

Running head: "STAYING WOKE" ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

"Staying Woke" on Educational Equity through Culturally Responsive Teaching

Emily Alicia Affolter

A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

2017

Reading Committee:

Geneva Gay, Chair

Dan Garvey

Dixie Massey

Anthony Geist

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

College of Education

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE
TEACHING

©Copyright 2017
Emily Alicia Affolter

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Abstract

“Staying Woke” on Educational Equity through Culturally Responsive Teaching

Emily Alicia Affolter

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:
Professor Geneva Gay
College of Education

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of a culturally responsive professional development intervention for teachers and school leaders in a K-5 school setting. This qualitative case study involved a five-month long professional development intervention called the Culturally Responsive Professional Development (CRPD) series, largely informed by Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) tenets. A selected review of research and scholarship was conducted to design the CRPD and develop the trajectory of the study, it involved: critical social justice in education, social justice teacher professional development, multicultural education, multicultural teacher preparation, and critical ethnography.

The major findings by category and specifics within categories were:

- **Teachers Gained**

- Tools and strategies to reform their curricula
- Increased ease with discomfort
- Greater self-knowledge resulting from reflections on and analyses of the influences of one’s positionality in different settings.

- **Areas of Strength and Growth**

- Incorporating tenets of justice and anti-bias action into curricula
- Deeper insights about Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)
- More leadership in CRT

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

-Unwavering commitment to culturally responsive teaching.

- **School-Wide Growth Needs**

-Feeling equal and safe

-Countering arrogance about how much progress the school has made in CRT that impedes further growth

-More consistency in what culturally responsive teaching means and how it is enacted

-Updating ideas of progressivism to better facilitate efforts in CRT.

The findings suggest that there was a gap in teachers’ beliefs and behaviors regarding culturally responsive teaching. In addition, teacher readiness and receptivity to the intervention varied, and receptivity could be cultivated by peer mentorship among teachers at different stages of readiness for CRT. The study translated theory to practice: with the design of the intervention, its implementation, and teachers critically reflecting on their practices. Recommendations for future research and practice were made to improve CRT continuity, increase continued teacher learning, and to help teachers in becoming more culturally responsive in their classrooms and beyond.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....v

Dedication.....ix

Chapter I 1

Introduction 1

 Purpose of Research6

 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework.....7

Chapter II13

Selected Review of Research and Scholarship.....13

 Critical Social Justice in Education.....13

 Social Justice Teacher Professional Development19

 Multicultural Education29

 Multicultural Education is Intersectional.....33

 Culturally Responsive Teaching.....35

 Multicultural Teacher Preparation40

Research Design44

Summary.....47

Chapter III50

Methodology.....50

 Research Designs: A Qualitative Case Study.....50

 Case Study54

 Participatory Action Research.....57

 Ethnographic Techniques.....60

Primary Research Questions.....64

 Participants64

 Context and Setting65

 Building Rapport with School Staff.....66

 Curriculum Development.....67

Data Collection.....69

 Study Sequencing72

Data Analysis.....73

Summary.....76

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Chapter IV	78
Data Analysis and Findings	78
Individual Tools and Strategies to Reform Curriculum	80
Ease with Discomfort Supported by Community Building.....	84
Teachers Gain Increasing Humility Over Time	87
Tempered Comfort with Discomfort	89
Increased Self-Reflection	89
A Lack of Justice and Action Addressed in Curriculum	92
Wanting to Go Deeper	95
Modeling What was Done Well.....	96
Collaborative Work Time	97
Hesitation Regarding Culturally Responsive Leadership	98
School Strength: Staff Dedication to Culturally Responsive Teaching	98
Obstacles to Cultural Responsiveness	101
Need to Feel Equal and Safe	101
Lack of Consistency or Buy-In.....	104
Arrogance.....	109
Tradition as a Road Block.....	111
Eight Principles of Equitable Education Applied to Findings	116
Summary	118
Chapter V	120
Discussion and Conclusion	120
Summary	120
Discussion and Interpretation	121
Gap in Beliefs and Behaviors.....	121
Cultivating Readiness and Receptivity.....	123
Connecting Theory to Practice	124
Sustained and Systematic Training.....	125
Teacher Community Building	126
Culturally Responsive Teaching Requires Systemic Change	127
Variability in Culturally Responsive Practices	128
Limitations	130
Significance	131
Recommendations for Future Research and Practice	133
Planting Roots for Justice	136

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

References.....	138
APPENDIX A: Survey Questions	154
Appendix B: Interview Protocols	157
Appendix C: Informed Consent Forms.....	160
Appendix D: Observation Guide	166
Appendix E: Email Recruitment	167
Appendix F	170
Culturally Responsive Professional Development (CRPD) Intervention Learning Objectives.	170
Appendix G: Curriculum Vitae	171

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Figure 1. Theory of Change for Educators based on a Culturally Responsive Professional Development (CRPD) Model. 10

Figure 2. Funneled interviewing model used for data collection..... 71

Figure 3. Culturally Responsive Professional Development project timeline..... 73

Figure 4. Study Findings..... 79

Figure 5. A CRPD Critical Question Guide..... 81

Figure 6. The Path to Competence. Reprinted from Frances E. Kendall, Ph.D., by F. Kendall (2017). Retrieved from <http://www.franceskendall.com/>..... 82

Figure 7. Culturally responsive curricular workshop themes co-developed at the fifth CRPD. .. 94

Figure 8. Areas of needed growth..... 95

Figure 9. Table of findings engaging with the eight principles for equitable education. 117

Acknowledgments

Just as teacher professional development does not exist in a silo, a study like this cannot be done alone. This experience permeated every nook and cranny of my life. It seeped into dinners with friends, work breaks, sleepless nights, conference presentations, runs and bike rides, and time with my precious newborn. Something this all-consuming is inevitably shaped by personal factors.

I finished the rough draft of this dissertation the week before going into labor, and made revisions with a newborn in tow. The generous support of my parents, Bill and Suzie, and my in-laws, Dave and Janet, made it possible for me to work uninterrupted, while they cared for our son. Logistically and emotionally, I would not have had the capacity for this without their selfless care. Also, Mom, I owe you a huge debt of gratitude for three decades of tireless editorial prowess. You have strengthened my work ethic and patience for the writing process, pushed me to think more deeply, and say what I mean. And Dad, thank you for providing a counter-balance to Mom’s critique, with your unending praise and affirmation, I have felt nothing but encouragement from you. You two as parents offer a prime balance for a burgeoning scholar--a critical lens paired with unfaltering cheerleading. These complementary roles has kept me afloat and moving forward. Thank you to my brother, Dave, and his partner, Tobin, for bringing levity and loving support to my world through this process. Like a good younger sibling, I have tirelessly observed all your moves and done my best to mimic them; most notably, your gentle kindness, humor, and endless curiosity.

I would like to thank Dr. Bev Santo and Dr. Jordana DeZeeuw Spencer who mentored me as a M.A. student in Multicultural Education at Prescott College, laying the groundwork for my doctoral trajectory. Their guidance and confidence in me led me here, helping me to find purpose

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

and passion, and more importantly, to find the strength and confidence in myself to choose this path.

Thank you to my reading committee, Dr. Tony Geist, Dr. Dixie Massey, Dr. Dan Garvey, and to my advisor, Dr. Geneva Gay. I felt both cared for and pushed by you all throughout this process. I appreciated all the energy you poured into my professional development-- it's no small thing to give a student this level of attention and I could not have done it without your backing. Dixie, you are one of the most dynamic educators I have ever met, and as I consider my future teaching life, I strive to teach with the dedication and heart that you bring to your students. Dan, you are so many things to me. You are three-dimensional in your brilliance, and much like your many fans, I see you as a mentor and cherish your friendship. I access your supernova metaphor often, remembering that the bus will continue to stop, whether or not I am on it. Your sage advice lives in my psyche, guiding me forward and reminding me to have faith in myself as I stumble on. Geneva, you represent this whole journey to me. When we are meeting, I feel like the only person in your world, as you have offered innumerable hours of undivided attention to me. I have loved every minute, attempting to take down all of your thoughts verbatim for future reference unless I am laughing too hard to do so. Thank you for your pushing me to think outside the bounds of convention. You have set the bar high, and yet, also know when to let go and watch me try to fly.

Thank you to my College of Education comrades, many of whom served on the panel of critical friends: Dalya Perez, Raedell Cannie, Aditi Rajendran, Sunun Park, and Suzie Hodges. You weighed in on the professional development intervention, provided insightful feedback, which pushed me to see past my own limitations in the work. I am endlessly thankful that my

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

epistemological community is made up of such strong and inspirational women, with whom I can laugh and be totally vulnerable.

To my boss, Dr. Liz Litzler whose leadership on our research team has been as personal as it has professional. Thank you for reminding me that a robust community is foundational to doing quality work. The Center for Research and Evaluation for STEM Equity, our work group, has offered me the space to grow in tandem with the dissertation, and to find solidarity and healthy resistance in dialogue.

Sarah Rosman--you are responsible for a hefty quantity of my growth over the last six years. Thank you for partnering with me in practice, for sharing your classroom gifts, insights, and working community. Your reflective depth continues to inform my practice. Being in alignment with you has fueled every step of this journey.

To the Maple Rock study participants, thank you for your openness to participating in this intervention. You offered so much of yourselves to this process--time, energy, heart, and flexibility. I have been privileged to work among you. You are an exceptionally dedicated and motivated group of educators, and there is no denying how deeply you care for your students.

Finally, to my loyal life partner, Nate Liebenstein, and our beautiful boy, Skyler. Nate, I couldn't have done a fraction of this without you. You have moved across the country in support of my dreams without question. Your support has been unfaltering, every step of the way. I will never forget being hospitalized, recovering from a complicated labor with our infant son, feeling like this Ph.D. was an insurmountable task, only to overhear you telling Sky, “Your mama is going to be a doctor, it's our number one priority.” In my most volatile moments you have propped me up and cared for me in the most simple and profound ways. Every day, you inspire

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE
TEACHING

me to be my most generous self. And thank you to sweet baby Sky, for providing blissful respite from the writing process. You are everything.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE
TEACHING

Dedication

*For my son Sky, who was born during this study. May the world you inherit be steadily changing
for the better. May you learn to question the status quo, and act courageously to transform it.*

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

“Staying Woke” on Educational Equity through Culturally Responsive Teaching

Chapter I Introduction

The other day while tilling the soil in my friend’s garden in an attempt to plant tomatoes, I struggled to clear the bed because of the presence of an insistent (and seemingly endless) root system. After an afternoon of weeding, I was almost certain I had cleared the garden bed of all impediments, but these roots were steadfast. It occurred to me that these roots had permeated the garden box from a modest-sized tree at least 10 yards away. Tree root systems are significantly larger than the trees themselves, and are virtually invisible on the ground.

A tree is incomplete without its root system, yet when I stand, infinitesimally small in comparison, in an enchanting sequoia grove I do not consider what is holding all that weight, which is the majority of what makes a sequoia a sequoia. Imagine every individual human as a tree. Consider the roots of those trees as deeply socialized and racialized belief systems about good and bad, right and wrong, ideas of common sense, and superiority and inferiority. This study was undertaken to reveal how teachers’ roots in the United States, a White dominant culture (appearing as seemingly invisible and neutral) inform their beliefs and values systems, and their pedagogies.

According to recent forest ecological research, trees communicate with one another both within and outside of their species in the same nature community (Simard, 2015). They use fungal networks among their root systems to share resources, sending food to neighbors of different species. One British Columbia, Canada study found a single douglas fir sharing resources with 47 others (Frazer, 2015). Communities (even of trees) are comprised of reciprocal

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

relationships among members that build cohesion, strength, and quality of community, not similarity. The essence of these relationships is difference.

This study examined socialized root systems, values, and skills of teachers participating in a community of practice related to cultural diversity, sharing resources to develop equitable consciousness individually and collectively, and how these efforts affected knowledge of and pedagogical practices for cultural diversity. Everyone acculturated in the United States is conditioned with prejudice and affected in some way by ethnic and cultural biases. Those who have unlearned many of these acculturated messages have the most resources pertinent to cultural diversity to share with their communities. Ultimately, though, teachers must hold themselves and each other accountable on the lifelong path of unlearning damaging internalized notions of superiority and inferiority. They must act similar to trees in a forest by sharing resources in varied, diverse networks to support their pedagogical, intellectual, emotional, and ethical quests. Transformative epistemological and methodological communities must hold up a mirror to their members to enforce accountability for each other for cultivating sustainable, equitable teaching practices.

I identify as a White female and have taught in various schools populated by predominantly White faculty who defined themselves as liberal, and therefore consider themselves exempt from being racist and engaging in other forms of oppression. They are not the exceptional few but are indicative of similar beliefs held by other teachers in the U.S. Socialization and racialization are inevitable growing up in the United States (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012; DiAngelo, 2012; Tatum, 2003). It is not a matter of whether or not these White faculty at predominantly White schools are prejudiced; it is a matter of if they choose to identify their biased, socialized beliefs (their roots) and work to unpack them and make them visible in

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

their classrooms to welcome critical, liberatory thoughts and actions. Uncovering these harmful beliefs can be in part facilitated by professionals, as they are so habituated in people's minds, they can be extremely difficult to recognize, identify, and interrogate without proper intervention. This study examined teachers engaging in professional development about recognizing prejudiced habits of mind like racism, and rethinking their pedagogies in ways that address and challenge those habits of mind.

Racism, as indicated by Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012), is something that dominant society teaches as “individual acts of meanness committed by a few bad people” (p. 102). It is important to reframe the concept of racism as not beliefs held by a binary of individuals, opposing good versus bad, but as an all-encompassing system that assumes “all people hold prejudices, especially across racial lines in a society deeply divided by race” (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012, p. 102). Irving (2014) offered the following explanation of the racialization process:

I can think of no bigger misstep in American history than the invention and perpetuation of the idea of White superiority. It allows White children to believe they are exceptional and entitled while allowing children of color to believe they are inferior and less deserving. Racism crushes spirits, incites divisiveness, and justifies the estrangement of entire groups of individuals who, like all humans, come into the world full of goodness, with a desire to connect, and with boundless capacity to learn and grow. Unless adults understand racism, they will, as I did, unknowingly teach it to their children. (p. xiii)

Irving’s description of White superiority as imposed upon children by parents and teachers has great ripple effects, offering White students significantly more opportunities and advantages than their non-White peers.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Stark disparities in the academic achievement of students of color and low-income students compared to middle class and affluent White students have a complex history in the United States, and is still of utmost concern today (Irving, 2014; Gay, 2010; Tatum, 2003). Teachers tend to teach students from historically disenfranchised groups by employing a pathological paradigm that results in low performance expectations for students of color and poverty (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). The United States includes a pluralistic and diasporic population that is socially stratified and racially segregated. Law enforcement profiling against poor individuals and communities of color is rampant in the news, tragically illustrated by recent high profile police homicides. These cases are indicative of a larger problem of racial and social class disparities in social, economic, and educational opportunities and achievements. Schools have a great responsibility to make pedagogical changes that address these problems.

The school-to-prison pipeline represents a junction between the K-12 schooling system and juvenile justice system in which youth from marginalized populations often land (Mallett, 2015; Kim, Losen, & Hewitt, 2010). Mallett (2015) contended that,

The young people caught in the pipeline and in the juvenile courts’ detention and incarceration facilities share a number of vulnerabilities. Thus, these punishment policies disproportionately involve certain at-risk groups. The first group includes children and adolescents who are poor, an experience that disproportionately involves families of color-- African American, Hispanic American, and Native American minorities, depending on the community location. (p. 5)

The greater responsibility for changing this pattern of opportunity for some students and discrimination of others, rests with teachers and schools, rather than the students themselves

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

(Kim, Losen & Hewitt, 2010). Tatum (2003) explained that, “If you are paying attention, the legacy of racism is not hard to see, and we are all affected by it” (p. 3).

According to the National Center on Education Statistics, in the United States, 51% of students identify as White, followed by 15.7% as Black, 24.3% as Latino, 5% as Asian or Pacific Islander, 1% as American Indian or Alaska Native, and 2.3% as two or more races. Also, 9.2% of students are English language learners (Kena, Musu-Gillette, Robinson, Wang, Rathbun, Zhang, Wilkinson-Flicker, Barmer, Velez, Nachazel, Dziuba, Smith, Nelson, Robles-Villalba, Soo, & Ballard, 2015). The number of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch is 27%. The total number of White students enrolled in public and secondary elementary schools has declined significantly since 2002. Between 2002 and 2012 (the last year these data were available) the total of White students decreased (from 59 to 51 percent), while the rate of Latino students is steadily increasing. From 2002 to 2012, the number of Latino students increased (from 18 to 24 percent) in public schools (Kena et al., 2015). White students will not be in the majority for much longer. Meanwhile, students of color have disproportionately low levels of achievement in all areas of education (Kena et al., 2015). The majority of teachers in U.S. public schools (82 percent) are White (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

DiAngelo (2012) contended that “society accepts the misinformation and mistreatment of the minoritized group because the dominant group has been socialized to see them as less valuable, if the minoritized group is considered at all” (p. 66). This socialized habit of mind runs deep. Unearned and internalized White superiority over people of color is pervasive in school pedagogy, curriculum, structure, and practice, and must be acted upon and against (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). In today’s increasingly heterogeneous classrooms and schools, culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010) and culturally relevant pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2004) must be employed to encourage students to develop critical consciousness, cognitive

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

abilities, and action-oriented skills to challenge dominant, exclusionary norms (Freire, 2000).

Teachers need to reframe their pedagogical strategies to better serve the needs of diverse learners with different cultural heritages and ethnic identities. Teaching with a critical consciousness involves questioning existing hierarchies of power, deconstructing common teaching practices, and promoting more equitable, just, and transformative learning opportunities. Creating inclusive learning classrooms and educational systems requires familiarity with fundamental multicultural beliefs, values, concepts, principles, and methodologies.

Purpose of Research

While there is a growing body of research on culturally responsive professional development for teachers, various components have not been profiled or characterized as thoroughly as they could and need to be. This study was undertaken to fill these gaps and to improve understandings of culturally responsive professional development for teachers enacted in an elementary school setting.

This study explored the transformative nature of a culturally responsive professional development program for teachers in a predominantly White K-8 public school in the Pacific Northwest. I co-created and co-facilitated six Culturally Responsive Professional Development (CRPD) sessions over an academic semester with other school leaders for the K-5 teaching staff of Maple Rock School (pseudonym). The curricula for these sessions were written in collaboration with three school co-leaders and validated by a panel of experts in multicultural education. I was interested in seeing what parts of the professional development program resonated most with teachers and caused shifts in their frames of reference and actions in the classroom. I also wanted to identify areas of resistance and determine what did not work for the participating teachers and why, with the ultimate goal of building professional development

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

interventions for educators that transform their understanding of self, students, their school, and the system at large towards anti-racist, equitable pedagogies, and curricula. In addition, I wanted to understand what school staff members identified as school-wide strengths and weaknesses regarding culturally responsive teaching to better assess how a professional development intervention could be more school need-based, viable, and responsive.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study was grounded in anti-bias and social justice pedagogies, ideologies, and curricula. hooks (1994) asserted:

When we, as educators, allow our pedagogy to be radically changed by our recognition of a multicultural world, we can give students the education they desire and deserve. We can teach in ways that transforms [sic] consciousness, creating a climate of free expression that is the essence of a truly liberatory liberal arts education. (p. 44)

Predominantly White institutions must urgently cultivate proficiency in culturally responsive teaching and learning in order to understand and challenge how they enact and benefit from White privilege. In this study, I considered the notion of teacher transformative self-study as fundamental to multicultural curriculum and instruction. This belief is congruent with Banks' (2001) contention that “Multicultural education assumes that with acquaintance and understanding, respect may follow” (p. 14). Banks refers to acquaintance and understanding of different cultural groups, stories, and histories in the classroom. The experience of learning about diverse people's experiences is often transformative, giving learners more insight about themselves and their positionality. Understanding transformative learning through self-study can be a powerful tool for teachers to encourage meaningful reflection and invite critical analysis of often unquestioned habits and norms. As Mezirow (2000) explained:

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

A defining condition of being human is our urgent need to understand and order the meaning of our experience, to integrate it with what we know to avoid the threat of chaos. If we are unable to understand, we often turn to tradition, thoughtlessly seize explanations by authority figures, or resort to various psychological mechanisms, such as projection and rationalization, to create imaginary meanings. (p. 3)

Transformational theory deals with becoming critically aware of one’s own, and others’ implicit assumptions and expectations, and continually reevaluating their relevance. Understanding one’s assumptions and expectations provides clarity in making sense of taken-for-granted habits of mind, that may or may not be equitable. Carnicelli and Boluk (2017) explained that transformative learning involves a structural change in thought, feeling, and action, shifting one’s consciousness in ways that significantly alters one’s way of being in the world. Freire’s (2000) concept of *conscientization* leads to transformative learning, achieved by the merging of rational thought and reflection, in the context of witnessing social injustices. The coupling of rational thought and reflection are a pathway to transformative learning. Too often in schools rational thought is not accompanied by critical reflection (both intraspective and otherwise) leading to a cultural stagnancy or perpetuation of the status quo (Carnicelli & Boluk, 2017).

With the Freirean notion of *conscientization*, and subsequently increased self-understanding, possibilities are awakened for action and disruption of the status quo. Culturally responsive pedagogy can be challenging to adopt and facilitate, because habits of mind often appear too deeply rooted, but no reality is static. By engaging in a critical analysis of personal experiences, one can better understand and more freely participate in his or her own life, and consequently, in the lives of others.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Culturally responsive (Gay, 2010) and culturally relevant pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2009) must be adopted and harnessed so that teachers and students develop the skills to challenge exclusionary norms. This means teaching for a heterogeneous classroom, capitalizing on diverse student groups' funds of knowledge, and addressing personal and structural inequities with an orientation for change. Teachers must frame their pedagogical values through curiosity about how to best serve the needs of diverse learning communities comprised of students with different cultural heritages and ethnic identities. To teach in this manner, one must question existing hierarchies of power and critique common teaching practices to be more equitable, just, and transformative. Culturally responsive teaching is offered as a charge to interrupt the disempowering pattern of students of color with disproportionate levels of achievement in U.S. schools to one of achievement and opportunity for students of color. Given culturally responsive learning opportunities, teachers, and schools, every student can be successful.

Transformative social change, that uproots the status quo and the traditional way of teaching with a social justice lens, must occur in schools in order to shift pedagogical practices for both disenfranchised student populations and those with dominant cultural identities. With critical inquiry and understanding, culturally responsive teaching can help students to become change agents who model, advocate for, and develop increasingly equitable ideologies and actions in their schools, communities, and beyond. That is the vision, the dream, and the charge. Figure 1 places transformative education and culturally responsive teaching at the center of the conceptual framework of this study.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING



Figure 1. Theory of Change for Educators based on a Culturally Responsive Professional Development (CRPD) Model.

First, teachers must begin with a fundamental buy-in to culturally responsive teaching. Certainly there will be a range of beliefs and opinions, but generally speaking, teachers must be attentive and open to engaging in culturally responsive teaching, which involves making teaching and learning relevant to racially diverse students teaching “*to and through* the strengths of these [racially and ethnically diverse] students” (Gay, 2010, p. 31). Culturally responsive teaching also offers students a critical lens with which to examine and interrogate structural inequities they experience and/or identify (Brown & Crippen, 2016). Teachers who are culturally responsive counter thinking implicit in institutional biases and co-construct classroom cultures with their students that address social differences, and reflect the social and cultural identities of all of their students (Chen, Nimmo, & Fraser, 2009). It examines power dynamics in society at large, in classrooms, among teacher and students, re-imagines the power balance with increased student agency and empowerment (Freire, 2000), and cultivates a space where students’ ideas are invited, expressed, and given weight (hooks, 1994).

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Second, the CRPDs must offer content, knowledge, and skill building regarding culturally responsive teaching. This can include examining assumptions about what is considered normative or dominant, and thoroughly reviewing selected curricular and instructional practices that are exclusionary. Examples of actions that can be taken of this nature include analyzing curricular offerings to determine what needs to be reworked, revised, or completely redesigned to be more equitable.

Third, teachers must engage in an intensive process of self-study. Here teachers begin to ask questions such as how race was communicated to them in experiences at school growing up; what similar messages were acquired as a child from family members; how their own positionality as teachers influences what and how they teach; and how they have colluded with racism in their own teaching practices (Irving, 2014; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012). There may be significant resistance from teachers, but, as Palmer (2003) suggested, it is vital to view this resistance as an opportunity to “explain by the affected people [teachers and school administrators] should want change . . . You have to cultivate readiness, not resistance” (p. xvii).

The fourth step in the conceptual framework of the CRPD model is collaboration and flexibility in planning for change. This process cannot be done alone. It requires teachers working together to continually engage in critical questioning; holding each other accountable through honest, and regular communication; and making constant adjustments to their practices after reflection which will ultimately support student achievement (Lassonde, Israel & Almasi, 2010; Ronfeldt, Farmer, McQueen, & Grissom, 2015). This step involves a transfer of resources, where each individual communicates with others to form a stronger epistemological community.

The final step in the theory of change is building and self-sustaining culturally responsive practices school-wide (Franke, Carpenter, Fennema, Ansell, & Behrend, 1998). This involves

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

regular peer observations and feedback on culturally responsive content and methods (James, 2013); teachers writing in journals to document their changes and sharing those changes with one another (Ronfeldt et al., 2015); doing outreach with parents and community members on the school’s revised focus and goals (Feith, 2010); or publishing a blog or newsletter frequented by a wide range of parents/community members that documents the school’s changes and successes (Martinez-Cosio, 2010). The fourth step ideally will create generative change, as recommended by Franke et al. (1998), “conceptualizing change in terms of teachers becoming ongoing learners” (p. 67). If the preceding four steps are followed sequentially, then these new orientations to pedagogical practice will become school-wide and sustaining. These four steps reflect the CRPD design. While the CRPD design is not a part of the research, it reflects the content that the teachers worked with throughout the intervention with the goal of guiding teachers to move towards building more culturally responsive skillsets and practices.

Staying “woke” as the title evokes, is a modern colloquialism that started with the Black Lives Matter movement. It involves being conscious, deliberate, intentional, and analytic of one’s assumptions of truth. In a commencement speech, Ladson-Billings (2016) defined staying “woke” as “the need to be vigilant and informed especially concerning social and political issues.” In contrast, when commonly misused, it can also be seen as “a ‘back pat’ from the left, a way of affirming the sensitive. It means wanting to be considered correct, and wanting everyone to know just how correct you are” (Hess, 2016). The professional development intervention in this study was a mechanism for “wokedness.”

Chapter II

Selected Review of Research and Scholarship

In this chapter a review of research and scholarship on social justice education is presented. The review is organized according to the themes of: critical social justice in education, social justice teacher professional development, multicultural education as it relates to teacher preparation, and critical ethnography. A sampling of research and scholarship on these themes is included that has inspired the design, practice, and credibility to this study, and to the notion that teachers require professional development opportunities that encourage them to unpack the presence of power and privilege in their teaching in striving for a more equitable model.

Critical Social Justice in Education

Social justice, in mainstream thinking, is often described as advocating the values of fairness, equality, and a respect for basic human rights. It is hard to disagree with these values. This thinking, however, rarely clarifies what fairness is, what basic human rights are, or what might constitute respect. Because all of these things are debatable, it is essential that social justice is considered critically and contextually. What is termed critical social justice must be approached from the understanding that society is stratified, segregated, and not equal based on group identifiers such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, and citizenship. For example, Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012) argued that “critical social justice recognizes inequality as deeply embedded in the fabric of society (i.e., as structural) and actively seeks to change this” (p. xviii). They explored the “historical, cultural, and ideological lines of authority that underlie social conditions” (p.1). Their approach centers the problem of societal stratification (unequal opportunity), coupled with the necessity of action to combat this problem. They contended that a person participating in critical social justice practice must:

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Recognize that relations of unequal social power are constantly being enacted at both the micro (individual) and macro (structural) levels.
- Understand one’s own positions within these relations of unequal power.
- Think critically about knowledge.
- Act to create a more socially just society. (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012)

Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012) also offer some practical tools developing what they term critical social justice literacy. These include critical analysis of socialization, prejudice, discrimination, power, privilege, and White supremacy. Their work is meaningful because it can be considered a primer on how to think and act in just and equitable ways. They advocate for critical social justice education with an aim to shift the way in which teaching and learning are approached for equity. Their work inspired some of the methodological and substantive components included in this study.

Hodges (2015) delineated two different definitions of social justice necessary to understand it in its complexity: distributive and social, and described an overlap between the two. Cochran-Smith (2010) explained that “although social justice has become a watchword for teacher education, the concept is under-theorized” (p. 6), requiring a delineation between distributive and social justice in order to make meaning of it. There is overlap between distributive and social justice (Boyles, Carusi, & Attick, 2009; Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008; Hodges, 2015). While this study leaned more heavily on social justice theory, it included an understanding and interweaving of both theories.

Distributive theory looks at justice as the fair allotment or distribution of goods and resources including health care, housing, wealth, education, and opportunities (Allingham, 2014). Distributive injustice, therefore, would mean inequality. Distributive justice indicates

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

everyone is on the same playing field with the same opportunities, regardless of their identities or backgrounds. Lahann, Cochran-Smith, Hargreaves, and Shirley (2010) described distributive justice as “A descendent of classic liberalism, [that] seeks to theorize how anything which has worth in a society-- rights, freedoms, material goods—may be most justly divided among a citizenry” (p. 28). Distributive justice is founded on egalitarian principles. Since egalitarianism implies equality, or the equal distribution of resources, then injustice is the unfair exclusion of either individuals or groups from social and material goods. Hodges (2015) asserted that one problem with distributive justice is illustrated by the idea that “giving the beggar a coin distributes more resources, but the beggar must still beg” (p. 31). Distributive justice does not challenge the larger sociopolitical and infrastructural problems that cause injustices in the first place.

In contrast, social justice is a more sophisticated theory that argues against distributive justice’s simplistic stance on equality. Instead, social justice theory addresses how to eliminate the systems that “create beggars in the first place, and freeing those who feel that oppression limits their share of resources available” (Hodges, 2015, p. 31). Bell (2007) described social justice as striving for a world in which distribution of resources is equitable (rather than equal) and that all members are safe and secure, physically and mentally. She explained further that “social justice involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others, their society, and the broader world in which we live” (pp. 1-2). Bell (2007) argued for the need for social justice in conjunction with anti-oppression, since oppression reinforces the stratification of opportunity, psychological, and physical safety in society. She intentionally used the term oppression rather than discrimination, prejudice, or bias to capitalize on the pervasiveness of social inequality, both institutionally and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

individually. It is vital to understand how educational institutions work to reinforce and reproduce social inequity amongst groups while simultaneously leveraging and privileging dominant groups (Bell, 2007). It is necessary to offer students (and teachers) the knowledge, tactics, and tools to critically analyze social systems and institutions to live consistently within U.S. democratic values of equal access and opportunity for all citizens (Banks, 2008).

Zeichner (2009) considered a merger between distributive and social justice, asserting the need to “address both recognition (caring and respectful social relations where all individuals and groups are treated with dignity), and redistribution (where there is a fairer distribution of material resources)” (p. xvi). He also recommended that social justice education be expanded beyond simply acknowledging diversity to include “issues of oppression and injustice that are linked to social class, race, gender, and other markers of difference that are embedded in the institutions and structures in a society, as well as in the minds of individuals” (p. 27). Similarly, Storms (2012) found that “Social Justice Education (SJE) is an educational reform movement to increase equity across social groups locally and globally” (p. 549).

Picower (2012) suggested that social justice education requires educators to participate on three distinct levels:

The first is for teachers to have a recognition and political analysis of injustice and how it operates to create and maintain oppression on multiple levels. The second is teachers’ willingness and ability to integrate this analysis into academic teaching in the classrooms. The third is that teachers must have the mindsets and skillsets to expand their social justice work outside the classroom as activists, with students and on their own, to combat multiple forms of oppression. (p. 4)

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Thus, it is vital for teachers to begin with an understanding of injustice as it affects their students, and to subsequently see themselves as change agents. It is not enough to simply identify problems of inequity and social stratification, but applying this critical lens must be done consistently throughout all curriculum content, and with the incentive to act, both inside the classroom and beyond, to challenge such norms (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 2007; Zeichner, 2009).

Gorski and Pothini (2014) compiled a series of *Case Studies on Diversity and Social Justice Education* in which they analyzed more than 30 real-life scenarios (complex, yet common) of inequity or injustice in classrooms or schools. Their intent was to offer practical solutions that require deep reflection, may be immediate or longer-term, and cultivate sustainable, equitable learning environments for all students. Gorski and Swalwell (2015) explain that social justice education should be accomplished developing equity literacy. They asserted that “at the heart of a curriculum that is meaningfully multicultural lie principles of equity and social justice” (p. 36). Equity literacy avoids essentializing and tokenizing students of color (such as celebrating Black history month, taco night, or the day of the dead) without discussing the discrimination or oppression experienced (both historically and in the present) by these groups in the U.S. In stressing the importance of these emphases, Gorski and Swalwell (2015) posed the challenge to: “Imagine experiencing racism, sexism, or class inequality in the present while hearing about it in school in only the past tense. What would it feel like, given those circumstances, to be pressed into participating in celebrations of diversity while nobody tends to your alienation?” (p. 36). For them, the core of every curriculum should be conversations about racism, homophobia, sexism, and economic inequality.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

To this list of issues, Boylan and Woolsey (2015) added the importance of working with identity in social justice teacher education. They believe that when identity is thoroughly addressed, compassion and respect follow. They explained further that the

work needed to negotiate changing identity is uncomfortable and challenging. . . .

Identity is rooted in personal histories and given that some of the underlying fixed positions are deeply held ethical positions. By engaging with these ethical stances a deeper dialogue about social justice may be enacted. (p. 63)

Boylan and Woolsey included teacher identities in social justice, noting that beginning teachers tend to be either committed or resistant to social justice.

Those committed to social justice tend to bring an identity, knowledge, and willingness to engage with critical theory. Boylan and Woolsey (2015) also identified an “informed empathy” (p. 64) that many of these teachers exhibit in practice that is required to challenge injustice. Yet many teachers who enter the profession are resistant to social justice ideals, and this resistance can be active or passive. It can manifest as defensive antagonism toward social justice content, or it can simply be a lack of engagement or interest in the topics covered. Boylan and Woolsey (2015) suggested that social justice requires “a pedagogy of inquiry into personal positionality and into the social and economic roots of injustice” (p. 64) as well as a pedagogy of discomfort to disrupt unquestioned assumptions. These two approaches work in tandem, looking into teacher identity and unexamined habits of mind relative to structures of power and privilege, and simultaneously pushing teachers to analyze their learning processes to deconstruct socialized ways of being and seeing in the world, and unveil their own complicitness and collusion with systems of oppression.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Cochran-Smith and Dudley-Marling (2012) identified a marker of difference often forgotten in the social justice education conversation, which is special education and disability. This is a population that is also often marginalized by dominant systems and modes of thinking and acting. Cochran-Smith (2001) also suggested that social justice education be explicitly politicized to affect change. Her work in social justice teacher education sought to “critique, challenge common practices, and engage in inquiry intended to alter the lives of children” (Cochran-Smith, 2001, p. 3); and teach against the grain to help create a more socially just world.

Likewise, Kelly and Brandes (2010) proposed an anti-oppressive approach to teaching for social justice. Their proposal involved: “(a) critically analyzing social and institutional inequities; (b) taking into account how positions of privilege and oppression shape pedagogical decisions; and (c) linking deliberative inquiry to working toward social justice” (pp. 390-391). Thus, social justice education requires understanding social and institutional inequities, analyzing of how these inequities inform instructional choices, and making thoughtful and actionable changes to these patterns. These conceptions of social justice education offer all students, regardless of their cultural identities, success in their school systems, and continuous professional development of classroom teachers and school leaders.

Social Justice Teacher Professional Development

Social justice teacher professional development can be accomplished in myriad ways, to various depths of involvement and vary in time, scope, philosophy, and leadership. However, teaching teachers requires its own unique pedagogical framework. Scholars strongly recommend that teacher educators model the practices and pedagogy they suggest for teachers to employ in their classrooms. For example, Lunenberg, Dengerink, and Korthagen (2014) explained why teacher educators should have significant pedagogical expertise, both in their modeling with

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

teacher candidates and in their knowledge of pedagogical theories and concepts. They asserted that “teacher educators should be able to make those principles and theories explicit and underpin their behaviour (*explicit modelling*)” (p. 70). Teachers educators must show teacher candidates quality lessons, using effective methods. It is also important that teachers develop the capacity to refine their work over time, and therefore teacher educators should encourage prospective teachers to reflect on their learning process, developing a habit of self-study that will serve throughout their teaching careers.

Bondy and Ross (2005) recommended that “teacher education programs should create a consensus around a common philosophy of teaching and learning” (p. 16). This could include employing social justice teaching principles; the notion that teaching and learning is contextual; and a no one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, teacher educators must personalize learning for their aspiring teachers, who, in turn, should practice this in their future classrooms. Palmer (1998) contended that students are cynical about the outcomes of education because teachers “teach them that the subjective self is unvalued and even unreal. Their cynicism simply proves that when academic culture dismisses inner truth and honors only the external world, students as well as teachers lose heart” (p. 19). Teacher educators must emphasize the development of their own personalized pedagogies of teacher education. Lunenberg and Hamilton (2008) underscored this idea “especially with regard to modelling [sic] and stimulating students’ reflection” (p. 20).

They also emphasized teacher educators’ roles in the production of knowledge in their field, as research and inquiry refined and strengthened their practice. Teacher educators must encourage the teachers with whom they work to do their own research, cultivating a habit of curiosity that will follow them into their classrooms. Social Justice Professional Development (SJPD) for teachers can borrow ideas from teacher education about informed leadership in social justice

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

theory and practice; professional development being intimate and personal as well as professional, cultivating self-reflection and curiosity in teachers (Bondy & Ross, 2005; Lunenberg & Hamilton, 2008; Palmer, 1998).

Shields (2014) contends that there is no one-size-fits all approach to social justice educational leadership, nor is there a singular best model to employ. She explained that understanding and factoring context into leadership is vital, and that working in a racially homogeneous, high socioeconomic communities require different methods than racially heterogeneous groups in lower earning brackets. Shields stresses that social justice professional development in the former context might challenge patterns of power, privilege, and entitlement that create oppressive systems. In poor diverse communities and schools the strategies might challenge deficit thinking. According to Shields (2014):

A social justice education therefore teaches students about the world in which they live, prepares them to become fully participating citizens in that world, and helps them to take proactive positions for justice, equity, dignity, and human rights. In order to accomplish this, of course, students must succeed within their own systems of education. (p. 331)

In order to partake in meaningful social justice professional development, it is imperative that school leaders understand the contexts and communities in which they work, and tailor their professional development curricula accordingly. Taylor and Sobel (2003) suggested that teachers need to be prompted to examine and analyze the underlying assumptions that govern how schools are structured and how these structures support societal inequities such as segregated student groupings (by factors like academic ability, language ability, or other) both across classes as well as within individual classrooms. (p. 249)

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Rogers, Kramer, Mosley, Fuller, Light, Nehart, Jones, Beaman-Jones, Depasquale, Hobson, and Thomas (2005) are a teacher research group that explores the relationship between literacy and social justice in classrooms. The group is comprised of a diverse cluster of teachers from different schools, teaching levels (elementary, secondary, and college) and districts collectively committed to the value of social justice education. Their work consisted of peer-led professional development over a four-year period. They challenged the notion of professional development led by experts or administrators (they are teacher practitioners), and worked under the assumption that meaningful professional development occurs over time. According to Rogers et al. (2005)

within the professional development space of a teacher network, teachers learn to monitor their own practice, rely on multiple sources of evidence to make decisions, problem solve with more knowledgeable others (e.g., their peers), make changes in their practice, and generalize these changes to new teaching and learning situation. (p. 348)

This group met twice a month over four years and shared readings, discussions, videos, guest speakers, and data from their students. Their charge was to connect classroom practice to social action. They also emphasized how they could learn and teach throughout the lifespan, not just the age(s) of their students. For example, they considered how a second-grader's experiences might inform a future GED student, and how what a GED student experiences might affect a second grader. They explained that “This type of questioning has caused us intellectual unrest because some of our long-held assumptions about teaching and learning are challenged” (Rogers et al., 2005, p. 356). This group of teachers also considered that social justice professional development to be a lifelong orientation and a long-term collective project.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Brody and Davidson (1998) believed in developing cooperative learning communities among teachers as essential to effective professional development. They asserted that “the major work in transforming schools begins and ends with teachers because they stay the longest, have the most contact with students, and potentially have the power to change the social relationships of the school and classroom” (p. 5). Working with teachers in cooperative learning communities creates internal accountability that gives the learning both momentum and continuity (Brody & Davidson, 1998; Rogers et al, 2005). The collaborative learning model relies on the following characteristics:

(1) There is a collaborative climate; (2) partners develop personal characteristics that foster teamwork; (3) effective group skills and reflective thinking skills are part of the content and process; and (4) the principles of adult learning are applied when working together. (Brody & Davidson, 1998, p. 55)

Group learning is vital to social justice teacher professional development. Teachers need to develop their own epistemological communities or communities of allies to foster continued growth (Gay, 2010). This group learning professional development philosophy is relevant to this study because the CRPDs used a collaborative and team learning model to build a community that holds its members accountable for culturally responsive teaching beyond their initial professional development.

For a six month period, Brown and Crippen (2016) examined a social justice professional development program for science teachers. The program’s goal was for high school teachers to revise their materials and methods for more socially just classrooms. Teachers met for monthly Saturday collaboration sessions where they re-worked their lessons from a social justice standpoint; brainstormed teaching ideas to align pedagogies with culturally responsive teaching

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

theory; participated in exercises to integrate students’ backgrounds into their classes; and selected three topics on which they wanted to learn more. After the six month period, the researchers analyzed program artifacts, group interviews, video recordings from the Saturday sessions, and revised teaching units. They found that while all of these activities helped to build culturally responsive teaching skills, teachers still struggled to incorporate students’ backgrounds into their lessons. Therefore, there was still significant need for how to construct culturally responsive teaching materials that speak to student identities and experiences. Teachers tended to possess little knowledge about their students’ cultures. Therefore, teachers needed curricular development support to enforce student identities and backgrounds (Gay, 2010). Brown and Crippen (2016) concluded that “By equipping science teachers with contextually appropriate responsive teaching knowledge, they begin to imagine not only what responsive teaching could look like in their classrooms beyond some ideal, but also how to skillfully adapt responsive strategies and relevant topics to future classrooms” (pp. 488-489). These findings and recommendations are relevant as a large focus in the CRPDs was on redesigning curriculum such that it is relevant to the students’ cultural identities and experiences.

Hynds, Sleeter, Hindle, Savage, Penetito, and Meyer (2011) conducted a case study of a professional development program for secondary school teachers in New Zealand called Te Kotahitanga. It involved evaluations of the program across 22 participating schools. The program was focused on shifting the relationship between teachers and Indigenous Maori students to strengthen student learning outcomes. They interviewed 150 teachers across the schools about their perceptions of the outcomes of the project. The study was inspired by stark disparities in achievement in mainstream schools between White New Zealanders and Indigenous Maori students, mirroring similar inequitable patterns of minoritized students in the United States and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Canada. The professional development program sought to mitigate teachers’ deficit pedagogies and low learning expectations for Indigenous and other minoritized students; and it employed a technical-rational approach to professional development.

The technical-rational approach to teacher professional development has long-dominated education (Hynds et al., 2011), and is best described by Sleeter and Montecinos (1999) as teaching entails a series of technical decisions made by experts who have a claim to authority. This claim rests on two premises: ownership of a domain of a morally neutral set of facts and the belief that those facts represent law-like generalizations that can be applied to particular cases. (p. 116)

The Te Kotahitanga professional development method employed a technical-rational approach, under the assumption that achievement and opportunity for Indigenous and minoritized groups can be addressed through experts teaching skills and developing awareness to support these groups. The model repositioned teachers as learners and minoritized students as teachers, “placing students as ‘experts’ who know best what works for them” (Hynds et al., 2011, p. 341). The professional development program involved 1) teachers reading Maori students’ stories about their experiences with teachers, 2) structured classroom observations of teachers and subsequent feedback given by skilled facilitators, 3) collaborative teacher problem-solving meetings, and 4) individual coaching sessions for teacher professional development.

Findings from the Te Kotahitanga suggest that teachers were most impacted by learning strategies with a relational and interaction focus to improve outcomes for Maori students. Many teachers learned to see themselves as more effective educators by re-envisioning the student-teacher power balance. Teachers reported shifts in their assumptions and biases particularly related to the Maori student population. As a result of the program, teachers’ motivation to

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

cultivate student-focused classrooms increased, and teachers “learned about the value of structuring learning activities whereby students learned from one another and pushed one another to learn” (Hynds et al. 2011, p. 347). The CRPDs parallel the Te Kotahitanga model in that they were led by facilitators who also employed a similarly culturally responsive teaching philosophy. While Te Kotahitanga is different in that it focused on the Maori population and visited teachers in their classrooms, the two programs were similar in cultivating a school environment where equitable learning opportunities were embedded in each teacher’s curriculum and instruction. One of the primary goals of the CRPDs (much like a major outcome of Te Kotahitanga) was to increase teachers’ awareness about their own biases and assumptions, how they show up in their classrooms, and to unpack and mitigate the presence of them for every student’s success.

Haviland and Rodriguez-Kiino (2008) researched a professional development program designed to shift the deficit thinking of White professors about Latino students in a small college located in the western United States. They chose faculty professional development as their focus because

Faculty members are central to the mission of every college. . . . Professors are often the only ones on a campus to see and interact with individual students two or three times per week. They can be the first to identify students who are at risk for not succeeding, and they can be critical in helping students develop the attitudes and empowerment necessary to learn and graduate. (pp. 199-200)

The program was six weeks in length, comprised of an online course and three-day institute designed to teach teachers more about Latino culture and culturally responsive teaching. Institute goals were to increase faculty members’ understandings of Latino culture, and challenges Latino students face, and to approach these challenges with useful pedagogical tools for success. The

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

researchers conducted pre and post interviews, structured classroom observations, and student surveys which yielded varied results. Some professors thought the program highly influential for their practice and pedagogy, while others felt it did not inform their future practice. Haviland and Rodriguez-Kiino (2008) concluded that “faculty need time to reflect on the professional development and explore ways to implement changes in their classrooms” (p. 205) after noting that it was hard to detect immediate changes in teacher practice. The changes that they did detect involved teachers sharing how the professional development experience changed their pedagogy and their role as an educator. According to Haviland and Rodriguez-Kiino (2008), for one teacher, “the summer institute was a catalyst that helped Timothy begin to recognize and embrace his power to act, and his responsibility to do so, even if the academic terrain was unfamiliar” (p. 207). The findings of this study suggest that in order to shape attitudes and catalyze meaningful classroom change, faculty professional development must be “both embedded and ongoing” (p. 209). Embedded refers to engaging in professional development that is linked explicitly to teachers’ classrooms and curriculum, and ongoing refers to these opportunities being conducted often and consistently over time.

Zozakiewicz and Rodriguez (2007) studied Maxima, a professional development intervention project to help teachers develop more inquiry-based, gender-inclusive and culturally responsive classroom environments. This three-year project also focused on improving academic performance and outcomes of culturally diverse girls from economically impoverished schools in Southwestern border towns in the United States in science, math, and technology. The teachers in the study taught fourth, fifth, and sixth grade math and science. Students in their classrooms were predominantly Latino/Latina (approximately 70% of the school populations). There were 20 participating teachers in the study and it began with 40 fourth grade girls, whom the

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

researchers followed for three years. Each year, the Maxima girls were placed with Maxima teachers.

Maxima teachers attended a two-week institute during each summer of the project, as well as engaged in monthly meetings to check-in and report progress with their co-participants. In these meetings, teachers also presented the curriculum they were sharing with students. Once a year, these monthly meetings became day-long workshops. The study was considered an intervention designed to make instructional practices more equitable for female minority students. The professional development program was situated in socio-transformative constructivism (STC), a theoretical orientation to teaching and learning “affirming that knowledge is socially constructed and mediated by cultural, historical, and institutional contexts” (Zozakiewicz & Rodriguez, 2007, p. 401). Additionally, STC involved teacher praxis in unpacking the structures of power that maintain hegemony. Praxis refers to reflection and action for transforming structures (Freire, 2000) regarding asymmetrical power dynamics in classrooms.

Maxima teachers were interviewed on three occasions in Year 1 of the project, and students were interviewed at each of the three grade levels at the beginning and end of each year. Ongoing surveys, transcripts, video footage of monthly meetings, field notes, and school artifacts were collected for the duration of Maxima. Researchers used an ethnographic approach to data collection and analysis. Results showed teachers benefited most from: being theoretically explicit by learning to model how STC is enacted in classrooms; sharing ideas and making connections with others by working in a learning community to develop ideas and present workshop lessons or project ideas; and learning to use reflexive approaches to their work. Teachers increasingly developed a capacity to reflect on their own teaching practices (Zozakiewicz & Rodriguez,

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

2007). Only 3 of the 20 teachers demonstrated little to no change over the course of the project. Therefore, it was deemed transformative overall. The greatest challenge that they found was teachers’ entrenched practices. Zozakiewicz and Rodriguez (2007) found that “some teachers felt that the work they were doing was already multicultural and student centered in nature and, therefore, change was not really needed” (p. 420).

Casey, Friend, Adler, Caruthers, Russell, and Schlein (2013) examined the effects of a culturally responsive professional development series on the beliefs and perceptions of six teachers in a public school district in suburban Missouri. The series consisted of eight two-hour sessions on White privilege, teacher identity development, and culturally responsive teaching that used: *We Can’t Teach What We Don’t Know: White Teachers, Multiracial Schools* by Howard (1999). Each session consisted of reflections from the previous session, connections teachers made to the material, a text-based seminar, and a team-building activity. In addition, teachers responded to one journal prompt each week. Pre and post-surveys, teacher interviews, and responses to journal prompts were used for data collection and analysis. Participants engaged in conversations about White privilege, and reflected on their teaching practice in the context of these conversations. Also, teachers found that developing awareness of their own identities helped them to better connect to their students from diverse backgrounds, and meet their needs. Finally, teachers expressed an increased awareness of their own racial biases and shifted their attitudes about them.

Multicultural Education

Multicultural education emerged as a response to pervasive prejudice facing students from minoritized groups in classrooms. The United States is comprised of racially and ethnically pluralistic population that is socially stratified and marked by racial segregation. The school-to-

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

prison pipeline illustrates a connection between K-12 schooling and the juvenile justice system inhabited by many young people from disenfranchised groups. The surge of unjust police brutality against African American males may be prevented, or at least diminished is educational programs and practices deliberately challenged prejudiced notions of members of non-dominant groups. Much of the curricula employed in the United States is Eurocentric that features European historical and philosophical claims of truth, and centers Whites and their corresponding values and practices. Subsequently, teaching about diverse groups is often limited to sharing a singular (or two-dimensional story) about a hero such as Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, or César Chávez, who are seen as embodiments of social justice movements. These types of singular stories can perpetuate the myth that people of color exist in siloed spaces, and are often oversimplified and unrelatable characters.

During a 2016 speech at Howard University, Education Secretary John B. King Jr. addressed the homogeneity of White teachers in the U.S. while offering a call to action for more teachers of color. He said,

Without question, when the majority of students in public schools are students of color and only 18 percent of our teachers are teachers of color, we have an urgent need to act. We've got to understand that all students benefit from teacher diversity. We have strong evidence that students of color benefit from having teachers and leaders who look like them as role models and also benefit from the classroom dynamics that diversity creates. But it is also important for our White students to see teachers of color in leadership roles in their classrooms and communities. The question for the nation is how do we address this quickly and thoughtfully? (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p. 1)

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

In order for a teaching career to appeal to more people of color, and for it to be more effective for students of all ethnic, cultural, racial, and social groups, it is imperative that multicultural education is both valued and cultivated in U.S. schools and teacher professional development programs.

Multicultural education relies on teachers and school leaders having thorough understandings of how power and privilege inform their everyday lives, and their practices in the classroom and in leadership (Banks & Tucker, 1998). This understanding must be made explicit with students, and challenged together. As Nieto (2009) explained,

The fact that education is not a neutral endeavor scares many people because it challenged cherished notions that education is based solely on equality and fair play.

Power and privilege, and how they are implicated in language, culture, and learning, also typically have been invisible in school discourse. (p. 2)

Multicultural education brings politics of power and privilege to the forefront, and exposes the ways in which they influence the production and dissemination of knowledge.

A number of contemporary education reform movements in the United States began in reaction to U.S. students' achievement or attainment gap between students of color and White students, as well as the gap between students from low socio-economic status versus middle and upper class students. These achievement gaps can be identified through myriad criteria in K-12 education including student grades, standardized test scores, dropout rates, and high school graduation rates. There has been a predominant focus on closing those gaps in recent years (Howe & Gabriel, 2014). As Howe and Gabriel (2014) asserted, “Multicultural education is a means to create equity in schools. It is a means to promote social justice and inclusion. It

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

provides a means to engage culturally and linguistically diverse students, to harness creativity for both teaching and learning” (p. 22).

Nieto (2010) argued that multicultural education must be understood within its specific socio-political contexts to avoid thinking of it as operating in a vacuum. When this isolationist consideration is done, the result is a kind of singular thinking. This singular thinking tends to focus on cultural artifacts like food and clothing, or celebrations and ceremonies, and multicultural education “can become . . . dissociated from the lives of teachers, students, and communities” (Nieto, 2010, p. 38). Instead, it is important to connect identity, difference, power, and privilege in multicultural education. She explains that race, ethnicity, social class, language use, gender identity, religion, ability and nationality are all fundamental components of the socio-political context of today’s schools, and that these factors are all intrinsically tied to structures of power and privilege. Nieto (2010) expands on this point in explaining that,

Affirming language and culture can help students become successful and well-adjusted learners, but unless language and cultural issues are viewed critically through the lens of equity and social justice, they are unlikely to have a lasting impact on promoting real change. (p. 39)

Multicultural education must consider historical and contemporary inequities, inequality, and exclusion that have marked, and continue to mark U.S. society in order to make marked change.

Banks (2004) argued that a primary goal of multicultural education, “is to reform the schools and other institutions so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class groups will experience educational equality” (p. 3). Banks (2004) also asserts that both female and male students should be offered equal chances at educational achievement and opportunity. Sleeter and Delgado Bernal (2004) discuss how multicultural education cannot study difference without

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

connecting it to “power or a critical analysis of racism” (p. 240). They describe how this is especially the case due to the predominance of White teachers and administrators who “bring a worldview that tacitly condones existing race and class relations” (Sleeter & Delgado Bernal, 2004, p. 240). They use the term *critical* multiculturalism to foreground racism, as (uncritical) multicultural education supports “White privilege by rendering institutional racism invisible” (Berlak & Moyenda, 2001, p. 94) which may assume that inequities will dissipate if everyone just learns to get along. Berlak and Moyenda (2001) also argued that “central to critical multiculturalism is naming and actively challenging racism and other forms of injustice, not simply recognizing and celebrating differences and reducing prejudice” (p. 92). Critical multicultural education links localized school dynamics with larger societal issues (McCarthy, 1995).

Multicultural Education is Intersectional

Crenshaw (1989), a scholar of law, critical race theory, and Black feminist thought, who used “intersectionality to explain the differences of Black women who--because of the intersections of race, gender, and class--are exposed to exponential forms of marginalization and oppression” (Mitchell, Simmons, Charlana, & Greyerbiehl, 2014, p. 1). She (1991) declared that

Feminist efforts to politicize experiences of women and antiracist efforts to politicize experiences of people of color have frequently proceeded as though the issues and experiences they each detail occur on mutually exclusive terrains. Although racism and sexism readily intersect in the lives of real people, they seldom do in feminist and antiracist practices. And so, when the practices expound identity as woman or person of color as an either/or proposition, they relegate the identity of women of color to a location that resists telling. (p. 1242)

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Intersectionality, therefore, is the notion that no singular part of a person’s identity can be isolated, for example, a woman is never a woman without race, ethnicity, language of origin, nationality, socioeconomic status, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation (Crenshaw, 1991; Carbado, Crenshaw, Mays & Tomlinson, 2013; Mitchell, Simmons, Charlana, & Greyerbiehl, 2014). All other intersecting or overlapping identities have weight and inform the experience of individuals relative to power and privilege in different contexts.

Ladson-Billings (1995) describes culturally relevant teaching as a pedagogy of opposition that addresses individual and collective transformation of thought and action. She argues that culturally relevant pedagogy is based on three ultimate goals for students: academic success, the development and/or refinement of cultural competence, and the cultivation of a critical consciousness with which to challenge dominant norms. I prefer the term cultural humility over cultural competence, instead of assuming that one can develop competence or expertise in cultures other than their own, it assumes that one approaches other cultures with a curiosity, inquisitiveness, and willingness to learn about them (Gallardo, 2014).

Culturally relevant pedagogy addresses individual and collective transformation of thought and action. It recognizes that dominant norms in the United States tend to leverage majority groups and marginalize non-majority groups, and these norms must be revised. Gallardo (2014) discusses how multiculturalism has been so often a term people associated with people of color instead of all people, and argues that without Whites included in and accountable to multiculturalism, it relegates multiculturalism to the borders rather than in the center of the national conversation. Gallardo (2014) asserts,

I am concerned that multiculturalism, in its present form, has continued to keep non-preferred racial groups from being understood, to the point where traumas and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

anxieties are pervasive, while also simultaneously relegating European, “White” individuals and communities to one category, unintentionally rendering them invisible and dominant. Dominance remains dominant when it goes unexamined. (p. 2)

Multicultural education requires all hands on deck. It begs for an examination of power and privilege from all angles of the spectrum so that everyone feels accountable to developing and sustaining equitable education, and everyone feels their identities and experiences can be reflected in classrooms and beyond. This charge is one that begs reform, a re-envisioning of what schools and instruction could be. Gay (2004) explained that “Multicultural education as a reform movement emphasizes revising the structural, procedural, substantive, and valuative components of the educational enterprise to reflect the social, cultural, ethnic, racial, and linguistic diversity of the United States” (p. 33). This perspective is relevant to this study as it recognizes the need for rethinking and revising teachers’ and schools’ curricula and pedagogy in order to address old, unexamined patterns of teaching and school leadership that reinforce the Eurocentric hegemony and subsequently marginalize those with identities that are non-dominant.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

The notion of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is described by Gay (2010) as follows:

Culturally responsive teaching can be defined as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them. It teaches *to and through* the strengths of these students. Culturally responsive teaching is the behavioral expressions of knowledge, beliefs, and values that recognize the importance of racial and cultural diversity in learning. (p. 31)

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Fundamental to multicultural education, CRT emerged in response to the distressing disproportionate levels of achievement for students of color in U.S. schools. CRT is offered as a call to activate plans to interrupt this disempowering trend to one of achievement and opportunity for students of color. In order to change this pattern, it is vital that classroom teachers, school leaders, and other educators recognize that achievement does not represent the entirety of one's being, but instead, is a singular accomplishment. Given the appropriate learning conditions, every student can succeed. Gay (2010) stresses that “teachers must learn how to recognize, honor, and incorporate the personal abilities of students into their teaching strategies. If this is done, then school achievement will improve” (p. 1). Gay (2010) contends that implementing CRT is a fundamental component of ending the underachievement of students of color, but it can not be achieved on its own. It is vital that other components of the educational system like administration, school leadership, policy making, and funding, and also undergo reforms that address racial and social stratification and inequities as well. Brown and Crippen (2016) stressed that “the culturally responsive teacher enacts practices that are not only meant to foster academic success in her/his students, but also empower these students to challenge inequities” (p. 473). Culturally responsive teaching not only should play to the strengths of the students in the classroom, but also, offer students a critical lens with which to examine and interrogate structural inequities they experience and/or identify. It is important to note that culturally responsive teaching and multicultural education are not synonymous. Instead, culturally responsive teaching is a dimension and variation of multicultural education.

Applying a culturally responsive frame, teachers aim to counter thinking implicit in institutional biases based on developing classroom cultures that address social differences and reflect the diverse identities of all students (Chen, Nimmo, & Fraser, 2009). hooks (1994) notes

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

the importance of every individual student’s recognition of place in the classroom, asserting, “to hear each other (the sound of different voices), to listen to one another, is an exercise in recognition. It also ensures that no student remains invisible in the classroom” (p. 40). Culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2010) requires a shift in normative, mainstream thinking and behavior on the part of both teachers and students, cultivating explicit conversations that address inequities in order to bring more voices and narratives to the fore, with a goal of transformative learning for equity (Mezirow, 2000). Gay (2010) asserted, “Ignorance of people different from us often breeds negative attitudes, anxiety, fears, and the seductive temptation to turn them into images of ourselves” (p. 24). Culturally responsive teaching unpacks the overarching problem of homogenizing heterogeneous student populations and seeks to teach about difference in intentionally contextualized classrooms that takes into account specific cultures and experiences of students (Gay, 2010).

Applying culturally responsive pedagogy in classrooms requires explicit self-study and self-reflection on the part of teachers in order to unlearn what is uncritically examined as normalized in schools and their curricula. hooks (1994) asserts:

When we, as educators, allow our pedagogy to be radically changed by our recognition of a multicultural world, we can give students the education they desire and deserve. We can teach in ways that transform consciousness, creating a climate of free expression that is the essence of a truly liberatory liberal arts education. (p. 44)

Educators and leaders striving for culturally responsive teaching must begin with a transformative process of self-study to raise self-awareness about their personal biases and beliefs that influence their teaching practice.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Chen, Nimmo, and Fraser (2009) developed a tool to help teachers engage in self-study. It includes questions that “address the level of awareness and comfort about self-identity, personal views about difference, and readiness to respond to bias” (p. 103). Before implementing culturally responsive teaching, educators confront these ideas within themselves, asking questions like, “Am I able to intervene with ease when I hear comments that exclude someone, show bias, or are discriminatory?” (Chen, Nimmo, & Fraser, 2009, p. 105). There are numerous resources that teachers can use to assist with these questions, it is vital that they are honest with students about what they do and do not know, promoting a learning environment of transparency and authenticity (Derman-Sparks, 2003).

Multicultural education requires the flexibility of recognizing how one’s specific context informs the learning landscape, and that can only be done when teachers recognize their own individual landscapes and those of their students, and take stock of how those landscapes must be integrated into the pedagogy. Mezirow’s (2000) stance on transformative education adds to the conversation on context teaching, arguing that “The most personally significant and emotionally exacting transformations involve a critique of unexamined premises regarding one’s self” (p. 21). Once this self-examination is in full-force, then inviting students to do the same becomes appropriate. If all educators and school leaders partook in this level of self-examination, culturally responsive teaching would be delivered with more effective and transformative results.

This is a personal process. Teachers must recognize that many of their unquestioned habits of mind or assumptions are power-laden in order to teach with a culturally responsive frame. For example, many teachers assume that intelligence can be conceived of in a narrow frame, as they were conditioned to believe. One fundamental principle behind the CRPDs is that teachers must undergo a rigorous process of self-study in order to begin to see the metaphorical

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

water in which they are swimming, or to begin to question their unquestioned assumptions. This is a stepping stone to effective culturally responsive teaching, as teachers must understand how their own (often unexamined) beliefs and behaviors interact with the leveraging of some populations and marginalizing of others, before they can attempt to teach critical content of this kind to students. Mezirow's (2000) transformative learning theory supports teacher self-study as a building block for culturally responsive teaching in action.

Each classroom is filled with a different group of individuals and curriculum and instruction must be tailored according to each setting. hooks (1994) suggests some strategies for use in multicultural classrooms that include recognizing cultural codes, and using them to create conducive learning environments for diverse students. She reasoned that, as a teacher,

I have to learn these codes. And so do students. This act alone transforms the classroom.

The sharing of ideas and information does not always progress as quickly as it may in more homogeneous settings. Often, professors and students have to learn to accept different ways of knowing, new epistemologies, in the multicultural setting. (hooks, 1994, p. 41)

Ladson-Billings (1995) added that “If students’ home language is incorporated into the classroom, students are more likely to experience academic success” (p. 159). Integrating students’ heritage languages, dialects, or vernaculars into the school day reinforces the belief that students’ cultural identities and funds of knowledge are valued. According to González, Moll, and Amanti (2005), students’ cultural funds of knowledge are “important and useful assets for the classroom” (p. 47). Furthermore, “grasping the social relationships in which children are ensconced and the broad features of learning generated in the home are key if we are to understand cultural identity and the emergence of cultural personality among U.S.-Mexican

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

children” (p. 48). This argument applies to other ethnic groups as well. Teachers must recognize the strength in students’ funds of knowledge and develop ways to integrate that knowledge into their classroom procedures, curriculum, and instructional practices.

Multicultural Teacher Preparation

There is a wider body of literature on teacher preparation than teacher professional development. Teacher preparation, while different from teacher professional development in that it works with pre-service rather than in-service teachers, similarly works to build teachers’ skillsets and capacities for the classroom. As the CRPDs offer a culturally responsive teacher professional development intervention, literature and scholarship on multicultural teacher preparation informs much of this study.

Convertino’s (2016) study *Beyond Multicultural Tidbits* looks at how to deliver pre-service teachers meaningful multicultural social justice education. Convertino explores the difference between multicultural tidbits and meaningful multicultural education. She reasoned “In contrast to multicultural social justice education, ethnic tidbits represent mainstream approaches to multicultural education” (p. 126) that involve few examples of ethnic heroes/heroines and limited cultural artifacts into the curriculum. This is known as an additive or tourist-based teaching approach (Banks, 2013). Instead, Convertino argues for multicultural social justice teacher education that involves challenging pre-service teachers to examine how their own positionality within a stratified society informs their teaching practices, and urging pre-service teachers to change the status quo.

In the U.S. today, there is a growing demographic divide that represents the vastly diverse racial, cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic student population and the predominantly White, middle-class, monolingual female teaching force. Convertino (2016) points out how this

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

demographic divide is still accompanied by an ideology that does not serve all students, reasoning that the “role of public schooling is to assimilate diverse students based on nation-state principles of meritocracy and traditional liberal citizenship stems in large part from hegemonic metanarratives related to science, progress and knowledge production” (p. 127). In her teacher preparation work, Convertino found that teaching threshold concepts was pivotal to multicultural social justice teacher preparation. Threshold concepts are seen as cognitive building blocks from which learners are one-by-one, able to make meaning of, and connections between related concepts and ideas. According to Convertino, a threshold concept in multicultural social justice teacher education is institutional oppression, and once learners understand that, they will better make sense of racism, homophobia, ableism, classism, and educational tracking.

A pedagogy of vignettes is one that Anast Seguin and Ambrosio (2002) introduce as a teacher preparation tool for multicultural education. Using culturally thematic vignettes in teacher education will prepare teachers to meet the needs of diverse learning communities. They describe a vignette as a case study or “a written description of a situation created for specific educational purposes, with possible solutions and conclusions omitted” (p. 10). They continue, “this pedagogy provides an opportunity for students to advance critical thinking as they evaluate various aspects of the situation and pose recommendations” (Anast Seguin & Ambrosio, 2002, p. 10). The vignettes are depictions of real-life classroom problems, so teachers in training can visualize how they might react in that kind of scenario. Data shows that using case studies in this way can improve critical thinking and linking theory to practice. Providing case studies that address a multicultural, diverse student body has made pre-service teachers “more aware of diversity and gender equity issues that translate into changes in future practice” (Anast Seguin & Ambrosio, 2002, p. 11).

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

The goal of vignettes is to determine pre-service teachers’ capacities to “consider alternative precedents to action within diverse classroom settings” (Anast Seguin & Ambrosio, 2002, p. 12) and to provide teachers in training the opportunity to imagine their plan of action to the kinds of scenarios that will likely occur in multicultural classroom settings. This method is intended to promote learning and encourage translating theory into practice. The idea of using vignettes is so future teachers can explore effective problem solving strategies to use in their diverse classrooms. Anast Seguin and Ambrosio (2002) found that the quality of future teachers’ responses rose as vignettes were used more frequently, developing multicultural competencies through practice.

Smith and Lambeth (2016) studied pre-service teachers’ perceptions of culturally responsive teacher education, with the impression that pre-service teachers “are frequently unclear about how to approach students from diverse backgrounds or they typically avoid discussions about culture and race with students of color” (p. 46). At the same time, research suggests that pre-service teachers value teaching heterogeneous groups of students and often gain significant self-knowledge in the process (Baldwin, Buchanan & Rudisill, 2007). Pre-service teachers’ perceptions of teaching in a culturally responsive classroom were studied by Smith and Lambeth (2016) addressing the following two questions:

1. What types of support do Caucasian pre-service teachers feel they need to teach students of other races and cultures, and how do they perceive the support that they actually receive?
2. How do pre-service teachers apply what they have learned from their mentors in their student teaching practice? (p. 49)

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

The study involved interviews and a questionnaire with a total of 21 pre-service teachers across two Masters of Teaching cohorts at a regional, teaching-centered university in the United States. All but one of the teacher candidates identified racially as Caucasian, the other as Black. The researchers did field observations in their practicum classes, and the pre-service teachers also conducted self-evaluations of their skills and knowledge acquired. Both researchers were also teacher educators involved teaching in the program.

Their findings included several themes: that pre-service teachers feel that an education program training teachers should not only teach about why to accept difference, but additionally, how to work with culturally diverse students. Smith and Lambeth (2016) also found that pre-service teachers believed in the importance of connecting with students, getting to know their interests and personalities, and that they must demonstrate belief in all students' academic abilities. They wanted mentors to employ culturally responsive teaching methods to show, rather than tell, through video clips of teaching in culturally diverse classrooms so they could model after the teachers. One participant expressed that they needed strategies from other teachers and professors for classroom management, discipline, and differentiation, along with an opportunity to practice using these tools. While pre-service teachers understood the importance of self-reflective practice for culturally responsive teaching, they did not feel those skills were effectively taught by their professors.

As demonstrated by the aforementioned scholars, multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy in teacher education challenge the notion that this content should be taught in tidbits, teach foundational social justice material like threshold concepts, and employ various creative tactics such as vignettes to help future teachers build strategies for culturally responsive classrooms (Smith & Lamben, 2016; Anast Seguin & Ambrosio, 2002; Convertino, 2016).

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching were employed in conjunction with a critical research orientation, orienting the study with an overtly political lens.

Research Design

This study was framed within critical race theory and critical ethnographic orientations. Critical race theorists consider racism as normative, and emphasize raising consciousness of social conditions and promoting emancipatory values equity, social welfare, justice, mutuality, and political liberty. People of color and women are often portrayed as deviant from the norm. Critical race theory is a form of oppositional scholarship, challenging the experiences of White cis-gendered, heterosexual males as the normative standard, grounding its conceptual framework in the experiences of historically disenfranchised communities. Critical race theory can be thought of as a lens for conducting more ethical research, as a transformative paradigm with implications for research that address racism and other forms of oppression, considering differential power imbalances and privileges between researchers and the researched; working to promote social justice, equity, and democracy. Social justice values inform the scope, design, conduct, and dissemination of the research (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Valdes, Culp, & Harris, 2002).

This study also used procedural aspects of ethnography that are identified as critical. Critical ethnography is a form of inquiry and reflection that looks at culture, knowledge, and action, and how they relate to hierarchical and oppressive structures of power. The origins of critical ethnography in education are in part grounded in the work of Freire (2000) and Giroux (2008), as well as academic feminism. It examines questions such as: Who benefits from research?; Whose interests are at risk?; and What are the consequences of the study for participants? (Brown & Dobrin, 2004). It is meant to be social and collaborative, Thomas (1993)

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

described critical ethnography as inquiry with a political purpose, to advocate for oppressed groups. The focus of inquiry is analyzing power structures to promote equity. Thomas added that “critical ethnographers describe, analyze, and open to scrutiny otherwise hidden agendas, power centers, and assumptions that inhibit, repress, and constrain. Critical scholarship requires that common sense assumptions be questioned” (p. 2).

Brown and Dobrin (2004) compared conventional and critical ethnography. They described critical ethnography as shifting away from acquiring knowledge about the people studied (either for the expansion of knowledge or the professional advancement of the ethnographer) to the “formation of a dialogic relationship with the [participants] whose destination is the social transformation of material conditions that immediately oppress, marginalize, or otherwise subjugate the ethnographic participant” (p. 5).

Critical ethnography challenges the dominant assumption that academic knowledge and epistemology are neutral, objective, and universal. Banks (2006) explores why feminist epistemologies began asking questions about “the extent to which objectivity within mainstream epistemology serves the interests of dominant groups and marginalizes groups such as women and people of color” (p. 779). Critical ethnographic research readily admits that the cultures, lived experiences, contexts, and positionalities of researchers affect their assumptions, questions, procedures, findings, and analyses. Researchers’ values are made explicit in the research process. Thomas (1993) argued that “to begin from a premise that social constraints exist and that research *should* be emancipatory and directed at those constraints is an explicitly value-laden position” (p. 21).

In critical ethnography, two questions should guide the researcher’s critical reflexivity, according to Thomas (1993). The first question is “what is the truth quotient of the study?” (p.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

47) in which the researcher examines how their own worldview and values influenced their work, analyzing if there were counterexamples dismissed that would shift the trajectory of the analysis, and keeping in mind how the study would differ if it were to be redone. The second question involves the social implications of the study’s findings and how they are presented. It is vital the researcher’s study challenges injustice and offers implications for action. A critical ethnographer’s duty is to problematize their own authority “demythologizing the knowledge-production process” (Thomas, 1993, p. 47) and ensure their research is serving a purpose for good. Batch and Windsor (2015) advanced this idea, arguing “undertaking ethnography through a critical lens ensured a focus not only on what was (or is) but on what could be” (p. 872) with the change orientation focused on structures and situations of power and dominance.

If one is to “uncover the hidden or taken-for-granted structures at play in society with a focus on the structures and relationships of power and control” (McCabe & Holmes, 2014, p. 79) then critical ethnography requires humility in the research process, including capturing what the researcher does as well as transmitting the limitations of the study. Not only does this humility require a consideration of how research promotes social justice rather than inadvertently colonizing people, but it also re-situates the researcher as equal to researched, an often unexamined power dynamic (Thomas, 1993). The critical ethnographer must be in a constant state of researching the researcher, and embracing the complexity of the research process itself (Batch & Windsor, 2015). There must be a level of self-monitoring throughout the study that may include questions such as: What do you (as the researcher) want to do in your research? What do you want your research to do? What is the purpose of your research? Are you cognizant and critical of yourself in the role of researcher? Do you break it apart/analyze it/question it/explore it? Do you try to shift it, reconfigure it, repackage it, and do I do the personal me or the

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

academic me? The researcher who is researching self presents narratives which become data.

This occurs as if there is a conversation between the descriptor (the voice that presents information) and interpreter (the voice that makes sense of the information presented) (Foster, 1999; Mitchell, 1982; Villenas, 1996).

Summary

The research and scholarship in this chapter reviewed selected research and scholarship on critical social justice in education, social justice teacher professional development, multicultural education, and critical ethnography. I explored these themes with reference to research and scholarship that supported and informed the design and analysis of this study.

Critical social justice in education is approached from the understanding that society is stratified, segregated, and not equal based on group identities. It recognizes inequality as a structural component of society and aims to change this. The arguments of several scholars in advocating social justice education were to instill in their students a sense of social agency and responsibility against oppression, discrimination, prejudice and bias. Social justice education requires teachers to have a fundamental understanding and political analysis of injustice, an impulse to integrate this analysis into their classroom teaching, and the motivation to apply this skillset outside of the classroom. Social justice education is not simply theoretical, but relies on practice for change.

Scholars strongly recommend that social justice teacher professional development involves active modeling of practices and pedagogy suggested for classrooms. Teacher educators or professional development facilitators must make social justice principles and theories explicit. Social justice teacher professional development also includes a component of self-reflection and self-study that cultivates a habit of curiosity, considering how one's own positionality and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

racialization inform their classroom praxis. Meaningful social justice teacher education involves professional development curricula tailored to the school’s specific context and community. Ultimately, social justice teacher professional development requires developing cooperative learning communities among teachers. A collaborative climate will serve to build teachers’ epistemological communities and foster continued growth as social justice educators.

Multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching were addressed in this chapter, with a particular focus on pre-service teachers’ learning, since scholarship and research on professional development was comparatively limited. Scholars such as Nieto (2009), and Sleeter and Delgado Bernal (2009) contend that multicultural education is not a neutral endeavor, and that multicultural educators must address power and privilege and how they show up in language, culture, and learning. Culturally responsive teaching is a fundamental component of multicultural education, and aims to use the funds of knowledge, frames of experience, and cultural styles of a diverse student body to make learning more pertinent and applicable to them (Gay, 2010). Employing a culturally responsive frame in one’s classroom aims to counter thinking implicit in conditioned, racialized biases (Chen, Nimmo, & Fraser, 2009). Multicultural education for pre-service teachers involves using a comprehensive lens, not one that isolates teaching into tidbits, a foundational, shared vocabulary of threshold concepts (Convertino, 2016), and the use of a method like vignettes or case studies that requires pre-service teachers to practice how they would engage in culturally responsive teaching rather than simply theorize about it (Anast Seguin & Ambrosio, 2002).

The qualitative research paradigm of critical ethnography was discussed at the end of this chapter. This paradigm challenges the dominant assumption that academic knowledge and epistemology are neutral, objective, and universal. It looks at culture, knowledge, and action, and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

how they relate to hierarchical and oppressive structures of power. Through critical reflection, critical ethnography’s end goal is to change the status quo by interrupting inequitable systems and structures, as a mechanism for transformative action.

Chapter III Methodology

Approaching Maple Rock School (a pseudonym) from the outside gives off the feeling of a garden oasis amidst urban life. There is a cobb oven outside the school gates (presumably used for school festivals and community gatherings), a chicken coop bustling with well-fed and well-attended hens, a vegetable garden, and ample child mosaics outside the main doors. While the big brick building itself is traditional, it is apparent the school has a strong sense of self, its own unique personality. During passing periods, the hallways are packed with smiling and chirping children, and during class you can often hear song or laughter permeate into the hallways. After school, for a period of five months, I co-facilitated a culturally responsive professional development sequence for the predominantly White school’s teaching staff with Maple Rock’s instructional coach. The purpose of this study was to determine how teachers and school leaders at this predominantly White school that is known for its social justice pedagogy, perceive of and implement culturally responsive pedagogy as a result of the professional development workshops and beyond. I aimed to explore how the school staff related to the notion of culturally responsive pedagogy both personally, and as a school-wide culture, and searched for areas of growth and resistance to culturally responsive pedagogy and practice.

Research Designs: A Qualitative Case Study

Qualitative research is a method of investigation and analysis employed in numerous academic disciplines. Its goal is to acquire a deep understanding of human behavior and the factors that influence such behavior. Its fundamental strength is the ability to describe how people experience a particular research topic, including contrasting belief systems, behaviors, attitudes, emotions, relationships of individuals, and how people make sense of and reproduce

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

the social world (Glesne, 2011; Hammersley, 2013). Hammersley (2013) described qualitative research as

a form of social inquiry that tends to adopt a flexible and data-driven research design, to use relatively unstructured data, to emphasize the essential role of subjectivity in the research process, to study a small number of naturally occurring cases in detail, and to use verbal rather than statistical forms of analysis. (p. 12).

Qualitative methods can also be useful in describing intangible factors including cultural norms, gender, race, religion, belief system, and so on to make the invisible visible (Guest, Mack, MacQueen, Namey & Woodsong, 2005). In qualitative research, the researcher is interested in “understanding the meaning people have constructed” (Merriam, 2014, p. 13) or how people perceive the world and their lived experiences.

Qualitative inquiry is often understood in contrast to quantitative inquiry, and according to Maxwell (2005), can be defined by five intellectual and three practical goals. The intellectual goals include: 1) understanding *meaning* of relevant participant experiences; 2) Understanding the effect and influence the *context* has on participant actions; 3) making sense of *unanticipated* phenomena; 4) understanding the *process* in which events are situated; 5) Offering *causal explanations* by asking how *x* influences *y*, and/or the process linking them. Qualitative inquiry as both inductive and flexible lends itself to three practical goals: a) producing results that make sense to the people you are studying and others, generating comprehensible and credible results; b) offering formative evaluations that aim to improve current practice rather than determine summative/finite values; c) Collaborating or acting with/among participants in the study (Maxwell, 2005, pp. 22-24). I chose qualitative inquiry for this study as I believed in the importance of getting to know the participants, understanding the nuances of their teaching

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

practices and the context in which they work, and spending time collaborating with them in order to deepen my ability to interpret their belief systems, pedagogies, and practices.

Qualitative research can use a variety of methods. It is employed in numerous academic disciplines, particularly within the social sciences. According to Stake (2010), qualitative research “relies primarily on human perception and understanding” (p.11). Denzin and Lincoln (2003) define qualitative research as “a set of interpretive activities, privileges no single methodological practice over another” (p. 9). The more human affairs are studied, the more it has become apparent that things work differently in different situations; for example, a medical provider’s treatment plan for an injury will shift according to the cause of the injury, the resources at hand, and triage priorities (Stake, 2010). Qualitative research does not attempt to generalize or universalize to populations, although findings can be generalized to theory.

While no methods are specifically valued above another, common ones include in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant and non-participant observations. In-depth interviews entail collecting information based on individuals’ personal histories, beliefs, and experiences. Focus group discussions elicit data that involve broad issues of concern to the cultural groups presented, helping to generate general impressions of a group’s cultural norms. Observations involve collecting data on naturally occurring social behaviors in their normal contexts (Murchison, 2010; Rodriguez, Schwartz, Lahman, & Geist, 2011).

Patton (2002) emphasizes the researcher’s voice in qualitative research as not objective, nor subjective: as objectivity is not possible, and subjectivity not credible, but balanced, “understanding and depicting the world authentically in all its complexity while being self-analytical, politically aware, and reflexive in consciousness” (p. 22). This study includes elements of two variants of qualitative research: case study and action research.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Often qualitative and quantitative methods are pitted against each other, representing a polarity between the two approaches to inquiry, although the two can be combined as well as complementary using a Mixed Methods approach. According to Guest, Mack, MacQueen, Namey, and Woodsong, (2005) qualitative and quantitative methods primarily differ in their analytical objectives, the forms of questions they ask, the types of data collection instruments utilized, and form of data they produce, and the level of flexibility built into the design of inquiry. One advantage of using qualitative data is the opportunity to ask participants open-ended questions, resulting in the ability to evoke meaningful, surprising, and explanatory responses.

It is vital to consider the ethical implications of conducting qualitative research. The well-being of the participants must be the first priority of researchers. The research theme is of secondary importance. Three core principles, originally stated in the Belmont Report (Guest et al., 2005), create the universally adopted guidelines for ethical research. Respect for persons, the first principle, requires a commitment the dignity of all informants. It involves ensuring the autonomy of research participants, and if the autonomy were to be compromised, researchers would be ethically obligated to protect people from the abuse of their vulnerability. The second principle, beneficence, refers to the importance of significantly reducing risks associated with the research, including both social and psychological, as well as increasing the benefits experienced by research participants. Justice, the third principle, involves a commitment to the idea of those voluntarily participating in the research sharing in the benefit of the knowledge gained.

In conjunction with these established principles, bioethicists have identified and advocated for a fourth principle: respect for communities. This demands that the researcher respects the morals and beliefs of the community and wherever possible, protects the community

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

members. Guest et al. (2005) continued, “this principle is, in fact, fundamental for research when community-wide knowledge, values, and relationships are critical to research success and may in turn be affected by the research process or its outcomes” (p. 9). In this study, I prioritized and kept central these principles.

Case Study

As a case study it is designed to address the explanatory question: *How* does a culturally responsive development intervention support teachers’ personal and professional growth, if at all? Bordieu (1998) explained that the multiplicity of human experience can be described using a single case:

My deepest scientific enterprise is indeed based on the belief that the deepest logic of the social world can be grasped only if one plunges into the particularity of an empirical reality historically located and dated, but with the objective of constructing it as a “special case of what is possible,” ... that is an exemplary case in a finite world of possible configurations. (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 2)

Yin (2006) described case study research as a method that helps to “illuminate a particular situation, to get a close (i.e., in-depth and firsthand) understanding of it. The case study method helps you to make direct observations and collect data in natural settings” (p.112). The case study method is pertinent when the research looks at descriptive *what* questions, or explanatory *how* or *why* questions (Yin, 2006). The case study method is fitting as it offers a nuanced lens on a teacher culture regarding culturally responsive teaching at the school site. Hyett, Kenny, and Dickson-Swift (2014) explained that “case study research has a level of flexibility that is not readily offered by other qualitative approaches...Case studies are designed to suit the case and research question and published case studies demonstrate wide diversity in study design” (p. 1).

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

While this study is primarily a case study, it also includes some elements of participatory action research and critical ethnography.

Key elements of a case study include: a bounded unit (in this case, a school site); located within a local community; involving interactions, relationships, and practices between the case study site and the larger world; a focus on capturing the complexity of the case; data collected either over an extended period of time or for a short duration; the researcher spending time in/getting to know the case; using a range of data collection tools such as interviews, observations, focus groups, reflection journals, and so on, as well as different perspectives to create depth; and two or more forms of data collection tools and two or more perspectives. This helps to triangulate or legitimize the data through cross-verification from two or more sources (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013).

According to Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2013), case study methods in education began to develop traction in the 1970s as a reaction to positivist research trends based on quantitative bias, measurement, and statistical analysis. Case study methods allowed for more deep, meaningful, multilayered insights about schools and classrooms. In 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act in the United States relied on one sole method of scientific research that would lead to understanding and subsequently, enhancing and refining the education system. This method did not account for capturing the complexity and diversity of schools and classrooms. “This ‘scientific’ approach is also in danger of seriously disempowering those at the heart of the education process while failing to recognize the value of different forms of engagement with issues in education” (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013, p.5). Case study methods intends to deepen and contextualize evidence (rather than decontextualize evidence, as often happens in experimental design research).

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

This case study used ethnographic techniques. Case study methods can borrow from numerous approaches including ethnographic, historical, sociological, psychological designs (Merriam, 1991). An ethnographic descriptive case study focuses on thick description of whatever is being studied. Thick description began as a resource for ethnographers while doing participant observation research and can be thought of by using the following analogy: imagine two boys quickly opening and closing the eyelids of their left eyes. The two movements are exactly the same if one were to just observe the physicality in action, one could not tell which was a twitch and which was a wink. The distinction between a wink and a twitch, however, are significant, and the winker has done two things: flexed his eyelids and winked, while the twitcher has only done one: flexed his eyelids (Ryle, 2009; Geertz, 1973). Geertz (1973) goes on to complexify the analogy by including a third boy parodying the winker with an uncoordinated and conspicuous wink by flexing the left eyelids. This eye-flexer is doing the same technical move as the first two boys, but is adding yet another layer of meaning. And upon reflection, the first winker could have been pretend-winking in the first place. Geertz (1973) indicated the difference between interpreting those scenarios as three eye-flexers versus “practicing a burlesque of a friend faking a wink to deceive an innocent into thinking conspiracy is in motion” (p.7) which expresses the object of ethnography,

a stratified hierarchy of meaningful structures in terms of which twitches, winks, fake-winks, parodies, rehearsals of parodies are produced, perceived, and interpreted, and without which they would not...in fact exist, no matter what anyone did or didn't do with his eyelids. (Geertz, 1973, p.7)

This thick description (the researcher's perception of participant perceptions of phenomena) serves as the researcher's compass that involves overlay upon overlay of complex cultural

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

messaging, that the researcher must try to interpret in its multiplicity of meaning and attempt to make sense of (Ponterotto, 2006; Kharel, 2015). Representation in interpretive research can be problematic because, as Denzin (2001) argued, any processes of representation involves the researcher’s interpretation, explaining that “social scientists write culture; they create culture through the process of writing. Writing is an interpretive act. Researchers do not describe culture; rather, they *inscribe* it” (p. 98). To write thick description as an ethnographer, one must have an understanding of, familiarity with, and rapport built among the people in the study in order to attempt to portray their experiences and perceptions, and the researcher must also take into account their own positionality: how do the researcher’s identity and research ideology inform what they see and interpret? Thick description is one technique employed in this case study intended to address the complexity of the case.

Participatory Action Research

Participatory action research merges the theoretical with the practical (Dick, 2015). Its relational, non-hierarchical nature is a good fit for this study because it dissolves some of the boundaries that tend to distance the traditional researcher from her or his participants. As a researcher working closely with the researched, participatory action research was aligned with equity principles and disrupted the often-impenetrable power binary between academicians and practitioners. Dick (2015) declared that, “Participation [research] serves multiple purposes, among them empowerment of those involved, a commitment to equity, information sharing among the various stakeholders and building commitment to the planned actions” (p. 435). Glesne (2011) explained that in action research,

The researcher works with others as agents of change...which assists a group, community, or organization in defining a problem; better understanding the situation; and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

then resolving their problems. The research process is collaborative and inclusive of all major stakeholders with the researcher acting as a facilitator who keeps the research cycles moving. (p. 23)

The professional development initiative that was the setting for the study was already in motion prior to the beginning of data collection. The teachers had been participating in equity professional development sessions roughly once every two weeks for several years. Participating as an action researcher provided more entry into the school culture and decision making process, and insights into the administrative leadership styles. Even though the teaching staff at the research site (Maple Rock School) already had some deal of experience and background in culturally responsive teaching, the training designed for this research project added more perspectives and insights to deepen their knowledge and skills, and their perspectives enriched and deepened my analysis.

Action research, also known as critical action research, critical narrative inquiry, teacher educator self-study or practitioner inquiry (Cochran-Smith & Donnell, 2006), was a central methodology of this study. This means that I worked with school leaders to develop the CRPD curriculum, and co-facilitated the curriculum throughout the duration of the study, embedding myself in the school community. Rather than acting as a passive, detached observer, I participated in the professional development process and became invested in the community. This helped me to understand not only the teaching staff dynamics and belief systems in a more complex way, but also it helped me reflect on my own positionality and practice as facilitator. Action research, according to McAteer (2013) is “a way of understanding and generating knowledge about the complexities of practice” (p. 21). Action research often involves collective

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

and collaborative work between school-based teachers and other educators, university based colleagues, and community organizers.

According to Cochran-Smith and Donnell (2006), “Many efforts labeled action research are aimed at altering curriculum, challenging common school practices, and working for social action” (p. 504). One example of action research was Bronson’s (1995) research on a high school course called “Participation in Government.” Bronson engaged his students in a self-study of the course’s content and structure, and the result was Bronson’s development of the course and as a teacher, as well as collectively re-imagined student responsibilities, rules, objective, and curriculum in order to demonstrate democratic governance. Bronson exemplified characteristic action research by conducting the study in collaboration with his students. Glesne (2001) suggested that “Action research has at its essence the intent to change something, to solve some sort of problem, to take action” (p. 15). This particular approach does not work well when the researcher is an outsider to the research community.

I interacted regularly with the participants and was involved in their professional development sessions as a co-designer and co-facilitator for the duration of this study, and was able to employ reflexive practice to reflect upon their feedback and made changes to my practice accordingly. According to McAteer (2013), “all models of action research are deeply rooted in the notion of reflection” (p. 25). Mertler (2012) expands on this thought by explaining that “Action research encourages teachers to examine the dynamics of their classrooms, critically think about the actions and interactions of their students, confirm and/or challenge existing ideas or practices, and take risks in the process” (p. 14). This study was intended to help facilitate growth and reflection for the teachers at Maple Rock School with regards to culturally

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

responsive teaching, and subsequently, informed my own growth as a striving culturally responsive educator.

Ethnographic Techniques

Ethnography is not only a method, but an orientation, and one way of doing qualitative research. It is an approach to studying people and culture that was originally developed in anthropology and now is used frequently in sociology and education research. According to Anderson-Levitt (2006), ethnography is more of a research philosophy rather than a method, that relies primarily on participant observation and open-ended interviewing. Anderson-Levitt (2006) described ethnography as “an approach to the study of people in everyday life with particular attention to culture, that is, to the processes through which people make (and sometimes impose or contest) meaning,” (p. 279). Denzin (1997) described ethnography as a “form of inquiry and writing that produces descriptions and accounts about the ways of life of the writer and those written about” (p. xi). Unlike other research methodologies, ethnographies are not typically unattached or passive from the research setting and participants. Instead, they gather data and meaning from firsthand experience with their participants; study human life without the influence of a controlled research environment; and make observations based on the dynamics of the community or culture as it exists naturally or normally, based on the context of the setting (Denzin, 1997; Glesne, 2011; Murchison, 2010).

Most thorough ethnographic projects will employ a combination of methods. These methods include participant observation, field notes, interviews (both formal and informal) and surveys. In this study I followed Glesne’s advice (2011) about “collecting data primarily by participant-observation and interviewing” and developing thick descriptions of “how people within a cultural group construct and share meaning” (p. 17). Choosing one’s methods involves

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

an analysis of the types of questions being asked and the kind of information necessary to answer these questions. For the majority of ethnographers, participant observation is the most natural way to embark on the project. It is helpful to familiarize oneself with the research setting personally to begin collecting information. While collecting information, a researcher must be aware that the lens of analysis will be ideally fine-tuned to the details of the surrounding environment. Murchison (2010) explained:

Focusing on the nonobvious allows the ethnographer to engage in the complexities that emerge in these multiple perspectives, in society and culture as lived and living phenomena. The power of ethnography is rooted in its ability to get past stereotypes, assumptions, and veneers to the complex inner workings. Building a research project that aims to identify and explore these complexities from the beginning by looking to investigate the nonobvious provides a strong foundation for research. (p. 27)

Participant observation should be scheduled in advance and with intention. It can be useful to limit participant observation events to several key environments or places in order to create increased consistency of experience.

The well-prepared ethnographer's lens can be uniquely clear, if in focus. The experience of observing a community or culture from the outside allows for a potentially critical outside perspective. Wolf (1992) wrote:

Some kinds of cultural meanings may only be accurately understood and reported by one who has learned them without realizing it, but much of the cultural onion may be as easily as or even more easily picked apart by a careful analyst who is not of the culture. (p. 5)

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

A skilled ethnographer can communicate the quality and experience of human life in evocative ways, but this requires deep respect for the community and will nevertheless be clouded by the researcher’s inherent positionality.

Ethnography relies on note taking as a habitual practice. This entailed creating a record by writing with great detail, documenting the intricacies of the study. Murchison (2010) wrote, “You should pay attention to sights and smells. If you can, you should record the words you hear... You will want to make sure you record the details that will make the story complete and compelling,” (p. 72). Both participant observation and analysis require note taking as a record of the research trajectory, to illuminate important thematic details that may serve to deepen the analysis.

Ethnography often involves interviews with participants. The purpose of ethnographic interviews is to learn from interviewees without interrogating them. While the researcher may have to ask challenging questions, it is vital to strive to maintain a horizontal, collaborative relationship between interviewer and interviewee. Unless the circumstances suggest a setting of formality, the interview process should begin with informal conversations to build relationships and mutual trust. This will offer the researcher information that will inform the makeup of the research plan (Dunne, Pryor, & Yates, 2005).

Murchison (2010) developed a five-step guide to crafting interview questions to equip the researcher for healthy and fruitful conversations. His first suggestion is to ask open-ended rather than closed-ended questions. He described the benefit of asking open-ended questions as getting to “the sort of expansive and deep data that are at the heart of most good ethnographic work” (p. 109).

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

The second idea is to avoid questions that imply a specific answer or suggest that the interviewer already knows that answer. The ethnographer’s primary objective is to learn about the participants in a genuine capacity, rather than influence their answers based on the framing of the question. The third piece of advice is highlighting the benefit of asking follow-up questions and double-checking participants’ answers. This approach requires flexibility and strong listening qualities in the researcher. These qualities will also serve to create a stronger connection between the researcher and interviewee.

The fourth idea is to consider asking the participant hypothetical questions. Murchison (2010) wrote, “A well crafted ‘What if...?’ question can help you learn about a wider range of situations than you may have a chance to observe or your interviewee has directly experienced” (p. 110). Hypothetical questions allow for creativity of thought and imagination while still highlighting personal values and beliefs. Finally, the last suggestion is to avoid asking simple or basic questions.

Asking basic questions reinforces a power-dynamic between the researcher and interviewee that creates an unhealthy imbalance and disempowers the interviewees. Wolf (1992) explored the ethics of ethnographic research in this capacity:

Power differentials within this society and between us and those we study exist, and, alas, will continue to exist for the foreseeable future. Anthropologists must be constantly aware of how these differences in power can distort their perceptions and skew their interpretations. Obviously, they must also be careful not to take advantage of their (usually) considerably greater power in ways that will disadvantage the people they are studying. (p. 6)

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

In framing interview questions, this consciousness must remain, informing how researchers choose and articulate interview questions, and additionally, how to proceed and analyze the data.

Primary Research Questions

Four primary research questions were the focus of this study. They were: 1) How did teachers perceive the culturally responsive professional development sessions; 2) What, if any, components were perceived as transformative; 3) What if any, components were perceived as barriers to their growth and development; and 4) How can this information serve school leaders, teachers, to best design culturally responsive professional development opportunities to maximize teacher transformation for equitable practice?

Participants

The participants involved in the study included were 23 K-5 classroom teachers, as well as the Maple Rock principal, vice principal, and instructional coach. The teachers were predominantly White women. This demographic reflected national teacher trends in the U.S. According to the National Center for Education Information 84% of teachers in the U.S. are White, followed by 7% Black, 6% Latino, and 4% classified as other, and 84% are female (Feistritzer, 2011). A total of 72% (16/22) of teachers at Maple Rock in the first survey self-identified as White or European American. Three teachers identified as Jewish American (some included White in that description, while others did not). One teacher identified as first generation Latin American. Four teachers identified as bi-racial, including Black, White, Asian, and Native American races/ethnicities. Most of these teachers would be considered veteran teachers, 64% of whom had six or more years of teaching experience. A total of 18% of teachers had three to five years of teaching experience, and 18% had been in the classroom between one

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

and three years. The staff appeared to be politically progressive and aligned with an equity philosophy.

Context and Setting

The research took place at a K-8 public elementary school in the Pacific Northwest over a period of five months. The school is situated in a politically liberal city, in a neighborhood that is predominantly White and middle class. It is a focus option school with lottery slots available for students around the district, but with their neighborhood growing at such a rapid rate there have been no lottery slots available for three years. At the time of the study, the teachers, alumni, and community activists were working diligently to switch to a full lottery system, open to all city residents through publishing demands in local media sources, and were advocating the same at board meetings, district advisory meetings, and public hearings. Maple Rock School has a local reputation for community involvement and liberal activism.

Maple Rock opened in the 1990s. Its curricular offerings include service-learning experiences and overnights; school gardens and compost bins; rotating themes of river, forest, and mountain; and visual arts. The school also has significant community, parental, and alumni involvement. Additionally, social justice and racial equity are central to the mission. The 600-person student body is approximately 80% White, 8% Latino, 2% Asian, and less than 1% Black or American Indian. About one third of the students are economically disadvantaged (The Oregonian, 2015).

The school is located within one of the largest districts in the Pacific Northwest. Home to 49,070 students, it has 28 elementary schools, 29 K-8 schools, 10 middle schools, 10 high schools, and one K-12 school. Student racial/ethnic demographics in the district include: 10% African American, 7% Asian, 16% Hispanic, 60% White, and 9% Multiracial. A total of 46% of

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

students in the district are eligible for free/reduced-price meals (Portland Public Schools, 2015).

The district is committed to educational equity and excellence for all students and it advocates for culturally responsive changes in policy, personnel, programs, and practices. Focused on race-based disparities in schools, the district’s equity policy addresses student assessment; district hiring practices; differentiated instruction and resources; teacher professional development to understand the effects of their own racialized identities on their classroom interactions; and cultivates welcoming environments for students and families of color. Specifically, the district mandates that all teachers undergo equity-focused professional development.

Building Rapport with School Staff

The Maple Rock administrators suggested I observe a two-day professional development workshop with the school’s equity team (that makes up about one third of the staff members) before starting the CRPDs. The idea was to build relationships with individuals at the school who were already active in this work, and to get a sense for how to design CRPD curricula that best serves and motivates the teaching staff. The session took place at the home of one of the teachers. Facilitated by an outside contractor, the teachers worked collectively on setting goals for culturally responsive pedagogy at their school and in their classrooms. I began to get to know this core group of teachers, acquiring impressions of how the school operated and the interests of the teachers. This session helped lay the foundation for my time at the CRPDs and beyond. These equity team members spoke openly and honestly, did not avoid conflict, represented a range of teaching experience, and worked together in a very familial, supportive way. After those two days, the school leadership was involved in helping guide the curriculum vision for the CRPDs.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Curriculum Development

I spent time with the team of administrators developing the CRPD model based on what they believed would be most valuable and useful for their school community. As a starting point, I offered eight fundamental features of multicultural education that could be used as organizing themes. These were:

- **Content Reform.** This involves questioning who is represented in the curricula and how with the goal of portraying diverse, complex and dynamic stories (Banks, 2004).
- **Contextual Competence.** Each class should be approached differently as all students have unique identities and lived experiences (Nieto, 2009; Gay, 2010).
- **Equity Pedagogy and Methodology.** This requires diversifying teaching methods to appeal to various student intelligences (Dewey, 1997; Freire, 2000).
- **Teacher Transformative Self-Study.** Teachers must engage in self-study to model thinking critically and questioning otherwise unquestioned assumptions (Tatum, 2003; Nieto, 2009; Palmer, 1998).
- **Interrogating Knowledge and Assumptions.** This implies addressing dominant paradigms of knowledge and asking what values and assumptions accompany these knowledge claims. (Romero, Arce & Cammarota, 2009; Macedo, Dendrinis, & Gounari, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2004).
- **Prejudice Reduction.** Developing more positive and democratic racial and cultural attitudes and values (Boutte, 2008; Banks, 2004; Derman-Sparks, 2009).
- **Student Agency.** Students cultivating action-oriented tools, such as critical thinking skills, ideologies, and habits, to become change agents who challenge racial and cultural disparities in opportunity (Ladson-Billings, 2004; Sleeter & Bernal, 2004; Gay, 1994; Freire, 2000).

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- **School Culture for Equity.** This requires that the whole school culture become more equitable, re-centering the organization so that students from diverse cultural backgrounds will experience educational leadership and modeling from adults representing diverse cultural groups with cultural competencies (Banks, 2004; Palmer, 1998; Valenzuela; 1999).

After discussing these eight tenets with the school administrators, content reform, teacher transformative self-study and interrogating knowledge and assumptions were selected for primary focus. They resonated most with their perception of what would interest the staff, and these themes complemented the professional development that was already in effect. Of the six distinct lessons, we decided to start with an introductory lesson, focus two lessons on interrogating knowledge and assumptions, two on content reform, and a final lesson that pulled all the themes together. Each lesson had an undercurrent of teacher transformative self-study. Interrogating knowledge and assumptions was integrated into goal-setting with students; content reform into analyzing who was being reflected in their curriculum and how; and teacher transformative self-study throughout all interventions in the form of self-reflective questions and written journal entries.

A panel of critical friends read through the CRPD lesson plans and provided feedback on their culturally responsive appropriateness. This panel included four female scholars in the field of multicultural education. Three identified as women of color and one as White. Their ethnic and racial diversity was important since four White women developed the equity curriculum used in this study and a dominant racial monopoly of its authorship does not represent variability of racial perspectives.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

The critical friends responded that while the curricular content did focus on culturally responsive teaching, the instructional methods were not necessarily so. The majority of the activities were writing and discussion-based with little expressive, artistic, creative, or visual elements to them. The panel members also mentioned that it would be advantageous to cultivate affective learning experiences. As a result, the co-designers and I incorporated questions and activities focused on vulnerability that facilitated community building. For example, one ice-breaker question was “Share a story about a time that you modeled vulnerability in your classroom this week.” Also, the co-facilitator and I modeled vulnerability by sharing stories with the teachers admitting to our own collusion with racism in teaching. I believe that as facilitators, sharing our own hiccups and struggles in the work resulted in more culturally responsive CRPDs. Based on the panel’s feedback, the curriculum was revised to both describe culturally responsive tenets and how to enact or model them.

Data Collection

I co-developed and co-facilitated six culturally responsive professional development sessions during the school’s spring semester. The content was created in conjunction with the school’s instructional coach, the principal, and vice principal. The Culturally Responsive Professional Development (CRPD) sessions were mandatory for the school staff and were scheduled on meeting days, from 3:30-5:30 p.m. Three of the sessions involved the K-5 staff (both classroom teachers and support staff), and three of the sessions involved the entire K-8 staff. While it would have been advantageous to have all K-8 staff involved in all sessions, this was not possible. Therefore, only the K-5 staff was invited to participate in the data collection process. It was not viable to interview middle school teachers and compare their experiences to K-5 teachers since they did not experience the entire professional development sequence.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

I conducted three surveys over the duration of the workshop to gauge how participants’ understandings of culturally responsive teaching shifted over time. In addition, I interviewed five teachers and three co-designers of the curriculum to gain a deeper understanding of their relationships to culturally responsive teaching and the intervention. The surveys and interviews were intended to address questions regarding what was meaningful about the CRPDs, what they perceived culturally responsive teaching to be, how it showed up throughout their teaching, and where they believed they as individuals and the school as a whole were effective, and conversely, what needed to be strengthened in the realm of culturally responsive teaching.

The interviews were 45 minutes to an hour in duration, audio-recorded, and conducted in-person at the school as well as over the phone, depending on teachers’ availability and preferences. The interviews were open-ended in an effort to understand participants “on their own terms and how they make meaning of their own lives, experiences, and cognitive processes” (Brenner, 2006, p. 357). In addition to understanding them as individuals, I sought out to make sense of their perspectives within the context of the Maple Rock School culture.

My aim in the open-ended interview process was to frame rich questions, beginning with big questions and working down to the details. According to Brenner (2006), the open-ended interview is structured in the funnel shape, beginning with large questions and working subsequently towards more details, as noted in figure 2. I used detail probes in the interview process, such as furthering understanding by inquiring about who, when, where, and how, in addition to using silence probes. My silence as a researcher cued participants to continue with their thoughts and indicated active listening (Brenner, 2006).

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

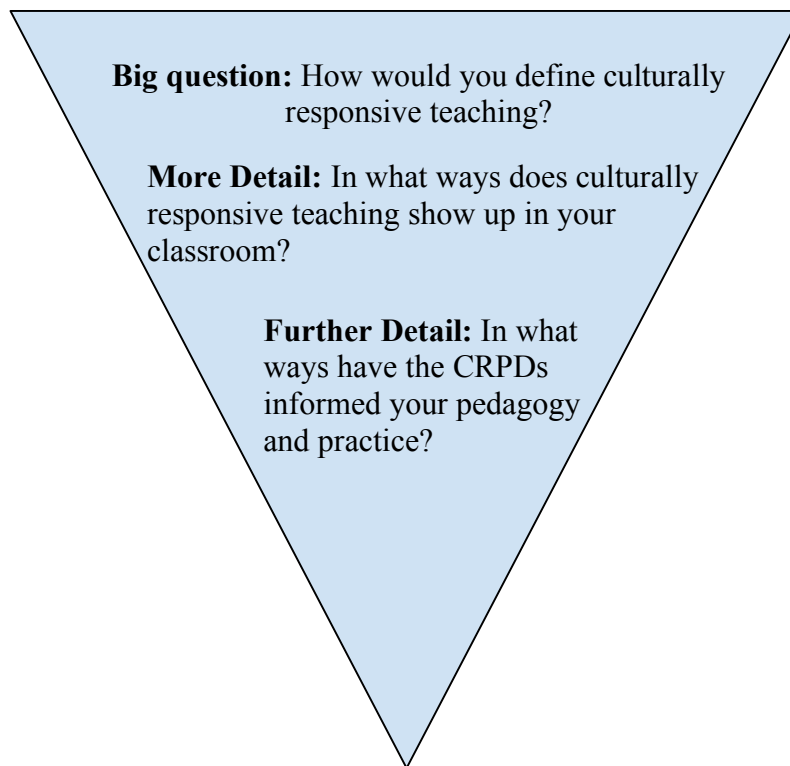


Figure 2. Funneled interviewing model used for data collection.

During interviews, I took notes to reflect insights from each participant’s story. This also provided interviewees with extra time to process questions. After the interviews, I imputed all those notes into a document in an effort to draw out larger themes across participants. Once the interviews were finished, they were transcribed. I gave participants the option to see transcripts to ensure they felt the interview was accurately portrayed. They were encouraged to make edits to or omit any parts they did not feel accurately represented their beliefs or perspectives.

Three surveys were administered as part of the CRPDs, during teacher professional development time, over the five months of data collection. This allowed for a higher response rate. Teachers brought their laptops to the CRPDs on sessions one, three, and six to take the online surveys (1) before the first CRPD; (2) in the middle of the professional development sequence; and (3) after its completion. There were 22 responses to the first survey, 16 to the

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

second, and 14 to the third. As the school year went on, the CRPD attendance was slightly less, resulting in a lower response rate.

Participating in the CRPDs elicited rich data. I wrote down detailed observational field notes after each CRPD, noting who appeared to be engaged or disengaged, what particular stories came to light over the course of the events, and general impressions of the interventions based on participation and participant-generated content. I videotaped the CRPDs so I could revisit the tapes as needed to support or double-check observations. Photographs of participant work from the CRPDs (for example, brainstorming ideas on anchor paper, putting post-it notes with ideas up, and so on) served as an additional data source. Participants kept journals throughout the CRPDs in which they wrote reflections, pasted resources, and utilized between sessions to document their ongoing learnings. These journals were also used as data to document formative learning. Finally, I used data on the school’s history and philosophy to support the study.

Study Sequencing

The figure below details sequencing of the intervention and data collection processes. The CRPD dates were chosen according to Maple Rock’s professional development calendar. Interviews were scheduled in remaining third of the CRPD process, such that participants had experienced at least two thirds of the CRPDs at the time of their interviews.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Culturally Responsive Professional Development Project Timeline

Winter & Spring 2016

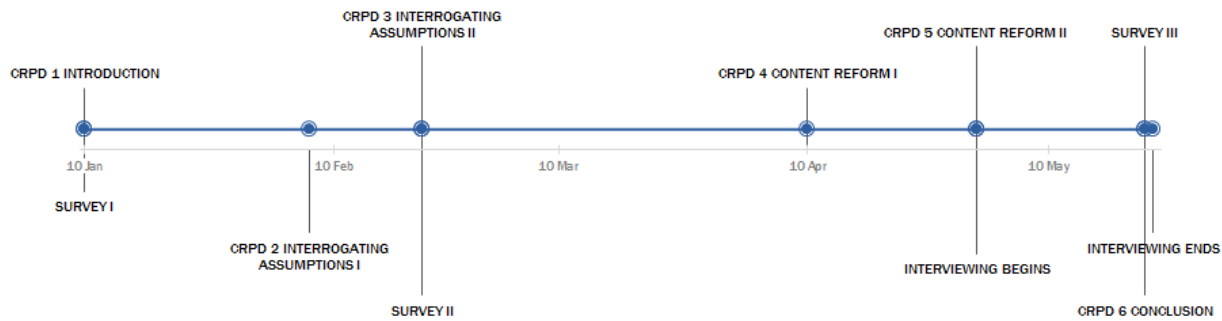


Figure 3. Culturally Responsive Professional Development project timeline.

Data Analysis

Sangasubana (2011) offered useful data analysis strategies that provided guidance and structure in this study. The strategies included: coding for descriptive labels, sorting for patterns, identifying outliers, generalizing constructs and theories, and making memos with reflective comments. These strategies are intended to reduce the data to a manageable size, and highlight patterns and themes. If any outliers exist, it is important to keep this particular data in mind in case follow-up research is pursued for further clarification. Then, generalizing constructs and theories are used to support identified patterns and themes. Finally, making memos with reflective comments helps the researcher remain grounded in her or his assumptions, biases, and reflections throughout the research process (Sangasubana, 2011).

As stated earlier, field notes, anecdotal data, interview transcriptions, audio transcriptions, video footage, journal data, and photographs from the CRPDS were compiled and analyzed inductively to determine in what ways the CRPD curriculum was meaningful and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

served to transform teachers’ worldviews and considerations of their own practices. I used thick descriptions (discussed earlier in this chapter) from field notes to prompt reflections.

Banks (2006) notes a goal of multicultural education theorists is “to reveal how the lives, cultures, and positionality of researchers influence their work” (p. 773). A multicultural framework guided the way in which I analyzed and interpreted the data. According to Banks (2006), multicultural research seeks to answer the following types of questions:

1. Who has the power to define groups and to institutionalize their concepts within schools, colleges, and universities?
2. What is the relationship between knowledge and power?
3. Who benefits from the ways in which key concepts such as race, culture, giftedness and disadvantaged are defined? Who loses?
4. How does the positionality of researchers influence the research questions, methods, and findings they construct? (pp. 775-776)

Triangulation is a way to confirm and validate research findings by looking at data from more than one perspective. Stake (2010) contended that “When knowledge is being constructed, no two observers construct it exactly the same” (p. 125) and I used triangulation in an attempt to paint an increasingly refined picture of Maple Rock’s faculty belief systems regarding culturally responsive teaching. I triangulated by compiling a series of different perspectives in the research, including observations and field notes from CRPDs, survey responses, one-on-one interview responses, literature related to the school, and theoretical literature about culturally responsive teaching. I worked in collaboration with CRPD co-facilitators throughout the study, and taking down observation notes after each CRPD with another co-facilitator. Stake (2010) described one benefit of the review panel process as internal disagreement, explaining that

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

“when observers disagree, the complexity also becomes clearer” (p. 127). My ideas were frequently pushed and nuanced by these reflective discussions. Also, during the creation of the CRPD curriculum, I worked with a critical panel of scholars in culturally responsive teaching who read through the CRPD curriculum at its inception and provided the designers with feedback to ensure the curriculum was culturally responsive. Member checks among interview participants took place, asking interviewees to look over their interview transcripts to see that their ideas were portrayed accurately. Participants were invited to omit, change, or elaborate on any ideas they felt were not fully represented in their interview transcript. Four of eight interviewees opted to participate.

I used the Survey Monkey software for the first survey, and switched to Google Forms for the second two surveys, as I found it more user-friendly. I used the software platform Dedoose as a coding and data analysis tool. Dedoose allowed me to upload all survey data, observation notes, and interview text. Subsequently, codes were identified to identify themes in the data. The codes that emerged had various tiers: the macro tier or parent code, and corresponding micro tiers, or child codes. For example, from the survey, one parent code was “What teachers Hope to Gain from the CRPD” and the child codes were “Concrete Techniques/Tools,” “Inspiration,” “Personal and Professional Growth,” “Gain Confidence,” “Self-Reflection/Self-Awareness,” and “Support for Students”. Another parent code was “Culturally Responsive Definition” and its corresponding child codes were “Curriculum,” “Outcomes,” “Teacher Philosophy,” and “Not Sure.” Child codes often had their own sub codes. For example, under “Curriculum” fell “Multiple Perspectives,” “Teaches Racialized History,” and “Students See Self in Curriculum.” Under “Student Outcomes” the following sub-themes emerged: “Broaden Student Perspectives,” “Student Created,” and “Students are Successful.”

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Under “Teacher Philosophy,” the following codes emerged: “Challenge Biases and Assumptions,” “Contextual Competence,” “Decentralize Whiteness,” “Equality,” “Large Scale Reform,” and “Not Teaching from One Perspective.” This method helped to organize and aggregate a great deal of information into relatively simple themes. Murchison (2010) asserted, “The codes become the means by which you can sort through the ethnographic record in a systematic fashion in working toward developing both an ethnographic narrative and an analytical framework” (p. 179). Frequently occurring codes emerged as worthy of mention and further analysis.

Summary

This chapter discussed the research design and methods used to capture how predominantly White teachers in a liberal-leaning political context responded to a culturally responsive professional development sequence, understanding themes behind general areas of growth and resistance to this pedagogy. The study took place in a large urban school district in the Pacific Northwest in a largely White neighborhood. The participants were 23 teachers and three administrators who taught grades K-5. The majority of the teachers involved in the study had been teaching for six or more years.

I co-facilitated six professional development sessions (CRPDs) for the teachers with the school’s instructional coach as part of their local district’s mandate for bi-monthly equity professional development. During this time, I videotaped the CRPDs, took field notes, surveyed the staff on three separate occasions, and interviewed eight individuals.

The data collected were analyzed through a critical theory lens in order to uncover the relationship between knowledge and power, in an attempt to make visible otherwise seemingly invisible hegemonic trends, with the goal of ultimately shifting that power equitably. Participants

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

were invited to participate in the data analysis process in an aim to best capture their beliefs and ideas. The design of this study was not aimed to universalize, but instead, was customized in its methods to represent each participant’s authentic perspective.

Chapter IV **Data Analysis and Findings**

The major findings from this study are organized according to what *individual participants gained from the CRPDs* (in other words, their developing culturally responsive teaching strengths); *the support they still needed in developing these skills*; what participants perceived to be Maple Rock’s *culturally responsive strengths school-wide*; and what *school-wide obstacles* kept Maple Rock from making more significant progress. Individual participants gained: 1) tools and strategies to reform their curricula; 2) an increasing ease with discomfort; and 3) increased self-consciousness resulting in greater awareness of the influence of one’s positionality in different settings. They expressed a need for growth: 1) incorporating anti-bias and justice tenets and actions in their curricula (compared to only identity and diversity); 2) greater depth of insights about culturally responsive teaching; and 3) more leadership in culturally responsive teaching. Participants identified Maple Rock’s primary CRT strength as teachers and administrators’ unwavering commitment to culturally responsive teaching. School-wide growth needs were included: 1) feeling equal and safe; 2) countering an arrogance about how far the school has come that impedes further progress; 3) a lack of consistency in what culturally responsive teaching means and how it is enacted; and 4) its traditions of progressivism that are not easily changed and stifle progress in CRT. Data related to each of these findings are presented in this chapter.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

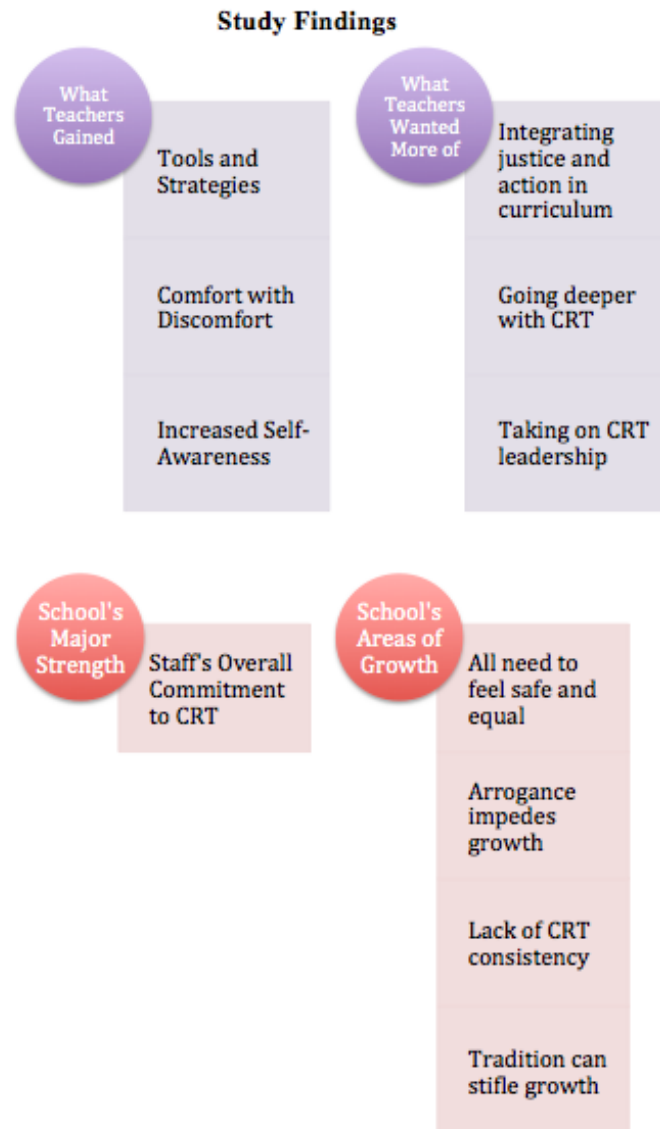


Figure 4. Study Findings.

These findings represent a synthesis of data gathered through one-on-one interviews, surveys conducted on three different occasions, reflections of participants through written CRPD exercises, researcher observations, and select participant journal entries. Specific data from different data sources are used to substantiate different patterns and trends. Quotes from one-on-one interviews identify participants by pseudonyms, while quotes from the three surveys are not named because the survey responses were confidential to the researcher.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Individual Tools and Strategies to Reform Curriculum

Participants were satisfied with tools provided in the CRPDs that helped guide them implement CRT. The first survey that was administered before the CRPDs began asked teachers what they hoped to gain from the professional development workshops. Many indicated a desire for concrete tools and techniques to bring to the classroom. One teacher hoped for “ways to apply culturally responsive teaching to the classroom--starting right now and ways to look at the big picture. I would like to gain strategies to use, but also an outlook that is an umbrella over all curriculum.” Another teacher echoed that sentiment in stating, “I hope to find concrete examples and guidance on how to create both a culturally responsive space in the library and curriculum for the library.”

In assessing strengths and weaknesses of the CRPDs, several participants praised receiving specific and actionable strategies they could employ in their classrooms. In the second survey, one teacher “really appreciated the resources such as articles and books that we have used during the sessions.” One popular tool was the Critical Question Guide (CQG) which was a list of questions to give teachers a starting point from which to question assumptions, values, and curricula present in their classes. An example of a CQG is presented in figure 5. Jocelyn found the CQG to be one of the most beneficial elements of the CRPDs, and used it frequently in planning. She said,

Usually I’ve brought [the list of questions] specific to the [essential] skills, and then it became more generic, and it kept coming back, so that’s definitely one [way to] connect the dots that I’ve really appreciated. I have those questions and I use them constantly in my academic planning now. Those were really, really helpful.

Another survey participant described the CQG as being “meaningful and allowing me to look at my practice in a deeper and more meaningful way with all kiddos in mind.” A third one said, “It

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

has given me a framework with which to look at my practice and our school with a more critical eye.”

Critical Question Guide

1. What underlying assumptions or values are embedded in this essential skill?
2. Is this skill universally applicable, or would it be more beneficial for some than others? For whom and what circumstances?
 - a. *What people/groups may be left out of the conversation? To whom does this value apply? In what circumstances? Why? To whom does this value exclude? In what circumstances? Why?*
3. How do you relate to this skill? How does that inform your read of it?
 - a. *Is this a value that was taught in your home growing up? In your school as a student? As a teacher? Consider your relationship to this value based on your history and socialization with it.*
 - b. *How might your own history with a value inform your relationship to teaching it?*
4. How have you seen this skill enacted in the public sphere? By whom? In what ways? For what purposes?
5. Does the appropriateness of this skill change from context to context? If so, how? If this is the case, in what ways do you make this explicit with students?
 - c. *In what circumstances could this value/assumption be positive?*
 - d. *In what circumstances could this value/assumption be negative or harmful?*
 - e. *How might you articulate this to your students?*
 - g. *What kinds of questions could you ask your students to draw out the complexity of (otherwise unquestioned) values and assumptions?*

Figure 5. A CRPD Critical Question Guide.

For Malia, the CRPD tools made CRT less amorphous and theoretical. These resources offered “some structure, a way of thinking instead of it feeling like this big, abstract thing that we’re just going to share anecdotes and where is that going to fit?” Anne agreed that the CQG helped anchor and propel her thinking, permeated her workday, and caused her to consider “underlying assumptions embedded in things, [asking] who would benefit more than others.”

Another resource that proved very useful was the Path to Competence, (adapted from Kendall, 2014) that includes four quadrants. Quadrant 1 was labeled Unconscious and Incompetent. The line dividing Quadrants 1 and 2 was Judgement. Quadrant 2 was Conscious and Incompetent. Quadrant 3 was Conscious and Competent. Quadrant 4 was Unconscious and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Competent. The idea is that if people are unconscious of systemic oppression (in any of its forms) they are ineffective at changing the status quo (Quadrant 1). Even if conscious of systemic oppression, people still are not necessarily doing anything effective to change it (Quadrant 2). The judgment line, between Quadrants 1 and 2, is a place where many people start seeing other people’s oppressive or marginalizing behaviors, but without seeing their own collusion or complicitness with the problem. Quadrant 3 is where a person is conscious of the problems that exist, and is making positive changes to combat them. Quadrant 4 is virtually unattainable. It is a place where people fully unlearn the power-laden conditioning of the society in which they live and are effective at changing it. We co-facilitators made it clear that an ultimate goal is to get to (and granted, getting to is not a static process, but is always in flex) Quadrant 3, as change agents.

PATH TO COMPETENCE

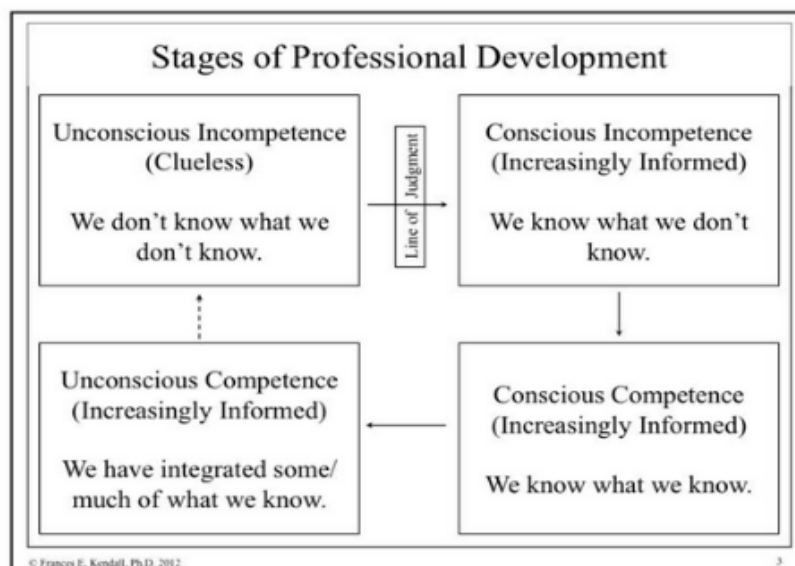


Figure 6. The Path to Competence. Reprinted from Frances E. Kendall, Ph.D., by F. Kendall (2017). Retrieved from <http://www.franceskendall.com/>

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

The facilitators named social justice themed topics such as “Culturally Responsive Teaching,” “Feminism,” “Environmentalism,” and “Anti-Racism,” and teachers stood on the quadrant they felt most appropriately reflected their own recent experience. If participants were unsure where to stand, they had to move back a quadrant. Humility in the process demonstrates self-reflection and getting ahead of oneself will not be motivation for effective change. One survey participant explained that the “path to competence was really eye opening in terms of my personal reflection on racial identity.” Another explained “the path to competence has been incredibly beneficial when it comes to my personal growth and my inner growth.”

In speaking about the effect of the Path to Competence on him, Desmond explained that it was thought-provoking to watch people move around based on their competence and familiarity with different topics. Moreover,

To see other people move around it and all of a sudden swap places was a fascinating activity that I thought was just really interesting . . . I saw some of those teachers move into the really competent zone, I’m like ‘Okay, next time this issue comes up, I’m talking to them,’ you know. So I think in a lot of ways it helped build that community. . . . None of us are experts on anything and so how can we communicate together and . . . create a stronger community.

Sharing resources such as the CQG and Path to Competence provided structure and content to the CRPDs, as well as a common framework and language for teachers to share. As Desmond mentioned, utilizing common resources strengthened their community, as the Maple Rock staff learned more about each other’s strengths and vulnerabilities in the process.

Both the CQG and Path to Competence are tools for self-reflection and increased self-awareness. They helped teachers gain insights into their own behaviors and belief systems, and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

encouraged them to unpack their unquestioned values or norms. While these self-reflective, self-analytic activities were difficult because they required an undoing or unlearning of habits, they caused many teachers to examine unexplored components of their teaching practice and philosophy.

Ease with Discomfort Supported by Community Building

Some of the participants felt that the CRPDs helped them to build and strengthen the Maple Rock school community. Desmond was impressed by the activity that required staff members to identify their levels of expertise on a variety of equity-oriented topics, including: culturally responsive teaching, environmental justice, racial justice, and LGBTQ justice. He described the benefits of having a collegial community with different competencies from which he could benefit:

to see other people move around [the path to competence] and all of a sudden swap places . . . it helped build that community . . . none of us are experts on [everything], and so how can we communicate together to . . . create a stronger community, I can share my story with you and you can share your story with me.

The CRPDs also provided opportunities for teachers to share resources, strengths in certain arenas, and weaknesses or vulnerabilities in others. Jocelyn echoed Desmond’s belief that one of the CRPD’s strengths was “relationship building,” allowing her to connect and collaborate with colleagues. A participant on the second survey remarked that a benefit of the CRPD was “having . . . time to delve deeper into our essential skills and sharing with my peers about CRT.” Other participants shared that “listening to what others have to say,” “[having] discussions,” and working “with colleagues . . . to have conversations both about student interactions and curriculum” were beneficial to them.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

A significant theme that emerged through the surveys, interviews, and observational data was participants feeling increasingly comfortable initiating, engaging in, and facilitating difficult conversations. During the CRPDs, Maple Rock staff had the opportunity to build trust and practice engaging in uncomfortable discussions together, and thus reinforce the value of community. One participant commented on the second survey that as a result of the professional development “it feels easier to question my team of colleagues when something bumps up against my ideas of culturally responsive teaching.” In responding to the third survey, a teacher participant noted that as a result of the CRPDs, “my conversations with colleagues are generally focused on aspects of [culturally responsive] teaching.” Spending time with colleagues focused on increasingly CRT-focused conversations, helped prepare teachers to enter into increasingly uncomfortable conversations about oppression and injustice. Another teacher remarked on the third survey that, “I feel comfortable talking about race with my friends and family where I didn’t before.”

Regarding difficult conversations, four participants discussed an eighth grade project initiated by a Maple Rock Girls of Color (GOC) group, as a place of affinity and solidarity. This group met significant push-back from White students and parents who did not understand why they could not be included. The involvement of study participants in these conversations were guided by a CRT lens. Malia explained that there was “an interesting parent reaction [to the GOC] that I don’t think I could have responded to as thoughtfully if I hadn’t had time and this framework [CRPD] for thinking about what my job as a culturally relevant educator is.” Mae and another administrator invited these White students in for ongoing conversations to explore their feelings and beliefs on being excluded. She recalled:

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

The first conversation was really closed off, and students felt like things were really unfair. When we talked about them identifying things that have happened in their classroom or like topics that they've studied in their classroom, they were really able to identify many different topics that they've talked about in their classroom that is the non-dominant narrative that's happening, so all different stories that they've talked about in their classroom. Through that, we were able to anchor thinking, to anchor it through studies they've already done, and then talk about sort of just Whiteness in general, which was not a new topic for them to talk about. . . . The three girls who were part of that group have gone on to actually really start identifying their own blind spots.

Through these heightened emotional conversations, Mae and her colleague were able to help students understand the reasoning behind the affinity grouping. Mina shared a similar story of a difficult situation with the GOC group that involved reasoning with a parent who was unhappy that she could not participate in the group because of her White racial identity. Mina recalled that “It was a lot of listening. . . . It was also hard. I wanted somebody else coaching me in the room.” Mina and Mae's conversations were uncomfortable but also pushed participants to choose discomfort driven by an underlying vision for and commitment to making change.

As his understanding of CRT developed, Desmond chose to have increasingly difficult conversations with his students. In trying to counter stereotypes and commonly held biases, he guided students in discussions about racism and identity. The following is one example of his efforts:

Our fall curriculum had to deal with first people of this area, the Chinook people, so we dealt a lot with stereotypes . . . where do stereotypes come from and breaking down their stereotypes of Native Americans. . . . You just see their minds trying to figure it out like,

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

‘why would that happen?’ That’s usually a question I just kind of turn back to them ‘Why would this happen?’

While these kinds of conversations tend to be emotional for third graders, Desmond considered them as vital to building his CRT classroom, and interrogating politics of power and privilege in each student’s thinking.

As the CRPDs progressed, we as facilitators realized that to be culturally responsive, we needed to make ourselves increasingly vulnerable with the staff to model the teaching process as humble, uncomfortable, and fallible just like everyone else. We recognized the problematic power dynamic inherent in being the providers of professional development versus the recipients, and also realized we were asking the school staff to disclose more than we were modeling ourselves. We changed this as soon as we reflected on it collectively. We started activities by sharing stories of our own collusion with racism, and things we had done in the classroom that we wished we had done differently. These were difficult topics to reveal. Yet as we modeled this vulnerability, and made explicit that we are all socialized in the same prejudiced system, others began sharing in more brave and courageous ways. Overall, teachers found that practicing conversations about the problems of systemic oppression and how it shows up in school, teaching, curriculum, and beyond, helped them become more comfortable and brave when practicing challenging norms outside of the CRPDs. One participant shared that after the interventions, “my conversations with colleagues are generally focused on aspects around [culturally responsive] teaching.”

Teachers Gain Increasing Humility Over Time

On the first day of the CRPD sequence, participants demonstrated more confidence in their competence than on the last day. For example, on the first day discussing how to combat

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

sexism or heterosexism, or advocating for feminism or environmentalism, a large number of participants located themselves in the third and fourth quadrants on the Path to Competence (both competent/effective at change-making). Most teachers self-selected the second (Conscious and Incompetent) quadrant regarding culturally responsive teaching. In general, teachers demonstrated a great deal of confidence in their competence on the first CRPD, as noted from researcher observations.

On the last CRPD, I observed when the same exercise was repeated, teachers self-selected as being less competent than five months before. It appeared that most teachers had dropped back a quadrant since the first session, indicating increased humility. One teacher confessed she did not know what she did not know, and that there was a vast landscape of knowledge of which she was just becoming aware.

One might assume that after months of professional development in this arena, teachers would be becoming more competent, however, being less so could be interpreted as progress. Increased humility for culturally responsive teaching and other equity-based issues may indicate a deeper understanding of the complexity of these issues. Often times, well-intentioned allies assume they have more information, competence, and leadership than required to make meaningful change, and often do damage to their causes as a result (Gorski, 2015). Leaving the CRPD trainings with more self-awareness of the nuance, level of dedication, and intentionality required to teach equitably can motivate teachers to think more deeply about the impact of their pedagogical choices and instill longer-term motivation for change. If teachers felt highly confident and competent at this stage, they might assume their learning was finished. This would be problematic since culturally responsive teaching is a lifelong commitment to uncovering what is too often left unquestioned.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Tempered Comfort with Discomfort

Malia voiced concern that the Maple Rock staff was comfortable with a certain level of discomfort because the school culture advocated the value of discomfort in conversations. Thus, what appears to be uncomfortable is normative. She said, “At this school I think people are very comfortable and comfortable being in a certain level of uncomfortable. It doesn’t really go past that.” Maple Rock school was considered to be at the fore of CRT in its district, and there is an expectation that teachers would raise difficult topics and challenge unquestioned topics. This is a generally accepted part of the school culture. There is a threshold, however, that Malia identified when teacher learning and vulnerability stops:

If I said something that I said here or shared a story that I share at this school at another school I was at it would be like, ‘Oh my goodness, you’re being so bold’ or something. Here it’s just like, yeah, we all have stories like that and we share them, and it’s normalized but people don’t really push back unpacking more. There could be more.

There is a White cultural norm in valuing being right or having answers (DiAngelo, 2012), and having fast answers to these questions can be another form of White supremacy or an attempt at being in control.

Increased Self-Reflection

The third major benefit participants received from the CRPDs was further developing a habit of self-reflection. This theme was echoed in interviews, surveys, and CRPD observational data. The increase in self-reflection resulted in greater self-awareness in many individuals, and consideration of how their positionality influenced participation styles.

The CRPDs were valuable because they provided opportunities for reflection within a job that can feel endlessly fast-paced and demanding. Creating time within the teaching workday to

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

more deeply unpack practices and procedures was of great value for staff. As an administrator with seemingly endless tasks to accomplish, Mina explained,

Having the opportunity to pause and just be able to be with other people and talk about . . . or even in some of the individual journaling, the reflecting, just time for me to stop and think. As much as I say I want to do that and I plan to do it, I just don't do it. Having that space to do that has been really important.

Mina also described some of the ideas that shifted her thinking through the CRPDs. She found it helpful to reexamine the school's 10 primary values, imagine them from a variety of perspectives, and explore the implications of adopting a finite number of values that apply to all students.

One of those values was “grit” or resilience. Mina continued to think these values through, asking herself “What is grit really about,” and “Are we just telling Black kids that ‘you need to pull up your bootstraps?’ What are we really doing?” The CRPDs provided Mina with the space and time to really consider the impact of otherwise unquestioned school-endorsed values.

The CRPDs helped Sophie to explore issues that require great vulnerability and trust, such as sharing the experience of not knowing what to say or do when confronted with a racially charged student experience, feeling ill-equipped to deal with the issue. Sophie valued the parts of the CRPD that highlighted the “heart-space and feeling space” as opposed to solely intellectual space, in order to partake in her most meaningful work. She “felt less vulnerable to feel like I get it, I know what they're talking about. I'm not lost and I'm feeling safe about sharing emotionally and personally.” Sophie felt that honesty, safety, and trust evolved over time with the CRPDs. While she did not feel that the CRPDs objectively improved over time, her experience of them

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

did because she was increasingly willing to open up, let go, and share more. Time to reflect on these issues with continuity gave her opportunity to contribute overall. Other participants agreed that a valuable component of the CRPDs was space and time to process and reflect on ideas that otherwise might not be possible in their busy lives. Also, the space and time allotted for processing these ideas allowed for intra- and interpersonal growth to take place and lay groundwork for meaningful change.

In the second survey, one participant explained that “the sessions really empower me to think metacognitively and critically about the systems of power in the classroom, as well as question everything I do and try to see things differently.” One teacher declared that “Culturally Responsive Pedagogy is not a ‘one size fits all’ paradigm. There is not one ‘right’ way to do it. It has helped me to constantly question and think more deeply about my practice as a whole.” Another teacher described the importance of acknowledging one’s positionality in teaching, because, in doing so, “I am showing my students more of where I am coming [from], my expectations, and seeing each child more completely.”

In the third survey, participants elaborated on their increased self-reflection and ability to ask probing questions that were bolstered by the CRPDs. One said these experiences “provided frameworks in which to think through the actions and practices I currently take part in, and to . . . look more closely at ways I can change how and why I do things in the classroom.” Another participant “started to ask questions about everything.” The CRPDs also helped the participating teachers consider assumptions implicit in their curriculum and pedagogy that reflected exclusionary, White cultural values. One declared that “It made me realize all that I don’t know and I am motivated to spend time this summer figuring it out.” Self-reflection may motivate and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

inspire the teachers to continue pursuing understanding of and grappling with power and privilege implicit in their routine classroom practices.

In the first survey, when asked if they considered themselves culturally responsive teachers, 50% of the participants said yes, 45% said they were unsure, and 5% said no. The results were virtually identical in the third survey. In response to the same question, 50% of participants said yes, and 50% said they were unsure. Since many participants expressed the CRPDs provided them with practice in self-reflection and increased self-awareness, it could be that deeper insights and knowledge about cultural responsiveness cause less certainty about related abilities. They may have prompted more critical questioning such as, *Do I include explicit mention of how my positionality informs lessons? In what ways could lessons be more inclusive? In what ways could I have included student family members, stories, and experiences in the lesson? In what ways could I have made the lesson more democratic?* If this were the case, uncertainty could be an indication of deepening understanding of greater progress in being culturally responsive.

A Lack of Justice and Action Addressed in Curriculum

The Teaching Tolerance anti-bias framework (Teaching Tolerance, 2014) that described four components of anti-bias teaching was used in the CRPDs. These components are *identity, diversity, justice, and action*. *Identity* involves students acquiring knowledge and confidence that affirm and accurately describe their membership in multiple identity groups. *Diversity* involves students developing curiosity, empathy, and respect for diversity. *Justice* helps students recognize oppression at individual and systemic levels, and examine their own relationships to power and privilege. *Action* involves students in responding to and resisting injustices both individually and collectively. Most teachers involved in this study indicated they taught identity

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

and diversity with consistency in their classrooms, but rarely did justice and action curriculum. This was revealed in during the fifth CRPD in which teachers wrote down their areas for growth within CRT on notecards. After coding the notecard findings, teachers’ responses reflected a need for implementing more justice and action curriculum. Notecard data are represented in the below word cloud. The bigger the text, the more frequently it was indicated by teachers as an area of growth. As indicated below, “Rewriting curriculum for justice & action” is of utmost importance to the teaching staff. Teachers indicated a desire for “time for writing or rewriting curriculum to support justice and action standards”, and declaring it is “easier to talk about identity and diversity than justice and action.” One teacher expressed wanting to see a “unit of study that includes the 4 domains.”

During the fifth CRPD, teachers discussed themes that emerged in response to the prompts, *What themes and similarities did your group encounter as you examined one another’s curricula? What did you notice? What are you wondering now?* Larger themes that emerged are presented in figure 7.

They were categorized according to the Teaching Tolerance (2014) anti-bias tenets: identity, diversity, justice, and action. Identity was referenced most often, followed sequentially by diversity and justice, but action was not mentioned at all. After this analysis, teachers were asked to name their top three CRT strengths and three areas of growth. As an area of growth, many teachers (11/25) identified the need for integrating and prioritizing justice and action in their curriculum.

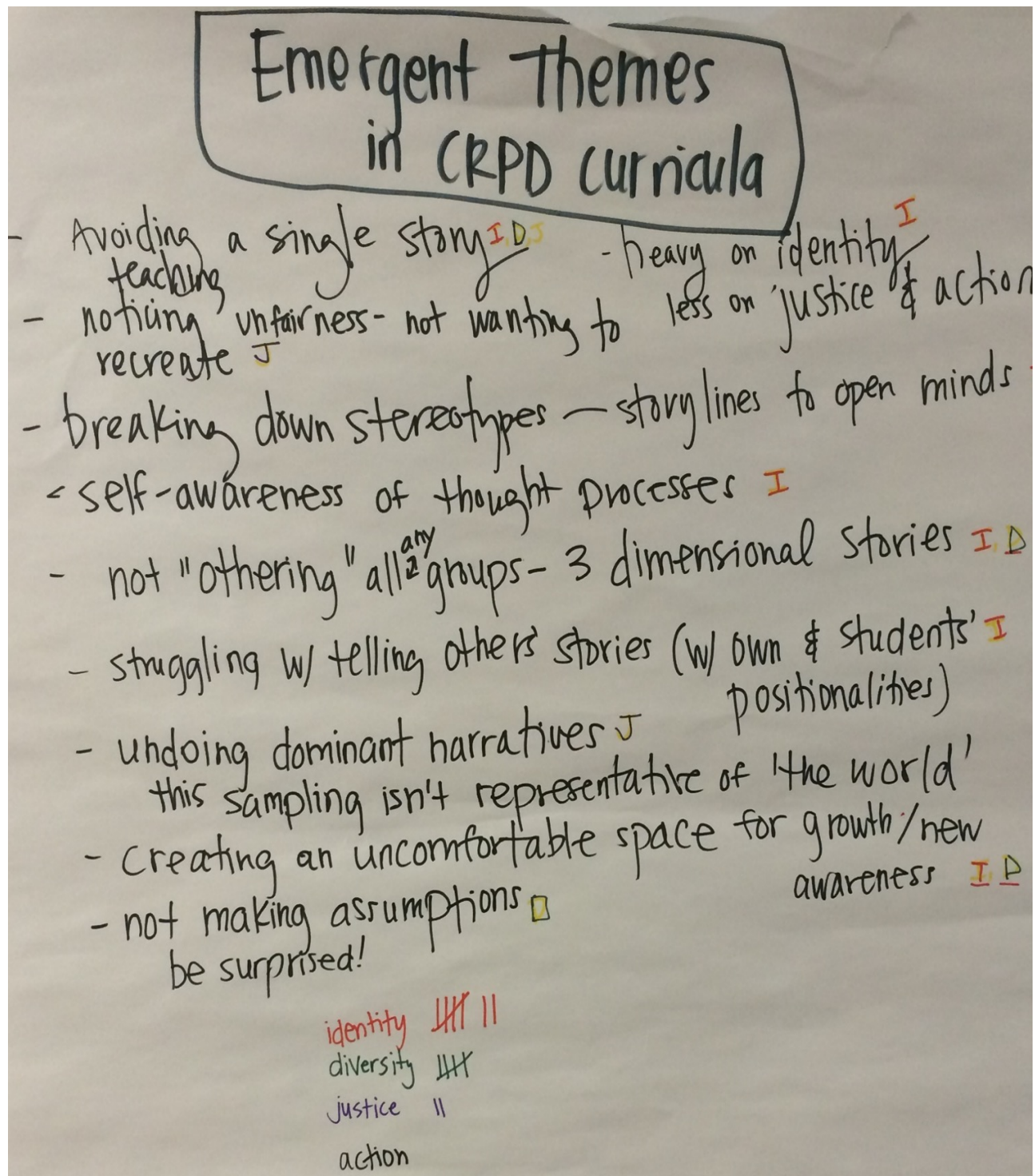


Figure 7. Culturally responsive curricular workshop themes co-developed at the fifth CRPD.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING



Figure 8. Areas of needed growth.

Figure 8 represents what teachers indicated as their culturally responsive areas need for growth. The size of the phrase is determined by how many participants used it, the bigger the font, the more significant the theme. One teacher wanted “to know how to plan for [and] support my younger students into taking relevant action. And how do I draw out deeper dialogues surrounding racism and injustice?” Another teacher wanted to extend their teaching beyond discussing race and diversity into racism, saying, “I want to find authentic ways for my students to act for justice and talk about racism, not just race.” In general, the teachers wanted more time and support in rewriting and rethinking curriculum to support justice and action standards. In the third survey, a participant stated, “more time to examine and alter curriculum would be hugely helpful.”

Wanting to Go Deeper

After the CRPD sessions, several teachers indicated they wanted more support in knowledge and skill development over time. When teachers were asked to elaborate, one

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

responded, “How do I draw out deeper dialogues surrounding racism and injustice?” Another teacher asked, “How do I balance the energy and planning of great depth curriculum with not working a million more hours. I want [Culturally Responsive Teaching] to feel more in the automaticity of my brain.” Another participant remarked, “I am still unsure how to dig deeply into the issues we discuss [and] learn about.” A few teachers agreed that they did not deeply understand these issues without some facilitation and scaffolding. However, they recognized the need to develop skills to continue pursuing social justice education without much guidance or intervention from outsiders.

In addition, availability of time was a challenge to most participants. They felt frustration about wanting to do equity teaching but not having the time and energy to build the needed competencies. While the CRPDs took place during designated working hours, there was not extra time allotted within the work day to plan the implementation of these changes.

Eight participants in the second survey indicated they were more thoughtful about their teaching as a result of the CRPDs. When asked what could be done differently to advance culturally responsive teaching, several suggestions were made, including wanting to “continue to pull apart curriculum, especially with mentors,” “observing teachers that are culturally responsive,” being observed by “someone [who] is willing and ready to guide and direct,” “more time for team collaboration,” and “more time for self reflection and team reflection.” These suggestions speak to ways in which teachers can sustain this learning into the future.

Modeling What was Done Well

Participants were critical of the CRPDs for focusing too much on what was not successful in dominant, Eurocentric curriculum, instead of modeling what has been successful. One participant said,

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

[I] really feel like the tone of the work could be more positive. Ironically, just as we are talking about students shutting down and tuning out when they don't find the classroom to be culturally receptive/inclusive, I often feel that way about the tone of these meetings and find myself shutting down.

This sentiment was echoed by several others. For example, another participant wanted to “see more of what teachers are doing well.” A third wanted “to learn more about what specific materials [and] methods are considered [culturally responsive] and maybe a list of resources or actual materials would be greatly appreciated.” The concerns for modeling more positive methods is relevant, and worthy of consideration since teaching from hopeful and optimistic standpoints, rather than deficiencies could lead to deeper learning outcomes, and perhaps more receptivity to change.

Collaborative Work Time

Another theme that participants articulated was the desire for more collaborative work time in the CRPDs. The comments of three participants are illustrative of these needs. One teacher would have appreciated “continued time to talk with my colleagues about my practice and sharing ideas, recognizing that ‘our’ school setting is unique and finding ideas from each other.” A second teacher wanted “time for sharing ideas like, where does this show up in your practice? Or sit with your team and push a little--how can we apply this in our curriculum?” Finally, a third teacher “would have liked to collaborate with [my] team, test something out, then reflect back on how it worked.” Some of this was woven into the CRPD curriculum, but apparently it was not enough.

Undoubtedly, there were elements to the CRPDs that need to be refined by incorporating the feedback of the participants for creating a more positive narrative, modeling more successful

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

CRT methods, and providing more collaborative work time. However, there were some contradictions in their reactions and reflections. Indicative of these are the comments of two of the teachers who thought the greatest strengths of the CRPDs were self-reflection and being comfortable with discomfort. Practicing self-reflection and doing self-study should help teachers move beyond the CRPD threshold. The continuing support and encouragement of teachers, and holding each other accountable for CRT actions can improve the overall quality of their performance.

Hesitation Regarding Culturally Responsive Leadership

The participants also expressed a desire to be increasingly competent in culturally responsive leadership with students, colleagues, and their wider communities. During the fifth CRPD session, this was a prominent theme. One teacher needed “much more guidance in participating [and] guiding racialized activities and discussions.” Another teacher wanted further support and further instruction in “having hard conversations with my class around big issues like poverty [,] race [, and] assumptions.” These teachers felt acquiring CRT leadership skills was necessary before they would be comfortable helping others be culturally responsive in their teaching.

School Strength: Staff Dedication to Culturally Responsive Teaching

In response to a question about Maple Rock’s greatest strength as a school, participants agreed they were dedicated to culturally responsive teaching and social justice. There was a general consensus that culturally responsive teaching was considered a fundamental school value. Overall, teachers felt that working with administrators and peer teachers dedicated to social justice and culturally responsive teaching made it easier for their own engagement. One

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

participant said, “Our unity as a school in our belief that this work is important is our greatest strength.”

Several teachers mentioned the strength and positive effects of having a school principal dedicated to culturally responsive education. One said that Maple Rock’s greatest strength was the principal who “holds it as a priority to push us and support us in this work.” Jocelyn agreed that the principal’s dedication to CRT is what attracted her to Maple Rock. She explained, “why I’m here is to be with [the principal] and do the work she wants to do. I would not work in a different school [in this district].” Sophie shared similar opinions in noting that “the administration is supportive. Holding this space, giving us this professional development, wanting us to push . . . I think that’s number one.” Another teacher echoed these sentiments in declaring that the school’s “strengths are the staff’s overall willingness, administration support and the value placed on this work, the space to converse and feel valued for input.”

On one survey a teacher noted the power of the staff all working collectively to achieve the same goals, and being “dedicated to . . . implementing the practice.” Anne found strength in the school’s philosophy of treating students individually and making adjustments according to their needs, not according to any policy or rulebook, but based on each teacher’s intuition and common sense. She explained further that

We have this freedom . . . to try things that maybe wouldn’t otherwise be okay. . . . I feel like it allows most of us to feel happier about our jobs, which allows us to see the kids when we’re not doing this one size fits all teaching. . . and let them experiment as humans.

According to Naomi, an administrator at Maple Rock, there was a common belief among staff that their job is to change the landscape of education as it is known today. She said, “We have a

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

critical mass of people who believe that they are, whether they are perfect in their actions, [believe] that their job is to be a revolutionary in education.” However, she conceded that there are other people (outliers), who were “out of touch with that belief.”

Most participants were enticed by the progressive mission of Maple Rock, which focuses on peace and justice, stemming from its environmental justice roots which have broadened and continued to expand over time. One teacher remarked, “There is a general awareness of culturally responsive [pedagogy] and at least a superficial desire to improve.” Another declared that culturally responsive teaching “is important to all of us and we are stronger because of it.” The school also had a notably thriving parent equity group that supported CRT and the CRPDs which strengthens the school’s CRT identity as a whole. Mae explained that there is

a critical mass of people [who] really do believe in this work and work really hard to learn and push themselves and grow. . . . It can be a really positive space, because it’s not that people agree with each other. There’s often people [who] are disagreeing with each other, but it’s a space where people can share their ideas. I think it makes it easier that way to be bringing up difficult topics for people . . . I’m proud to be a part of the staff that is committed to working on this and trying to figure out what’s next.

Desmond indicated that the greatest strength of the school was the staff’s willingness to unpack the persistence of White supremacy in curriculum and pedagogy. He felt the staff was “starting to examine the Whiteness in our school and our curriculum, more than we ever have before. I think that’s really benefitted us as a school and as educators.” Desmond also recognized differences between Maple Rock and his former school regarding orientations to social justice. He said,

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

There were a couple of teachers at [my former school] that had similar visions for education as me, but it was just a small contingent. . . We always felt like the minority, so coming to a school where we [have] a vision together as a school was so radical for me! Just to be like, ‘wow, we’re all in,’ you know, everybody.

Obstacles to Cultural Responsiveness

The CRPD intervention was designed to create a learning environment where teachers could speak freely about CRT, social and environmental justice, and how they integrated these into their classrooms. However, four barriers to growth in these areas emerged from data analyses. The Need to Feel Equal and Safe, A Lack of Consistency in CRT Practice, Arrogance as a Blinder to Change, and Tradition as a Road Block. How these barriers to growth were manifested in the data is presented next.

Need to Feel Equal and Safe

One theme that emerged as a road block for moving forward with Maple Rock’s culturally responsive teaching trajectory was some teachers did not feel equal or safe in the Maple Rock community. This concern was not noticeable at the onset of the CRPD interventions, but it became apparent over time, as the comfort level of a few teachers with expressive personal dispositions increased towards the end of the school year. Two Maple Rock administrators observed an inconsistency in CRT participation and growth, which may be a ripple effect of feeling unsafe or on the fringe of the community. Naomi noted staff withdrawal by saying:

I hoped that these CRPD sessions would cause certain individuals to grow . . . And maybe they have. I don't live inside people's heads. But I haven't seen [or] witnessed huge increased engagement from people that I was hoping [for]. . . From some people,

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

not everyone. I've seen a lot of increased engagement from some people but there's still a handful [of withdrawn staff].

The majority of teachers were engaged in the CRT materials and curious to learn, but there also was a subset of teachers who seemed to lack buy-in. They were often subtly talking off-topic during prompted small group discussions, and were less participatory during group discussions.

Mina also commented on a lack of consistency across teams. She said, “It's really teacher-by-teacher in some ways, and if they have a really strong team, it does, and if they don't have a really strong team, it's less so.” Mina did not define a strong team here but embedded in this comment is an assumption that some teams have more CRT capabilities than others. This ideology is reflected in a number of participant responses in the third survey. As one participant explained,

I think there is still a lot of judgment about how far people have come in their racial or social justice thinking. I think that parents and some teachers may represent a different perspective or be thinking about it in a different way, or maybe even are learning to articulate their ideas. I wonder if most of the school conversations about race are coming from a place of learning/support/building up of the whole community.

A subtle stratification in the school existed between staff members who were generally considered more advanced, leaders, or credible in CRT, and those who were not. It was a subtle observation on the outside, but numerous staff members echoed the same sentiments. One participant described growing pains in coming to Maple Rock as a new teacher and struggling to catch up with the teacher's colleagues. This participant suggested that “perhaps having a cohort of people for new hires that can get mentorship in this area if they want--I know that I was looped in but also needed to take on a lot of learning in order to catch up.” Entering into the

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Maple Rock community was challenging for those teachers who did not feel they were equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to engage fully in the CRT conversation. For instance, Jocelyn expressed concern about making sure new hires were competent in CRT. She said, “I’m not sure we do the best job of integrating new people into the work because we’ve been doing it here for so long and people are so . . . deep in it.”

Malia discussed communication norms at Maple Rock as comprised of significant sharing but paired with an undeniably guarded nature, noting that it was “normalized” to share about something “bold”, but she explained that people do not share beyond those norms. Why do many people stop at a premature unpacking threshold regarding CRT? While Maple Rock is a school where the communication norm is to share more than other schools, there was still a level of caution and protection that was not challenged. How much continuous critique and reflection would deepen the dialogue? In what ways might the community need to strengthen in order to push past that threshold?

One teacher stated in the third survey that “we need to work on our relationships with each other so that people have more opportunities to speak their truths.” Another person echoed this, saying one major impediment to CRT growth is “speaking truths--having a ‘safe’ community where this can be more possible and real.” The same viewpoint was expressed by another teacher who also acknowledged that not everyone felt respected or able to share in the school community. This teacher said, “If we are to become a stronger school that has a common vision [then] we all need to feel safe, heard, and equal.” Observations did not reveal certain voices as more prominent or claiming expertise above others. Only one person mentioned this explicitly in a CRPD. It was a teacher of color who had been at the school for many years. She said she did not feel safe sharing her experiences with racism and discrimination even after her

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

decades of tenure at the school. The fact that the school leadership triad was White may have contributed to her discomfort.

The challenge of feeling safe and being able to share thoughts and feelings openly about race and diversity was a function of both a White dominant school culture and a hierarchy among teachers in the school who have pursued different types of efforts to combat White privilege. For Mae, “one of the hopes would be that we can . . . have real honest conversations with each other about things, brave conversations about things.” She explained further that, “I don’t know if as a staff we’ve gotten to the point where many staff members would say that they could be really honest with their colleagues . . . face-to-face about their feelings.” Jocelyn agreed with Mae’s sentiment and wondered what it might take for the school culture to shift to one that was more courageous and honest. She asked, “Is there a way to . . . get people to a place where they feel comfortable taking a risk and examining their teaching practice in a way they might have never done before?” A baseline level of trust amongst school faculties is essential to do CRT. The development of a stronger community in which all voices are heard and respected (rather than some being more important or more influential than others) was vital to Maple Rock CRT effectiveness.

Lack of Consistency or Buy-In

Another impediment to CRT growth and development that emerged from the data analyses was a lack of consistency in CRT practice among teachers. This particular theme was in direct contradiction with what Maple Rock staff identified as its greatest strength, a school-wide commitment to social and environmental justice. While this school-wide commitment to environmental and social justice was seen as a unifier, culturally responsive teaching (which is part of the social justice movement) was not seen as such. This lack of consistency or buy-in for

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

CRT was directly linked to the sense of community at the school. If the community was stratified by beliefs that some individuals were more proficient in CRT than others, then subsequently, a lack of consistency and buy-in could be a direct result of that issue. As Mae explained:

My . . . guess is that maybe 60% have a very active understanding of what Culturally Responsive Teaching is, and then there may be about 40% that semi know but is still really nervous to . . . talk about it, because of fear of maybe not being able to articulate what it is.

This interview took place after the sixth and final CRPD. It indicates that even though the staff had been engaging in bi-monthly Culturally Responsive Teaching trainings, Mae still doubted the staff’s understanding of, and genuine commitment to CRT. She speculated that the fear of not knowing and not being able to clearly articulate what CRT is, silenced teachers.

Jocelyn discussed contradictions between the school’s social and environmental justice mission and the range of how it played out in classrooms. This included tension between Maple Rock’s philosophy and the teachers’ overall support of it, and how it was implemented differently from classroom to classroom. She said, “we [at Maple Rock] proclaim this philosophy. I don't have a better word, but we say this is our mission and this is what we do, and then every classroom looks really different.” Mina added to Jocelyn’s thoughts by saying, “I feel like there's some real Whiteness. . .we kind of negotiate the rules as we go.” While CRT-oriented classrooms do not have to be identical, it is important for practice to be consistent with conceptual principles. The challenge of consistency in understanding and endorsement of key principles of CRT were obstacles to Maple Rock school being effective in its efforts.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Mina addressed the challenge of consistency. She felt that inconsistent expectations for students, which she considered a school-wide problem, was confusing for students and teachers alike. She said,

I don't think our language is consistent, I don't feel like we have consistent expectations for kids. . . that to me doesn't feel culturally responsive. I feel like everywhere they're going, they're re-looking at the rules, at the norms, and people are guessing at things because we really haven't sat down to think about what those are.

One ubiquitous standard of culturally responsive teaching is consistently high expectations for students. Those expectations must be unwavering. Mina equated this inconsistency with not enough time devoted to establishing and discussing expectations for students and school staffs. Others associated a lack of consistency with a range of ownership regarding CRT. For example, Jocelyn said,

I . . . feel like I'm one of those self-selecting. . . I don't know if you would hear from someone else on the staff who I think is in that other camp what their answers would sound like. . . I hope that you got that perspective in your interviews.

In referencing “that other camp” Jocelyn referred to teachers who were less convinced of the importance of culturally responsive teaching. However, during the interview process no one explicitly denied buy-in for culturally responsive teaching. It seemed that expressing dissent, or in Jocelyn’s words, “being in another camp” would not be socially acceptable. Yet, a number of staff implied that a range of buy-in did exist. Others described the inconsistency as a range of interest in and curiosity for CRT. Naomi elaborated on this point by saying,

I think there's still a range. Some of it's the K-5 teachers because they've had more work with this, have a better common understanding among each other. I think, that's based on

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

some of this year’s PD work. . . . I think that it's the same people [who] are curious and [are] really seeking to define this, which is most people. Then there's people who aren't as curious, who I don't know that they're really interested in continuing to evolve their definition of [their] practice in culturally responsive teaching.

According to Jocelyn, inconsistency in investments and competencies in CRT existed throughout the school. She observed elementary-age students changing grades and receiving an entirely different experience in the transition. She explained that her former students went on to the next grade and asked “‘Where am I? This isn't the way school felt last year. Now I'm back in that awkward place where I don't fit in anymore. Now what do I do?’” Jocelyn also explained that moving through the grades at Maple Rock was challenging for the students. In a school with genuine culturally responsive teaching, not fitting in would occur because the notion of being an outsider would be intentionally addressed and interrupted.

Desmond thought the CRPDs had helped the school staff cultivate some fundamental understandings of CRT, but there still was no consensus on what it meant to them and how it played out in their classrooms. He said,

I think we're all . . . in different places in our understanding of it. . . . It is kind of an amorphous thing and it is something that is really hard to pin down and say, ‘This is what it is.’ Because I think it looks different depending on the situation. . . . Some of us . . . who have been working with this longer . . . maybe have an easier time identifying it and using it in our classrooms. . . . For some people it's brand new so I think it's definitely a spectrum but I think that our [professional development] has definitely put us in a place that we're having discussions that were not happening at this school before.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Jocelyn also acknowledged a range of experiences and reinforced Desmond’s perspective in observing that

There are people who are like . . . this is why they teach. This is why they're here. This is why they want to work for [the administration] and be in this building. For some [others] they're like, ‘You mean I'm talking about this again? We talk about this ad nauseam, and it's useless.’ Literally, I hear both I want to say equally. . . . I rarely hear a middle ground except for people who are new to the work.

Maple Rock has an active parent equity group. Mae described the juncture between the parent group and the staff equivalent. She thought the two groups should merge for more consistency and pursuing deeper, multi-dimensional diversity initiatives. She said, “[When] I feel like they’re siloed apart like that there’s the parent equity and then the staff equity, it can be like putting up real barriers sometimes instead of really allowing them to merge even though that can be messy.”

Overall, the Maple Rock school staff struggled with the lack of consistency in CRT. They felt that different individuals had different levels of ownership of CRT, based on their innate curiosity about subject matter, grade placement, feeling of security in the group (whether they were part of the dominant racial group or a minority racial group), and the newness of exposure to CRT or the Maple Rock values. All of these factors could contribute to a stratification in buy-in or consistency regarding CRT. Maple Rock would benefit greatly from creating an environment in which everyone feels they have access to CRT knowledge, and in which they feel comfortable sharing their beliefs, or questions. In order for this to happen, Maple Rock as a school needs to recognize how fear and anxiety can develop with staff feeling like they do not know enough and are reluctant to say so to avoid being judged or ostracized.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Arrogance

Another barrier to growth in culturally responsive competence was arrogance. Many Maple Rock staff communicated this concern, that there is a pervasive attitude of hubris at the school regarding culturally responsive teaching, and that some Maple Rock teachers believed they were more advanced or self-aware than was accurate. This hubris was a major impediment to deeper learning, because with inflated confidence also comes resistance to self-reflection, or recognizing one’s own areas of needed growth or learning.

Naomi identified this as a problem with several teachers. She shared that “I do think there's a couple dangerous, ‘I got this already [mindsets].’” Mae agreed with Naomi’s claim and declared the problem of arrogance as follows:

If you can’t examine your own practice first, then what are you teaching anyways? I guess that’s the crux of which where I sit. I think that that is still a big sort of barrier right now. The work is sort of a feeling we’ve got this, like we already know this, so now let’s move on to the next thing. I just think if you are truly understanding this, then you realize that this work is never done, you’re always doing it.

Mae’s comments indicate confidence in CRT rather than mere curiosity about cultural differences, and that claims of confidence can be a veil for ignorance. That kind of confidence can manifest in classrooms as making decisions that are not in the best interest of all students.

Malia thought the Maple Rock staff had been given ample CRT tools to use, but “the uncomfortable aspect is what needs to be pushed. People just seem very comfortable with a certain level of discomfort. Past that it doesn't get pushed.” In her assessment, the Maple Rock staff considered a certain level of discomfort as essential to endorsing and doing CRT. They had learned to navigate that kind of discomfort without exposing themselves in deep, meaningful, and intimate ways. Malia added,

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

There's just this feeling that we are really good at being teachers and here are all the things we're really good at versus we are really good at being teachers and we could be even better by doing these things . . . or possibly asking this question to myself.

She identified arrogance within her colleagues and herself as she wondered how this might be part of her own behavior as well. Malia's ability to express her own possible collusion in arrogance and fear about including cultural diversity in teaching was a reflection of her increasing self-awareness. Malia also discussed the pervasive tendency of some teachers at Maple Rock to focus on what is problematic in their colleagues and in other teaching practices, but not what is problematic in themselves. It is easier to critique others, and find fault with the public school system, than it is to reveal one's own limitations. Naomi described arrogance in the staff related to colleagues at other schools from her perspective of an administrator. She said,

One big sticking point is a 'We got this already' attitude. Despite all this work we've done . . . when they go to district meetings, [staff members] are starting to see that other schools aren't doing this, and so the feedback I get is like how amazing for us that we are. While I believe that that's amazing. . . no one has ever [completely] arrived. . . . I don't even know if there's a place for pride.

Naomi conceded that positive affirmation that Maple Rock stands out as doing something novel or unique in the district was great. But she also recognized that this attitude was not easy to work with, nor did it reflect culturally responsive teaching. Naomi attributed some of this arrogance to Maple Rock's location in a liberal city; teachers having to fight for a curriculum of their own making; pride in teachers who chose to work at the school; not teaching a mandated curriculum; and teachers who worked hard are creating “interesting, constructive lessons and units.” She

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

recognized that a “level of cockiness” existed that resulted from these perceptions that Maple Rock was more advanced in CRT than other schools.

One participant in the third survey thought the Maple Rock staff could “be open to the fact that we . . . have [not] arrived in this work.” Another participant added, “we can [still] learn from each other, outside folks, other schools. Sometimes I think we get into our bubble and think ‘we already have this down.’” As reflected in their comments, the Maple Rock staff was conscious of this arrogance. However, they needed to use this consciousness as a stimulant for continuing growth and excavate the vulnerability and questioning that lie beneath it.

Tradition as a Road Block

Maple Rock school was started as an environmental justice magnet school and over the years, teaching staff have explicitly focused on environmental education, culturally responsive teaching, place-based learning, service learning, and activism. Its current identity continues to reflect those early values. Some teachers who were part of Maple Rock in founding years are still active staff members. A theme that came up repeatedly as a roadblock to promoting culturally responsive teaching was traditions, that have been retained since the school’s inception. The teachers in this study struggled with critically analyzing these traditions, and letting go of them to make way for more equitable pedagogical practices.

On the habit of retaining traditions, Desmond remarked:

The school's original intention . . . didn't use the word culturally responsive, but there was a lot of emphasis on social justice and valuing ethnic diversity. I think that for a long time, there were a lot of things at this school that were like, ‘Well, this is just what we use.’ . . . Once you build any institution there's traditions and there's just things that this is how it is.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Some staff members spoke proudly about Maple Rock’s early belief in the importance of social justice values, yet a sense of defensiveness was present about some parts of the curriculum related to them that needed to be changed or reexamined. One participant in the third survey recognized this need in commenting that, “The curriculum and dominant culture of the history of the school need to be gutted.” Another survey participant expressed a similar sentiment in explaining that Maple Rock needed an influx of “specific strategies to guide activities on race and looking at traditions and curriculum units.” These teachers were frustrated with how school traditions were too often left unquestioned and kept the school tethered to ideologies that were not equitable today.

Sophie, a new teacher, expressed a desire to know more about Maple Rock’s history and its philosophical trajectory over time. She explained,

I'm still trying to figure out and learn myself about our school's philosophy and its beginnings and how it's changed. There's a lot of history there that I get in bits and pieces from different people and different perspectives and how things have changed. As a brand-new teacher at [Maple Rock] it seems it's pretty different from how it used to be and what it's supposed to be. It seems different and there's a lot of history I'm not aware of.

Some changes at the school had occurred over time, but the participants in the study generally agreed that the changes were too little and too slow.

Both Desmond and Mae shared their thoughts about the connection between social justice and environmental justice. They explained that often environmental justice is misconstrued as something separate from social justice (and therefore culturally responsive teaching). Mae felt that there needed to be more acceptance of the idea that the environmental justice tradition and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

culturally responsive teaching are both a part of the same umbrella. Mae thought that “there’s a real disconnect around environmental studies, because in my mind, environmental studies is culturally responsive teaching. Because to me, environmental studies is social justice education, and it’s social science and natural science.” Desmond described the same assumption of how many people see social and environmental justice as separate and siloed parts. He also explained how much of his work is attempting to combat that assumption, and illustrated the interconnectedness of the two as follows:

I think that we have to . . . rethink what the environment is. . . . Environment is not the forest, you know? That's usually what people think. . . . if you want to get down to it, it's like our body, so start there. If somebody is going to tell you, how you are supposed to be in your body or they're making decisions about your body. To me . . . that's the first form of environmental oppression right there. But then we kind of expand out. We're thinking about families and friendships and relationships and community and our city and our state and our country. We kind of expand outward in these concentric circles. Thinking about who you are as a person in that environment and what is your role. You're not just an external, the environment is not just out there for us to go look out and go enjoy and hike through, but you are a part of it. . . . [Even] when we are talking about race and oppression, that is the environment because if you are living in an oppressive situation and that is your day to day experience, that is your environment. How can you care about anything like climate change or the extinction of a species when your day-to-day experience is survival because of the oppression in your environment? So I think we really need to see that, it's the same thing. I think the mentality that creates oppressive systems is the same mentality that is causing climate change and ocean acidification and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

everything else you know that you analyze. But we've somehow separated those as [if] these are the science issues, these are the environmental issues, and these are the social issues.

Maple Rock's contemporary philosophy and values on its website reflected this interconnection between environmental and social justice. Yet these relationships were not evident in all of the school's curricula; nor did all teachers teach with this in mind. As a staff, Desmond wished that social and environmental justice were not so often seen as separate entities. He needed a coherent way to communicate this intersection. As he explained, “I think some of the staff is kind of getting there; I think some still see it as one or the other and . . . It's hard to do both.”

Anne also acknowledged the school-wide adherence to tradition was problematic. She explained,

The idea [exists] that this is what we've always done. This is what we're doing. This is what you're supposed to do, because this is how it's always been done . . . which doesn't allow for [new] voices to enter. It's possible that voices can't enter as readily when it's just, well, this is what . . . we've always done.

Anne's grievance about the static nature of tradition at the school reflected some of Sophie's experience as a new teacher. How can a curriculum be culturally responsive when many of the more experienced teachers were entrenched in the history of the school and they have much more authority or sway?

There was a curricular practice used in virtually all classrooms at Maple Rock that involved teaching through storytelling using a specific methodological lens. While this method evoked various learning modalities, Anne saw it as very teacher-directed rather than student-centered. She abandoned this method, although she felt nervous about doing because of its

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

ubiquitous acceptance in the school community. She wanted to pursue methods she believed were more culturally responsive. She said,

I just feel like there's the risk of a lot of assumptions being made. It doesn't have to be that way, because drama can be a great way to have kids experience things. There's something about it where you're saying, 'Here's what we're learning and there's a mural and this is our setting. You're going to be a character, make a character.' 'It's the [a local indigenous people], so you have to have brown skin,' just a very regimented [traditional teaching method]: 'Here's the activity of the day,' rather than, 'What can you learn and bring back to the group?' The hard part of [being] a teacher really is figuring out the questions that get kids to experience [learning] in a way that interests [them] and captures their attention.

Anne was the only teacher who considered this instructional method as questionable for practice. She was courageous in trying something new and what she thought was more student-led and less prescriptive. Anne described her new unit on the indigenous local peoples as being student-led. She began by asking them “What is home to somebody who is [the local indigenous group]?” Her students were most enthusiastic about making an interactive museum gallery in class that answered that question based on their research and findings.

Anne’s willingness to abandon tradition led her to what she believed to be a successful outcome for all her students. While her new pedagogy was not guaranteed to success, she believed in it and ventured into it with a leap of faith. Reflecting on daring to be different in her teaching, she explained that “It felt pretty good. It was like jumping out of an airplane not sure if your parachute's going to open.” The school administration supported Anne’s efforts and her desire to try teaching methods that were not congruent with the rest of her colleagues. The

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

administration and some of Anne’s collegial peers came to see the interactive museum gallery and were surprised by how much the students had accomplished in the learning process. Anne said their reaction was, ““Oh my gosh. I can't believe [this]. Not that they can't believe, but just what [elementary aged students] are able to [do] when they give a shit.”

Anne was among the minority teachers who were actively engaged in re-thinking the widely accepted traditional teaching method practiced at Maple Rock. She believed and practiced critical consciousness teaching and learning. While few of her other colleagues were similarly engaged, Desmond thought change was beginning to occur in that direction as he explained,

I think that we as a staff, have been able to be much more critical of ourselves and our school and our pedagogy in a way that I don't think was happening when I first starting teaching here. There were a lot of things in place that [were], this is what we do. I think lately we've been able to really break things down a bit more and kind of examine the Whiteness that exists and certainly the things that we do and why.

While Desmond and Anne both thought some traditions were slowly being uprooted, there was still much that needed to be examined and changed. For Maple Rock to be culturally responsive school-wide, all members of the school community needed to critique the institution’s habits of mind and practice, and reassess their relevance and effectiveness in serving students’ heterogeneous classrooms.

Eight Principles of Equitable Education Applied to Findings

As was discussed in the third chapter, eight principles that make up equitable education are as follows: content reform, contextual competence, equity pedagogy and methodology, teacher transformative self-study, school culture for equity, interrogating knowledge and

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

assumptions, prejudice reduction, and student agency for action. Considering these principles played a central role in the professional development program that was a target of interest in this study, one might expect a direct correlation between them and the results.

Eight Principles of Equitable Education Related to Findings

8 Principles of Equitable Education	Individual Gains from Intervention	Collective Strengths of Maple Rock	Individual Areas of Growth	Areas of Growth for Maple Rock
Content Reform	-tools and resources for curriculum		-integrating action and justice in curriculum	-arrogance impedes growth -tradition stifles change
Contextual Competence	-tools and resources for curriculum			
Equity Pedagogy and Methodology	-tools and resources -comfort with discomfort			-arrogance impedes growth
Teacher Transformative Self-Study	-self reflection -comfort with discomfort		-taking on CRT leadership -going deeper with CRT	-tradition stifles changes
School Culture for Equity		-Everyone buys into the idea of CRT		-a need to feel equal and safe -lack of consistency
Interrogating Knowledge and Assumptions	-tools and resources for curriculum		-going deeper with CRT	-tradition stifles change
Prejudice Reduction	-self reflection -comfort with discomfort			
Student Agency for Action			-integrating action and justice	

Figure 9. Table of findings engaging with the eight principles for equitable education.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Most principles generated both positive findings, and indicated areas of further growth. Two exceptions to that rule include contextual competence, and student agency for action. Contextual competence was something that occurred as the teachers’ tools and resources for curriculum reform expanded. In contrast, there were no positive results for student agency for action, and teachers felt that they needed to teach more to the justice and action domains, leaving this as an area of needed growth and future focus for teachers at Maple Rock School.

Summary

After analyzing data from three different surveys; interviews with eight interviewees; observations and field notes from CRPDs; note cards from CRPD participants indicating CRT beliefs; and reading through participant journals, several themes emerged that were documented in this chapter. Participants identified benefits derived from the CRPDs that included tools for changing curricula; becoming more comfortable with discomfort around issues of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity; and increasing self-reflective habits of mind. Individuals’ areas of personal growth in CRT included emphasizing justice and action in curriculum (in addition to identity and diversity), and developing a deeper understanding and internalization of CRT practice. The participants identified Maple Rock’s greatest CRT strength the enduring commitment to culturally responsive teaching and social justice of the teachers and administrators. However, there were some prominent obstacles to growth and development in CRT. These included the need to feel equal and safe; a lack of consistency and buy-in, arrogance; and the power of tradition.

Some of these findings that emerged from the data were contradictory. For example, while the staff considered Maple Rock’s greatest strength as its commitment to CRT, one of its greatest weaknesses was the lack of consistency in CRT practice. The claim that all Maple Rock

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

staff were committed to culturally responsive teaching was not evident in various practices throughout the school. The idea that there are different dimensions to CRT, and therefore, different manifestations of it in practice may have accounted for this apparent inconsistency. While CRT must look different in different contexts, there are some basic tenets that must be upheld by all, such as using equity pedagogy, teacher transformative-self-study, maintaining high performance expectations for all students, and using diverse, culturally informed means to facilitate their accomplishments. This inconsistency in the study is an area that deserves more attention.

Teachers identified one of their greatest individual gains as self-reflection, and yet, felt that a collective weakness was depending on outsider support to deepen their understanding of CRT. Ideally, with a strong self-reflective toolkit, individuals would not be seeking more external support because they would be able to self-guide and regular their own learning. This sense of efficacy was not consistent among the participants in this study. The data did support the idea that a community of co-learners who assist each other in developing culturally responsive teaching competencies is imperative. While some notable progress was made in understanding and practicing CRT during the course of the study, the journey toward authentic understanding and genuine practice is far from complete for the participants in this study.

Chapter V Discussion and Conclusion

Summary

The focus of this qualitative case study was a culturally responsive professional development intervention at Maple Rock School, an environmental justice magnet school in the Pacific Northwest. The intervention consisted of a five-month bi-weekly program that assisted teachers in developing more culturally responsive habits of mind and pedagogies. The intervention is known as the Culturally Responsive Professional Development (CRPD) series. Twenty-eight regular classroom and special instructors participated in the CRPDs. Previously the district of which Maple Rock was a part had mandated culturally responsive professional development for all teachers. Therefore this intervention was congruent with what the school leaders were expected to provide for their teachers’ professional growth.

The findings from the study were grouped into four general categories. These are (1) *What teachers gained from the CRPDs*; (2) *What teachers needed more support in developing*; (3) *The most prominent school-wide CRT strength*; and (4) *Remaining roadblocks to CRT*. The specific findings were:

- Teachers gained tools and strategies to make their curricula more inclusive of ethnic and cultural diversity; became increasingly more comfortable with discomfort connected with diversity, privilege, and racism; and were more conscious about how their positionalities informed their pedagogy.
- Teachers became more confident about incorporating the anti-bias tenets of justice and action into their curriculum, and teaching actionable solutions with students.
- Yet, teachers felt they still needed to deepen their knowledge and skills about, and leadership in implementing culturally responsive teaching.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Teachers felt the school where they taught (Maple Rock) had a value investment in CRT that could be used as a foundation for actualizing CRT in practice.
- Some teachers did not feel their culturally responsive knowledge or expertise was equal to their colleagues, and feared participating as a result.
- In addition, they had a somewhat inflated perception of their school’s accomplishments to date that could obstruct continuing development in CRT.
- There was a lack of consistency among the participants’ knowledge, perceptions, values, and practices related to culturally responsive education.

Discussion and Interpretation

These findings suggest that providing teachers with appropriate resources and methodologies will improve their ownership and quality of practices in culturally responsive education. This progress can be facilitated through carefully designed and intentional professional development experiences that focus on improving their culturally responsive knowledge and skillsets; confronting existing inequities in educational opportunities, power, and privilege; critically analyzing existing school programs, policies, and practices that are both challenges and opportunities for equity education; and helping teachers to become better reflective practitioners.

Gap in Beliefs and Behaviors

Intention versus impact is often part of the equity education discourse. Most of the time, people from dominant identity groups focus on their good intentions, rather than the actions and effects. For example, if someone were to question the impact of the content they delivered they might defend themselves and explain the motivation behind a lesson plan rather than consider the effects of how it was delivered. In culturally responsive teaching, it is vital to focus on the how

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

as well as the what of learning opportunities provided about and for ethnic and cultural differences. The teachers at Maple Rock who participated in this study had good intentions. However, their culturally responsive actual practices were less compelling and persuasive than their positive value and belief claims about cultural diversity and education.

The findings suggested that there was a gap in teachers’ beliefs and behaviors regarding CRT. While Maple Rock’s teaching staff and leadership were committed ideologically to culturally responsive teaching, it was not enacted to the same extent. According to Juvan and Dolnicar (2014), gaps in beliefs and behaviors could be attributed to various reasons such as, “no alternatives to current behaviors, that other issues are of greater importance, . . . being too busy to change one’s behavior, . . . blaming others, . . . [and] denying responsibility,” (p. 77). Attribution theory explains that people can either see themselves as the causes of their own behavior with internal or personal attribution, or with external situational attribution, people see reasons other than themselves as the causes (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014). Participants in this study often evoked external situational attribution by claiming that a lack of time for CRT impeded their ability to enact it in their classrooms; they would have gained more working on teams with administrators than peer teachers; they would have benefitted more by testing theories rather than reading and discussing them; and that they felt unsure how to shift from ideas to actions. These results also are consistent with those of Hodges (2015) who reported that “although the [White] teachers in this study claimed to believe in social justice, their teaching behaviors rarely embodied these beliefs” (p. 149). The teachers at Maple Rock feared not doing CRT correctly. This fear impeded some teachers’ engagement in the CRPD because they did not want to be viewed as amateurs.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

An unspoken hierarchy of understanding of CRT existed at the school, was characterized by judgment, and a privileged knowledge status that threatened the health of the learning environment. It was somewhat like the sentiment among some teachers that DiAngelo (2012) found characterized as “I already know this . . . [and I am] *beyond* the discussion” (p. 250). DiAngelo recommended that the more knowledgeable teachers can “validate the struggle while reinforcing its worthiness, take the discussion deeper, and back up the facilitators and participants of color” (p. 251). While this may have been occurring to some extent during the CRPDs in small group discussions, and in subtle ways, it was not pervasive, as the findings of teachers not feeling a sense of belonging in CRT discussions imply.

Cultivating Readiness and Receptivity

CRT readiness and receptivity are not the same. Readiness could imply having background knowledge, prior training in teacher preparation or professional development, and culturally responsive teaching experience. In contrast, receptivity is an attitudinal disposition; an openness to shifting one’s practices and pedagogical philosophies towards culturally responsiveness; a willingness to try different approaches to teaching. One could argue that increasing teachers’ readiness to engage with CRT would subsequently make them more receptive to it. Readiness could be addressed by pairing those with some experience with CRT with others who are novices. Establishing peer mentor relationships in which mentees could learn CRT concepts and practices from their mentors could inspire CRT readiness and receptivity. Other professional development projects similar to CRPDs could provide differentiated and individualized experiences, by offering an array of materials and learning opportunities, addressing different learning needs and styles. For example, foundational CRT texts, perspectives, and practical guides could be offered together to address a spectrum of

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

learners. While a group of teaching staff and leaders would not necessarily be at the same level of readiness, an understanding and acceptance of their different stages of readiness might increase overall staff receptivity to and efficacy in CRT. Everyone involved would benefit, but differentially, and in complementary ways.

For example, peer mentorship would engage mentors and mentees in ways described by Shaub (2015). These include reciprocity between and among mentors and mentees; increasing the mentor’s feeling of self-worth and re-energizing the mentor professionally; with mentees gaining self-confidence, and learning how to speak up. Whiteing and Delores (2013) added another benefit in these cooperative learning ventures in noting that “mentoring is a way to transmit experience and knowledge” and in doing so as much learning can occur for mentors and mentees. More deliberate efforts of this nature could have narrowed the gaps between culturally responsive ideologies and actions revealed by the findings in this study.

Connecting Theory to Practice

This study translated theory to practice within the design of the CRPD, its implementation, and teachers critically reflecting on their practices. Culturally responsive teaching and multicultural education are most viable when their theoretical ideas inform classroom teaching practices, and systemic school reform. Closer connections between the value claims of Maple Rock around culturally responsiveness and the various dimensions of its daily routines would have been more persuasive if the school actually practiced what it purported to believe. The inconsistencies that became apparent suggest the need for closer scrutiny for educators’ claimed endorsements of culturally responsiveness in beliefs, practices, and the interactions between them.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

While educators need content, pedagogical knowledge, and compassion for diverse students and communities, to become competent in culturally responsive teaching, these elements are insufficient. They should be “complemented with careful *self-analyses* of what teachers believe about the relationship among culture, ethnicity, and intellectual ability; the expectations they hold for students from different ethnic groups; and how their beliefs and expectations are manifested in instructional behaviors” (Gay, 2010, p. 70). The multifocal framework in the CRPD was the target of analysis, and some growth was evident in many areas. Yet, much more training and practice in culturally responsive teaching, research, and practice are needed.

Sustained and Systematic Training

The study findings suggest that school teachers and leaders did not share a common understanding of CRT. This was evident in school-wide inconsistencies in practice. Their experiences with preparation programs varied widely, as indicated by a range of years in the profession, and therefore, teacher training in different decades (7% of teachers had 1-3 years of teaching experience; 14% had 4-6 years; 14% had 7-10 years, 64% had 11 or more years of classroom experience). Teacher preparation for and about cultural diversity ranges in its quality and scope. Mainstream approaches still tend to offer ethnic tidbits (Convertino, 2016), and single stories of ethnic heroes or heroines as cultural artifacts (Banks, 2013). These reductive approaches are most often presented without being regularly revisited. However, social justice and cultural diversity professional development should be systematic, comprehensive, and occurring over time with intentionality (Rogers et al., 2005). This study offered an alternative approach to culturally responsive teacher professional development. Its five-month scope was sustained and the program design was systematic. This provided school staff with a shared

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

vocabulary (Convertino, 2016), and content developed over time (Rogers et al., 2005) to increase their competency, agency, and changes in future practice.

Teacher Community Building

Teachers built a community of practice through the CRPD, by aiding and assisting each other in their learning. The CRPD curriculum was designed to foster collegial engagement and create community. This emphasis was in agreement with Sleeter’s and Grant’s (2003) views about the importance of creating community in multicultural education preparation because “practicing democracy also means learning to articulate one’s interests, to openly debate issues with one’s peers, to organize and work collectively with others, to acquire power, [and] to exercise power” (p. 206). In this study community-building was indicated by the participants, as a group reading through texts together, asking clarifying questions, making connections to other readings or experiences, identifying patterns, generating questions, and discussing the transference to their personal and professional lives. Kuusisaari (2014) also suggested that “collaboration supports the development of teachers’ skills and helps to sustain professional development” (p. 47). Ronfeldt et al. (2015) added that “collaboration enables teachers to strengthen their instruction, thus improving learning outcomes for students” (p. 475). Consistent with these ideas about collaboration, the CRPD involved group work, and analyzing how the participants’ personal beliefs shaped their teaching. For example, in the first session, participants shared their responses to questions in small groups such as, *What type of learner are you, How do you know, Do you teach to this type of learner in your classroom, and, If so, in what ways.*

A culturally responsive teaching community is one that welcomes and resolves discomfort, recognizing that without it, authentic learning will not take place. According to Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012), engaging with social justice principles requires understanding

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

individual and structural power; positionality relative to power; critical thinking about where knowledge comes from; and acting on those principles “in the service of a more socially just society” (p. xix). Culturally responsive teaching is predicated on the beliefs and practices that knowledge acquisition and dialogue are essential elements of competency building. The participants in this study assisted each other in these pursuits, and were more open to engaging in difficult conversations about oppression and prejudice after the intervention.

One benefit of strengthened community was sustained effort and engagement with CRT as a result of the CRPDs. Individuals who took part in this intervention may hold each other more accountable for their growth and progress. As teachers develop their self-reflective capabilities, their CRT practices evolve over time. For example, teachers could critically analyze their lesson planning and implementation, and, in the process, improve the quality of their pedagogical performance. Their efforts could also be more sustained and comprehensive, from the realization that culturally responsive teaching is not instantaneous; nor do all teachers have to do it the same way at the same time. Instead, while ideologically some common principles should prevail across persons and settings, in practice CRT is developmental, contextual, differentiated, and complementary among teaching personnel, place, policies, and programs.

Culturally Responsive Teaching Requires Systemic Change

Not only teachers, but school leaders, instructional specialists, and the greater school system should be involved in implementing CRT. Nieto (1994) stressed the need to transform schools, not just teaching practices. Banks (1998) proposed that one key dimension is multiculturalizing school culture, policies, politics, curriculum, and environment. While this study was not quite this inclusive, it did extend the boundaries of teacher education for cultural diversity somewhat by including more than curriculum content, such as analyzing school climate

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

and practitioner reflectivity. It also engaged a variety of school actors, including teachers, librarians, administrators, and the instructional coach. The involvement of different types of educators is another indication of the mandate for systemic change to improve the effectiveness of cultural responsiveness in education.

Variability in Culturally Responsive Practices

One might assume that the longer teachers have been in the profession, the more likely they are to be resistant to CRT, and that newer teachers might be more impressionable and open to change as a result of an intervention. However, this was not necessarily the case in this study. Even though the findings suggest all participants endorsed the ideology of CRT to some degree, there was notable variance, especially in application, regardless of one’s teaching experience or engagement in prior CRT preparation. Some novice teachers appeared to have more CRPD receptivity, perhaps because they had a recent CRT course in teacher preparation, and may be more conversant in its rhetoric, while those just out of pre-service programs also can be resistant to equity and cultural diversity. They may not be blatant, but can be resistant in other ways, such as believing that conventional subject matter and competency mandates are sacrosanct and that cultural diversity is only for minority student populations and restricted to special occasions. While more teacher education programs now offer multicultural education courses, those courses may not be systemic and sustained over time. It is dubious to assume teachers are adequately prepared as a result of their teacher education programs, that use these superficial and fragmented approaches. As Sleeter (2008) pointed out, “most teacher education programs lack a coherent and sustained approach” (p. 562) to multicultural education. In addition, Barajas and Hovestadt (2015) contended that in recent years teacher education has experienced “a gradual shift from learning about the *other*, to a more introspective, reflective approach grounded in self-

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

inquiry and ecological analysis of power and privilege [but still] . . . much work remains” (p. 26) to adequately prepare pre-service teachers with culturally responsive competencies.

Other scholars support these contentions. For example, Penney, Crandall, and Cunningham (2013) found that while preservice teachers were satisfied with their multicultural education preparation, new teachers who graduated from the same program “unanimously disagreed that their multicultural education prepared them to teach in culturally and linguistically diverse school” (p. 47). According to Lew and Nelson (2016), “there is a significant gap between teacher education curriculum and the real fabric of schools in the area of culturally responsive teaching. . . . some concerted measures should be planned to bridge the gap between theories and practice” (p. 12).

The more experienced teachers at Maple Rock school had the professional experience and background to understand the dynamic of teaching. This same advantage could make them less open to CRT methods and ideas because of other pressing demands. Conversely, their fluency with teaching practice could make it easier for them to apply new concepts and practices. The findings of this study demonstrated variance among experienced and new teachers, and their receptivity to engaging with CRT.

Social justice teaching is built on the premise of diversity and plurality, thus recognizing that there are numerous ways to design curricula and instruction for different student populations. Regardless of how long they had been teaching, a number of teachers in this study believed they were already teaching in a culturally responsive manner. As a result, they subtly disengaged from the CRPD intervention. Believing that one way of teaching is the most equitable is as marginalizing to a heterogeneous classroom as doing nothing. According to Gay (2010), culturally responsive teaching “uses a wide variety of instructional strategies” (p. 32) to

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

accommodate different student populations in all developmental stages of their educational experiences.

Limitations

The primary limitations of the study include a small number of participants in one school, occurring at one site, the research methodology, and the positionality and bias of the researcher. Maple Rock school was the only site of study. A singular research site provided a limited perspective on teacher professional development. Adding other schools from other districts, with other educational philosophies, and in other geographic locations for comparison would provide additional layers of nuance and depth to the study.

Since this study was qualitative in nature, the results can only be generalizable to theory. Also, teacher responses were not disaggregated by grade level taught. Instead, I grouped the K-5 findings together. It would be beneficial to look at grade-level specific responses to determine how teachers working with different age populations respond to the CRPD curriculum.

One methodological limitation was not collecting data from students. Instead, this study looked at teachers' responses to and perceptions of the professional development curriculum. No data were collected about student experiences of the CRPDs' effects. Conducting classroom observations and interviews with students could have provided valuable information. Teachers' perceptions of how the CRPDs informed their work would probably differ from students' perceptions of changes in instruction and curriculum, and their own experiences in classrooms.

The study was limited by its timeframe and frequency of the CRPDs. The six CRPDs only occurred for the winter and spring semester of the academic year. If the CRPDs had lasted for a longer duration or occurred more frequently, more changes may have been observable.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

A few changes were made to the survey over time because as the CRPD intervention occurred, questions emerged that were not initially anticipated. While most questions were consistent on the first, second, and third surveys, some were included in surveys 2 and 3 involving school-wide barriers to CRT and strengths that were not included in the initial survey. It would have been helpful to see if teachers’ perceptions of school-wide CRT shifted from survey 1 to survey 3.

Finally, researcher bias may have affected the results of the study. I brought my own experiences, opinions, and beliefs to the design and facilitation of the professional development intervention. My vested interests in the CRPDs may have skewed my recording and interpreting of teachers’ perceptions to get favorable results. These experiences and beliefs were both made explicit during the CRPDs and in conversations with Maple Rock teachers, as well as being implicitly present throughout the study. Another researcher with a different educational philosophy and set of identities may obtain different results. While all of these limitations to the study exist and are worthy of consideration, the results still offer some meaningful insights about equitable professional development for elementary school educators.

Significance

Multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching scholarship is more heavily focused on theory than practice. This study provides some guidance as to the type of research that can be done to explore the implementation of culturally responsive teaching in action. However, multicultural education practices in actual classrooms need more guidance for their design, evaluation, and documentation. This type of research could help educators better design needs-based interventions. Too often generalized multicultural education and culturally responsive interventions are offered to teachers without a thorough analysis and understanding of

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

their needs. In this study, the researcher met with the equity and administrative teams at a particular school in the process of designing the CRPD to identify topics that were pertinent to that particular context. Content reform and interrogating assumptions were selected as they related to the school’s prior and recent professional development topics since participants demonstrated enthusiasm for those topics. In using this approach to creating learning experiences for teaching, this study may be instructive for other teacher educators and researchers in translating theoretical and conceptual principles into practice regarding improving teachers’ (and other learners, too) active involvement in their own continuing professional development, along with increased empowerment, ownership, and efficacy.

This research is also significant because it provides a model for context-specific professional intervention for teachers. Very often in multicultural education there is an appeal for one type of intervention for everyone. This research adapted this approach to make it more compatible to the specific characteristics of Maple Rock school, its teaching and leadership personnel, and its professed value orientations. Therefore, it is an example of how scholarly claims can be contextualized for local circumstances without compromising their integrity.

This study also adds to the body of research on teacher self-study and self-analysis, which are elements and benefits of culturally responsive teaching. The study exemplified unpacking one’s assumptions and curricula through a critical theory lens, thus offering teachers tools to improve pedagogically. It featured teachers increasingly engaged in processes of self-study while developing increasing comfort with sensitive topics. Thus, this study may inspire other educators to engage in culturally responsive learning, practices of self-reflection, and courageous conversations as they refine their culturally responsive pedagogies.

Recommendations for Future Research and Practice

There are many possibilities for complementing this study and compensating for its limitations. This study can be seen as a building block for more research on developing and delivering professional development for teachers to improve their culturally responsive competencies and classroom practices. The future of culturally responsive teaching relies on continuity of understanding between teachers and administrators, and across grade levels and subjects taught. Future studies could compare the effects of culturally responsive interventions for preschool, middle school, and high school teachers. It would be helpful to know what similarities and differences exist in these different groups, and what interventions work best for which teaching population.

It also would be beneficial to conduct a similar study over several years rather than months, in order to track shifts in teacher belief systems and pedagogies over time. A longitudinal study would offer more time and opportunity for teachers to transition their thinking and teaching practices more equitably. The CRPD (or similar) intervention could be ongoing for a period of years, covering all eight multicultural principles rather than the two addressed in this study. New principles could be discovered and revealed by the teaching body as a result of their growing familiarity with CRT concepts and practices. In addition, a longitudinal study could make sense of teachers' processes of change, as increasing comfort with discomfort is a gradual process, beginning with an ideological shift, often followed by conversational shifts, and then by classroom implementation, leadership, and school policy changes. Conducting a longitudinal study would offer complementary benefits to this study, providing a parallel analysis with deep explorations to better understand CRPD effects on teaching beliefs and practices.

This study focused on one school. Future studies could include multiple school sites for comparative analysis. The different school sites could involve various geographic locations,

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

sociopolitical landscapes, and teacher, administrator, and student demographics. Examining the effects of the CRPD, and/or similar professional development programs could identify which components are universally applicable, and which ones are most problematic and pertinent for specific populations and locations. Other variations of comparative analyses could include:

- schools with similar pedagogic orientations;
- schools with different pedagogic orientations;
- global cross-cultural studies;
- schools with different racial, ethnic, and linguistic student and teacher populations;
- schools with different structural configurations in different regions of the U.S.

For example, conducting research in multiple schools that have similar pedagogic orientations could provide more information about how to prepare teachers to promote social and environmental justice. In contrast, studying schools and teachers with different pedagogical orientations would allow for more breadth in understanding similarities and differences of equity and justice understanding and actions.

In general, the CRPD intervention used in this study dealt with understanding issues of systemic oppression in the United States and teaching justice and equity in that context. But the intervention could be modified to deal with global inequities, and create interventions that address them. Although such a study would be more complex to design based on the variable factors across cultures, languages, histories of oppression, and nationalities, it would be a valuable undertaking. It would be instructive to see what components of the CRPD and other similar initiatives are transferable, and which ones are location- and culture-specific.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Another extension of this study could be examining the effects of the CRPDs on students. Student perspectives would deepen and broaden understanding how (or whether) teachers’ practice is consistent with the CRPDs. Students could be interviewed about their experiences in class before and after the intervention. Classes could be observed before and after the CRPDs to examine instructional changes, and curriculum could be analyzed pre and post. Integrating student perspectives on how, if at all, their own feelings about being in the classroom shifted would provide another layer of insight into the effectiveness of teaching for social justice and culturally responsiveness.

The intervention could occur during summer months, which might involve a more self-selecting population of attendees, and capture more teacher attention and focus. This may happen because teachers would not have the demands of their jobs overlaying their learning experience, and they may be able to engage more deeply with the material, and plan more thoroughly for changing classroom practices for the coming school year.

Finally, an inventory of teachers’ school libraries could be taken prior to and after the intervention. Changes in this usage could be indicative of shifts occurring in their classroom instructional focus and content. Increased focus during the intervention then could be placed on creating classroom culturally responsive libraries for students. This emphasis would extend those elements of the existing CRPDs that deal with curricular reform and interrogating assumptions and habits of mind.

Continuing research in culturally responsive teacher professional development will provide more opportunities for helping teachers create equitable classrooms. All of the suggestions for future research imply practice, and those for practice could generate research because promoting equity and cultural responsiveness requires both. Both can contribute to

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

improving teachers’ multicultural competence and efficacy that will produce better results for achieving social justice and equity in their classrooms and beyond.

Planting Roots for Justice

This study was greatly inspired by my own experiences teaching in first through eighth grade. I was stifled by a lack of resources and professional development that addressed equity pedagogy. I was so limited to working with Eurocentric materials and methods that my classroom content did not reflect local and global pluralism; nor did it adequately address systems of oppression. I did not have the vocabulary nor the skills to teach critically. Intuitively I knew I was not teaching in a culturally responsive manner, because I had so much fear about how and what to teach with so little guidance. As a result, I spent years in graduate school while simultaneously in classrooms with students, to make sense of and employ culturally responsive teaching under the guidance of expert multicultural teachers and scholars. I would have been thrilled if the school where I taught had prioritized culturally responsive teaching and provided professional development opportunities for the teaching staff to explore our pedagogies and selves from an equity vantage point.

As I look back on the Maple Rock teaching staff’s experience with the CRPDs, I recall the tree root metaphor introduced at the beginning of this study. Trees of different species can communicate and nourish each other by sharing nutrients through their root systems. Trees, of all types, can work to heal and strengthen each other from below ground, up. The Maple Rock teaching staff was somewhat like trees. They shared a common mandate and a common goal to develop their culturally responsive teaching capacities. And they realized that these capabilities would develop better in community than in isolation. During this study, like trees, they helped each other to be better. They realized becoming multicultural educators must be done in the

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

presence of an epistemological community. The CRPDs were most potent as a foundation for these educators to learn a common language, and share ideas and actions regarding culturally responsive teaching. The legacies of the CRPDs are relationships that teachers developed; a commitment to learning in community; holding each other accountable; and offering each other resources, support, and dialogue when needed or solicited. These relationships will reinforce and strengthen teachers’ beliefs and practices, and deepen Maple Rock’s collective roots in culturally responsive pedagogy. While the CRPD intervention was fleeting, I hope these relationships will sustain teachers in continuing to develop agency and empowerment for the benefit of all their students, not just those with privileged identities. Ideally, the CRPDs helped teachers shift from considering themselves to be “woke,” to staying “woke” as Black Lives Matter leaders intended.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

References

- Allingham, M. (2014). *Distributive justice*. Hoboken, MI: Taylor and Francis.
- Anast Seguin, C., & Ambrosio, A. (2002). Multicultural vignettes for teacher preparation. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 4(4), 10-16.
- Anderson-Levitt, K. M. (2006). Ethnography. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. B. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of Complementary Methods of Education in Research*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Baldwin, S. C., Buchanan, A. M., & Rudisill, M. E. (2007). What teacher candidates learned about diversity, social justice, and themselves from service-learning experiences. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 58, 315-327.
- Banks, J. A., & Tucker, M. (1998). Multiculturalism's five dimensions. *NEA Today Online*. Retrieved from <http://www.learner.org/workshops/socialstudies/pdf/session3/3.Multiculturalism.pdf>
- Banks, J. A. (2001). *An introduction to multicultural education*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Banks, J. A. (2004). Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice. In J. A. Banks, & C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (2nd ed., pp. 3-29). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Banks, J. A. (2006). Researching race, culture, and difference: Epistemological challenges and possibilities. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. B. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of Complementary Methods of Education in Research*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Banks, J. A. (2008). Diversity, group identity, and citizenship education in a global age. *Educational Researcher*, 37(3), 129-139.
- Banks, J. A. (2013). Multicultural education: Characteristics and goals. In J. A. Banks & C. A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (8th ed.) (pp. 3-32). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Barajas, M., & Hovestadt, A. (2015). *Pedagogical approaches to multicultural education within teacher preparation programs*. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
- Batch, M., & Windsor, C. (2015). Nursing casualization and communication: A critical ethnography. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 71(4), 870-880.
- Bell, L. A., (2007). Theoretical foundations for social justice education. In M. Adams, L.A. Bell, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (2nd ed., pp.1-14). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Berlak, A. & Moyenda, S. (2001). *Taking it personally*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Bondy, E., & Ross, D. D. (2005). *Preparing for inclusive teaching meeting the challenges of teacher education reform*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1998). *Practical reason: On the theory of action*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.
- Boutte, G. S. (2008). Beyond the illusion of diversity: How early childhood teachers can promote social justice. *Social Studies*, 99 (4), 165-173.
- Boylan M., & Woolsey, I. (2015). Teacher education for social justice: Mapping identity spaces. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 46, 62-71.
- Boyles, D., Carusi, T., & Attick, D. (2009). Historical and critical interpretations of social justice. In W. Ayers, T. Quinn, & D. Stovall (Eds.), *Handbook of social justice in education* (pp.30-42). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Brenner, M.E. (2006). Interviewing in educational research. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. B. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of Complementary Methods of Education in Research*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Brody, C., & Davidson, N. (1998). *Professional development for cooperative learning*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Bronson, G. (1995). Putting the “P” into a participation in government course. In S. Noffke & R. Stevenson (Eds.), *Educational action research* (pp. 95-114). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Brown, S., & Dobrin, Sidney I. (2004). *Ethnography unbound: From theory shock to critical praxis*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Brown, J., & Crippen, K. (2016). Designing for culturally responsive science education through professional development. *International Journal of Science Education*, 38(3), 470-492.
- Cammarota, J. (2007). A social justice approach to achievement: Guiding Latina/o students toward educational attainment with a challenging, socially relevant curriculum. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 40(1), 87-96.
- Carnicelli, S. & Boluk, K. (2017). The promotion of social justice: Service learning for transformative education. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 11(1). Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2017.01.003>
- Carbado, D.W., Crenshaw, K.W., Mays, V.M. & Tomlinson, B. (2013) INTERSECTIONALITY: Mapping the movements of a theory. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, 10(2), 303–312. doi: 10.1017/S1742058X13000349.
- Casey, A., Friend, J. I., Adler, S., Caruthers, L., Russell, D., & Schlein, C. (2013). *The effects of a culturally responsive professional development series on the attitudes and beliefs of teachers of diverse students in a Missouri suburban school district*, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
- Chen, D. W., Nimmo, J., & Fraser, H. (2009). Becoming a culturally responsive early childhood educator: A tool to support reflection by teachers embarking on the anti-bias journey. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 11, (2), 101-106.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Chubbuck, S. M., & Zembylas, M. (2008). The emotional ambivalence of socially just teaching: A case study of a novice urban schoolteacher. *American Educational Research Journal*, 45(2), 274–318. doi:10.3102/0002831207311586
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2001). Learning to teach against the (new) grain. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 52(1), 3-4.
- Cochran-Smith, M., & Donnell, K. (2006). Practitioner Inquiry: Blurring the boundaries of research and practice In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P.B. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of Complementary Methods of Education in Research*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2010). Toward a theory of teacher education for social justice. In M. Fullan, A. Hargreaves, D. Hopkins, & A. Lieberman (Eds.), *The International Handbook of Educational Change* (2nd ed.). (pp. 445-467). New York, NY: Springer Publishing.
- Cochran-Smith, M., & Dudley-Marling, C. (2012). Diversity in teacher education and special education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 63(4), 237-244.
- Convertino, C. (2016). Beyond ethnic tidbits: Toward a critical and dialogical model in multicultural social justice teacher preparation. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 18(2), 125.
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241.
- Denzin, N. (1997). *Interpretive ethnography: Ethnographic practices for the 21st Century*. London, UK: Sage.
- Denzin, N. (2001). *Interpretive interactionism* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.) (2003). *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (2nd Ed.). London, UK: Sage.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Derman-Sparks, L. (2003). They ask, you answer. *Scholastic Parent & Child*, 11, 3.
- Derman-Sparks, L. (2009). Children—socioeconomic class and equity. *Young Children*, 64(3), 1-4.
- Dewey, J. (1997). *Experience and education*. New York, NY: Touchstone.
- Dick, B. (2015). Reflections on the *SAGE Encyclopedia of Action Research* and what it says about action research and its methodologies. *Action Research*, 13(4), 431-444. doi: 10.1177/1476750315573593
- DiAngelo, R. (2012). *What does it mean to be white? Developing white racial literacy*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Dunne, M., Pryor, J., & Yates, P. (2005). *Becoming a researcher: A companion to the research process* (27-40). Retrieved from <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/prescott/docDetail.action?docID=10161332&p00=collecting%20interpreting%20qualitative%20materials>
- Feistritzer, E. (2011). *Profiles of teachers in the U.S. 2011*. Washington D.C.: National Center for Education Information. Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org/media/pot2011final-blog.pdf>
- Feith, D. (2010) The radical school reform you've never heard of; with 'parent trigger,' families can forcibly change failing schools. *Wall Street Journal (Online)* Retrieved from <https://searchproquestcom.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/docview/763623507?accountid=14784>
- Foster, M. (1999). Race, class, and gender in education research: Surveying the political terrain. *Educational Policy*, 13(1/2), 77-85.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Franke, M. L., Carpenter, T., Fennema, E., Ansell, E., & Behrend, J. (1998). Understanding teachers' self-sustaining, generative change in the context of professional development. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 14*(1), 67-80.
- Frazer, J. (2015). *Dying trees can send food to neighbors of different species: No tree is an island, and no place is this truer than the forest*. Retrieved from <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/artful-amoeba/dying-trees-can-send-food-to-neighbors-of-different-species/>
- Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum.
- Gallardo, M. (2014). *Developing cultural humility: Embracing race, privilege and power*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Gay, G. (1994). *A synthesis of scholarship in multicultural education*. Washington, D.C.: NCREL. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED378287>
- Gay, G. (2004). Curriculum theory and multicultural education. In J. A. Banks, & C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (2nd ed., pp. 30-49). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Glesne, C. (2011). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Geertz, C. (1973). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In *Interpretations of cultures*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Giroux, H. (2008). *Pedagogy and the politics of hope theory, culture, and schooling: A critical reader*. New York, NY: Westview Press.
- González, N., Moll, L. C., & Amanti, C. (2005). *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practice in households, communities, and classrooms*. Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum.
- Gorski, P., & Pothini, Seema G. (2014). *Case studies on diversity and social justice education*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Gorski, Paul C., & Swalwell, Katy. (2015). Equity literacy for all. *Educational Leadership*, 72(6), 34-40.
- Gorski, P. (2015). Relieving burnout and the “Martyr Syndrome” among social justice education activists: The implications and effects of mindfulness. *The Urban Review*, 47(4), 696-716.
- Guest, G., Mack, N., MacQueen, K., Namey, E., & Woodsong, C. (2005). *Qualitative research methods: A data collector's field guide*. Research Triangle Park, NC: Family Health International.
- Hamilton, L., Corbett-Whittier, C. (2013). *Using case study in education research: Research methods in education*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Hammersley, M. (2013). *What is qualitative research?* London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781849666084.ch-001>
- Haviland, D., & Rodriguez-Kiino, D. (2008). Closing the gap: The impact of professional development on faculty attitudes toward culturally responsive pedagogy. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 8, 197–212.
- Hess, A. (2016, April 24). Earning the ‘woke’ badge. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/24/magazine/earning-the-woke-badge.html?_r=0

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Hodges, S. (2015). *Contextualizing multicultural visions from the foot of the mountain*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington.
- hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Howard, G. (1999). *We can't teach what we don't know: White teachers, multiracial schools*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Howe, W. A. & Gabriel, M. L. (2015). Multicultural education: From ethnic studies to NCLB to common core- a PK-12 perspective. In H. P. Baptiste, A. Ryan, B. Araujo & R. Duhon-Sells (Eds.) *Multicultural education: A renewed paradigm of transformation and call to action* (7-28). San Francisco, CA: Caddo Gap Press.
- Hyett, N., Kenny, A., & Dickson-Swift, V. (2014). Methodology or method? A critical review of qualitative case study reports. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being*, (9). Retrieved from <http://www.ijqhw.net/index.php/qhw/article/view/23606/33590>
- Hynds, A., Sleeter, C., Hindle, R., Savage, C., Penetito, W., & Meyer, L. H. (2011). Te Kotahitanga: A case study of a repositioning approach to teacher professional development for culturally responsive pedagogies. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 39(4), 339-351.
- Irving, D. (2014). *Waking up white and finding myself in the story of race*. Cambridge, MA: Elephant Room Press.
- James, D. (2013). *Improving teacher efficacy through peer observations: An action research study*. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Retrieved from <https://search-proquest-com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/docview/1492717108?accountid=14784>

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Juvan, E. & Dolnicar, S. (2014). The attitude–behaviour gap in sustainable tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research, 48*, 76-95.
- Kelly, D. M., & Brandes, G. M. (2010). Social justice needs to be everywhere: Imagining the future of anti-oppression education in teacher preparation. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 56*(4), 388-402.
- Kena, G., Musu-Gillette, L., Robinson, J., Wang, X., Rathbun, A., Zhang, J., Wilkinson-Flicker, S., Barmer, A., Velez, E. D., Nachazel, T., Dziuba, A., Smith, W., Nelson, V., Robles-Villalba, V., Soo, W., Ballard, D., (2015). *The condition of education 2015*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015144.pdf>
- Kendall, F. E. (2014). What are you prepared to do? (NCORE Powerpoint presentation). Retrieved from <http://www.franceskendall.com/handouts/WhatAreYouPreparedToDo.pdf>
- Kharel, D. (2015). Visual ethnography, thick description and cultural representation. *Dhaulagiri Journal of Sociology and Anthropology, 9*, 147-160. Retrieved from <http://www.nepjol.info/index.php/DSAJ/article/view/14026>
- Kim, C. Y., Losen, D. J., & Hewitt, D. (2010). *The school-to-prison pipeline: Structuring legal reform*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Kuusisaari, H. (2014). Teachers at the zone of proximal development – Collaboration promoting or hindering the development process. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 43*, 46-57.
- Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate, W. (1995). Toward a critical race theory of education. *Teachers College Record, 97*(1), 47.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy.

Theory into Practice, 34(3), 159-65.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2004). New directions in multicultural education: Complexities, boundaries, and critical race theory. In J. A. Banks, & C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (2nd ed., pp. 50-65). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dream-keepers: Successful teachers of African American children* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2016). *2016 graduation ceremony commencement speech*. Retrieved from

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHITgCaLQmk>

Lahann, R., Cochran-Smith, M., Hargreaves, A., & Shirley, D. (2010). *Teach First's theory of teacher education for social justice: Distributive justice and the politics of progressive neoliberalism*. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Lassonde, C., Israel, S. E., & Almasi, J. F. (2010). *Teacher collaboration for professional learning facilitating study, research, and inquiry communities*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lew, M., & Nelson, R. (2016). New teachers' challenges: How culturally responsive teaching, classroom management, and assessment literacy are intertwined. *Multicultural Education*, 23(3/4), 7-13.

Lunenberg, M., & Hamilton, M. L. (2008). Threading a golden chain: An attempt to find our identities as teacher educators. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 35(1), 185-205.

Lunenberg, M., Dengerink, J., & Korthagen, F. A. J. (2014). *The professional teacher educator: Roles, behaviour, and professional development of teacher educators*. Boston, MA: Sense Publishers.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Macedo, D., Dendrinos, B., & Gounari, P. (2003). *The hegemony of English*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Mallett, C. (2015). *The school-to-prison pipeline: A comprehensive assessment*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.
- Martinez-Cosio, M. (2010). Parents' roles in mediating and buffering the implementation of an urban school reform. *Education and Urban Society*, 42(3), 283-306.
- Maxwell, J.A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- McAteer, M. (2013). *Action research in education: Research methods in education*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- McCabe, J., & Holmes, D. (2014). Nursing, sexual health and youth with disabilities: A critical ethnography. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 70(1), 77-86.
- McCarthy, C. (1995). Multicultural policy discourses on racial inequality in American education. In R. Ng, P. Staton, & J. Scane (Eds.), *Anti-racism, feminism, and critical approaches to education* (pp. 21-44). Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
- Merriam, S. (1991). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. (2014). *Qualitative research A guide to design and implementation* (3rd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Mertler, C. A. (2012). *Action research: Improving schools and empowering educators*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Mezirow, J. (2000). *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Mitchell, J. (1982). Reflections of a Black Social Scientist: Some Struggles, Some Doubts, Some Hopes. *Harvard Educational Review*, 52(1), 27-44.
- Mitchell, J., Simmons, Charlana Y, & Greyerbiehl, L. A. (2014). *Intersectionality & higher education theory, research, & praxis*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Murchison, J. (2010). *Ethnography essentials: Designing, conducting, and presenting your research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- National Center for Education Statistics (n.d.). *Digest of education statistics*. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_209.10.asp
- Nieto, S. (1992). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education*. New York, NY: Longman.
- Nieto, S. (1994). Moving beyond tolerance in multicultural education. *Multicultural Education*, 1(4), 9-12.
- Nieto, S. (2009). *Language, culture, and teaching: Critical perspectives for a new century* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Nieto, S. (2010). *Language, culture, and teaching: Critical perspectives* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Palmer, P. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Palmer, B. (2003). *Making change work: Practical tools for overcoming human resistance to change*. Milwaukee, WI: ASQ Quality Press.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Penney, J., Crandall, H., & Cunningham, C. (2013). *Multicultural education for preservice teachers: An exploration of the effectiveness of multicultural education in preparing preservice teachers to teach in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms*. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
- Picower, B. (2012). *Practice what you teach: Social justice education in the classroom and the streets*. Hoboken, MI: Francis & Taylor.
- Ponterotto, J. G. (2006). Brief note on the origins, evolution, and meaning of the qualitative research concept "Thick Description". *Qualitative Report, 11*(3), 538-549.
- Rodriguez, K., Schwartz, J., Lahman, M., & Geist, M. (2011). Culturally responsive focus groups: Reframing the research experience to focus on participants. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 10* (4), 400-417.
- Romero, A., Arce, S., & Cammarota, J. (2009). A barrio pedagogy: identity, intellectualism, activism, and academic achievement through the evolution of critically compassionate intellectualism. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 12*(2), 217-233.
- Rogers, R., Kramer, M. A., Mosley, M., Fuller, C., Light, R., Nehart, M., Jones, R., Beaman-Jones, S., Depasquale, J., Hobson, S., & Thomas, P. (2005). Professional development as social transformation: The literacy for social justice teacher research group. *Language Arts, 82*(5), 347-358.
- Ronfeldt, M., Farmer, S. O., McQueen, K., & Grissom, J. A. (2015). Teacher collaboration in instructional teams and student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal, 52*(3), 475-514.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- Sangasubana, N. (2011). How to conduct ethnographic research. *Qualitative Report, 16* (2), 567-573. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/EJ926307.pdf>
- Ryle, G. (2009). *Collected papers*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Sensoy, O., & DiAngelo, R. (2012). *Is everyone really equal? An introduction to key concepts in social justice education*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Shaub, M. (2015). Benefits of mentoring. *Retirement Advisor, 16*(10), 48.
- Shields, C. M. (2014). Leadership for social justice education: A critical transformative approach. In I. Bogotch, & C. M. Shields (Eds.), *International handbook of educational leadership and social (in)justice*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Simard, S. (2015). *Do trees communicate with each other?* Retrieved from <http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2015/05/20/4236600.htm>
- Sleeter, C., & Grant, C. (2003). *Making choices for multicultural education: Five approaches to race, class and gender* (4th ed.). Danvers, MA: Wiley.
- Sleeter, C.E., & Montecinos, C. (1999). Forging partnerships for multicultural education. In S. May (Ed.), *Critical multiculturalism: Rethinking multicultural and anti-racist education* (pp. 113–137). London: Falmer Press.
- Sleeter C. E., & Delgado Bernal, D. (2004). Critical pedagogy, critical race theory, and antiracist education: Implications for multicultural education. In J. A. Banks, & C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (2nd ed., pp. 240-258). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Sleeter, C. E. (2008). Preparing white teachers for diverse students. In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, D. J. McIntyre, & K. E. Demers (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher*

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

education: Enduring questions in changing contexts (3rd ed., pp. 559-582). New York, NY: Routledge.

Smith, A. M., & Lambeth, D. T. (2016). Pre-service teachers' perceptions of culturally responsive teacher preparation. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 85(1), 46-58.

Stake, R. (2010). *Qualitative research : Studying how things work*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Storms, S. B. (2012). Preparing students for social action in a social justice education course: What works? *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 45(4), 547-560.

Taylor, S., & Sobel, D. (2003). Rich contexts to emphasize social justice in teacher education: Curriculum and pedagogy in professional development schools special issue: Partnering for equity. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 36(3), 249-258.

Tatum, B. D. (2003). *Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria? And other conversations about race*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

The Oregonian. (2015). Retrieved February 2nd, 2016 from the Oregonian at <http://schools.oregonlive.com/>

Thomas, J. (1993). *Doing critical ethnography*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Teaching Tolerance. (2014). *Introducing the Teaching Tolerance anti-bias framework*. Retrieved from <http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/Anti%20bias%20framework%20pamphlet.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education, (2016). *The state of racial diversity in the educator workforce*. Washington D.C.: Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service. Retrieved from

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

<https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/highered/racial-diversity/state-racial-diversity-workforce.pdf>

Valdes, F., Culp, J. M., & Harris, A. P. (2002). *Crossroads, directions, and a new critical race theory*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Portland Public Schools (2015). *Portland public schools information*. Retrieved from <http://www.pps.net/domain/265>

Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive schooling: U.S.-Mexican youth and the politics of caring*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Villenas, S. (1996). The colonizer/colonized Chicana ethnographer: Identity, marginalization, and co-optation in the field. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(4), 711-731.

Whiteing W. & Delores J. (2013). The benefits of mentoring students. *Radiation Therapist: The Journal of the Radiation Oncology Sciences*, 22(2), 233.

Wolf, M. (1992). *A thrice told tale: Feminism, postmodernism, and ethnographic responsibility*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Yin, R. K. (2006). Case study methods. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. B. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods of education in research* (111-122). New York, NY: Routledge.

Zeichner, K. (2009). *Teacher education and the struggle for social justice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Zozakiewicz, C., & Rodriguez, A. J. (2007). Using sociotransformative constructivism to create multicultural and gender-inclusive classrooms: An intervention project for teacher professional development. *Educational Policy*, 21(2), 397-425.

APPENDIX A: Survey Questions

Pre-Survey Questionnaire
Prepared by Emily Affolter
To be disseminated on Survey Monkey

1. How do you self-identify in terms of your cultural/ethnic identities?
2. How many years have you been teaching?
3. What are your primary goals as a teacher?
4. Do you consider yourself a *culturally responsive* teacher?
5. What does being a *culturally responsive* teacher mean to you?
6. How does your own racial/ethnic/cultural identity inform the work you do?
7. What do you hope to gain from these *culturally responsive* professional development sessions?

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

During-Survey Questionnaire
Prepared by Emily Affolter
To be disseminated on Survey Monkey

1. What aspects of the CRPDs have been most beneficial to you? Please be specific.
2. What aspects of the CRPDs have been least beneficial to you? Please be specific.
3. Have the CRPDs informed your thinking about your own teaching? How?
4. Have the CRPDs informed changes in your practice? How?
5. Have the CRPDs shifted anything else in your life (professional or otherwise)? Please be specific.
6. Moving forward, how could the CRPDs better support your development as a culturally responsive teacher?
7. Other comments?

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Post-Survey Questionnaire
Prepared by Emily Affolter
To be disseminated on Survey Monkey

1. What are your primary goals as a teacher? Have they shifted as a result of the Culturally Responsive Professional Development (CRPD) workshops?
2. What does being a *culturally responsive* teacher mean to you?
3. After participating in the CRPDs for some time, do you consider yourself a *culturally responsive* teacher?
4. How does your own racial/ethnic/cultural identity inform the work you do?
5. What aspects of the CRPDs have been most beneficial to you? Please be specific.
6. What aspects of the CRPDs have been least beneficial to you? Please be specific.
7. Have the CRPDs informed your thinking about your own teaching? How?
8. Have the CRPDs informed changes in your practice? How?
9. Have the CRPDs shifted anything else in your life (professional or otherwise)? Please be specific.
10. Moving forward, how could the CRPDs better support your development as a culturally responsive teacher?
11. Other comments?

Appendix B: Interview Protocols

Interview Protocol for **Teachers**

To take place during CRPD process

4 interviewees

One-on-one audio recorded interviews

60-90 minutes in length.

What gender pronoun do you go by?

How do you identify yourself racially?

How long have you been working as a teacher? In what capacity?

How do your many overlapping identities, as well as your ____ years of experience as a teacher, inform how you approach your teaching and students?

How do you relate to the culturally responsive professional development work that is happening here? Do you find the CRPDs fruitful? Why?

Have you always had that opinion, or has it shifted over time?

Please describe an experience of dissonance/challenge that occurred for you during a CRPD. What stimulated that dissonance? How do you perceive that now?

Do you consider yourself a culturally responsive teacher? Please explain. (If there was a pivotal thing that happened that shifted your teaching philosophy or core value that informed it, please share)

In what ways does culturally responsive teaching/social justice education show up in your classroom? Amongst your colleagues? With parents? In the school at large?

What areas do you feel are sticking points/challenges for you in this work? Where and how could you use more support to grow in this arena?

What areas do you feel your school could benefit from a strengthened CRPD standpoint as a whole (considering curriculum, school culture, pedagogy, leadership, community events, family interactions, staff/faculty makeup, and so on).

What do you consider to be working with the CRPDs for faculty growth?

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

What are barriers that you perceive with the CRPDs for the faculty growth?

Is there anything else you would like to share?

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Interview Protocol for **Co-Designers**
To take place during CRPD process
4 interviewees
One-on-one audio recorded interviews
60 minutes in length.

What gender pronoun do you go by?

How do you identify yourself racially?

How long have you been working as in schools? In what capacities?

How does your own cultural/ethnic identity inform the work that you do?

What inspired your interest in/commitment to culturally responsive teaching?

What is at the foundation of your educational leadership philosophy?

What do you believe have been the most successful parts of the CRPDs?

What do you believe have been the most challenging aspects of the CRPDs?

What are you most proud of, regarding culturally responsive teaching, as a school?

What areas do you think require the most growth in the school?

Do you think everyone has the same notion of culturally responsive, antiracist pedagogy? If not, what does that spectrum look like?

Provide examples of teachers' self designated culturally responsive teaching strategies/tactics.
Ask administrators how they perceive those strategies/tactics.

Over time with this work, have your CRPD tactics/curriculum shifted? How so? Why?

Appendix C: Informed Consent Forms

Informed Consent Form Overall Study

University of Washington:
College of Education
Graduate Student Researcher: Emily Alicia Affolter
affolter@u.washington.edu
(206) 979-8846

Researcher’s Statement

I am inviting your voluntary participation in my dissertation project regarding culturally responsive teacher professional development practices. Please read the following information below. If you would like to participate in the project, please sign in the appropriate box below.

The purpose of this consent form is to give you the information you will need to help you decide whether to be in the study or not. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the research, what we would ask you to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear. When we have answered all your questions, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called “informed consent.” I will give you a copy of this form for your records.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the project is to analyze the effectiveness of the ongoing culturally responsive professional development for teachers at your school. It is intended to examine what particularly resonates with or shifts teacher consciousness, as well as explore what barriers to growth may exist. The intention of the study is to identify strategies and resources that are successful in supporting teachers by supporting the development of equitable, intentional pedagogies and instructional philosophy to address racial/ethnic/cultural stratification in achievement and increase opportunity and sense of belonging for students of minoritized identities at large.

Study Procedures

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to contribute to three online questionnaires over the course of the study. Each questionnaire should take roughly 20 minutes to fill out. The study will take place over about 2 ½ months, and therefore roughly 6 CRPDS.

The first questionnaire will take place before I co-facilitate the CRPD, the second will be after the completion of 3 CRPDs, and the third will be after the last CRPD I participate in (the 6th). Your responses may be linked over time to track how your perspectives or experiences may shift.

You may skip any question you choose not to answer throughout the duration of the survey.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Also, I will be videotaping the CRPDS for my own analysis and recording purposes (no video footage will be made public) and will be taking field notes during/after the CRPDS that will contribute to the overall study data.

Risks, Stress, or Discomfort

The potential risks of this study could be emotional or psychological, as shifting the status quo relies on cognitive dissonance or discord. This work may make you feel emotional, uncomfortable, or vulnerable. An example of a question that may bring discomfort is: What do you believe have been the most challenging aspects of the CRPDS?

Measures will be in place to keep your information confidential, however, no system for protecting your confidentiality can be completely secure. It is possible that unauthorized persons might discover you are in this study or obtain information about you.

Benefits of the Study

The potential benefits of this study are wide reaching. Teacher transformative self-study is foundational to culturally responsive teaching, and this will examine that topic with the intention of developing and implementing effective support strategies for equitable classrooms.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Also, you are free to withdraw from this study at any time without any consequences. This process will be strictly anonymous. No participant's identity will be disclosed.

If you have any questions in regard to the study, feel free to email me.

Other Information

Also, you may refuse to participate and are free to withdraw from this study at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. This process will be strictly anonymous. All video recordings and identifiable photo footage will be used only for internal research purposes and will not be shared publicly. Data will be analyzed and presented both in aggregate form and individualized form.

Participant's statement

This study has been explained to me. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later about the research, or if I have been harmed by participating in this study, I can contact the researcher listed on the first page of this consent form. If I have questions about my rights as a research subject, I can call the Human Subjects Division at [\(206\) 543-0098](tel:2065430098). I will receive a copy of this consent form.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

By signing this form, I am attesting that I have read the information provided above and freely give my consent to participate.

Consent Agreement

Participant

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

Researcher

Printed name of Researcher obtaining consent

Signature

Date

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Informed Consent Form In Depth Interviews

University of Washington:
College of Education
Graduate Student Researcher: Emily Alicia Affolter
affolter@u.washington.edu
(206) 979-8846

Researcher’s Statement

I am inviting your voluntary participation in my dissertation project regarding culturally responsive teacher professional development practices. Please read the following information below. If you would like to participate in the project, please sign in the appropriate box below.

The purpose of this consent form is to give you the information you will need to help you decide whether to be in the study or not. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the research, what we would ask you to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear. When we have answered all your questions, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called “informed consent.” I will give you a copy of this form for your records.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the project is to analyze the effectiveness of the ongoing culturally responsive professional development for teachers at your school. It is intended to examine what particularly resonates with or shifts teacher consciousness, as well as explore what barriers to growth may exist. The intention of the study is to identify strategies and resources that are successful in supporting teachers by supporting the development of equitable, intentional pedagogies and instructional philosophy to address racial/ethnic/cultural stratification in achievement and increase opportunity and sense of belonging for students of minoritized identities at large.

Study Procedures

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to participate in an approximately 60-minute-long interview with me that will take place at [school] sometime around the middle of the study, roughly after I participate in 3 CRPDS with you and your colleagues. I will audio record your responses and transcribe them in the months after the interview. If you name any individuals in your interviews, those names will be replaced with pseudonyms. Your responses may be linked over time to track how your perspectives or experiences may shift.

You may skip any question you choose not to answer throughout the duration of the survey.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Risks, Stress, or Discomfort

The potential risks of this study could be emotional or psychological, as shifting the status quo relies on cognitive dissonance or discord. This work may make you feel emotional, uncomfortable, or vulnerable. An example of a question that may bring discomfort is: What areas do you feel are sticking points/challenges for you in this work? Where and how could you use more support to grow in this arena?

Measures will be in place to keep your information confidential, however, no system for protecting your confidentiality can be completely secure. It is possible that unauthorized persons might discover you are in this study or obtain information about you.

Benefits of the Study

The potential benefits of this study are wide reaching. Teacher transformative self-study is foundational to culturally responsive teaching, and this will examine that topic with the intention of developing and implementing effective support strategies for equitable classrooms.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Also, you are free to withdraw from this study at any time without any consequences. This process will be strictly anonymous. No participant's identity will be disclosed.

If you have any questions in regard to the study, feel free to contact me.

Other Information

Also, you may refuse to participate and are free to withdraw from this study at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. This process will be strictly confidential. All audio recordings will be used only for internal research purposes and will not be shared publicly, and will be transcribed as data. The audio recordings will be destroyed by December of 2018. Data will be analyzed and presented in individualized form primarily, and one-on-one interview responses may be linked to survey data.

Participant's statement

This study has been explained to me. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later about the research, or if I have been harmed by participating in this study, I can contact the researcher listed on the first page of this consent form. If I have questions about my rights as a research subject, I can call the Human Subjects Division at [\(206\) 543-0098](tel:2065430098). I will receive a copy of this consent form.

By signing this form, I am attesting that I have read the information provided above and freely give my consent to participate.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Consent Agreement

Participant

Printed Name of Participant	Signature of Participant	Date
-----------------------------	--------------------------	------

Researcher

Printed name of Researcher obtaining consent	Signature	Date
----------------------------------------------	-----------	------

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Appendix D: Observation Guide

As I imagine the data to be emergent and situational, below I have listed the domains and topics I will cover and explore:

- Monitoring airtime (who is speaking/for how long based on their racial/cultural identities)
- Content relative to Whiteness (level of vulnerability/humility expressed in identifying Whiteness)
- Risk-taking (who is taking risks & the content of those risks)
- Transformation/breakthroughs in thinking and acting
- Resistance to Change
- Other notable Observations

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Appendix E: Email Recruitment

Email Recruitment for Interviews

Dear [Name],

I would like to invite you to participate in a one-on-one interview with me about the CRPDs as part of my research study. As you have already participated in the pre-survey, you are familiar with the study itself, examining the effectiveness of the culturally responsive professional development sessions.

If you choose to participate, this will take about 60 minutes of your time, and will ask you more questions about your own relationship to culturally responsive teaching beliefs and practices, as well as your experience with them at [school name].

Your participation in this interview (as in the study at large) is entirely voluntary and optional. Also, you are free to withdraw from this study at any time without any consequences. This process will be strictly confidential. Your identity will not be disclosed.

If you are interested in participating, let me know and we will set up a time to conduct the interview.

Sending a major thank you in advance for your time and energy!

In solidarity,
Emily

P.S. More on the purpose, risks, and benefits of the study:

Again, the purpose of the project is to analyze the effectiveness of the ongoing culturally responsive professional development for teachers at your school. It is intended to examine what particularly resonates with or shifts teacher consciousness, as well as explore what barriers to growth may exist. The intention of the study is to identify strategies and resources that are successful in supporting teachers by supporting the development of equitable, intentional pedagogies and instructional philosophy to address racial/ethnic/cultural stratification in achievement and increase opportunity and sense of belonging for students of minoritized identities at large.

The potential risks of this study could be emotional or psychological, as shifting the status quo relies on cognitive dissonance or discord. This work may make you feel emotional, uncomfortable, or vulnerable.

The potential benefits of this study are wide reaching. Teacher transformative self-study is foundational to culturally responsive teaching, and this will examine that topic with the intention of developing and implementing effective support strategies for equitable classrooms.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Email Recruitment for Surveys

Dear [FirstName],

I am writing to request your participation in a survey to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Culturally Responsive Professional Development Sessions. Any and all feedback is important as it will support research on culturally responsive teaching practices to better serve our youth with equitable classrooms. You can save and complete the survey later if it is not finished in one sitting. Please complete the survey by [insert date].

The information that you provide is confidential to me, Emily Affolter. Individually identifiable information will not be shared.

Please complete the confidential survey now:
[SurveyLink]

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address; please do not forward this email to someone else.

Many thanks in advance,

Emily Affolter, PhC
emily.affolter@gmail.com

[RemoveLink]

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Email Recruitment Reminder

(for those who did not do the survey after being asked once)

Dear [FirstName],

I would greatly appreciate your participation in our survey to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Culturally Responsive Professional Development Sessions. Many of your colleagues have already shared their valuable feedback with us. Join them by contributing your thoughts as well. Please complete the survey by [insert date].

The information that you provide is confidential to me, Emily Affolter. Individually identifiable information will not be shared.

Please complete the confidential survey now:

[SurveyLink]

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address; please do not forward this email to someone else.

Many thanks in advance,

Emily Affolter, PhC
emily.affolter@gmail.com

[RemoveLink]

Appendix F
Culturally Responsive Professional Development (CRPD) Intervention Learning Objectives.

CRPD Intervention 1. Introduction.

Learning Objective: At the end of the session, teachers will be familiar with a working definition and core tenets of culturally responsive teaching, will have a general sense of where this professional development sequence is headed, and will have defined their overall goals or objectives for this experience.

CRPD Intervention 2: Interrogating Assumptions I.

Learning objective: By the end of the session, teachers will have explored how student goals can be measured, considering what assessment practices need to be reexamined for culturally responsive classrooms.

CRPD Intervention 3. Interrogating Assumptions II.

Learning Objective: At the end of the session, teachers will have practiced analyzing the Essential Skills critically and unpacking assumptions implicit in this work.

CRPD Intervention 4. Content Reform I.

Learning Objective: By the end of the session, teachers will be familiar with Teaching Tolerance’s Anti-Bias Curricular framework and will have begun considering how it can be further integrated into team-based curriculum.

CRPD Intervention 5. Content Reform II.

Learning Objective: By the end of the session, teachers will be able to revisit a lesson they planned with a culturally responsive framework.

CRPD Intervention 6. Self-Reflective Conclusion.

Learning Objectives: By the end of the session, teachers will have self-reflected on the CRPD process, and have developed goals regarding culturally responsive teaching as they move forward independently.

Appendix G: Curriculum Vitae

Emily Affolter

7755 Corliss Ave. N. Seattle, WA 98103 206.979.8846 emily.affolter@gmail.com

Education	<u>University of Washington</u> , Doctoral Candidate, ABD Curriculum and Instruction: Multicultural Education.	<i>Fall 2013 – present</i> <i>Ph.D. Graduation date: Summer 2017</i>
	<u>Prescott College</u> , Prescott Arizona Master of Arts in Multicultural Education Fellow: Institute for Sustainable Social Change Graduate Teaching Assistant Fellow	<i>Fall 2011 – May 2013</i> <i>Spring 2013 – present</i> <i>2012 – 2013</i>
	<u>Scripps College</u> , Claremont, California	<i>September 2003 – May 2007</i>
	Dual Bachelor of Arts Degree in Humanities and Hispanic Studies Cumulative GPA: 3.78 Honors Thesis: <i>Feminism in post-revolutionary Nicaragua</i> Cum Laude with Honors in Humanities Dean’s List	<i>Spring 2007</i> <i>Fall 2003, Fall 2004, Spring 2005,</i> <i>Spring 2006, Fall 2006, Spring 2007</i>
	<u>Institute for Central American Development Studies</u> Costa Rica, Nicaragua	<i>Fall 2005</i>
Awards	Fulbright-Hays Fellow: Mexico and Colombia Davis Family Foundation Leadership Grant	<i>Summer 2012</i> <i>Summer 2007</i>

Professional Experience

University of Washington

Center for Evaluation and Research for STEM Equity: Graduate Research Associate September 2015 – present

- Researches and evaluates national equity platforms and initiatives for women and racial minority groups in STEM fields on a collaborative team. This position requires quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, spanning various National Science Foundation grants. This role includes regular consulting on STEM educational equity initiatives and facilitates diversity and inclusion seminars for the workplace.

Department of Spanish and Portuguese Studies: Spanish Teaching Assistant August 2014 – 2015

- Independently taught undergraduate courses in Spanish at the University of Washington. Has taught Spanish 102, 103 and 134, a summer intensive course. This position required daily curricular planning as well as a continual focus on student assessment.

Experimental Education Unit: Teaching Assistant 2013 – 2014 academic year

- Taught in an early education classroom: facilitated lessons and supported other faculty in their teaching, developed curricula, took and interpreted data on student progress and development, and worked with families to provide continuity and a culturally responsive teaching environment.

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Prescott College

Graduate Mentor

August 2014 – present

- Works remotely as a mentor in the field of education with three graduate students. Guides students’ development of sequence of study through thesis and completion of M.A. in Education. This position involves weekly conversations with students as well as reading and commenting on their scholarly work.

Adjunct Faculty: Intermediate Spanish

2012 – 2013 academic year

- Taught an undergraduate Intermediate Spanish class with many community service field components.
- Planned cultural and linguistic curriculum based on Prescott’s experiential education philosophy

Adjunct Faculty: Global Engagement

2012 – 2013 academic year

- Co-developed and executed a Global Engagement Speaker Series for the wider Prescott, AZ community. Worked to build a practical student skillset that included marketing, community organizing, organizational tools, and collaborative event planning.

Learning Commons Writing Coach

2012 – 2013 academic year

- Coached students (undergraduate and graduate) on papers and written assignments, facilitating student development of effective communication and writing capacities in the following areas: voice, grammar, organization, formatting, and planning skills.

University of Virginia *Residential Director and TEDx Coordinator for Semester at Sea:*

Summer 2014

- Purposefully and holistically promoted undergraduate student learning and development
- Coordinated and organized the TEDx Semester At Sea event “From Anchors to Action.”

Antioch University Seattle *Adjunct Professor*

Spring 2014

- Taught a core course for graduate students in teaching entitled “Education and Society” that provided an overview of the foundations of education in the United States—the philosophies and orientations that inform it; the historic, economic, political, and social realities that impact it; the psychological sources that have influenced it, and a sense of the linkages between them.

Bright Water School *Spanish Teacher*

April 2009- June 2012

- Taught Spanish language and Latin American Cultures to 1st – 8th grades. Planned and taught eighteen 45-minute courses per week to grades 1-8. Wrote and developed all curriculum consistent with Bright Water School’s pedagogy. Chair of Social Inclusion Committee, facilitated faculty Grades School meeting.

Crooked Trails *Course Leader: India & Peru*

Summers 2008 & 2010

- Prepared for, organized and facilitated 25 day trip, including 15 day cultural trek in the Himalayas
- Prepared for, organized and facilitated ten-day trip in Cusco, Peru with “Bridges to Understanding” clientele. Acted as group’s Spanish translator and cultural interpreter.
- Utilized Wilderness First Responder medical knowledge and safety precautions to care for each group.

Publications:

Affolter, E., Jackson, J., Caldwell, A., & Scott Byone, E. (2016). Trump is our President-elect: It’s time for action. *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-is-our-president-elect-its-time-for-action_us_58361a8ce4b050dfe61879b5

Affolter, E., & Rosman, S. (2015). The White Liberal Chamber. *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved from

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/emily-alicia-affolter/the-white-liberal-chamber_b_8514712.html

Affolter, E. (2013). *La diáspora latina: Investigando y celebrando su impacto en los Estados Unidos/The Latino Diaspora: Exploring and Celebrating its Significance in the United States. Lanic Etext Collection*. Retrieved from <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/etext/llilas/outreach/fulbright12/>

Affolter, E. (2013). Examining the Influence of the Fulbright-Hays Mexico and Colombia Seminar on Educators' Philosophic and Pedagogic Orientations to Multicultural Education. *Prescott College*. Retrieved from <http://gradworks.umi.com/15/38/1538854.html>

Manuscript for Academic Journal in Process:

Theory of Change for Transforming Engineering Culture to Advance Inclusion and Diversity (TECAID) written from CERSE work experience with TECAID PIs.

Book Chapter in Process:

“Pressing Pause: Teaching through Microaggressions for Transformation” for Dr. Geneva Gay’s book *Achieving Multicultural Education Teaching and Learning: Multiple Techniques and Contexts*. Submission for Publication September 2017

Presentations/Interventions:

UW College of the Environment Townhalls January 2017

Co-facilitated three workshops at the UW’s College of the Environment with the intention of disseminating information about CERSE’s College of the Environment’s Focus Group and Culture Survey results, and subsequently engaging faculty, staff, and students in offering their feedback, thoughts, and recommendations for making equitable change in their college a priority.

Equitable Workplace Workshop Fall 2016

Co-developed and co-facilitated 4 workshops for employees of NOAA, JISAO, and PMEL [environmental science organizations] with the intention of re-envisioning the workplace culture towards something more inclusive and equitable. These presentations will lead to the development of a climate survey that addresses these problems.

Culturally Responsive Teaching Professional Development Series Winter & Spring 2016

Co-developed and co-facilitated a five-month culturally responsive professional development sequence for a K-8 school staff that focused on teacher self-study, rewriting/reinvisioning curriculum and interrogating assumptions commonly held in classrooms for equity.

Conferences Presentations and Workshops:

“Walking the Talk: Transforming Organizations for Equity”
White Privilege Conference. Kansas City, MO April 2017

“Teaching Microaggressions through Concept Mapping: A Tool for Antiracist Classrooms”
Northwest Teaching for Social Justice Conference. Portland, OR Fall 2016

“Interrogating Whiteness: Pathways to Resistance for Equitable Education”
Olympic Diversity Conference. Bremerton, WA Summer 2016

“The Power of Silence: Teaching Generative Listening to Early Learners”
Infant and Early Childhood Conference. Tacoma, WA Spring 2016

- 1) “Identifying White Supremacy Through Microaggressions: Pathways to Equity and Justice”
- 2) “The White Liberal Chamber”

“STAYING WOKE” ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

White Privilege Conference. Philadelphia, PA

Spring 2016

1) “Exiting the White Liberal Chamber”

2) “Multicultural Education Concept Mapping”

National Association for Multicultural Education. New Orleans, LA

Fall 2015

Volunteer for Northwest Conference on Teaching for Social Justice. Seattle, WA

Fall 2015

Social Justice Training Institute Graduate: Springfield, MA

Summer 2015

Skills Fluent in Spanish; Proficient in Microsoft Office; SPSS, Dedoose, NVivo

Interests Biking, encaustic painting, backpacking, backcountry skiing, Latin American travel, piano.