

Professional Learning Network

Introduction: All of my sources connect to each other and have similar goals. They all focus on the ways teachers can create better classrooms for all students by thinking of their identity, culture, learning, and respect to everyone. A few of these articles talk about how to have productive classroom management and how to build relationships with your students to make them feel included and engaged in the classroom. While other articles focus on culturally responsive teaching by incorporating students' identity in the lessons. Altogether, these sources will help me become a successful educator.

Category 1- How classroom practices impact student learning

Admin, C. (2024, March 4). *The Pros and cons of technology in education: Celebree School*.

Celebree School | <https://www.celebree.com/the-pros-and-cons-of-technology-in-education/>

This article explains the pros and cons of using technology in education. I like how this article relates to our second part of this seminar course when it was focused on technology in the classroom. It connects to a lot of our conversations we had in this course. This article pushes on the idea that technology isn't all that good in the classroom, it has its downfalls too. The pros include, technology excites the students, prepares them for the future, and encourages spontaneous learning. On the other hand, the cons of technology in the classroom stated are, can be distracting, removes the children from socialization, and discourages creativity. This article helps my mind grow as a future teacher because I need to make sure that if I am using technology in my classroom, it has to be in a productive manner and try to avoid the cons of it.

It's crucial to know as a teacher to know how to use technology correctly in the classroom since technology is advanced nowadays.

Bartlett, J. (2022, August 8). *Center for the advancement of teaching excellence*. Center for the Advancement of Teaching Excellence | University of Illinois Chicago.

<https://teaching.uic.edu/cate-teaching-guides/inclusive-equity-minded-teaching-practices/navigating-social-identity-in-the-classroom/>

In this article, Jackson Bartlett explains how to navigate Social Identity in the Classroom. He explains that it can be complicated because teachers and students come together in the classroom with different identities that influence their perceptions. This article highlights the dominant and non-dominant groups. Bartlett says that a way to look at it is to think about who has advantages and disadvantages in society. It can be complicated due to intersectionality as each of us has multiple social identities. This article tells how Kimberle Crenshaw introduced intersectionality in 1989 as how we all experience privilege or oppression regarding our identities. This article will help me as a future educator as it is a guide to help teachers understand how social identities matter. It helps me to understand that these identities are not in isolation. The article used an analogy that will stay with me explaining intersectionality like a traffic intersection where traffic will flow in different directions. When at an intersection, a person can be harmed by cars from any which way direction or also face discrimination from one or many directions whether it be race or sex discrimination or other types of discrimination.

Cohn-Vargas, B., & Steele, D. M. (2015, October 21). *Creating an identity-safe classroom*. Edutopia.

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/creating-an-identity-safe-classroom-becki-cohn-vargas-dorothea-steele>

This article goes into deep detail of the importance of creating an identity-safe classroom and the benefits of doing so. Cohn-Vargas and Steele made important points about the fact that when teachers do not engage in who the student is by their background or experiences, they perform an unconscious bias of what students know and do, and how they feel, does not matter. Instead of just knowing your students on an academic level, it is very crucial as the teacher fosters positive relationships with each student, so they feel safe and engaged during school. A negative social environment in the classroom can distract students from learning because they are too worried about belonging in the classroom. This article helps me as a future educator because not only have I learned the importance of an identity-safe classroom, but I also learned how to create one. An educator needs to create classroom relationships by being kind and fair to everyone and setting a positive emotional tone of a classroom because that determines where the students feel safe and comfortable to flourish and learn.

Watts, T. W., Nguyen, T., Carr, R. C., Vernon-Feagans, L., & Blair, C. (2021). Examining the effects of changes in classroom quality on within-child changes in achievement and behavioral outcomes. *Child Development*, 92(4), e439–e456.

This article explains how the way a classroom is run can totally change and affect how well the students behave and learn. Researchers followed children over time and learned that when classrooms are calmer, organized, and good teaching, the students performed better in school and didn't have much behavioral problems. The classroom practices and not just the child make the big difference. This article will help me as a teacher because I know that when teachers

create a well managed, organized, inclusive classroom, students are more likely to feel motivated to learn and be on their best behavior.

Category 2- Focusing on student centered learning, culture, and equity

Culturally responsive teaching: Strategies and tips: American University. School of Education

Online. (2024, April 15). <https://soeonline.american.edu/blog/culturally-responsive-teaching/>

This article about Culturally Responsive Teaching by School of Education, America University explains how to implement this practice in your classroom and the many benefits of doing so. It highlights that Culturally Responsive Teaching is a student-centered approach to education and it is the idea that every student brings their own cultural strengths to the classroom as a learner. When I am a teacher, I know I will do this practice in my classroom and this article benefits me by explaining specific ways to do so. This article explains that when students' backgrounds are celebrated and acknowledged, they do better in school and it is more engaging for them. Students won't be as motivated to learn if it is not what they are interested in. As a teacher, I will make sure every student feels represented and included in the lessons. It is important to know that all your students may not speak English and that's when Culturally Responsive Teaching will come into play. I will take this into consideration and if I have students who don't speak English, I will make sure they feel just as included as the others and provide them additional support as needed. This source is also useful because it expresses the importance of family involvement within the classroom and how creating a relationship with my students' parents will take pride in my students' success.

Hernandez, L. E., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2022, August). *Creating identity-safe schools and classrooms*. Creating Identity-Safe Schools and Classrooms.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED626549.pdf>

Hernandez and Darling-Hammond stress the importance of an emotionally and psychologically safe environment for all students. The problem is that schools are not safe for many students. This article gives a statistic explaining that one in five students, between the age of 12 and 18, reports having been bullied often due to race, ethnic group, or gender identity. This article writes about the concept of social identity threat and its impact. This occurs when people feel at risk of being negatively evaluated in a situation because people think negatively of their identity. This source will help me as a teacher because it sheds light on the importance of promoting trust and personal connections with my students. This also tells me I must make safety a top priority for my students and to be aware of any bullying that may be going on in my classroom. This article gives me ideas to have classroom walks or classroom meetings to address these issues.

Howard, T. C. (2024, February 20). *Using data to advance equity*. Edutopia.

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/data-advance-education-equity>

This article by Tyrone Howard explains how equity is based on the idea that students' voices matter. Although they may not tell us what we want to hear, they will tell us what we need to hear. Listening will teach us how we can best support them. It is important for us to utilize data to advance equity. Data can be insightful, but it can also be discouraging. It is key to not get discouraged but to know that more work needs to be done. One important data indicator is the concept of disproportionality which is a group's representation in a particular category that exceeds expectations of that group. An example of this is when students of color are a higher

percentage of special education than is expected or represented in the general population. This also holds true for percentages of disciplined students of color compared to the general population. This data needs to be analyzed to ask further questions and see what can be done to address the differences. He notes that data can be revealing but a deep dive is necessary to see what the data is really telling us. This article will help me as a future educator as it teaches me to consider the creation of data teams and to identify user friendly data platforms. It also encourages me to talk to parents about the data and to exercise transparency and openness.

Samuels, A. J. (2018). *Exploring culturally responsive pedagogy: Teachers' perspectives on fostering equitable and inclusive classrooms*. *SRATE Journal*, 27(1), 22–30.

This article by Samuels explains how teachers try to use culturally responsive teaching to make their classroom environment welcoming for all students. There is a teacher in the study and she was explaining that it is beneficial to connect the students' backgrounds and identity to lessons and this way the students will feel more included and engaged. Some teachers struggle with this because they might not have enough training or they don't want to accidentally say the same thing. The author also explains that understanding students and incorporating student-centered teaching can definitely help create an equitable and supportive learning environment. This article will help me in my teaching career because I will try to do lessons that my students can relate to and feel a sense of inclusiveness.

Category 3- Relationship and sense of belonging. Classroom environment is beyond a set of rules

Terada, Y. (2019b, February 27). *The key to effective classroom management*. Edutopia.

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/key-effective-classroom-management>

In this article, Youki Terada writes about the keys to effective classroom management, which as a teacher it is extremely important to have productive classroom skills and techniques. Terada explains how research shows that in classrooms where teachers use a variety of strategies centered around maintaining, establishing, and restoring relationships with their students, their academic engagement increases. This article helps me grow as a teacher candidate because it provides examples of how to run an effective classroom. Some of the examples include one-on-one meetings with students to grow relationships with each one of them, encourage student-led activities because this will give them an opportunity to share their interests, and use positive communication techniques, positive reinforcement creates a relationship with the students. I am so excited to do these classroom techniques in my own classroom soon. This article shapes my mind of a future teacher because it deepens my understanding of what effective classroom management looks and sounds like.

Weinstein, C., Curran, M., & Tomlinson-Clarke, S. (2003). *Culturally responsive classroom management: Awareness into action. Theory Into Practice*, 42(4), 269–276.

This article explains that productive classroom management works best when teachers understand students' background, cultures, and identity. Students come from all different backgrounds and it is important to know about their backgrounds and how it plays a role in their identity. The authors tell teachers to think about their own beliefs, get to know their students and create a classroom environment where everyone feels included and respected equally. As a teacher, this article will help me manage a classroom that isn't just about stopping problems, but building a positive and inclusive classroom where all students feel comfortable and can learn.

Will, M., & Najarro, I. (2023, March 24). *What is culturally responsive teaching?* Education Week.

<https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/culturally-responsive-teaching-culturally-responsive-pedagogy/2022/04>

This article by Madeline Will and Ileana Najarro explains what it means to be a culturally responsive teacher. This is described as considering students' experiences, customs and perspectives and using them for better classroom management and instruction. This is so important because more than half of public-school students are of color and school has traditionally been set up for the culture of white Americans. These students' culture is not well represented at school, or it can even be represented in a stereotypical way. Moreover, 80% of teachers are white and their biases do affect the classroom. Lower expectations for Black students may lead to self-fulfilling prophecies. Culturally responsive teaching was introduced by Gloria Ladson-Billings. This text is useful to me because I now recognize to be culturally responsive a teacher needs to have a strong knowledge base about cultural diversity. I also need to have a culturally relevant curriculum and elevated expectations for all students. I need to have an appreciation for different communication styles, and I need to employ the use of multicultural examples.

These new sources will help me grow as a future transformative educator because they gave me a lot of insight into running a productive classroom and what my role is as an educator in doing so. I have gained knowledge of specific examples of Culturally Responsive Teaching in the classroom, running a productive classroom, and effectively using technology in the classroom. These sources all connect because they have similar goals. They each have the goal of a productive classroom and creating an inclusive and comfortable learning environment for all

students. The articles all want success for the students and the teachers. I can see how these sources connect to my field placements and my courses at Oakland University. I have seen these practices in my field placement and I am so excited to pursue them in my own future classroom.

After reading and reflecting on these articles I cannot help but think it means so much more to be a teacher than to just simply teach students academics. There will be diversity in the classroom and the students will all have diverse cultures and social identities that they bring to the classroom. Although it will be complicated, it will also be a great opportunity to gain experience and grow from each and every different person's perspective. I learned that I must look past the initial indicators of what data may be telling me at first glance and dig deeper to analyze the data and use it to help the students learn and grow. I have to be aware of my unconscious bias and I have to set high goals for all my students. I need to consider how my classroom may be set up traditionally and what adjustments I can make to make sure stereotypes are not prevalent in the classroom.

There will be dominant and non-dominant groups and I must be aware of intersectionality and how privilege and oppression affect students in complicated ways. The safety of all my students will be a top priority and I must ensure students feel comfortable talking to me and bringing concerns to me so I can help them understand and problem solve as much as they possibly can. I will need to learn how to set the tone for equity and fairness. So much of what I learned in these articles reinforces what I have learned in this class during the semester. I must look through a different lens and this will be difficult and discouraging at times. Teachers are not perfect, and they will make mistakes along the way, but I will understand that what I do will matter to the students. They will be watching and looking towards me for validation and support,

and I hope I will learn the skills and tools to be equipped to help them not just get through school but to be aware and learn and grow in their own social identities.

References

Admin, C. (2024, March 4). *The Pros and cons of technology in education: Celebree School*.

Celebree School | <https://www.celebree.com/the-pros-and-cons-of-technology-in-education/>

Bartlett, J. (2022, August 8). *Center for the advancement of teaching excellence*. Center for the Advancement of Teaching Excellence | University of Illinois Chicago.

<https://teaching.uic.edu/cate-teaching-guides/inclusive-equity-minded-teaching-practices/navigating-social-identity-in-the-classroom/>

Cohn-Vargas, B., & Steele, D. M. (2015, October 21). *Creating an identity-safe classroom*.

Edutopia.

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/creating-an-identity-safe-classroom-becki-cohn-vargas-dorothy-steele>

Culturally responsive teaching: Strategies and tips: American University. School of Education

Online. (2024, April 15). <https://soeonline.american.edu/blog/culturally-responsive-teaching/>

Hernandez, L. E., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2022, August). *Creating identity-safe schools and classrooms*. Creating Identity-Safe Schools and Classrooms.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED626549.pdf>

Howard, T. C. (2024, February 20). *Using data to advance equity*. Edutopia.

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/data-advance-education-equity>

Terada, Y. (2019b, February 27). *The key to effective classroom management*. Edutopia.

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/key-effective-classroom-management>

Will, M., & Najjarro, I. (2023, March 24). *What is culturally responsive teaching?* Education Week.

<https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/culturally-responsive-teaching-culturally-responsive-pedagogy/2022/04>