

**Los Angeles Unified School District
Program Evaluation and Research Branch**

TO: Members, Curriculum and Instruction Committee **DATE:** November 21, 2006
FROM: Esther Wong
SUBJECT: AN EVALUATION OF CULTURALLY RELEVANT AND RESPONSIVE
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SPONSORED BY THE LOS ANGELES
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

This report examines the content of professional development (PD) sessions identified by program staff as presenting culturally relevant (CRRE) content. PERB conducted the evaluation by looking for evidence of the seven domains that comprise a culturally relevant framework. In total, we observed 399 hours of professional content provided by each of the eight local districts as well as the central office. Key findings were as follows:

- 1) Sessions that were characterized as being devoted to CRRE often included many other topics --- non-CRRE pedagogy, information and operational issues.
- 2) Among the CRRE content, there was much evidence of components such as: “designing rigorous instructional environments” (53%), “relating to students’ life experience” (43%) and “adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural difference” (42%). We found less evidence of: “making willingness to participate the sole criterion for access to educational opportunity” (3%), “giving ample assessment time” (3%), “intelligence as an effort based phenomenon” (6%), and “parents are encouraged to increase involvement in school activities” (8%).
- 3) Participants sometimes expressed concerns that culturally relevant theory was often at odds with district instructional standards and assessment requirements.
- 4) The majority of CRRE professional development presented attendees with introductory, conceptual information involving CRRE and the characteristics of the Action Plan.
- 5) We observed high levels of engagement at the sessions that we observed. Where we observed participants to be resistant to the aims of the trainings, this was due to the perception that the issues raised did not meet the needs of students that were not African-American.
- 6) Attendees communicated their realization that the types of issues raised in CRRE professional development were not regularly addressed in any other professional development context.

Please contact Dr. Daniel Patton, Project Director at (213) 241-8274 if you have any questions about this report.

**AN EVALUATION OF CULTURALLY RELEVANT AND
RESPONSIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SPONSORED BY
THE LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Daniel C. Patton, PhD
Ebrahim Maddahian, Ph.D.
Sara Monempour, M.A.**

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Contributing researchers:

Ahou Abedi

Delie Bishil

Melody Cross

Geraldine Furth

Enrique Gonzalez

Laura Jeffords

Janet Lee

Rose Luna

Sara Monempour

Lorena Munoz

Duyen Nguyen

Melissa Rosen

Jonathan Stern

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Executive Summary

Analyses of academic outcomes for students in urban school districts have long evidenced significant disparities between the performance of African-American and Latino students and their white and Asian counterparts. Ladson-Billings (1994), Gay (2000) and others advocate the use of culturally relevant and responsive pedagogical methods as a means of improving student achievement. These culturally relevant and responsive education (CRRE) strategies have been adopted by Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) instructional leaders as a means of supporting the learning of students of color and reducing the achievement gap. They are built into district-sponsored professional development events in an effort to train school staff to emulate CRRE ideas in their own work.

This report examines the content of professional development (PD) sessions identified by district staff as presenting the CRRE framework, the Action Plan and culturally relevant content. The Program Evaluation and Research Branch (PERB) observed 399 hours of CRRE professional development. These sessions were evaluated for CRRE content using an extensive coding scheme comprised of seven domains essential to culturally relevant education. The research team identified four distinct types of professional development sessions: Culturally Relevant, Pedagogical/Non-CRRE, Operational, and Informational. In order to simplify data analysis, we separated each session into hours, such that a single 6 hour session would be separated into 6 distinct hours. Subclassifying each content hour made it easier for us to draw conclusions regarding the issues addressed in each class of professional development, as well as the dynamics that were observable during these sessions. While much of the professional development content could be termed culturally relevant content, we also assessed the degree to which CRRE content was woven into each of the four PD types.

A mixed methodological approach was used to examine the content of these sessions. Qualitative analyses helped highlight important and insightful CRRE-related data from various professional development sessions, clarifying the meaning of the elements that comprise CRRE and effective professional development. This evaluation addressed the following research questions:

1. What issues were presented to attendees at culturally relevant professional development sessions offered by the Los Angeles Unified School District during the academic year 2005-2006?
2. What are the characteristics of CRRE professional development observed in this evaluation?
3. What, if any differences were identified among the professional development content that was observed?
4. To what extent are these professional development sessions culturally relevant and effective?

Our analyses demonstrated that while “culturally relevant” PD sessions addressed important issues such as ‘using relevant and applicable material’ and ‘building on students’ prior knowledge’, socio-cultural and other emotional factors were also discussed. While the implementation of domains and their components varied between PD groups, all groups demonstrated the lowest implementation in the parent and community domain. The study also explored the effectiveness of these sessions using a structured coding scale to measure the effectiveness of professional development that was distilled from the literature.

We distilled the following key points from our observations:

- 1) Although we asked our informants to direct us to sessions where attendees would be trained in CRRE, we found that while CRRE information did constitute some of the PD curriculum, it did not comprise the sole focus.
- 2) Overall, the majority of the session hours contained CRRE content.
- 3) We asked district instructional staff to guide us to culturally relevant professional development sessions. They identified 399 hours of content, which we observed. Despite our expectations, only 57 % met our criteria for CRRE classification.
- 4) We classified 235 hours of the total as CRRE content, and found that the following themes were most frequently addressed: as the most common
 - a. designing rigorous instructional environments (53%)
 - b. active learning (48%)
 - c. focusing on language needs of ELLs (45%)
 - d. relating to students life experience (43%)
 - e. adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural difference (42%)

- 5) We observed fewer instances of the following components:
 - making willingness to participate the sole criterion for access to educational opportunity (3%)
 - giving ample assessment time (3%)
 - relations between community and school (3%)
 - intelligence as an effort based phenomenon (6%)
 - parents are encouraged to increase their involvement in activities at their children's school (8%)
 - impact of culture on testing (8%)
 - applied learning (9%)
 - peer teaching (9%)
 - preparing students for college and vocational opportunities (9%)
- 6) With the exception of professional development presented as part of the AEMP workshops and conferences, most CRRE professional development presented attendees with introductory information involving the basic CRRE concept and the foci and parameters of the Action Plan.
- 7) With the exception of Academic English Mastery Program (AEMP) sponsored sessions, the majority of the PD sessions CRRE professional development was usually presented at the end of the instructional period.
- 8) Session dialogue indicated a high level of engagement among the attendees.
- 9) Where attendees were observed to be resistant to the aims of the sessions, this was due to the perception that the trainings did not meet the needs of the students who were not African-American.
- 10) Participants sometimes expressed concerns that the ideal of culturally relevant instructional practice was sometimes at odds with district instructional standards and assessment requirements. For example, while CRRE research stated that African-American children might perform best using alternate assessment methods, state and local requirements necessitate that teachers administer standardized tests, assign written work that could be collected in portfolios, and conform to the strict timelines articulated within the LAUSD Pacing Plan.
- 11) Attendees communicated their realization that the types of issues raised in CRRE professional development session were not addressed in any other professional development context.

An Evaluation of Culturally Relevant and Responsive Professional Development Sponsored by the Los Angeles Unified School District

Beginning in 2001, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) created a Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE) Initiative for the purposes of assisting instructional staff to improve their instructional practice, and eliminate the academic achievement gap¹. The Initiative's conceptual framework maintains that the cultural referents and backgrounds of African-American and Latino students must be specifically addressed by District instructional practitioners if these students' academic achievement is to be improved. It aims to train teachers and school administrators to develop curricula and provide instruction that meets the needs of students of color. LAUSD administrators maintain that CRRE pedagogy and strategies should be embedded throughout instructional practice, curricula and professional development (LAUSD, 2003).²

In order to develop classroom practice that reflects these aspirations, LAUSD has developed an Action Plan that is comprised of five major tenets:

- Tenet 1: Students' Opportunity to Learn (Student Focused): focusing on student academic outcome measures (e.g., grades, test scores and college preparatory course enrollment);
- Tenet 2: Students' Opportunity to Learn (Adult Focused): focusing on rigorous, college preparatory curricula and teacher training;
- Tenet 3: Professional Development for Teachers and Administrators: specific plan to develop and provide professional development to instructional and school practice offered to African-American students and all other students;

¹ *Action Plan for a Culturally Relevant Education That Benefits African American Students and All Other Students: A Response to the African Student's Resolution Approved by the Los Angeles Unified School District's Board of Education.* June 2001.

² *Closing the Achievement Gap: Blueprint for Implementing the Action Plan for a Culturally Relevant Education That Benefits African American Students and All Other Students.* Los Angeles Unified School District Instructional Support Services Division. (2003).

- Tenet 4: Engaging Parents and the Community: specifies goals for increasing parent involvement and the utilization of parents' cultural knowledge and experience in support of their children's learning;
- Tenet 5: Ongoing planning, systematic monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the Action Plan's status: mentions the importance of evaluation and monitoring of the Action Plan's implementation, and specifies important focal areas.

This evaluation focuses on some of the on-going, comprehensive professional development activities that are provided as part of the third tenet. In the academic year 2005-2006, LAUSD provided its teachers with a significant number of professional development (PD) opportunities. Such sessions were developed to train teachers to use classroom practices and develop instructional tasks that meet the learning needs of students of color, and to increase their sensitivity to their students' cultural backgrounds.

Demographic trends within the District underscore the importance of providing teachers with this type of training. The overwhelming majority of LAUSD students are drawn from communities of color (LAUSDc, 2005)³. The District's teacher population, however, does not reflect these students' diversity (ibid.). Specifically, while approximately 87% of LAUSD students are either Latino or African-American, the teacher population remains largely white and female (LAUSDc, 2005).

Such differences (and a consequent mismatch in culturally influenced perceptions and behavioral expectations) often contribute to *cultural dissonance* between students and their teachers. In this context, cultural dissonance is defined as "a lack of congruence between the customary beliefs, social forms, and behaviors of one group and those of another group (Patton, 2004, p. 14)." Cultural dissonance between students and teachers has been linked to difficulties in classroom management and instruction, and thus, to

³ *A Strategies, Reference, and Resource Manual for Eliminating Achievement Gap: Implementing Culturally Relevant and responsive Instruction*. Los Angeles Unified School District Instructional Support Services (2005).

student academic underachievement (Carter & Goodwin, 1994; Patton, 2004). These challenges make the provision of culturally relevant professional development services to LAUSD instructional staff even more vital and significant.

This evaluation addresses the following research questions:

1. What issues were presented to attendees at culturally relevant professional development sessions offered by the Los Angeles Unified School District during the academic year 2005-2006?
2. What are the characteristics of CRRE professional development observed in this evaluation?
3. Does the content presented differ across different sessions and how?
4. To what extent are these professional development sessions culturally relevant and effective?

Quantifying the amount of time that CRRE sessions apportioned to differing activities shows the emphasis given to each content type during these sessions. We also paint a qualitative picture of the professional development looked like, the issues that were addressed by these trainings and how session attendees discussed a given topic.

BACKGROUND

Students of color have constituted the majority of Los Angeles Unified students for more than 20 years (LAUSD Ethnic Survey, 2005). Despite their numeric predominance, the academic performance of African-American and Latino students is substantially lower than that of their white and Asian student counterparts. These students' underachievement underscores the importance of the District's large-scale efforts to support the instructional needs of students of color. These activities are designed to improve student academic performance and reduce the achievement gap (LAUSD, 1987).

Since the late 1970s, LAUSD has implemented site specific, comprehensive school reform programs such as the Magnet Program (Maddahian, 1990), School Language Readiness Program (Maddahian, 1999), and Ten Schools Program (Patton, Maddahian & Lai, 2005; Maddahian, Pike & Weisbender 1996; Maddahian, 2002). The District has also developed a number of programs in support of English language acquisition, such as Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) and Structured English Immersion (Morris, 2005; Hayes, Salazar & Vuckovic, 2005). Furthermore, other district-wide initiatives have been devised to address disparities in student achievement, such as "The Children Can No Longer Wait" which the District began in 1989 (Los Angeles Board of Education, 2003). While each effort has exerted varying levels of impact in terms of improving student outcomes, the achievement gap persists and in some cases, even widens (Maddahian, Stern & Chen, 2006).

The Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education Initiative differs from previous reforms in that it aims to embed research-based pedagogical and other culturally relevant

strategies throughout all aspects of instructional practice. Such a holistic, district-wide approach distinguishes the CRRE Initiative from most previous attempts to improve student outcomes. As previously stated, most other programs were subject-specific and intended to impact specific subject areas (e.g., reading or math). Several previous school reform efforts were framed by the effective schools or multicultural education literatures, with the goal of either identifying effective school practices and replicating them in previously dysfunctional schools (Edmonds, 1979; Maddahian, 1999; Maddahian, 2000; Druian & Butler, 1987; Taylor, et. al., 2000), or training teachers to be more sensitive to the cultural backgrounds of their students (Banks and Banks, 1995).

Research suggests that culturally relevant professional development should develop five primary competencies among session attendees. First, these sessions should encourage their participants to hold high academic and personal expectations for each child (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Culturally relevant teachers *must* care about their students, hold them in high esteem, and use strategies to fulfill the expectations of their students, parents and others for the students' learning (Gay, 2000). Second, CRRE professional development should encourage educators to provide equitable access to learning resources and opportunities for all students (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Third, these sessions should train teachers to tailor instruction such that learning experiences are meaningful, relevant and useful for each child. Fourth, attendees should be trained to adjust their instruction to maximize each student's individualized potential based upon the learner's prior knowledge, experiences and skills. Finally, as a result of their exposure to CRRE professional development, teachers should emerge feeling responsible to provide each child with effective, empowering instruction (Oakes and Lipton, 1992).

In addition to the Action Plan, LAUSD's Instructional Support Services Division has devised an instructional manual that operationalizes professional development sessions that support the creation of culturally relevant and responsive learning environments. The following seven points distill the purposes of CRRE professional development as identified by the District:

1. using data to understand the factors that contribute to the achievement gap, and how change can be facilitated;
2. understanding culturally relevant and responsive instruction (CRRI) and its role in closing the achievement gap;
3. understanding the ten domains of CRRE;
4. clarifying what CRRI looks like in key content areas and student success indicators;
5. deconstructing myths, misconceptions and negative beliefs around CRRE instruction;
6. identifying CRRE competencies for administrators and teachers, and;
7. providing classroom application of theoretical concepts through lesson design, lesson study, peer coaching and collaborative learning.

(LAUSD, 2005)

Each element presents an important aspect of improving the academic achievement outcomes and closing the achievement gap for the District's students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section identifies the salient research findings involving the culturally relevant and responsive education, effective professional development and culturally relevant and responsive professional development research literatures. This review will enhance our understanding of important issues, frame the evaluation design and influence the analyses and findings.

Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education

The Los Angeles Unified School District defines culturally relevant and responsive teaching in the following manner:

Adjusting how we teach to the needs and experiences of students by using their cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference and performance styles to make learning encounters more relevant and effective (LAUSD, 2005, p.3).

This passage conveys the District's intention to provide instruction that responds to students' needs and cultural backgrounds. The definition underscores the belief that student engagement and academic achievement are most likely improved when the backgrounds and interests of students' determine the instructional focus and methods used in their schools.

Ladson-Billings (1994), Gay (2000) and others have conducted research involving the positive impact of culturally relevant and responsive pedagogical strategies upon classroom instruction and student academic achievement. In a study of the classroom practice of eight "exemplary" teachers of African-American students, Ladson-Billings (1994) contrasted the success of effective and culturally responsive teachers with the

ineffectiveness of teachers whose classroom practice was not culturally relevant. Ladson-Billings (1994) found that teachers who were successful with their students:

1. believed that all students were capable of academic success;
2. saw teaching as a means of giving back to the community of which they themselves belonged;
3. believed that teaching was a means of “pulling knowledge out” of the students;
4. focused on their own shortcomings as teachers, rather than identifying deficits within the students;
5. encouraged students to be responsible for each others’ learning;
6. believed that their role as teachers was to scaffold student learning, and;
7. believed in the importance and utility of multiple, alternate assessment methods.

(Ladson-Billings, 1995).

The Initiative asserts that LAUSD teacher practice should reflect these characteristics. In turn, such practice should positively effect student academic achievement. Gay (2000), Villegas and Lucas (2002) and Maddahian, Fidler, and Hayes (2005) have identified a direct relationship between culturally relevant teacher practice (teaching that is informed by students’ prior knowledge and experience and socio-cultural background) and student learning and academic achievement. Increasing the understanding of students’ communication patterns, learning styles, and instructional methods that positively effect student learning are essential to efforts to improve student performance.

Effective Professional Development

Urban school districts commonly use teacher professional development to affect standards-based reform of school practice (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Smith and Desimone, 2003). Weiss et. al. (1998), Cohen and Hill (2002), Sykes (1999) and others highlight the use of professional development as a means of improving teachers’ knowledge of content and developing their instructional practice. They believe that, after

having participated in effective professional development, attendees should better understand the processes involving student learning of subject matter and the contextual information that informs students' prior knowledge and their lives outside of school.

A number of themes are consistently found in research that elucidates the characteristics of "high quality" professional development such as: focus on content and subject-matter specific pedagogy, standards-based instruction, active learning opportunities for session attendees, empowering teacher-leaders, and "collective participation of groups of teachers from the same school, grade or department" over an extended length of time (Garet et.al., p. 82). While Weiss et.al. (1998) found a positive relationship between the intensity and duration of professional development and change in teacher practice, others (Cohen & Hill, 2002; Stigler & Hiebert, 1998; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999) noted that professional development that focuses on a specific aspect of pedagogical content (e.g., mathematics) exerts a more positive impact on students' conceptual understanding than professional development activities than focus on general pedagogy or classroom management strategies. These findings are corroborated in other research (Smith and Desimone, 2003).

Sykes (1999) specified three characterizations that describe effective professional development:

1. The knowledge transmitted in professional development needs to be highly specific to the curriculum of the child. Professional development should be directly connected to what the child learns.
2. Three forms of knowledge involving student work should be addressed by professional development activities:
 - a) Knowledge of subject matter --- teachers need to be engaged in the intellectual work of deepening their own understanding of subject matter;
 - b) Pedagogical knowledge --- the knowledge of how you teach a subject;
 - c) Knowledge of how children learn a subject.

3. Professional development must attend not only to standardized tests, but also to a variety of other forms of learning assessment, whether or not these are advanced by the district or state.

[Sykes, as cited in Moller, 1999, p.13]

In addition to the issues addressed above, Birman, Desimone, Porter and Garet (2000) insist that such effective sessions must also provide their attendees with opportunities to critically analyze learning and teaching. A feeling of connectedness and inclusiveness should be observable at these trainings.

Despite their focus on creating instructional environments that enrich teacher practice, they do acknowledge the importance of understanding students' prior knowledge and cultural backgrounds, and making allowances for who students are and what they bring to the classroom. Although Sykes (1999) pinpoints the importance of training teachers to use specific pedagogies, the author did not emphasize the importance of infusing culturally relevant pedagogy and strategies into professional development. Furthermore, these studies did not mention the need to train teachers to craft lessons and incorporate the particular learning styles of African-American and Latino students. Including these issues in professional development is particularly important for teachers in urban school districts such as LAUSD, where teachers are often unfamiliar with their students' cultures, their ways of thinking, learning and living and most importantly, how these issues influence classroom practice.

Culturally Relevant Professional Development

Teacher quality and CRRE are commonly linked in research that examines professional development for teachers of diverse students. Villegas & Lucas (2002) directly associate student achievement with the quality of teacher practice and by

extension, teacher professional development. Each maintains that, if students of color are to be academically successful, they must be provided with standards-based classroom instruction that is informed by the students' prior knowledge and cultural backgrounds. Ladson-Billings (1994) cites prejudicial attitudes and the lack of appropriate training as major indicators of unequal treatment of black students. Furthermore, culturally relevant practices have been found to be more successful with African-American and Latino students than "assimilationist" teaching practices (ibid, 1994; Maddahian, Fidler, and Hayes 2005; Barela, Fernandez, and Hayes, 2005).

Villegas & Lucas (2002), Gay (2002), and Maddahian and Bird (2003) also highlight the importance of addressing cultural knowledge in classroom instruction and teacher professional development. They agree that teachers who lack a working knowledge of their students' cultures may be similarly unaware of the relationship between the characteristics or communication patterns of diverse learners and their learning and performance. More precisely, these teachers may also be unsophisticated regarding the application of instructional procedures that maximize diverse students' academic achievement. They further maintain that adjusting teacher practice in light of students' home cultures enhances student learning.

Darling-Hammond (1999) emphasizes that teacher quality is the most critical predictor of student success. Effective teacher practice improves student learning outcomes, and exerts a demonstrative effect on the academic achievement of students who have been placed at risk by their environments. In short, professional development that focuses upon the needs of students of color should:

1. provide participants with specific, operationalized guidance as to how they can better connect classroom instruction to their students' prior knowledge, cultures and life experiences;

2. address the socio-emotional elements that influence students' behavior and thinking;
3. increase students' success in all areas of the school;
4. improve the quality and rigor of classroom instruction, and;
5. train teachers to use the instructional, diagnostic and assessment strategies that have been proven to be successful with students of color.

Farmer, Hauk and Newman (2005), Clair and Adger (1999) and Knight and Wiseman (2005) focus on professional development that is intentionally culturally relevant. In addition to specifying curricular and pedagogical elements, they also identify five characteristics that should be evident in culturally relevant professional development sessions. These are outlined below.

First, these activities must validate the backgrounds and learning styles of teacher-learners by helping them to better understand who their students are. The knowledge and awareness that they accrue should be used to develop curricular resources and materials that are rich with multicultural connections. Mainstream rules and communication practices involving the subject matter are discussed and clarified so as to specify the means by which this information can be used to support the academic achievement of culturally diverse students. Secondly, culturally relevant professional development must explicitly value and discuss the diverse ways that one's cultural and personal identities mediate one's style of cognitive engagement. These learning styles should be accounted for in the professional developments' instructional design and the types of programming that is offered during the sessions themselves.

Third, culturally relevant professional development should support the development of awareness among teacher-participants of the knowledge, skills and values

that are associated with access to socio-economic and political power. As with other aspects, these should be made explicit and operationalized so as to support subject-matter mastery. Fourth, culturally relevant professional development should engage attendees in learning through a wide array of culturally authentic instructional contexts. As a result of their participation, attendees should feel empowered and support socially conscious critical thinking among their students. Fifth, professional learning should also engage in multidimensional learning assessments. In addition to allowing sufficient time for exams and quizzes, alternate methods of assessing student learning should be used, such as portfolios, collaborative assignments, peer and self-evaluated work and writing assignments.

After having attended culturally relevant professional development, Knight and Wiseman (2005) contend that teacher participants should be able to positively influence academic outcomes for diverse learners by performing the following:

1. effectively instructing diverse populations;
2. recognizing and accepting their own [teachers'] culture;
3. committing to equity for all students;
4. maintaining high expectations for all students;
5. developing strong relationships with students;
6. providing academically challenging curricula;
7. establishing collaborative learning environments;
8. including connections to different cultural groups;
9. scaffolding between academic curricula and cultural resources that students bring to school;
10. involving parents and community; and
11. understanding the socio-political issues that are rooted in the community and influence student learning.

(Knight & Wiseman, 2005, p. 390).

The previous literature review explains the concepts and frames the findings that will be presented in the remainder of the paper. Also, by framing the teacher competency outcomes in light of the prior research on professional development, the review highlights

the optimal outcomes for teachers and students that will hopefully result from their training.

Methodology

The Los Angeles Unified School District is organized into eight local districts that are supported by a central administration. The District provides its instructional staff with extensive professional development over a variety of issues, ranging from pedagogy to school operations to classroom management. With regard to CRRE, staff development and training is provided either by Standard English Learner specialists, content experts, coach coordinators, other instructional program staff from central and local districts, or by external providers. To provide data for this study, we contacted program staff and administrators from the central office and local districts for information regarding their scheduling of CRRE professional development workshops.

Our trained observers attended these workshops and collected observational data from CRRE professional development sessions between April 2005 and December 2005. They compiled detailed narrative fieldnotes from each session, each of which was sampled from individual school sites, local district or central district offices. Local or central district offices sponsored most of the sessions included in this study. While specific instructional program offices sponsored some sessions (e.g., HighPoint or Open Court professional development) others were underwritten by grade-level specific offices, such as the middle school programs office.

Attendees were primarily teachers, content experts, coaches and other instructional staff. Our observers attended a diverse group of session types, such as literacy-focused, second and third grade level meetings, coach and content expert demonstration lessons, coach observations, debriefing opportunities and other formal and informal professional development activities. Observation sessions that were sponsored by central and local district offices averaged 4.4 hours.

District Level	Frequency (n)	Percent %
LD1	25	6.3
LD3	36	9.0
LD4	11	2.8
LD5	78	19.5
LD6	54	13.5
LD7	54	13.5
LD8	44	11.0
Central	51	12.8
AEMP	46	11.5
Total	399	100.0

Table 1 provides a summary of the observed professional development session hours by local district. As part of their trainings, school leadership teams are encouraged to use the knowledge acquired through professional development to create action plans for instructional improvement in a particular reading content area (e.g., fluency, comprehension, vocabulary and writing).

Our data collectors also prepared a set of reflective notes for each observation. Such notes reflect the observers' impressions of the PD sessions that they have attended. Observers were instructed to record these subjective ruminations in the reflective notes section to avoid expressing them in their "objective" fieldnotes. While these reflections were not used analytically, they provided clarifying, contextual information for the study.

Observation Time. The collected PD data was broken down into one-hour observation blocks, which were then broken down into 5-minute observation components for coding purposes. The 5-minute observation components were initially considered the unit of time for coding purposes. Each unit of time was analyzed and coded according to the CRRE core principles, which is summarized in our CRRE Coding Scheme, and

displayed in Appendix A. Each observation hour was considered a separate unit of analysis. As each hour consisted of 12, 5 minute segments, we could see no more than 12 instances of any component in any hour.

Data Analysis. For this study, we used a mixed-methodological approach that combines both quantitative and qualitative procedures to analyze the observation data [see Denzin & Lincoln (2000) and Miles & Huberman (1994)]. Before coding and analyzing our observation data, each set of fieldnotes was reviewed for accuracy and quality. First, we examined the observation fieldnotes to determine the foci of the sessions themselves. Then, we used a holistic and systematic approach to examine the content of each hour of observation and to summarize our findings. This approach provided detailed qualitative information about the content of each observation.

To analyze our observations quantitatively, we assembled and trained a research team to review and code each narrative's content using our CRRE Coding Scheme, derived from an exhaustive review of the CRRE research literature and relevant LAUSD documents.⁴ Our instrument addresses CRRE core principles that comprise seven domains: connecting instruction to student's knowledge and life experiences, inclusion of social and emotional elements, enhancement of educational opportunities, instructional quality and rigorous curriculum, instructional strategies, diagnosis and assessment, and parents and community involvement. The coded data was then entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) for statistical analyses. This usage of mixed methodology enabled us to triangulate our sources of information, and increased our confidence in the accuracy of our findings. Using a qualitative approach, we were able to

⁴ In particular, we used the framework developed by the Program Evaluation and Research Branch (Maddahian & Bird, 2003), the CRRE Action Plan and CRRE Instructional Guide (created and distributed by LAUSD's Instructional Support Services Branch).

read through transcripts of professional development sessions and then analyze the sessions according to our conceptual framework and instruments.

FINDINGS

This section presents our analyses of professional development session observation data. Resulting from our preliminary, qualitative data analysis, we found that despite the fact that the 399 hours of professional development had been characterized as CRRE, not all professional development was, indeed, CRRE focused. We categorized the professional development content into four distinct types:

1. *High CRRE content* sessions focused on connecting to students' prior knowledge and life experiences, inclusion of cultural, social and emotional elements, and educational equity. Examples specifically address CRRE issues.
2. *Pedagogical, non-CRRE sessions*: session trains teachers to provide pedagogical instruction regarding instructional issues without paying attention to student diversity or cultural difference. Examples may involve biology, language acquisition or another instructionally focused topic, but does not specifically address CRRE issues.
3. *Operational*: session focuses on providing training to participants involving non-instructional issues that affect school functioning (e.g. facilities, payroll and personnel issues).
4. *Informational*: top-down dissemination of information, wherein administrators update school staff and others regarding latest developments effecting the district, local district or program. Issues may involve an upcoming testing schedule, new program implementation, staff introductions or promotional information.

The first categorization, 'Culturally Relevant,' represents sessions with higher prevalence of evidence of the six major domains of CRRE conceptual framework, particularly with respect to the first two domains. The second group of professional development sessions emphasized pedagogical, informational or operational issues, and placed less emphasis on diversity issues. However, it should be noted that there is some

overlap among these PD types. As can be seen in the following tables, the analysis of sessions is displayed by content type; facts and figures are presented in the order of the four content types discussed above. Some of the proportions provided in the tables will be discussed in the text to help supplement any qualitative findings and excerpts.

Summary Categorization of Session Hours by Content Type

Among the 399 hours of professional development programming that we observed, we identified 235 session hours (59%) as being overtly culturally relevant. These sessions emphasized issues such as *relating to students' life experiences* and *inclusion of socio-emotional elements*. Twenty-nine percent (117 hours) of the pedagogical content that we observed at these sessions did not specifically address culturally relevant education. Content offered during these sessions addressed subject-matter content like literacy, math or science, the dissemination of recent research, modeling pedagogical techniques, fostering classroom talk and applying pedagogical techniques in the classroom. While these sessions did address pedagogy, the language and literacy content did not meet our criteria for CRRE. A variety of topics were addressed during these sessions: *thinking maps training, elementary math coach meetings, extended learning program, secondary language and literacy meeting, testimonials from teachers and administrators regarding their professional experiences, and positive discipline*, among others. The content discussed in these meetings often reviewed pedagogy or presented mock classroom lessons, but was not specifically geared toward connecting with the cultures of African-American or Latino students.

Among the sessions that we observed, we found that 25 of the total hours (6 %) provided operational content. These sessions focused on the application of a particular

testing tool (such as scantrons) or software (platform) programs like Edusoft. They provided explanatory discussions of systems, trainings and demonstrations of software, managerial strategies, regulations and legal strictures involving schools and record keeping and data utilization methods. This information was offered during the following types of trainings: periodic benchmark assessments, administrative academy, and Leadership Excellence through Administrator Development (L.E.A.D.) cohort meeting, among others.

Finally, 22 (6 %) of the 399 hours that we observed were categorized as providing “informational” content. The vast majority of this information was collected at principals’ meetings. Hence, the focus was on providing top-down, large-scale information to the participants. The bulk of the time was devoted to discussions of district-wide policies, budgets and personnel issues. In addition to the principals’ meetings, we classified some of the proceedings from meetings sponsored by Math Coaches, the Language Acquisition Branch and the Administrative Academy as pertaining to this category.

The next section presents our analysis of the evaluation findings, in light of each evaluation type. Analysis is presented both according to each specific type and across categories. Please note that the columns do not add up to 100, as one or more components were often observed to be enacted at the same time.

I. Culturally Relevant Professional Development Content

This category includes sessions that specifically address CRRE pedagogy and strategies or raise the attendees’ sensitivity toward CRRE issues. The session content focused on connecting instruction to students’ knowledge and life experiences, the inclusion of socio-emotional elements, the enhancement of educational opportunities, the

provision of instructional quality, and issues involving rigorous curriculum and assessment or conceptual discussions of issues involving discrimination or history. Sessions may address all of these issues or just one or two, but addresses them thoroughly and effectively. Of the 399 hours that we observed, we identified 235 as overtly emphasizing culturally relevant content. Among these, *relating to students' life experiences* and *the inclusion of socio-emotional elements* were the most frequently observed domains. Comparatively few sessions pertained to the *diagnosis and assessment* and *parents and community* domains, as these were the least frequently observed.

In many instances, the session discussions often broached issues involving discrimination, and its effects on various populations. In the excerpt below, the facilitator spoke of the incidence of racism and its prevalence among the general population:

We all have biases, I don't care who you are. They always say "I'm not racist and our school is very integrated and everyone dates each other, but 10 minutes later, they say "I don't like those Arabs at 7-11." And its important that we know our biases and we're honest with each other and we make sure that that doesn't color everything. And it's normal when you're the majority to feel threatened.

The speaker mentioned that all people had biases, and that they were often expressed in seemingly innocuous ways. The existence of this racism, however, often has real consequences for school practice and student outcomes. This part of the discussion reflects the importance of honestly addressing the issue of racism in schools --- acknowledging and pinpointing its existence, and then creating a system of strategies to address the situation. Interestingly, the speaker acknowledged the normalcy of a once dominant population's discomfort with changing demographics and emergent populations. Despite this discomfort, it is essential that the school population be accurately assessed and classroom practice should be attuned to students' backgrounds and instructional needs.

The following sections are presented according to the aforementioned types and displayed using tables extracted from our quantitative analyses. The tables compare the frequency with which each component was observed in each content type. For example, Table 2 displays the percent of time that the components of the “students’ knowledge and life experiences” were observed in each of the four content types of sessions that we attended. While we did not observe attention being paid to the identifying students’ cognitive strengths component during the operational sessions, we did see them in 21% of the sessions that we characterized as providing CRRE content.

Connecting Instruction to Student’s Knowledge and Life Experiences

As presented in the following table, Characteristics of Domain A: Students’ Knowledge and Life Experiences,” the most frequently mentioned component was “relating to students’ life experience. In only slightly more than 20% of the sessions, we found evidence of content that stressed “identifying students’ cognitive strengths,” “using alternative source of knowledge,” or “building on student’s prior academic knowledge.” CRRE professional development sessions most often focused on connecting instruction to students’ knowledge and life experiences, identifying students’ cognitive strengths, focusing on the alternative sources of knowledge familiar to them, and building upon each students’ prior academic knowledge. Table 2 displays that the CRRE PD group holds the highest values for most of the elements, followed by the pedagogical PD group.

Among those sessions that were seen as offering general instructional or pedagogical content, “building on students’ prior academic knowledge” (31%) was most frequently observed, followed by “relating to student’s life experiences” components. During the hours where informational content was offered, “relating to students’ life

experiences” was the most frequently discussed component. None of the CRRE components were significantly evident in the operational sessions.

Components	CRRE (n=235)	Pedagogical (n=117)	Informational (n=25)	Operational (n=22)
	Percentages (%)			
Relating to Students' life experience	43	28	24	9
Identifying Students' cognitive strengths	21	18	4	0
Using alternate sources of knowledge	21	14	16	5
Building on Students' prior academic knowledge	23	31	16	0

CRRE professional development sessions most often focused on connecting instruction to students’ knowledge and life experiences, identifying students’ cognitive strengths, focusing on the alternative sources of knowledge familiar to them, and building upon each students’ prior academic knowledge. As presented in Table 2, the CRRE PD group holds the highest values for most of these elements, followed by the pedagogical PD group. *Using familiar sources of knowledge* is defined as classroom instruction that introduces new subject area tasks as a beginning to support instruction. Such references may be drawn from students’ cultural or historical background, life experiences, home environments, the immediate geographical surroundings of the school and/or the community in which the students reside. *Building on student’s prior knowledge* is defined as classroom instruction that is informed by instructional tasks from prior lessons. Prior learning is referenced and overt links are made to current study (e.g., ELA, Math).

Using Familiar Sources of Knowledge

The issues raised during these sessions ranged from using cultural knowledge to augmenting standards-based classroom instruction by allowing students to use ‘cultural language’ in the classroom. The following excerpt outlines some of the academic problems experienced by diverse students and links teachers’ cultural knowledge of their students to good classroom practice.

... Well there is EL versus EO. African-American, Hawaiian/Samoan, Mexican-Americans and Native-Americans. They are performing far below the standards. They are performing far below Asians and Caucasians. That doesn't mean that if I have five Filipino children in the classroom, I'm not going to bring in Asian literature. I need to learn about my Chinese and Filipino students even if they are not the gap. We need to respond to our diverse student populations.

The excerpt above highlights the importance of learning and understanding students’ backgrounds in order to serve them effectively. While the facilitator alluded to using culturally appropriate literature as a strategy, he emphasized that knowing about their students’ cultures is critically important for all teachers as they strive to meet their students’ needs and improve their academic performance. Understanding the students’ everyday language and ‘home’ lived experiences are imperative to effectively teaching LAUSD students.

Relating to Students’ Life Experiences

In the excerpt below, the facilitator emphasizes the need to connect students’ prior knowledge to standards-based instruction. This session cited teacher support as an important element in using the student’s experiences as a basis for translating standards and exciting student learning.

What are the connections between your content cadre and the California Teaching Standards and the IFL? We need to connect them to the student's prior knowledge. I have poor readers, but finding something meaningful from their lives is a great first step to engaging them. Things have to be meaningful for them. There's no way around it.

In addition to calling for teacher support, facilitators modeled classroom instruction by incorporating students' experiences or alternative sources of knowledge into sample lessons designed to pique students' interests. The speaker mentioned the importance of finding an element of the students' lives that could be used to excite their learning, and to connect what students value to their daily instructional tasks. That was perceived to be the only means of making learning encounters meaningful for the students.

The following excerpt is taken from a model class lesson presented by a literacy coach, and opens with the facilitator having just finished a read-aloud passage. The facilitator illustrates how she might co-analyze the text with students by using experiences that are more familiar as a bridge toward comprehension of less common phrasing.

I wonder what "melted into the blue mountain mist" means. Have you ever picked up a piece of ice cube and you put it down and maybe in about 30 minutes, it melts and then it disappears? So that must mean that Amber watched a friend Anna, disappear into the mountain. How many of you have been to the airport before?

By linking two visual experiences --- the melting of an ice cube and watching a plane disappear into the horizon after take off --- the facilitator moves phrasing with ubiquitous meaning ("melted into the blue mountain mist") to a space that is more familiar to students. The key concept is that, with increased distance, the image dissolved into the horizon. While the students may have had limited contact with wilderness settings, they would likely have all seen an ice cube melt or an airplane disappear into the horizon during flight. It should be noted that these examples are not unique to urban students' experiences. In this way, not all of the alternative sources of knowledge or prior experiences are culturally exclusive by ethnicity or class.

Building on students' prior academic knowledge

“Building on students’ prior academic knowledge” was also a large component of connecting instruction to students’ knowledge and life experiences. As mentioned above, we defined *building on students’ prior academic knowledge* as classroom instruction that is informed by instructional tasks from prior lessons. This concept references prior learning and makes overt links to the issues and concepts that are presently being studied (e.g., ELA, Math). Where observed, prior knowledge was used to help scaffold students to meet state standards. In the following excerpt, the facilitator relates his efforts to scaffold instruction using students’ prior knowledge:

For me it's a process, a constant repetition. And that's a strategy --- to go back over it again, in a new way. One of my [methods] is to go back to standards, and relate whatever lesson I'm scaffolding to it. Students have to take what they know from their prior knowledge, and their actions, and come up with a criteria chart to see what they need to do to reach the goals of the classroom.

In the strategy presented by the facilitator, the entire class co-constructed a criteria chart for grading and meeting classroom standards for performance. In order to be successful, the teacher helped the students to identify what they already knew and used that knowledge to tailor lessons to support the learning goals that the students set for themselves.

Inclusion of Social and Emotional Elements

At least a third of session content that pertained to socio-emotional elements addressed either *high expectations for all students* or *adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural differences among students*. We defined the latter component as instructional practice that encouraged session participants to adapt instruction to most

effectively meet students’ needs. Instructional decisions involving classroom practice are informed by the teacher’s prior knowledge of children’s experiences. According to Table 3, the CRRE category held the highest proportion for *high expectations for all students* (26%), as well as or *adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural differences among students* (42%).

Table 3: Characteristics of Domain B: Inclusion of Social and Emotional Elements				
Components	CRRE (n=235)	Pedagogical (n=117)	Informational (n=25)	Operational (n=22)
	Percentages (%)			
Affirmation of Students' values	10	3	4	5
Building Students' Self-confidence	16	21	12	0
Encouraging Students' to learn	9	11	24	5
Respecting Students' diversity	23	9	8	9
High expectations for all Students	26	15	8	14
Emphasizing the importance of unity	9	3	4	0
Ensuring Students safety	8	13	8	14
Presenting positive role models and historical figures	11	5	8	0
Adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural difference	42	15	24	0

Predictably, content involving social and emotional issues was much more frequently observed in culturally relevant sessions than in any of the other content types. The importance of adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural difference in LAUSD classrooms was mentioned far more frequently than any other issue. The other two issues that were most often mentioned involved high expectations for all students and respecting students’ diversity, as each was mentioned in about one-fourth of session hours that presented culturally relevant content. The evidence related to other components ranged from 8% for ensuring student safety to 16% for building student’s confidence. Among the instructional/pedagogical sessions, none of these issues were

meaningfully addressed with the exception of building student self-confidence. While some attention was paid to encouraging students to learn and adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural difference, most other components were not mentioned at all in the informational and operational sessions.

Adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural differences among students

Facilitators and attendees discussed the notion of adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural difference in a myriad of ways. Two components most frequently emerged from discussions: adjusting instructional delivery to more effectively address students' learning styles, including curricular materials that reflect their unique identities while providing teachers with strategies to improve student-teacher interaction. Sessions in which content was devoted to these issues heavily emphasized the importance of linking culture to pedagogical strategies. The excerpt below provides a good example, wherein a math facilitator digressed from a math exercise to address some of the misconceptions involving culturally relevant education:

There are many sources of misconception --- for example, that education has nothing to do with culture or the heritage of the students. We don't take that into consideration and that is one of the reasons we have cultural blindness. Then teachers don't know how these Euro-American lenses work so they cannot see or understand how other cultures work and what their perceptions about education are. We are not going to do this math problem the same kind of way.

This portion begins by asserting the centrality of culture to effective classroom instruction. In an effort to debunk the notion that culture functions independent of education, he mentioned the negative impact of cultural blindness upon student achievement. Importantly, he mentioned that cultural blindness is not dependent upon the intent of the actors involved. One can be well-meaning and still be blind to the existence of a bias or the misapplication of a paradigm or the projection of an inappropriate lens

upon a student or group of students. This lack of understanding can be very detrimental to student learning, and negatively impact the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom, both in terms of instruction and discipline.

In another illustration of how instruction could be adjusted to account for cultural difference, a facilitator modeled a Mayan and Aztec history lesson. The intent was to provide historical details that pique the children's interest and then help them to make the association between ancient rituals and contemporary culture.

The Aztecs were a primitive tribe coming from the desert in Mexico. Their ecosystem was collapsing and they had to move. Their god was very bloodthirsty and they were hungry and took over another tribe. The Aztecs took the culture of the Meso-Americans and added some things, especially the bloodthirstiness of it. So the calendar should be very similar.

The jaguar pelt is very important. When the sun went down, they believed it transformed into the jaguar. The pelt is very precious and the nobles and the kings used the pelt and traded it as a luxury item. So there were the food and regular things, that were traded, and then luxury items like jade, feathers, and the pelts.

The speaker acknowledged that most Latino students may not have had much exposure to ancient Mesoamerican history prior to these presentations. Despite that, he believed that teaching them about their history would excite their learning, as well as equip them with tools that would allow them to recognize Mesoamerican symbolism in places that they had not previously recognized. He believed that such understanding would give them a better sense of self by helping students to understand the history of two great civilizations.

As illustrated in the passage below, the importance of adjusting instructional delivery was discussed in relation to student's prior life experiences, culture and prior knowledge. In an introductory presentation, the facilitator addressed the conceptual definition:

The definition of culturally responsive teaching is “adjusting how we teach to the needs and experiences of students by using their cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of references, and performance styles to make learning encounters relevant and effective.” So the knowledge that students bring into school is a wealth of knowledge, and you should use the students’ prior knowledge and experience for scaffolding, even if it doesn’t match the curriculum.

This excerpt points out a potential flaw in the programming. In some instances, after having been instructed to use alternate methods to assess student learning, participants pushed back by saying that despite the appropriateness of assessment methods that are attuned to students’ cultures, the teachers are still required to use the assessments mandated by the District and the state of California. For example, though a child might function better verbally than in written form, state requirements are still given as standardized tests or portfolios of student work. Bridging state assessment requirements and how students learn best is critically important for the accurate assessment of what students know and are able to do in school.

The importance of caring for students is mentioned repeatedly in the literature and in discussions with school staff, and is reflected in Table 3 with elements such as *building students’ self-confidence*. As was the case made by anecdotal evidence, culturally relevant strategies improve the effectiveness of teachers by enabling them to demonstrate that they care for students and providing them with the cultural tools to be able to relate to students.

I realized that it’s about bonding with the students and showing them that you care. But where is this leading? Building their sense of humanity and creating in them a wanting to be a lifetime learner.

The link was made between demonstrating care for students and developing a love for learning among the students. The need to develop a connection with the instructor in order to learn was mentioned continually, and thought to be essential to their desire to be good students.

High Expectations for All Students

The excerpt below presents a facilitator's explanation of her understanding of the meaning of culturally relevant education and the relationship between CRRE and high academic achievement:

It's to understand dynamics and be able to understand diversity and interaction. I think it sounds easier than it is. It facilitates high academic achievement. Free cultural experience and understand freeness of students expressing themselves and different learning styles and models by example.

In addition to adjusting instructional delivery, 'high expectations' was frequently discussed in the professional development sessions. 'High expectations' is defined as teachers expressing the belief that all students can learn, and communicating that belief to their students. We found that the concept was often referenced without being meaningfully discussed. Having said that, there were instances where 'high expectations' was both presented and operationalized as an important means of fostering student success. The following excerpt presents an example wherein the facilitator described how high expectations was expected to work in classrooms and the effect that it had upon student achievement:

But the other part, which is equally important, is to have high expectations of students and motivate them to rise to the best of their ability. So there [are] two parts: warming and demanding. Caring for a person and their performance, not just passively but also action provoking. Saying "you can do better." Engaging students. Students know that you're engaged in them and it matters to you what happens to them.

In order for students to succeed, the facilitator and attendees agreed that it was essential that teachers hold high expectations of their students and that these were communicated to and internalized by students. While the concept of high expectations was broached frequently in the high CRRE sessions, its mention did not mean that facilitators went beyond a conceptual explanation to offer tools that participants can use for classroom instruction. As is the case in the following example, high expectations was

often described as a positive attitude among teachers involving their belief in the ability of their students' to succeed.

Much of high expectations is subsumed in having a positive attitude regarding one's students, whether in regard to their intellectual ability, work ethic or their prospects for success. This is also seen in Table 3, where 'high expectations for all students' has a consistent proportion across all PD session types. As seen in the following excerpt, a teacher would ideally see her students not just as they currently are, but as our nation's future, capable of performing at the highest levels.

These are our future leaders --- right now --- those kids you are teaching. Whatever you want to be when you grow up. It is important that you see them in that role --- that you see them going to the Harvards, MITs, Yales, etc.

Emphasizing the importance of intergroup unity

In light of the persistent interracial conflict among district students, identifying points of unity between various ethnic groups was all the more important. While Table 3 demonstrates a low proportion of this component, sessions that do address this issue clearly conveyed its importance. In the excerpt below, the presenter described his travels to South America and presented what he had learned regarding the history and cultural importance of people of African ancestry in that part of the world.

('Journey to Black Mexico' presentation) Let me give you a fact. When Spaniards did a census, they found that 1/10th of the population were Africans. There were never more Spaniards than there were Africans. So how did they become Hispanic? If anything, they were his-african,

Contrary to popular belief, he argued that African people made up a large percentage of the South American population. In contrast with commonly held beliefs, African people were a larger share of the population than were Spanish people.

Enhancement of Educational Opportunities

Sessions that addressed issues that were designed to enhance the educational opportunities for students discussed *offering equitable access to relevant educational opportunities* and *providing additional resources for students when necessary*. By offering equitable access to relevant educational opportunities, teachers were better able to provide classroom instruction that improved student achievement (e.g., teacher feedback and discipline) and access to instrumental resources (e.g., computer time, access to curricular materials).

As presented in Table 4, “providing additional resources” was the most frequently mentioned component across the various types. We defined this as “student receives support that augments services that are usually offered (e.g., extra tutoring, diagnostic services or curricular materials, counseling, free lunch).” We applied this to instances where the facilitators mentioned the availability of extra services, monies or trainings for the support of school services. As can be observed in the chart below, issues involving the enhancement of educational opportunities were not frequently mentioned in any of the types identified during this evaluation. These were observed in less than 10% of the other content hours that we observed.

Components	CRRE (n=235)	Pedagogical (n=117)	Informational (n=25)	Operational (n=22)
	Percentages (%)			
Making willingness to participate...	3	3	8	0
Offering equitable access	14	3	4	9
Removing obstacles to educational opportunities	8	3	8	5
Providing additional resources	33	23	24	14

The most meaningful sessions that addressed enhancement of educational opportunities either modeled the use of a particular pedagogical method (e.g., read and discussed chapters from a book, culturally relevant presentations by the facilitators) or provided specific instructional resources or tools. We also found session presenters who were more aggressive in their engagement of attendees in discussions about the unflattering perceptions that they themselves or the society may hold of students. Such notions are rooted in race, class, gender or language-based bias, and inevitably hinder students' academic achievement and access to equitable educational opportunity. The following excerpt was drawn from a session wherein the facilitator recounted their own experiences as a teacher:

When I was a teacher, I had a difficult class and I had to line them up by the door at the end of recess. I had them line up in different criteria because the school was in trouble for gender equity stuff. By modeling that [gender equity], we create better opportunity for our kids. I mean kids hear all the time that people are equal but when we read this book we see it's different. Teachers all say of course 'they are all the same.' That was a very interesting point that you have to be careful with that. This whole conversation is very critical because we're creating structures where people walk into a room where they might not be aware of predispositions that they have, but we're articulating 'here is your special day class, here's your sheltered math class.' Most teachers are not aware of their predisposition and then you are putting them in an environment where you have to treat them differently. In some classes, there is little investment in the teaching of the class and all the focus is on order and control. Even in a poor school where people are perceived as low ability, the gifted classes are considered [to be higher performing students]. There is some very fascinating data on how kids are treated. What do they perceive their kids to be? We need to create awareness of the teacher's own awareness of the kids.

Some professional development sessions also addressed the issue of providing additional resources to students. In fact, Table 4 highlights that that component was frequently discussed across *all* PD session types. Further, the CRRE PD group contained the highest proportion amongst all groups. In addition to critical engagement with teacher practices that might hinder student access to equitable educational opportunities, the notion of access to additional resources was discussed critically as well.

“Providing additional resources for students when necessary” is defined as support for students that augments services that are usually offered (e.g., extra tutoring, diagnostic services or curricular materials, counseling, free lunch). In addition to these particular resources, facilitators provided session participants with resources that would aid and augment their classroom instruction. Two books were frequently referenced by the facilitators as being good resources for individuals who sought to increase their conceptual understanding of CRRE: *Culturally Responsive Teaching*, by Geneva Gay and *Subtractive Schooling* by Angela Valenzuela.

Curricular Issues

Our analysis of issues involving instructional quality and rigorous curricula addressed the design of rigorous instructional environments, the emphasis of multicultural content in curricular resources, focusing on the language needs of specific student groups and using arts as a learning vehicle. Sessions in which participants were engaged critically with “Instructional Quality and Rigorous Curriculum,” focused mostly on *designing rigorous instructional environments* across all PD types. Another important issue, addressing the language needs of *ELL* and *SEL* students, was not as consistent across groups. While most groups discussed ELL issues (proportions ranging between 23% and 68%), only in the CRRE PD category did a significant proportion of its sessions (32%) discuss any SEL issues. Designing rigorous curriculum is defined as classroom instruction that is characterized by commitment to standards-based curricula, rubrics, and use of an agenda. These sessions commonly explored standards-based classroom instruction. In these instances, attendees were urged to design curricula and instruct students to meet high, standards-based expectations.

Some attention was paid to issues involving the design of rigorous instructional environments, as can be seen in the fifth table, “Instructional Quality and Rigorous Curriculum.” Discussions involving the design of rigorous instructional environments were the most frequently observed across the various types. These were found in over half of the culturally relevant sessions and in 60% of the instructional/pedagogical sessions. We identified evidence of attention to the linguistic needs of English language learners in slightly less than half (45%) of the session hours, while less than one-third (32%) addressed issues involving the language needs of Standard English learners.

Interestingly, most instructional/pedagogical sessions (60%) offered some focus on designing rigorous instructional environments. About one-third of these sessions also emphasized paying attention to linguistic needs of ELL students. The foci of informational sessions were on linguistic needs of ELL students (68%) and designing a rigorous instructional environment (32%). Operational sessions also paid some attention to these issues. As was the case across each type, far more attention was paid to the needs of ELL students than was given to Standard English learners.

Components	CRRE (n=235)	Pedagogical (n=117)	Informational (n=25)	Operational (n=22)
	Percentages (%)			
Designing rigorous instructional environments	53	60	32	23
Emphasizing multicultural content	16	4	0	0
Preparing Students for college and vocational training	9	4	12	0
Using arts as a learning vehicle	20	15	12	0
Focusing on language needs of Standard English Learners	32	12	20	9
Focusing on language needs of English Language Learners	45	35	68	23
Considering intelligence as effort- based	6	2	4	0

Most high CRRE sessions engaged the language needs of SEL and ELL students.

Each element is defined separately below:

1. *Focusing on language needs of SEL students:* teacher helps students (whose first language is English, but not Standard English) to learn Standard English by building upon their knowledge of their home language. The teacher may allow students to use home languages or dialects in classroom discussions.
2. *Focusing on language needs of ELL students:* Teachers assist students whose first language is not English to learn Standard English by building upon their knowledge of their home language. The teachers may allow students to use home languages or dialects in classroom discussions. Teachers may use other resource materials such as picture books or dictionaries to support students learning.

The professional development facilitators frequently made the point that the language needs of SELs and ELLs were very similar. Further, critical reflection and engagement of current practices were evident in sessions that were facilitated by CRRE specialists or coaches who had been trained in culturally relevant pedagogy.

In the following excerpt, the presenter facilitated a brainstorm session wherein the attendees were asked to tell what they knew about the Standard English learner population:

[Reflection and group dialogue] *Ok, let's look at what you came up with about SELs. Teacher 1: the achievement gap widens the longer the SELs are in school. Teacher 2: SELs score the lowest in standardized testing. Teacher 3: [SELs are] taught by teachers who would rather not teach them. Teacher 4: Most SELs need to code-switch at the school and in the workplace. Teacher 5: Rigor must be continuous for SELs to achieve. Teacher 6: SELs do not buy into the testing process.*

In many instances, an open and honest conversation about the attendees' perceptions and misconceptions about the SEL and ELL student populations typified discussions that were perceived to have high CRRE content. These sessions went beyond discussions involving misconceptions to provide the participants with a better understanding regarding how to best engage SEL and ELL students.

The following excerpt models the type of open and honest conversations essential for sessions that effectively engaged participants in culturally relevant discussions. In this

instance, the facilitator modeled how to facilitate, scaffold and grade writing among the target student population:

Let them [SELs and ELLs] get thoughts down on paper. We'll worry about code switch or contrastive analysis and editing later. {White teacher asks about home language. [Particular SEL specialist] says that it is important to carry this over to homework, so that parents are not ignorant of this}. We do not correct, we model! If they say something in AA English, just reply in SA English.

Where discussions focused on the instructional needs of SEL and ELL students, facilitators typically addressed the topic by teaching attendees to develop classroom practice that was attuned to the diversity of students' learning styles. The excerpt below describes such an interchange, in which the attendees were taught to effectively address the learning styles of SELs. This comparative analysis of learning styles --- that of "traditional school culture" as compared with those that are associated with Standard English learners --- clarifies the cultural distinctions between European learning styles and those of Standard English and English language learners. In sum, the passage summarizes some of the rules involving learning, pointedly stating that where differences exist, these are *just* differences, and not deficiencies.

It is important to reassert the research finding that children of color generally learn best when working cooperatively, as compared with the European learning model, which encourages individualism (Ladson-Billings, 1997). This type of interaction is critical to student learning (both for LAUSD students and PD session participants), as discussions about SELs and ELLs seemed more meaningful when the participants shared their own experiences, learned from each other, *and* critically discussed culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy how it should be applied to their instructional practice.

[Facilitator explains] One side of the paper shows 'Learning styles valued by the traditional school culture.' Other side shows 'Learning styles of many SELs.' Even doctors have parents talk to children, have their children learn left to right, top to bottom model, which was the European model. One example is on the job training. We learn by

watching. That belongs on the left side. Our culture (Latino) has us learn as a group. Standard culture has us just listen to authority. When content and context clash, we interpreted that as deficit. But, it is just that they've been learning differently all along. Our interpretation of space and time is different, not a deficit. For example, Asian language does not have singular or plural. That is a European concept.

In other examples, facilitators mentioned differences in students' attention spans and how these should be taken into account when providing instruction. Also, they discussed student home-life experiences and the implications of CRRE for classroom management, parent involvement, and testing.

This excerpt illustrates a typical example of a session that specifically addressed the language needs of Latino standard English learners:

Thank you, ___. There are three objectives this morning and for the afternoon. The emphasis is on Mexican American SELs. Building your awareness and knowledge level of their heritage and language and the impact this has on Mexican American SELs --- their learning styles and strengths.

Instructional Strategies

In most cases, rather than isolating a simple CRRE element, critically engaged discussions were usually holistic in scope. While our quantitative analyses found evidence of all of the 11 CRRE **instructional strategies**, some were mentioned more frequently than others. For example, Table 6 shows that while *active learning* was the component that we observed most frequently across *all* PD groups, attention to these strategies was observed in about half of culturally relevant sessions (48%). Other approaches mentioned in culturally relevant sessions were instructional conversation (29%), cooperative learning (22%) and scaffolding (22%).

Interestingly, the rating for most of these instructional strategies components were slightly higher among the instructional/pedagogical session content than for those involving cultural relevant content. We found evidence of each of the following components in the sessions: active learning (64%), instructional conversation (53%), and

cooperative learning (34%). About one-fourth of informational sessions (24%) discussed instructional conversation and 32% of operational sessions focused on active learning.

Components	CRRE (n=235)	Pedagogical (n=117)	Informational (n=25)	Operational (n=22)
	Percentages (%)			
Cooperative learning	22	34	4	18
Active learning	48	64	16	32
Instructional conversation	29	53	24	18
Constructivist learning	15	15	4	0
Applied learning	9	9	4	0
Scaffolding	26	22	16	5
Targeted teaching	20	25	12	5
Peer teaching	9	18	4	9
Instructional tech	6	1	0	0
Teaching knowledge construction practices	33	46	8	5
Utilizing a variety of learning modalities	31	50	20	5

Additionally, a third of the session blocks contained discussions on instructional conversation, teaching knowledge construction and using a variety of learning modalities.

Also, about one-third of the session blocks contained discussions involving

Instructional Conversation, Teaching Knowledge Construction, and Using a Variety of Learning Modalities. We found instances of each of the following during our coding:

1. *Cooperative learning*: Students work in small groups (3-5 students), having been provided with clear instructional tasks and desired outcomes by teachers.
2. *Active learning*: Teaching through active application of facts and skills, modeling and observation, hands-on laboratory experiences, or active practice (S goes through a process). Use of computers, other multi-media, and methods that employ rhyme and music to enhance retention of ideas.
3. *Instructional conversation*: Teachers creates understanding through dialogue with students. Various techniques are used to clarify and check for understanding, and feedback is provided to the entire group as well as to individual students.
4. *Constructivist learning*: Teachers foster the development of critical learning skills, higher order thinking, and creative problem solving. Teachers may discuss everyday experiences, in order to support Ss understanding of their

influence upon their neighborhoods. Students may be given the opportunity to read, write, process information and make conclusions regarding current events.

5. *Applied learning*: Teachers create an instructional task with a real-world application. Tasks are developed based on students' instructional needs and interests.
6. *Scaffolding*: Teachers teach a new instructional concept or skill step by step, modeling the particular strategy or task, and then gradually reducing the amount of support so that students become more self-reliant. In scaffolding, teachers do not just give answers to students, but elicits input from them.
7. *Targeting teaching*: upon recognizing an individual student or small group of students' instructional needs, teacher gives additional instructional support to specific students.
8. *Peer teaching*: Teachers create instructional activities where one student with more knowledge teaches others who are less proficient in the subject area or instructional activity.
9. *Instructional technology*: computer-based assistance designed to support classroom instructional delivery.
10. *Teaching knowledge construction practices*: Teachers operationalize cognitive skills and specific steps necessary for S to master to subject area. These generic learning strategies can be used to clarify understanding in other instructional areas.
11. *Utilizing a variety of learning modalities*: classroom instruction is delivered to students using several instructional strategies or delivery methods.

Instructional strategies involving meeting the language needs of SEL and ELL students were the most frequently mentioned. Facilitators most commonly provided participants with 'tips' regarding the usage of CRRE instructional strategies. Less frequent were instances where attendees shared how they used these strategies in their own classrooms. The following excerpt offers an example of session attendees learning from one another's experiences:

[Teacher] for me, it's a process, constant repetition. And that is a strategy, to go back over it again in a new way. One of my [methods] is to go back to standards, and relate whatever lesson I am scaffolding to it. I have to take what they know from their prior knowledge, and their actions, and come up with a criteria chart to see what they need to reach their [instructional] goals. So collaboration does not just go on between student and student, but also teacher-student. Those who missed an area of understanding need scaffolding.

In this instance, the attendee described his approach toward scaffolding, and his usage of CRRE strategies to operationalize instructional strategies and lesson plans.

The excerpt below provides the reader with a summary of some of the other instructional issues that were thought to result in achievement gains for students:

Academic rigor, clear expectations, building on student's learning styles, and allowing students to engage in accountable talk. Research has shown that students of color fit in to the SEL category. We are trying to engage the students, and move away from lecturing. Research has shown that when students look at the lesson, they'll first look to see if they can connect to the lesson, the plot, the whole story. If so, then they can continue to [develop] the comprehension that you want.

Whereas the first elements of the passage make reference to elements of the *Principles of Learning*, the bulk of the passage emphasized the importance of engaging SEL students in a manner that they found exciting. By showing attendees that proving culturally relevant practice was directly linked to student comprehension, the facilitator takes CRRE from a position of marginality to one of centrality.

Diagnosis and Assessment

Issues involving the implication of culturally relevant education for diagnosis and assessment were among the least frequently mentioned. High CRRE professional development sessions engaged minimally with the **diagnosis and assessment** domain. The elements in the domain are: using tests to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, using multiple assessment strategies, giving ample assessment time, data driven instruction and the impact of culture on testing. The diagnosis and assessment domain definitions are the following:

1. *Using tests to identify students' strengths and weaknesses*: formative and summative assessments are used to determine students' prior knowledge, level of academic achievement and subject matter knowledge. This information is used to inform classroom instruction, program placement or grading.

2. *Giving ample assessment time*: Teacher uses non-fixed time testing, or extends time if students demonstrate that more time is necessary to complete assessment.
3. *Impact of culture on testing*: Teacher develops tests that include items that draw from students' culture and experiences.
4. *Data-driven classroom instruction*: Teacher uses test results to determine or inform instructional goals.

Although the sessions minimally engaged these concepts, they did so in conjunction with the domains described above.

Approximately half of the operational sessions addressed issues involving either “using tests to identify students’ strengths and weaknesses” or “using data to drive classroom instruction.” In most instances, these mentioned the importance of using test data to inform classroom practice or walked attendees through the analysis of student data. The usage of multiple assessment strategies was the only other component mentioned with any frequency among this content type. As can be seen in the table, diagnosis and assessment issues were mentioned slightly more as part of informational/ pedagogical session content than in the culturally relevant ones.

Components	CRRE (n=235)	Pedagogical (n=117)	Informational (n=25)	Operational (n=22)
	Percentages (%)			
Using tests to identify Ss' strengths and weaknesses	31	36	24	50
Using multiple assess strategies	23	24	8	23
Giving ample assess time	3	3	4	0
Impact of culture on testing	8	2	0	0
Data driven classroom instruction	26	38	20	55

Diagnosis and assessment were most frequently discussed in reference to the need to use test data to assess student learning and inform classroom instruction. Sessions where these concepts were mentioned typically instructed attendees to critique the effectiveness of their classroom materials and instruction using assessment data. This is

clearly reflected in Table 7 where there is a progressively steep drop from one row to the next, with the exception of *Data-driven Classroom Instruction*, for all PD types. This creates a wide gap in proportional values, where *Using Tests to Identify Students' Strengths and Weaknesses*, *Using Multiple Assessment Types* and *Data-driven Classroom Instruction* are the most frequently discussed.

The remaining components were less frequently addressed. In one instance, an attendee related their use of data, saying: “we looked at grade 4 quarter 3 results and looked at the areas of concern and realize that these prompts are really not working for those areas.” This illustration presents an ideal use of assessment. Regrettably, this type of example was not usually seen during our observations.

Parent and Community Involvement

Finally, we also saw comparatively few instances where issues involving parents and community were raised in the context of culturally relevant education. Our analyses were geared toward looking for instances of the following CRRE elements in the fieldnotes:

1. *Positive interaction between teachers and parents is fostered*: parents are encouraged to maintain frequent, regular contact with their child's teacher (e.g., via phone calls, notes sent home).
2. *Session encourages parent(s) to function as an educational advocate for their child*: support is given to parents to address their children's educational issues with school teachers and/or administration, assist with homework, and guide their children toward post-secondary education or a particular vocation (e.g., session instructs parents to challenge teacher or administrative decision involving their students; may teach parents how to approach school staff for maximum effectiveness).
3. *Parents are encouraged to increase their involvement in activities at their children's school*: Teacher places impetus on parents to have a more frequent presence in their children's classroom, school extracurricular activities, and/or parent-teacher organizations.

4. *Relationships between community organizations and the school are nurtured*: increased interaction between schools and businesses, non-profits, and religious organizations are encouraged.

In these particular sessions, the conversations regarding parent and community involvement most frequently targeted the need to provide a healthy, supportive learning environment for the students. Professional development content that addressed parent involvement was usually presented to administrators, at venues such as principal’s meetings and coaches meetings.

Table 8: Characteristics of Domain G: Parents and Community				
Components	CRRE (n=235)	Pedagogical (n=117)	Informational (n=25)	Operational (n=22)
	Percentages (%)			
Session encourages parents to function as educational advocate	11	4	32	14
Positive interaction between teachers and parents	13	9	60	9
Parents are encouraged to increase involvement in activities	8	3	20	0
Relationships between community organizations and the school	3	1	0	0

Discussions at the professional development sessions did not usually address issues involving parents and the community. Among only one of the types, *Informational*, was the exception to this; those sessions did mention the importance of parents being their children’s educational advocate and emphasized and presented strategies to support positive interaction between teachers and their children’s parents. Becoming a student’s educational advocate (32%) and creating a positive communication between teachers and parents (60%) were frequently mentioned during these portions of the professional development.

Summary Findings involving Culturally Relevant Education

- 1) While we expected that the bulk of session content would address instructional issues, we found that some sessions that we anticipated would be devoted entirely to CRRE instructional content also addressed operational, informational or other types of instructional issues.
- 2) Regardless of the context, CRRE professional development content repeatedly stressed the importance of using sources of knowledge that were familiar to students.
- 3) The importance of using familiar sources of knowledge (the language and culture of the students' home environments) and prior academic knowledge as part of classroom instruction was also greatly emphasized.
- 4) Facilitators often modeled the application of CRRE strategies in classrooms, especially in regard to the usage of students' prior knowledge. Much attention was paid to debunking and demystifying stereotypes of students and the environments in which they live.
- 5) Session facilitators frequently underscored that teachers must care and respect their students, should instill confidence in and buttress the self-esteem of their students.
- 6) High expectations for their students' performance was thought to be critically important to students' success. Attendees at the sessions corroborated the importance of these strategies and mentioned that when used, they had realized success in their own instructional practice.
- 7) CRRE relevant professional developments focused on the instructional needs of both SEL and ELL students. As reflected in Table 5, more explicit references were made involving the needs of ELL students than those of Standard English learners.
- 8) CRRE session hours generally spent less time addressing issues involving diagnosis and assessment and parents and the community than the other types of content.

II. Instructional, Non-CRRE Professional Development Content

Among nearly 400 hours of observation, about twenty-nine percent presented pedagogical content that did not specifically address culturally relevant themes. Content addressed calendaring of professional development sessions, data disaggregation, subject matter content involving literacy, math and science, dissemination of salient research, modeling of pedagogical techniques, development of class discussions and cooperative pedagogical discussions. These sessions are categorized as pedagogical/instructional, non-CRRE professional development and were observed in meetings such as: *thinking maps training, elementary math coach meetings, extended learning program, math coach intensive, english language coordinator meeting, secondary language and literacy meeting, positive discipline, and closing the achievement gap meeting*, among others. Among this category, sessions that were targeted towards math intervention had the highest frequency.

Though they did address pedagogy, the language and literacy content did not meet our CRRE criteria. The content discussed in these meetings often reviewed pedagogy or presented mock classroom lessons that were not specifically geared toward connecting with the cultures of African-American or Latino students in any meaningful or significant way. The example below was drawn from a session where intensive, remedial methods were presented as a means of helping students to improve their test performance. Basic literacy was stressed, as deep comprehension was linked to improved test outcomes. In addition to test results, decoding was used as a means of alternate assessment.

We need to measure where each student is performing, with multiple tests. Without that critical literacy bedrock they cannot read textbooks. So this is what we have to do to improve test scores. Keep in mind that those kids cannot comprehend grade level content ... They cannot read the questions on the standardized tests... Test scores improve far more rapidly if they improve their literacy. We are not simply talking about improving

vocabulary and phonetics. All the pieces of the wheel will lead to comprehension. Why is it so difficult? Often they have decoding skills, but keep falling behind. Based on decoding, we 'guesstimate' where they are.

We found math trainings often provided pedagogical content that was not always explicitly culturally relevant. Interestingly, the lack of culturally relevant association in math trainings was often justified by staff who believed that math was culturally neutral. This belief draws more from the lack of sophistication of the speaker than from the research, as Moses and Cobb (2002), Gutstein and Petersen (2005) and Rodriguez and Kitchen (2004) have developed and applied culturally relevant mathematics approaches for use with urban students. The excerpt below is drawn from an elementary math coaches' training. Their exercise involved identifying a task, setting parameters, devising questions and answers and providing clear directions:

(Coaches at an ES math Coaches meeting) In this question, we wanted them to make a ruler, and actually measure something with their ruler.

(Coaches still brainstorming on how to explain how to make a 4 inch ruler. They are discussing construction paper, etc.)

My question is, what is it that we want the students to write?

I think we just want them to compare lengths, so we need to ask, measure two objects and compare the lengths.

Why don't we just ask them to use an index card that's 4 by 6?

Even though the group was engaged in what was to become a rigorous task, the lesson was not thought to be culturally relevant because it did not specifically address the students' cultures. It could have been made explicitly culturally relevant, however, by identifying a task that was relevant to students' cultures and by facilitating classroom instruction in a way that resonated with the students in their classes and connected to their prior learning.

In another instance, a group of teachers at a training for mathematics coaches met to cooperatively discuss some of the issues that they faced in the classrooms that they supervised. These issues are addressed by a series of teachers in the excerpt below:

Table 6: Upper grades --- teacher misconception knowing multiplication factors is the answer for all. Primary --- inverse conceptions. The application of it in a problem is not used. I think it stems from not believing there are always five fingers on your hand.

Table 7: Primary --- the memorization of multiplication leads students away from problem solving. Not taught to apply word problems. Upper grades --- division is not taught conceptually, so when they see it on the test in a word problem they cannot do it. There have to be more connections. A demonstration of the procedure means understanding of the conception is a misconception.

MC4: Can I add to it? I have a teacher who is doing 50 problems of division and feels like that is a cure all. It is not, because they don't get the concept.

MC5: I think the teacher misconception is that we have to teach decimals, fractions, and percents as separate ideas. And until we get to the point where we teach them all together we will have that misconception over and over again.

Among the first domain, students' knowledge and life experiences, numerous references were made to building on students' prior academic knowledge and relating to students' life experience. Surprisingly little attention was paid to socio-emotional elements during these hours, however. Table 4 shows that "providing additional resources..." was the only component to which any attention was paid. Among these session hours, 60% made some reference to designing rigorous instructional environments. Predictably, Table 6 shows that while we found a significant amount of evidence for most of the components, active learning, instructional conversation, teaching knowledge construction practices and utilizing a variety of learning modalities were the most frequently observed. While many references were made to issues involving testing and assessment (per Table 7), almost no mention was made of parent and community issues (Table 8).

III. Operational Professional Development Content

Among the sessions that we observed, 33 of the total hours were categorized as providing operational content. Session content that was categorized as operational provided explanatory discussions of systems, testimonials from teachers and administrators regarding their professional experiences, trainings and demonstrations of software, managerial strategies, regulations and legal strictures involving schools and record keeping and data utilization methods. Such meetings are the following; *Periodic benchmark assessments, Administrator's Academy, Administrator's academy, L.E.A.D cohort meeting, Elementary Administrative Institute*, among others.

The following excerpt presented an exercise where prospective administrators were given a demanding task to be executed under difficult circumstances. The attendees were presented with a hypothetical campus incident and instructed to describe what actions they would take to address the situation. In this instance, the group wrote a response justifying their actions during a campus riot:

(Facilitator at Administrator's Academy meeting) So you have 15 minutes left. Remember that if you were a real principal, you would have had a fire drill or an irate parent knocking at your door. But we're being generous and we're not giving you a fire drill or irate parent. ... So you have 5 minutes until your community parent meeting and you know that you never want to be late to a community parent meeting ...[some people seem stressed, sighing and frantically writing.]

Time is up. If you would put your pencils down.

Before we start timing you for your Summary of Actions Taken, why don't you put the forms in order the best you can so it's easier to fill out the summary sheet? All right, if you look at the sheet, it says, what I did and why I did it" ... you have 10 minutes for this activity. Be brief.

Cooperative discussion before sharing out.

While not specifically instructional, the instance above provided the participants with important experience in responding to a very realistic scenario involving their campuses.

The excerpt below describes an instance where an assistant principal discussed his experience before a group of aspiring administrators:

I've seen people come in like gangbusters and they fizzle after a month. Find out who your people really are. You'll know who you've got and you'll know who you'll need to go see right away after you assign something. And when you are an administrator, you are in a different position. A lot of people try and still be a teacher. Once you've crossed that line, you've crossed it. You have to be very careful about what you say. You don't discuss things out except with your administration team. Maybe not even with everyone on your administration team. But be very cautious of what you say. Don't take things too seriously to the point of making yourself sick. Work hard but don't think you're going to fix the world. Be ready to admit your mistakes.

As is evident from the excerpt, the individual shared his perspective regarding what was required in order to be a successful administrator, stressing the need to pace oneself.

Much of the advice seemed to be geared toward becoming a stable, effective and productive administrator over the long term. His emphasis on the need to be cautious and grave as an administrator set the tone for the entire talk, and that of much of the days' programming. Also, he seemed to emphasize the importance of taking care of oneself first, even before the needs of the school.

In cases where information, operational, and instructional information was disseminated during a single professional development session, they were generally presented in that order. Culturally relevant programming was invariably presented at the end of the allotted time. Our observers often got the impression that these types of issues were thought to be the least important, or in cases where time was limited, CRRE discussions were cut short or postponed to the next meeting.

In comparison with the other content types, operational sections spent little time addressing students' knowledge and life experiences or socio-emotional content, as can be seen in Table 2 and 3. Some information involving the design of rigorous instructional environments and focusing on the needs of English language learners was observable, but

almost no attention was paid to the language needs of Standard English learners during this time. Interestingly, as presented in Table 6, we did find that instructional strategies such as cooperative learning, active learning and instructional conversation were at least mentioned during this time. Table 7 shows that this session type displayed the highest ratings for using tests to identify students' strengths and using data to drive instruction. Few references were made to parents and community during these sessions.

IV. Informational Professional Development Content

Of the total, we categorized 28 of the professional development hours as presenting informational content. A wide variety of issues were raised during the informational components of these meetings, ranging from greetings and introductions to announcements of new regulations to important deadlines. The bulk of the sessions discussed district-wide policies, budgets and personnel issues. While we observed this kind of content at meetings sponsored for math coaches, principals, and the Language Acquisition Branch and Administrator Academy. Principals' meetings had the highest frequency of observation among the group. Hence, the focus was on providing a top-down, large-scale information to the participants.

The excerpt below discussed a wide range of issues, ranging from program goals, to health care to compliance issues involving special education:

Ex. 1: (Facilitator at [name of curricular program] Administrative training). At [name of program office], we have the goal of high level academic English proficiency for our students. We want them to achieve professionally and academically. Instructional goal is High Point. Standards-based curriculum through ESL...High Point components include chants, CDs, reading selections... there are teacher resource books, assessment handbooks... We are going to look at the basics. Intensive language development begins. They are gaining comprehension skills. Phonics, word structures, simple sentence structures....

Ex. 2: There is California Care and if you pass out the fliers to all your kids, they're able to be seen and receive health care from doctors in the community and its good to disseminate these things to the parents.

Ex.3: (Superintendent for Special Education presenting at Local District 3 Principals' Meeting): you're not doing well with placement of students in SLD and SLI. You're not doing well with placing severely disabled with non-disabled. We did not meet the individual transition plan. You need to put those online. And at management, you are not doing the timely completion of the evaluation. You need to record and report. The good news is we have data. The bad news is that we have data. We need to have accountability and support of our sources. We signed a federal consent decree. We promised we'd meet this. Looking at the federal level and also in LAUSD, the student population is dropping, but our Special Ed is rising.

Predictably, nearly all of this content was clustered at the beginning of these sessions.

While we expected that the bulk of the sessions would address instructional issues in light of students' diversity and culture, we found that some sessions that we anticipated would be devoted to CRRE instructional content addressed operational and instructional issues instead.

As compared with the operational content, informational content paid far more attention to *relating to students' life experiences* and *building on students' prior academic knowledge* (per Table 2). We also identified many instances where *encouraging students to learn, adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural difference* and *providing additional resources* to enhance students' educational opportunities were mentioned frequently, as reflected in Tables 3 and 4. In regard to the fifth table, more attention was paid to focusing on the language needs of English language learners than for any other session type. Interestingly, these issues were referenced three times more often than issues focusing on the language needs of SEL students. The importance of designing rigorous instructional environments was mentioned in 32% of the sessions. While references to instructional strategies and testing were not frequently made, positive interaction between teachers and parents were mentioned in 60% of the session hours that we categorized as informational.

CONCLUSION

The Los Angeles Unified School District has committed to providing comprehensive professional development to eliminate the achievement gap. During the observation period, the District committed a significant amount of resources to train individuals to provide culturally relevant and responsive classroom instruction. These sessions constituted most of the district's effort to directly teach instructional staff to adjust classroom instruction so as to most effectively recognize and address their students' cultural referents and backgrounds.

The sessions were interesting as much as for what they did not address as for what they did. We hypothesized that most of the content provided in the sessions that we attended would offer pedagogical training, and that it would be entirely devoted to culturally relevant programming. While the content was not entirely devoted to CRRE programming, this kind of information did comprise the majority of the instructional content. Much time was also devoted to content that addressed operational, informational or other instructional issues. The importance of 'using sources of knowledge that were familiar to students' was highly stressed during the session hours that we categorized as culturally relevant. Also, the essential nature of 'caring for students' and 'supporting the self-esteem of students' was widely stressed.

In general, our analysis of the observation data yielded the following:

- 1) We found that CRRE content sessions stressed relating to students' life experiences much more than the other content types;
- 2) Socio-emotional elements were more frequently addressed in CRRE than in other content types. This is particularly true in the case of affirming student values, respecting student diversity, high expectations for students, and adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural difference;

- 3) The language needs of English language learners were more likely to be addressed than those of Standard English learners. This was the case for all of the content types, including CRRE. This inequitable distribution was most obvious in the informational and operational sessions. While still uneven, CRRE sessions had the highest frequency of mention of the language needs of SEL students of any of the content types.
- 4) We observed the highest frequency of mention of instructional strategies in Instructional/Pedagogical content sessions, as compared with the other content types. This was particularly true in the cases of cooperative learning, active learning, instructional conversation, peer teaching, knowledge construction, and the usage of a variety of learning modalities.
- 5) CRRE session content was four times as likely to address the impact of culture on testing than were pedagogical sessions. In contrast, the importance of using data to drive instruction was much more frequently addressed in instructional/pedagogical content than in CRRE.
- 6) In regard to the effectiveness of the professional development, we found an average distribution for each dimension across the various professional development content types. In other words, the content satisfied our criteria for professional development effectiveness.

Summarily, we distilled key points from our observations:

- 1) Although we asked our informants to direct us to sessions where attendees would be trained in CRRE, we found that while CRRE information did constitute some of the programming, it did not comprise the trainings' sole focus.
- 2) Overall, the majority of the session hours contained CRRE content.
- 3) We asked district instructional staff to guide us to culturally relevant professional development sessions. They identified 399 hours of content, which we observed. Despite our expectations, only 59 % met our criteria for CRRE classification.
- 4) Once identified as CRRE the most common themes we observed across the 235 hours of professional development included:
 - designing rigorous instructional environments (53%)
 - active learning (48%)
 - focusing on language needs of ELLs (45%)
 - relating to students life experience (43%)
 - adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural difference (42%)

- 5) We saw fewer instances of the following:
 - making willingness to participate the sole criterion for access to educational opportunity (3%)
 - giving ample assessment time (3%)
 - relations between community and school (3%)
 - intelligence as an effort based phenomenon (6%)
 - parents are encouraged to increase their involvement in activities at their children's school (8%)
 - impact of culture on testing (8%)
 - applied learning (9%)
 - peer teaching (9%)
 - preparing students for college and vocational opportunities (9%)
- 6) With the exception of programming presented as part of the AEMP workshops and conferences, most CRRE programming presented attendees with introductory information involving the basic CRRE concept and the foci and parameters of the Action Plan.
- 7) With the exception of Academic English Mastery Program (AEMP) sponsored sessions, the majority of the PD sessions CRRE programming was usually presented at the end of the instructional period.
- 8) Session dialogue indicated a high level of engagement among the attendees.
- 9) Where attendees were observed to be resistant to the aims of the sessions, this was due to the perception that the trainings did not meet the needs of the students who were not African-American.
- 10) Participants sometimes expressed their concerns that the ideal of culturally relevant instructional practice was sometimes at odds with district instructional standards and assessment requirements. For example, while CRRE research stated that African-American children might perform best using alternate assessment methods, District requirements necessitates that teachers administer standardized tests, and conform to the strict timelines articulated within the LAUSD Pacing Plan.
- 11) Attendees communicated their realization that the types of issues raised in CRRE professional development session were not addressed in any other professional development context.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The Los Angeles Unified School District has made tremendous strides in conceptualizing the Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education Initiative and identifying benchmarks that could be seen as success indicators. Further, significant progress has been made in developing a structure within which to disseminate this content. At the same time, challenges persist that impede instructional improvement efforts for our students. Efforts to date have not fundamentally changed LAUSD instructional practice. In many ways, culturally relevant and responsive education is perceived to be of marginal importance.

Recent analysis of student academic outcomes indicates that while there has been some increase in student academic outcomes, the achievement gap persists and in some cases, has worsened for LAUSD students of color (Maddahian, Stern & Chen, 2006). These findings highlight the enduring importance of providing LAUSD students with instruction that is tailored to fit their needs and account for student prior knowledge and backgrounds. Such instruction would excite students' learning and improve student outcomes, as well as student-teacher relations (Ladson-Billings, 1997).

During the course of this evaluation, we observed nearly 400 hours of professional development that had been identified as disseminating CRRE strategies. While over 59 % of the professional development content hours focused on CRRE themes, we saw no emphasis on cultural issues in the other 40% of the instructional professional development. Also, we found that information about operational and informational issues was also presented during these sessions. Bluntly stated, whereas we expected that CRRE strategies would be the dominant theme of all aspects of these trainings, we did not find that to be the case.

There needs to be a genuine, sustained and substantive commitment to tailor LAUSD instructional practice to the needs of the children that it serves. As is commonly known, approximately 85% of the district's students are children of color. As noted earlier in the report, research evidence indicates significant improvement in student achievement outcomes for students of color who receive standards-based, culturally relevant instruction (Maddahian, Fidler & Hayes, 2005; Barela, Fernandez & Hayes, 2005). While district instructional staff has expressed keen interest in learning more strategies to help school staff to address these issues, evidence suggests that the district's commitment to provide CRRE training is at best questionable. Increasing the level of political and financial support provided for CRRE professional development would demonstrate that dedication. CRRE should be an integral and dominant theme for instructional improvement throughout the district.

What we found

During our research, we found some evidence of serious attempts to provide CRRE training to LAUSD instructional staff. At the same time, our research indicates that CRRE professional development training is not happening on a large scale. Other than in schools that have adopted the AEMP program or professional development sessions that are either sponsored or facilitated by the AEMP program staff, CRRE professional development training occurs sporadically and in pockets. Nor did we detect a sense of urgency or the recognition that CRRE strategies could fundamentally improve teaching and learning outcomes in the district. Neither did we observe a sense of urgency among others who are responsible for the professional development of LAUSD instructional staff to learn these strategies for themselves, so as to be able to teach others.

The CRRE content that we observed was invariably facilitated by a member of the AEMP/Closing the Achievement Gap Branch, rather than by a specialist or coordinator from one of the sponsoring offices. While the efforts of the AEMP/Closing the Achievement Gap Branch are duly noted, admirable and essential, these few individuals could not possibly be expected to train tens of thousands of LAUSD teachers without a significant increase in support. Ideally, individuals who are resident in schools and other offices would take responsibility to learn how to apply these strategies to their practice and to teach others. While the Action Plan puts forth this expectation, it has yet to occur on a large scale.

Without a greater commitment on the part of the District to not only speak of the fundamental importance of CRRE to instructional improvement and student academic achievement, but to enact changes to ensure that CRRE is embedded throughout district practice, the efforts will once again fail. Without change, large numbers of LAUSD students will continue to underperform academically.

What we interpret this to mean

Summarily then, we have identified four areas that, if addressed, would facilitate the success of Culturally Relevant and Responsive professional development efforts.

These are outlined below:

1. *Change at the teacher level.* In order to improve instructional practice, the district should define the competencies that are necessary for a teacher to be successful with students of color, who constitute the vast majority of LAUSD students. This conceptualization should note culturally relevant and responsive education as a centrally important element of all teachers' instructional practice. At present, CRRE is perceived to

be an optional, compartmentalized element that is implemented at the discretion of some teachers and administrators. Rather than an option, CRRE should be seen as an essential aspect of effective instruction for LAUSD students. In order to scaffold student learning, effectively manage a classroom, or interact with parents and the community, teachers must first know who their students are and be able to connect that understanding to define their own practice as teachers. Having done that, they would be better able to scaffold student learning from the known to the unknown.

2. Lack of commitment to implement CRRE. Previous research has concluded that the District's consciousness as to the basic elements of CRRE and its application to classroom practice (Patton, 2004). Furthermore our respondents believed that, despite this raised consciousness, most instructional staff do not clearly understand the meaning of CRRE (ibid.). Furthermore, those who are responsible for providing instructional support to others have not received sufficient support in providing this type of training to effect change.

Despite continuing efforts, district staff did not feel as though CRRE was a high priority of the District's instructional agenda. Optimal implementation of CRRE professional development will come only when District instructional leaders insist that all LAUSD instructional practice should be culturally relevant. All LAUSD instructional staff who support instructional or technical support to schools and instructional staff should be required to have a working knowledge of CRRE pedagogy and strategies and be able to apply such learning to their instructional practice. This level of commitment has not yet been observed.

3. Observed conflict between the culturally relevant ideal for instructional practice and LAUSD requirements. During our observations, we found that participants

expressed concerns regarding incongruence between the culturally relevant instructional ideal and LAUSD requirements for instructional practice. Specifically, they acknowledged that CRRE theory suggests that children should be assessed using the methods that would best allow them to demonstrate what they know and are able to do. The use of alternate assessment methods (verbally assessing students, for example) was often suggested as method that could be used instead of traditional standardized testing or written work. While the attendees often agreed with the merits of this rationale in theory, they objected that these suggestions were often at odds with what their principals required of them.

In one instance, the participants argued with a presenter, mentioning that the District's requirements for standardized testing, written work that could be displayed in portfolios and the requirements of the pacing plan made the application of some aspects of culturally relevant instruction all but impossible. They expressed their frustration with the lack of continuity between what the district recommended in professional development and what they required teachers to do in class.

4. Need for further clarity as to the essential characteristics of CRRE professional development. As individuals from offices other than the Closing the Achievement gap Branch begin to take a more active role in providing CRRE professional development, they could benefit from having a clear, operationalized conception of what CRRE professional development does, and what it is designed to do. Specifically, defining the essential characteristics of CRRE PD, and giving others a sense of what such training should look like in practice, would be helpful to those seeking to take more ownership in learning CRRE for themselves and training others.

Recommendations

We believe that our research findings have some implications for district instructional practice. These are displayed by overall theme, and then followed by a series of steps for action:

1. Renewed and sustained commitment to implement CRRE.

- Make CRRE a fundamental part of LAUSD's instructional agenda.
- Place CRRE prominently in the Superintendent's charge
- Clarify and operationalize what the district means regarding the discovery and usage of students' backgrounds and prior knowledge in instruction.

2. Tangibly support CRRE professional development.

- Support AEMP/ Closing the Achievement gap office with significant increases in staffing and financial support.
- Use the tools that have been developed to implement CRRE professional development to positively influence school practice and student academic achievement.

3. Change Teacher's Job Description. In order to enact change at the teacher level, several things must take place:

- Clarify what it means to discover students' backgrounds and prior knowledge.
- Require LAUSD teachers and other instructional staff to learn CRRE strategies and be able to apply them in their own instructional practice.

4. *Resolve conflict between culturally relevant theory and state and LAUSD instructional requirements.*
 - Identify the conflicts between what is suggested to teachers by CRRE professional development, as compared with LAUSD requires of its teachers.
 - Reconcile these conflicts by amending district requirements for instruction and assessment with CRRE theory.

5. *Increase the level of distributed leadership involving CRRE.*
 - Clarify the essential characteristics of CRRE professional development.
 - Require instructional staff to be responsible for supporting the learning of others to learn CRRE strategies.
 - Insist that instructional staff members who are responsible for supporting school staff take a more active role in providing professional development themselves.

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Appendix A: CRRE Coding Scheme

Session Title: _____

Facilitator: _____

Date & Time: _____

Location: _____

Observer: _____

CRRE Coding Scheme

Instructions:

1. Immediately following the session, offer your summary judgments by noting yes or no next to all items that apply.
2. Cross-reference your scripts with this worksheet and report the time block(s) when items occurred.

A. Connecting Instruction to Student's Knowledge and Life Experiences		
<i>PD session emphasized the following topics:</i>		Time block(s)
Yes/No		
	Relating to students' life experiences	
	Identifying students' cognitive strengths	
	Using alternate sources of knowledge that are familiar to students	
	Building on students' prior academic knowledge	
B. Inclusion of Social and Emotional Elements		
<i>PD session emphasized the following topics:</i>		Time block(s)
Yes/No		
	Affirmation of students' values	
	Building students' self-confidence	
	Encouraging students' to learn	
	Respecting students' diversity	
	High expectations for all students	
	Emphasizing the importance of unity between different groups	
	Ensuring students' safety	
	Presenting positive role models and historical figures	
	Adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural differences among students.	
C. Enhancement of Educational Opportunities		
<i>PD session explored the following topic(s):</i>		Time block(s)
Yes/No		

	Making willingness to participate the sole criterion for access to school and classroom opportunities	
	Offering equitable access to relevant educational opportunities for all	
	Removing obstacles to educational opportunities	
	Providing additional resources for students when necessary	

D. Instructional Quality and Rigorous Curriculum

PD session emphasized the following topics:

Yes/No

	Designing rigorous instructional environments	
	Emphasizing multicultural content	
	Preparing students for college and vocational training education	
	Using arts as a learning vehicle	
	Focusing on language needs of SEL students	
	Focusing on language needs of ELL students	
	Considering intelligence as an effort-based phenomenon	

E. Instructional Strategies

PD session emphasized the following topics:

Yes/No

	Cooperative learning	
	Active learning	
	Instructional conversation	
	Constructivist learning	
	Applied learning	
	Scaffolding	
	Targeted teaching	
	Peer teaching	
	Instructional technology	
	Teaching knowledge construction practices	
	Utilizing a variety of learning modalities	

F. Diagnosis and Assessment

PD session emphasized the following topics:

Yes/No

	Using tests to identify students' strengths and weaknesses	
	Using multiple assessment strategies	
	Giving ample assessment time	
	Impact of culture on testing	
	Data driven classroom instruction	

G. Parents and Community

PD session emphasized the following topics:

Yes/No

	Session encourages parent(s) to function as an educational advocate for their child.	
	Positive interaction between teachers and parents is fostered.	
	Parents are encouraged to increase their involvement in activities at their children's school.	
	Relationships between community organizations and the school are nurtured.	

CRRE Coding Scheme Definitions

I. CRRE Content

A. Connecting Instruction to Student's Knowledge and Life Experience

1. *Relating to students' life experience*: classroom instruction that includes references from Ss' environment, culture or family life [T directly questions S regarding an aspect of their lives at home or in the community; T asks S to use an example from their home lives in classroom learning (T: "what are some examples of home remedies that your families use to cure a cold?")].
2. *Identifying students' cognitive strengths*: T asks questions or provides classroom instruction that is designed to pinpoint Ss' innate instructional talents and skills (e.g., T assigns S to write a paragraph to determine their conceptual writing skill).
3. *Using familiar sources of knowledge*: classroom instruction that introduces new subject area tasks as a beginning to support instruction (may include references from students' life experiences, geographic references, etc.).
4. *Building on students' prior academic knowledge*: classroom instruction is informed by instructional tasks from prior lessons. Prior learning is referenced and overt links are made to current study (e.g., ELA, Math).

B. Inclusion of Social and Emotional Elements

1. *Affirming students' values*: T shows empathy and respect for Ss and their cultures. Ss know they are accepted and understood (e.g., T verbally supports the worth of S' cultural traditions or beliefs, or their rights to maintain a particular belief).
2. *Building students' self-confidence*: T encourages Ss' academic successes, thereby providing Ss with feelings of competence and confidence (e.g., T verbally recognizes child as having performed well on a classroom assignment).
3. *Encouraging students' to learn*: inspiring Ss to apply themselves academically, as demonstrated by focused, sustained effort (e.g., T inspires or spurs students focus on new subject matter or academic concepts; T: "Come on you guys, this is a really important concept. You can do it!").
4. *Respecting students' diversity*: T shows respect for Ss cultures, values, and communities (verbal or visual demonstration). T overtly discredits negative speech or action toward different ethnic groups by including positive role models and images within course content and materials. [e.g., "Mayan architecture was extremely advanced technologically," or in response to an S providing a non-linear description of events (e.g., "Chantrelle, I like the way that you described the story's setting. It gives a better understanding of the reasons behind why things are occurring the way that they are.")]
5. *High expectations for all students*: T expresses the belief that all Ss can learn, and communicates that to Ss (e.g., T verbally expresses her expectation that all S in classroom are intelligent and able to achieve academically; T may

address this expectation to a disengaged individual or group of S; T expresses high expectations for all ethnic groups represented in the classroom).

6. *Emphasizing the importance of unity between different groups*: overt encouragement of commonality and goodwill between ethnic groups, and need for intergroup harmony (e.g., T encourages S of different ethnic group to participate in activities drawn from other S cultures; T changes S seating to ensure that Ss of different ethnic groups and genders interact).
7. *Ensuring students' safety*: overt speech or action to safeguard Ss from possible injury (e.g., T intervention from bullying or fighting). Intervention may protect S from other S, staff or off-campus person.
8. *Presenting positive role models and historical figures*: T provides positive role models from all cultural/ethnic groups represented by Ss, and expresses respect for different types of life work (e.g., positive examples of figures from various ethnic groups are displayed in classroom environment or reflected in curricula; individual could be drawn from politics, business, entertainment fields, family and community or other arena).
9. *Adjusting instructional delivery to address cultural differences among students*: T adapts classroom practice and pedagogical strategies to most effectively meet the needs of classroom students. Decisions involving classroom practice are informed by T prior knowledge of children's experiences. (e.g., T uses pedagogical method that has been proven successful with students of color; T clarifies the meaning of a vocabulary word by using examples from the instructional language).

C. Enhancement of Educational Opportunities

1. *Making willingness to participate the sole criterion for access to school and classroom opportunities*: T welcomes all Ss participation in classroom lessons. T does not obviously favor one S or group of Ss over another (e.g., T actively works to ensure that all Ss are engaged in classroom tasks).
2. *Offering equitable access to relevant educational opportunities for all*: T works to ensure that classroom practices (e.g., T feedback and discipline) and access to instrumental resources (e.g., computer time, access to curricular materials) are dispensed fairly and equally to all students. Schools of similar background (e.g. test scores, student demographics, location) are ensured to receive similar types of resources and learning opportunities.
3. *Removing obstacles to educational opportunities*: T identifies operational (e.g., T practice and inadequate curricular materials) or tacit (e.g., culturally incompatible T practice) impediments to S learning and removes them.
4. *Providing additional resources for students when necessary*: S receives support that augments services that are usually offered (e.g., extra tutoring, diagnostic services or curricular materials, counseling, free lunch).

D. Instructional Quality and Rigorous Curriculum

3. *Designing rigorous instructional environments*: classroom instruction is characterized by commitment to standards-based curricula, high thinking demand (S are challenged to construct explanations and justify arguments in

each subject; S are expected to raise questions, solve problems, think and reason), rubrics, and use of an agenda.

4. *Emphasizing multicultural content*: T includes historical examples of resilience, overcoming adversity, excellence and contributions from a variety of ethnic groups, cultural and socio-economic groups into class lessons. T utilize specific cultural references in a positive manner (T: The non-violent strategies used by Martin Luther King , jr. were based upon those of Gandhi. What were some of the similarities between the conditions that Indians and African-Americans struggled against?).
 5. *Preparing students for college and vocational education*: T makes reference to importance of post-secondary education, inquires re: Ss' goals and career interests (T: The standard of living here in California makes obtaining a college education all the more important.).
 6. *Using arts as a learning vehicle*: T uses art (literary references, music, graphic arts (sculpture, painting) to excite students' love of learning.
 7. *Focusing on language needs of SEL students*: T helps Ss (whose first language is English, but not Standard English) to learn Standard English by building upon their knowledge of their home language. T may allow Ss to use home languages or dialects in classroom discussions.
 8. *Focusing on language needs of ELL students*: T assist S whose first language is not English to learn Standard English by building upon their knowledge of their home language. T may allow Ss to use home languages or dialects in classroom discussions. T may use other resources materials such as picture books or dictionaries to support S learning.
 9. *Considering intelligence as an effort-based phenomenon*: T makes overt association between academic achievement and student work ethic and commitment to excellence (T: "Pedro is using the memorization strategies that we talked about in class yesterday. You can see from his recitation that it makes a difference in terms of his ability to remember the poem.")
 10. *Adjusting instructional delivery to account for S academic performance*: T adapts classroom practice and pedagogical strategies according to S academic performance.
- E. Instructional Strategies
9. *Cooperative learning*: S work in small groups (3-5 students), having been provided with clear instructional tasks and desired outcomes by T (e.g., observation describes small groups of S working on an assignment with teacher assistance).
 10. *Active learning and apprenticeship*: Teaching through active application of facts and skills, modeling and observation, hands-on laboratory experiences, or active practice. Use of computers, other multi-media, and methods that employ rhyme and music to enhance retention of ideas (e.g., S apply and discuss concepts to test their understanding, interpret texts and construct solutions to complex problems).
 11. *Instructional conversation*: T creates understanding through dialogue with students. Various techniques are used to clarify and check for understanding, and feedback is provided to group as well as to individual S (e.g., T and S

- dialogue re: a classroom task or other issue. S actively participate in classroom talk. Some of the questions or comments are initiated by S).
12. *Constructivist learning*: T fosters the development of critical learning skills, higher order thinking, and creative problem solving. T may discuss everyday experiences, in order to support Ss understanding of their influence upon their neighborhoods. S may be given the opportunity to read, write, process information and make conclusions regarding current events (e.g., T brings up the topic of bullying on campus. Links campus bullying to tyrannical political regimes that exploit the lower classes).
 13. *Applied learning*: T creates an instructional task with a real-world application (e.g., mathematical word problems involving videogame skill sets or comparison between literary hero and Ss' lives). Tasks are developed based on students' instructional needs and interests.
 14. *Scaffolding*: T teaches a new instructional concept or skill step by step, modeling the particular strategy or task, and then gradually reducing the amount of support so that Ss become more self-reliant. In scaffolding, teachers do not just give answers to Ss, but elicits input from them (e.g., T introduces 4 digit addition problems, providing significant support for students. After S demonstrate proficiency, T reduces level of support, leaving S to self-manage their learning).
 7. *Targeting teaching*: upon recognizing an individual S or small group of Ss' instructional needs, T gives additional instructional support to specific Ss. (e.g., T addresses an instructional probe toward a particular S).
 8. *Peer teaching*: T creates instructional activity where one student with more knowledge teaches others who are less proficient in the subject area or instructional activity (e.g., 2 S work together on a classroom task, with one S providing the other with instructional support).
 9. *Instructional technology*: computer-based assistance designed to support classroom instructional delivery (e.g., T assigns S to do some work on a computer; can be Special Education resource work).
 10. *Teaching knowledge construction practices*: T operationalizes cognitive skills and specific steps necessary for S to master to subject area. These generic learning strategies can be used to clarify understanding in other instructional areas [e.g., T explains how to go about conducting an assignment, mentioning some of the skills that are necessary for conceptual understanding (algebraic thinking, journalistic thinking)].
 11. *Utilizing a variety of learning modalities*: classroom instruction is delivered to students using several instructional strategies or delivery methods (e.g., cooperative learning and lecture, or white board and listening exercises supported by audio equipment).

F. Diagnosis and Assessment

1. *Using tests to identify S strengths and weaknesses*: formative and summative assessments are used to determine students' prior knowledge, level of academic achievement and subject matter knowledge. This information is used to inform classroom instruction, program placement or grading [e.g., teacher uses formal (quizzes and standardized tests) and informal (in-class

recitation, question and answer) to check S' understanding of a specific subject. This knowledge can be used to inform future teacher practice or curricular planning].

2. *Using Multiple Assessment Strategies:*
3. *Giving ample assessment time:* T uses non-fixed time testing, or extends time if Ss demonstrate that more time is necessary to complete assessment. (e.g., T asks S if they need additional time to complete a test or other in-class assignment, gives them extra time accordingly).
4. *Impact of culture on testing:* T develops tests that include items that draw from S' culture and experiences (e.g., math tests may reference S favorite foods or use locations S are familiar with in word problems to compute distance or circumference).
5. *Data-driven classroom instruction:* T uses test results to determine or inform instructional goals (e.g., T uses formative assessment results to determine areas for future instructional focus; S may perform poorly on a test, and T extends time on a particular instructional area accordingly).

G. Parents/Community

6. *Positive interaction between teachers and parents is fostered:* parents are encouraged to maintain frequent, regular contact with their child's teacher (e.g., via phone calls, notes sent home).
7. *Session encourages parent(s) to function as an educational advocate for their child:* support is given to parents to address their children's educational issues with school teachers and/or administration, assist with homework, and guide their children toward post-secondary education or a particular vocation (e.g., session instructs parents to challenge T or administrative decision involving their S; may teach parents how to approach school staff for maximum effectiveness).
8. *Parents are encouraged to increase their involvement in activities at their children's school:* T places impetus on parents to have a more frequent presence in their children's classroom, school extracurricular activities, and/or parent-teacher organizations. Attention is given to possible impediments in parent interaction (e.g. evening meetings, weekend events, etc.). For example, facilitator mentions the importance of parent involvement in classroom instruction; may mention areas in which parents may increase their involvement (classroom art lessons, Teacher-Parent meetings conducted in language other than English; parent meetings designed to train parents to help S with homework).
9. *Relationships between community organizations and the school are nurtured:* increased interaction between schools and businesses, non-profits, and religious organizations are encouraged (e.g., facilitator encourages school staff to find new ways to increase community involvement at school).