



Culturally Sustaining/Responsive PLCs

Culturally Sustaining/Responsive Practices: Culturally responsive practices utilize [High-Quality Instructional Resources](#) and asset-based mindsets to create an inclusive environment where each student, particularly those from underserved communities, feels a sense of belonging and are held to high expectations with *Kentucky Academic Standards* and grade-level appropriate content. These practices create [vibrant learning experiences](#) that provide student choice and voice, are student-led, meaningful to students and allow students to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. They also reflect students' cultural identities throughout the curriculum. Finally, these practices celebrate and leverage students' cultures and identities and provide opportunities to broaden perspectives by learning about other cultures.

What do we expect our students to learn? Teacher teams identify the knowledge, skills and dispositions each student is to acquire as a result of each unit of instruction.

When implementing standards-aligned instruction, answer the following questions:

- Does what we want students to learn include historically underrepresented communities' knowledge and contributions (historical or current)?
- Does the knowledge we expect students to learn connect to the communities and experiences of historically underrepresented communities?
- Is what we want students to learn relevant and beneficial to all students including historically underrepresented communities? How will we know?
- Is what we want students to learn aligned to grade level standards?

How will we know if they are learning?

- Are the scales and rubrics used culturally responsive/sustaining? Are there unintentional biases included with some of the questions?
- What are nontraditional ways of measuring the knowledge of students (especially historically underrepresented students)?
- What are the best ways for our students to show what they know?

How will we teach it? "Students deserve access to instructional resources that are culturally relevant, free from bias and accessible for all, resources they can readily connect to the diverse perspectives of their communities" (KDE Model Curriculum Framework, 2023).

- Are the instructional methods culturally responsive/sustaining and inclusive? What are the connections to windows (curricula that provides a glimpse into another perspective), mirrors (curricula that reflects back students' own lives) or sliding doors (curricula that is highly engaging)?
- Do our instructional methods recognize, celebrate and leverage students' cultures, identities and learning styles and provide opportunities to broaden perspectives by learning about other cultures? (KDE Model Curriculum Framework, 2023)
- How are we incorporating student voice and choice into our pedagogy?

How will we respond when some students do not learn?

- How will we use critical self-reflection/collective reflection techniques to understand when (and why) some students from historically underrepresented backgrounds are not responding to our instruction and content?
- How will we utilize disaggregated data to ensure students from all backgrounds fully grasp the content?
- How will feedback on instruction based on student voice be utilized?

How will we extend learning to students who already know it? Teacher teams identify students who have reached identified learning outcomes to extend the student's learning.

Citations:

Kentucky Department of Education. (September, 2023). Model curriculum framework- Section II: Professional Learning Communities. KYstandards.org. <https://kystandards.org/standards-resources/model-curriculum-framework/>

Marshall, S.L. and Khalifa, M.A. (2018). Humanizing school communities: Culturally responsive leadership in the shaping of curriculum and instruction, *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 56 No. 5, pp. 533-545. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-01-2018-0018>