



# Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Pedagogy

## Getting Started Guide

### What is it?

Culturally responsive education (closely related to the terms “culturally relevant” and “culturally sustaining” education) refers to the combination of teaching, pedagogy, curriculum, theories, attitudes, practices, and instructional materials that center students’ culture, identities, and contexts throughout educational systems.<sup>1</sup>

For more on these terms and how they are connected, see [Understanding Culturally Responsive Teaching](#).

### Why use it?

Research shows that culturally responsive-sustaining education can “increase student academic engagement, attendance, grade point averages, graduation rates, civic engagement, positive racial self-images, and self-definition.”<sup>2</sup> In addition to positive academic experiences, culturally responsive-sustaining pedagogy can influence **all** students’ biases and attitudes, and help give them the tools to analyze and critique systems and institutions.<sup>3</sup>

### How is it successfully implemented?

- In contrast to a deficit-based approach, **identify students’ assets** through practices like surveys, [questionnaires](#), or brainstorming [funds of knowledge](#).
- [Build supportive classroom environments](#) through relationship building efforts and communicating to students that cultural diversity is welcome.
- [Transform pedagogy and curriculum](#) via course content, methodology, and assessment.
- [Involve families and communities](#) as equal partners in students’ learning, rooted in knowledge and appreciation for their social and cultural identities and contexts.
- **Provide educators with** [professional learning opportunities](#) in the areas of equity, bias, multiculturalism, and [culturally-responsive sustaining pedagogy](#).

### What are examples of it done well?

- Highlander institute: [Culturally Responsive & Sustaining Pedagogy Framework](#) | [Starting Conversations about Racial Injustice in Schools](#) | [5-Step Guide](#)
- [15 culturally relevant teaching strategies and examples](#)
- [Culturally Responsive teaching and Learning: Master Teacher Project](#)

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<sup>1</sup> NYU Metro Center. (2020). Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecard.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bc5da7c3560c36b7dab1922/t/5fa9b9c736ca92025d8787da/1604958663425/CRE+Scorecard+Revised+Aug+2020.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Garth-McCullough, R. (2008). Untapped cultural support: The influence of culturally bound prior knowledge on comprehension performance. *Reading Horizons*, 49 (1), 1-30.

- [Online Teaching Can be Culturally Responsive](#)
- [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Remote Education Hub](#)
- [What does Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy look like?](#)

## Who can we learn from?

- [Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools | Implementation Guide](#)
- [New York Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#)
- [Washington Cultural Competency Standards](#)