Learner Variability Project in the Field:
A Guide for Culturally Responsive Practice

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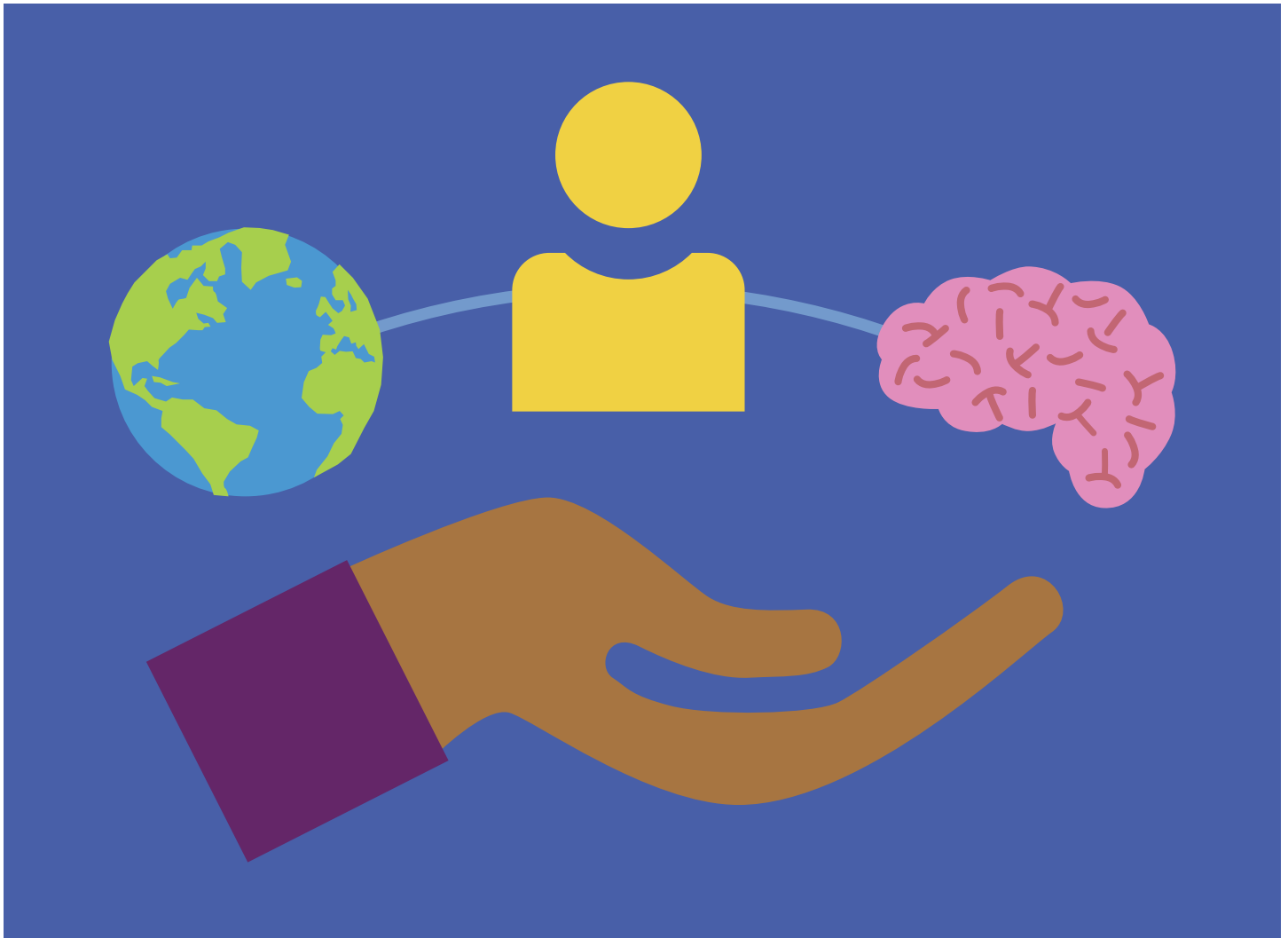Washington, DC: Digital Promise.

Guide Overview

The purpose of this Guide for Culturally Responsive Practice is to provide educators and educator teams with questions and protocols to guide and/or reflect on how to apply culturally responsive instruction practices as they address learner variability. Learner variability is a recognition that all students differ, and that learning sciences research guides us in understanding how these differences matter for learning. It embraces both students' struggles and strengths. It considers the whole child—academic, social-emotional, and student background. When people understand learner variability, they see a design challenge, not a student problem.

The Guide merges the Digital Promise Learner Variability Project's (LVP) free and open source web app, the Learner Variability Navigator (LVN), and its whole child framework with culturally responsive competencies from New America's report, Culturally Responsive Teaching: A 50 State Survey of Teaching Standards. Throughout this report, we reference culturally responsive instruction standards found in the New America report as **CRS**.

Watch the Webinar:
Culturally Responsive Teaching Strategies So All Learners Are Seen and Heard

The Guidebook presents the following components:

1. **The Learner Variability Project's Culturally Responsive Guiding Questions:** These questions are designed to guide educators in their reflection of their culturally responsive practices and are crosswalked with the culturally responsive instruction competencies from New America.

2. **Pre-planning Reflection Tool:** This tool is designed to guide participants' self-reflection of implicit biases and core tensions. It is to be used prior to engaging in group discussions or intentional planning for culturally responsive instruction.
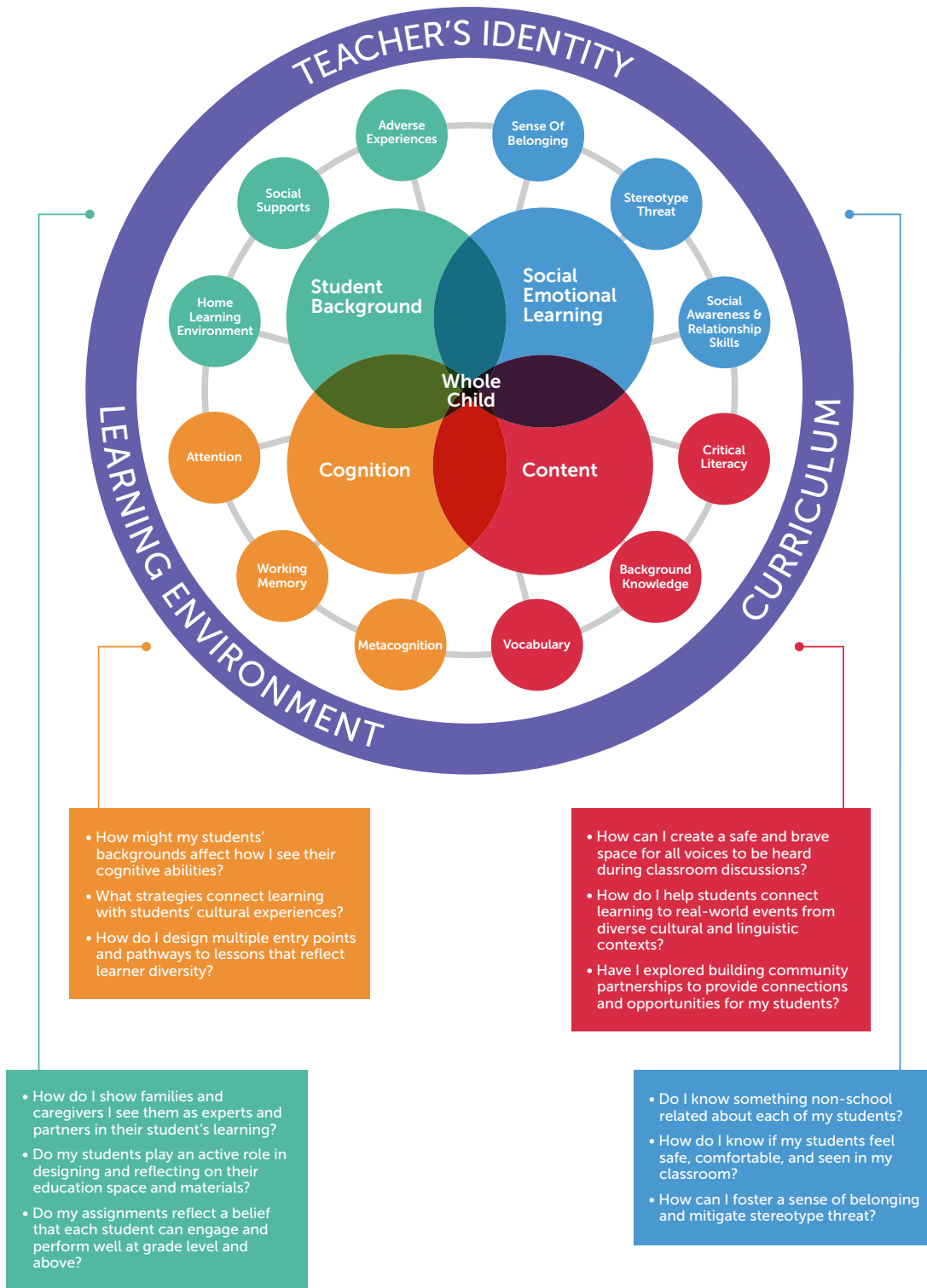
3. **Initial Meeting Protocol:** This protocol is designed to guide teams through a process of establishing norms to create a safe discussion space and to provide structure for teams to share their experiences from the pre-planning reflection process.

4. **Recurring Meeting Protocol:** This protocol is designed to be the primary tool teams use to consistently reflect on culturally responsive practices. The protocol should be used at the beginning of each unit, grading period, lesson, or at another frequency determined by the team.

5. **Recurring Individual Planning Protocol:** This protocol is designed to be the primary tool individual educators use to consistently reflect on culturally responsive practices. The protocol should be used at the beginning of each unit, grading period, lesson, or at another frequency determined by the team.

As you individually and collaboratively engage with this guide, you may experience discomfort in your body. As stated in *My Grandmother's Hands*, notice what you are experiencing. Watch your body closely and notice what sensations, impulses, and emotions arise. Noticing your body, or your soma, is important as you go through this process of questioning. Somatic exercises such as scanning, meditating, mindfulness, and breathing can help you understand your biases, beliefs, and mental model mindset.

There are resources in the section below to assist you in somatic exercises and connecting with your body so that you can stay present and engaged as you use this tool. **Please do not skip steps as you go through this tool, as it is imperative that you examine all questions that fall within the subject you are focusing on.**

It is important to make space for marginalized voices if you are using this tool in a group setting. Prior to starting this tool, read The Big 10 (+1) Ideas that Fuel Oppression. To cede power, we have to understand that people who are chronically neglected, underserved, and marginalized can adapt the marginalization as a part of their identity. This can show up as believing that their voice is not valued, which can show up as a reluctance to speak up. If you have privilege, this means you must be willing to share that power. Ask those with less privilege/power what they think should happen. Practice giving all members of the group equal time to talk and listen and provide more time for marginalized members of the group. Cede your power.

Learner Variability and Culturally Responsive Practices

- How might my students' backgrounds affect how I see their cognitive abilities?
- What strategies connect learning with students' cultural experiences?
- How do I design multiple entry points and pathways to lessons that reflect learner diversity?

- How can I create a safe and brave space for all voices to be heard during classroom discussions?
- How do I help students connect learning to real-world events from diverse cultural and linguistic contexts?
- Have I explored building community partnerships to provide connections and opportunities for my students?

- How do I show families and caregivers I see them as experts and partners in their student's learning?
- Do my students play an active role in designing and reflecting on their education space and materials?
- Do my assignments reflect a belief that each student can engage and perform well at grade level and above?

- Do I know something non-school related about each of my students?
- How do I know if my students feel safe, comfortable, and seen in my classroom?
- How can I foster a sense of belonging and mitigate stereotype threat?

Guiding Questions for Educators

Literacy

- When selecting texts, do students have **mirrors*** (opportunities to see themselves in texts), and **windows*** (opportunities to see others)? CRS 1, CRS 3, CRS 6

- When facilitating discussions, how can I create a safe and **brave*** space for all voices to be heard? CRS 2, CRS 3, CRS 6

- How do I offer students the opportunity to understand the context, historical, and/or present tense of stories they read? CRS 2 , CRS 6

- What opportunities do my students have to reflect on different viewpoints from multiple texts and produce counter-texts to express their own opinion? CRS 1, 2, 3, 4

- When exploring texts, what opportunities exist to partner with members of the community to provide additional text-to-world connections for my students? CRS 3, 4, 6, 7

- Have I ensured that assignments are on **grade level*** and matched to grade level standards? CRS 5

- Have I provided multiple avenues for students to **access*** the texts that meet language and learning needs? CRS 8

Literacy Resources

- Glossary of Terms

- Literacy 7-12 Factors Learner Variability Network

- Cultivating Genius: A Webinar on Critical Literacy

- Social Justice Books: A Teaching for Change Project

- Exploring Types of Empathy: Cognitive, Somatic, Affective

- "From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces: A New Way to Frame Dialogue Around Social Justice and Diversity" by Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens

- NNSTOY: Social Justice Book List

- Principles for Culturally Responsive Teaching

Mathematics

- How can I incorporate positive examples of mathematicians from diverse backgrounds to foster a Sense of Belonging and mitigate Stereotype Threat? CRS 1, CRS 3, CRS 6

- How **diverse*** (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, learning differences, ESL, etc.) are my advanced mathematics groups/classes/STEM courses, and what recruitment/retention/ entry criteria strategies can I use to ensure all students are held to high expectations? CRS 1, CRS 2, CRS 5

- Do I model positive connections to math and incorporate real-world problems from diverse cultural and linguistic contexts? CRS 6, CRS 8, CRS 4

- When exploring math problems and projects, what opportunities exist to partner with members of the community to provide additional connections for my students? CRS 3, 4, 6, 7

- What **implicit biases*** might I hold about students' mathematical abilities? CRS 1

- Have I ensured assignments are on **grade level*** and matched to grade level standards? CRS 5

Mathematics Resources	• Glossary of Terms • Learner Variability Navigator Math Learner Model • Culturally Responsive STEAM Scorecard • Improving the Odds for Diverse Learners in Math • Make Math Meaningful for Diverse Learners • Ensuring the Instruction is Inclusive for Diverse Learners • Teaching for Excellence and Equity in Mathematics (a focus on Latinx students) • Access and Equity in Math Education • Math Anxiety is Real; How Teachers Can Help Calm the Nerves • Promoting Resilience in Diverse Classrooms: The Answers are Not in the Back of the Book. • How Belonging and Productive Struggle Can Motivate Students in Math

Watch the Webinar:
Promoting Belonging in Math Through Instructional Choices

Cognition*	• How might my students' backgrounds affect the way **cognition*** looks? What intentional strategies might I use to connect new learning with students' cultural experience and facilitate cognition for all students? CRS 3, 4, 5, 6, 8
	• When planning lessons, how do I consider students' **diverse*** (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, learning differences, ESL, etc.) abilities when selecting cognition/processing strategies? CRS 5, 6, 8
	• How can I foster students' agency through Metacognitive strategies to build ownership of learning with strategies like student-led conferences? CRS 1,3,4,8
	• In what ways do I design for students to grapple with above-level problems by **scaffolding*** the learning when necessary? CRS 5
	• How do I design multiple **entry points*** in complex questions and rich math tasks to provide students with varied pathways that reflect their intelligence, learning differences, and background knowledge? CRS 3, 4, 5, 6, 8
	• Do my students have opportunities to process information in their primary language* and/or cultural style? CRS 5, 6, 8
Cognition Resources	• Glossary of Terms
	• The Power of Diversity
	• Universal Design for Learning Graphic Organizer
	• Cultural Differences in the Classroom
	• The Importance of Matching Instruction to a Child's Maturity Level
	• Making Sense of Learning Pathways
	• Learning Pathways: A Walkthrough
	• How to Use Choice Boards to Differentiate Learning
Social Emotional Learning	• How can I identify strengths for each of my students and create opportunities to communicate those strengths to them? CRS 3, 5, 6, 7
	• How do my assignments provide opportunities for students to collaborate and build **empathy*** for others? CRS 3, 4, 6
	• Do my reward systems inadvertently create **inequities*** by preferencing students who come from contexts where vocalizing in a group is normalized and individuality is prized? CRS 2
	• Are my attempts to form connections with students done in an **equitable*** and sincere manner, or forced? What aspects of my students' interests are really interesting to me and how might I authentically connect to students as people through these shared areas of interest? CRS 6, 8
	• Do I know something non-school related about each student in my class? CRS 3, 6
	• How do I know if my students feel safe, comfortable, and seen in my classroom? CRS 6,7,8
	• Have I created a brave space where we can discuss race with students in a way that fosters a sense of belonging and mitigates stereotype threat? CRS 1, 2, 3, 6, 7
	• Have I intentionally made a plan to establish relationships with each student? CRS 3, 6

Resources for SEL Learning	• Glossary of Terms
	• Building Empathy
	• Discussing Race with Students
	• How Do Children Learn Empathy?
	• Literacy 7-12 Factors
	• "What Is Educational Inequality?" by Audiopedia
	• 6 Reasons Rewards Don't Work
	• Equity Education
	• SEL: What are the Core Competencies and Where are they Promoted?
	• 9 SEL Activities that Promote Global Citizenship and Global Learning

Watch the Webinar:

Creating IEPs:
Understanding Learner
Variability and the Role of
Empathy

Student Background	• How does my identity (racial, ethnic, etc.) frame my lived experiences? What parts of my identity are similar and different from my students? CRS 1,2,3
	• What **personal biases*** do I hold against students because of their backgrounds? How can I learn about my students to eliminate biases? CRS 1, 2, 3, 7
	• What do I know about the community I work in, what do I assume, and what do I have to learn or **unlearn***? CRS 1
	• What activities can I intentionally plan to learn more about the community I work in? How will I hold myself accountable? CRS 1
	• Do I create opportunities to confer with my students one-on-one so that I can hear them talk about their interests and concerns? CRS 3
	• What do I need to learn about my students' backgrounds? What do I need to unlearn about **stereotypes*** about my students' backgrounds, and how will I do it? CRS 1
	• How do I show families and caregivers that I see them as experts and partners in their student's learning? CRS 6, 7, 8
	• Do my students play an active role in **designing*** and reflecting on our education space and the materials we use? CRS 3
	• Do I give all of my students authentic responsibilities in a classroom setting with the opportunity to come through for the group in ways that show them their contributions are meaningful and valuable? CRS 5
	• Do my assignments reflect my belief in all students' abilities to perform on grade-level? CRS 5
	• Do the parent events (conferences, activities, etc.) occur at times and in ways that are convenient and welcoming to the diverse community I work in? CRS 2
	• When I collaborate with families and communities, do I take into consideration the impact of **systemic racism*** and **intergenerational trauma?*** CRS 7

Watch the Webinar:

Stereotype Threat:
Research-based Strategies
for Helping Students Thrive

Student Background Resources	• Glossary of Terms
	• Stereotype Threat
	• Establishing Real-World Connections in Projects
	• Assessing Students' Interests
	• Student Interest Surveys Create Interest
	• Conferring with Students
	• Catalyzing Conferring in Your Classroom
	• Guide to Tripod's 7Cs Framework
	• Bringing the Community into the Classroom
	• Design Class Allows Students to Choose their Own Learning Adventure
	• Leaders of their Own Learning
	• Student-Centered Teaching and Learning
	• Remote Family Engagement
	• 8 Tips for Reaching Out to Parents
	• How Trauma Affects Kids in School
	• The Legacy of Trauma
	• Teaching in Safe Spaces
	• What the Research Shows about the Best Ways to Engage Parents

Setting the Stage for Culturally Responsive Instruction

Individual Reflection

Purpose	The purpose of this tool is to guide participants' self-reflection of implicit biases and core tensions. This tool is to be used prior to engaging in group discussions or intentional planning for culturally responsive Instruction.

Time:	The purpose of this tool is to guide participants' self-reflection of implicit biases and core tensions. This tool is to be used prior to engaging in group discussions or intentional planning for culturally responsive instruction.
Materials	• "How Do I Know if My Biases Affect My Teaching?" by The National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) • Notebook or word processor to capture notes and reflections

Process	1. Read "How Do I Know if My Biases Affect My Teaching?" by The National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME)
	
	2. Select and complete at least one of the assessments embedded in the NAME article (i.e., Implicit Association Test, Sorting People, Understanding Race)
	
	3. Use the Reflection Questions below and the Additional Resources section to reflect on your responses/results to the assessment(s), terms, and reflection. Notice your internal dialogue and any feelings of discomfort. Interrogate why that might be happening:
	
	   i. In what ways do biases I hold impact my relationships across differences?
	
	   ii. How many relationships do I sustain across racial differences? Why?
	
	   iii. How many relationships do I sustain across class differences? Why?
	
	   iv. How many relationships do I sustain across gender identity and sexual orientation differences?
	
	   v. In what ways do my relationships shape my biases?
	
	4. Explore the Glossaries in the Additional Resources section below. Identify two words that informed, surprised, or challenged you. Commit to using these words correctly when engaging in discussions or reflections.

Additional Resources	**Additional Reading**	**Glossaries**
	• 3 Core Tensions We Face when Talking about Race • When White Bodies Say: "Tell Me What to Do" • Detour Spotting	• Cultural Awareness Glossary (National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences) • Culturally Responsive Practices Glossary (Wisconsin RTI Center)

Watch the Webinar:

Cultivating Genius: An Equity Model for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy

Setting the Stage for Culturally Responsive Instruction

Protocol for Initial Meeting

Purpose	The purpose of this protocol is to guide participants' initial discussion of culturally responsive practices. This tool is to be used prior to engaging in intentional planning for culturally responsive Instruction and can be separated into two separate activities if necessary.

Time:	60-90 minutes
Materials	• Individual responses to pre-planning reflection • Sticky notes or digital tool for generating notes (e.g., Jamboard)
Process	**Step 1: Establish Norms (30-60 min)** Protocol Adapted from "The Art of Coaching Teams" by Elina Aguilar
	1. **Brainstorm** (5 min): While reflecting the discoveries, internal dialogue, and reflection from the pre-planning activity, each team member will generate a list of three to five behaviors they think will be most important for the team to engage in respectful, productive discourse, and collaboration. 2. **Rank** (1 min): Team members will rank the behaviors they listed in order of importance, placing a "1" beside the most important, a "2" beside the next most important, etc. 3. **Share** (4 min): Team members will select a partner. Partner 1 will share the behavior list in priority order and explain why the behaviors are important. (2 min). The process will repeat with Partner 2 (2 min). 4. **Display, Clarify, Categorize** (15-25 min): Team members will write each behavior on a separate sticky note (or in a separate digital box) and display in a central location visible to the entire group. The group will review the individual notes and ask for clarification as needed. The group will then collectively group the sticky notes into three to five groups based on common trends. 5. **Draft Norms** (10-15 minutes): Team members will write a norm for each group of behaviors to compose a list of three to five norms.

Step 2: Discuss (30+ min) *Time will vary based on team size

Discussion Prompt: In our pre-meeting reflection activities, what resonated with, challenged, provoked, motivated or surprised you? What effect will that experience have on your practice?

1. **Assign roles: Facilitator, Timekeeper**

2. **Share** (3 min): One team member (presenter) will share a response to the prompt. No other members may interrupt the presenter during this time.

3. **Clarify** (3 min) The team members will ask clarifying questions to better understand what the presenter said.

4. **Dig Deep** (3 min): The team members will ask probing questions to better understand the presenter's thinking. The questions should focus on the "why" and "how" behind the presenter's thoughts and should help the presenter think deeply about their responses.

5. **Respond** (4 min): Team members will share their responses to the presenter's presentation. The presenter may listen and take notes during this time but may not respond.

6. **FInal thoughts** (2 min): The presenter may comment on the team members' responses. The presenter should consider how listening to the group members affected his or her point of view. Other group members listen but may not speak during this time.

The team repeats the process with each team member.

Additional Resources	## Norms & Protocols-Building Resources

- [Creating Norms and Protocols: Tips and Tools](#)
- [Sample Norm Building Agenda: Bright Morning](#)
- [Create Your Classroom Rules With Your Students for a Powerful Start to the Year](#)
- [Socratic Discussions](#)
- [Socratic Seminar](#)

Question Stems

Clarifying

- Is this what you said..?
- What did you mean when you said...?
- What's another way you might...?
- Did I paraphrase what you said correctly?
- How do you define...?

Probing

- Why do you think...?
- What experiences do you think made you...?
- What is the connection between...and...?
- What do you think about...?
- How do you think... influences your practice?

Setting the Stage for Culturally Responsive Instruction

Protocol for Recurring Planning Meetings

Purpose	The purpose of this protocol is to guide participants' discussion of and intentional planning for culturally responsive practices. This protocol should be used at the start of each unit, quarterly, or at another appropriate frequency determined by the team.
Time:	45-60 minutes
Materials	• LVP Guiding/Reflection Questions for Educators • Curricular materials/resources
Process	1. **Assign roles: Facilitator, Note-taker, Timekeeper** 2. **Silent Reflection** (3 min): Team members will silently review the LVP Guiding/Reflection Questions for Educators and select one question for response*. 3. **Share** (1 min per team member): One team member (presenter) will share the selected question and response. Without further discussion or elaboration, additional team member(s) may share a personal response to the presenter's question. 4. **Dig Deep** (5 min): After all team members have shared a response to the first question, the facilitator will ask probing questions to help the team better understand the implications of the responses. 5. **Next Steps** (5 min): The team members will determine an appropriate objective, action items, and timeline to address any concerns raised during the discussion.

Additional Resources	**Additional Reading**	**Probing Questions**	**Strategic Planning Tools**
	Beyond Inclusion, Beyond Empowerment Starting the Coordinator's Toolkit: Strategies for Collaboration An Adaptive Schools Toolkit of Strategies and Moves for Developing and Facilitating Collaborative Groups	• Why do you think...? • What experiences do you think made you...? • What is the connection between...and...? • What do you think about...? • How do you think... influences your practice?	Simple Strategic Plan Template The Question Formulation Technique is a way to find out core areas of focus upon which to build a strategy.

*Team members may determine categories and/or questions in advance of the meeting

Setting the Stage for Culturally Responsive Instruction

Protocol for Recurring Individual Planning Sessions

Purpose	The purpose of this protocol is to guide individual intentional planning for culturally responsive Instruction practices. This protocol should be used at the start of each unit, quarterly, or at another appropriate frequency determined by the teacher.

Time:	45-60 minutes
Materials	• LVP Guiding/Reflection Questions for Educators • Curricular materials/resources

Process	1. Determine the Focus Area for your Planning Session and select at least one guiding question to consider.
	
	2. Give an honest answer to the question. Consider recording your response in a journal or other document.
	
	3. Use at least one of the probing questions below to dig deep:
	
	   a. Why do you think...?
	
	   b. What experiences do you think made you...?
	
	   c. What is the connection between...and...?
	
	   d. What do you think about...?
	
	   e. How do you think... influences your practice?
	
	4. Use a strategic planning tool to record your next steps. Schedule regular check-ins to hold yourself accountable for completing your action steps.

Additional Resources	**Additional Reading**
	My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending our Hearts and Bodies The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity Learner Variability Project - Literacy 7-12: Factors (see column on Social-Emotional Learning) Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences How to Get Started with Culturally Responsive Teaching

Glossary of Terms

Alphabetical Order

ACCESS: The ways in which educational institutions and policies ensure—or at least strive to ensure—that students have equal and equitable opportunities to take full advantage of their education. ([The Glossary of Education Reform](#))

BRAVE SPACE: A discussion space that has the following components:

- "Controversy with civility," where varying opinions are accepted
- "Owning intentions and impacts," in which students acknowledge and discuss instances where a dialogue has affected the emotional well-being of another person
- "Challenge by choice," where students have an option to step in and out of challenging conversations
- "Respect," where students show respect for one another's basic personhood
- "No attacks," where students agree not to intentionally inflict harm on one another ([NASPA Research and Policy Institute](#))

COGNITION: The mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses. (Oxford Dictionary)

DESIGNING: In this context, designing means full participation in creating an educational space that cultivates a personal and communal sense of belonging.

DIVERSE: The various types of learners based on categories including race, ethnicity, gender, learning differences, and language acquisition.

EMPATHY: The ability to emotionally understand what other people feel, see things from their point of view, and imagine yourself in their place. ([Verywell Mind](#)) Also see: [Building empathy](#)

ENTRY POINTS: Providing equitable and grade-level access to content from a variety of starting points based on what a student already knows.

EQUITABLE: The provision of personalized resources needed for all individuals to reach common goals. In other words, the goals and expectations are the same for all students, but the support needed to achieve those goals depends on the students' needs. ([Equity Education, 2019](#)) Equity ensures everyone gets what they need versus equality, where everyone gets the same thing regardless of what they need.

GRADE LEVEL: Students are able to read, compute, and understand topics expected at a particular level of learning. Typically learning levels are determined based on state and federal standards.

IMPLICIT BIAS: Attitudes or stereotypes that are activated unconsciously and involuntarily. They are not the same as biases that a person might try to hide because they're unpopular or socially incorrect. Social scientists believe that implicit biases are learned as young as age 3, and may be fueled by stereotypes perpetuated in the media, or beliefs passed along by parents, peers, and other community members. ([The Kirwan Institute](#))

INEQUALITIES: Disparities in distribution, access, and opportunity.

INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA: A phenomenon in which the descendants of a person who has experienced a terrifying event show adverse emotional and behavioral reactions to the event that are similar to those of the person himself or herself. These reactions vary by generation but often include shame, increased anxiety and guilt, a heightened sense of vulnerability and helplessness, low self-esteem, depression, suicidality, substance abuse, dissociation, hypervigilance, intrusive thoughts, difficulty with relationships and attachment to others, difficulty in regulating aggression, and extreme reactivity to stress. (APA Dictionary of Psychology)

MIRRORS: Opportunities for students to see themselves in the texts they read and the curriculum they are taught.

PRIMARY LANGUAGE: A primary or natural language is one that has developed naturally through use. This can include native or home country languages as well as cultural language practices. (Oxford Languages)

PERSONAL BIAS: Attitudes or stereotypes that are activated unconsciously and involuntarily. They are not the same as biases that a person might try to hide because they're unpopular or socially incorrect. Social scientists believe that implicit biases are learned as young as age 3, and may be fueled by stereotypes perpetuated in the media, or beliefs passed along by parents, peers, and other community members. (The Kirwan Institute)

SCAFFOLDING: A variety of instructional techniques used to move students progressively toward stronger understanding and, ultimately, greater independence in the learning process. The term itself offers the relevant descriptive metaphor: Teachers provide successive levels of temporary support that help students reach higher levels of comprehension and skill acquisition that they would not be able to achieve without assistance. Like physical scaffolding, the supportive strategies are incrementally removed when they are no longer needed, and the teacher gradually shifts more responsibility over the learning process to the student. (The Glossary of Education Reform)

STEREOTYPE: A widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing. (Oxford Dictionary; How to Recognize, Avoid, and Stop In Your Class This School Year; Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do)

SYSTEMIC RACISM: Policies and practices that exist throughout a whole society or organization, and that result in and support a continued unfair advantage to some people and unfair or harmful treatment of others based on race. (Cambridge Dictionary)

UNLEARN: The idea that we have been implicitly or explicitly exposed to information that is false and harmful and must do work to expose that learning and replace it with accurate depictions of reality.

WINDOWS: The opportunity for students to see and build empathy for others through the texts they read and the curriculum they are taught.

CRP Guidebook Contributors

Kelisa Wing is an educator, author, speaker, and a [renowned activist](#) for student discipline reform. As the 2017 Teacher of the Year for the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), she is the first person of color to receive the award in DoDEA's 71-year history. An acclaimed author, Kelisa has published several books, including [Promises and Possibilities: Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline](#) and [If I Could: Lessons for Navigating an Unjust World](#). More recently, she published and served as content advisor of six children's books, the [Racial Justice in America Series](#), including What Is Anti-Racism? and What Is the Black Lives Matter Movement?, among others.

Dr. Jerilyn Packer is the founder of Sequoia Learning, a professional learning organization committed to supporting schools in the identification and refinement of best practices in instruction and leadership. She brings experience as an elementary, secondary, and virtual school administrator; district professional learning specialist; and regional leadership development specialist for school and district leaders. Dr. Packer is a National Board Certified Teacher and currently lives in South Korea providing support to leaders worldwide.

Dr. Maryann Woods-Murphy is the founder of Woods-Murphy Educational Services. Maryann is the 2010 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year, a 2011-2012 Washington Teaching Ambassador Fellow, an America Achieves Fellow, and a Leading Educator Ambassador for Equity for the Education Civil Rights Alliance. Maryann earned her Ed.D. in Teacher Leadership in 2016 with a study on the way New Jersey teachers improve schools. She has co-chaired [Teens Talk about Racism](#) for 21 years, and is the Equity Chair for the NJ State Teachers of the Year Council.

Leigh Ann Erickson, educator, activist, and author of [*What is White Privilege*](#), has taught in New York City, Chicago, rural Ohio, and Mt. Vernon, Iowa. She was a finalist for the 2019 Iowa Teacher of the Year, and aims to eradicate racism through justice driven curriculum. Erickson is the founder of Undone Consulting and The Undone Movement, a nationwide movement of racial reconciling. Grateful to play a small role in centuries long resistance work, she owes much to her family, friends, and mentors.