



Culturally-Relevant and Sustaining Education (CR-SE) Program Framework Guidelines

Introduction

On April 23, 2022, the final form amendments to **Chapter 49 (relating to Certification of Professional Personnel)** of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code became effective upon publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.¹

22 Pa. Code § 49.14(4)(i) requires the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to identify competencies and develop associated standards for educator training in culturally relevant and sustaining education (CR-SE).

Chapter 49 requires instruction in CR-SE to be integrated in educator preparation, induction, and continuing professional development programs as follows:²

- Continuing professional development programs must integrate the CR-SE competencies no later than the 2023-24 academic year.
- Educator preparation and induction programs must integrate CR-SE competencies no later than the 2024-25 academic year.

22 Pa. Code § 49.1 defines several terms and their definitions are provided in the glossary.

¹ <https://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pabull?file=/secure/pabulletin/data/vol52/52-17/624.html&continued=/secure/pabulletin/data/vol52/52-17/624a.html&d=reduce>

² <https://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pabull?file=/secure/pabulletin/data/vol52/52-17/624.html&continued=/secure/pabulletin/data/vol52/52-17/624a.html&d=reduce>

COMPETENCIES: CULTURALLY RELEVANT AND SUSTAINING EDUCATION (CR-SE)

| COMPETENCY 1 | |
|--|--|
| Reflect on One's Cultural Lens | |
| Professional Educators: | |
| Standard | Competency |
| CRSE1.A | Reflect on their own life experiences and membership to various identity groups (race, skin color, ethnicity, gender identity, age, nationality, language, class, economic status, ability, level of education, sexual orientation, and religion). |
| CRSE1.B | Understand that they, like everyone, can unwittingly adopt societal biases that can shape the nature of their interactions with groups and individuals. |
| CRSE1.C | Engage in critical and difficult conversations with others to deepen their awareness of their own conscious/unconscious biases, stereotypes, and prejudices. |
| CRSE1.D | Reflect on how they meet the needs of each learner. |
| COMPETENCY 2 | |
| Identify, Deepen Understanding of, and Take Steps to Address Bias in the System | |
| Professional Educators: | |
| Standard | Competency |
| CRSE2.A | Know and acknowledge that biases exist in the educational system. |
| CRSE2.B | Understand the importance of social markers, such as race, skin color, ethnicity, gender identity, age, nationality, language, class, economic status, ability, sexual orientation, and religion. |
| CRSE2.C | Identify literature and professional learning opportunities for themselves to understand more about the manifestations of racism and other biases at institutional and structural levels that can result in disadvantaging some groups of learners, educators, educational leaders, and families while privileging others. |
| CRSE2.D | Identify and make efforts to remove bias in their teaching materials, assignments, curriculum, and resource allocation. |
| CRSE2.E | Recognize schools' history of inequities and institutional biases and their consequences. |
| CRSE2.F | Disrupt harmful institutional practices, policies, and norms by advocating and engaging in efforts to rewrite policies, change practices, and raise awareness. |

COMPETENCY 3

Design and Facilitate Culturally Relevant Learning that Brings Real World Experiences into Educational Spaces

Professional Educators:

| Standard | Competency |
|----------|---|
| CRSE3.A | Respect the real-world experiences of learners, educators, educational leaders, families, and caregivers and the diverse funds of knowledge they bring into educational spaces. |
| CRSE3.B | Integrate multiple perspectives into learning experiences and interactions that capitalize on learners' real-world experiences, identities, and heritage. |
| CRSE3.C | Recognize that learners are connected to local and global communities and events that influence and impact their learning and their relationship to and understanding of their social worlds. |
| CRSE3.D | Challenge their own beliefs, attitudes, assumptions, and behaviors regarding the knowledge and backgrounds of dominant and non-dominant social groups, thinking critically about the nuances of culture, identity, and other social markers, and how they manifest themselves in curricula and other educational materials. |
| CRSE3.E | Design learning experiences and spaces for learners to identify and question economic, political, and social power structures in the school, community, nation, and world. |
| CRSE3.F | Provide rigorous learning experiences and relevant projects in culturally supportive spaces that integrate advocacy skills, deep listening and thinking, collaboration, resource gathering, and strategic actions. |

COMPETENCY 4

Provide All Learners with Equitable and Differentiated Opportunities to Learn and Succeed

Professional Educators:

| Standard | Competency |
|----------|---|
| CRSE4.A | Make fair and equitable instructional and assessment decisions to ensure all learners have equitable access to educational resources, experiences, and opportunities. |
| CRSE4.B | Create an equitable learning environment by challenging and debunking stereotypes and biases about the intelligence, academic ability, and behavior of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and other historically marginalized learners, educators, educational leaders, families, and caregivers. |
| CRSE4.C | Utilize differentiated methods of communication to articulate clear expectations aligned with the ability of each learner, which allows them to demonstrate knowledge through differentiated modalities. |
| CRSE4.D | Provide multiple pathways and opportunities for students to achieve academic and social success. |

COMPETENCY 5

Promote Asset-based Perspectives about Differences

Professional Educators:

| Standard | Competency |
|----------|---|
| CRSE5.A | Recognize diversity as an asset to the entire learning community and treat it as such. |
| CRSE5.B | Show respect for every BIPOC learner, educator, educational leader, and family across cultural, racial, and linguistic differences. |
| CRSE5.C | Assess how learners from different backgrounds experience the environment and encourage them to reflect on their own experiences with bias. |
| CRSE5.D | Exhibit sensitivity to the ways in which BIPOC learners, educators, educational leaders, families, and guardians experience social and academic spaces. |
| CRSE5.E | Assist learners in valuing their own and others' cultures and help them develop a sense of responsibility for recognizing, responding to, and addressing bias, discrimination, injustice, and bullying. |

COMPETENCY 6

Collaborate with Families and Communities through Authentic Engagement Practices

Professional Educators:

| Standard | Competency |
|----------|---|
| CRSE6.A | Believe that every family, regardless of their race, skin color, ethnicity, gender identity, age, nationality, language, class, economic status, ability, level of education, sexual orientation, and religion wants the best for their children. |
| CRSE6.B | View the cultural aspects of the community as an extension of their teaching spaces. |
| CRSE6.C | Value every family as an asset and resource. |
| CRSE6.D | Understand the nuances of diverse families and the wide range of factors that shape how families interact with educators and schools. |
| CRSE6.E | Identify systems, structures, practices, and policies that exclude and marginalize BIPOC and multilingual families, families living in poverty, and families with varying sexual orientations and gender identities. |
| CRSE6.F | View family and community engagement as a priority. |

COMPETENCY 7

Communicate in Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Ways that Demonstrate Respect for Learners, Educators, Educational Leaders, and Families

Professional Educators:

| Standard | Competency |
|----------|--|
| CRSE7.A | Understand and honor the ways in which culture influences verbal and nonverbal communication. |
| CRSE7.B | Employ diverse channels to communicate with families in their first language. |
| CRSE7.C | Honor and respect the home language of learners and their families. |
| CRSE7.D | Exhibit an awareness of the multi-dialectical nature of language in American society and the social constructs of different dialects, including learners' natural ways of talking. |
| CRSE7.E | Believe that all learners have a choice and a right to practice the language(s) of their culture. |

COMPETENCY 8

Establish High Expectations for Each Learner and Treat Them as Capable and Deserving of Achieving Success

Professional Educators:

| Standard | Competency |
|----------|--|
| CRSE8.A | Understand the importance of having high expectations for all learners, including BIPOC students. |
| CRSE8.B | Communicate expectations and a clear framework for all learners (specifically individuals from diverse backgrounds), which clarify and articulate the standards to which they are being held. |
| CRSE8.C | Foster positive learning spaces that nurture creativity, build high self-esteem, support agency, and lead to self-actualization for all learners (including those from disadvantaged and historically marginalized backgrounds). |
| CRSE8.D | Recognize and respect that learners have agency and are capable of contributing to their own learning. |
| CRSE8.E | Establish authentic relationships with learners. |
| CRSE8.F | Recognize the integral role families play in their students' education and work closely with families and learners to set mutually agreed-upon goals and devise a plan for accountability that is supported by all individuals. |

COMPETENCY 9

Educate Oneself About Microaggressions and their Impact on Diverse Learners, Educators, and Families, and Actively Disrupt the Practice by Naming and Challenging its Use

Professional Educators:

| Standard | Competency |
|----------|---|
| CRSE9.A | Believe and acknowledge that microaggressions are real and take steps to educate themselves about the subtle and obvious ways in which they are used to harm and invalidate the existence of others. |
| CRSE9.B | Take responsibility for informing themselves about the various types of microaggressions and the specific communities and subgroups harmed by these practices. |
| CRSE9.C | Inform themselves about the long-term impact of unchecked microaggressions on the mental and emotional health of BIPOC and other marginalized learners, educators, educational leaders, and families. |
| CRSE9.D | Understand the relationship between impact and intent. |
| CRSE9.E | Create learning communities and spaces that are inclusive and free of destructive and harmful microaggressions. |
| CRSE9.F | Actively counter deficit-based and invalidating behavior in themselves and others by engaging in affirming practices. |
| CRSE9.G | Engage in critically reflexive practice. |

A Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license permits re-use of New America content. These competencies were adapted from Muñiz, Jenny. 2019. *Culturally Responsive Teaching: A Reflection Guide*. 2020. New America Foundation.

https://newamerica.org/documents/5724/Culturally_Responsive_Teaching_A_Reflection_Guide_2021_WAMBwaO.pdf.

APPENDIX A GLOSSARY

Cultural Awareness: Cultural awareness is defined as understanding, consideration and integration of individuals' culture, language, heritage, and experiences. (Source: [22 Pa. Code § 49.1.](#))

Culturally-Relevant and Sustaining Education (CR-SE): Education that ensures equity for all students and seeks to eliminate systemic institutional racial and cultural barriers that inhibit the success of all students in this Commonwealth—particularly those who have been historically underrepresented. CR-SE encompasses skills for educators including, but not limited to, approaches to mental wellness, trauma-informed approaches to instruction, technological and virtual engagement, cultural awareness, and emerging factors that inhibit equitable access for all students in this Commonwealth. (Source: [22 Pa. Code § 49.1.](#))

Diverse Learner: A student who because of limited English language proficiency or disabilities may have academic needs that require varied instructional strategies to help the student learn. (Source: [22 Pa. Code § 49.1.](#))

Equity: Equity in education is defined as every student having access to the resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, family background and/or family income. (Source: [Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in Pennsylvania](#). Pennsylvania Department of Education).

Historically Underrepresented Groups: Groups that are documented to have been represented across time in the educator population in proportions below their representation in the general population. These include, but are not limited to, people of color and the economically disadvantaged. (Source: [22 Pa. Code § 49.1.](#))

Marginalized: Relegated to a marginal position within a society or group; excluded from or existing outside the mainstream of society, a group, or a school of thought. (Source: *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, [Marginalized](#); [Marginal](#))

Microaggression: A comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group (such as a racial minority). (Source: *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, [Microaggression](#))

Reflexivity: The act of being directed or turned back on itself; marked by or capable of reflection. (Source: *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, [Reflexive](#))

Trauma-informed approaches to instruction: Pedagogy that recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma and integrates knowledge about trauma for the purpose of promoting resiliency among students. (Source: [22 Pa. Code § 49.1.](#))

APPENDIX B ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Pennsylvania Department of Education recognizes the following organizations and individuals in the development of these competencies:

- Pennsylvania State Board of Education for leading the process to update the Chapter 49 regulations
- Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators for identifying and recommending members to PDE’s Culturally-Relevant and Sustaining Education (CR-SE) Working Group
- Culturally-Relevant and Sustaining Education Working Group Members: Dr. Reuben Selase Asempapa (Pennsylvania State University Harrisburg); Dr. Juliet Curci (Temple University); Dr. Leighann S. Forbes (Gannon University); Jill McNeish (Mount Union School District); Dr. Constance Nichols (Grove City College); Dr. James Preston (Slippery Rock University); Dr. Kathleen Reeves (Temple University); Dr. Amy Rogers (Lycoming College); Dr. Laura Roy (La Salle University); Dr. Ronald W. Whitaker II (Cabrini University)
- Educator preparation program faculty for participating in the Listening Sessions to review and provide input to the draft developed by the CR-SE Working Group
- The original authors and contributors of the draft CR-SE competencies who were members of the Aspiring to Educate Work Group within the Temple University Institution of Higher Education Educator Diversity Consortium that became the Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium: Dr. Donna-Marie Cole-Malott (former PDE contractor); Karen Parker Thompson (subcontractor to the Region IV Comprehensive Center); Dr. Rochelle Peterson-Ansari, Dr. Trent McLaurin, and Dr. Laura Roy (La Salle University); Dr. Ronald W. Whitaker II (Cabrini University); Dr. Marc Brasof and Dr. Priscilla Jeter-Iles (Arcadia University); Dr. Megeara Glah Mabry and Dr. Tamara Sniad (Temple University); Dr. Larry Keiser (Drexel University); Dr. David Monk (former PDE contractor); and Dr. Beverly Mattson and Tandra Turner (subcontractor to the Region IV Comprehensive Center)
- Colleagues at the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network in Harrisburg who supported PDE in the facilitation of the working groups and listening sessions