

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading

CULTURALLY
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TEACHING AND
LEADING





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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

What is Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading?

Illinois adopted Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading standards in 2021. These standards ensure that educators and school leaders are meeting the needs of all students through the inclusion of cultures, customs, experiences, and perspectives to create culturally responsive classrooms. Culturally responsive teaching aims to affirm students' stories, histories, and experiences to benefit learning for students. ISBE describes the potential benefits: “Cultural responsiveness improves student outcomes across a range of indicators from math and reading scores to attendance, to postsecondary enrollment. The standards encourage future teachers, administrators, and school support personnel to engage in self-reflection, to get to know their students' families, to connect the curriculum to students' lives, and to support students.”

What is Culturally Responsive Teaching?

Instructional Approach	Definition and Goal of Approach
Multiculturalism (Banks and McGee Banks, 2004, 2007)	This approach focuses on how better understanding multiple cultures can help us improve pedagogy.
Culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2014)	This approach focuses on students' intellectual growth, creating an affirming environment, and teaching students to solve societal and real-world concerns.
Culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000)	This approach commits to using students' customs, experiences, and perspectives as a means for better classroom practices.
Culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris et al., 2017)	This approach celebrates multi-culturalism and decenters whiteness in schools and asserts that these efforts must be sustained throughout a student's schooling.
Historically responsive literacy (HRL) (Muhammad, 2023)	This is an approach that constructs an equity framework that blends histories, identities, and literacy to create culturally responsive classrooms.
Culturally and Community Immersive Pedagogy (Bunch, 2023).	This approach extends the practices of cultural responsiveness through community/cultural engagement and immersion.

Bunch, M. 2024,
*The Magnitude
of Us.*, Teachers
College Press.



“The brain uses cultural information to turn everyday happenings into meaningful events. If we want to help learners do more higher order thinking, then we have to access their brain’s cognitive structures to deliver culturally responsive instruction.”

Zaretta Hammond, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students*



What is Culturally Responsive Leading?

Culturally Responsive Leading Scholars

Osly Flores, University of Illinois

Ann Ishimaru, University of Washington

Lauri D. Johnson, Boston College

Muhammad Khalifa, Ohio State University

Rachel Roegman, University of Illinois

AJ Welton, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Culturally Responsive Leading is based on culturally responsive teaching principles and includes critical self-reflection, the commitment to helping teachers and staff become more culturally responsive and engaging with students and the community.





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Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards:

- 1. Self-awareness and relationship to others**
- 2. Systems of oppression**
- 3. Students as individuals**
- 4. Students as co-creators**
- 5. Leveraging student advocacy**
- 6. CRTL family and community collaboration**
- 7. Content selection in all curricula**
- 8. Student representation in the learning environment**

ISBE CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING AND LEADING STANDARDS



STANDARD	WHAT IT ENTAILS	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN ACTION
Self Awareness and Relationships to Others	Building relationships with students and families, perspective taking, illuminating the histories/lived experiences of others, learn about your students, examine your positionality (lens) through self-reflection and unlearning, advocating for students and educational reform, and listening to students.	This might look like journaling, engaging in a meaningful professional development to fill in a skill gap, attending a student's extracurricular school activity, making a positive phone call home, having a 1-1 check in with a student.
Understand Systems of Oppression	Understanding and learning about systems of oppression and systemic inequities is an ongoing commitment. This includes understanding the histories of historically marginalized cultures, groups, and communities. Develop curricula that helps expand perspectives and celebrate an array of cultures and ethnicities.	This might look like attending a webinar about culturally responsive teaching, reading a text about a history you are not well versed in, learning about your inequities or lack of access in your city (e.g. redlining, etc.), committing to creating a lesson plan about a group often overlooked, or collaborating with a colleague to help expand your area of knowledge.
Students as Individuals	Valuing students, means taking the time to know your students. This includes communicating with students, including your students in dialogue in curricula, and offering representation in lessons and classroom activities.	This might look like having a 1-1 meeting with a student to check in, attending one of their school extracurricular events, acknowledging them for a positive action you witnessed or academic strength, or giving them choice on an assignment regarding how they demonstrate their learning.
Students as Co-Creators	Students are listened to and respected. Student feedback and voice are considered. Authentic relationships and mentoring is prioritized. Opportunities for students to lead and guide inquiry is provided.	This might look like allowing students to lead a Socratic seminar about a topic the class is learning about. This could also include offering students choice in how they demonstrate learning (e.g. a menu of options for a final project), or a self-assessment that students complete.

ISBE CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING AND LEADING STANDARDS



STANDARD	WHAT IT ENTAILS	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN ACTION
Leveraging Student Advocacy	Leveraging student advocacy means offering guidance to students, connecting with students, helping students learn how to collaborate, and modeling and encouraging autonomy.	This might look like allowing students to share their insights about a lesson or to help co-create a project idea. It also includes inquiry based learning, and students having the opportunity to solve their own questions and problems.
Family and Community Collaboration	Valuing students, their families, and their cultures and experiences, means taking the time to know your students. This includes communicating with students and families, including your students in dialogue in curricula, and offering representation in lessons and classroom activities.	This might look like inviting a parent in to speak to the class about an area of expertise they have, sending home a monthly newsletter, sharing a student survey for feedback about a lesson plan or the classroom culture, etc.
Content Selection in all Curricula	Content selection in all curricula means working to create inclusive lessons and activities that provide representation for students to see themselves in curricula and connect their worlds to the learning content.	This might look like examining inclusive histories, including a diverse range of stories and texts, offering multiple viewpoints and perspectives, and considering global learning. An assessment tool/framework (e.g. the un/HUSH framework) can help assess if lessons are culturally responsive.
Student Representation in the Learning Environment	Student representation in the learning environment means having diversity and inclusion in curriculum, and also representing it visually in your classrooms, text choices, etc. Inclusion should consider languages, cultures, ethnicities, and so forth.	This might look like a class library with diverse books, posters and classroom decorations that are inclusive, and lessons that celebrate and offer learning opportunities about other communities, cultures, people, and histories.



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Some potential benefits of culturally responsive teaching and leading include:

Improving teacher retention.

Closing opportunity gaps.

Culturally responsive pedagogy that engages student learning.

Preparing teachers to better support student leadership.

Inviting educators to self-examine and assess how their positionality impacts their teaching.

Providing teachers with tools to build relationships with students and families.



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**Illinois State Superintendent
Dr. Tony Sanders Discusses Why Culturally
Relevant Teaching Matters**

HOW DO WE BEGIN?

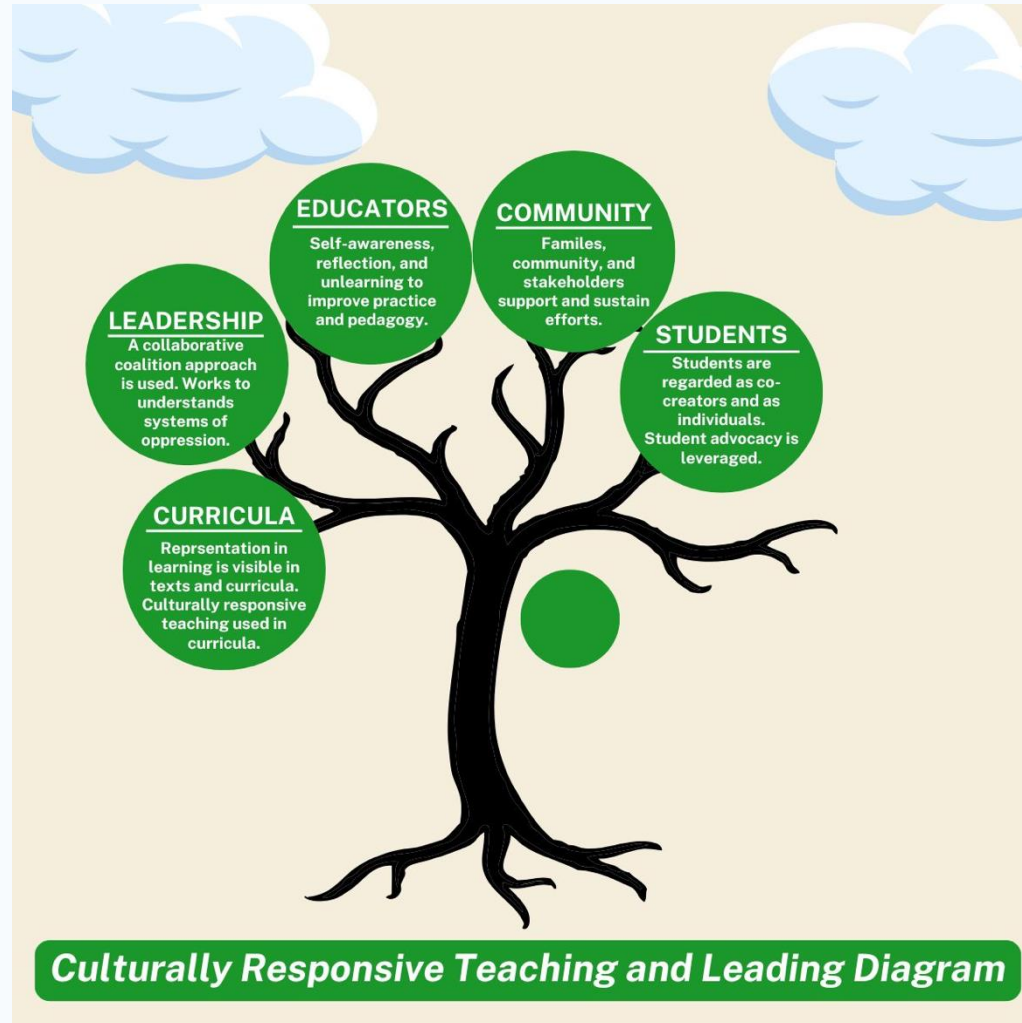
The University of Illinois will provide educators and school leaders with staff development, resources, asynchronous learning modules, and 1-1 support.

Strategies that will help ensure the successful embedding of Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading standards include:

- Survey data and research
- Teacher and administration feedback
- Use of assessments and/or the un/HUSH framework to guide implementation
- ISBE culturally responsive teaching and leading assessments
- University of Illinois CRTL professional development and learning opportunities



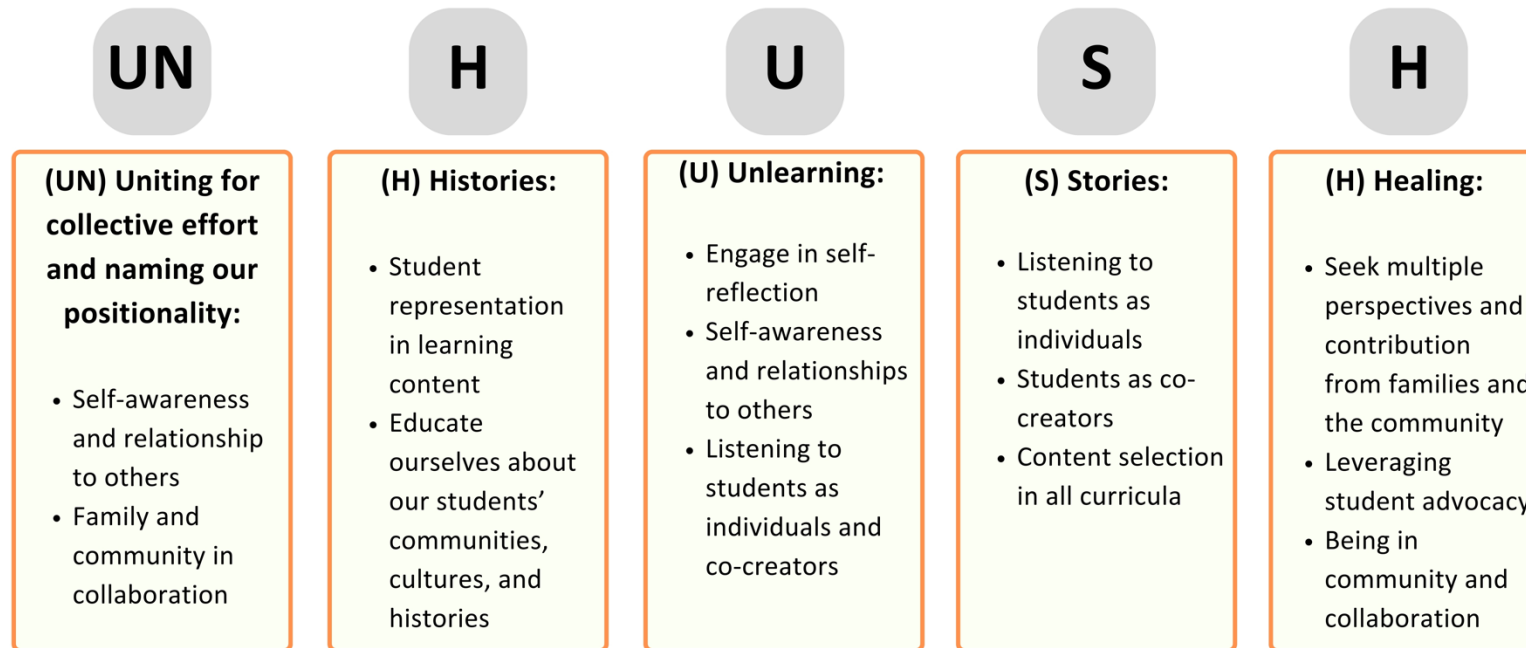
A Summary of Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards



The un/HUSH Framework

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE un/HUSH FRAMEWORK©

This framework is aligned with Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and can help assess and guide curricula development



The un/HUSH framework by Dr. Marlee Bunch aligned with ISBE'S CRTL standards offers a blueprint for educators and leaders to implement, assess, and sustain culturally responsive teaching principles. Bunch, M. 2024. *The Magnitude of Us*. Teachers College Press.

“Teachers must learn to construct pedagogical practices that have relevance and meaning to our students’ social and cultural realities.”

Tyrone Howard, *Why Race and Culture Matter in Schools*



OUR TEAM

Our team is comprised of professionals with expertise in education, evaluation, history, curriculum development, leadership, and state standards.

Email us with any questions or for support:

Email: CRTL-ISBE@education.illinois.edu

