes, behaviors, world views that may be characteristic of a significant number of the members of a particular group as a result of the commonalities of experiences that have shaped their responses to the world.

• **The Culturally Different**: That group of individuals whose ways of being are different from that which the environments in which they must function rewards. Cultural differences may include but are not limited to race and ethnicity but may encompass *any socio-cultural group that exhibits characteristics that are different from the expected norms valued by those in charge.*

• **Equity**: Ensuring equal access to high quality educational opportunities for *all* students in a manner that is consistent with their world views, learning, behavioral and communication styles and any other characteristics that can impact their ability to profit from offerings available from the educational system.

• **Culturally Relevant and Responsive Service Delivery**: A framework that recognizes and celebrates the varied cultural wealth, knowledge and skills that diverse groups bring to schools and seeks to *develop relevant teaching practices, employ relevant cultural content and strategies and provide multiple means for demonstrating competence* that are consistent with the characteristics of the clients served.

• **Culturally Competence**: A philosophy and set of behaviors that embodies a professional, political, cultural and ethical disposition that goes beyond superficial teaching acts but is grounded in fundamental beliefs about teaching and learning that automatically respects the unique strengths that diverse populations of students and families bring. *Operationally defined, cultural competence involves the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, attitudes and behaviors that are effective with diverse populations in cross-cultural settings.* Culturally competent educators accept the fact that students have the right to maintain bicultural identities and should be able to be *educated in their own cultural context, in ways that are tied to their lived experiences, personal background and/or cultural ways of knowing and being* in order to have the greatest potential for producing satisfactory educational outcomes.

**Cultural Capital**: The behavior patterns, values, linguistic patterns and skill sets expected in the cultures of specific socio-economic or ethnic groups that *allow them to effectively negotiate the rules, patterns of interaction and demands of the environments and the familial and social groups in which they must function.* What counts as cultural capital may vary in different contexts but also may even be counterproductive in situations where those same skills are not valued.

**Cultural Mismatch**: The *mismatch between aspects of individuals’ home, family, community cultures and those required within the school culture or other environments in which they must function.* There may be a need to both modify some aspects of the school culture to accommodate the differences that students bring as well as to teach students appropriate code-switching survival skills that do not denigrate the skills developed to negotiate their worlds.
Viewing the World Through the Lens of Culture
Youth Culture
Cultures of Privilege and Poverty
Race and Ethnicity
Culture of Families

Multifaceted Definitions of Culture

∞ Focus: The Institutional Culture
Goal: Adopting an Equity Agenda that maximized the potential of all students
Vehicle: Goal setting/Professional development/Accountability
Outcome: Institutional transformation using a cultural lens

∞ Focus: The School Culture
Goal: Establishing standards that take into consideration the differences that diverse populations bring
Vehicle: Incorporating the socio-cultural differences that students bring into our service delivery system
Outcome: Increasing culturally responsive student and family engagement

∞ Focus: The Classroom Culture
Goal: Building staff capacity to broaden their tolerance for variations in student preparation, learning styles, behaviors, sociocultural characteristics
Vehicle: Professional development and support
Outcome: Build staff capacity to address the social emotional needs of students with an emphasis on those who present challenges in the classroom/school

∞ Focus: The Youth Culture
Goal: Aligning service delivery with what we know about the ways that today’s youth have been socialized
Vehicle: Empowering student voices
Outcome: Student-centered, culturally relevant approaches to instruction and behavior

∞ Focus: The Cultures of Families
Goal: Culturally responsive approaches that address the unique needs of diverse family constellations
Vehicle: Understanding and responding to the factors that shape families’ realities
Outcomes: Improving family engagement in ways that are consist with the unique needs that families bring

There is no malice required for destroying those who are different from us...
No fault...No blame...No guilt...
Beyond willing participants in a flawed system...
Youth Culture

Factors That Shape Their Worlds

Today’s Society teaches them that:

- Play more fulfilling than work
- Self-gratification more desirable than self control
  - Emotions more trustworthy than reason
- The “Me” is more important than the “We”

Me Generation

Youth-Defined Rites of Passage

Premature Access to Information

Cornucopia Culture

Gap between the Haves and the Have-nots

Video Culture

Might Makes Right

Challenged Families

Products of a generation of adults who struggled so that they would not have to…

...And they don’t!
Privilege and Poverty
The Culture of Poverty: A Controversial Concept

Ruby Payne, A Framework for Understanding Poverty
In the following verbatim excerpt from the above author, she shares her observations of the cognitive abilities of the poor and outlines the cognitive strategies that characterize those who come from the culture of poverty based upon her review of the work of Israeli researcher, Reuven Feuerstein.

Cognitive Strategies
“Increasingly, students, mostly from poverty, are coming to school without the concepts, but more importantly, without the cognitive strategies. P.120-121

What are their cognitive deficiencies?
• “Blurred and sweeping perceptions and the lack of a systematic method of exploration …They simply do not have the cognitive methodology for doing tasks or a systematic way to finish tasks.”
• “Impaired verbal tools mean that they do not have the vocabulary to deal with the cognitive tasks…Many students who rely solely on casual register so not use or have many prepositions or adverbs in their speech.”
• “Impaired spatial orientation is simply the ability to orient objects. They have neither the vocabulary nor the concepts for spatial orientation”.
• “Impaired temporal orientation is the ability to organize and measure in time. I find among students from poverty that time is neither measured nor heeded”.
• “Impaired observation of constancies is the ability of the brain to hold an object inside the head and keep the memory of the object constant. or “…to hold two objects or two sources inside the head while comparing and contrasting..”
• “Lack of precision and accuracy in data gathering is another cognitive deficiency.”

Based upon your experiences with poor youth and families, how accurate would you say these descriptors are and if accurate, how do they impact their performance in the school and other settings? What does this characterization say about the author’s perceptions of this population?

What are the implications of the following excerpt from her book?

Cognitive Strategies
“If an individual depends upon random episodic story structure for memory patterns, lives in an unpredictable environment and has not developed the ability to plan then… If an individual cannot plan, he/she cannot predict. If an individual cannot predict, he/she cannot identify cause and effect. If an individual cannot identify cause and effect, he/she cannot identify consequence. If an individual cannot identify consequence, he/she cannot control impulsivity. If an individual cannot control impulsivity, he/she has an inclination toward criminal behavior.” Ruby Payne  Page 90
Transforming School Cultures
Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education

It is essential to give all students equal access to a culturally relevant and responsive standards-based curriculum and to employ practices and procedures that are consistent with the characteristics of the populations served. Cultural sensitivity and cultural competence are important skills required of those who are engaged in the education of the young people if all students are to reach their potential. When there is a mismatch between the characteristics and behaviors that young people bring to school and those required for success in the educational environment, it becomes difficult to ensure that they receive an education that allows them to profit from the services offered.

Cultural sensitivity requires educators to be aware of and genuinely believe in the intellectual potential of their students, to accept unequivocally their responsibility to teach all students without ignoring, demeaning, or neglecting their ethic, cultural and socio-cultural identities and to structure their services based on a strength rather than a deficit model. Cultural competence goes further in that it assumes that educators have the prerequisite knowledge about the characteristics of the diverse student populations served and the skills required to redesign teaching and learning to incorporate that knowledge into their work. Rather than ignoring or denying the existence of cultural influences on students behaviors and their own, the culturally competent educator uses this cultural knowledge to design teaching and learning environments and interventions.

How A Culturally Responsive School Environment Looks

A school-community that is culturally responsive is one where educators use the sociocultural backgrounds, prior experiences, world views, and learning, behavioral and communication styles of students in all aspects of the teaching/learning process to maximize student success. In a culturally responsive school-community, it is evident that educators design curriculum and provide instruction that connects new tasks or concepts to prior knowledge and adjusts what and how students are treated and taught to meet their specific social and emotional needs and experiences. Not only is there an emphasis on the teacher as learner but there is evidence that the differences students bring are celebrated and students feel that their family, community, culture and way of being in the world is respected and valued.

Culturally relevant service delivery not only relates to children of color nor does it imply that only people of color can deliver quality instruction to diverse populations. Moreover, there is no “bag of tricks” available that defines the practices and procedures for educating young people from the various backgrounds represented in our schools. Cultural competence involves a dynamic internal pre-disposition that accepts the fact that students bring with them the cultural capital to be successful and the belief that we need to use those characteristics in designing appropriate learning environments.
Cultural competency encompasses three primary areas of understanding and proficiency: awareness, cross-cultural communication and meaningful relationships. Cultural awareness, in and of itself is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to becoming culturally competent. Cultural competency requires not only an understanding of other cultures but also simultaneously being open to engaging in ongoing self-reflection and understanding of how our own cultural history has shaped us and its impact on others. Secondly, the development of effective cross-cultural communication skills is essential in interacting with those who are different from us. It requires mindful listening, responding, learning the art of inquiry and acquiring the observational acuity to discern the intent and impact inherent in our communications and responses to others. Lastly, cultural competency must have as its goal the development of more trusting and compassionate relationships through authentic and open dialogue. When participants feel heard and acknowledged, valued and understood, meaningful relationships are established and a desired sense of community can be created. (Lee Mun Wah)

Culture is the lens through which we see and understand the world and it important that we understand the many ways that we ourselves -and those around us- shape our different beliefs, world views, behaviors, communication styles and many other aspects of how we function. The broadened lens of those who are truly culturally proficient allows us to examine our own beliefs from a new perspective. Because what was once unconscious is now conscious, we become mindful of how our underlying beliefs drive our practices. We are then able to avoid judging the behavior of those around us based only on our limited perspective of how things should be done but incorporate into our perspective the various ways that others may have chosen to do it.

Personal beliefs have a powerful influence on what we know and do. When we are exposed to new information, we unconsciously sift it through our personal beliefs to make sense of it. In doing so, we often reject or modify aspects of the information that do not fit with the beliefs we hold (Bandura, 1982). When we hold beliefs that exclusively focus on those who are different from us as having deficiencies, the focus of education becomes “fixing” students rather than building on their strengths and assets. When cultural understanding becomes a part of the everyday workplace environment and not just isolated professional development offerings, each person can bring their full range of gifts and talents to the teaching/learning process.

As you go on this journey together as a school-community, hopefully, everyone can continually reflect upon their beliefs and how to integrate what we know about ourselves-as individuals and as an institution- with what we know about those with whom we interact so that we can foster a vision of acceptance that affirms the strengths that we all bring. Truly culturally responsive environments are ones that are continually engaged in crafting a set of deliberate action-strategies that focus on dismantling inequitable schooling practices that place any group of students at risk for failure and are committed to the sustained and school- or systems-wide improvement of instruction.
Case in Point: Emotional Disturbance

The identification of students with emotional disturbance based on educational criteria is not a simple, clear-cut task since many variables enter into the identification process making it more subjective than any other disability categories. Any or a combination of the behaviors listed below may characterize a student with an emotional disturbance according to the educational definition, but may also be exhibited by students in other disability categories.

Emotional Disturbance: A Definition: Emotional disturbance, one of twelve disability categories specified under IDEA, is defined as: “a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child’s educational performance:
(a) An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors
(b) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.
(c) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.
(d) A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
(e) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

Conduct Disorder: A Definition: Conduct disorder is defined as a persistent pattern of anti-social, rule breaking or aggressive behavior including defiance, fighting, bullying, disruptiveness, exploitation, and/or disturbed relations with both peers and adults. Research suggests that conduct disorder frequently co-occurs with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), reading disabilities, anxiety disorders, and depression.

The literature suggests that there are no valid theoretical or empirical grounds for differentiating between conduct disorders and other behavioral and emotional disorders and that there are no reliable or socially validated instruments for making such a distinction. Children with emotional disturbance may also be socially maladjusted, but to receive services under IDEA, they must satisfy additional requirements.

In comparison with other students, both with and without disabilities, those identified with emotional disturbance are more likely to be male, African American, and economically disadvantaged. They are also more likely to live with one parent, be in foster care or in another alternative living arrangement. These students’ presenting behavior, as well as its intensity may be episodic, subject to change over time and may serve to direct attention away from underlying issues such as depression or reactions to trauma. Also, African students are also disproportionately represented in the disciplinary system, in informal exclusion from instruction as well as suspensions and expulsions, in the penal system and all other aspects of society that are related to behavioral issues.
Race and Education: Several Approaches

Race is Nonessential Approach
This approach contends that race and/or racism has nothing to do with the current academic and behavioral outcomes of students in U.S. schools, and refutes any inquiry that even raises the racial question or seeks analysis along racial lines (McWhorter, 2000, S. Steele, 1990, Thernstrem, 2000). Thus, the history of racial segregation in U.S. schools, Jim Crow law and destructive racial ideologies are dismissed as unimportant vestiges of the past that minimize the importance of individual merit and personal responsibility. Those who support the “race is nonessential” approach maintain that the failures of people of color in the United States are more a result of individual choice and lack of merit and have little to do with institutional or historical structures or policies.

Race Was Essential But We Have Overcome Racism Approach
Bonilla-Silva (2003) refers to believers in this approach as “racial optimists” or individuals who maintain that a profound transformation has occurred in the United States over the past several decades, that the country has become more egalitarian and just and racial issues are not important variables in explaining outcome disparities. Frequently lacking from this analysis is an examination of any existing institutional practices and policies that remain from past racial ideologies and hierarchies. Moreover, racial optimists tend to believe that any mention of race is unwarranted and only contributes to ignoring the tremendous racial progress that has been made.

Race is the Determining Variable in All That Ails Schools and Society Approach
Proponents of this approach views race and racism as the primary, if not only critical variables that define the disparities in educational performance for African American and Hispanic students and other under performing subgroups. They attribute the failure of these students to thrive exclusively to racism and view the solutions as only related to increased institutional responsibility and individual accountability for educators.

Race: A Colorblind Approach
The use of a colorblind approach seeks to conceal the power and ugliness of race but, at the same time, highlights the very significance of it by claiming that to acknowledge it, would lead to troublesome outcomes. Hence, to many educators, race becomes the pedagogical paradox, the conversation in which many least want to engage, since they are aware of the explosive nature that it can have if they do. The solution becomes to avoid it, rendering it unimportant, making it useless within the context of teaching and learning. Adults can become extremely uncomfortable discussing race when it comes to adult-student interactions. This leads to ambiguity and contradictions in how adults and students deal with race and can contribute to what appears to be unresponsive environments for some students. Mica Pollock (Colorblind...Colormute) suggests that although talking in racial terms can make race matter, not talking in racial terms makes race matter as well. It is possible for issues of racism and classism to impact the lives of individuals in societal institutions even if there are not people within them who are racist.
Critical race theory provides unique ways to ask the important question of what racism has to do with inequities in education by centering the discussion examining racial inequities through a more critical lens than multicultural education or achievement gap theorists do. The process is one of asking penetrating questions that are rarely part of the dialogue in education. It goes beyond the question of “Does racism/sexism/classism play any role in educational disparities?” and presupposes the historical and contemporary role that institutional racism/classism/sexism plays and has played in education by asking the more penetrating question: “How has individual, institutional, societal racism, classism and elitism contributed to those disparities and how can they be dismantled or their impact on the lives of our youth diminished?

Additional questions characteristic of this approach might be:

• How do we ensure that institutional policies and practices—however far they may be from the sites where students are educated—are routinely examined to ensure that they do not inadvertently contribute to inequities or to lack of responsiveness to the unique needs of the diverse populations served?
• How do we make meaning of the disproportionate number of certain subgroups who are placed in special education classrooms?
• What are the characteristics of certain subgroups students that cause them to be disproportionately referred to the disciplinary system, identified as emotionally disturbed and/or placed in more restrictive environments?
• What are the ramifications of an increasingly homogeneous teaching population educating an increasing racially and socio-culturally heterogeneous student population?
• How do we best build the capacity of educators to work with the variety of culturally different students they must serve using a strength rather than a deficit model?
• How do school leaders develop a culture of racial/ethnic/class awareness, sensitivity and inclusiveness that acknowledges the importance of cultural responsiveness?
• How do we impact students’ expectations of themselves that have been shaped by their experiences and their willingness to challenge themselves in higher level classes?
• How do we ensure that culturally different families have the same access to information about how to maximize their children’s access to the highest quality of educational opportunities as the more knowledgeable and “privileged” families do and secure their engagement in the educational process?

Applying a Cultural Lens

To apply a cultural lens, educational leaders need to consider the cultural implications of policies and practices and the impact of their on the clients we serve. Our perspectives, values and viewpoints are formed by our upbringing as well as the institutional context in which we must operate. Often miscommunication or ineffective actions can result when culture is not taken into consideration as we research, plan, and implement policy and practice. Becoming adept at applying a cultural lens is a developmental process that begins with having an awareness of one’s own beliefs, gaining knowledge of the individual and institutional cultures that we serve and understanding how different cultural values intersect.
Steps to Empowering the Powerless

Step 1: Courageous Conversations: Confronting Ourselves and Others
The “courageous conversation” must go beyond platitudes that either victimize or romanticize the clients we serve to having the willingness to explore preconceptions, stereotypes, beliefs and attitudes that impact our expectations for student adjustment and achievement. However variable the within-group characteristics are among culturally different group members, it does not nullify the existence of some common cultural influences on students’ behaviors and those of educators that characterize many that have had similar journeys. It is imperative that educators understand these realities and are willing to engage in honest dialogue about their impact on the kind and quality of services offered.

Step 2: Connect Emotionally, not just Cognitively
Courageous discussions about race, ethnicity and poverty require an emotional as well as an intellectual commitment, a willingness to open oneself up to explore some previously unexplored sensitive issues that can make individuals feel vulnerable. Because many adults are hesitant about dealing with cultural descriptors for fear of stereotyping, over-generalizing or being judged for their honest views, they compensate for these dangers by trying to ignore or deny the existence of the very differences that must be taken into consideration if we are to address the unique needs of the populations served. Transformation begins in the heart, not in the head; change happens first on the affective rather than on the cognitive one.

Step 3: Viewing the World From Multiple Perspectives
To truly develop culturally responsive approaches to service delivery for those who are different from us, it is essential that we suspend our perceptions of the world and try to vicariously experience others’ journeys in contrast to our own. Even if we come from the same racial, ethnic or socio-economic background as those we serve and/or have had to overcome adversity ourselves and therefore think we understand what they feel, we must realize that our current success is a significant part of our own personal journey that shapes how we perceive the adversity that others currently face. If we have conquered it, it impacts how we evaluate its power in shaping our identity and self-worth. The powerless who are still immersed in it often cannot see the light beyond the tunnel and need to be guided -not judged- by those who have.

Step 4: Adopt a Strength rather than a Deficit Model
Acceptance of the different characteristics that those who are challenging to and challenged by the system bring is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to help them achieve success in an environment that is alien to their way of being. Accommodations for those differences by altering various aspects of the service delivery system are also important but not sufficient. Affirmation of the strengths that those who are different bring is a prerequisite to preserving the identity and integrity of the populations served as they try to integrate the discrepant information received from the multiple worlds in which they must function.

Step 5: Identify Strategies that Build on Prior Knowledge
Irrespective of the comparative differences in preparation, skills and resources that some bring to the teaching/learning environment, one must take into consideration the strengths that the intellectual and social capital that their worlds have created. Strategies that emphasize the importance of prior knowledge can serve as a bridge to acquiring skills needed for success in both worlds in a manner that denigrates neither.

If you can show me how I can cling to that which is real to me, while teaching me a way into the larger society, then and only then will I drop my defenses and my hostility and I will sing your praises and help you to make the desert bear fruit.”
Ralph Ellison


**Impediments to Traditional Parent Involvement**
Empowering Culturally Different Families as Equal Status Partners

- Differences in beliefs systems/world views
- Reliance on school authorities for decision-making
- Lack of responsiveness to written communications
  - Feelings of inadequacy in academic areas
- Allowing students to have more latitude in making educational choices
  - Lack of trust in the fairness of the system

- Ensure that the initial contact with culturally different families is a positive one that promotes confidence and lays the groundwork for future involvement in school activities.
- Provide systematic opportunities for outreach to the home and community encourages meaningful participation even without their physical presence.
- Provide information about GATE, the value of Honors and AP enrollment, how to support a Gate-oriented work ethic and other approaches that more advantaged families already use to promote high achievement
- Decrease reliance on lengthy written communications; use brief, creative and consistent modes of communication that maintain positive connections between home and school and that emphasize encouraging high aspirations and having a strong work ethic
- Identify the significant others within the family and community constellation who may have influence on the lives of the students we serve and use their influence when needed
- Provide opportunities for families to focus on their strong suits rather than their weak ones by encouraging practices and activities that they can do rather than those that come from our value systems that make them feel inadequate
- Identify alternative ways for families to demonstrate involvement that also meet the requirements that the school regards as important
- Invite families to participate in uplifting activities where students are demonstrating competency and where families may make meaningful connections with others families who have similar aspirations for their children
- Encourage curriculum development that ensures multicultural content and images; choose activities that validate the various cultures and lifestyles represented by your client population and the values that they hold
- Use technology to communicate more effectively with families through multimedia approaches

If they knew better, they would do better…
Action Planning: Adopting a Socio-cultural Lens

As you reflect upon our discussion today and your beliefs, attitudes and behaviors and those of your colleagues relative to the issues we have discussed, what do you need to:

**Start?** *What can I/we do to ensure that we continue to see issues from a socio-cultural lens?*

Focus on ME ________________________________________________________________

Focus on US ______________________________________________________________

**Stop?** *In what ways have my/our behaviors not been consistent with this vision?*

Focus on ME ______________________________________________________________

Focus on US ______________________________________________________________

**Continue?** *What am I/are we doing right that approach behaviors from the socio-cultural perspectives of the diverse clients we serve?*

Focus on ME ______________________________________________________________

Focus on US ______________________________________________________________

What barriers exist to achieving the vision shared? ______________________________

Priority Area to Address to Transform Our School Culture: __________________________
If you control a man’s thinking,  
you don’t have to worry about his action.  
If you determine what a man shall think,  
you don’t have to concern yourself about what he will do.  
If you make a man feel that he is inferior,  
you don’t have to compel him to accept an inferior status,  
he will seek it for himself.  
If you make a man feel that he is justly an outcast,  
you don’t have to order him to the back door.  
He will go without being told and if there is no back door,  
his very nature will demand one…”

Carter G. Woodson  
1933