EQUITY SELF-REFLECTION FOR IDENTIFIED SCHOOLS

# Introduction

The *Equity Self-Reflection for Identified Schools* is designed to support schools identified as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) as they consider how their school currently supports Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) Education principles and allows for the creation of an equitable learning environment where all experience dignity, a sense of belonging, and inclusion.

**This document is intended to help facilitate a discussion among members of the school community about how the school may want to proceed with supporting these principles in the 2021-22 School Comprehensive Education Plan** **(SCEP).**

The [NYSED Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/crs/culturally-responsive-sustaining-education-framework.pdf) guided the development of the Self-Reflection. The Self-Reflection is organized around four core principles, which correspond with the four principles of the NYSED CR-S Framework:

1. Welcoming and Affirming Environment
2. High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction
3. Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment
4. Ongoing Professional Learning and Support

# Directions

1. School teams should consider if their discussion about CR-S would be enhanced by incorporating individuals not on the SCEP team who have specific insights that would deepen the team’s discussion (e.g. a teacher that has taken the lead on culturally responsive practices in her classroom, students that have expressed  an interest in having the school pursue culturally responsive principles).  The SCEP team may also want to consider incorporating elements of this Self-Reflection into the Student Interview process.  The team should determine how to incorporate these perspectives as the team completes the steps below.
2. School teams should distribute the Self-Reflection prior to discussing the document, so participants have adequate time to consider each practice.  Team members should review the [CR-S Framework](http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/crs/culturally-responsive-sustaining-education-framework.pdf) prior to reviewing the Self-Reflection.
3. School teams should discuss the Self-Reflection together.  Team members may find the examples identified in the [CR-S Framework](http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/crs/culturally-responsive-sustaining-education-framework.pdf), along with the materials on the [NYSED Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education website](http://www.nysed.gov/crs), useful as they discuss this document. While entering text into the “How This Looks in Our School” section is not required, the discussion should center around the extent to which the practices exist within the school.  As part of the discussion for each practice, the team should consider which of the three Self-Reflection Categories (Emerging, Integrating, Sustaining) best captures the work the school has completed to date.
4. Upon completion, school teams should consider the results of the Self-Reflection and where opportunities may exist to promote CR-S principles in the 2021-22 school year.  The Self-Reflection will serve as one of the tools used to identify priorities to pursue for the upcoming school year.   School teams should also review the materials on the [NYSED Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education website](http://www.nysed.gov/crs) to become familiar with the resources available to support schools as they pursue and expand CR-S principles.

# Principle: Welcoming and Affirming Environment

**Self-Reflection Categories**

**Emerging:** Demonstrates beginning knowledge and skillswith limited use of the defined practice.

**Integrating:** Exhibits an understanding and use of knowledge and skills in the practice, and performance is growing.

**Sustaining:** Sustains an exemplary levelof practice.

A **Welcoming and Affirming Environment** feels safe. It is a space where people can find themselves represented and reflected and where they understand that all people are treated with respect and dignity. The environment ensures all cultural identities (i.e., race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, language, religion, socioeconomic background) are affirmed, valued, and used as vehicles for teaching and learning.

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| **PRACTICES** | **E** | **I** | **S** | **HOW THIS LOOKS IN OUR SCHOOL (*Optional)*** |
| Assume collective responsibility to learn about student cultures and communities. |  |  |  |  |
| Foster close relationships with students and families, including working with families to gather insights into students’ cultures, goals, and learning preferences. |  |  |  |  |
| Assess school climate using a variety of measures (i.e., surveys, interviews, focus groups, informal gatherings) to collect diverse stakeholder impressions and experiences using questions that consider issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. |  |  |  |  |
| Prioritize social-emotional learning programs, such as restorative justice. |  |  |  |  |
| Highlight materials that represent and affirm student identities. |  |  |  |  |
| Cultivate a school and classroom environment of affirmation and acceptance. Respond to instances of disrespectful speech about student identities by intervening. |  |  |  |  |

# Principle: High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction

**Self-Reflection Categories**

**Emerging:** Demonstrates beginning knowledge and skillswith limited use of the defined practice.

**Integrating:** Exhibits an understanding and use of knowledge and skills in the practice, and performance is growing.

**Sustaining:** Sustains an exemplary levelof practice.

**High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction** prepare the community for rigor and independent learning. The environment is academically rigorous and intellectually challenging while also considering the different ways students learn. Instruction includes opportunities to use critical reasoning, take academic risks, and leverage a growth mindset to learn from mistakes. Messages encourage positive self-image and empower others to succeed.

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| **PRACTICES** | **E** | **I** | **S** | **HOW THIS LOOKS IN OUR SCHOOL (*Optional)*** |
| Initiate student-led civic engagement projects and school-based student leadership opportunities. |  |  |  |  |
| Establish an inclusive space that encourages cultural identity development through affirming race, class, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability level, and any other differentiator.  |  |  |  |  |
| Provide opportunities for students to develop projects on social justice issues. |  |  |  |  |
| Embed opportunities into curriculum and school operations for students and staff to critically examine topics of power and privilege.  |  |  |  |  |
| Facilitate teaching and learning practices that enable individuals to grow as independent learners, think critically, make meaning of new concepts in multiple ways, and apply learning to meaningful, real-world situations. |  |  |  |  |

# Principle: Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment

**Self-Reflection Categories**

**Emerging:** Demonstrates beginning knowledge and skillswith limited use of the defined practice.

**Integrating:** Exhibits an understanding and use of knowledge and skills in the practice, and performance is growing.

**Sustaining:** Sustains an exemplary levelof practice.

**Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment** elevate historically marginalized voices. It includes opportunities to learn about power and privilege in the context of various communities and empowers learners to be agents of positive social change.  It provides the opportunity to learn about perspectives beyond one’s own scope. It works toward dismantling systems of biases and inequities and decentering dominant ideologies in education.

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| **PRACTICES** | **E** | **I** | **S** | **HOW THIS LOOKS IN OUR SCHOOL (*Optional)*** |
| Incorporate curriculum, texts, content, and assignments that activate connections to student experiences and identities and provide students with opportunities to discover, research, and build deep structural understanding of themes, content, and curriculum covered. |  |  |  |  |
| Integrate current events into daily instruction. |  |  |  |  |
| Encourage students to acknowledge and explore completing assignments in multiple languages. |  |  |  |  |
| Use resources written and developed by racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse perspectives. |  |  |  |  |
| Include students as co-designers of curriculum. |  |  |  |  |

# Principle: Ongoing Professional Learning and Support

**Self-Reflection Categories**

**Emerging:** Demonstrates beginning knowledge and skillswith limited use of the defined practice.

**Integrating:** Exhibits an understanding and use of knowledge and skills in the practice, and performance is growing.

**Sustaining:** Sustains an exemplary levelof practice.

**Ongoing Professional Learning and Support** is rooted in the idea that teaching and learning is an adaptive process needing constant re-examination. It allows learners to develop and sharpen a critically conscious lens toward instruction, curriculum, assessment, history, culture, and institutions. Learners must be self-directed and take on opportunities that directly impact learning outcomes.

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| **PRACTICES** | **E** | **I** | **S** | **HOW THIS LOOKS IN OUR SCHOOL (*Optional)*** |
| Create learning communities (i.e., professional learning communities, book studies, discussion groups, online webinars, digital subscriptions) for teachers and students to engage in topics that directly address educator and student identities and understand and unpack privilege. |  |  |  |  |
| Provide opportunities for all staff to receive training on topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (i.e., critical self-reflection, disproportionality, anti-bias, developing racial literacy, combating racism, and microaggressions, etc.). |  |  |  |  |
| Support teachers in conducting cross-curricular culturally responsive-sustaining planning sessions by providing forums for collaborative planning, drafting, mapping, and aligning. |  |  |  |  |
| Disseminate self-assessment tools and resources for educators to assess and reflect on their implicit biases. |  |  |  |  |