

# 2

## BECOMING A MULTICULTURAL EDUCATOR

### A Four-Step Model

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Define the characteristics of an effective multicultural educator
- 2.2 Identify professional teaching standards that will guide you in becoming a multicultural educator
- 2.3 Describe culture as the core element of becoming a multicultural educator
- 2.4 Outline a four-step model for the professional development of multicultural educators

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020), in 2019 there were 3.7 million K–12 teachers, including high school teachers, middle school teachers, elementary teachers, and special education teachers. The largest occupation category was elementary teachers, accounting for approximately 42% of those employed in the entire group. About 12.5 million people work in the field of education. Between 2019 and 2029, employment for educators in elementary, middle, high school, and special education will grow by 4%. This number may be even larger, as significant numbers of teachers have or will retire due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its challenges in education.

Interestingly, the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated impact on the U.S. economy may contribute to improved teacher quality (West et al., 2020). Unemployment resulting from the pandemic has been producing more jobseekers. When there are economic downturns, as was the case in the United States in 2020, adults tend to seek more stable sources of income. These facts will undoubtedly influence the number and kind of adults who will consider entering the teaching profession in the coming years. According to an article by Natasha Singer in *The New York Times* (2021), the pandemic has contributed to a slowly building shortage of teachers to crisis levels. Singer notes that the shrinking availability of teachers, due to the pandemic and other challenges, may impact low-income students the most.

With this in mind, it's important to reflect on what kind of teacher you hope to be or are. With the critical challenges facing our students, teachers, and schools, it will take significant knowledge about what makes an effective teacher for us to provide a high-quality education for every individual student in our country.

In this chapter, we will investigate what characterizes an effective educator and how these characteristics are applied to becoming a multicultural educator. We will explore the characteristics through several lenses: (1) the research and literature on effective teaching, (2) professional standards that describe the expectations of what teachers should know and be able to do, and (3) the particular lens of culture. Finally, we will describe a four-component model for the development of a multicultural educator that has been developed by the authors. This model serves



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as the organizing framework for the remaining chapters in this book. In this process, we will discuss the knowledge, skills, and dispositions or attitudes that contribute to the effectiveness of a multicultural educator.

Upon the subject of education . . . I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people may be engaged in.

—**President Abraham Lincoln**, *the 16th president of the United States and perhaps best known for his role in the emancipation of the enslaved population and keeping the country united*

Specifically, through engagement in the learning and work of this chapter, students will learn about the research on effective teaching, as well as the research on the characteristics of effective multicultural educators. Students will also become familiar with standards or expectations for what effective teachers and multicultural educators should know and be able to do, and they will be able to analyze their own emerging capacity in relation to professional teaching standards. Finally, they will reflect on the influence and importance of culture in teaching and learning practices and come to understand a four-step process for the professional development of multicultural educators.

## CASE STUDY

### A TEACHER'S USE OF CULTURE

Bethany was ecstatic about her impending first teaching assignment. In her teacher preparation program in the Midwest, she had worked hard to learn about curriculum, instruction, and assessment. She had immersed herself in coursework that included practice in developing curriculum based on the Common Core State Standards (CCCS). She had dreamed of becoming a teacher for several years, and now that dream was about to become a reality.

She had been offered a position as a first-grade teacher in a public school and was moving to Phoenix, Arizona.

Bethany had looked forward to moving away from the Midwest so she could experience the beauty of the mountains and deserts in Arizona. She was looking forward to exploring and learning about her new state. Admittedly, she didn't know much about the cultures of the peoples of Arizona, who included Native Americans and Mexican Americans in addition to European Americans. But she looked forward to learning about the cultures of the West in her spare time.

At the end of the first semester, however, Bethany found teaching her first-grade students to be more challenging than she anticipated. She really enjoyed teaching all of them, but for some reason, several of her students—many of whom were Mexican American—were not making the expected progress in reading and language arts. While it would have been easy to blame the students—after all, English was not their native language—Bethany knew that she needed some assistance. She had come to know her colleague across the hall, Marisol, and asked to meet with her.

Marisol was an experienced teacher who had participated in professional development toward implementing multicultural education in school. While Marisol was Hispanic, she didn't assume that, just because she was bilingual and could relate to many of the students, she didn't need to study deeply how to become a multicultural teacher. She knew she needed to spend considerable time in revising her curriculum, starting with a vision of how to support diverse learners. After much work, Marisol had become a highly respected multicultural educator and a resource for other teachers. Marisol saw great potential in Bethany and knew that she could have an impact on her diverse learners, but she also knew that Bethany needed some special support. She took Bethany under her wing and committed to mentoring and coaching her through a process for becoming a multicultural educator.

In her initial meetings with Bethany, Marisol talked with her about a variety of topics. For example, she asked Bethany about what she knew about diverse cultural groups, particularly those who lived in the surrounding area and whose children attended the school. Bethany shared with Marisol that she had tried to read about Native Americans and Mexican Americans before she arrived at the school. Marisol responded that this was a good start. Marisol next asked Bethany to think about what her views and beliefs were about the use of standards in teaching and learning. Bethany said that she had learned a great deal about standards in her teacher preparation program. Marisol concluded that Bethany possessed some good basic knowledge in this area. When Marisol asked Bethany how she used her students' culture to create culturally relevant teaching, Bethany was hesitant. She knew that teacher-student relationships were critical and that she needed to develop units and lesson plans based on standards, but she was not at all sure about how to use students' culture effectively, particularly the cultures of the students in her current classroom. They agreed to meet twice per week, starting at the beginning of the spring semester, so that Marisol could mentor and coach Bethany in enhancing her own practice of working effectively with diverse students.

### Your Perspectives on the Case

1. In light of your current understanding of the importance of culture, what is contributing to Marisol's effectiveness and Bethany's lack of effectiveness in their respective classrooms?
2. Imagine that you are also a grade-level colleague of Bethany and Marisol. Marisol has asked that you all work together as a team to support the development of multicultural education in the entire grade. What short-term and long-term strategies might you suggest to support improvement of teaching not only by Bethany but also by the grade-level team?
3. Compare this scenario with your teaching experiences so far. How much of it is similar to experiences you have had? What did you do to correct it? If you have not yet worked in a classroom, compare this scenario with a particular classroom situation in which you had found yourself as a student, a student teacher, or an observer.

## TIME FOR REFLECTION 2.1

Everyone encounters different kinds of teachers throughout the years of being a student. If you reflect on your own experiences as a student, you probably can recall teachers who really had a positive impact on your life and, unfortunately, teachers who were not effective. What makes a teacher effective at teaching individual students? This important question leads us into a discussion of what characterizes a multicultural educator. An effective teacher and a multicultural educator are close to being one and the same. If someone is effective at teaching all students in a variety of settings, that person is probably a multicultural educator.

1. What kind of teacher do you want to be? Describe yourself as that teacher using 10 different words or phrases.
2. What is your understanding of the role of standards in education? What is the role of standards in achieving equity in education?
3. Why do you think the development of standards has become so important over the past several years?
4. What do you know about teaching diverse students? Where did that knowledge come from?
5. Imagine that it is the beginning of the school year. You have received your class list and know that several of your students are newly arrived immigrants. Describe your plan for how you will make use of their cultural backgrounds as well as the backgrounds of all of your other students during the first month of school.
6. What do you think are the stages that educators go through as they work to become multicultural educators? As you think of the development of a multicultural educator in stages, what stage do you think you are in at this point in time? What evidence is there that you are at this stage? What do you think you need to do to become an effective multicultural educator?

## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE MULTICULTURAL EDUCATOR

### What Is Effective Teaching?

Numerous scholars have conducted research on the characteristics of effective teachers. For many years in American schools, the concept of effective teaching was influenced by theories and research about behaviorism. Classrooms were designed so that students listened passively to the teacher and were assessed through paper-and-pencil tests about the extent of their learning, particularly their capacity for memorization. It was believed that effective teachers set learning goals and taught from textbooks that were clearly biased in favor of a distinctly Eurocentric curriculum. For some students, this approach worked quite effectively. However, for a number of students, for a variety of reasons, this approach was not effective.

An investigation into more recent research about learning and about teaching indicates that this earlier, more limited approach does not support every student in learning at high levels. We now know that students learn in different ways, and instruction needs to be differentiated to address diverse learning styles and needs. We know that education must be relevant to students' previous experiences and cultural backgrounds. We know that learning is essentially problem-solving and that most learning takes place in a social context in which students collaborate and work together. We also know that one of the most important contributors to high levels of learning is the relationship established between the teacher and the student. The traditional "one-size-fits-all" approach to teaching that seemed to work in earlier centuries

and decades is not effective in addressing the learning needs of the rapidly changing student populations in our schools today. We will need to attend to a more current, research-based definition of effective teaching.

Jeannie Oakes et al. (2018) described key findings from research about critical components of effective teaching. It appears that effective teachers convey a personal interest in and liking for students, use an “ethic of caring” to shape classroom conditions, believe that relationships are crucial to all learning, and make lessons and learning interesting. Many researchers believed that effective teachers work to make schooling child-centered rather than subject-centered. Oakes et al. wrote of the importance of effective teachers empowering students by giving them choices and engaging them in making important decisions.

Some common themes emerge from an examination of research on effective teaching. These themes are particularly relevant in preparing to teach today’s learners. The Great Schools Partnership synthesized the research on effective teaching in a framework that outlines five intertwined elements of instructional practice (2019). The five elements include the following:

1. Learning environment: All students are supported in taking risks, asking questions, and making and learning from mistakes.
2. Clear, shared outcomes: Learning outcomes are shared and used by teachers and students.
3. Varied content, materials, and methods: Students explore ideas and information in diverse ways and come into learning through multiple entry points.
4. Practice and feedback: Students have multiple opportunities to practice what they are learning and are given timely, specific feedback based on their current performance in relation to the desired outcomes.
5. Complex thinking and transfer: Students are coached and taught to engage in higher-order thinking through instructional activities and practice tasks.

Of particular note, the Great Schools Partnership has defined educational equity as ensuring just outcomes for each student, raising marginalized voices, and challenging the imbalance of power and privilege (2021).

Richard Arends (2015) has written extensively and elegantly about four essential characteristics or qualities of effective teachers that mirror the research on effective teaching. First, effective teachers have *personal qualities* that allow them to make important connections to students, parents, other teachers, and the community. It is critical that teachers firmly and deeply believe that every single child can achieve at high levels and can learn. If the teacher doesn’t believe this, and believe it passionately, then the students will certainly not believe it either. One important personal quality, according to Arends, that effective teachers possess is a commitment to social justice for children. What this means is that effective teachers are committed to providing what every individual student needs to achieve at high levels.

Second, effective teachers have developed a *knowledge base* in three primary areas: subject matter, human development, and pedagogy. More specifically, effective teachers have a wide knowledge of, and continue to study and learn, the content of their particular subject areas, such as a world language, science, or mathematics. Effective teachers also know how people learn. Finally, effective teachers know how to develop learning experiences, using a wide variety of research-based instructional strategies to teach the content while considering how learning occurs.



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Third, according to Arends (2015), effective teachers have a significant *repertoire of instructional strategies* that can support student motivation, develop the learning environment such that every student wants to engage in learning, and produce learners who take responsibility for their own learning. Effective teachers are knowledgeable about and skilled in important models of instruction, including those that are more teacher-centered (e.g., lecture and direct instruction) and those that are more student-centered (e.g., cooperative learning and problem-based learning).

Fourth, effective teachers are knowledgeable about and committed to regular *reflection* on their own practice. They see themselves as lifelong learners, working to improve themselves and thereby improve the education they provide for their students. They reflect individually and in collaboration with colleagues about what they teach, why they teach in particular ways, and how they can improve their teaching.

### What Is a Multicultural Educator?

In light of our previous discussion of the research and literature that reveal some important characteristics of effective teachers, we can now apply some of those themes common to current definitions of effective teaching to answering the question “What is a multicultural educator?”

The National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) offers a detailed definition of multicultural education (2021). Inserted into this definition is the following statement that helps us describe a multicultural educator:

Multicultural education is a process that permeates all aspects of school practices, policies, and organization as a means to ensure the highest levels of academic achievement for all students. It helps students develop a positive self-concept by providing knowledge about the histories, cultures, and contributions of diverse groups. It prepares all students to work actively toward structural equality in organizations and institutions by providing the knowledge, dispositions, and skills for the redistribution of power and income among diverse groups. Thus, school curriculum must directly address issues of racism,

sexism, classism, linguisticism, ableism, ageism, heterosexism, religious intolerance, and xenophobia.

Multicultural education advocates the belief that students and their life histories and experiences should be placed at the center of the teaching and learning process and that pedagogy should occur in a context that is familiar to students and that addresses multiple ways of thinking. In addition, teachers and students must critically analyze oppression and power relations in their communities, society, and the world.

To accomplish these goals, multicultural education demands a school staff that is culturally competent, and to the greatest extent possible, racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse. Staff must be multiculturally literate and capable of including and embracing families and communities to create an environment that is supportive of multiple perspectives, experiences, and democracy. Multicultural education requires comprehensive school reform, as multicultural education must pervade all aspects of the school community and organization.

NAME's definition clearly explicates the expectations of multicultural educators. Leading experts and writers have also contributed to our understanding of a multicultural educator. Carl Grant and Maureen Gillette (2006) synthesized the ideas of expert multiculturalists, including Geneva Gay, Gloria Ladson-Billings, and Jacqueline Jordan Irvine in a list of characteristics of multicultural educators. Among those ideas are important aspects of knowledge, skills, and dispositions. In particular, according to Grant and Gillette, the research about effective teaching with diverse student populations supports the three aspects mentioned earlier. Research by Rosa Sheets (2004) indicates that students of color—who may have been low performing but then were placed in higher-level classes in which the teachers maintained high standards and had high expectations for all students, provided complex and challenging tasks, and created warm and positive classroom environments—in fact, excelled. Gloria Ladson-Billings (2009) found that diverse students also perform at higher levels when working with teachers who

- engage them in challenging, cooperative, and hands-on learning experiences levels;
- expect that all students can achieve at high levels;
- believe that a critically important process for learning in the classroom is through collaboration and learning communities;
- make explicit and meaningful connections to families and the community, knowing that they are important contributors to the success of every student;
- know and use a variety of instructional strategies that meet the needs of diverse learners;
- use the experiences, cultural backgrounds, and knowledge that each student brings to the teaching and learning process to enhance the experience for all; and
- reflect deeply and regularly about how they can improve their practice and eliminate bias and prejudice from the classroom.

Cummins (2000) stressed the power and importance of an instructional approach known as *transformative pedagogy*, in which effective teachers of diverse students design learning experiences such that students can relate the curriculum to their own lives and consider broader social issues. Transformative pedagogy, according to Ukpokodu (2009) is pedagogy that

**TABLE 2.1** ■ What Is a Multicultural Educator?

Traditional Teacher	Effective Teacher Who Is a Multicultural Educator
	<b>Knowledge base</b>
Understanding of the content being taught is grounded primarily in a Eurocentric perspective	Understanding of the content is grounded in multiple perspectives; teacher works to learn about the contributions of people of diverse cultural backgrounds to that particular content area/discipline; appreciates the diversity of cultural identities and continually works to learn more about many diverse cultures
Has a limited approach to the design of teaching and learning experiences; is not knowledgeable about diverse learning styles and how to meet those learner needs	Knows that diverse students learn in many different ways and knows how to design instruction to reach learners according to their preferred learning styles
Personal awareness of own cultural identities and knowledge of other cultural groups is fairly limited	Has explored their own personal ethnic, racial, gender, and other identities; knows how own culture compares with those of the students; understands the strengths and struggles of various identities
Has limited or no understanding of issues of racism, sexism, classism, and other means of oppression and their effects on education	Has deep and personal insight into social injustices and inequities in society and incorporates this knowledge into the educational process
Is apolitical with respect to the practice of teaching	Understands the implications of and connections between public policies and laws and their effects on education and people at all levels; is current on the actions of government at the local, state, and federal levels
	<b>Repertoire of skills</b>
Operates from a <b>behaviorist</b> orientation to teaching and utilizes didactic and direct instruction as the primary teaching strategy; assessment strategies are limited to paper-and-pencil tests	Utilizes numerous and varied teaching strategies to accommodate diverse learning styles; is able to differentiate instruction and assessment to meet diverse learner needs
Classroom experience is teaching- and teacher-centered	Classroom experience is learning- and student-centered
Lesson plans tend to be Eurocentric and lack multiple perspectives	Creates lesson plans that incorporate a variety of cultural perspectives
Believes that the content is the most important component of classroom teaching, and communicating that content generally happens in the form most comfortable to the teacher	Communicates effectively with a variety of students; establishes deep and meaningful relationships with each student
	<b>Personal qualities and dispositions</b>
Believes that, while discrimination is a major concern in society, a focus on equity is not relevant to the teaching and learning process	Believes that racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination are too prevalent and a deterrent to an equitable education
Believes that teaching in the subject areas is culture-free	Believes that the infusion of ethnic content into the curriculum is critical to the learning process
Believes that students need to learn the “basic skills”	Is committed to preparing students to contribute to improving society; values student experience, student voices, and student perspectives

combines elements of constructivist and critical pedagogy and empowers students to examine their beliefs, values, and knowledge. The goal of this type of pedagogy is the development in learners of a capacity for reflection, an appreciation for multiple perspectives, and a sense of critical consciousness. In particular, constructivist pedagogy engages the learners in building



their own understanding of important concepts. We'll discuss constructivist practice in depth in Chapter 8.

With these descriptions of effective teaching and effective multicultural educators in mind, a comparison can be made with a more traditional approach that is grounded in earlier research and thinking. Using several of the key themes of effective teaching, Table 2.1 compares teachers who are more traditional in their knowledge base, repertoire of skills, and personal qualities or dispositions with multicultural educators according to the same categories.

### Essential Knowledge for Multicultural Educators

Being a multicultural educator means that one has a solid knowledge of the content area in which one is teaching and that one's knowledge is grounded in **multiple perspectives**. A grounding in multiple perspectives is a key concept. This means that the educator has come to know a particular topic by looking at the literature, histories, and experiences of diverse people who may perceive the same topic differently. A classic example of multiple perspectives is how early European settlers in America viewed their movement as a "westward expansion" while Native Americans viewed this activity as "westward invasion." Just this idea necessitates a deep and ongoing study of the literature in one's field or content area.

The perspectives that we as educators hold, and how we use those perspectives in teaching and learning situations, is critically important. For example, picture in your mind two different scenarios. In the first, schoolchildren were taught from the perspective that the early settlers were brave men and women who loaded their belongings, along with their hopes for a better future, onto Conestoga wagons and headed west to claim land, which they believed was their God-given right. They also felt, in many cases, that they needed to tame the "savages" and bring them Christianity and civilization. In the second scenario or perspective, imagine the Native Americans, whose ancestors had lived on that land for hundreds of years, observing the clouds of dust raised by wagon trains of settlers heading toward them. In their minds, did they see this as a welcoming sign? The Native Americans were perfectly happy with their faith and their culture. They were puzzled as to the concept of owning land—how could one own land? For Native Americans, property was communal. It would be like claiming that someone owns the air. In a multicultural approach, students must be taught both perspectives.

A multicultural educator also has a deep knowledge base about students, how they learn, and how their cultural identities affect the learning process. Multicultural educators know about learning styles and that different students learn in different ways and have different preferences for how they can best demonstrate their learning.

Multicultural educators know that students do not learn in a vacuum. Students' education is affected by economic, social, and political pressures. An important example of pressures on students' education is the at-times overwhelming impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students, schooling, and the economy, in 2020 and beyond. When it became apparent, in approximately March 2020, that COVID-19 was spreading quickly in the United States and that the country was not equipped to deal with it, schools and businesses in many states shuttered completely for the remainder of the academic year and beyond. Educators needed to pivot immediately to virtual learning for their students. As the weeks went on, it became clear that those students who had access to technology and home support for learning were able to manage this horrendous change more effectively. But for many students who didn't have strong access to technology or home support, they struggled mightily. Added to that were the psychological challenges of students' fears about their parents' and families' health, lack of meaningful interactions with classmates, and, in some cases, the absence of individual contact

with the teachers. The impact of COVID-19 on student learning will be felt for years to come, and not necessarily in a positive way.

In “normal” times, a child living in poverty will not flourish in school if the teachers do not take the predicament of poverty into account. While middle-class students may have access to parents with the time and resources to enrich their lives, poor students often lack help with homework and encouragement to study. Some students and their families may be grappling with food insecurity, particular in the time of the pandemic with its concurrent impact on employment. Some students’ parents are often working two or more jobs to make ends meet. The newspapers, books, magazines, and computers common in middle-class homes are often not there to help in the education of a poor student. Students who come from a long line of poverty often lack a culture of the good study habits that are needed to succeed. Teachers who do not understand the culture of poverty will not know how to supplement and support the education of poor students. These phenomena have clearly been exacerbated in the time of the global pandemic.

Similar obstacles face those students who live and study in environments where racism, sexism, and homophobia as well as other psychologically, emotionally, and physically damaging evils afflict them and interfere with their right to learn. This phenomena has become quite clear with the Black Lives Matter movement of 2020 and renewed recognition of, and emphasis on racial injustices. This movement highlights students’ fears for their own and their family members’ safety experienced on a daily basis across the country. It becomes critical that our classrooms demonstrate valuing of diversity and that educators understand the lives that others lead and work toward social justice (Schneidewind & Davidson, 2014). The barriers and challenges to providing the necessary support for every individual child to learn are many.

And still, in 2020, the highest levels of leadership in the country were working to prevent professional training in the federal workplace in cultural awareness, as well as eliminate multiculturalism from schooling.

There is much for the multicultural educator to learn in order to support every child. At different times, researchers and writers have worked to define the knowledge bases needed by multicultural educators. One of the richest and most comprehensive sources for educators is *Common Sense About Uncommon Knowledge: The Knowledge Bases for Diversity* by G. Pritchey Smith (1998). In this book, Smith provides an extensive review of the literature on critical aspects of culture and delineates 13 distinct bodies of knowledge that are now considered essential to becoming a multicultural educator. These knowledge bases are as follows:

1. Foundations of multicultural education
2. Sociocultural contexts of human growth and psychological development in marginalized ethnic and racial cultures
3. Cultural and cognitive learning–style theory and research
4. Language, communication, and interactional styles of marginalized cultures
5. Essential elements of culture
6. Principles of culturally responsive teaching and culturally responsive curriculum development
7. Effective strategies for teaching minority students
8. Foundations of racism
9. Effects of policy and practice on culture, race, gender, and other categories of diversity

10. Culturally responsive diagnosis, measurement, and assessment
11. Sociocultural influences on subject-specific learning
12. Gender and sexual orientation
13. Experiential knowledge

In his book, Smith (1998) discusses each of the knowledge bases in depth and provides suggestions for how to make use of them in teaching and learning. For example, Smith believes strongly that educators need a deep understanding of the ways in which human growth is affected by culture, definitions of and models for multicultural education, learning style as influenced by culture, strategies for becoming culturally responsive educators, and the impact of racism and other forms of discrimination—as well as policies—on the achievement of all students. Smith's book is a powerful resource for educators in their growth as multicultural educators.

## EXTENDED EXPLORATIONS 2.1

### KNOWLEDGE BASES FOR MULTICULTURAL EDUCATORS

Often when confronted with having to consider the knowledge bases required of multicultural educators, educators respond that their capacity in each area is somewhat limited because they weren't taught these areas. They state that they weren't prepared to move beyond a traditional, fairly limited perspective about knowledge. Reflect on Smith's (1998) list of 13 essential knowledge bases. Assess your own capacity in each of these areas. Develop a plan with specific actions for how you will enhance your capacity in the 13 knowledge bases.

Smith added two more knowledge bases in 2001: (1) identifying and working with special needs students and (2) understanding international and global education (Huber-Warring, 2008). The additions illustrate the challenges of defining a specific set of knowledge bases, the changing nature of what constitutes important knowledge for educators to have, and the critical need to keep defining it.

Other educators have also worked to develop recommendations for knowledge bases that are essential to multicultural educators (Arends, 2015; Gay, 2018; Sleeter & Cornbleth, 2011). Moule (2011) writes eloquently about essential knowledge bases that include a deep understanding of racism and prejudice, privilege, culture and cultural differences, bias in the curriculum and classroom, child development, and racial identity issues. Another useful resource for considering knowledge bases important to educators is *Growing a Soul for Social Change: Building the Knowledge Base for Social Justice* (2008), edited by Tonya Huber. In a rich variety of chapters, Moule and Huber address the knowledge needed by educators to develop culturally responsive teaching and curriculum, international and global education, cultural identities and cultural contexts for human growth and development, and the kind of knowledge that can be gained through experience. The way in which Huber has organized the chapters into sections is grounded in Smith's (1998) 13 knowledge bases, again showing that key themes have emerged in defining important knowledge.

Gollnick and Chinn (2016) describe in great detail the foundational knowledge for multicultural educators. Their book is grounded in the firm belief that an understanding of and use

of students' culture is the basis for multicultural education. They describe groups of cultural identities that affect student and teacher identity, including ethnicity and race, class and socioeconomic status, gender and sexual orientation, exceptionality, language, religion, geography, and age. For example, in discussing gender and sexual orientation, Gollnick and Chinn provide background knowledge on male and female differences, gender identity, sexual orientation, the women's movement, and sexism and gender discrimination. They then provide extensive opportunities for teacher reflection through guided experiences.

### A Repertoire of Skills for Multicultural Educators

A multicultural educator possesses skills in a wide variety of instructional strategies, communicates effectively with students, makes the content meaningful for students, and establishes a rich classroom learning environment. A primary responsibility of all educators is to provide equitable educational opportunities for all students to achieve at high levels. This means that new teachers need to be skilled in the use of research-based instructional strategies that will help them support all students in achieving at high levels. One way of addressing this is to make use of the work of Howard Gardner (2000, 2006, 2011) on multiple intelligences. His research showed that people are intelligent in different ways and that different kinds of intelligences beg different instructional strategies. More specifically, teachers need to use a wide variety of explicit instructional strategies and curriculum development approaches that make use of culture in order to be culturally proficient teachers. And they need to be provided time to work on multicultural curriculum development (Howe & Lisi, 1995; Lisi & Howe, 1999). To achieve **educational equity** and social justice, we must prepare culturally proficient teachers to work in culturally proficient schools (Robins et al., 2012).

Several models have been developed to support teachers in their development of a curriculum that is multicultural. Banks (2009) developed a model with four stages: (1) the contributions approach, (2) the ethnic additions approach, (3) the transformation approach, and (4) the decision-making and social action approach. Schools at the contributions level focus minimally on token representations of culture in the curriculum that are not connected to the curriculum. An example is celebrating Martin Luther King Day in January and doing a token activity in February during Black History Month but ignoring Black history the rest of the year. In the ethnic additions approach, units of ethnic studies, such as a week on the Nazi Holocaust, are tacked onto an otherwise unchanged curriculum. Most schools are at these two levels since they require no restructuring of the curriculum.

At the third level—transformation—each subject is infused with ethnic content (according to Banks, 2009), and teaching strategies are increased to accommodate different cultural learning styles. The fourth stage of decision-making and social action is similar in most models of multicultural education in that it focuses on infusing social change as a goal into the curriculum. Students are taught to be civic minded. A desire to improve society and work toward social justice is instilled.

Grant and Sleeter (2009) developed a model for multicultural education that includes five levels: (1) teaching the exceptional or culturally different, (2) human relations, (3) single-group studies, (4) education that is directed at reducing prejudice, and (5) education that is both multicultural and social reconstructionist. Both the Banks model and the Grant and Sleeter model were introduced in Chapter 1. It appears that the ultimate goal for most experts in the field is developing education models that prepare students to be socially responsible in a global and diverse society.

## Personal Qualities or Dispositions for Multicultural Educators

In terms of social justice, a multicultural educator values the diverse backgrounds of students and is deeply committed to helping them make a difference in society. The multicultural educator invests time and energy in getting to know each individual student, including their cultural background, and uses that information to establish a meaningful and sincere relationship with each student. Related to a deep knowledge base about culture is the fact that educators must be committed to eliminating bias, discrimination, and prejudice. Teachers need to examine their own attitudes so they can project positive attitudes toward and higher expectations for all students. When teachers have equal expectations for all students, there is more interracial friendship and interaction among students. A classroom climate of acceptance among students is related to increased student achievement, especially among minority students (Bennett, 2011, 2018). Teachers must be aware of their own prejudices and how those prejudices may contribute to lowering expectations about some students. Teachers must accommodate the differences among students and help all students achieve mastery without compromising the instructional content and standards.

A multicultural educator understands and appreciates the critical importance of social justice and educational equity and believes that understanding issues such as race, class, gender, and socioeconomic status is essential for teachers since it will inform what and how they teach (Adams & Bell, 2016).

### EXTENDED EXPLORATIONS 2.2

#### DISPOSITIONS

A particularly useful experience for educators, novice and experienced alike, is to reflect on their own attitudes, values, and beliefs about children, learning, teaching, diversity, equity, and so forth. This can be a daunting exercise. Fortunately, dispositions inventories have been developed in the field of multicultural education that can support educators in reflecting on their own capacity and perspectives. For example, you may try to locate Franklin Thompson's (2009) Multicultural Dispositions Index. Find an inventory of dispositions for educators and take the inventory. Assess your own stance in terms of important dispositions for multicultural educators. Then develop a plan for enhancing your dispositions in specific areas.

## PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS THAT SUPPORT MULTICULTURAL EDUCATORS

As you may have learned by this time in your preparation for becoming a teacher, standards are a very important part of the process. Standards are often a means of encapsulating the important knowledge, skills, and dispositions discussed in the previous section. Standards can be viewed as expectations of what a person—for example, a preK–12 student, a teacher, a school leader—needs to know and be able to do.

Sets of standards have been established by a variety of entities to guide the development of curriculum in schools, colleges, and universities. The Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) has been one of the primary authors of standards to guide the preparation of teachers and school leaders, as well as for the examination and accreditation of education



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programs at the university level. An understanding of standards is important for educators, especially as they work to become multicultural educators.

### Curriculum Standards as a Guide for Multicultural Education in Schools

**Curriculum standards** have been established for students in public, as well as independent and international preK–12 school settings for most, if not all, subject areas, and they are used to support the development of curriculum. While standards have been established by state-level offices, professional organizations, and independent collaborative bodies at the national level, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) have been established to provide a consistent and clear understanding of what students need to know and be able to do across educational settings and across states in the areas of mathematics and English/language arts. As of 2021, 41 states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity have adopted the CCSS as the standards to be used by public schools in mathematics and English/language arts. Proponents of the CCSS believe that the standards will help close the nation's achievement gap. A major focus in the use of the standards is on persistence, or on supporting students in working through mistakes and coming to deeper understandings of important concepts. The standards are designed to promote equity by ensuring that all students are supported in achieving success. While experts in multicultural education (e.g., Sleeter, 2011) do believe in the value of standards, such as the CCSS, they caution that the starting point for the development of curriculum is a vision of a culturally relevant unit. Once the unit is developed, it is important to connect the unit directly to the relevant standards.

In addition to the CCSS for math and English/language arts, curriculum standards have been developed in other content areas. The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) is a state-led effort to develop standards to improve science education for all students. The work, initially completed in April 2013, was undertaken by the National Research Council and Achieve (as of December 2020, this is now the NextGenScience project at WestEd) and has been supported by

the Carnegie Corporation of New York. As is the case with the CCSS, individual states decide whether or not to use the NGSS. If a state decides to use the NGSS, it also determines whether or not to develop assessments that align with the standards. Believing in the critical importance of equitable learning opportunities, the National Research Council worked to develop research and standards-based classroom strategies that teachers can use to ensure that the NGSS are applicable to all students. Of particular importance have been NGSS policies, publications, and support for teachers in learning strategies to engage diverse learners. NGSS early on established the NGSS Diversity and Equity Team, which published, among other resources, *NGSS for All Students* (2015).

Professional organizations have also developed sets of standards for what preK–12 students should know and be able to do. The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS, 2010) is a professional association whose members include educators at the preK–12 levels as well as faculty in higher education in the fields of, among others, history, anthropology, political science, sociology, and psychology. In 1994, the NCSS developed a set of performance expectations for students in preK–12 grades. In 2010, the NCSS standards were revised. The result was the *National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment*. Included in that document is the chapter “Ten Themes of the National Curriculum Standards for the Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment.” First among the 10 themes is culture and the expectation that social studies programs include opportunities for students to learn about culture and cultural diversity. In *Using the NCSS National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment to Meet State Social Studies Standards*, Michelle Herzog (2010) linked the use of the standards to effective teaching. Interestingly, Herzog believed that, with the newest set of social studies standards, the NCSS standards promote the teaching of essential principles of social studies, as opposed to the content addressed in most sets of standards. The 10 themes provide ways to organize knowledge important to social studies into meaningful and relevant learning experiences for students. The result is that students will acquire not only essential knowledge but also important higher-order thinking skills and the disposition to be responsible members of society.

## EXTENDED EXPLORATIONS 2.3

### LEARNING STANDARDS AND EQUITY IN EDUCATION

Locate the website for the CCSS (Common Core State Standards). Select a content area of interest (e.g., literacy) and a grade level of interest. Look carefully at the standards for that particular area and grade level. Critique the standards in terms of how they address diverse learner needs, interests, cultural backgrounds, and so on. What conclusions can you draw from this critique about the potential for the CCSS to address diverse learner needs? In what ways do the standards hold promise for achieving equity in education and supporting all diverse learners in achieving at high levels? If they do not, suggest a new way to address the need for expectations about what learners should know and be able to do.

### Professional Teaching Standards as a Guide for Multicultural Educators

Since the use of standards had proven to be very useful in directing the design of teaching and learning at the preK–12 levels, it was believed that the same approach would be useful for directing

the learning experiences of preservice and in-service educators. Once again, different entities have developed standards or expectations for what teachers should know and be able to do.

Perhaps of most relevance to candidates who are preparing to become teachers are the standards developed by the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC), a program of the Council of Chief State School Officers (2021). The InTASC is a consortium of state education agencies and national educational organizations dedicated to the reform of the preparation, licensing, and ongoing professional development of teachers. InTASC created a set of 10 principles, or standards, as well as key indicators under each principle that reflect the knowledge, skills, and dispositions critical for new teachers. In 2021, InTASC released a new document that includes the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards: A Resource for State Dialogue, released in April 2011, and the new InTASC Learning Progressions for Teachers 1.0: A Resource for Ongoing Teacher Development, which were released in 2013. Together, these documents support teacher development.

While each of the 10 principles is important for all multicultural educators, Principle or Standard 2 specifically speaks to the critical need for a teacher who “communicates verbally and nonverbally in ways that demonstrate respect for and responsiveness to the cultural backgrounds and differing perspectives learners bring to the learning environment” (CCSSO, 2011, p. 12). In reading the standards, you will notice that each one contributes in its own way to an understanding of how teachers should be prepared to work effectively with diverse learners. The InTASC standards define what teachers need to know and be able to do regarding the learner and learning, content, instructional practice, and professional responsibility (Exercise 2.1). Teacher preparation institutions that commit to the pursuit of accreditation must use the InTASC standards as a basis for curriculum development in their programs.

## EXERCISE 2.1

### LOCATE THE SET OF INTASC STANDARDS ON THE INTERNET

Locate the website for the Council of Chief State School Officers. Locate the link for the Resource Library. Locate the model standards for teaching on that website. For each InTASC standard, reflect on what that standard means for you as a multicultural educator. What will you need to learn and be able to do specific to being an effective teacher with diverse student populations? Complete the matrix for this exercise about important knowledge, skills, and dispositions or qualities that you believe you will need to be competent in that particular standard.

#### Matrix to Use in Reflection on Important Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

InTASC Standard	Knowledge	Skills	Dispositions
1. Learner development			
2. Learner differences			
3. Learning environments			
4. Content knowledge			
5. Application of content			
6. Assessment			



InTASC Standard	Knowledge	Skills	Dispositions
7. Planning for instruction			
8. Instructional strategies			
9. Professional learning and ethical practices			
10. Leadership and collaboration			

The National Council for the Teaching of Mathematics (NCTM) developed standards for the teaching of mathematics—*Principles and Standards for School Mathematics* (2000), which outlines the essential components of a high-quality school mathematics program. The NCTM standards are grounded in six principles. The first principle focuses on equity, stressing that excellence in mathematics education requires high expectations and strong support for all students. Furthermore, equity does not mean that every student receives the same type of instruction. It means that appropriately challenging content be included to promote access and attainment for all students.

For experienced educators, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) provides an assessment program to secure advanced professional certification. The NBPTS developed five core propositions about teaching as well as sets of standards in 21 certificate areas in 16 different subject areas and four developmental levels. Proposition 1 (NBPTS, 2016) states that accomplished teachers are committed to their students and their learning. More specifically, this means that accomplished teachers believe that all children can learn, understand how children develop, respect cultural differences, and treat students equitably. A deep understanding of and appreciation for culture appear to be at the core of effective teaching as defined by the NBPTS. Of note, on its website the National Board (2023) provides this statement that underlines its commitment to equity:

The National Board is an anti-racist and inclusive organization. We believe that educators must help students consider their role in a diverse world, value individual differences, and—especially in times such as these—we believe in the power of the teaching profession to defend what is good and right for all people.

## CULTURE AS THE CORE ELEMENT OF BECOMING A MULTICULTURAL EDUCATOR

In reviewing the research about effective teachers and about multicultural educators and in an analysis of the standards that support the professional development of educators, it is interesting to note a persistent theme throughout most of that work: the concept of culture. It appears time and time again that an effective teacher, a multicultural educator, and a teacher who meets the professional standards for teaching is a person who has a deep understanding of culture and is committed to using the culture of the students in the classroom to inform teaching and learning.

### Why Attend to Culture?

Why should teachers pay particular attention to student culture? This is made clear through the seminal research on successful teachers of African American children conducted by



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Ladson-Billings (2009), who discovered four critical aspects of culturally relevant teaching. She found that successful teachers (a) reject the notion of “equity as sameness” (they see and value students’ racial and ethnic differences), (b) encourage a community of learners, (c) hold a constructivist view about knowledge and the curriculum, and (d) focus on numeracy and literacy in meaningful ways.

Ladson-Billings (2009) and other education experts have found that the greater the gap between the child’s culture and the school’s culture, the greater the likelihood of failure or low student achievement. Conversely, the greater the overlap, the greater the likelihood of success or high student achievement. Other research has also focused on the critical importance of teachers knowing and using the culture of their students. In their research on Native American education, Demmert and Towner (2003) found critical elements of “culturally based education” that include the understanding and use of Native languages, development of instructional strategies that use Native culture, development of curriculum that uses Native culture, and strong connections of the teachers to the Native community. Nishioka (2019) found that when teachers work to get to know each of their students, the effort can lead to students experiencing a sense of belonging and connection to the school. This in turn can lead to academic success. Finally, in a study of culturally relevant teaching, Byrd (2016) found that elements of culturally relevant teaching were significantly associated with academic outcomes and ethnic-racial identity development.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers in Using Culture**

If the research appears compelling about the need for effective teachers to attend to culture, what are the specific roles and responsibilities of teachers regarding the use of culture? First, effective teachers make a commitment to learning about students’ cultures—not only through holding celebrations of festivals and other special events but also through daily and ongoing conversations with students, reading, going into the community, and attending cultural events and courses. Effective multicultural educators also create an environment in which students believe

that they can learn and want to engage in learning experiences that are meaningful and relevant. Effective multicultural educators create a culture of respect for students' cultures (Banks, 2009; Banks & Banks, 2015). Banks and Banks believe that teachers need to be very aware of how students see the teacher–student relationship and the extent to which students see teachers as caring about them. Emdin (2016) stated that it's fairly easy for students and teachers to develop strong relationships if they share similar cultural backgrounds. That said, with increasing diversity in the student and teacher population, that phenomenon is becoming more the exception rather than the norm. As we move ahead in education, it will be critically important for teachers to consciously focus on student social and emotional needs, see opportunities for students to use their talents and cultural knowledge to co-teach, and allow students to believe they are not just guests in the classroom, but active participants. Educators need to learn to embed themselves in the communities in which their students live. Finally, teachers need to collect, annotate, and preserve information about themselves as they teach, so they might be able to study themselves and their own practice.

Effective teachers also build bridges between content and students' prior understanding and knowledge (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 2009). They do this through meaningful, culturally relevant activities and appropriate selection of instructional materials that link to students' culture and are bias free. Research indicates that when students' cultures are used, student academic achievement increases. Effective teachers seek out professional development that engages them in learning about culture and how to develop as culturally competent teachers.

Effective multicultural educators develop and use curriculum that reinforces and values the cultural knowledge of students. These educators know that a culturally responsive curriculum integrates cultural knowledge rather than adding it on in special lessons or units at special times of the academic year. Carl (2020) underlined the critical importance of this practice when she described her work teaching Indigenous people in southeast Alaska. She started her 30-year career in a small rural school district and had westernized assumptions about how people learn. These practices didn't serve the students well. She indicated that developing relationships is the first step in teaching students and focused on subtle cultural aspects, such as eye contact, and cultural practices, taught by the students' maternal uncle, in preserving foods. When Carl understood these practices, the level of connection with her students and families grew. She also learned that students learn better when their cultural values and practices are reflected in the curriculum through relevant assignments. In her case, this meant activities such as writing about trapping and fishing, as well as creating math problems around the price of furs and salmon.

By being aware of their own cultural identities, teachers can encourage students to be knowledgeable about and proud of their cultural backgrounds. White teachers must understand how a life of privilege guides their teaching and that the lives of people of color are not the same (McIntosh, 1998). By having a deep understanding of our own lives, we are in a better position to appreciate the circumstances and lives of our students. Many monocultural teachers lack knowledge not only about their students' cultures but also about their own (Howard, 2006). With the proportion of non-Hispanic whites decreasing to 56% by 2030 and to 44% by 2060, it is imperative that teachers be knowledgeable about issues of diversity (Vespa & Armstrong, 2020).

In addressing the critical importance of culture in being a multicultural educator, Geneva Gay (2010) described three key roles and responsibilities of teachers:

1. *Cultural organizers*: Teachers must recognize the role of cultural understanding in the classroom.

2. *Cultural mediators*: Teachers must create opportunities for students to be aware of and have a dialogue about cultural conflicts.
3. *Orchestrators of social contexts for learning*: Teachers must understand how culture affects learning.

Teachers who do not have a deep understanding of these critical roles and functions will miss important teaching opportunities in both racially monocultural and multicultural classrooms. Effectiveness will be diminished while shortchanging the learning potential of students. Furthermore, teachers will find that parents often need as much education as their children in that they do not see or ignore racist attitudes and behaviors (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001).

Patricia Ramsey (2015) suggested developing a positive rapport around culture with parents by answering first, and then asking, questions such as these:

- Where are you from? How long have you lived in this community?
- How do you identify yourselves and your child?
- What groups do you as a family spend time with? Feel closest to?
- How are you teaching your child about their background?
- When you think about your racial, cultural, and class backgrounds, how have they influenced the values that you are teaching your child?

Information derived from these types of questions provides more insightful and useful information than the usual demographic questions asked in surveys. All students, regardless of their background and geographic location, must have a stronger knowledge of other cultures and peoples. In the 21st century, many of our business interactions are global in nature. To be competitive in the workplace, employees will be required to have a far greater knowledge of other countries and their habits and customs than they do now. A multicultural education is a commonsense idea in this new century, with new partners and new associations that are radically different from those of the past (Lisi & Howe, 1999).

## A FOUR-STEP MODEL FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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To understand the application of theory, it often helps to view it in terms of conceptual models. Numerous models of multicultural education have been introduced in this book (Banks, 2009; Bennett, 2014; Grant & Sleeter, 2009). This section will attempt to paint a picture of what the various stages are that a person might go through to become a multicultural educator. This model has been developed based on an understanding of how teachers develop as professional educators, of the knowledge base and skills that are needed to be an effective teacher, and of the school improvement process.

It is first important to understand that although there may be a readily identifiable starting point for this journey, there may not be a clear end. In other words, to use a common expression in education, becoming a multicultural educator is a lifelong journey. The pursuit of knowledge and skills may never end. It might help to view this learning process as a continuous cycle as opposed to continuum with a beginning and ending.

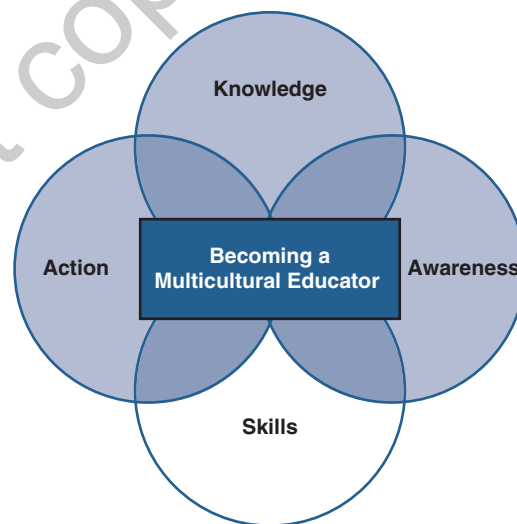
## Becoming a Multicultural Educator

Howe and Lisi (1995) developed a model for the professional growth of educators in multicultural education. The model indicates that to become an effective multicultural educator, teachers must move through four areas (Figure 2.1). The four stages are part of a cyclical process that includes knowledge, awareness, skills, and action.

First, educators must have a sound *knowledge* of other cultures and perspectives. Second, educators must develop an *awareness* of the reality of the bias, prejudice, and discrimination faced by others and an acknowledgment of their own biases. Third is the need to develop the *skills* required to teach to diverse learning styles and cultures. And fourth is the need to develop a life-long personal *action* plan to increase one's knowledge, skills, and dispositions around diversity and to work to develop an institutional action plan to support education that is multicultural.

- *Knowledge*: When confronted with questions about their knowledge of cultures or groups of people other than those with whom they identify, educators are often amazed to realize the limited exposure they have had to learning such information. To become resources for our students, we need to commit to expanding our knowledge base about people who are different from us. This includes knowledge of beliefs and values, communication and interaction patterns, histories, attitudes, and behaviors. This is a lifelong effort.
- *Awareness*: Education is value laden and embedded with conscious and unconscious values. Often as educators, we are not fully aware of all the assumptions, beliefs, and values under which we operate. To be able to work with diverse students, we must first examine our own beliefs, biases, and prejudices and become aware of our own cultural essence. Then we can begin to become more aware of the value of the various dimensions of diversity in ourselves and others. Sensitivity, understanding, tolerance, and compassion about differences are key constructs.

**FIGURE 2.1** ■ A Model for Professional Development in Multicultural Education





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- *Skills:* Working effectively with those who are different means learning new skills, including communication; lesson planning; integration of knowledge about motivation, diversity, and multiple intelligences; and so forth. We need to learn gender-neutral language that is inclusive and how to intercept statements and actions that are prejudicial. Teachers must also learn the various ways of infusing multiculturalism into the curriculum and pedagogical strategies. There are a variety of lesson plan formats that can guide teachers in developing lessons that offer multiple perspectives or focus on building positive regard for other dimensions of culture. There are different ways to teach that can offer a more responsive approach to educating students of different cultures. Learning the skills, including teaching strategies and communication styles, is important to becoming a culturally responsive educator.
- *Action:* Finally, teachers must learn how to develop individual and organizational action plans in order to implement education that is multicultural in their classroom and in the school. Teachers must first learn how they can get started with becoming more multiculturally aware. They must also learn how to develop support networks and collaborations with other teachers. Strategies must be found also to ensure that institutional supports will arise.

With the new knowledge comes awareness. This leads to a change or acquisition of new skills. Ideally, an action plan is formed to complete the cycle.

### Getting Started

It will be easier to help your students learn about and value their culture if you first delve deeply into your own heritage, beliefs, and values. People of color often remark that the day-to-day bias they encounter forces them into a lifelong awareness of their race and ethnicity. Caucasian or white people do not often have that experience of being reminded that they are white. White

educators such as Peggy McIntosh (1998) and Gary Howard (2006) have addressed the importance of white teachers understanding the unearned privilege that they live with—that the color of their skin affords them benefits over people of color in a white-majority society. These educators talk about the importance of understanding what it is to be white. The task then is for white teachers to discover and understand not only their culture but also how the cultures of their students of color affect teaching and learning.

One important movement that helps to clarify knowledge and use of culture is ethnic studies. Ethnic studies is the interdisciplinary social and historical study of how different populations have experienced, survived, and critically engaged in the United States. It is about race and power. It is also defined as the study of the histories, experiences, cultures, and issues of racial-ethnic groups in the United States. Ethnic studies has gained new energy in schools and school districts throughout the United States, particularly with the implementation of the Mexican American Raza Studies program in Tucson. While the program has been viewed as exceptionally successful, it has met immense pushback from the state of Arizona (Sleeter & Zavala, 2020). Sleeter and Zavala define what ethnic studies means, raise questions about how and whether racism impacts curriculum, and describe how ethnic studies might support educators in rethinking the entire curriculum. For Sleeter, ethnic studies is a means to rethink the entire curriculum, its purpose, and its pedagogical processes.

## TIME FOR REFLECTION 2.2

This chapter is written to introduce a model for becoming a multicultural educator. As you have read, multicultural educators possess significant and important knowledge and skills that will support diverse learners. At times, the process of becoming a multicultural educator may seem overwhelming. However, a starting point is to realize where you are. Then you can work to set meaningful goals for your own learning.

1. Did you have experiences in your schooling that made learning difficult? How did that make you feel? How did it affect your grades?
2. Imagine yourself as a persecuted racial, ethnic, or gender minority student trying to attain an education. How might your identity affect your ability to succeed?
3. Select three of the 10 InTASC standards and write a brief reflection about how each of them is influencing your preparation as a multicultural educator. Also, write about why you chose these three standards. Reflect specifically on your capacity in InTASC Standard 2. How do you see that students differ in their approaches to learning? How would you create instructional opportunities for these diverse learners?
4. What new aspects of your culture have you been able to discover?
5. What are your preferred modes of learning, based on your cultural upbringing?
6. What have you learned about specific teaching strategies that would respond to members of other cultures?
7. Investigate through an internet search the concept of learning styles linked to culture. How might this information affect how you design learning experiences for diverse students?
8. Based on what you have read in this chapter, how would you rate yourself in your development toward becoming a multicultural educator?
9. Of the four components in the model for becoming a multicultural educator, in what stage(s) are you strongest and why? What contributed to your strengths in that area?
10. In which areas do you think you need to do the most work, and why?

## PROFILES IN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Carl A. Grant

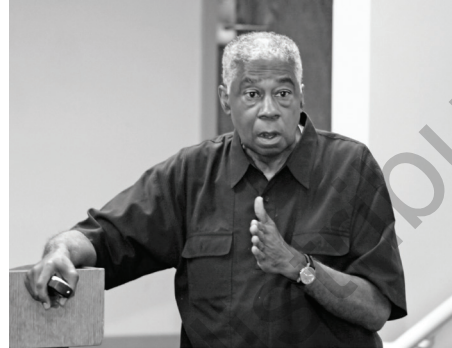
**Carl A. Grant** is the Hoefs-Bascom Professor of Teacher Education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He is a former classroom teacher and administrator and has spent time in England as a Fulbright Scholar.

In 1990, the Association of Teacher Educators selected Dr. Grant as one of 70 Leaders in Teacher Education. In 1997, he received the School of Education Distinguished Achievement Award from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. In 2001, he received the G. Pritchey Smith Multicultural Educator Award from the

National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) and the Angela Davis Race, Gender, and Class Award from the Race, Gender, and Class Project. His book *Global Constructions of Multicultural Education: Theories and Realities* (2001) received the Philip C. Chinn Multicultural Book Award from NAME.

In addition to his scholarly work, Dr. Grant is perhaps best known for being instrumental in his role as president of NAME from 1993 to 1999. During his tenure, he helped NAME establish itself as a national and international presence, opening an office in Washington, DC, hiring its first executive director, developing a professional journal, and nurturing an annual conference on multicultural education, which was attended by top scholars and multicultural educators from around the world. Dr. Grant is well recognized for his work with numerous universities and several publishers of preK–12 books to help infuse multicultural education into their programs.

Among Dr. Grant's most important contributions to the field is that he has brought multicultural education to the forefront of modern education. He has mentored many in the field today and continues to contribute his time and talents in the interest of educational equity and social justice. Dr. Grant informs the teacher candidates, graduate students, second-generation multicultural education scholars, and teachers with whom he has worked about the "gifts"—commitment, knowledge, disposition, experiences, and so on—they bring to the field of multicultural education. He informs them about the challenges (and rewards) of being a multicultural educator—that it is very hard work and that it is necessary for them to have a philosophical vision and a plan of action for making certain that social justice (i.e., distributive equality and equity and cultural recognition) is a real thing in their classrooms and schools. His most persuasive argument is to tell teacher candidates that they have—perhaps unknown or little known to them—a personal, almost selfish reason to want to be multicultural educators. Multicultural education will make their instruction much more intellectual and culturally engaging and academically enriching, and it will help them understand the real reason why learning is dynamic and why both students and teachers must be lifelong learners.



Mingfong Jan / North America Taiwan Studies Association



## CASE STUDY

### SCHOOL ISN'T LIKE IT USED TO BE

#### Key Issues to Be Explored in the Case

1. The critical need to use students' culture in the design of learning experiences
2. Attention to the research into and standards for effective teaching
3. Ways to enhance teacher understanding about culture and effective teaching

In her role inspecting inner-city schools, she was accustomed to seeing drab, impoverished schools, attended by the poorest students in the city, almost all of them children of color. Many of these inner-city schools lack libraries that are rich in resources and have little, if any, outdoor playground space. In several cases, students use outdated textbooks that may have been used by their parents. School supplies, teaching materials, and technology are limited. Teachers resort to using recycled paper, boxes, and other materials scrounged from their own homes or donated by corporations or local merchants.

Resources aside, however, if teachers have been well prepared to meet the learning needs of the diverse students in today's society, they would be knowledgeable about and capable of creating meaningful learning experiences for each student. Unfortunately, with few resources at their command, scant opportunities to work with colleagues to develop rich and meaningful learning experiences, and little professional training in how to address the learning needs of diverse students, teachers often resort to creating a teaching and learning environment similar to what they may have experienced themselves as learners. This type of learning environment was more often than not teacher-directed, with students sitting in rows, ready to accept the information that was provided to them.

On that particular day, as the inspector approached the entrance to one of the schools, the dark skies outside and the drizzling rain added to the sense of despair. Inside, she was led by the principal, Maria Davis, from one sparsely equipped classroom with mismatched desks and chairs to another. The enthusiasm of the teachers and the excited looks on the children's faces, however, told her that some good teaching and learning were happening there. Near the end of the tour, led by Ms. Davis trying to show off her school in the best light, they entered the last classroom. It reminded her of the scene from the movie *The Wizard of Oz* when Dorothy and her trio of friends left the dark forest and entered a field of bright flowers basking in the brilliant sunshine. This classroom was awash in colors and almost cluttered with books, toys, crafts, board games, and other learning materials. The walls were adorned with art and posters depicting hopeful, multicultural faces. Signs everywhere proclaimed popular character-building sayings. Signs written in crayon showed off the good deeds or academic successes of each child. Two parent volunteers were in the room. Small groups of students working together were scattered throughout the classroom. The crowning sight was a mini computer lab—three computers surrounded by excited children, all engaged in the lessons on the screens.

Some children stood up to greet the inspector. Others ran to hug Principal Davis. The teacher, Ms. Gosselin, waited until she was finished giving directions to a table of students and then walked over to the inspector, offering a warm handshake and a huge smile. Prompted by Principal Davis, who declined to accept credit for this marvelous classroom, Ms. Gosselin quietly explained the purpose of each educational activity occurring in the classroom. She humbly accepted the effusive praise the inspector gave her and Principal Davis. Near the end of the visit, remembering the bureaucratic role that the inspector was supposed to be playing, she started asking detailed questions about how Ms. Gosselin had been able to create such an engaging learning environment. Ms. Gosselin stood straight and calmly, simply replied, "I don't have a choice! This classroom is for each and every student here."

### Discussion Questions

1. What evidence exists in this case that Ms. Gosselin, in fact, is making use of students' culture?
2. What role does Principal Davis appear to have played in this case? What else could Principal Davis do to make sure that the teaching and learning in this classroom are culturally responsive?
3. Is it apparent that Ms. Gosselin is adhering to teaching standards? Why or why not?
4. In what ways is Ms. Gosselin demonstrating culturally responsive teaching? In what ways could the teaching be enhanced?

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

### 2.1 Define the characteristics of an effective multicultural educator

There are distinct differences between an educator who is steeped in more traditional approaches to teaching and learning and a multicultural educator. These differences can be ascribed to differences in essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Specifically, a multicultural educator

- has a broad and deep understanding of different cultures and how culture affects teaching and learning;

- attends to standards about teaching since many sets of standards guide the preparation of effective educators, as well as the work they do in the classroom;

- understands, appreciates, and uses students' cultural backgrounds;

- is aware of their personal cultural history and how it affects teaching;

- is aware of the cultural history of their students and how it affects their learning;

- is knowledgeable about and skilled in particular approaches to instruction, curriculum, and assessment;

- uses multiple teaching strategies to reach all students and support them in developing to their fullest potential;

- is knowledgeable about numerous useful models of a multicultural curriculum because finding one that reflects the teacher's personal orientation while supporting the purposes of a multicultural education is important; and

- understands a model that can guide the development of a multicultural educator and includes knowledge, awareness, skills, and action. If an educator is committed to being the strongest multicultural educator in the interests of all children, that educator will probably continue to do work and develop in each of these components throughout their professional lifetime.

### 2.2 Identify professional teaching standards that will guide you in becoming a multicultural educator

Accomplished teachers believe that all children can learn, understand how children develop, respect cultural differences, and treat students equitably. A deep understanding of and appreciation for culture appear to be at the core of effective teaching as defined by the NBPTS.

An effective multicultural teacher “communicates verbally and nonverbally in ways that demonstrate respect for and responsiveness to the cultural backgrounds and differing perspectives learners bring to the learning environment” (InTASC, 2017).

### 2.3 Describe culture as the core element of becoming a multicultural educator

Effective multicultural educators know and use the culture of their students to effect high levels of learning. Effective multicultural educators also create an environment in which students believe that they can learn and want to engage in learning experiences that are meaningful and relevant. Effective multicultural educators develop and use curriculum that reinforces and values the cultural knowledge of students.

### 2.4 Outline a four-step model for the professional development of multicultural educators

First, educators must develop an *awareness* of the reality of bias, prejudice, and discrimination faced by others and an acknowledgment of their own biases. Second, educators must have a sound *knowledge* of other cultures and perspectives. Third is the need to develop the *skills* required to teach to diverse learning styles and cultures. And fourth is the need to develop a lifelong personal *action* plan to increase one's knowledge, skills, and dispositions around diversity and to work to develop an institutional action plan to support education that is multicultural.

## KEY TERMS

Behaviorist

Ethnic

Curriculum standards

Multiple perspectives

Educational equity

## APPLICATION: ACTIVITIES AND EXERCISES

### Individual

1. Create your own model for becoming a multicultural educator. What steps or components are important to your own development? Explain your rationale for creating the model you have developed. How does your model reflect the teacher standards you have read about?
2. Select some of the qualities of several teachers with whom you are familiar who embody the best qualities of a multicultural educator. Develop a composite portrait of a multicultural educator, making use of those qualities.
3. Begin a personal family history project about your family's cultural background:
  - Construct a family tree.
  - Interview close and distant relatives about family history.
  - Read a book, view a movie, or watch a documentary about your culture.
  - Do all of the above with someone of another culture.

### Group

1. As a group, come up with a common model of multicultural education. How have you improved on other models? Were there any strong agreements or strong disagreements on the components among your group? ( Learning Objective 2.4)
2. In small groups, discuss each individual's strengths as well as weaknesses regarding the person's knowledge or expertise in cultural areas (e.g., race, ethnicity, religion, gender,

sexual orientation, class, ability). Work as a team to develop goal statements about which areas of culture each person would like to deepen their knowledge in. (Learning Objectives 2.1, 2.2)

### Self-Assessment

1. Fill in the right-hand column with your responses to the prompts in the left-hand column.

The areas of diversity that I am most comfortable with are . . . (e.g., race, gender)	
The areas of diversity that I am most uncomfortable with are . . . (e.g., race, gender)	
The cultures that I am most familiar with are . . .	
The cultures that I am most unfamiliar with are . . .	
My greatest strengths that I now have as a multicultural educator are . . .	
My greatest need areas that I now have as a multicultural educator are . . .	

### RECOMMENDED FILMS

This list includes films that were shown during the film festival at an annual conference of the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME). Film descriptions were provided by producers of the films ([https://www.nameorg.org/name\\_mc\\_film\\_festivals.php](https://www.nameorg.org/name_mc_film_festivals.php)) and edited for style.

- *America; I Too*. Directed by Anike Tourse. Produced by Angelica Salas and Daniel Solinger. 2017. New Day Films. [www.newday.com](http://www.newday.com). 20 minutes.  
 Young muralist Manny Santiago is arrested after being wrongfully accused of tagging his very own mural. After being unduly locked up in a holding cell overnight, he learns that he was ordered removed back in 2008 due to his undocumented immigration status and that his name came up in the “gang database.” Manny insists that he was 9 years old in 2008, unaware of any pending deportation, and certainly not a part of any gang. When he refuses to sign a voluntary departure form, Manny is sent into detention. Meanwhile, Korean elder Myeong Kim is just starting her shift at the garment factory, the same factory where young pizza delivery guy Ahmed Omar has arrived to deliver a pizza. Both discover in horror, however, that they have walked into a setup for an immigration raid. The two bewildered and undocumented immigrants are sent to the same detention center as Manny. Manny, Myeong, and Ahmed each go on to make three distinctly different journeys to stave off deportation and stay in the country. While wrestling with criminalization, humiliation, and limited resources, Manny, Myeong, and Ahmed each dig for their unique option for legal relief and for the courage to fight for it. *America; I Too* is based on actual testimonies and true experiences.
- *Following Their Lead: Youth in Action*. A series of short films. 2018. Brave New Films. [www.bravenewfilms.org](http://www.bravenewfilms.org). 60 minutes.  
 Youth leaders have been instrumental in leading progressive movements throughout American history. During the civil rights movement, young people played a pivotal role in ending segregation through nonviolent sit-ins and walkouts. Youth organizers in the late 1960s were responsible for lowering the voting age to 18. And more recently, Parkland students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School organized one of the largest youth-led protests to date, mobilizing over 1.2 million people for the March for Our Lives protest. Young people

are still using their collective power to lead change-making movements. The series spotlights youth-led advocacy groups across the country who are creating positive change on critical social and political issues. Young people are experts on their lives and the change they want to see in the world; they also bear the consequences of today's decision-making. Their voices are powerful and should be heard. The youth voice needs to be at the decision-making table for all issues. Their help is essential for an inclusive and responsive democracy.

- *Being Muslim in America: An Afghan Family Story*. Directed by Scott Houck. Produced by Mary Ann Watson and Christine Sheikh. 2018. Films for the Humanities and Sciences, New York. [www.films.com](http://www.films.com), 24 minutes.

Jamshid and Huma Ebadi both came to the United States as young children with their families from Afghanistan under harrowing circumstances. As adults, with a young family of their own, they now live in a suburb of Denver, Colorado. Hear their stories of love, compassion, and hope.

## ANNOTATED RESOURCES

### Bueno Center for Multicultural Education

<https://www.colorado.edu/center/bueno/>

Since 1976, the BUENO Center for Multicultural Education has been an integral part of the School of Education at the University of Colorado–Boulder. Through a comprehensive range of research, training, and service projects, the center strongly promotes quality education with an emphasis on cultural pluralism. The center is deeply committed to facilitating equal educational opportunities for cultural and language minority students.

### Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

<http://www.corestandards.org>

The website for the CCSS is the official home of the Common Core State Standards. It is hosted and maintained by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center). It provides parents, educators, policymakers, journalists, and others easy access to the actual standards, as well as supporting information and resources.

### The Great Schools Partnership

<https://www.greatschoolspartnership.org/about/about-gsp/>

The Great Schools Partnership is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit school support organization working to redesign public education and improve learning for all students. Working at all levels of the education system, from the classroom to the statehouse, the Great Schools Partnership provides school and district coaching, professional development, and technical assistance to educators, schools, districts, organizations, and government agencies. They also create tools and resources for educators and communities, administer public and private grant programs, and coordinate large-scale school improvement initiatives for foundations and states. The Great Schools Partnership is the lead coordinator of the New England Secondary School Consortium and League of Innovative Schools.

### National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME)

<https://www.nameorg.org/index.php>

NAME is a nonprofit organization that advances and advocates for equity and social justice through multicultural education.

Their objectives include these:

- To provide opportunities for learning in order to advance multicultural education, equity, and social justice
- To proactively reframe public debate and impact current and emerging policies in ways that advance social, political, economic, and educational equity through advocacy, position papers, policy statements, and other strategies
- To provide the preeminent digital clearinghouse of resources about educational equity and social justice

The Founders of NAME envisioned an organization that would bring together individuals and groups with an interest in multicultural education from all levels of education, different academic disciplines, and from diverse educational institutions and occupations.

### National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

<https://www.nbpts.org/standards-five-core-propositions/>

Developed and revised by practicing educators based on research and practitioner expertise, the National Board Five Core Propositions and Standards describe what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do to have a positive impact on student learning. National Board Certification identifies teachers who meet those standards through a performance-based, peer-reviewed series of assessment components.

First published in 1989 and updated in 2016, *What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do* articulates the National Board's Five Core Propositions for teaching. The Five Core Propositions set forth the profession's vision for accomplished teaching.

Together, the propositions form the basis of all National Board Standards and the foundation for National Board Certification.

## SECTION I ASSESSMENT

### Background

#### MAJOR ASSESSMENT 1: DEVELOP A PLATFORM OF BELIEFS

The following major assessment involves integrating your knowledge and skills around defining multicultural education and being a multicultural educator.

You will write a platform of beliefs about teaching and learning. Your platform should be grounded in your growing understanding of teaching and learning, as well as the knowledge base about teaching and learning. You will also describe personal strengths and challenges as an educator in building an educational environment that reflects your beliefs.

In assessing your own strengths and challenge areas, include an analysis of the findings from the assessment instruments and exercises that are included in the previous chapter. You may also access additional assessment instruments.

Include in your platform the following sections:

1. Introduction
2. Your platform of beliefs about teaching and learning. Some essential questions that might be addressed in your platform are these:
  - What do you believe is the purpose of education?
  - What is the role of the teacher?
  - What should be taught (curriculum)?
  - How do people learn?
  - How do you view students as learners?
  - Who controls the curriculum in schools?
  - Whose knowledge is important to include?
  - Are state standards and tests desirable?
  - What is the impact of standardized testing on learning?
  - How do issues of race, class, and gender influence what you do?
  - What is your definition of effective teaching?
  - Who and what have influenced your beliefs (e.g., people, experiences, readings)?
  - What is the impact of your beliefs on teaching and learning for diverse students?

Make specific and clear connections between your platform and course readings and discussions.

3. Personal strengths and challenges in advancing a school vision of learning; promoting the success of all students; responding to diverse student interests and needs; understanding and responding to social, economic, legal, and cultural contexts
4. Personal goals (knowledge, skills, dispositions) that you will be working on in the future
5. Conclusions

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