

Culturally Inclusive Practices



Diane Douglas
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Guidelines for Local Educational Agencies

March, 2017

Charge to the Committee

In 2015, Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction, Diane Douglas, formed the Culturally Inclusive Practices Committee because she recognized that our students did not have equitable access to rich educational opportunities and issued this charge:

Develop culturally inclusive guidelines which are subsequently adopted by each local educational agency.

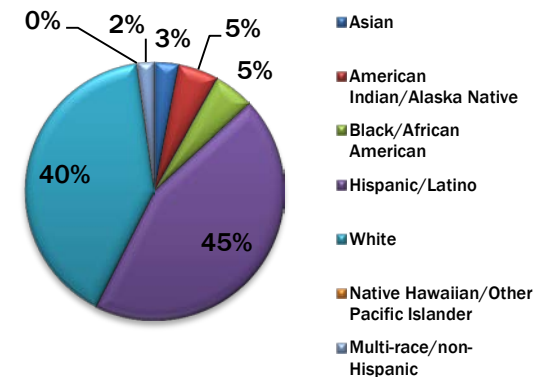
This dedicated committee, comprised of educators and community members, carried out this charge to develop the guidance which can be easily implemented.



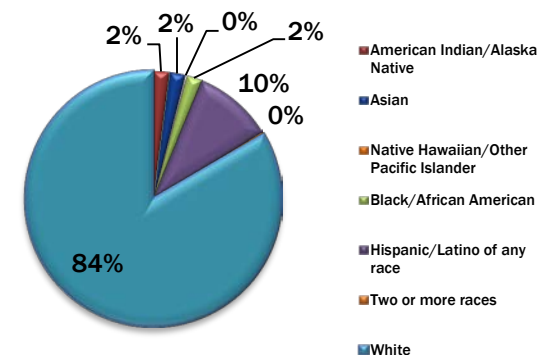
Why are Culturally Inclusive Practices Needed?

- The two charts on this slide exemplify how the makeup of our teaching cadre does not match the diversity of our student community
- It is evident that we, as educators, must fully embrace culturally inclusive practices to ensure the success of all students.
- To combat this disconnect, national movements support the inclusion of culturally responsive techniques in educator preparation programs.

2014-2015 Arizona Student Population



2015 Arizona Teacher Demographics

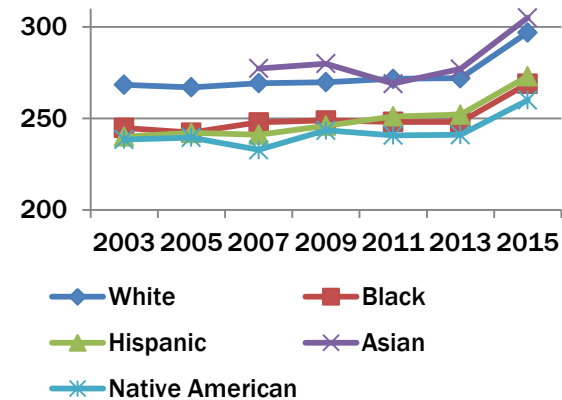


Why are Culturally Inclusive Practices Needed?

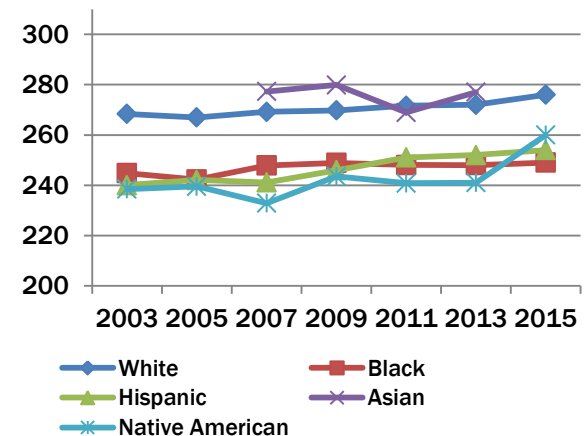
Achievement gaps persist.

- The charts provided here show a large achievement gap which has persisted over time.
- Though mathematics shows improvement in all subgroups, it is important to note that gaps have not decreased.
- Reading scores have remained relatively flat over time with the notable exception showing large gains in our Native American populations.

NAEP Grade 8 Mathematics in Arizona



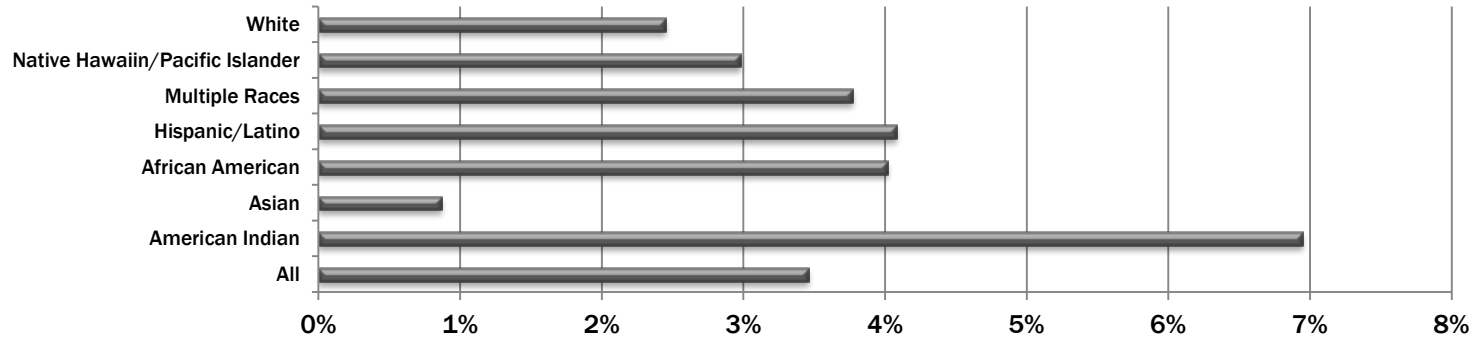
NAEP Grade 8 Reading in Arizona



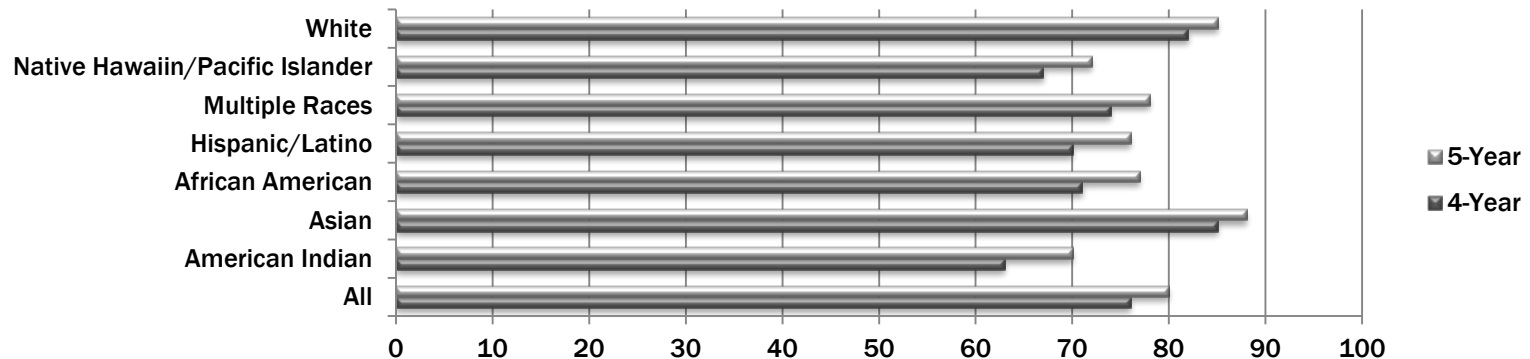
Why are Culturally Inclusive Practices Needed?

Drop-out and graduation rates also reveal great disparities among cultural groups.

2015 Arizona Drop-out Rates (# of drop-outs/total # of students in subgroup)



2014 Arizona Four- and Five-year Graduation Rates



Why are Culturally Inclusive Practices Needed?

A moral and legal imperative:

- The integration of culturally inclusive practices will contribute to equity for all children regardless of race, class, gender, language, immigration status, and sexuality.
- Instructional goals will be delivered in ways that are relevant to and attainable for students.
- The curriculum will reinforce the collective values of inclusion, students' prior knowledge, and academic excellence.



Why are Culturally Inclusive Practices Needed?



A moral and legal imperative (cont):

- The intentional building of relationships will form systems of support for all students resulting in a strong academic environment.
- Disciplinary policies will contribute to improving students' academic outcomes.
- Policy and case law demands it of us – from the 14th Amendment to Brown v the Board of Education to Flores v. Arizona.



Culturally Inclusive Practices: Implementation Guidelines

Professional Development

To build the cultural competence of educators, professional development must address evidence-based practices related to instruction, curriculum and school climate/environment.

Educators and communities must openly dialogue to identify opportunities to implement culturally responsive practices and strategies. Specific components of professional development must include:

- Opportunities for **personal reflection** on beliefs and prejudices.
- Effective **instructional strategies** to meet the needs of all students regardless of background.
- Differentiated and customized **job-embedded professional learning**.
- On-going **support** to address the needs of teachers in their professional practice.
- Specific **attention to the cultures/languages** of the student populations being served.
- Professional development related to **Native history** as required by A.R.S. §15-341 (34) and A.R.S. §15-710.



Culturally Inclusive Practices: Implementation Guidelines

Instruction

While planning lessons across all subjects, integrate culturally inclusive instruction that takes into account the unique stories, accomplishments and struggles of all of the people of Arizona.

How well does the teacher...

- Recognize their **culture** and its **influence** on **instructional practice**?
- **Eliminate actions** and **preconceptions** that negatively impact student success?
- **Know** their students and use their knowledge of the students
 - to **support and engage**?
 - to **differentiate and personalize** instruction?
- Build upon the cultures and experiences from an **asset perspective** and link instructional purpose to student interests?
- Ensure **equitable access to a rigorous curriculum**?
- Discuss and **promote** the **unique stories**, accomplishments and struggles of all of the people of Arizona?



Culturally Inclusive Practices: Implementation Guidelines

Curriculum

Every Local Educational Agency (LEA) should teach a balanced curriculum adhering to State adopted standards and mandates for the content areas, using complementary materials that address the contributions of diverse cultures.

To what extent does the curriculum...

- Reflect **students' experiences** and the communities in which they live?
- Include **multiple voices and perspectives**:
 - What they have been,
 - What they are, and
 - What they could be?
- Address the **contributions of diverse cultures**?
- Prepare students for **success in college, career and community**?



Culturally Inclusive Practices: Implementation Guidelines

School Climate/ Environment

Consciously build educational environments which value the rich heritage of all of Arizona's communities and cultures, fostering appreciation for all, so that all students and their families are treated equitably and with respect.

In the *classroom*,
to what extent do
teachers...

- Reflect upon their **beliefs, practices and policies**?
- Recognize their **culture** and its **influence** on a culturally inclusive **environment**?
- **Maintain appropriate, authentic relationships** with students?
- Establish an environment of **high achievement** for all?
- Create an environment which **builds mutual respect**?
- Create a **student-centered environment** where students own their learning?
- Build awareness of the **rich heritage of Arizona's communities and cultures**?



Culturally Inclusive Practices: Implementation Guidelines

School Climate/ Environment

Consciously build educational environments which value the rich heritage of all of Arizona's communities and cultures, fostering appreciation for all, so that all students and their families are treated equitably and with respect.

**In the *school*,
to what extent do school
leaders...**

- Demonstrate the **equitable behaviors** expected of teachers?
- **Identify and scale effective practices and celebrate success?**
- Provide **professional development** that addresses beliefs and implicit biases?
- Ensure **diverse membership** on school committees?
- Build **relationships with families** in the community?



Culturally Inclusive Practices: Implementation Guidelines

School Climate/ Environment (cont)

Consciously build educational environments which value the rich heritage of all of Arizona's communities and cultures, fostering appreciation for all, so that all students and their families are treated equitably and with respect.

In the *school*,
to what extent do school
leaders...

- Implement strategies to enhance **family involvement and voice**?
- **Confront deficit language and discrimination**?
- **Encourage open discussion of controversial issues**?
- **Give students a voice**?
- **Assist in the elimination of barriers to student learning**?



Culturally Inclusive Practices: Implementation Guidelines

School Climate/ Environment

Consciously build educational environments which value the rich heritage of all of Arizona's communities and cultures, fostering appreciation for all, so that all students and their families are treated equitably and with respect.

**In the *District/Charter*,
to what extent do district
leaders/charter holders &
governing board members...**

- Demonstrate the **equitable behaviors** expected of teachers and school leaders?
- Model **culturally inclusive practices**?
- Provide culturally inclusive **professional development** opportunities for all staff?
- Commit to **systemic transformation** which supports culturally inclusive practices?
- Recruit and retain a cadre of **teachers and leaders who represent the student diversity**?
- Support teachers and leaders on school campuses to **assist in the elimination of barriers** to student learning?
- Equitably **allocate resources**?



Culturally inclusive education
must become a
silver thread

interwoven into our actions as educators and
communities in order to provide Arizona's students
with intentionally equitable educational experiences.

