

CCSSO DLRT Teacher Pipeline Series:

What does Teacher Diversity and Culturally Responsive Practice have to do with ... DATA SYSTEMS?

Introduction

In 2018, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) engaged nine states¹ in their Diverse and Learner-Ready Teachers (DLRT) Initiative. CCSSO also engaged a range of national organizations as collaborators to support the work of the DLRT states. One subset of national collaborators, the Communications and Advocacy Work Group², identified the need for developing a common language for policymakers around diverse teaching and learning. The group worked to address this need by developing two resources. First, they collaboratively assembled the following definitions for two key terms – teacher diversity and culturally responsive practice:

- Diversity can be defined as the sum of the ways that people are both alike and different. The dimensions of diversity include race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, language, culture, religion, mental and physical ability, class, and immigration status. **Teacher Diversity** refers to the representation of dimensions of diversity in the collective makeup or pool of individuals within the K-12 public school teacher workforce. The work of the CCSSO DLRT Initiative focuses specifically on increasing the *racial* diversity of the teacher workforce.^{3,4}
- **Culturally Responsive Practice** in the classroom refers to both: 1) the use of cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for all students; and, 2) the embodiment of attitudes and dispositions that empower students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The work of the CCSSO DLRT Initiative focuses specifically on increasing the culturally responsive practice *aptitude* of the teacher workforce.^{5,6,7}

Next, based on these definitions, group members developed a series of short papers that would address how these two terms relate to nine key aspects of the teacher pipeline: Accountability, Compensation, Data Systems, Induction and Mentoring, Preparation, Recruitment, Retention, Student Demographics, and Well-Rounded Education. These papers form a series that seeks to provide both language and rationale to state policymakers as they work to incorporate teacher diversity and culturally responsive practice in policy initiatives across the spectrum of teacher pipeline issues. The current paper specifically addresses the intersection of diversity with Data Systems.

What are data systems? What are these systems' role in the larger Teacher Pipeline?

- Data systems are tools that states and districts can use to collect, organize, and publicize data.
- In the absence of sufficiently-detailed data systems, state and district policymakers cannot properly determine the current diversity of the teacher pipeline and workforce, as well as whether they are adequately meeting their students', schools', and communities' teacher diversity needs.

What does Teacher Diversity have to do with data systems?

- State and district policymakers have the opportunity to use data systems to measure what matters. Accordingly, system leaders who care about increasing teacher diversity can and should use data systems to measure the diversity of the profession.
- The strongest data systems will measure teacher diversity at multiple points in the teacher pipeline, such as, for example:
 - at the prospective teacher candidate level,
 - at the teacher preparation program level,
 - at the early-career teacher level,
 - at the mid-career teacher level, and
 - at the late-career teacher level.
- Collecting data on teacher diversity at various points in the teacher pipeline is critically important to provide system leaders--including leaders of teacher preparation programs, state education leaders, lawmakers, and school and district leaders--with important information about the success of specific efforts to increase diversity.

How can policymakers and school leaders leverage data systems to diversify the teaching force?

- States should consider the necessary data to collect in order to identify -- and ultimately, address -- student and teacher diversity.
- Data should help state and local leaders identify not only whether teachers of color are becoming teachers, but whether they are being retained over time.
- States should consider the [multiple methods](#) by which states can measure the gaps in teacher diversity; having the data necessary (i.e. teachers race, gender, where they teach, what subjects they teach, how long they stay in the classroom) for determining the extent to which its students have access to diverse teachers is critical for understanding and ultimately addressing the problem.⁸
- For example, states might consider following the lead of states including [Tennessee](#) and [New Mexico](#) by tracking the number of diverse candidates that each teacher preparation program prepares.^{9,10}
- States should further consider tracking the success of any specific initiatives designed to increase teacher diversity in order to ensure that programs that are having their intended impact are able to be expanded and replicated and programs that are not can be discontinued.

How can data and data use among teachers and school leaders help promote culturally responsive practice?

- Teachers and school leaders who are equipped with strong [data literacy](#) skills are able to more clearly see the full picture of their students' identities and refine their practice in ways that account for the diversity of needs and knowledge in their classroom.¹¹
- A data-literate educator possesses the knowledge and skills to access, interpret, act on, and communicate about data to support student success. Rather than relying on hunches or past

knowledge to understand student performance, data literacy coupled with knowledge of culturally responsive practice can lead to classrooms that better serve all students.

- Teachers use data to meet students' needs in a variety of ways:
 - Determine which students need more help with what, and how to support them
 - Set and monitor personalized student goals
 - Make strategic decisions about how class time is spent
 - Track students' progress over time
 - Guide conversations with parents about student performance
- Culturally responsive practice pushes towards a student-centered classroom with high expectations, and work that is grounded in an understanding of students' backgrounds and community context. Data literate teachers and school leaders use data to more objectively understand their students' strengths and needs and tailor their instruction accordingly which is essential to student-centered instruction and responsible use of assessment.
- As states consider the use of predictive analytics, like some growth models, ethical data use and culturally responsive practice must go hand in hand so that data does not become destiny, but rather a tool to support student success.

What are some policies and practices that could help make data access and literacy an integral part of Culturally Responsive Practice?

- Data literacy is not a one-off skill; it is rooted in the practice and curricular knowledge of good teaching.
- Educator preparation programs have a vital role to play to ensure teachers enter the classroom on day one with the data literacy skills necessary to meet their students' individual needs.
- Creating and sustaining a culture of meaningful classroom data use also requires quality and consistent professional development and data literacy training throughout an educators' professional career.
- To meet this need, districts, with the support and capacity-building resources of the state educational agency, have a key role to play in providing school leaders and teachers with rigorous and relevant data literacy training opportunities throughout their professional careers.
 - Training should include helping teachers use data ethically—protecting students privacy and using data only in service of student learning.
 - Teachers and school leader should be able to dig into demographic and performance data to understand trends and opportunities to better to support every students' success.
- Of teachers polled in DQC's 2018 Harris Poll, 46% say principals and 44% say district leadership or superintendents are most responsible for ensuring teachers have the time they need to use data.¹²

Where can I go to learn more?

- [Teacher Data Literacy: It's About Time](#), Data Quality Campaign
- [Administrator Data Literacy Fosters Student Success](#), Data Quality Campaign

- [Ms. Bullen’s Data-Rich Year](#), Data Quality Campaign
- [Using Data to Ensure That Teachers Are Learner Ready on Day One](#), Data Quality Campaign

¹ The nine states initially engaged in CCSSO’s DLRT initiative were: Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Mexico, and New York.

² The national organizations represented in the Communications and Advocacy Work Group were: American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE), Center for American Progress (CAP), Data Quality Campaign (DQC), Education Commission of the States (ECS), Education Testing Service (ETS), Education Trust, National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), National Center for Teacher Quality (NCTQ), New America, and Teach for America (TFA).

³ Council of Chief State School Officers. (2018). Preparing “Learner-Ready” Teachers: Guidance from NTEP States for Ensuring a Culturally Responsive Workforce. Washington, D.C.: Council of Chief State School Officers. From

<http://www.ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2018-02/Preparing%20Learner-Ready%20Teachers.pdf>

⁴ National Education Association. (2008). Diversity Toolkit Introduction. From <http://www.nea.org/tools/diversity-toolkit-introduction.html>

⁵ Council of Chief State School Officers. (2018). Preparing “Learner-Ready” Teachers: Guidance from NTEP States for Ensuring a Culturally Responsive Workforce. Washington, D.C.: Council of Chief State School Officers. From

<http://www.ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2018-02/Preparing%20Learner-Ready%20Teachers.pdf>

⁶ Geneva Gay. (2010). *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Teachers College Press.

⁷ Gloria Ladson-Billings. (1994). *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*. Jossey-Bass.

⁸ Hansen, M., & Quintero, D. (2017). 4 ways to measure diversity among public school teachers. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute.

⁹ National Council on Teacher Quality. (2017). Program Entry: Tennessee results. State Teacher Policy Database. [Data set].

Retrieved from: <https://www.nctq.org/yearbook/state/TN-Program-Entry-81>

¹⁰ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2018) Educator Preparation Program Scorecards. Retrieved from:

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/licensure/educator-preparation-program-scorecards/>

¹¹ Data Quality Campaign. (2014). Teacher Data Literacy: It’s About Time. Washington, D.C.: Data Quality Campaign.

¹² Teacher poll: online surveys conducted within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Data Quality Campaign: May 23-26, 2018, among 762 full-time K-12 grade teachers. For more information, please contact: info@dataqualitycampaign.org.