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# Culturally Responsive Multicultural Education

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# Culturally Responsive Multicultural Education

**Abstract**

This paper identifies the many facets and importance of a multicultural/culturally responsive education. While a multicultural education affirms issues of identity and differences among people as a positive thing, it also uses this same lens to question and confront both historical and current issues of power and privilege in society. Today multicultural education strives to instruct teachers as to the ways in which culturally and linguistically diverse students learn and function in order for them to receive and experience the most diverse and culturally rich learning possible. Based in recognizing and accepting cultural differences, culturally responsive education is a pedagogy rooted not only in equality but also in fairness.

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**Culturally Responsive Multicultural Education**

By

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St. John Fisher College

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### **Abstract**

This paper identifies the many facets and importance of a multicultural/culturally responsive education. While a multicultural education affirms issues of identity and differences among people as a positive thing, it also uses this same lens to question and confront both historical and current issues of power and privilege in society. Today multicultural education strives to instruct teachers as to the ways in which culturally and linguistically diverse students learn and function in order for them to receive and experience the most diverse and culturally rich learning possible. Based in recognizing and accepting cultural differences, culturally responsive education is a pedagogy rooted not only in equality but also in fairness.

## **Culturally Responsive/Multicultural Education**

As a teacher of bilingual education, I have often wondered how I could better my teaching practices when working with culturally and linguistically diverse students as well as students with special needs. For this literature review, I chose to research culturally responsive teaching and practice. Culturally responsive teaching is very closely linked with Multiculturalism in that they both clamor for an equal and equitable education for all students, regardless of their socioeconomic status, race, or sex. In my research, I found that these two concepts were inextricably bound. Throughout my literature review, the terms multicultural education and culturally responsive education may be used interchangeably. Both of these terms denote an approach to education that recognizes and affirms the cultural differences in our nation. They consider the importance of language, race, ethnicity and the role that each of these elements play in forming the social landscape, both in school and society. These terms, however, are not one in the same. It is this misinterpretation of language that often causes gaps within educator understanding and classroom practice.

Reviewing the historical importance, modern understanding, professional training and educator development, and classroom practice, the current study seeks to examine the current beliefs of educators within the field of multicultural education. Specifically this study seeks to review educator beliefs and interpretation within Culturally Responsive Multicultural educational practice, implementation and importance.

## **The History of American Education**

American history is marked with societal injustices and racial inequalities, starting from its birth and continuing into the modern society that America has become. Born from the progressive ideals of the socially and religiously persecuted, resulting in the revolutionary war, America's foundation is built on the ideals of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Written in its founding constitution American citizens are entitled to liberties previously stifled under oppressive monarchial rule. Since its declaration of independence in 1774, the history of the United States of America has been marked with progressive ideologies advocating for the equal treatment of all its citizens. These progressive ideologies are often met with great resistance from repressive principles, resulting in the unparalleled carnage that is inexplicably linked to great social change. While American society has evolved since its birth, it is important that we examine the historical presence of segregation within our society in its entirety, paying special attention to the most prominent social arena of all, educational institutions. The following section examines the history of the American educational system (Table 1).

Since its beginnings, educational institutions have been marked by segregation, with public schools initially being developed exclusively for the education of white male students in the early 1600's. It is here that we can begin to trace the roots of multicultural education, with educational theorists tracing its history to the social actions taken by various oppressed groups within American society. However in order to understand how multiculturalism arose, it is first important to understand the creation, and maturation of American education prior to the 1960's.



While the multicultural movement itself arose in the 1960's, multicultural ideals can be traced back as far as the 1840's within the Cherokee and Choctaw Indians nations. During this time, Cherokee and Choctaw peoples established their own school systems within "Indian" territory. Schools here, while not part of the United States public education system are important to consider when examining the multicultural ideal, as the education provided within these schools was implemented bilingually, in both English and the native language of the Cherokee and Choctaw. This act is often viewed as the first American attempt at multiculturalism within any educational system. However, twenty years later, in 1864 Congress passed legislation outlawing the education of Native American children in their native language, removing children from their parents and sending them to off reservation schools. Following this legislation, American public education began a back-slide which would dominate American legislation for the next hundred years. Over the next thirty years various state judicial courts and mandates were passed segregating children from the public school system, and placing them in schools designed specifically for ethnic populations (Table 1). It wasn't until 1896 that the Federal government provided legislation that would not only condone but normalize these practices of segregation. In the historical court case *Plessy V. Ferguson*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the state of Louisiana has the right to require "separate but equal" railroad cars for Blacks and whites. This ruling resulted in the passage of laws in several southern states requiring racial segregation in public schools.

Table 1: Timeline of United States Public Education

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Court Case</b>	<b>Overview of Decisions, Significant Political, Social and Educational Impact</b>
<b>1600's</b>		Public schools are developed to exclusively serve white male students
<b>1783</b>		Noah Webster created a dictionary that was designed to promote

		political harmony between regional and class differences through a unified, common language.
1840's		Cherokee and Choctaw Indians establish their own school systems in Indian territory. Schools provided a bilingual education, employed both white and native American teachers and achieved high level of literacy.
1864		Congress makes it illegal for Native Americans to be taught in their native languages. Native children as young as four years old are taken from their parents and sent to Bureau of Indian Affairs off-reservation boarding schools, whose goal, as one BIA official put it, is to "kill the Indian to save the man."
1879		The Carlisle Indian School in Carlisle, PA, is developed to house thousands of Native American children who were forcibly removed from their families. Students are forced to wear uniforms, have their long hair cut, change their names, eat traditional foods, and speak their native languages.
1884	<i>Tape v. Hurley</i>	An 8 year-old girl named Mamie Tape was refused access to a San Francisco school because she was Chinese. The Supreme Court decision allowed for the creation of separate Chinese schools rather than force integration.
1893		Congress mandates that all Native American children ages 6 to 16 must attend an Indian boarding school.
1896	<i>Plessy V. Ferguson</i>	The U.S. Supreme Court rules that the state of Louisiana has the right to require "separate but equal" railroad cars for Blacks and whites. This decision means that the federal government officially recognizes segregation as legal. One result is that southern states pass laws requiring racial segregation in public schools.
1905		Francis Ellington Leupp is named Indian Commissioner. He works to change Indian education but change is very slow.
1920		Fifteen U.S. states legislated English as the basic language of instruction. Ohio and other states forbid foreign language instruction in elementary grades.
1926		<b>Meriam Report is published. It recommended that there should be no "Uniform Course of Study" for Native children, that only older students should attend boarding schools, and that Indian Service needed to give parents and students tools to adapt to both white and Indian worlds.</b>
1930-1950		The NAACP brings a series of suits over unequal teachers' pay for Blacks and whites in southern states. At the same time, southern states realize they are losing African American labor to the northern cities. These two sources of pressure resulted in some increase of spending on Black schools in the South.
1935		John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, crafted Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. Assimilation of Native Americans was no

		longer the goal of American policy.
<b>1944</b>		<b>Government reports favor reinstating boarding schools for Native children. Native leadership groups form to stop this process.</b>
<b>1954</b>	<i>Brown v. Board of Education</i>	The Supreme Court reversed the <i>Plessy</i> ruling. With this decision, public school segregation became unconstitutional.
<b>1957</b>		A federal court orders integration of Little Rock, Arkansas public schools. Governor Orval Faubus sends his National Guard to physically prevent nine African American students from enrolling at all-white Central High School. Reluctantly, President Eisenhower sends federal troops to enforce the court order not because he supports desegregation, but because he can't let a state governor use military power to defy the U.S. federal government.
<b>1960</b>		The field of multicultural education gained momentum due to increasing social protest over civic and economic inequality.
<b>1964</b>		The Civil Rights Act is passed, providing equal access to public facilities and banning discrimination in employment and education.
<b>1965</b>		The National Advisory Council on Indian Education (NACIE) was formed. This council is formed to advise the Secretary of Education and Congress on matters of funding when Native students are involved.
<b>1968</b>		African American parents and white teachers clash in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville area of New York City, over the issue of community control of the schools. Teachers go on strike, and the community organizes freedom schools while the public schools are closed.
<b>1969</b>		The Kennedy Report is published. This report found that the practice of "coercive assimilation" had "disasterous effects on the education of Indian children."
<b>1972</b>		Indian Education Act: provides for direct federal funding of education for American Indian and Native Alaskan students in public, tribal, and BIA schools.
<b>1974</b>	<i>Lau v Nichols</i>	The Supreme Court ruled that school programs conducted exclusively in English denied equal access to education to students who spoke other languages. The Court directed that all students who do not speak English be served in a meaningful way.
<b>1978</b>	<i>Miliken v Bradley</i>	A Supreme Court rules that schools may not be desegregated across school districts. This effectively legally segregates students of color in inner-city districts from white students in wealthier white suburban districts
<b>1975</b>		Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act: This legislation gave tribes the power to run their own education and health programs through contracts with the Federal government.
<b>1979</b>		NCATE's first standard on multicultural education became effective. It required that all institutions provide evidence that the infusion of multicultural, nonsexist principles had become a reality in their institution.

1998	In California a measure is placed on the June 1998 ballot outlawing bilingual education in California.
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Source adapted from Applied Research Center: Historical Timeline of Public Education in the US (2011) retrieved from <http://www.arc.org/content/view/100/217/>,

### **The Rise of Multicultural Education: A History**

While rumblings of multiculturalism are evident across the history of America's public education system it wasn't until the 1960's that the multicultural educational movement gained momentum.

The idea of implementing a truly multicultural education was first conceived in the 1960's. The civil rights movement was in full swing and the judgment of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) would change the face of American education forever. Overturning the result of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), which mandated separate but equal, the landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* legally recognized the importance of not only equality but also fairness, ending segregation. Existing as the first major victory for diversity in education, *Brown* opened the door for all other underserved, persecuted and oppressed groups to receive justice within the world of academics. As stated by Gay (2004):

If it were not for *Brown*, there would not be a women's movement. There would not be a gay rights movement. There would not be any movement for the relief of oppression of group after group in American society that found its identity because it read *Brown* and realized that there was an aspiration for equality embedded in the Constitution that was the common property of every oppressed group. *Brown* as a catalyst moved us toward the political understanding of

egalitarianism that underlies every single civil rights movement statute passed since that time and the enduring movement for equality that continues. (p.195)

The end of segregation called for an educational system that would truly include all students and all cultures present. The mission of multicultural education was to “genuinely integrate educational programs, procedures, and practices with the ethnic, racial, cultural, and social diversity that characterizes U.S. society” (Gay, 2004). The Bilingual Education Act (1968) was enacted about fifteen years later. The Bilingual Education Act (BEA) was initially created in 1968 as a supplemental grant program to support and assist local school districts in teaching students whose primary language was not English. Since its inception, the BEA has been amended and extended several times, in order to meet the increasing needs of limited English proficient students, offering bilingual education grants, and personnel training grants (Nieto, 2009). These efforts have been made in an attempt to provide students with the free and appropriate public education that is not only an innate right, but also a mandated act within modern American education.

Another court case that has helped mold the current construction of our educational system is the civil rights case, *Lau v. Nichols* (1974). In this case, the San Francisco School Department was sued by the parents/guardians of Chinese-speaking students charging that the education that their children were being provided was not equal. The school department argued that these students were receiving an equal education because they were receiving the same instruction from the same teachers and utilizing the same materials as all of the other students (English –speaking students). In

an attempt to clarify the precarious situation that these students found themselves in, “The court reasoned that giving non-English-speaking students the same instruction, teachers and materials as English-speaking students flew in the face of equal educational opportunity because Chinese-speaking students could not benefit from instruction provided in English” (Bode & Nieto, 2010, p. 157).

Arguing that every student brings to his/her educational career advantages and disadvantages based upon their individual social, economic, racial, and cultural backgrounds, the District Court, as well as the Court of Appeals, held that these factors were independent from the school system, and therefore did not require educational attention. Citing the California Education code, the lower courts relied on language presented within the statutes to support their decision. The California Code, which stated that the English language was the basic language of instruction in all California schools, required mastery of the English language by all students was ruled discriminatory by the Supreme Court. Relying on Section 601 of the Civil Rights Act (1964) the Supreme court overturned the lesser court’s rulings, stating that the state standards did not provide satisfactory educational treatment simply because all students were provided equal facilities, books, teachers and education. Findings in this case found that the actions taken by the San Francisco School District were discriminatory in nature, and as reversed the Court of Appeals decision. (Bode & Nieto, 2010, p. 157).

### **Multiculturalism Defined**

Multicultural education is defined as an educational reform movement whose major goal is to restructure curricula and educational institutions so that students from diverse social classes, racial, and ethnic groups, as well as both gender groups, will

experience equal educational opportunities (Banks, 2008, p.135). The major and recurring themes in the multicultural movement are three-fold, focusing on 1) ideology, (2) goals and (3) recognition of procedural discrepancy. As stated by Banks (2008) this educational reform movement (1) strives to create equal educational opportunities for all students; 2) an ideology whose aim is to actualize American democratic ideals, such as equality, justice and human rights; and 3) a process that never ends because there will always be a discrepancy between democratic ideals and school and societal practices (p. 135). A truly multicultural approach includes the consideration of elements such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language use, sex, sexual orientation, religion, and many other social and human differences that exist among people.

While multicultural education affirms issues of identity and differences among people as a positive thing, it also uses this same lens to question and confront both historical and current issues of power and privilege in society. In the 1960's, multicultural education stood out as an avenue for change that would allow African American students to be educated along with their white counterparts, utilizing curricula in which people of all cultures and ethnicities would be represented, providing a much richer and informed perspective. Today, multicultural education strives to instruct teachers as to the ways in which culturally and linguistically diverse students learn and function in order for these students to receive and experience the most diverse and culturally rich learning possible. As stated by Bode & Nieto "this means challenging racism and other biases as well as the inequitable structures, policies, and practices of schools and, ultimately, of society itself" (2010, p. 5).

One way in which educators can provide students access to a multicultural education is by acknowledging and emphasizing the importance of differences, particularly in language as it relates to culture. By affirming the language use and culture of our students, we can help them to become confident and well-adjusted learners, engaging them in an additive approach to teaching as opposed to a deficiency model of teaching. An additive approach to teaching, specifically in bilingual education, emphasizes the importance of the development of the second language in addition to, not at the expense of, the primary language. Students continue learning to speak, listen, read and write in their primary language, while acquiring and developing the secondary language. All the while students are using skills developed in their dominant language to inform new learning and help them make sense of what they are learning in the second language. An additive teaching approach builds on the knowledge that students already have and uses their strengths, instead of their weaknesses, to inform and round out instructional practices. This practice helps students to strengthen their weaknesses by creating opportunities for them to succeed academically, as opposed to focusing entirely on problematic areas that may frustrate and discourage students.

By teaching students the importance of their language, educators provide students an opportunity to develop a critical lens towards cultural variations and differences outside their own identity (Kumashiro, 2003). The more students know about themselves, such as where they come from and how their own culture has thrived, the more they can learn and understand the many cultures and social structures that exist around them. This may, and hopefully will, cause students to question their rank in the scheme of things and challenge preconceived societal ideals in hopes of achieving



equality. This focus on equality is the basis from which this review will examine a secondary ideology, termed culturally responsive education.

### **Culturally Responsive Teaching**

Based in recognizing and accepting cultural differences, culturally responsive education is a pedagogy rooted in not only equality but also fairness. Culturally responsive education recognizes and accepts that cultural differences dictate modifications that are responsive to and address said differences. This is accomplished by varying teaching styles, employing flexible grouping, and collaborating with students, in order to create a more cooperative learning climate. Culturally responsive pedagogy echoes the multiculturalism ideal but on a larger scale. As stated by Bode & Nieto (2010) “The organization and structures of schools often are contrary to the needs of students, the values of their communities, and even to one of the major articulated purposes of schooling-to provide equal educational opportunities for all students” ( p.139).

Where multiculturalism focuses on the classroom practices, culturally responsive education encompasses all levels of the academic arena, including administrative practices. A culturally responsive administrative approach emphasizes the importance of the implementation of policies, procedures and curriculum that address the needs of the diverse learners in their charge, using cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic factors to help reach and teach students. (Ford & Kea, 2009) In order for students to be successful, we must first understand their values. By understanding, the values held by varying cultures, educators are more able to provide learning opportunities that are matched not only to students’ academic goals, but to intrinsic motivations as well. Only when we

understand children in every facet of their lives, academically and non-academically, can we meet their needs.

### **Culturally Responsive Multicultural Education in Modern Education**

After reviewing multiculturalism and culturally responsive teaching separately, it becomes clear that these two approaches are centered in the same innate understandings and ideologies. Combining these two approaches under a singular terminology allows us to focus on understanding as well as accepting and actively engaging culturally diverse learners. A multicultural/culturally responsive approach to education addresses the importance of students' backgrounds, including prior experiences, cultural knowledge, and socialization practices. While many modern educators and educational institutions stress "multiculturalism" citing its correlation with success, modern education still falls short of its multicultural goals, often approaching cultural diversity with a blind eye.

Ignoring diversity within the classroom, or taking a "blind" approach to education, meaning providing instruction and discipline as if culture makes no difference and all people are the same, takes away from the student identity. Instead of learning about and celebrating differences, diverse students are demeaned and marginalized as their culture and experience have no place in the "blind" classroom. This idea of blindness is, in and of itself, a primary reason for student failure. When culture is not considered, behavior can be misinterpreted, and reprimanded or reinforced inaccurately as indicated by Ford & Kea (2009) in stating that:

Teachers who are culturally competent recognize that behavior is socially constructed...one teacher may view a student's open and direct expression of his opinion as appropriately assertive, proactive self-advocacy; and another teacher

may view the same behaviors as aggressive, inappropriate, disrespectful, or confrontational ( p.12).

The practice of misinterpretation, as described above, while ideally fictitious, is in all actuality a common practice within modern educational systems. Staggering numbers of culturally diverse students are often misunderstood, and suffer socially, behaviorally and academically. “The most frequently cited indicator of inequitable outcomes experienced by African-American and Hispanic learners is the disproportionate rate at which those learners, especially males, are referred and placed in special and remedial classes” (Townsend, p. 728, 2002).

This misinterpretation and misalignment of expectations is evident in that students of color receive more and harsher disciplinary referrals, are more often subjected to classroom environments that implement direct and controlling supervision, and receive instruction that is, in many cases, less than intellectually stimulating or challenging(Gay, 2002, p. 618). Disciplinary issues lead to referrals. Referrals then lead to evaluations that, inevitably, end in classification and labeling. Turning a blind eye to culture and diversity does a true disservice to all students. It is this kind of practice that multicultural education and culturally responsive education hope to eradicate.

Within the last few decades, the multicultural education movement has identified several areas or fields, which have developed and become integral dimensions of the movement. Banks (2008) states that these key components include: content integration, equity pedagogy, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, and empowering school culture and social structure (p.34). One of the main goals of culturally responsive pedagogy and the curriculum is to infuse an understanding of

students' prior knowledge in order to establish strong connections with new learning and concepts. When the above-mentioned dimensions are present during instruction, learning becomes an interactive process with students at the center of it.

An essential component of multiculturalism within the classroom, content integration has been described as an infusion of ethnic and cultural content into the modern educational curriculum. As expressed by Banks (1993) content integration “deals with the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalization and theories in their subject or discipline. Essentially, content integration, is the degree to which teachers implement and utilize examples and information from a variety of cultures and groups of peoples to teach and illustrate key ideas, theories, concepts and subjects. For example, teachers of math and physics can include biographies of physicists and mathematicians from different cultural groups. In this way, educators integrate a cultural component to their instruction that does not distract or take away from the content being taught, but reinforces and adds to the information taken in by students.

It is obvious that if we want our students to feel represented in the concepts and ideas that they learn about, we must use materials in which they are clearly and accurately depicted. If it is not possible, educators must do their best to present concepts or ideas to students and refer to them as being part of a collective humanity, showing that somewhere along the line a group of people, much like theirs, underwent trials and tribulations in order to survive, much like our students are trying to do today.

A second component of culturally responsive education is known as equity pedagogy. Equity pedagogy refers to the idea that all teaching may be equal but not

equitable. An equal education means that every student is treated the same way, regardless of language, culture, or race. “The dictum “Equal is not the same” is useful here. It means that treating everyone in the same way will not necessarily lead to equality; rather it may end up perpetuating the inequality that already exists” (Bode & Nieto, 2010, p. 157). As stated by Nieto (2010), an equitable education:

First, acknowledges the differences that children bring to school such as their gender, race, ethnicity, language, social class, sexual orientation, religion, abilities, and talents among others. The refusal to acknowledge differences often results in schools and teachers labeling children’s behavior as “deficient” or “deviant”. In other cases, it results in making students “invisible”. Second, it means admitting the possibility that students’ identities may influence how they experience school and, hence how they learn. Being aware of connections among culture, identity, and learning should in no way devalue children’s backgrounds or lower our expectations of them, yet this is precisely why so many educators have a hard time accepting “Equal is not the same.” That is they are reluctant to accept this notion because they may feel that in doing so they must lower their expectations or “water down” the curriculum so that all children can learn. Yet neither of these practices is necessary; on the contrary, it is imperative to raise the bar for all students. Third, accepting differences also means making provisions for them. When students’ cultural and linguistic backgrounds are viewed as strengths on which education can draw and build, pedagogy changes to incorporate students’ lives. This approach is based on the best of educational theory: that individual differences must be taken into account in teaching and that

education must begin where children are at. If we are serious about providing all students with educational equity, then students' cultures and identities need to be seen not as a burden, a problem, or even a challenge, but rather assets upon which to build. (p. 157-158)

Teachers must use a plethora of approaches when teaching, considering the various learning styles of the various cultural and ethnic groups that may be present in our classrooms. Using different approaches like cooperative learning, inquiry-based learning. Similar to the equity pedagogy, the knowledge construction process addresses the way in which educators help students connect to learning. In implementing various teaching styles to address the various learning styles present in classrooms, Banks (2008) states that, "Teachers help students to understand how knowledge is created and how it is influenced by the racial, ethnic, gender, and social-class positions of individuals and groups" (pg. 31). Lessons that are specific and tailored to suit the needs of our students assist in building relationships between teachers and students, students and their peers, and teachers and families. In doing so, teachers provide students with lessons that "...value students' voices and collaborative problem-solving, and engage with students in research and critical thinking inquiry" (Goodwin & Swartz, 2008, p.2).

Another key element is prejudice reduction. Prejudice reduction refers to the strategies and methods that teachers can implement in their classrooms in order to help students develop more positive attitudes towards other racial and ethnic groups. Prejudices within modern society often permeate into the educational system, creating less than optimal learning environments for students. Undermining the very core of social justice, prejudices, if unaddressed within our schools pose a serious threat to the

development of our children. Many children learn social values and construct understandings of differences within schools, as it is often the earliest experience they have with individuals from varying social, ethnic, racial and gender groups. If unaddressed in our schools, prejudicial biases and beliefs, pose unique threats to not only the development of our students social lens, but also on their academic behavior and success.

Examining the impact of prejudicial biases on achievement, Fiske (2002) introduces the term stereotyped threat. Stereotyped threat is when an individual, belonging to a group (social, racial, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation) that has a negative stereotype attached to it, subconsciously conforms to the stereotype, emulating behavior(s) that align with the perceived deficit or difference. Simply put, stereotype threat is the subconscious act of becoming who others think you are. For example, Steele & Aronson (1995) found that Black students performed more poorly on standardized testing than their white peers when their race was emphasized. Focusing on the expected performance and/or behavior, stereotyped threat is a pervasive issue in today's schools, as often, students experiencing prejudice within the classroom often disengage from academic learning (Steele, 1997; Fiske, 2002). By being aware of prejudices, educators and students alike are in the unique position of being able to improve inter-group relationships inside and outside of schools (Parker, 2003).

Studies show that “by the age of four, African American, White, and Mexican American children are aware of racial differences and often make racial preferences that are biased toward Whites” (Banks, 2008, p.34). When educators involve students in learning experiences that include realistic images of various racial and ethnic groups in a

consistent and natural manner, students can develop more positive racial attitudes. Empowering school and social structures involves the school environment and school staff. Assessment techniques that reflect the learning styles of all students, the elimination of tracking, and the fundamental belief that all students are capable of learning and success are all aspects of an empowering atmosphere that enhances student ability. According to Banks (2008) multicultural schools are comprised of identifiable by eight specific characteristics and criteria, as reported in Table 2.

*Table 2: The Eight Characteristics of Multicultural Schools*

- 
1. The teachers and school administrators have high expectations for all students and positive attitudes towards them. They also respond to them in positive and caring ways.
  2. The formalized curriculum reflects the experiences, cultures, and perspectives of a range of cultural and ethnic groups as well as of both genders.
  3. The teaching styles used by the teachers match the learning, cultural and motivational characteristics of the students.
  4. The teachers and administrators show respect for the students' first languages and dialects.
  5. The instructional materials used in the school show events, situations, and concepts from the perspectives of a range of cultural, ethnic, and racial groups.
  6. The assessment and testing procedures used in the school are culturally sensitive and result in students of color being represented proportionately in classes for the gifted and talented.
  7. The school culture and the hidden curriculum reflect cultural and ethnic diversity.
  8. The school counselors have high expectations for students from different racial, ethnic, and language groups and help these students to set and realize positive career goals.
- 

The first element deals with the attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, and actions of the school staff. In a multicultural school, all faculty and staff have high academic, social and behavioral expectations for all students and believe that all students are capable of learning. As the research indicates the contrary, teachers must make sure that expectations for language-minority students, low-income students, and students of color remain high.



The second element speaks to the formalized curriculum and course of study. When studying or discussing events, issues, concepts, or problems, too often the only perspective present is that of the dominant culture, marginalizing the experiences of people of color and of women. A multicultural approach to education reforms the content in the curriculum so that students can evaluate and view topics from multiple perspectives. This dimension of multicultural education also refers to the accuracy with which educators present topics. The omission of facts and delivery of erroneous information can have detrimental effects on student learning. Educator instruction must be accurate and based on current research.

The third element refers to the learning, teaching, and cultural characteristics favored by the school. “Research indicates that a large number of low-income, linguistic minority, Latino, Native American, and African American students have learning, cultural, and motivational characteristics that differ from the teaching styles that are used most frequently in schools” (Banks, 2008, p.37). It is clear that for content to stimulate critical thinking, “it must include and represent those cultures and groups who were/are present and whose knowledge and achievements are part of defining the subject matter being taught”(Goodwin & Swarts, 2008, p.6). When educators deliver instruction that is culturally relevant to their students, students are that much more apt to take in and apply the information learned. For instruction to be meaningful it must reach its target. If instruction is meaningful to students, they will actually feel that the learning has been purposeful, allowing them to retain the information with much more ease.

The fourth element explores the importance of languages and dialects in school. In many cases, students come to school speaking languages other than English. The

additive approach to education, as mentioned before, ensures that English is taught to students in addition to their first language, allowing students to use their first language as a tool for learning English. Culturally responsive education encourages the use of the first language as bridge between the first language and the acquisition of the second language. Culturally responsive educators encourage and foster the development of both languages, resulting in bilingual, bi-literate students.

The fifth element addressed the importance of instructional materials. Materials used in culturally responsive classrooms represent and exhibit people of color, language minorities, and men and women who are members of mainstream society. The sixth element speaks to the assessment and testing procedures carried out in schools.

Assessments must address the differences in our students. An example of this would be allowing a student to turn in a portfolio of work to demonstrate his/her understanding, as opposed to taking a written exam. We must consider our students' feeling and the circumstances under which they learn the best in order to be able assist them to achieve success.

The seventh element addresses the school culture and hidden curriculum. This "hidden curriculum" is composed not of the actual content, but of the underlying attitudes and beliefs that permeate the school. This includes the school's attitudes towards diversity, the racial composition of the school staff, the fairness with which students from different cultural groups are disciplined. In a culturally responsive school, the entire school environment sends the message that diversity is, not only celebrated, but also affirmed.

The eighth and final element of a multicultural school is a counseling program. In a truly culturally responsive school, counseling is provided for all students. Counselors provide students with guidance in regards to career choices and help them to make good choices that will, in effect, create a foundation for their futures. Each and every one of these elements is necessary for a school to be considered truly multicultural.

Proponents for multicultural education state that it will assist and support students in the learning process by “helping individuals from diverse racial, cultural, language, and religion groups to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively within their cultural communities, the national civic culture, their regional culture, and the global community” (Banks, 2008, p.5). This statement, while seemingly simplistic, is in fact quite sophisticated, and easily misunderstood, often resulting in the misconstruction of its meaning. This misunderstanding allows for the creation of delusions within education, some of which will be examined below.

One of the biggest misconceptions, resulting in delusion, is that multicultural education is for the “others”. In this context, the word “others” refers to someone that does not belong to the dominant culture. African Americans, Latinos, women and other marginalized groups are considered by many to be the target audience for multicultural education, when in fact, multicultural education is for everyone. Banks (2008) states:

The major theorists and researchers in multicultural education agree that it is a reform movement designed to restructure educational institutions so that all students, including White, male, and middle-class students, will acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function effectively in a culturally and ethnically diverse nation and world” ( p. 8)

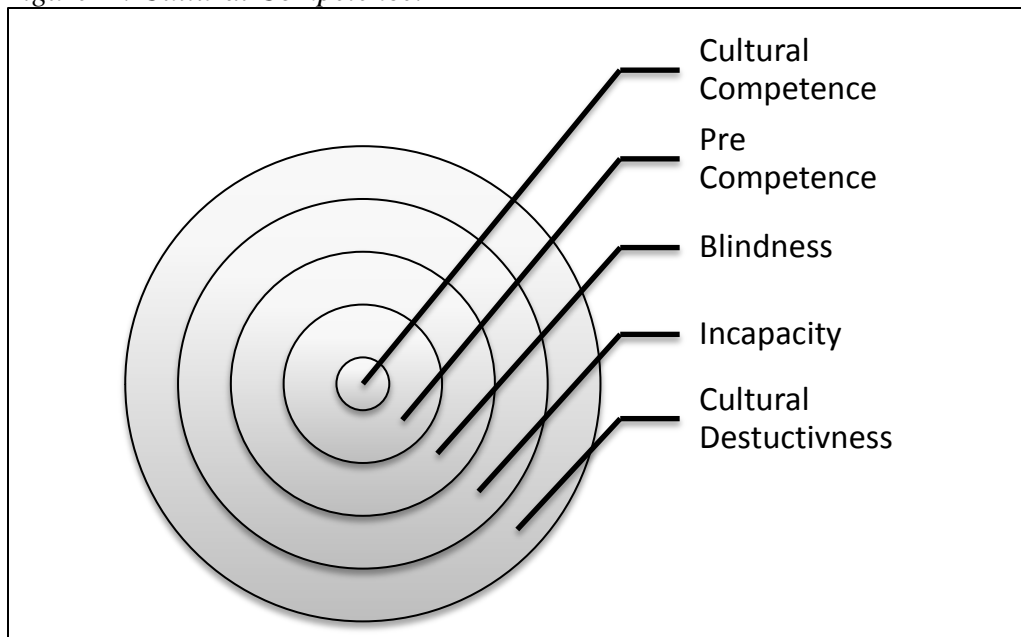
It is not an ethnic-specific or gender-specific movement, “but a movement to empower all students to become knowledgeable, caring, and active citizens in a deeply troubled and ethnically polarized world” (Banks, 2008, p 8). Belonging to the dominant culture does not make one exempt of the need of multicultural education. If multicultural education is to be successful, it must be considered to be essential for all students, not just some or others.

Another long-standing misperception of multicultural education is that it is separate from the core curriculum and content that educators present to their students daily. Implemented correctly, multicultural education permeates not only the instructional content carried out to students, but also school/district policies, learning environments, the way in which teachers deliver lessons and instruction, leadership roles within schools and the greater community, assessment and evaluation methods. In order for multicultural/culturally responsive education to be in its purest form, it must become an integral part of everything that occurs in the educational domain. Explicit and purposeful connections must be made between the curriculum to be carried out and multicultural education if it is to be considered a truly multicultural approach to teaching.

As mentioned before, there are many ways to establish and create these student connections. Lessons must reflect the cultural orientations and identities of the students in the classroom. One way to do this would be to use a diverse array of materials, like textbooks, music, and art that speak to and represent the students in classrooms. When students see themselves portrayed in the materials used to teach them, they develop a common ground with the information to be learned. This, in turn, makes learning much more meaningful and purposeful.

As expressed earlier cultural competence is an important aspect of providing a culturally responsive education. Like many classroom practices, and beliefs, modern educators exhibit cultural competent teaching differently, varying not only in externalized behaviors but also in internalized beliefs and understandings. Due to individual educator variability, cultural competence can be represented in levels of targeted behavior. A Bulls-eye diagram or target diagram (Diagram 1) is best used to illustrate these varied levels, and has been provided below.

*Figure 1: Cultural Competence.*



(Source adapted from Cultural Competence Self-Assessment Questionnaire, by J. Mason Portland, OR:Portland State University, Multicultural Initiative Project, 1993).

The outermost ring of the bulls-eye diagram represents the least desirable level of cultural competence. Located in this ring is cultural destructiveness. The attitudes, policies and practices exhibited by individuals currently acting at this level negatively affect diverse individuals and groups. At this level, educators do not truly know who they are teaching, what to teach, or even which methodology to implement. This, in turn,

affects the quality of instruction and opportunities for students to perform and succeed. The next level is termed incapacity. At this level, agencies, systems and educators do not intentionally seek to be culturally assaultive and offensive, but often remaining passive. Individuals within this level lack the skills and resources necessary to work effectively and responsively towards cultural differences and variations.

Level three, or blindness marks the beginning stage of cultural competence. Within this level, actions teachings and services are provided with the expressed intent of being unbiased. Rather than acknowledging the existence of cultural differences, individuals within the blindness level act as if culture is unimportant because all individuals are the same.

Continuing inward we approach a level of understanding and acknowledgement known as pre-competence. In this stage, individuals and organizations move towards acknowledging cultural differences, making documented efforts to improve policies, procedures and teachings. The final and targeted level, as represented by the bulls-eye is cultural competence. Within this level individuals not only acknowledge cultural variation but accept differences amongst individuals. Central to cultural competence are acceptance and respect of cultural differences, as exemplified by the common practices of individuals within this area. Furthermore this level focuses on continued self-assessment, attention to the dynamics of cultural differences, and the adoption and implementation of culturally relevant services, policies and procedures.

Self-reflection and multicultural education training is integral to the process of developing this socio-cultural consciousness. As teachers reflect, they continue to learn

about themselves, allowing them to continuously draw out and evaluate any negative attitudes they may have. Townsend (2002) states:

Specific multicultural education training would increase teachers' repertoires of knowledge and skills that facilitate academic and social success for minority students, as well as for majority students. Teacher training programs should minimally enhance teacher awareness of their perspectives of cultural differences, facilitate the use of academic and social instruction that is effective with diverse student, and promote positive interactions between teachers and parents of culturally diverse students.(p. 736)

Teachers must continuously reflect and participate in professional development that will force them to really look at and evaluate their views. This will, in turn, help them to provide the culturally responsive education that culturally diverse students are so desperately in need of.

Ford and Kea's (2009) research shows, "culturally competent and responsive educators acknowledge the differences as well as the commonalities in their students" (pg.12). Simply put, some teachers understand that race, gender, and socioeconomic status all have a bearing on one's way of thinking, behaving, and working. Cooperative learning and problem solving/inquiry based teaching are approaches that allow opportunities for students to work together in a community of learners. Collaboration and cooperation is encouraged, while students work together to create a collective understanding of the concepts learned. Learning occurs when students are united and being helped by others. Gay (2002) states:

Research on cooperative learning indicates that students from all ethnic groups, ability levels, and areas of schooling benefit positively from it in multiple ways, including higher academic performance, stronger feelings of personal efficacy, greater satisfaction with school, and improved interpersonal relations across ethnic groups...Another salient feature of learning communities in culturally responsive teaching is multifaceted skill development. In addition to academic excellence, students learn about their own and each other's cultural heritages, how the lives of different ethnic groups are connected, moral and ethical dimensions of living and learning, and skills needed to engage in social and political reform actions. In other words, students are taught that being educated involves more than academics, and it carries with it the responsibility to use knowledge to bring about social change (p.623).

The research clearly states that cooperative learning is beneficial to students in that it exposes them to a wealth of information about other cultures and people. Through cooperative and inquiry based teaching, also called a problem-solving approach, students learn how to work together in a community of learners, each contributing and working together towards a common good. For students to reach their full potential, it is imperative that learning styles are considered when preparing instruction.

A large part of both the multicultural ideology and culturally responsive teaching pedagogy focuses on treating culturally diverse groups of learners with the respect and understanding they innately deserve. Often this practice of acceptance and understanding is confused with tolerance, an act that many, intentionally or unintentionally, participate



in on a routine basis. A large part of understanding multicultural responsive education is understanding the true meanings of tolerance and acceptance.

According to Merriam-Webster, tolerance is defined as “the allowable deviation from the standard or the act of allowing something”. Tolerance is quite simply the human act of permitting differences, and allowing for variation. Acceptance on the other hand is defined as “act of receiving something that is offered, favorable approval or the act of believing” Acceptance refers to the understanding and act of acknowledgement.

Reviewing the definitions, it is clear that tolerance and acceptance are not the same. By examining these two nouns, tolerance and acceptance, within the field of educational practice that we can see how far removed from each other they truly are. According to Jacobs (2006), tolerance “subtly reinforces the idea that it is sufficient for us merely to put up with one another” (p. 202), and that as educators we must trade tolerance for “a dynamic, deliberate embrace of other people’s experiences and cultures and orientations” (p 203).

This dynamic and deliberate acknowledgement, acceptance and understanding is quite simply known as respect, and is vital to education. Respect within education means not only respecting others, but respecting individualities and differences within the classroom community. Within the classroom, the teacher should focus on respecting individual differences, and require the same of their students. This expectation of respect and understanding, calls for individual variations to become part of the classroom community, and ambiance. This integration of respect and diversity into the framework of the community, allows individuals to be seen simply as that; individuals with unique experiences, ideas, and cultures, which are not celebrated as differences, but accepted as

diversities. It is through this act of respect and understanding, the seed of a multicultural responsive educational practice can begin to grow.

### **The Present Study**

The present study used a non-experimental design to examining educator training, common beliefs and misconceptions and educators confidence surrounding multicultural education.

### **Methodology**

In this study the researcher will examine the common beliefs held by current educators surrounding culturally responsive/multicultural education. Respondents will be questioned as to what they believe as far as the importance of a culturally responsive/multicultural education, culturally responsive/multicultural education teacher training, the importance of culturally responsive education in teacher practice, and the importance of cultural diversity within the classroom and when dealing with a culturally diverse group of students.

### **Materials**

For this study, the researcher utilized the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey as the basis for research, modifying the apparatus to fit the specific needs of the research question. (Adapted from Baluch, S., Greig, T., Ponterotto, J., Rivera, L. (1998). Development and initial score validation of the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 58, (6), 1002.) This survey uses a Likert scale, in which respondents identify the level to which they agree or disagree with a survey item. Participants selected one of five possible responses for each item. Those

responses are strongly agree (1), agree (2), undecided (3), disagree (4), and strongly disagree (5). A Likert-scale was used to increase the accuracy of respondents knowledge, and provide clarification when compiling results.

### **Procedure**

Surveys containing twelve questions regarding culturally responsive/multicultural education were distributed to fifteen individuals. The questions on the survey were geared towards four particular areas within the multicultural/culturally responsive realm of teaching: multicultural/culturally responsive education teacher training, the importance of diversity and multiculturalism in the classroom, the effect of multiculturalism/culturally responsive education on teacher practice, and working with the diverse population of students in schools. Respondents were instructed to submit completed surveys to the researcher via mail for review.

### **Results**

#### **Participants**

The sample was composed of 15 participants from primary and secondary school teachers were surveyed from the Rochester City School District. Educators discipline includes bilingual education, special education and general education. Specific program information has been provided and defined (**Table 3**). Demographic information was not included on this survey.

#### **Table3: Educational Programs and Characteristics**

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Program Specific Characteristics</b>
<b>Bilingual education</b>	Dual Language program classrooms, where both English and Spanish are spoken, read, and written.
<b>Regular education</b>	monolingual settings, as well as Inclusion classes, often times containing students that speak languages other than English or Spanish, where only English is spoken.
<b>ESOL</b>	Program servicing students in need of English instruction, both pulling out and pushing into classrooms to provide instruction.
<b>Secondary Education</b>	Teachers servicing ninth through eleventh grade students in Inclusion classrooms.

### **Findings**

To address the research question regarding the participant responses were scored individually to determine the personal knowledge of each participant. Participant scores were then calculated for each individual area of knowledge in order to determine educator confidence in response. Confidence Scores were obtained by dividing the individual participant response by the total number of items and converting this to a percent. Additionally, an overall response rate for each item was calculated

Overall response rates for each item on the individual participant responses were totaled for each item and then divided by the total number of responses in order to produce a frequency of response percentages for each item. Percentages were then calculated for each item on the Likert Scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree). These percentages can be located in **Table 4**.

Once percentages were compiled they were then compared in order to determine educator confidence levels. For the purpose of this study educator confidence has been rated as high, low and neutral, depending on the percentages displayed. The highest, lowest, and neutral (impartial) educator responses are listed in **tables 5, 6, and 7 respectively**.

**Table 4 Total Response Percentages**

		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<b>1</b>	I find teaching a culturally diversity student group to be challenging and rewarding	53%	33%	13%	0%	0%
<b>2</b>	I believe that teaching methods need to be adapted to meet the needs of a culturally diverse student group	40%	33%	13%	13%	0%
<b>3</b>	I believe there is too much emphasis placed on multicultural awareness and training for teachers	0%	20%	27%	33%	20%
<b>4</b>	I believe that it is the teachers responsibility to be aware of their students culturally backgrounds	47%	33%	6%	13%	0%
<b>5</b>	I feel that being multiculturally aware is not relevant for the subject I teach	0%	0%	0%	40%	60%
<b>6</b>	I feel that multicultural awareness training would help me to work more effectively with a diverse student population.	27%	33%	27%	0%	13%
<b>7</b>	I feel that multicultural training for teachers in not necessary	6%	0%	6%	6%	80%
<b>8</b>	I feel that in order for one to be an effective teacher one needs to be aware of cultural differences present in the classroom	67%	20%	6%	6%	0%
<b>9</b>	I feel that teaching students about cultural diversity will only create conflict in the classroom	0%	0%	0%	20%	80%
<b>10</b>	I believe that regardless of the racial and ethnic makeup of my class, it is important for all students to be aware of ,multicultural diversity	80%	13%	0%	6%	0%
<b>11</b>	I feel that I can learn a great deal from students with culturally different backgrounds	53%	40%	6%	0%	0%
<b>12</b>	I am fully aware of the diversity of cultural backgrounds for my classroom	27%	33%	27%	13%	0%

**Table 5- Highest Confidence Responses-Strongly Agreed**

Question Number	Question	%
10	I believe that regardless of the racial and ethnic makeup of my class, it is important for all students to be aware of ,multicultural diversity	80%
8	I feel that in order for one to be an effective teacher one needs to be aware of cultural differences present in the classroom	67%
11	I feel that I can learn a great deal from students with culturally different backgrounds	53%

Reviewing of question #10 shows that 80% of respondents interviewed strongly agreed that regardless of the racial and ethnic makeup of a class, it is important for all students to be aware of multicultural diversity. Reviewing of questions #8 shows that 67% of respondents strongly agreed that in order for one to be an effective teacher, one needs to be aware of the cultural differences present in the classroom. Reviewing of question #11 shows that 53% of respondents interviewed strongly agreed that they can learn a great deal from students with culturally different backgrounds.

**Table 6 Lowest Confidence Responses-Strongly Disagreed**

Question Number	Question	%
9	I feel that teaching students about cultural diversity will only create conflict in the classroom	80%
7	I feel that multicultural training for teachers is not necessary	80%
5	I feel that being multiculturally aware is not relevant for the subject I teach	60%

Reviewing of question #9 showed that 80% of respondents strongly disagreed that teaching students about cultural diversity will only create conflict in the classroom.

Reviewing of question #7 showed that 80% of respondents strongly disagreed that multicultural training for teachers is not necessary. Reviewing of question #5 showed that 60% of respondents strongly disagreed that being multiculturally aware is not relevant for the subject they teach.

**Table 7 Most Common Neutral Responses**

Question Number	Question	%
6	I feel that multicultural awareness training would help me to work more effectively with a diverse student population.	27%
3	I believe there is too much emphasis placed on multicultural awareness and training for teachers	27%
12	I am fully aware of the diversity of cultural backgrounds for my classroom	27%

## **Discussion**

The questions on the survey distributed were geared towards four particular areas within the multicultural/culturally responsive realm of teaching: multicultural/culturally responsive education teacher training, the importance of diversity and multiculturalism in the classroom, the effect of multiculturalism/culturally responsive education on teacher practice, and working with the diverse population of students in schools. These questions have been sorted and placed under the appropriate heading. The findings produced by the survey are presented below along with my discussion.

There were four questions, numbers 1, 2, 4, and 11, having to do with culturally responsive education when working with diverse populations of students. For the majority of these questions, participants surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that it is the

educator's job to be aware of the cultural differences present in their classrooms, learn from these differences, and adapt their instruction in order to meet the needs of the diverse learners in their classroom. All of these ideas are encompassed by Banks (2008) when he states that the key components of multicultural education include content integration, equity pedagogy, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, and empowering school culture and social structure (p.34). These findings support the idea that one of the main goals of culturally responsive pedagogy and the curriculum is to infuse an understanding of students' prior knowledge in order to establish strong connections with new learning and concepts.

Questions three, six and seven from the survey instrument were specifically geared toward the teacher training component of culturally responsive/multicultural education. The majority of the participants surveyed agreed that multicultural awareness training was necessary and that it would help them to work more effectively with a diverse student population. It is evident here that the participants surveyed believe that multicultural education training is integral to the process of developing the socio-cultural consciousness necessary to carry out a culturally responsive/multicultural education. As Townsend (2002) states:

Specific multicultural education training would increase teachers' repertoires of knowledge and skills that facilitate academic and social success for minority students, as well as for majority students. Teacher training programs should minimally enhance teacher awareness of their perspectives of cultural differences, facilitate the use of academic and social instruction that is effective with diverse



student, and promote positive interactions between teachers and parents of culturally diverse students. (p. 736)

Questions number eight and nine address the attitudes and beliefs of teachers' towards culturally responsive/multiculturalism in every day teacher practice. The majority of the participants agreed that for an educator to be an effective one, they must be aware of the cultural differences present in their classrooms. An overwhelming majority disagreed that that teaching students about cultural diversity would only create conflict in the classroom. In learning about the culturally diverse populations in schools and teaching students about cultural diversity, educators use the differences present in the classroom to their advantage. Culturally responsive education recognizes and accepts that cultural differences dictate modification that are responsive to and address said differences. This allows teachers to vary their teaching styles, employ flexible grouping, and collaborate with students in order to create a more cooperative learning climate.

As stated by Bode & Nieto (2010) "The organization and structures of schools are often contrary to the needs of students, the values of their communities, and even to one of the major articulated purposes of schooling-to provide equal educational opportunities for all students" (p. 139). The more students know about themselves, such as where they come from and how their own culture has thrived, the more they can learn and understand the many cultures and social structures that exist around them. By teaching students the importance of their language, educators can provide students an opportunity to develop a critical lens towards cultural variations and differences outside their own identity (Kumashiro, 2003).

Questions number five, ten, and twelve discuss the general importance of cultural responsiveness and multiculturalism. One hundred percent of the respondents surveyed disagreed that being multiculturally aware is not relevant for the subject that they teach, demonstrating that teachers do believe in the importance of culturally responsive education in the classroom, while only about half of respondents surveyed actually had any knowledge of the diversity of the cultural backgrounds in their classrooms. Eighty percent of respondents surveyed, however, believe that regardless of the racial and ethnic makeup of their class, it is important for all students to be aware of multicultural diversity.

It is clear that the respondents surveyed believe that culturally responsive/multicultural education will assist and support students in the learning process by “helping individuals from diverse racial, cultural, language and religion groups to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively within their cultural communities, the national civic culture, their regional culture, and the global community” (Banks, 2008, p.5).

### **Limitations**

For this particular study, the sample group was taken from only the Rochester City School District. This limits the scope of responses as the classes involved in the study contained a wide diversity of students. Results would probably have been different had respondents belonged to outlying, urban as well as suburban and rural districts. Students were not interviewed in this study. The student perspective could be considered for a future area of research. Another area that was not examined was the effects that

culturally responsive/multicultural education can have on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual students.

### **Future Research**

A main area for focus in future research would be to include demographics on the survey instrument. Sending surveys to a wider sample of the population could provide a very different outcome as far as the beliefs and attitudes of educators towards culturally responsive/multicultural education. Another area that could be more closely examined is the student perspective on culturally responsive/multicultural education in schools.

Asking students if they feel that they are represented accurately and consistently in the classroom could provide some insight to educators as to how they can implement and carry out culturally responsive/multicultural education.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A- Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS)

#### Culturally Responsive Education Teacher Survey

Using the scale below, please circle the number that best corresponds to your level of agreement with each statement. This survey is anonymous. By filling this survey out, you are giving permission for the results to be analyzed and published. Thank you very much!

Strongly Agree..Agree..Undecided...Disagree..Strongly Disagree

1. I find teaching a culturally diverse student group to be challenging and rewarding.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
2. I believe that teaching methods need to be adapted to meet the needs of a culturally diverse student group.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
3. I believe there is too much emphasis placed on multicultural awareness and training for teachers.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
4. I believe that it is the teacher's responsibility to be aware of their students' cultural backgrounds.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
5. I feel that being multiculturally aware is not relevant for the subject I teach.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
6. I feel that multicultural awareness training would help me to work more effectively with a diverse student population.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
7. I feel that multicultural training for teachers is not necessary.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
8. I feel that in order for one to be an effective teacher, one needs to be aware of cultural differences present in the	1.....2.....3.....4.....5

classroom.	
9. I feel that teaching students about cultural diversity will only create conflict in the classroom.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
10. I believe that regardless of the racial and ethnic makeup of my class, it is important for all students to be aware of multicultural diversity	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
11. I feel that I can learn a great deal from students with culturally different backgrounds	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
12. I am fully aware of the diversity of cultural backgrounds in my classroom	1.....2.....3.....4.....5

Do you have any thoughts or comments about this survey, or about the research topic?  
(Please use the back of this form if additional space is needed.)

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(Adapted from Baluch, S., Greig, T., Ponterotto, J., Rivera, L. (1998). Development and initial score validation of the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 58, (6), 1002.)

## Appendix B- Letter to Administration

April 2012

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am a graduate student in the Special Education program at Saint John Fisher College, Rochester NY. I would like to request your cooperation for the teachers at School #12 to participate in a research study that I am conducting on Culturally Responsive/Multicultural education. This study focuses on the importance of culturally responsive education when addressing culturally diverse students and the m

The study consists of a survey (Likert scale, comment section), which would require about 5-10 minutes of the teachers' time. A copy of the survey is enclosed as well as a consent form allowing your teachers to participate in this study. All information obtained in connection with the study will be kept confidential. Additionally, when the study is complete, a copy of my study will be sent to you.

I realize that you and your teachers are very busy and I greatly appreciate the time you have taken to assist me in my research. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Ms. Mayra Ortiz  
585-749-9468  
[Mayra.Ortiz@RCSDK12.org](mailto:Mayra.Ortiz@RCSDK12.org)



## Appendix C- Letter to Participants

Good Day,

I, Mayra Ortiz, am currently in the process of completing my Capstone project, a thesis to be submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master's of Science in Special Education at Saint John Fisher College. I would like to ask for 5 to 10 minutes of your time to assist me in gathering data for my research.

If you could complete the attached survey and return it to me, I would be most appreciative. These surveys are completely anonymous! My findings will be made available to anyone who is interested upon the completion of my research. Requests for this information can be delivered to me via e-mail at:

[Mayra.Ortiz@rcsdk12.org](mailto:Mayra.Ortiz@rcsdk12.org)

Please include your name and contact address (electronic or mail) so that I may send you my findings.

Thank you in advance,

Mayra Ortiz

**Appendix D- Administrator and Participant Consent Form**

Principal  
James P.B. Duffy School #12  
Rochester City School District  
999 South Avenue  
Rochester, NY 14620

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to allow my teachers to  
participate in a research  
(Please Print)  
study conducted by Mayra Ortiz.

\_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Signature Date

If you wish to have a specific individual other than yourself act as researcher liaison,  
please list the name of such a contact person at the school:

\_\_\_\_\_

Name Position

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to act as researcher liaison on  
behalf of the faculty

at James P.B. Duffy School #12.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature Date