Culturally Responsive: Educator Mindset and Action
Engage in Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices

>> Good teachers know that a repertoire during the day will vary greatly, that depending upon the kids they’re teaching and depending upon the particular skill or competence or knowledge that they wish to develop in the kids, that there will be different pedagogical moments and approaches. The trick, I think, of overall professional capacity is developing a broad repertoire, and then the kind of assessment literacy so that the teacher can actually see the kid, see the target competence or knowledge and skill, and then put the repertoire in place. The two elements of pedagogy that we found that seemed to make a difference for our most at-risk learners were intellectual depth and connectedness to the world; that is, upping the intellectual demand, taking them to rich possible worlds, opening out the world to them, exploring ideas in depth. And on the other hand, showing them a connectedness between what you were teaching and everyday life.

>> I tried to circumvent the notion of other, and so on, when dealing with social justice issues by simply rooting it in the city, and the things that the students themselves are experiencing. And that is key, not only to engagement, but certainly enables their own knowledge and their own experiences in their society to come forth and come full circle, so to speak, because they know then that when they want to assist, they’re not just going to be assisting some unknown factor. They’re going to be assisting people they know, the place where they live.

>> Okay, thank you for being so well-behaved on the walk here.

>> We started here at St. Sebastian by looking at real-world problems and looking at how our students can be engaged in mathematics, and going a step beyond that. Looking at how they can be action-oriented based on mathematics. And we found that once we introduced this to our students and allowed them to have their voice heard, they became more engaged and they became doers. They became not just passive learners, but active learners, active doers.

>> Are you guys ready for this?

>> Yes!

>> This gets us to pedagogy, our teaching and learning. And the pedagogy, we call it the "new pedagogy," because it’s a new pedagogical partnership between and among students and teachers, and linked into families. What does that mean in new partnership? It means that the student has much bigger role in defining some of the direction, and the teacher’s proactive in helping students work together. They work on real problems and developed skills of collaboration. The student is part of giving feedback to the teacher and feedback to each other. So this combination, and we’re at the early stages here, but some people are doing examples of it. So the next stage is to carefully define, what are the key elements of this learning partnership that
gives teachers a proactive role, but students also a strong partnership? And how do students work together? How do teachers work together?

>> I’ve always considered myself a co-learner, but now with this pedagogy, I’m finding myself more so. I also find that I assist in facilitating, but predominantly, it is the student who engages in the inquiry, and becomes very, very engaged with the subject matter. So I’m sometimes there almost for the ride, so to speak.

>> Good teaching is like dancing. You’ve got to have a lot of dance steps, so depending upon who your partner is and what the music is, you can actually shift the repertoire. A lot of us as teachers fall into that default mode, where the music changes to rumba, to cha-cha, and we keep doing the samba. A skilled professional -- and we have observed this -- will actually shift repertoire, and actually has a range of pedagogies.