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EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING  
PRACTICES OF EDUCATORS

By  
Lenore Andella Thompson

A Dissertation Submitted to the  
Gardner-Webb University School of Education  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Gardner-Webb University  
2020

## Approval Page

This dissertation was submitted by Lenore Andella Thompson under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Gardner-Webb University School of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

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## **Abstract**

EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES OF EDUCATORS. Thompson, Lenore Andella, 2020: Dissertation, Gardner-Webb University.

This dissertation was designed to examine how experiences, education, and professional development informed culturally responsive pedagogy and influenced teacher beliefs in their ability to guide students to success when employing culturally responsive teaching practices. The research school district was located in the piedmont region of North Carolina. It was determined after reviewing the district's historical student achievement data there was a trend of underachievement by marginalized groups of students. Licensed educators completed the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE) Scale and the Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy (CRTOE) Scale in order to determine their level of preparedness to teach students from culturally diverse backgrounds and to determine their level of confidence in the positive outcomes associated with culturally responsive teaching (CRT). Student outcome data was used to determine if the adoption of the district's professional development program positively impacted student achievement in third through eighth grade pilot classrooms. Teacher focus group data was used to identify what 12 teachers did differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development. Findings included a CRSTE mean score of 74.58 and CRTOE mean score of 84.27. These scores indicated teachers did not feel confident in their abilities to work with students from culturally diverse backgrounds, however they did believe in the positive outcomes associated with CRT. The results of this study were inconclusive with regard to improved student

achievement as measured on standardized benchmark assessments. Focus group data found several things that educator's did differently after participation in a district-sponsored professional development program. This study contributes information, which could be useful to school and district leaders as they plan high quality professional opportunities for educators.

*Keywords:* culturally responsive teaching, teacher self-efficacy, multicultural education, cultural diversity

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy (CRTSE) among educators in the study school district. I sought to examine how experiences, education, and professional development informed culturally responsive pedagogy and influenced teacher beliefs in their ability to guide students to success when employing culturally responsive teaching (CRT) practices. Self-efficacy is when a teacher believes in their own ability to guide their students to success. The population of culturally and linguistically diverse students is increasing, and achievement gaps continue to be widest for economically poor and ethnically diverse minority student groups (Public School Forum of North Carolina, 2016; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). However, it is unknown whether teachers in the district have CRTSE. A lack of understanding and knowledge about the CRTSE of teachers can lead to further achievement gaps and the perpetuation of social inequity. Educators have indicated they need effective professional development to equip them with skills and resources to design culturally responsive classrooms that will have a positive impact on student achievement. A major component of continuous improvement is to promote collaboration among teachers in an effort to refine practice and design instruction based on student data and student outcomes (Hirsh, 2007; Hirsh & Killion, 2007; Learning Forward, 2011). Today's educators are held to increasing standards to ensure that all students succeed as demonstrated by student proficiency on high stakes testing. Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century calls for adjustments in teaching and learning in an effort to improve student achievement and prepare students to be college and career ready (Johnson, 2009). In order for students to be prepared for postsecondary college and or career opportunities, they must successfully demonstrate

knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to succeed. Research and literature regarding CRT indicates that by studying the CRTSE of preservice and in-service teacher candidates, researchers can inform best practice with respect to culturally relevant teaching and CRT (Siwatu, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011). By addressing this problem, there is great potential to affect the abilities of teachers to meet the needs of culturally diverse students and to potentially impact social change within their classrooms as these teachers increase their intercultural competence and culturally responsive self-efficacy. In addition, by understanding the multicultural concerns of classroom teachers, school leaders can potentially develop ways of implementing culturally relevant pedagogies (knowledge, skills, and dispositions) that better meet the needs of teachers. Hines (2008) presented the positive correlation between teacher self-efficacy beliefs and the academic achievement, performance, and success of students. Hines investigated the interactive effects of race and teacher self-efficacy on the achievement gap in middle school math scores. The research of Hines showed a significant positive effect between teacher self-efficacy and student scores on benchmark tests. Hines's findings indicated that students with highly efficacious teachers earned higher test scores than students of teachers with low self-efficacy. The findings for the first benchmark test reflected higher student performance for students with highly efficacious teachers ( $M=81.23$ ;  $SD=7.42$ ) than students with low efficacious teachers ( $M=71.47$ ;  $SD=9.43$ ). Similar outcomes resulting from the second benchmark ( $M=78.90$ ;  $SD=9.29$ ) showed higher scores of highly efficacious teachers than students with low efficacious teachers ( $M=71.46$ ;  $SD=8.59$ ). The findings from the third benchmark test revealed higher achievement scores for students with highly efficacious teachers ( $M=82.09$ ;  $SD=10.11$ ) than students with low

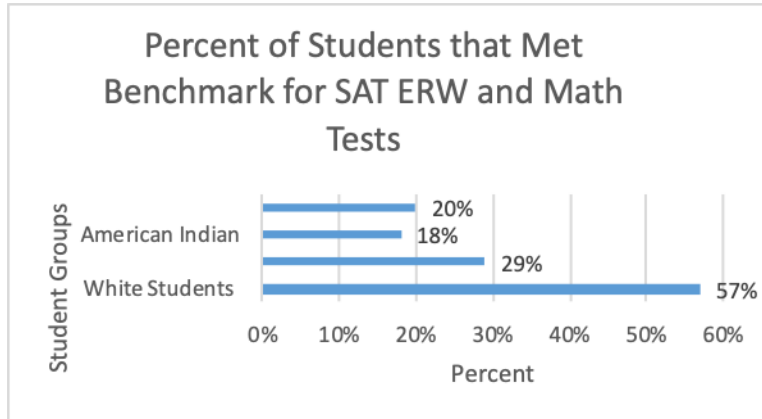
efficacious teachers ( $M=69.01$ ;  $SD=11.42$ ). Findings from the three benchmark assessments consistently showed higher student outcomes for highly efficacious teachers. Hines's findings have implications for addressing the role of self-efficacy and student performance.

### **An Overview of the Research Problem**

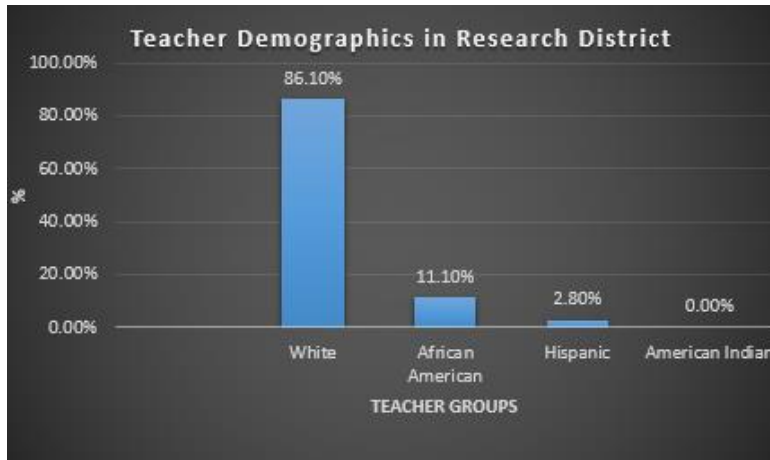
Race, as an indicator of success, in public schools continues to be a heavily debated topic within school districts across the country. The most widely regarded cause of the achievement gap in schools is ethnicity (Kober, 2001; Ogbu, 2003). As evidenced by student achievement data, the debate has yielded very little progress since the beginning of school desegregation in the mid-1950s. The national achievement gap among students in this country continues to widen as evidenced by evidence-based reading and writing and math scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). In 2019, 57% of White students met the benchmark for reading and math with 31% of Hispanic students meeting those same benchmarks (see Figure 1). In comparison, 24% of American Indian students and 21% of Black students met the required reading and math benchmarks (CollegeBoard, 2019).

**Figure 1**

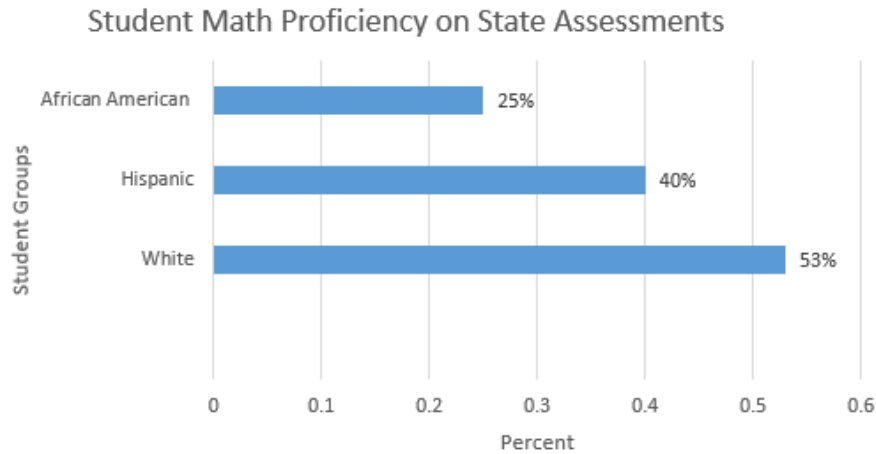
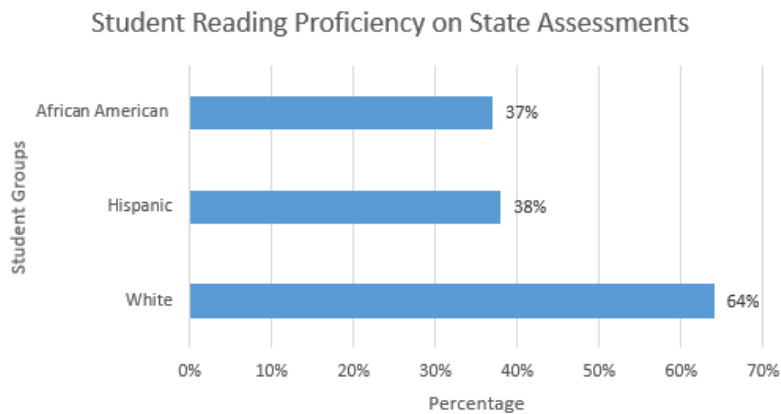
*Percentage of Students Who Met Benchmark for Scholastic Aptitude Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Math Tests*



Orfield (2008) explained that challenges of our current educational system are the result of teachers who have little or no help in addressing the inequity within their classrooms. In addition, school districts “have very little diversity in their staffs and little or no preparation to avoid polarization, inequality, and the segregation so many urban neighborhoods and schools experienced in the years past” (Orfield, 2008, para. 2). This lack of cultural diversity exists among the staff in the school district used for this research. Eighty-six percent of the teaching faculty in the subject school district are White, 11% are African American, nearly 3% are Hispanic, and 0% are American Indian (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2***Teacher Demographics in Research District*

Each year, school districts disaggregate achievement data that look very similar to national SAT results where minority students consistently underperform White students. The achievement gap continues to remain prevalent in diverse settings, such as the school district in which this research study took place. According to the 2018 North Carolina State School Report Card for the school district, 53% of White students were proficient on the state's math standardized achievement test (see Figure 3). On the same test, 40% of Hispanic students and 25% of African American students were proficient. As shown in Figure 4, reading achievement scores reflected a very similar performance gap with 64% of White students, 38% of Hispanic students, and 37% of African American students meeting the required proficiency benchmark.

**Figure 3***Student Proficiency on Standardized State Math Assessment***Figure 4***Student Proficiency on Standardized State Reading Assessment*

Adding to the significance of achievement gaps and student inequities was the inequitable distribution of behavior consequences given to minority students throughout many school districts in North Carolina. With the most frequent consequences being out-of-school suspensions (OSS) and in-school suspensions (ISS), minority students who are already disadvantaged academically are being removed from the classroom at a far higher rate than their White peers. Behavior data for the subject school district reflect this trend



as well (see Table 1). During the 2017-2018 school year, African American students were assigned OSS 295 times throughout the year and 240 additional assignments of ISS during that same period. This means that African Americans comprised 30% of the total student population and 48% of suspensions. Hispanic students were given OSS 209 times and 167 ISS assignments. This means that Hispanic students comprised 36% of the student population and 34% of suspensions. In comparison, White students were assigned 116 OSS assignments and 86 ISS assignments. This means that White students comprised 34% of the student population and 18% of suspensions. African American students were assigned exclusionary behavioral consequences nearly three times more than White students, even though they comprised the smallest percentage of the student population.

**Table 1**

*Suspension Data in Study School District*

Student group	% of population	OSS	ISS	Total suspensions	% of suspensions
Hispanic	36%	209	167	376	34%
African American	30%	295	240	535	48%
White	34%	116	86	202	18%
Total		620	493	1113	

The achievement and behavior data of the subject school district supported the idea that racial inequities played a major role in the lack of CRT practices throughout the subject school district. School leaders were unclear as to how to specifically address and close the achievement gap of minority students, thereby effecting a proactive solution where all students can be successful. In her research regarding teacher preparation, Mader (2015) asserted that the continuously growing gap is due to an increased distribution of inexperienced teachers in classrooms across the country. Mader explained that teachers need to be provided with a residency experience reflecting culturally diverse student

populations and that teacher preparation programs should extend a greater effort recruiting a more diversified teaching force. Orfield (2008) suggested that teachers and schools must do a better job to become increasingly more diverse over time and teachers and schools must develop awareness of recognizing cultural conditions outside of their schools and have a better understanding of how those conditions adversely affect student achievement. Orfield wrote that districts must

develop and implement training and support plans to give the nation's teachers the skills they need to better work with students of all backgrounds and to teach with materials and practices that fully recognize the contributions of all cultures and races to the United States. (para. 4)

In her book *The DreamKeepers*, which focuses on successful teachers of African American children, Ladson-Billings (1994) explained that most teachers struggle with ideological blinders as a result of their own cultural and educational experiences. In addition to these experiences, teachers often resist an attempt by their leaders to engage in CRT practices or identify the inequity that exists in their own classrooms. Ladson-Billings's (2009) suggestion is that school leaders must put forth a greater effort with developing a teacher preparation or growth process that is culturally relevant. Ladson-Billings (2009) suggested that process begins with recruiting teacher candidates who express an interest in working with diverse populations of students and ensure those teachers are provided with experiences that immerse them into the culture of their students. The process also includes empowering those teachers as "agents of change" (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 145) and ensuring the conservation of culture, immersion, and inequity remains at the forefront of planning and instructional delivery.

Payne (2012) expounded on actionable high impact things teachers can do to effectively teach economically disadvantaged students. Payne is known for her work on educating children of poverty. Payne (2012) contended that despite suppressing economic disadvantages, effective tools and strategies can propel students out of poverty. Thirty percent of Americans who are born in the bottom quintile make it out of that quintile (Isaacs et al., 2008). Payne (2012) contended that impoverished students excel because of human capital. Payne (2012) asserted that human capital is developed through education, employment, and the intergenerational transfer of knowledge and social bridging capital. Payne's (2012) work highlighted the importance of building mutually respectful relationships between students and teachers. According to Payne (2003), understanding family resources and dynamics is also key to effectively understanding the inequities that exist in teacher classrooms. Payne's (2003) research highlighted the importance of educators analyzing the resources of students in order to make interventions based on resources to which the students have access.

Teachers need tools to assist them in meeting the demands of the rigorous accountability standards that currently exist in education. These accountability standards impose pressure on teachers to ensure that all students succeed. Research indicates that current models of professional development call for collaborative practices where teachers are actively engaged in their own learning (Archibald et al., 2011; Gibbs, 2011; Hirsh & Killion, 2007; Learning Forward, 2011; Loveless, 2013; Tournaki et al., 2011). Currently, in education, there is a problem of teachers lacking culturally responsive self-efficacy and awareness of the need to meet the needs of all students.

Villani's (2018) research provides a tool to ensure that we can analyze data on

student performance and outcomes using the lens of equity. By using this lens, inequities that were not originally evident come into a much sharper focus. For example, educators with an equity lens can analyze chronic absenteeism data and probe into the challenges those students may face when getting to school each day. An understanding of those challenges allows the educator to own the problem and seek proactive solutions that can alleviate the burden for the student (Villani, 2018). Villani explained the steps that educators should use to generate probing questions about equity in regard to achievement and behavioral data. First, the educator must identify and investigate the problem regarding student experiences and/or outcomes. This should be followed by identifying questions about the problem and determining the sources of data to answer the questions and learning how school conditions may influence the problem. Once a concrete understanding of conditions and influencers are established, educators use a data-driven dialogue process to generate the priority issues for the equity goal. Next, participants should explore resources, research, and evidence-based practices to inform the creation of goals to address the root causes and ultimately create a plan to begin closing the achievement gaps evidenced by the original data (Villani, 2018).

### **Setting**

The setting of this research study is a small suburban city in the southeastern region of the United States. The school district in which the research for this study was conducted is located in the piedmont region of North Carolina. In 2018, the district spent an average of \$9,400 on each student. The school district encompasses nine schools that serve approximately 5,415 students in preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Enrollment in the district's K-5 schools ranges from 369 students to 585 students. The average sizes of the

district's schools are 421 students in each elementary school, 1,195 students in middle school, and 1,616 students in high school. High school students have access to an early college or nontraditional high school program located on a community college campus. Students who graduate from this institution will do so with a certification or an associate's degree from the local community college. In 2015-2016, the graduation rate was 83.3%. District schools receive subsidies from the federal Title I program.

Faculty demographics of the district are 86.08% Caucasian, 11.08% African American, and 2.84% Hispanic. The demographic student makeup averages approximately 36.22% Hispanic, 0.4% American Indian, 1.4% Asian, 29.73% African American, 0.1% Pacific Islander, 34.05% Caucasian, and 4.9% students of two or more races. The average size of a school in the district in 2008 was 673 students. Ten years later in 2018, the average size of a school in the district was 779 students. This was evidence of increased population changes within the school district.

Many district educators held advanced degrees and certifications and had more than 10 years of teaching experience. Thirty-two percent of elementary educators had completed an advanced college degree, including a master's or doctoral degree; and on average, there were six National Board certified teachers at each elementary site. Comparably, 43% of middle school educators had completed an advanced college degree, and there were eight National Board certified teachers in middle school. Twenty-three percent of high school educators had completed an advanced college degree, and there were 17 National Board certified teachers compared to an average of eight across the state.

The majority of district teachers in each grade span had more than 10 years of

experience followed by teachers who had 4-10 years of teaching experience. Thirty-nine percent of elementary teachers had 10+ years, 37% had 4-10 years, and 24% had 0-3 years of teaching experience. At the middle school level, 58% had 10+ years; 24% had 4-10 years; and 19% had 0-3 years of teaching experience. At the high school level, 62% had 10+ years; 21% had 4-10 years; and 18% had 0-3 years of teaching experience. The study school district's middle and high school teachers had been teaching longer than other teachers on average across the state.

### **Statement of the Research Problem**

The findings of this evaluation were needed so instructional leaders could make decisions about improving teacher efficacy in regard to CRT practices and design universal culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum resources that would support improved student achievement. According to the 2018 State School Report Card for the school district, there was a 13%-28% difference in math achievement of the district's marginalized student populations. Reading achievement data indicated a similar gap of underachievement ranging from 26%-27%. All student groups in the district should have been demonstrating comparable proficiency in math and reading.

Prior to the 2018-2019 academic school year, the school district had been labeled as one of the state's low-performing districts. This was based on student proficiency and growth on end-of-course and end-of-grade assessments. In 2016-2017, 50% of schools within the district met growth, while 38% did not meet growth. Only 12% of schools in the district exceeded growth. Five schools received school report cards grades of a D, while three schools received a grade of C. This earned the district the label of low performing. In response to being labeled low performing, district leaders lead faculty in

several initiatives to improve student achievement. One area of focus was high-quality and aligned curriculum across all departments and schools within the district. Another area of focus for improved student achievement was aligned curriculum resources. Despite efforts, there was no evidence that achievement gaps were decreasing among subgroups. The underachievement problem was specific and could be feasibly addressed by determining levels of teacher self-efficacy and by examining the effects of CRT practices of teachers who have participated in district-sponsored professional development. In turn, reacting to the findings of this research study can effect change in student future proficiency rates. In response to student inequities, the local school district sponsored systemic equity professional development and facilitated professional development on cultural responsiveness and text equity. The district's text equity professional development highlighted many exclusionary teaching practices that were inherent in the district's curriculum resources. This professional development program had not yet been formally evaluated and data were needed so expansion decisions could be made.

There is evidence that a trend exists that has led to inequities in education. Implicit racism in schools does exist. The National Education Association stated, "Social scientists believe that implicit biases are learned as young as age 3 and may be fueled by stereotypes perpetuated in the media, or beliefs passed along by parents, peers, and other community members" (Flannery, 2015, para. 6). It is a fact that needs to be recognized. In order to adequately address racial equity in our schools, the term racism and the deeper systematic meaning of racism need to be discussed among educators. Educators contribute to systemic racism by looking the other way in the face of acts or systems that

marginalize students of color. Complicity in policies and systems that are oppressive to students of color contributes to systemic racism as it perpetuates oppressive systems. Looking the other way and denying the existence of oppressive systems is part of the problem.

Teachers often think they “see and celebrate color” without even realizing there are implicit biases that are ingrained in their ideologies. Their attitudes towards and stereotypical thoughts about groups of people affect their understanding. Examples can include believing that certain groups are smarter than others, while other groups are inclined to do well in sports. These unrealized biases often influence the way teachers respond to students in the classroom. Without realizing, teachers often make decisions that are not equitable among students of color.

### ***Lack of Quality Professional Development***

There is a lack of quality professional development for teachers in the area of cultural and linguistic diversity. The North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey provided pertinent information about the capacity of district personnel to implement an equity initiative. District teachers spent significantly more time addressing discipline concerns than professional development. Forty-eight percent of district teachers indicated that in an average week, they spent more than 1 hour addressing student discipline issues, yet 64% of district teachers spent less than 1 hour per week in professional development. Eighty-one percent of teachers indicated on the Teaching Working Conditions Survey that they had less than 10 professional development hours on classroom management in the last 10 years, though they spent a significant amount of time each week addressing discipline concerns.



Teachers thought there was capacity for district leaders to provide ongoing and systemic professional development about equity issues as there are existing systems for available personnel support. In fact, 85% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they had sufficient access to a broad range of professional support personnel. Examples of this included both district and site-based instructional coaches and contract services such as approved mental health providers.

### ***Achievement Gap***

There was evidence to support the need for equity in education. There were persistent achievement gaps across multiple years among marginalized students in the local district. Disparities exist in the district's student outcome data in the following areas: ACT scores and standardized summative assessments such as end-of-grade and end-of-course exams.

ACT data in the study school district indicated lower proficiency levels for Black, Hispanic, and economically disadvantaged students than White students on measures of college and career readiness. ACT Performance is a college entrance exam. According to the North Carolina Department of Public Education, 52% of White students met the college admission's minimum requirement of a composite score of 17, while only 23% Black, 20% Hispanic, and 36% two or more races met the same minimum requirements. ACT WorkKeys Performance is an assessment that indicates college and career ready status. As shown in Table 2, 73% of White students were awarded at least a Silver Level Career Readiness Certificate in comparison to 31% Black, 57% Hispanic, and 60% two or more races. Collectively, 49% of 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students in the study school district met at least one of the career and college readiness benchmarks. Fifty-one percent of students

enroll in college, but only a staggering 25% are Hispanic as the data indicate that most (57%) are obtaining credentials in career readiness.

**Table 2**

*ACT and ACTWorkKeys Indicators in the Study School District*

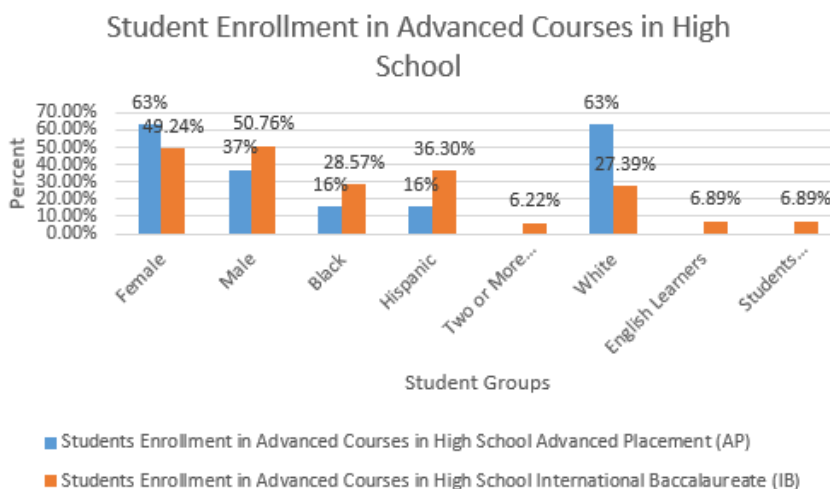
ACT Performance								
Black	Hispanic	Two or More Races	White	Academically Intellectually Gifted	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged	District Total	State Total
23%	20%	36%	52%	95%	22%	35%	31%	56%
ACT WorkKeys								
Black	Hispanic	Two or More Races	White	Academically Intellectually Gifted	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged	District Total	State Total
38%	57%	60%	73%	95%	41%	62%	58%	56%
ACT/ACT WorkKeys Combined Indicator								
Black	Hispanic	Two or More Races	White	Academically Intellectually Gifted	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged	District Total	State Total
31%	40%	55%	73%	55%	30%	56%	49%	65%

According to 2018-2019 North Carolina School Report Card student data, three schools in the district had a North Carolina School Report Card Grade of D and five schools had a C grade. During the 2018-2019 school year, one school exceeded growth, five schools met expected growth, and two schools did not meet expected growth in the state's accountability model. Fifty-eight percent of students in the district did not demonstrate math proficiency on state assessments, in comparison to 41% of students across the state. Fifty-one percent of students did not demonstrate reading proficiency on state assessments, in comparison to 43% of students across the state. Furthermore, an analysis of district data revealed disparities among student population groups. According to the 2018-2019 North Carolina School Report Card, 15.56% of Black students and 15.56% of Hispanic students were enrolled in advanced classes compared to 62.96% of

White students (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5**

*Student Enrollment in Advanced Courses in High School*



High non-proficiency rates existed for multiple years. A 3-year analysis revealed the following data. Student achievement data for the 2017-2018 school year indicated that at the secondary level, overall 67.9% of students were not proficient on state end-of-course exams. Secondary level student growth and proficiency data received a D rating school under the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) school rating system (Anonymous, personal communication, June 24, 2018). An analysis of the 2016-2017 school year data as indicated by the North Carolina School Report Card Data indicated an overall 62.5% of the district's students were not proficient. This proficiency rate earned the school district a letter grade of D.

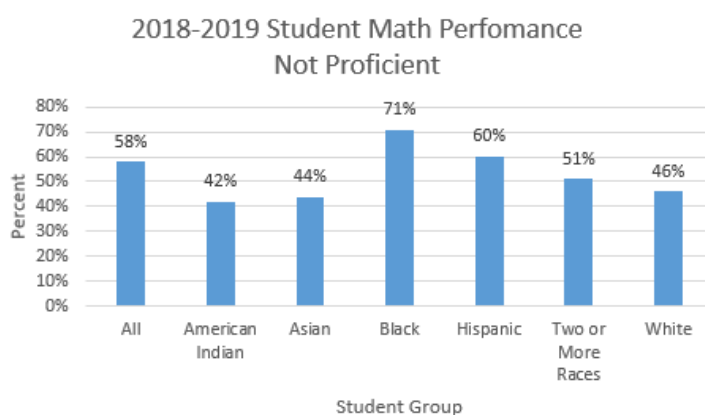
Further analysis of 2016-2017 student achievement data indicated there was a higher percentage of students who scored at achievement level 1 in all six of the state's end-of-grade and end-of-course exams when compared to the state average. Likewise, a significantly higher percentage of the district's students scored at the level 2 range on all

six state end-of-grade and end-of-course exams. These data provided evidence that student achievement was an overarching area of improvement for the study school district.

In addition, an analysis of the district's 2018-2019 end-of-grade and end-of-course assessment data revealed significant disparities in achievement among various subgroups. Overall, 46% of White students did not demonstrate math proficiency compared to 71% of African American students and 60% of Hispanic students (see Figure 6).

**Figure 6**

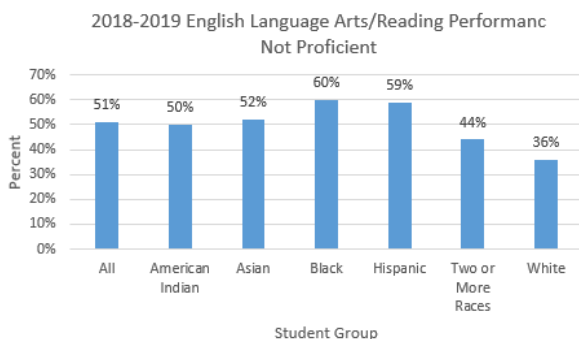
*2018-2019 Percent of Non-Proficient Math Students*



In addition, an analysis of the district's 2018-2019 reading end-of-grade and end-of-course assessments also revealed disparities in achievement among subgroups. Overall, 36% of White students did not demonstrate reading/English language arts proficiency compared to 60% of African American students and 59% of Hispanic students. White students demonstrated proficiency at a rate that is almost two times as much as Black and Hispanic students (see Figure 7).

## Figure 7

### *2018-2019 Percent of Non-Proficient English Language Arts Students*



### *Student Perceptions*

An analysis of student survey data portrayed significant concerns in the areas of school climate and school engagement for 1,799 students in Grades 6-12. Results of the spring 2018 survey reflected that only 47% of students responded favorably about their perception of the overall social and learning climate of their school. Only 35% of students responded favorably when reflecting on how attentive and invested they were in the school which is reflective of a decrease of 5% in school engagement since the fall administration of the survey. Other findings of the district's student survey data showed 73% of students indicated that the behavior of other students hurt their learning. Only 31% of sixth- through 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students were excited about going to class; and likewise, only 38% were eager to participate in class. There was persistent lack of engagement among students.

### *Suspensions and Expulsions*

Inequities also existed in the behavior consequences that groups of students received in regard to expulsions and both long- and short-term suspensions. North Carolina School Report Card data indicated no student expulsions during the 2016-2017

school year. A small percentage of students in the subject school district received long-term suspensions, resulting in them missing more than 10 days of instruction as reflected in the middle school rate of 0.56% and the high school rate of 0.13%. In contrast, the number of short-term suspensions were far more significant. Short-term suspensions were suspensions in which students missed fewer than 10 days of instruction. At the high school level, the average number of short-term suspensions was 21.41% and 16.25% at the middle school level (see Figure 8).

### Figure 8

#### *OSS and Expulsion Data for 2016-2017*

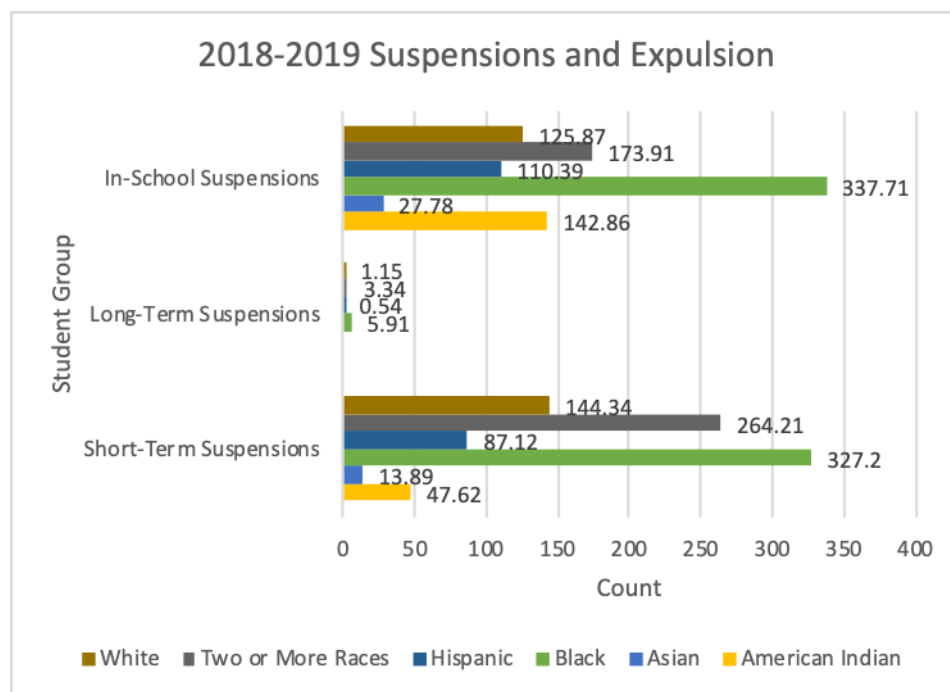
**Student Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions:** The average number of short-term (10 days or fewer) and long-term (more than 10 days) out of school suspensions and expulsions per 100 students.

	Elementary	Middle	High
Short-Term Suspensions	7.3	21.41	16.25
Long-Term Suspensions	0	0.56	0.13
Expulsions	0	0	0

Suspension rates remained consistent; and 2 years later, an analysis of subgroup data highlighted inequities among suspensions for subgroups. Information from the 2018-2019 North Carolina School Report Card indicated American Indian and African American students were excluded from instruction at a far higher rate than White students. Both ISS and short-term suspensions were highest for Black students indicated by 337.21 accounts and 327.2 accounts respectively (see Figure 9).

**Figure 9**

*Suspension and Expulsion Data for 2018-2019*



### ***Dropout Counts and Rates***

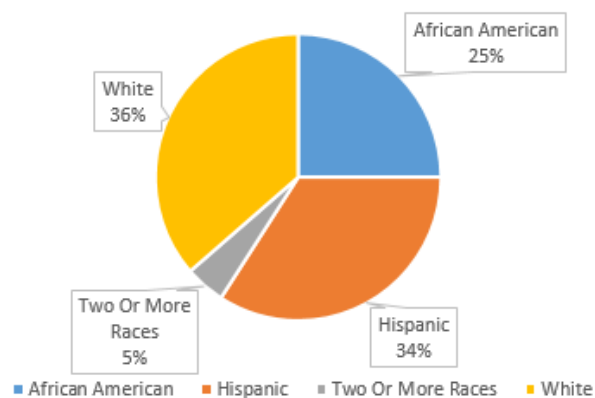
An analysis of the district’s dropout data indicated not all students were graduating “ready for post-secondary education and work, prepared to be a globally engaged and productive citizen,” as evidenced in reports to the North Carolina General Assembly’s dropout data for 2016-2019. Dropout data reflected any student who left school for any reason before graduation or completion of a program of studies without transferring to another school. Data included students who attended any part of the previous school year and did not return to school for the current school year. That included students who were not in attendance on the 20<sup>th</sup> day and students who did not attend at least any 1 school day during the current school year. The district reported 44 dropouts during 2015-2016, 43 dropouts in 2016-2017, and 36 dropouts in the 2017-2018 school year. The dropout rate was 2.93%, 2.69%, and 2.15% respectively. During the

previous 7 years, the school district's dropout rates were 2012-2013 2.98%, 2013-2014 3.24%, 2014-2015 3.53%, 2015-2016 2.93%, 2016-2017 2.69%, 2017-2018 2.15%, and 2018-2019 2.65%. Though there was a decrease of 16.3% between 2017 and 2018, there was an increase in 2019. This was an area of concern, as inequities existed in this area as well. Further data analysis of 2018-2019 found that the majority of the district's 44 dropouts were White and Hispanic males. The subject school district's dropout count was 44 total; 16 females; 28 males; and White 16, Hispanic 15, African American 11, and two or more races 2 (see Figure 10). These data highlighted from the district created comprehensive evidence of the existence of a local problem for both the majority and marginalized student populations.

### Figure 10

*High School Dropouts for Study District by Race/Ethnicity*

High School Dropouts for LEA by Race/Ethnicity



Comparably, there was evidence to support the fact that an achievement gap existed on a level much larger than the local school district. In a report published by the Northwest Evaluation Association, McCall et al. (2006) indicated that several achievement gaps existed. These included gaps between European-American students



and African-American students; between European-American students and Hispanic students; between students in low-poverty schools and those in high-poverty schools; and among European-American students, Hispanic students, and African-American students in schools with similar levels of poverty. Students enrolled in high-poverty schools tended to grow less academically in math during the school year than students enrolled in low-poverty schools, and African-American students grew less academically during the school year than students in other groups. The report went on to indicate that the difference was more prevalent in mathematics than in reading. Additionally, the report identified that low-performing students in all groups continued to grow during summer months; but African-American students, Hispanic students, and students enrolled in high-poverty schools grew less. Researchers cautioned that high-performing students tend to lose achievement during the summer months, with African-American students and Hispanic students losing more achievement than similar European-American students. High-performing students enrolled in high-poverty schools lose more achievement during the summer than similar students who are enrolled in low-poverty schools. The researchers revealed clear findings that illustrated the achievement gap is more than simply the difference in average performance between European-American students and minority students. Additionally, findings indicated the achievement gap affects students ranging from high performers to low performers. When attempting to close the achievement gap, educators must be intentional about focusing on all learners, high and low (McCall et al., 2006).

### ***Demographic Trends***

There are potential causes related to the problem of inequities in student

performance. Rapid demographic changes pose challenges for practitioners to design instruction that is sensitive to the needs of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The U.S. Census Bureau (2015) defined minority as the “population identifying their race and ethnicity as something other than non-Hispanic White race alone” (p. 2). By 2060, the minority population of the United States will be greater than the majority (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). During the last 4 years in the study school district, the percentage of Hispanic student enrollment grew from 26.7% to 36.22%. The percentage of Caucasian students decreased from 37.6% to 34.05%, and the percentage of African American students remained unchanged at a current 29.73% from 29%. In contrast, the faculty demographics were 86.08% Caucasian, 11.08% African American, and 2.84% Hispanic. The number of young culturally and linguistically diverse children entering educational settings is increasing rapidly, but the number of practitioners with expertise and background in working with culturally and linguistically diverse children is low (Ochoa et al., 1997). Two separate national surveys of school psychology and early childhood special education practitioners revealed that respondents considered their training with respect to serving culturally and linguistically diverse children as less than adequate (Delgado Rivera & Adkinson, 1997; Ochoa et al., 1997).

According to Garibaldi (1992), “one of the most actively discussed, and sometimes vigorously debated issues, since the late 1980’s has been the declining social, economic, and educational status of young African American males in our society” (p. 4). In her work regarding the truth of ability and accomplishment for students, Dweck (2006) explained that a stereotype has the potential to hijack an individual's ability to perform by alienating them from the environment in which they exist. The negative

impact of stereotypes and negative labels on minority students causes them to withdraw, which is exhibited through behaviors that appear to be apathetic or disrespectful to the educator (Dweck, 2006). Closing the achievement gap requires classroom resources that reflect all students without stereotyping or labeling a specific group. Research shows that when it comes to the characters within children's books, 1% reflect American Indian, 5% Latino, 7% Asian, 10% African American, and 50% White. When students look in books, they should be able to relate somehow to the characters in the story. Meaningful classroom libraries allow teachers to be more inclusive for their students. Without inclusive literature within the classroom, students from minority backgrounds are discouraged from reading and/or writing. This is due to the fact that there is not a direct relation between the students and the text (SLJ Staff, 2019).

### **Deficiencies in the Evidence**

Scholars have been studying the achievement gaps of marginalized students, yet they still exist. Currently, there is a gap in the research on the advantages of a culturally relevant pedagogy for teachers and its impact on positive student outcomes. Research needed to be done to examine teacher abilities to effectively teach culturally and linguistically diverse students and to examine teacher perceptions of their self-efficacy competence that predicted their effectiveness and interventions that needed to be implemented to meet diverse student needs (Irvine & Hawley, 2011; Siwatu, 2007; Sleeter, 2011).

To date, there has never been a study conducted in the subject school district that examined culturally responsive self-efficacy beliefs of teachers. In this project study, I sought to examine teacher perceptions about their level of confidence when teaching

culturally and linguistically diverse students. I also wanted to identify what teachers did differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development on CRT practices. I anticipated that teachers who participated in district professional learning experiences would have increased culturally responsive self-efficacy, competence, student outcomes, and confidence to meet diverse student needs. I secured permission from author Dr. Kamau Oginga Siwatu to use the CRTSE and Outcome Expectancy Scale. The scales are located in Appendix A. The rationale for conducting this research study was to improve student outcomes for marginalized student populations through an examination of educator CRTSE belief patterns.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This was a mixed methods study. Mixed methods is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, or “mixing” or integrating both quantitative and qualitative data at some stage of the research for the purposes of gaining a better understanding of the research problem (Ivankova et al., 2006, p. 2).

The purpose of this study was to examine teacher levels of CRTSE and examine how experiences, education, and professional development informed culturally responsive pedagogy for educators in the study school district. Second, this study would provide data about the impact of professional development on teacher sense of self-efficacy when using CRT practices. Third, this study examined the relationship between teacher efficacy and student achievement. A core group of 18 teachers who received professional development in CRT practices would be solicited for voluntary consent to participate in the study. The study was both qualitative and quantitative in nature based on information gathered from teacher surveys, teacher focus groups, and an analysis of

student performance on benchmark assessments. All teachers who participated in the district's equity professional development program had the potential to be affected by this study, and the entire district faculty had the potential to be affected if the program was expanded by the school district to include additional opportunities for professional development. It was anticipated that both teachers and students could benefit from completion of this study. Benefits for teachers included improved sense of efficacy. Benefits for students included improved social emotional competencies, increased levels of engagement, and improved academic achievement.

### **Guiding Research Questions**

The guiding research questions for this research study were as follows:

1. How efficacious are teachers in their ability to teach students from culturally diverse backgrounds?
2. Do teachers believe in the positive outcomes associated with CRT?
3. Does implementation of the district-sponsored professional development program impact student achievement as measured on 2019-2020 reading, math, and science benchmark assessments?
4. What do classroom teachers do differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development?

### **Definitions of Major Concepts and Terms**

#### ***Changing Demographics***

Any quantitative changes in the groups of people in the population; for example, in terms of average age, dependency ratios, life expectancy, family structures, birth rates, and size of ethnic and racial groups.

### ***Cultural Deficit Perspective***

This pedagogical perspective is comprised of two parts: (a) the attribution of an individual's achievement to cultural factors alone, without regard to individual characteristics; and (b) the attribution of failure to a cultural group. In other words, a cultural deficit perspective is a view that individuals from some cultural groups lack the ability to achieve just because of their cultural background (Silverman, 2011, pp. 446-447).

### ***Colorblindness***

The racial ideology that posits the best way to end discrimination is by treating individuals as equally as possible without regard to race, culture, or ethnicity (Williams, 2011). A major theoretical concept found in the literature is that colorblindness functions as a racial blindness that is the “ideological opposite of racial awareness or multi-cultural consciousness” and “pretends racism no longer exists,” blinds us to our continuing inequality, and may perpetuate racism and further disadvantage minorities (Oppenheimer, 2011, p. 232).

### ***Culture***

Shared ways of living and thinking that include symbols and language (verbal and nonverbal); knowledge, beliefs, and values (what is “good” and “bad”); norms (how people are expected to behave); and techniques, ranging from common folk recipes to sophisticated technologies and material objects. (Leicht, 2013, para. 1)

### ***Culturally Diverse***

When population differences are well represented within a group. These differences include but are not limited to race, ethnicity, age, ability, language,

nationality, socioeconomic status, gender, religion, or sexual orientation.

### ***CRT***

Using the knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them. CRT is the behavioral expression of knowledge, beliefs, and values that recognize the importance of racial and cultural diversity in learning. Cultural differences are assets that are valued; and cultural knowledge is used to guide curriculum development, classroom climates, instructional strategies, and relationships with students that challenge racial and cultural stereotypes, prejudices, racism, and other forms of intolerance, injustice, and oppression (Gay, 2010b, p. 31).

Siwatu (2007) summarized teaching approaches and instructional practices that include sensitivity and respect for a student's cultural background as, "culturally congruent instruction (Mohatt & Erikson, 1981), culturally appropriate instruction (Au & Jordan, 1981), culturally compatible instruction (Jordan, 1984; Vogt et al., 1987), or culturally relevant teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995)" (p. 1086). For the purpose of this research, I will refer to CRT when describing the instructional approach in which educators consider both the contextual and cultural features of a student's background and use this information to plan instruction and respond to students; thus, "culturally responsive teaching is defined as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (Gay, 2002, p. 106).

### ***CRTSE***

CRTSE are the beliefs teachers hold about their ability to execute CRT practices

(Siwatu, 2007). These beliefs were measured by the CRTSE Scale.

### ***Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy (CRTOE)***

CRTOE are the beliefs teachers hold about CRT as having a positive impact on classroom and student outcomes (Siwatu, 2007).

### ***Diverse Student Learners***

Students from racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse families and communities of lower socioeconomic status (Saravia-Shore, 2008, pp. 3-4).

### ***Elementary***

Elementary refers to children, classrooms, and teachers of children with the relative ages of children attending kindergarten through fifth grade.

### ***End-of-Grade Assessments***

These summative assessments are developed by NCDPI and are administered at the end of the school year to third through eighth graders. They are designed to measure student performance on the goals, objectives, and grade-level competencies specified in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

### ***Practicing Teachers***

For this research study, practicing teachers refers to teacher education graduates who are initially licensed and in their first through fifth year of teaching as the lead teacher in K-8th.

### ***Preservice Teachers***

Preservice teachers refers to teaching candidates (or student teachers) in their respective teacher education preparation programs who are in their professional semesters prior to entering the teaching profession.



### ***Student Outcomes***

Student outcomes will be represented by  $z$  scores. Student outcome  $z$  scores will be computed based on standardized assessment data acquired from the subject school district and/or individual schools whose teachers are participating in the study.

### ***Teacher Efficacy***

In general, teacher efficacy refers to what Woolfolk Hoy (2000) described as “teachers’ confidence in their ability to promote students’ learning” (p. 2).

### ***North Carolina Check-In Assessments***

These are interim assessments developed by NCDPI that are aligned to North Carolina grade-level content standards (for reading and mathematics) and North Carolina Essential Standards (for science).

### ***Self-Efficacy***

An individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments. Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and social environment (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1999).

### ***Social Change***

The significant alteration of social structures and cultural patterns through time. Social structure refers to persistent networks of social relationships where interaction between people or groups has become routine and repetitive (Leicht, 2013).

### ***Student Achievement Gap***

Statistical differences in scholarly achievement among majority and minority groups of students.

## **Limitations**

Participants for this study voluntarily completed a survey on an individual basis. The surveys were comprised of position statements that depicted attitudes or beliefs towards specific groups of children and the participants' own perceptions of their teaching abilities along with their perceptions of the importance of particular instructional practices. The participants' self-report regarding their CRT beliefs and anticipation of the value of culturally responsive practices may have limitations. Self-report measures can be limiting because various biases may influence a participant's response such as social desirability or acquiescence bias (Gall et al., 2007). Further, participants varied by age, race, school type, school experiences, and years of experience, which may have influenced their interpretation of the statements on the questionnaire. Participant responses may have varied based on the time frame within the data collection window in which they completed the survey, as perceived stressors (i.e., standardized testing window, classroom responsibilities) may have influenced them. Economic and political factors also posed limitations to this research study as study participants responded during a global pandemic of historical significance. Enforceable stay-at-home orders enacted by state and local governments due to COVID-19 hindered my ability to physically assemble groups of five or more participants as well as travel to access the maximum number of program participants during this research.

Additionally, with a limited timeline for research, it was difficult to collect and analyze all data necessary to truly define how students were impacted by the adoption of the professional development program. A multi-year timeline would allow for an in-depth district-wide analysis of multiple data sources encompassing achievement and social

emotional learning of students and teacher efficacy. Another limitation was the sensitivity of the culturally responsive topic. It was anticipated that many district faculty may have been uncomfortable discussing issues involving race. Further limitations included issues related to sample size. I used a convenience sampling from the district's 856 staff ( $n < 856$ ) and it was contingent upon voluntary participation in the study by educators. The overall sample size was ( $n = 18$ ). Statistical analyses would be contingent upon the sample size, and a small sample size would impact statistical power and could lead to a Type I error, causing misleading study results.

### **Delimitations**

Delimitations were present in the research study. I only recruited teachers from a single school district. This delimitation did not allow me to have a control group for data analysis and comparison. Additionally, I focused solely on third- through eighth-grade educators located in the suburban area of the local school district. This convenience sample limited the generalizability of the results. Another delamination was present in this study in that I only sampled the efficacy levels of certified faculty from across the district excluding any faculty who did not have a homeroom. In addition, I did not include Grades K-2 or ninth- through 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students in the research as there were no comparable standardized assessment data to reflect student outcomes as exist for students in Grades 3-8.

### **Significance of the Study**

The educational significance of this research study is profound. First, this study will inform district leaders about the effectiveness of the text equity professional development. Study findings will indicate ways the professional development course may

potentially need to be revised in order to meet program goals and will further indicate whether the training needs to be scaled towards a larger audience in the subject school district. Findings of this study will also advance literature in the field of teacher education on the topic of teacher efficacy beliefs as related to CRTSE and outcome expectancy beliefs. Particularly, this study will improve the understanding of how teacher CRTSE and outcome expectancy beliefs are associated with effective instructional practices. It will also advance the knowledge regarding the CRSTE instrumentation and its ability to measure such variables (Siwatu, 2007). Additionally, this research study will highlight links between professional development, teacher efficacy, effective culturally and linguistically responsive teaching practices, and student outcomes. As such, this study may serve as a pilot to future similar studies.

### **Summary**

A myriad of factors has attributed to the widening achievement gaps in educational systems across the United States. As stated earlier, changing demographics and lack of teacher efficacy have attributed to the increase of negative outcomes for students representing culturally and linguistically diverse populations. It is my hope to examine how CRT practices impact student learning.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The purpose of this study was to examine teacher efficacy for CRT practices of professionally licensed educators in the subject school district. I sought to examine how experiences, education, and professional development informed culturally responsive pedagogy. Findings from this study would provide information about the relationship between teacher self-efficacy levels and student outcomes. Another anticipated outcome of this study was implications for the district-sponsored professional development program and levels of teacher efficacy within the study school district.

I conducted an extensive literature review using multiple databases, searching keyword terms and phrases, and will present it in this chapter. I conducted the literature review using electronic sources I accessed through the Gardner-Webb University library as well as other university databases and print resources. The databases included Bulldog Onesearch, EBSCO, Education Research Complete, Academic Search Complete, ERIC, ProQuest, SAGE, and Google Scholar. I used the following terms and phrases to search these electronic databases: adult learning theory, effective professional development, culturally and linguistically responsive teacher preparation and professional development, culturally relevant and best designs for professional development, teacher education and culturally responsive teaching, culturally relevant, culturally competent, culturally responsive skills and dispositions, culturally responsive teacher practices, culturally responsive teacher education, CRTSE beliefs, self-efficacy, and teacher beliefs.

### **Historical Background**

The review of literature for this study is organized in the following sections: teacher self-efficacy, adult learning theory, and CRT practices. The literature review

begins with the examination of teacher beliefs in which the theoretical foundations of this study will be applied. Those frameworks are Mitzel's (1960) theory on teaching and learning and Bandura's (1977) Self-Efficacy Theory. A review of literature highlighted existing research about adult learning theory and effective professional development models in culturally responsive skills training that are most influential in increasing teacher CRTSE. Last, I examine existing literature about the theoretical framework of Gay's (2002, 2010a, 2010b) culturally responsiveness model.

The work of this study is anchored in Mitzel's (1960) theory on the teaching and learning process. Mitzel's theoretical framework on the teaching and learning process is anchored in the premise that there is a relationship between teacher characteristics and student outcomes in a classroom. Mitzel centered his theory on four different variables: presage variables, context variables, process variables, and product variables. Mitzel defined the terms as follows: presage variables as teacher characteristics, context variables as student characteristics, process variables as classroom activities, and product variables as student outcomes. According to Mitzel, teacher and student characteristics determine classroom activities. Mitzel further asserted that the interactions of presage, context, and process variables determine the product variable or student outcomes.

Mitzel's (1960) theory on teaching and learning was the predecessor to Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory. Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory claims that human achievement is created by the interactions of three variables: behavior, personal factors, and environmental factors. Bandura (1977) asserted that environmental variables influence behavior. Bandura (1977) defined personal factors as self-beliefs that control your behavior. According to Bandura (1977), people can participate in their own

development. This teaching and learning theoretical framework laid the foundation for much work in educational settings.

### ***Teacher Self-Efficacy***

Bandura (1977, 1986) defined teacher self-efficacy as a teacher's judgement about their own capability to produce desired outcomes in student achievement. Bandura (1986) explained that the major influences on self-efficacy are mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, and social persuasion. Bandura (1986) stated that mastery experiences are influenced by previous successful teaching experiences. Vicarious experiences mean that teachers have the opportunity to observe effective teaching practices. Social persuasion is feedback teachers receive that builds their confidence to try new and innovative teaching practices.

Vicarious experiences are an important aspect of Bandura's social cognitive theory as it is defined as learning that involves observing and interacting with others in social contexts via modeling (Bandura, 1986, 1999, 2006b; Rosenthal & Zimmerman, 1978). According to the social cognitive theory, observational learning through modeling, including symbolic modeling through verbal or pictorial means, has been greatly influenced by improvements in technology and can foster the acquisition of "new competencies, cognitive skills, and behavior patterns" (Bandura, 1989, p. 23). Bandura (1977, 1997a) theorized that together these variables add a cyclical dimension to the self-efficacy of teachers. High teaching self-efficacy fosters high confidence for teaching and effective teaching performance. Likewise, these principles are evidenced in Bandura's (1986, 1997a) descriptions of high efficacy and low efficacy teachers. High efficacy teachers are more likely to use various instructional methods than low efficacy teachers.

Furthermore, research has continuously documented higher achievement levels for students with high efficacious teachers (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Coladarchi, 1992; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfok-Hoy, 2001). Bandura (1977, 1997a) and Schunk (1994) also asserted that in comparison to low efficacious teachers, high efficacious teachers are more likely to persist at risk taking and using teaching innovations in their classrooms. In addition, teachers with a high teaching self-efficacy are less critical of student errors and struggling students than teachers with a low teaching self-efficacy. A study on teaching self-efficacy by Ross (1994) found that high efficacious teachers were better prepared to (a) exhibit management strategies that facilitate student achievement, (b) place ongoing emphasis on differentiated instruction for students, (c) inspire students to develop a positive self-esteem for learning, and (d) maintain continuous goals for student learning.

Findings of research by Gibson and Dembo (1984) and Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) have shown that high efficacious teachers spend more time on planning and organization for teaching. Moreover, high efficacious teachers have a stronger commitment to teaching compared to low efficacious teachers. Such teachers tend to believe it merely takes creativity and increased effort to reach all students, including those with disabilities (Ashton, 1984). They are more confident and open to trying new ideas or methods in teaching to assist their students in learning (Allinder, 1994). In comparison, teachers with low efficacy associate student learning difficulties with low ability (Frase, 2006).

Bandura's (1997a) theoretical framework on teacher self-efficacy has the potential to provide a rationale for many educational outcomes that are occurring in



today's classrooms. In addition, I think elements grounded in Bandura's (1997a) social cognitive theory will provide a rationale for anticipated differences in the student outcomes in this study.

### ***Adult Learning Theory***

This research study is also anchored in the theoretical and conceptual framework of adult learning theory. A review of the current literature indicates that teachers are ill prepared to design culturally relevant curriculum for all students represented in their classrooms. Proper training is needed to meet the professional development needs of teacher candidates and school faculty in regard to the development of culturally responsive skills. A literature review reveals that professional education scholars assert that teacher education programs provide only rudimentary knowledge in the foundations of educating underserved populations and do little to provide training in the skills needed to translate their knowledge into effective practices (Evans & Gunn, 2012; Gorski, 2009; Lucas & Villegas, 2013; Lynn, 2014; Sleeter, 2011).

Several scholars asserted that adults learn best when they are involved with observing and interacting with others (especially masterful others) in social contexts via modeling (Bandura, 1986, 1999, 2006a; Rosenthal & Zimmerman, 1978). Adult learning theory posits that teachers are more likely to increase their CRTSE beliefs if their professional learning tasks include modeling and the opportunity to observe masterful faculty execute CRT strategies and skills (Bandura, 1986, 2006a; Rosenthal & Zimmerman, 1978). Culturally and linguistically responsive professional development for training projects that are culturally and linguistically responsive are ones that establish inclusion, enhance meaning, engender competence, and are clear about their purpose.

Adult learning theory emphasizes an adult learner's ability to transfer their learning into another real world situation (Caffarella, 2002; Closson, 2013; Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2015; Harris et al., 2008; Mandell, 2014). According to Trotter (2006), teachers want learning experiences they can immediately use in their classrooms, and they want to discuss practices and problem-solving with others in interactive situations in order to reflect and grow in their learning and teaching capacities. A review of Oja's (1990) research indicates key elements of adult learning include (a) concrete experiences, (b) continuous available supervision, (c) encouragement to take on more complex rules, and (d) the use of support and feedback when implementing new strategies. The work of these scholars continues to inform the conceptual framework for adult learning.

Further review of the literature revealed promising findings from the work of Li (2013). Li's model is known as the "cultural worker continuum," and it demonstrates a direct impact on student academic and social emotional success as it proposes that teacher candidates move through three stages in order to be considered effective cultural workers. These stages include cultural reconciliation (knowing self and others), cultural translation (developing competencies and skills to bridge differences in instruction needed), and cultural transformation (becoming change agents and skilled cultural workers (Li, 2013). Meeting the needs of today's diverse student populations calls for transformational professional development.

Findings from a literature review also suggested that effective professional development should be conducted over time, include learning with others, and tap into the prior knowledge of the trainees (Smyth, 2013). The work of Pelayo (2012) further elaborated on this premise. Findings from Pelayo's qualitative multiple case study of

early childhood teachers examined how teacher beliefs, knowledge, and practices changed over time. Pelayo's results indicated that with culturally and linguistically responsive professional development that included modeling of coaching and teacher support by skilled models, there was a direct impact on improving student outcomes. Other findings in this study were that the race and ethnicity of the teacher did not impact the teacher being more culturally and linguistically responsive even when the race and ethnicity of the teacher and the student population were the same (Pelayo, 2012).

### ***CRT Practices***

Instructional practices that reflect cultural beliefs and values are central to the development of today's students. Another theoretical and conceptual framework used for this study is the CRT framework (Gay, 2002). As a result of the need to challenge inequities in education after the civil rights movement, a model of multicultural education emerged (Banks, 1981) and became more refined through the work of various scholars. CRT as an equity pedagogy (Banks, 2016) has evolved as culturally appropriate (Au, 2009; Au & Jordan, 1981; Singh, 2011); culturally relevant (Kana'iaupuni & Ledward, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995); and culture based (Demmert, 2011; Kana'iaupuni et al., 2010; Ledward et al., 2009). The theory of CRT is framed as an aspect of multicultural education and equity pedagogy (Banks & Banks, 2010; Gay, 2010b; Grant & Sleeter, 1987; Nieto, 1992, 1996; Nieto & Bode, 2008). The goal of this framework is to create educational equity and social change in schools and teacher education programs to challenge tracking and other discriminatory educational practices (Gorski, 2009). The goal of CRT is to challenge current inequalities schools perpetuate by believing that all students have an equitable right to achieve, learn, and develop to their best potential. The

CRT theory values using student experiences that are reflective of individual cultural, linguistic, familial, academic, and other forms of knowledge in order to engage in meaning making, learning, and critical thinking (Banks, 1979). Gay (2010b) asserted teaching to and through the cultural lens of students is the cornerstone of a more CRT theory. Gay's (2010b) work described the characteristics of CRT theory as a theory that (a) acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect student dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum; (b) teaches students to know and praise their own and others cultural heritages; (c) incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools; (d) builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well as between academic abstractions and lived socio-cultural realities; and (e) uses a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles.

The construct of CRT is important as preparing teachers to teach students from diverse backgrounds is one of the greatest challenges for teacher education programs and schools today (Gay, 2002; Nieto & Bode, 2008). CRT that affirms and includes student cultures in the teaching and learning process rather than viewing student cultures as deficits is an empowering process that increases achievement and has the potential for increased participation in society (Santamaria, 2009).

As today's society becomes more globally diverse, Jayakumar (2008) contended that institutions of higher education are inadequately preparing teaching candidates to be competent in working cross-culturally with individuals whose beliefs and values are different from their own. Educators who are not aware of their own cultural attributes and

worldviews run the risk of misinterpreting the worldviews of others and this may perpetuate deficit perspectives that perpetuate achievement gaps (Walters et al., 2009). CRT practices align with federal mandates that emphasize accountability for appropriately educating all students, based on the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Gay (2010a) contended that it is the responsibility of all teacher preparation programs to help teachers confront all underlying assumptions and values that may prevent teachers from developing culturally and linguistically responsive teaching approaches that will meet all students' needs.

### **Research Related to the Problem**

#### ***Lack of Sufficient Curriculum in Teacher Education Programs***

Teachers can benefit from professional development experiences that provide skills training and modeling of culturally and linguistically responsive instructional strategies. The literature review shows that teacher education programs in the United States stress the importance of making learning relevant for all students but are typically not yet providing sufficient curriculum that includes training in culturally responsive skills. According to educational scholars, teacher education programs provide only rudimentary knowledge in the foundations of educating underserved populations and do little to provide training in the skills needed to translate their knowledge into effective practices (Evans & Gunn, 2012; Gorski, 2009; Lucas & Villegas, 2013; Lynn, 2014; Sleeter, 2011). In the literature review, I found evidence of a lack of experiences that increase teacher candidates' CRTSE beliefs and multi-culturally responsive practices that translate into classroom practices (Debs & Brown, 2017; Gay, 2010b; Ladson-Billings, 2011; Siwatu, 2011; Sleeter, 2011). However, research on the CRTSE of preservice and

in-service teacher candidates asserts that when teacher education programs do invest in developing their students' CRTSE, they are more likely to transfer these beliefs to classroom practices (Cantrell et al., 2013-2014; Chu & Garcia, 2014; Frye et al., 2010; Sarker, 2012; Siwatu, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2011; Siwatu et al., 2009; Skepple, 2011; Snider, 2015). This is all an indication for a need for increased training as statistics from the National Center for Educational Statistics indicates continued growth of ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse student populations across the nation (Aud et al., 2012) and achievement gaps persist.

The findings of Evans's (2017) mixed methods study indicated that as a result of having all required coursework online, including methods courses, there was little opportunity for teacher trainees to interact with course instructors who could provide the necessary skills training and modeling. Evans's findings indicated that this lack of interaction with college instructors was most evident in the participants' self-reported decrease in their CRTSE to meet linguistically diverse student needs. Additional study findings of Evans indicated moderately high levels of colorblind racial awareness among participants. Evans found that these were predictors of their decreased CRTSE.

Siwatu's (2008) mixed methods study about the CRTSE beliefs and multicultural teaching concerns of (N = 104) midwestern preservice teachers found that teachers were most efficacious in their abilities to help students feel like important members of the classroom and to build a sense of trust and relationships. However, Siwatu's findings indicated that the preservice teachers were less efficacious in being able to greet students in their native languages, communicate student achievement effectively with parents of English language learners, and implement strategies that minimized the effect of the

mismatch between the home culture and the school culture (Siwatu et al., 2009). The results of this study highlighted the need for self-efficacy building interventions for the study participants. Interventions that were needed included providing teacher candidates with opportunities to practice mastery experiences, participate in vicarious experiences, and teach students about cultural contributions.

In another mixed methods study, findings were similar in a study of a western university's undergraduate and graduate preservice teachers who participated in a pre/posttest study of their CRTSE. The pre and posttests were administered after participation in a semester-long training to implement and integrate culturally responsive lessons in all subject areas. Frye et al.'s (2010) findings showed that participant CRTSE and awareness increased significantly in addition to their capacity to assess student needs prior to lesson planning and connect cultures to planned lessons.

Further review of literature reveals that early introduction to culturally and linguistically responsive skills training in teacher preparation programs can potentially result in greater achievement and outcomes for future diverse students (Garnett, 2012; Lynn, 2014; Reynolds et al., 2014; Rhodes, 2013).

Culturally responsive pedagogy includes the development of CRTSE among teachers. Self-efficacy beliefs are a determinant of how one perceives their own capacity to create or modify their environment (outcome expectancy beliefs) and how they can change themselves, overcome challenges, and control their own destiny (Bandura, 1999). An important component in the learning and teaching process is teacher self-efficacy. A teacher's self-efficacy beliefs move them from knowing about culturally responsive pedagogy to implementing CRT practices. Bandura's (1994) work revealed that modeling

vicarious experiences by masterful faculty can increase teacher self-efficacy.

This idea was illustrated in Siwatu's (2011) study of preservice teachers. In this study, teacher candidates reported missed opportunities for self-efficacy experiences. Teacher candidates reported that their teacher education coursework was limited to discussions about CRT instead of actually practicing the skills of the culturally responsive practices needed to enact that knowledge (Siwatu, 2011). Designing professional learning tasks that include modeling and the opportunity to observe master teachers execute CRT strategies and skills will likely increase CRTSE beliefs of teacher candidates (Bandura, 1986, 2006b; Rosenthal & Zimmerman, 1978).

The theory of self-efficacy is based on the premise that an individual's beliefs in their capabilities lead to desired outcomes from their own actions (Bandura, 1977). In the context of teaching, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) defined teacher self-efficacy as a "teacher's belief in his or her ability to organize and execute the course of action required to successfully complete a teaching task in a particular context" (p. 117). Furthermore, Tschannen-Moran et al. asserted that it is the experience of teaching that provides the teacher the greatest confidence in his or her abilities.

### ***Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Professional Development for Teacher Preparation***

Professional development that is culturally and linguistically responsive is designed to be inclusive, enhance meaning, engender competence, and have a clear purpose. Professional development should utilize the principles of adult learning to effect change in participants that equips them to transfer their learning to their real world situations (Caffarella, 2002; Closson, 2013; Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2015; Harris et al.,



2008; Mandell, 2014). According to Trotter (2006), teachers want learning experiences they can immediately use in their classrooms, and they want to discuss practices and problem-solving with others in interactive settings so they can reflect and continue to develop their learning and teaching capacities. A review of Trotter's work highlighted key elements for designing successful adult learning. Those key elements included (a) concrete experiences, (b) continuous available supervision, (c) encouragement to take on more complex rules, and (d) the use of support and feedback when implementing new strategies (Oja, 1990).

## **History of the Problem**

### ***Beliefs***

Beliefs are central to this research study about teacher behaviors, culturally responsive teacher practices, and student outcomes. Nespor (1987) explained, "if we are interested in why teachers organize and run classrooms as they do, we must pay more attention to the goals they pursue ... and to their subjective interpretations of classroom processes" (p. 325). The literature review addressed teacher beliefs and teacher efficacy beliefs in existing research. Teacher pedagogical beliefs refer to what teachers believe to be effective instructional practices. Bandura's (1997a) social cognitive theory explained how self-efficacy beliefs are at the heart of teaching (Kagan, 1992; Vartuli, 1999, 2005). Understanding teacher self-efficacy beliefs has been critical in learning about outcomes for students (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Multon et al., 1991; Woolfolk Hoy & Spero, 2005). Efficacy beliefs are critical in considering goal-oriented behavior. Bandura (1997a) further explained that teacher resilience in self-efficacy motivates an individual to do "extraordinary things by productive use of their skills in the face of overwhelming

obstacles” (p. 37). Little is known about teacher self-efficacy and outcome expectancies as related to CRT. CRTSE beliefs are defined by Siwatu (2007) as, “teachers’ beliefs in their ability to execute specific teaching practices and tasks that are associated with teachers who are believed to be culturally responsive” (p. 1090). This set of beliefs represents how efficacious teachers are in teaching populations of children from different racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Incorporating CRTSE beliefs, Siwatu (2007) introduced CRTOE beliefs. These expectancies are defined as, “teachers’ beliefs that engaging in CRT practices will have positive classroom and teaching outcomes” (Siwatu, 2007, p. 1090). Bandura’s (1997a) findings suggested a causal model between efficacy beliefs and outcome expectancies and differentiated the two concepts: “perceived self-efficacy is a judgment of one’s ability to organize and execute given types of performances, whereas an outcome expectation is a judgment of the likely consequence such performances will produce” (p. 21).

### ***Demographic Trends***

This study’s findings will illustrate an important and relevant concept. As today’s classrooms become more globally diverse, teachers are less competent to work cross-culturally with individuals whose beliefs and values are different from their own (Jayakumar, 2008). Educators who are not aware of their own cultural attributes and worldviews run the risk of misinterpreting the worldviews of diverse others, and this may perpetuate deficit perspectives that perpetuate achievement gaps (Walters et al., 2009). According to the Center for Public Education (2012), “The face of our nation is changing, and nowhere is the change more evident than in public school classrooms” (para. 1). In the coming years, schools will continue to see a significant increase in the number of

students from minority populations, as the youngest population is experiencing the most diversity. According to the Center for Public Education, 47% of children under the age of 5 are members of an ethnic minority group, yet this demographic proportionality is not mirrored in the proportion of teachers. More than 80% of teachers are White. Educators must prepare to adjust their teaching practices in response to these shifts in population as teaching a more diverse population presents implications for current curriculum. In fact, Johnson (2013) predicted that by 2050, the ethnicity of the United States will be 47% White, 29% Hispanic, and 13% African-American. Johnson (2013) referred to this phenomenon as the Browning of America and implied that it precipitates a tremendous need to train school staff to be culturally responsive to all students.

Understanding that student academic achievement is highly influenced by teacher self-efficacy levels, there needs to be further research regarding CRTSE. Vygotsky (1978) believed that a child's learning and development are influenced by the adult or adults in their world. The teacher functions in a similar way in the realm of a student's world, and this implies that teacher beliefs are heavily influential.

### **Professional Development**

There is a need to create educational equity and social change in schools. As Gay (2004) asserted,

Educational equity is a multidimensional goal that requires culturally responsive teaching which includes the domains of: "multicultural content; pluralistic classroom climates and learning environments; teacher attitudes and expectations toward diversity; building community among diverse learners; caring across cultures; use of multiple teaching techniques that are congruent with the cultural

backgrounds, values, experiences, and orientations of different ethnic groups; developing personal efficacy and an ethos of success among diverse students; and using culturally informed assessment procedures to determine learning needs, knowledge acquisition, and skill proficiencies. (p. 214)

However, as literature asserts, preparing teachers to teach students from diverse backgrounds is one of the greatest challenges for teacher education programs and schools today (Gay, 2002; Nieto & Bode, 2008). CRT, which affirms and includes student cultures in the teaching and learning process rather than viewing student cultures as deficits, is an empowering process (Santamaria, 2009). As mentioned earlier, teacher self-efficacy is a “teacher’s belief in his or her ability to organize and execute the course of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context” (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 117). The actual teaching experience is the most influential activity in shaping the individual’s confidence in their abilities (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

The implication of an equity problem on a school district implies academic failure for many marginalized student groups. School leaders must recognize the cultural contexts within their communities in order to meet the needs of a diverse student population. A denial of equal access to curriculum serves to widen the achievement gap and create economic hardships for marginalized groups of people. In addition, school leaders seeking to improve student outcomes must consider factors that affect teacher levels of culturally responsive self-efficacy beliefs and provide opportunities to experience ongoing culturally and linguistically responsive professional development. Furthermore, school leaders need to provide ongoing opportunities for teachers to reflect

on their beliefs about diverse cultures in order to add to their knowledge of how to practice in their classroom.

“American schools are under tremendous pressure to produce better results than they have ever produced before” (City et al., 2010, p. 2). Standardized tests and high stakes accountability models inundate today’s educational systems. Education faculty are being held accountable to positively impact student achievement. Educational leaders participate in ongoing systems of continuous improvement where they reflect on achieved goals. According to research, a major component of continuous improvement is to promote collaboration among teachers in an effort to refine practice and design instruction based on student data and student outcomes (Hirsh, 2007; Hirsh & Killion, 2007; Learning Forward, 2011).

The framework for this study was guided by essential theories that highlighted the function of teacher beliefs in the classroom and the potential impact of teacher beliefs on instructional practices and student achievement. The previously stated theories were used to describe the learning and development of the teacher (Bandura, 1997a), the call for collaborative professional development practices of the adult learning conceptual framework, and Gay’s (2002) culturally responsive pedagogy.

### **Summary**

Using the theoretical framework of self-efficacy theory, CRT theory, and adult learning, I examined teacher CRTSE beliefs. My rationale for conducting this research project study was to inform culturally responsive curricular and professional development that increases culturally responsive self-efficacy beliefs and culturally responsive competencies of teachers in the subject school district. My ultimate goal is to affect social

change by improving teacher CRTSE and competencies, which may in turn create positive student outcomes for the district's culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse student population. In order to explore this problem, I conducted a mixed methods research study, which I discuss in the next section.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the research methodology for this mixed methods study. In this study, I conducted explanatory research on teacher levels of CRTSE beliefs, CRTOE beliefs, and student outcomes in the research subject school district. The mixed methods approach allowed me to collect and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data, thereby providing an in-depth analysis of the relationship between teacher efficacy levels, outcome expectancy beliefs, and student outcomes. The study examined the extent to which teacher self-efficacy and outcome expectancy beliefs showed differences in benchmark tests for students.

In this chapter, I provide an explanation of the research questions, research design, methodology, study participants, instrumentation, procedures, data analysis method, and ethical considerations.

#### **Guiding Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How efficacious are teachers in their ability to teach students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?
2. Do teachers believe in the positive outcomes associated with CRT?
3. Does implementation of the district-sponsored professional development program impact student achievement as measured on 2019-2020 reading, math, and science benchmark assessments?
4. What do classroom teachers do differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development?

## Overview of Methodology

The research study was conducted using a mixed methods research design approach. Creswell (2012) defined a mixed methods research design as, a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and ‘mixing’ both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study or a series of studies to understand a research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The basic assumption is that the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods, in combination, provides a better understanding of the research problem and questions than either method by itself. (p. 535)

Prior to conducting any research, I secured permission from Gardner-Webb University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) through an expedited review process (see Appendix B). This research study did not subject any child, individual with impaired decision-making capacity, or economically or educationally disadvantaged persons to any coercion.

In order to protect the rights and welfare of study participants, specific safeguards were enacted for the duration of this study and for 5 years after it is completed. Selected schools, teachers, and students were identified by acronyms and numbers disassociating them from an institution. I protected the confidentiality of students, teachers, and schools, as I did not disclose them in this study. Study findings are displayed using overall data representative of total grade levels and anonymous identifiers for stakeholder responses. Participants were not exposed to any physical nor psychological risks including but not limited to loss of job security or altered workplace conditions related to participation or lack thereof in the research study. There was no deception in the design or procedures of



this study. Participants were neither encouraged nor discouraged from participation in the study with the use of compensatory methods or incentives including money, extra credit, gift cards, raffles, or drawings. Teachers were afforded the opportunity to decline study participation, and this was clearly communicated to them (see Appendix C). A collection of voice, video, and digital recordings were made for the purpose of informing me about self-efficacy beliefs of study participants. Information on group characteristics and practices gathered by mean scores, survey, and focus group participants are stored on a secure server to protect the confidentiality of participants and subject data. All student data including assessment data of teachers and students will be securely destroyed after 3 years.

### **Setting and Participants**

Participants for this study consisted of a convenience sample of teachers recruited from schools in a suburban school district located in the piedmont region of North Carolina. During the quantitative phase of this research study, I based my sample size on the work of Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size requirements (cited in Siwatu, 2009). Therefore, I used a minimum sample size of 175 participants to assure "and assess the suitability of the quantitative data for factor analysis" (Siwatu, 2009, p. 13). The total number of teacher survey participants was potentially 856; however, a sample size between 30 and 500 at 5% confidence level is generally sufficient for many researchers (Altunışık et al., 2004).

The sample size for the mixed methods study was drawn from a population of 856 educators from the study school district and  $M = (\# \text{ of third- through eighth-grade students in subject school district})$ . I invited 432 participants from a potential 856 to

complete CRT surveys. Participants for this study were selected from a population of professionally licensed faculty and included teachers with both initial and continuing North Carolina teaching licenses. The participants were full-time employees of the research school district and work at one of the district sites.

Non-licensed staff serving in long-term interim positions as classroom teachers were excluded from the study due to the fact that they were not afforded an opportunity for preparatory college courses in diversity awareness as other licensed faculty.

### **Instruments**

This project study was guided by a previous study completed by Siwatu (2005) in a different setting. In my study, the sample population was diverse in terms of multiple races, mixed races, and other diversities not included in the study by Siwatu (2005). With permission from the lead author, I used the CRTSE Scale (Siwatu, 2007) to gather information from teachers in the research school district regarding their ability to implement CRT practices in their classrooms and their outcome expectancy beliefs. Permission was granted from Dr. Siwatu of the University of Texas to use the instruments that are included in Appendix A. Dr. Siwatu created this self-efficacy instrument as a means to gauge preservice teacher self-efficacy beliefs. This instrument was used so participants could rate how confident they were in executing CRT practices and their beliefs that such practices produced positive classroom outcomes (Siwatu, 2007). The instrument had 40 items, and participants indicated their level of confidence by rating individual beliefs on a scale from 0-100. A rating of 0 indicates “no confidence,” and a rating of 100 indicates “complete confidence.” Similarly, the response format for the CRTOE asked participants to indicate the probability of success in regard

to a particular instructional practice with a rating of 0 “entirely uncertain” to 100 “entirely certain.” I summed the ratings for each scale and divided by the total number of items to yield a strength index for each CRT practice. Strength index scores represent the continuous/independent variable of teacher beliefs. This type of 0-100 range is different than a traditional Likert scale. According to Pajares et al. (2001, as cited in Siwatu, 2007 p. 1090), the examination of 0-100 scales rendered great psychometric strength. This means that respondents are less likely to select a redundant rating for items, as there is a wider selection of answer choices. Student outcome scores on the North Carolina end-of-grade exams and North Carolina benchmark assessments served as the dependent variable in this study. Student outcome scores obtained from standardized achievement assessments were used to represent average student achievement by classroom.

### ***Validity***

I used the survey instrument as a tool for teachers to rate their ability to successfully complete culturally responsive tasks. The instrument was pretested to have high reliability based on results from studies conducted by Siwatu (2005, 2007, 2009). The CRTSE instrument was updated in 2007 to “include a new construct that included self-efficacy items on the measure that were aligned with competencies in culturally and linguistically diverse school populations and culturally responsive teaching competencies” (Siwatu, 2007, p. 1086). Siwatu (2009) pilot-tested this new instrument and then tested it on a sample of 275 preservice teachers ( $N = 275$ ) who were students in two different teacher education programs in the Midwest. Siwatu (2009) ran a reliability test of this new version of the CRTSE instrument (Chronbach’s  $\alpha = .96$ ) demonstrating high reliability. I used the newer version of the CRTSE for this

quantitative study after securing permissions from Siwatu.

### **Procedures**

The procedure for this mixed methods research study consisted of three phases. Preliminary measures required permission from the superintendent of the research school district to communicate with school system employees via email (see Appendix D). Next site supervisors were advised of an upcoming research study in which faculty had the opportunity to participate (see Appendix E).

Additional preliminary measures included, all licensed classroom teachers in the research school district received an email containing a recruitment letter (see Appendix F) and an attached informed consent form (see Appendix C). The letter of recruitment outlined the purpose of the study, participation requirements, and informed consent procedures. An explanation of how the results of the study will be used, procedures to be used, and risks and benefits were included in the recruitment letter and informed consent. I ensured respondents understood their right to end the research at any time and how their confidentiality would be protected. The email also included dates and times of scheduled zoom meetings designed to further clarify survey results. Additionally, study participants were asked to respond to a brief demographic survey (Appendix G). The educator demographic survey was used to collect information such as age, gender, racial background, major, years in teaching, feelings of preparedness, and experience in multicultural settings. Potential research participants were encouraged to contact me with questions, as my contact information was included on multiple sources: emails, letters, consent forms, and demographic survey. Participant data from informed consent forms and demographic data were collected and all consenting teachers were involved in the

first quantitative phase of this research study.

In the first phase, quantitative data were collected from all consenting teachers through an electronic survey. I used the Research Randomizer tool to select participants. Collected data provided an answer to Research Question 1, “How efficacious are teachers in their ability to teach students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?” Teachers used the survey tool to indicate their level of confidence when using CRT practices and indicated their level of outcome expectancy beliefs. The survey tool was shared via an electronic Survey Monkey survey and was cost-effective and a time-efficient means of communicating. An electronic survey was chosen due to forced school closures as a result of the global pandemic. All district staff had access to complete the survey through the district’s email system. Electronic surveys provide an accurate means of data reporting when working with data (Fitzpatrick et al., 2011). Quantitative data collected from the CRTSE beliefs instrument and CRTSO beliefs instrument were analyzed to determine collective teacher perceptions about their beliefs.

In the second phase, data collected from the CRTSE beliefs instrument and CRTSO beliefs instrument were used to select participants for smaller qualitative measures comprised of two teacher focus groups. I anticipated that each focus group would have eight to 12 participants and would consist of district faculty who had a range of high, medium, and low confidence index scores on the survey and had participated in extensive, ongoing culturally responsive professional development. Focus groups were used to elaborate and clarify information extrapolated from survey results. This qualitative process provided data about Research Question 3, “What do classroom teachers do differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored

professional development” (see Appendix H). Each participant was required to provide consent to record audio and video prior to participating in focus groups (Appendix I). Additionally, I provided assurance that I would do no harm with my knowledge of any data obtained during the study. Focus groups were recorded electronically using video/audio recording capabilities. A transcription application was used to transcribe focus group content.

There are benefits and challenges to collecting data through a focus group. Jones et al. (2019) described focus groups as one of the most popular methods for collecting qualitative data. Focus groups are comprised of small groups of people (usually eight to 12) who share some characteristics or relevant experience and ideally do not know each other (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Group participants discuss ideas and insights in response to open-ended questions from a facilitator. Group dynamics are also used to help generate data through themes (Jones et al., 2019, p. 72.) The study’s focus groups allowed participants to define what was important and provided an opportunity to clarify responses through probes that I asked. In general, focus groups are more efficient than interviews, as I had the opportunity to gain insight from more study participants. However, group settings do present challenges, as there is a lack of confidentiality and both group members and facilitators have the potential to interject bias into the discussion. Jones et al. indicated that focus groups can be time consuming to conduct, and data can be difficult and time consuming to analyze. I analyzed the qualitative data by identifying themes in the open-ended data.

The global pandemic and forced school closures caused focus groups to be restricted to video conferencing platforms, as nonessential employees were restricted

from school campuses and the state government issued an extended stay-at-home order for all nonessential workers in the state of North Carolina. The focus groups were recorded electronically using a video recording system and a voice recorder within the Zoom platform.

In the final phase, I collected quantitative data through student scores on each of the 2019-2020 benchmark assessments in English language arts/reading, math, and science. Benchmark scores were available for October 2019 and January 2020. This data collection occurred in Grades 3-8. I shared this study's consenting participant list with the district accountability director in order to collect matched classroom data by teacher-participant. This study measured third- through eighth-grade student reading, math, and science achievement on a commonly used standardized assessment across the state. Scores on these norm-referenced reading, math, and science assessments served as the dependent variable in this study.

By using a mixed methods design for this project study, I used quantitative measure (first phase), qualitative measure (second phase), and quantitative measure (third phase) to explore the CRTSE of participants. Creswell and Guetterman (2019) explained this combination will provide new insights and new ways to understand research data (p. 544). Advantages of conducting a mixed methods research study included gleaning complex knowledge and understanding from an emergent research design. Multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative data from this study developed comprehensive understanding of problems with teacher efficacy, CRT experiences, and participant perspectives.

## **Data Analysis**

The following research questions were examined: “How efficacious are teachers in their ability to teach students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds,” “Do teachers believe in the positive outcomes associated with CRT,” and “Does implementation of the district-sponsored professional development program impact student achievement as measured on 2019-2020 reading and math benchmark assessments?” Analysis allowed me to identify characteristics, beliefs, and practices of the sample teachers in comparison to teachers in previous studies. Further analysis allowed me to explore student outcomes in comparison to study participants. Quantitative data analysis included analysis of each of the survey instrument items (CRTSE) in the form of item-specific means. Demographic descriptive statistics was computed for participants based on race, gender, average age, and CRTSE scores.

The research question, “what do classroom teachers do differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development,” was answered through a qualitative approach to data collection analysis. To increase credibility and transferability of the qualitative data for this study, the focus group discussions were videotaped, transcribed through electronic application, member checked, and peer reviewed. In this qualitative phase, a purposeful selection of 12 participants were selected for in-depth discussion from their scores on the CRTSE in three groups (high, medium, or low scorers on the CRTSE). The maximum variation sampling included extreme, typical, and negative case sampling. This was the ideal sampling rationale for this qualitative phase because it provided me rich descriptions of why the teacher beliefs scores were ranked in one of the three groups and assisted me in



gaining more in-depth explanations of the quantitative results of the surveys.

A focus group protocol included open-ended questions that elicited information about culturally responsive practices and perceptions of their teacher qualifications and experiences to design a culturally responsive environment. I analyzed focus group transcripts for trends, patterns, and contradictions, in order to generate thematic categories. To assure the credibility of the transcripts, a member check was conducted, and a peer reviewer was used to validate the qualitative data.

### **Limitations**

As the researcher, I made efforts to control variations within the study by design; however, there were remaining limitations. Due to the development of a national crisis caused by a global pandemic, several considerations had to be executed during the data collection phase of this project. A global health crisis caused historical school closures that restricted access to school campuses and students. This meant NCDPI canceled standardized testing which eliminated three data points for each student in the study. I was unable to use individual student scores from the 2018-2019 end-of-grade assessment as the 2019-2020 end-of-grade assessment was canceled due to school closure, and there was not a comparative sample for growth analysis. In addition, I was unable to obtain the third data point from the 2019-2020 benchmark assessment.

The findings of this study are limited to the experiences of participants from the study school district in the piedmont region of North Carolina. The small sample size of 12 for the qualitative data collection indicates that the generalizations of the study were limited. Additionally, the finding may only be applicable to third through eighth graders in this region who use an identical standardized assessment instrument.

Student achievement is affected by many variables outside the influence of a teacher. Some of those variables include adverse childhood experiences, family income, and parental involvement. Such negative factors can have an adverse effect on student school performance.

### ***Test Bias***

Additional negative factors influencing student achievement include test bias. Hilliard (1995) and Schellenberg (2004) contributed test bias as a variable that negatively affects student achievement on close-ended assessment instruments. Despite equal access to curriculum, different testing results exist for racial groups of students. Test bias can be used to account for these different testing results. The work of Hilliard (1995) suggested that assessments should use cultural material that is familiar to the test taker. Often, tests lack content validity as item bias exists. Eliminating bias items from tests requires an extensive process that includes an analysis of subgroup performance data on individual test items, in addition to an analysis of the group's performance on individual test items in comparison to overall test performance. This analysis leads to elimination of items that reference region-specific products and activities.

Another area of consideration with test bias is to look beyond test items at culture which is not something that can be examined solely through data. Looking at what and how students learn and how that is influenced by student cultural backgrounds should be considered when designing appropriate assessment tools. Schellenberg (2004) asserted, "In order to know what students have learned, we need to be sure that we are using assessment tools that are congruent with both cultural backgrounds and desired outcomes" (p. 11). An incongruence in the design of testing instruments and student

cultural backgrounds accounts for the differences we see among racial groups in assessment data. We need to move away from close-ended formats such as multiple choice tests to open-ended formats such as free response forms. As standardized assessments were the sole data source for student outcome data, the potential for test bias does present as a limitation for this study.

Another limitation present in this study that relies on an analysis of student outcome data is student self-efficacy. Research studies have shown that student self-efficacy impacts student achievement (Marsh et al., 1991; Schunk, 1994; Zimmerman et al., 1992). Low student self-efficacy can either positively or adversely influence student achievement.

### **Confidentiality**

Assurances to maintain confidentiality were employed and maintained at all times. The participants, individual schools, and the school district were not identified by name. I was observant of potential identifiers (such as assessment type) and assigned generic labels to minimize potential identification of school information. Identification numbers were given to participants in this study. Student outcome scores were associated with numerical identification of teacher participants. Student names were not collected and do not accompany student outcome scores. All study information was locked and in a secure office. I am the only individual with access to classroom, survey, and focus group data.

### **Summary**

This chapter provided a detailed overview of the methodology that was used to answer the research questions. A discussion of the research design, participants,

procedures, data collection, and analysis outlines the specifics of how the study was conducted.

The data were analyzed and reviewed using a mixed method of collecting survey data, focus groups, and standardized student outcome data. I selected this design because mixed methods “is a procedure for collecting, analyzing or ‘mixing’ or integrating both quantitative and qualitative data at some stage of the research for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the research problem” (Ivankova et al., 2006, p. 2). As such, it provided a more comprehensive understanding and validation of the research. My credibility as a research is strengthened by triangulating multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative data. Comparisons of the quantitative data to the descriptions of participant perspectives allowed me to minimize the weaknesses of each of the approaches. For the purpose of this study, priority was given to the quantitative data, while the qualitative data served to better explain the quantitative data results (Creswell, 2003; Ivankova et al., 2006; Morgan, 1998). All responses examined teacher self-efficacy beliefs with reference to CRT practices. Chapter 4 presents the study results and elaborates on the methodology described in Chapter 3. Chapter 5 further analyzes the data, provides a synthesis of the data, builds on previous studies, and presents recommendations for future practice and further research.

## **Chapter 4: Results**

### **Results of the Mixed Methods Research**

Chapter 3 provided a detailed overview of the methodology that was used to answer the research questions. Chapter 3 included a discussion of the research design, participants, and procedures. Data collection and analysis outlined the specifics of how the study was conducted. Chapter 4 presents the results of this research study and elaborates on the methodology described in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 begins with the research questions of this explanatory mixed methods study. Next, descriptions of the participants are presented. The study results then are presented concurrently with each research question. Tables, figures, and appendices are referenced throughout the chapter to assist in the presentation of the information.

Through this research study, I aimed to identify the current state of teacher self-efficacy with reference to teaching students who are culturally and linguistically diverse as represented by teachers who completed the CRTSE Scale and CRTOE Scale and participated in focus groups. This study examined how experiences, education, and professional development informed culturally responsive pedagogy. It was anticipated that a deeper understanding of why some teachers demonstrate greater predisposition towards CRT approaches would provide insight.

### **Guiding Research Questions**

The guiding research questions for this research study were as follows:

1. How efficacious are teachers in their ability to teach students from culturally diverse backgrounds?
2. Do teachers believe in the positive outcomes associated with CRT?

3. Does implementation of the district-sponsored professional development program impact student achievement as measured on 2019-2020 reading, math, and science benchmark assessments?
4. What do classroom teachers do differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development?

### **Data Collection Process**

The CRTSE and CRTOE Scales (Appendix A) and demographic survey questions (Appendix G) were combined and administered using an electronic survey distributed to educators at all schools in the study school district. I obtained permission from the lead author, Dr. Kamau Siwatu (Appendix A), to use the CRTSE and CRTOE Scales. Dr. Siwatu created this self-efficacy instrument as a means to gauge preservice teacher self-efficacy beliefs. This instrument was selected for use to elicit information from practicing teachers regarding their self-efficacy. Participants rated how confident they were to execute CRT practices and about their beliefs that such practices produced positive classroom outcomes (Siwatu, 2007). The instrument had 41 items, and participants indicated their level of confidence by rating individual beliefs on a scale from 0-100. A rating of 0 indicated “no confidence,” and a rating of 100 indicated “complete confidence.” Similarly, the response format for the CRTOE asked participants to indicate the probability of success in regard to a particular instructional practice with a rating of 0, “entirely uncertain,” to 100, “entirely certain.” I summed the ratings for each scale and divided by the total number of items to yield a strength index for each CRT practice. Strength index scores represent the continuous/independent variable of teacher beliefs.

Participant responses were examined based on the following topics: teacher

background, teacher age, teacher gender, teacher ethnicity, grade level taught, type of community, community diversity, high school diversity, teaching staff diversity at high school, advanced certifications such as master's degree and National Board certification, participation in district-sponsored professional development, and number of languages spoken fluently.

Additionally, survey responses were used to select participants for qualitative analysis of focus group data. The focus group discussions were recorded. The discussions were transcribed into print, and common themes were identified (see Appendix J). The focus group discussion examined the following questions.

1. What do you think of when I use the phrase “culturally diverse students?”
2. How confident do you feel in your ability to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students?
3. How prepared did you feel in your ability to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students prior to your participation in district-sponsored “Text Equity” professional development program?
4. How prepared did you feel in your ability to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students after your participation in the district-sponsored “Text Equity” professional development program?
5. What aspect of the “Text Equity” professional development program is most beneficial in preparing facilitators to teach in a diverse setting?
6. Are there any personal and/or professional factors that positively impacted your confidence in teaching culturally diverse students?
7. Are there any personal and/or professional factors that negatively impacted

your confidence in teaching culturally diverse students?

8. Is there anything else you like to add to assist district leaders in preparing teachers to teach culturally diverse students?
9. Do you have any suggestions for better preparing colleagues to teach in a diverse setting?

In the final phase, I collected quantitative data through student scores on the 2019-2020 benchmark assessments in English language arts/reading, math, and science. Benchmark scores were available for October 2019 and January 2020 for Grades 3-8. Student scores on these norm-referenced assessments served as the dependent variable in this study and represented average student achievement by classroom. Table 3 describes the sequential phases and procedures that were administered.

**Table 3**

*Explanatory Mixed Methods Research Design (Program Management Plan)*

Phases	Procedures	Analysis
Quantitative data collection	Surveys administered to (N = 185) teachers in the school district	Quantitative data analysis
Qualitative data collection	12 focus group participants were selected based upon high, medium or low scores on the CRTSE and CRTOE Scales (1 from each group for maximum variation)	Qualitative data analysis
Quantitative data collection	Data collection of student benchmark assessments	Quantitative data analysis

### Sample Demographics

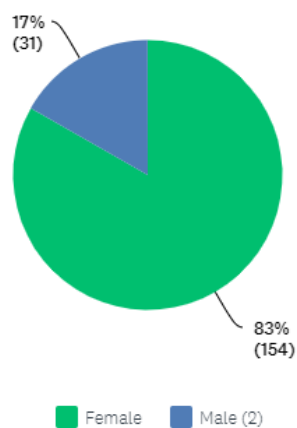
Surveys were distributed to 431 professionally licensed faculty in the study school district. There was a 43% response rate resulting in (N = 185) survey participants. Of the total sample, 154 (83%) were females, and 31 (17%) were males (see Figure 11).



Participants were asked to indicate their race/ethnicity: 148 (80%) indicated they were White or Caucasian, 19 (10%) were African American; nine (5%) were Hispanic; one (1%) was Asian; six (3%) were Multi-Racial; and two (1%) indicated Other (see Figure 12).

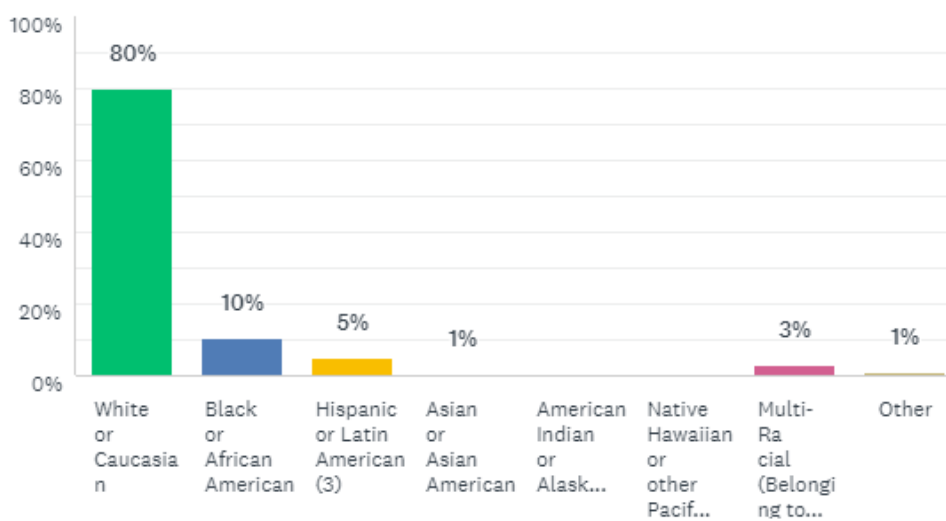
**Figure 11**

*What is Your Gender?*



**Figure 12**

*How Do You Identify Your Race/Ethnicity?*

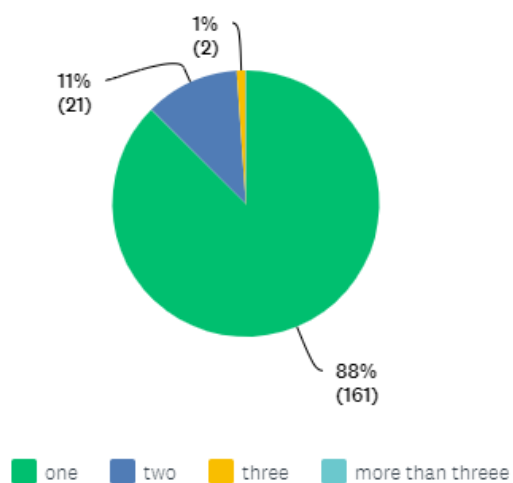


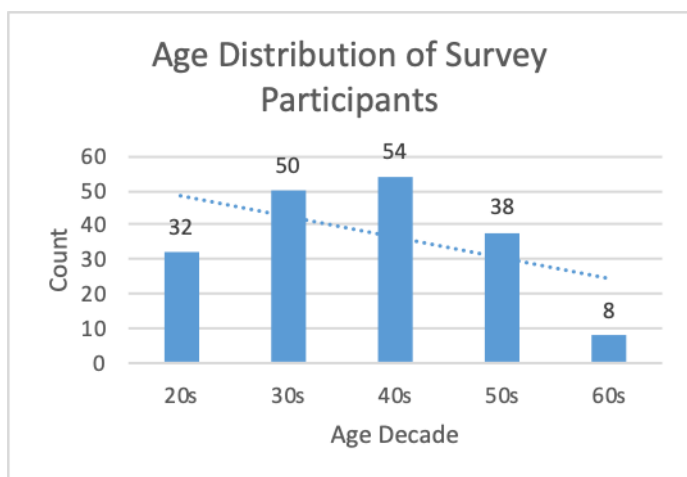
Survey participants indicated they spoke a range of one to three languages (see

Figure 13). The majority (n = 185, 88%) of respondents spoke one language fluently. One hundred sixty-one respondents (88%) speak one language fluently; 21 participants (11%) speak two languages fluently; and two participants (1%) speak three languages. A majority of the sample (n = 185, 30%) included 54 participants spanning ages in the 40s decade. The remaining participants were divided among the following age groups: 50 participants aged 30s (27%); 38 participants aged 50s (21%); 32 participants aged 20s (18%); and eight participants aged 60s (4%; see Figure 14). The ages of three participants were not included as participants indicated age of 50+ or skipped the question.

### Figure 13

#### *Number of Languages Spoken Fluently by Participants*

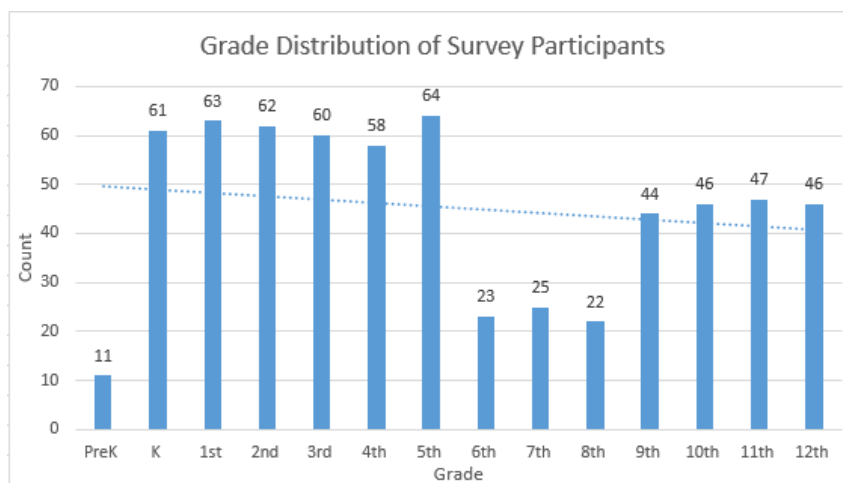
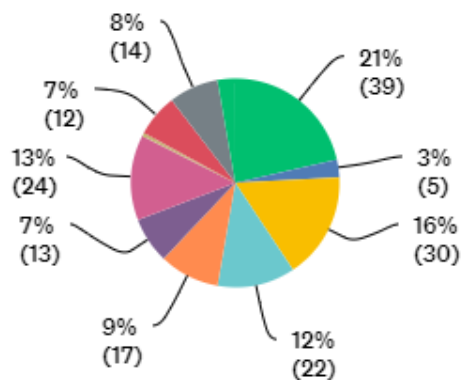


**Figure 14***Age Distribution of Survey Participants*

*Note:* Three participant responses were not included as they indicated age of 50+ or skipped the question.

Data indicated the work experience of survey participants ranged from 1 to 35 years of experience with a 14-year mean. Survey respondents spanned a wide range of grade levels as depicted in Figure 15. The majority of survey respondents work with students in Grades Kindergarten through 5 and 9-12.

Survey participants identified one of 11 work sites within the study school district (see Figure 16). The majority of respondents ( $n = 185$ , 21%) indicated they worked at a high school site, followed by one particular elementary site at 16%, and then a middle school site at 14%.

**Figure 15***Grade Distribution of Survey Participants***Figure 16***Identify Your School/Work Site(s)*

Survey respondents lived in various kinds of communities while growing up, as shown in Figure 17. The majority of respondents ( $n = 185$ , 58%) lived in suburban communities. One hundred seven participants (58%) lived in suburban communities. Suburban communities were defined as larger than rural areas with a population less than 25,000 with farmland but smaller than urban areas with a population more than 500,000, or a large city. Fifty-four of the participants (29%) lived in a rural community, while 23

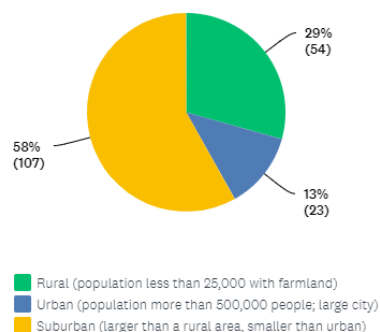
(13%) lived in urban communities while growing up. Survey participants were asked to evaluate the ethnic diversity of the community in which they grew up. One hundred thirteen respondents (61%) indicated there was no ethnic diversity in the community in which they were raised, while 71 (39%) indicated there was ethnic diversity in their community (see Figure 18). Additionally, survey participants were asked to evaluate the diversity of their high school population. Ninety-five respondents (52%) indicated yes, their high school population was considered diverse, while 88 (48%) indicated no (see Figure 19). Participants were asked to evaluate the ethnic diversity of the teaching staff in their school district while growing up. As shown in Figure 20, 135 respondents (74%) indicated there was no ethnic diversity among the teaching staff of the school district in which they grew up, while 47 (26%) indicated yes.

### Figure 17

#### *Type of Community Sample Lived in While Growing Up*

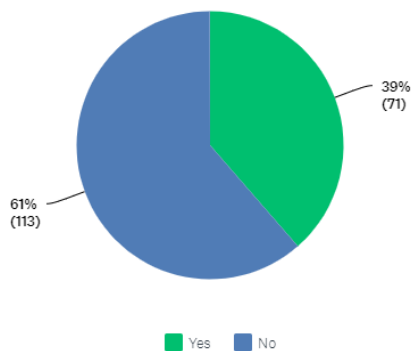
What type of community did you live in while growing up?

Answered: 184 Skipped: 1



**Figure 18**

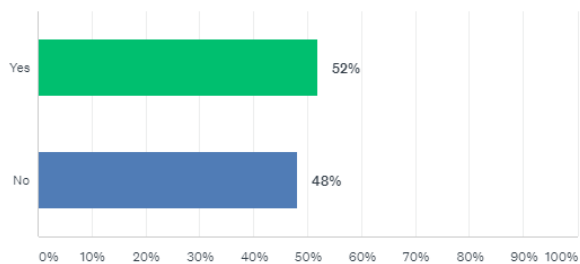
*Was Your Community in Which You Were Raised Considered Ethnically Diverse?*

**Figure 19**

*Was Your High School Population Considered Ethnically Diverse?*

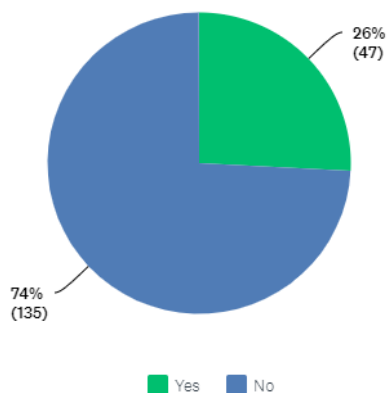
Was your high school population considered ethnically diverse?

Answered: 183 Skipped: 2



**Figure 20**

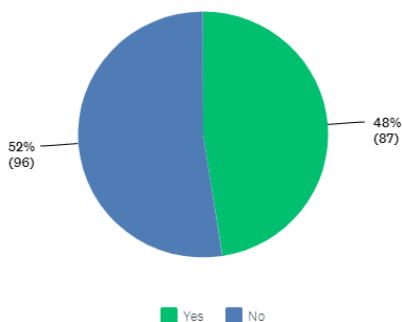
*Was the Teaching Staff in School District Considered Ethnically Diverse?*



District staff in the research school district possessed a variety of advanced certifications. Ninety-six sample respondents (52%) do not hold a master's degree, while 87 (48%) have a master's degree (see Figure 21). One hundred fifty-six of professionally licensed respondents (85%) do not have National Board certification, while 27 (15%) are National Board certified (see Figure 22). As shown in Figure 23, 162 of the sample participants (88%) did not participate in ongoing district-sponsored professional development during the 2019-2020 school year, while 22 participants (12%) indicated they did participate.

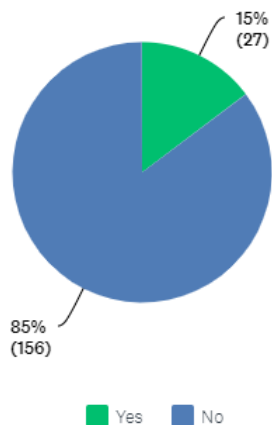
**Figure 21**

*Do You Have a Master's Degree?*

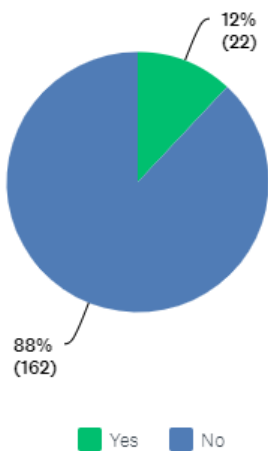


**Figure 22**

*Do You Have National Board Certification?*

**Figure 23**

*Participation in District-Sponsored Professional Development*



## **Quantitative Findings**

### ***Summary of Research Question 1***

How efficacious are teachers in their ability to teach students from culturally diverse backgrounds? To answer Research Question 1, quantitative data analysis was



conducted. In the research study, quantitative data were collected from a convenience sample of practicing educators in a suburban school district in North Carolina (N = 185). All professionally licensed staff received electronic surveys via email and volunteered to participate, completing electronic informed consent forms.

The research questions and findings are presented in Table 4. This is followed by a summary of the findings from each of the three quantitative research questions.

**Table 4**

*Research Questions and Findings*

Research questions/results research		
Research question	Hypotheses	Results
Research Question 1: How efficacious are teachers in their ability to teach students from culturally diverse backgrounds?		Mean score = 74.58 (SD = 19.66)
Research Question 2: Do teachers believe in the positive outcomes associated with CRT?		Mean score = 84.27 (SD = 16.37)
Research Question 3: Does implementation of the district-sponsored professional development program impact student achievement as measured on 2019-2020 reading, math, and science benchmark assessments?	Ho3: There is no relationship between completion of district-sponsored professional development program and improved student achievement as measured on the 2019-2020 reading, math, and science benchmark assessments.	Ho3: (Null) Retained When comparing class means for standardized benchmark assessments between study participants who took the district-sponsored year-long professional development course to non-participants, across Grades 3-8, the mean scores of professional development participants were higher in six of 12 benchmarks.
	Ha3: There is relationship between completion of district-sponsored professional development program and improved student achievement as measured on the 2019-2020 reading, math, and science benchmark assessments.	Ha3: Rejected research

Data analyses were conducted in order to determine how efficacious teachers were in their ability to teach students from culturally diverse backgrounds. The means for

items on the CRTSE Scale ranged from 52.72 (SD = 28.79) to 89.40 (SD = 13.4). See Table 5 for a summary of the mean scores for each item on the CRTSE Scale. The total mean score = 74.58 (SD = 19.62).

**Table 5***CRTSE Scale Means and Standard Deviations of Appraisal Items in Comparison to Siwatu (2007)*

Appraisal item inventory	Current study (N=185 )		Siwatu (2007) (N=275)	
	M	sd	M	sd
...adapt instruction to meet the needs of my students.	81.31	15.56	84.26	10.46
...obtain information about my students' academic strengths.	83.07	15.19	86.62	9.76
...determine whether my students like to work alone or in a group.	82.18	15.66	87.28	12.74
...determine whether my students feel comfortable competing with other students.	70.03	20.68	82.06	13.8
...identify ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) is different from my students' home culture.	70.88	18.35	80.64	13.57
...implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture.	63.12	22.58	76.04	14.8
...assess student learning using various types of assessments.	78.87	17.58	85.22	12.87
...obtain information about my students' home life.	74.54	18.5	80.28	14.66
...build a sense of trust in my students.	88.23	12.98	92.15	8.41
...establish positive home-school relations.	79.99	18.31	85.06	12.49
...use a variety of teaching methods.	83.27	15.39	89.95	10.22
...develop a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse backgrounds.	78.72	18.29	85.26	11.78
...use my students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful.	71.67	21	84.16	12.52
...use my students' prior knowledge to help them make sense of new information.	81.22	15.77	88.08	11.32
...identify ways how students communicate at home may differ from the school norms.	73.31	19.32	81.05	12.52
...obtain information about my students' cultural background.	75.24	18.49	85.51	11.5
...teach students about their cultures' contributions to science.	58.07	25.97	74.4	18.7

(cont.)

Appraisal item inventory	Current study		Siwatu (2007)	
	(N=185)		(N=275)	
	M	sd	M	sd
...greet English Language Learners with a phrase in their native language.	63.02	29.57	71.01	23.78
...design a classroom environment using displays that reflect a variety of cultures.	72.92	22.36	85.03	15.63
...develop a personal relationship with my students.	89.4	13.4	92.76	8.42
...obtain information about my students' academic weaknesses.	80.98	16.26	88.4	9.4
...praise English Language Learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language.	60.2	29.83	71.48	23.56
...identify ways that standardized tests may be biased toward linguistically diverse students.	64.75	24.05	78.58	17.47
...communicate with parents regarding their child's educational progress.	80.91	18.83	87.82	11.11
...structure parent-teacher conferences so that the meeting is not intimidating for parents.	78.91	20.59	88.41	11.11
...help students to develop positive relationships with their classmates.	83.63	14.61	88.21	10.84
...revise instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups.	69.57	20.55	83.04	13.56
...critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes.	68.63	22.35	83.61	12.95
...design a lesson that shows how other cultural groups have made use of mathematics.	52.72	28.29	74.44	21.5
...model classroom tasks to enhance English Language Learner's understanding.	74.05	18.56	83.28	15.51
...communicate with the parents of English Language Learners regarding their child's achievement.	64.57	26.26	76.72	18.97
...help students feel like important members of the classroom.	88.21	12.96	92.97	8.91
...identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards culturally diverse students.	66.63	23.9	80.79	16.39
...use a learning preference inventory to gather data about how my students like to learn.	70.09	22.24	81.92	15.73

(cont.)

Appraisal item inventory	Current study		Siwatu (2007)	
	(N=185)		(N=275)	
	M	sd	M	sd
...use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds.	68.06	21.35	81.73	13.34
...explain new concepts using examples that are taken from my students' everyday lives.	77.5	16.57	87.52	11.13
...obtain information regarding my students' academic interests.	80.06	17.04		
...use the interests of my students to make learning meaningful for them.	82.37	16.78	90.36	9.38
...implement cooperative learning activities for those students who like to work in groups.	80.65	16.58	89.66	10.54
...design instruction that matches my students' developmental needs.	79.04	18.23	87.8	10.38
...teach students about their cultures' contributions to society.	67.36	23.72	Not included	
CRTSE Item Total	3057.95		3361.89	342.03
	74.5841	19.622	83.9374	13.3777

*Note.* 100 point scale. One study participant did not complete the scale and therefore was not included in the descriptive analysis.

All mean scores were categorized into four quartiles: 0-25, 26-50, 51-75, and 76-100. None of the mean scores for each question on the CRTSE fell in the lower two quartiles. See Table 6 for the distribution of the CRTSE mean scores for each question.

**Table 6**

*Mean Score Distribution by Quartiles for the CRTSE Questions*

Quarters	Number of mean scores in the given range
0-25	0
26-50	0
51-75	21
76-100	20

Due to the uneven distribution of the CRTSE mean scores, a more specific range

for the CRTSE mean scores was selected. This adjustment from the originally identified quartiles allowed for an examination of a targeted distribution of self-efficacy beliefs.

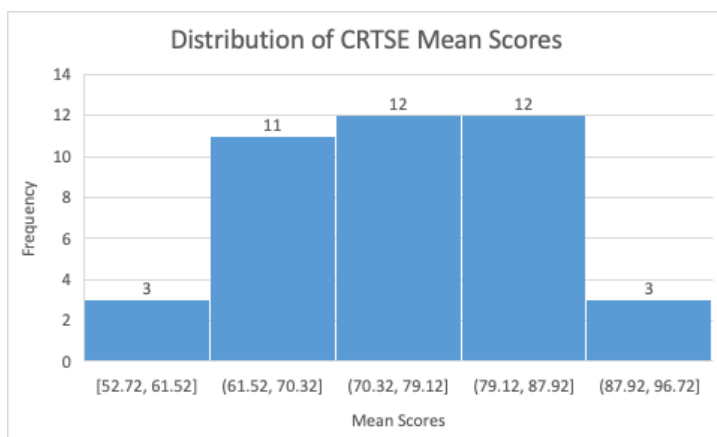
Table 7 displays the adjusted distribution of CRTSE mean scores with the specific categories of 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, and 80-89.

**Table 7**

*Adjusted Range for Mean Score Distribution by Quartiles for the CRTSE Questions*

Quarters	Number of mean scores in the given range
50-59	2
60-69	10
70-79	15
80-89	14

Analysis of the distribution for mean scores for each question on the CRTSE survey allowed me to identify the areas in which teachers had the greatest and least amount of confidence in regard to CRT practices (see Figure 24 and Table 8). As shown in Table 8, participant CRTSE was highest for their perceived ability to develop a personal relationship with my students ( $M = 89.40$ ,  $SD = 13.40$ ); build a sense of trust in my students ( $M = 88.23$ ,  $SD = 13.98$ ); and help students feel like important members of the classroom ( $M = 88.21$ ,  $SD = 12.96$ ). Table 8 also displays the lowest item-specific means for participants. Those included participant perceived ability to design a lesson that shows how other cultural groups have made use of mathematics ( $M = 52.72$ ,  $SD = 28.29$ ); teach students about their cultures' contribution to science ( $M = 58.07$ ,  $SD = 25.97$ ); and praise English language learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language ( $M = 60.20$ ,  $SD = 29.83$ ).

**Figure 24***Mean Score Distribution for CRTSE Questions***Table 8***CRTSE Scale Means and Standard Deviations of Appraisal Items*

Appraisal item inventory	(n = 185)	
	M	sd
...design a lesson that shows how other cultural groups have made use of mathematics.	52.72	28.29
...teach students about their cultures' contributions to science.	58.07	25.97
...praise English Language Learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language.	60.2	29.83
...help students feel like important members of the classroom.	88.21	12.96
...build a sense of trust in my students.	88.23	12.98
...develop a personal relationship with my students.	89.4	13.4

Additionally, each survey participant answered a demographic questionnaire and responded with a numeric response of 1-100 to 41 questions about their level of confidence about CRT practices. Each participant received a total CRTSE score and a

CRTSE index score. The CRTSE total score was the sum of all participant responses. The CRTSE index score was the total score divided by 41 for the total number of questions. The higher index score corresponded to a higher sense of self-efficacy when working with students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The CRTSE index scores were analyzed. Comparisons were made between the following groups: all survey participants, district-sponsored professional development participants, and non-participants. See Table 9 for the CRTSE mean index comparisons. The level of self-efficacy for all survey participants is reflected in the total mean index score of 74.58. In contrast, the level of self-efficacy for survey participants who participated in the district-sponsored professional development was 78.32. The level of teacher self-efficacy for survey participants who did not participate in the year-long district-sponsored professional development was 74.03.

**Table 9**

*Comparison of CRTSE Mean Index Scores*

	Mean index score	sd
All survey participants	74.5841	19.622
District-sponsored professional development participants	78.3263	17.0417
Non-participants for district-sponsored professional development	74.0312	19.852

In summary, the results indicated that educators who participated in year-long district-sponsored professional development collectively had a higher level of self-efficacy in regard to CRT practices.

***Summary of Research Question 2***

The second research question examined whether or not teachers believe in the



positive outcomes associated with CRT. To answer Research Question 2, quantitative data analysis was conducted. In the research study, quantitative data were collected from a convenience sample of practicing educators in a suburban school district in North Carolina (N = 185). All professionally licensed staff received electronic surveys via email and volunteered to participate completing electronic informed consent forms.

Data analyses were conducted in order to determine whether or not teachers believe in the positive outcomes associated with CRT. The means for items on the CRT0E Scale ranged from 71.49 (SD = 23.03) to 92.37 (SD = 10.99). See Table 10 for a summary of the mean scores for each item on the CRT0E. The total mean score = 84.27 (SD = 16.37).

**Table 10***CRTOE Scale Means and Standard Deviations of Appraisal Items in Comparison to Siwatu (2007)*

Expectancy inventory items	Current study (n=185)		Siwatu (2007) (n=275)	
	M	sd	M	sd
Changing the structure of the classroom so that it is compatible with my students' home culture will increase their motivation to come to class.	71.49	23.03	76.82	17.03
The frequency that students' abilities are misdiagnosed will decrease when their standardized test scores are interpreted with caution.	74.01	23.62	79.52	17.06
Acknowledging the ways that the school culture is different from my students' home culture will minimize the likelihood of discipline problems.	76.43	19.04	78.11	16.96
Encouraging students to use their native language will help them to maintain their cultural identity.	76.69	22.75	74.62	19.44
Simplifying the language used during the presentation will enhance English Language Learners' comprehension of the lesson.	80.35	18.98	85.02	14.4
The likelihood of student-teacher misunderstandings decreases when my students' cultural background is understood.	82.78	17.81	85.32	13.99
Using culturally familiar examples will make learning new concepts easier.	82.97	16.99	87.91	11.52
Student attendance will increase when a personal relationship between the teacher and students has been developed.	83.03	16.72	86.78	13.87
Conveying the message that parents are an important part of the classroom will increase parent participation.	83.09	18.1	85.27	15.44
Revising instructional material to include a better representation of the student's cultural group will foster positive self-images.	83.63	18.23	87.58	12.15
Understanding the communication preference (e.g., the value of eye-contact; protocol for participating in a conversation) of my students will decrease the likelihood of student-teacher communication problems.	83.66	16.19	83.08	13.33
Establishing positive home-school relations will increase parental involvement.	83.77	17.29	85.71	12.91
Students will develop an appreciation for their culture when they are taught about the contributions their culture has made over time.	83.99	15.92	87.38	12.91

(cont.)

Expectancy inventory items	Current study (n=185)		Siwatu (2007) (n=275)	
	M	sd	M	sd
Students' academic achievement will increase when they are provided with unbiased access to the necessary learning resources.	84.73	15.8	87.34	11.59
Matching instruction to the students' learning preferences will enhance their learning.	85.38	15.64	89.5	10.52
When students see themselves in the pictures (e.g., posters of notable African Americans, etc.) that are displayed in the classroom they develop a positive self-identity.	85.99	15.75	84.33	16.02
Developing a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse cultural backgrounds will promote positive interaction between students.	86.64	14.92	89.49	10.27
Students will be successful when instruction is adapted to meet their needs.	87.76	13.57	89.59	10.31
Providing English Language learners with visual aids will enhance their understanding of assignments.	88.03	13.37	90.01	12.5
Helping students from diverse cultural backgrounds succeed in school will increase their confidence in their academic ability.	88.5	13.04	88.54	11.51
Using my students' interests when designing instruction will increase their motivation to learn.	88.52	13.64	90.67	9.84
Assessing student learning using a variety of assessment procedures will provide a better picture of what they have learned.	88.96	13.13	88.33	12.17
Connecting my students' prior knowledge with new incoming information will lead to deeper learning.	88.98	13.83	91.75	9.34
Incorporating a variety of teaching methods will help my students to be successful.	89	14.06	91.96	9.57
Students' self-esteem can be enhanced when their cultural background is valued by the teacher.	90.16	13.14	87.23	13.15
A positive teacher-student relationship can be established by building a sense of trust in my students.	92.37	10.99	93.49	8.62
Please indicate your willingness to participate (if chosen) or your desire not to participate in the group. Remember, participants will be randomly selected.				
CRTOE Total	2190.91	425.55	2245.96	224.08
CRTOE Index	84.2658	16.3673	86.3596	12.9392

All mean scores were categorized into four quartiles: 0-25, 26-50, 51-75, and 76-100. None of

the mean scores for each question on the CRTOE fell in the lower two quartiles. See Table 11 for the distribution of the CRTOE mean scores for each question.

**Table 11**

*Mean Score Distribution by Quartiles for the CRTOE Questions*

Quartiles	Number of mean scores in the given range
0-25	0
26-50	0
51-75	2
76-100	24

Due to the uneven distribution of the CRTOE mean scores, a more specific range for the CRTOE mean scores was selected. This adjustment from the originally identified quartiles allowed for an examination of a targeted distribution of outcome expectancy beliefs. Table 12 displays the adjusted distribution of CRTOE mean scores with the specific categories of 70-79, 80-89, and 90-99.

**Table 12**

*Adjusted Range for Mean Score Distribution by Quartiles for the (CRTOE Questions*

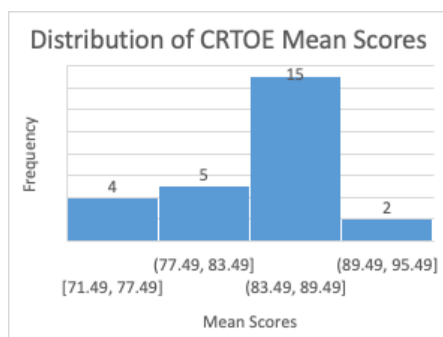
Quartiles	Number of mean scores in the given range
70-79	4
80-89	20
90-99	2

Analysis of the distribution for mean scores for each question on the CRTOE survey allowed me to identify the areas in which teachers had the most and least amount of certainty that a target behavior would lead to a specified outcome in regard to CRT practices (see Figure 25 and Table 13). As shown in Table 13, participant CRTOE were highest for their perceived certainty that a positive teacher-student relationship can be established by building a sense of trust in their students ( $M = 92.37$ ,  $SD = 10.99$ ); and

student self-esteem can be enhanced when their cultural background is valued by the teacher ( $M = 90.16$ ,  $SD = 13.14$ ). Table 13 also displays item-specific means were lowest for participant perceived certainty that changing the structure of their classroom so it is compatible with students' home culture will increase their motivation to come to class ( $M = 71.49$ ,  $SD = 23.03$ ); the frequency that student abilities are misdiagnosed will decrease when their standardized test scores are interpreted with caution ( $M = 74.01$ ,  $SD = 23.62$ ); acknowledging the ways the school culture is different from student home culture will minimize the likelihood of discipline problems ( $M = 76.43$ ,  $SD = 19.04$ ); and encouraging students to use their native language will help them maintain their cultural identity ( $M = 76.69$ ,  $SD = 22.75$ ).

### Figure 25

*Mean Score Distribution for the Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy CRTOE Questions*



**Table 13***CRTOE Scale Means and Standard Deviations of Appraisal Items*

Expectancy inventory items	(n=185)	
	M	sd
Changing the structure of the classroom so that it is compatible with my students' home culture will increase their motivation to come to class.	71.49	23.03
The frequency that students' abilities are misdiagnosed will decrease when their standardized test scores are interpreted with caution.	74.01	23.62
Acknowledging the ways that the school culture is different from my students' home culture will minimize the likelihood of discipline problems.	76.43	19.04
Encouraging students to use their native language will help them to maintain their cultural identity.	76.69	22.75
Students' self-esteem can be enhanced when their cultural background is valued by the teacher.	90.16	13.14
A positive teacher-student relationship can be established by building a sense of trust in my students.	92.37	10.99

Additionally, each survey participant answered a demographic questionnaire and responded with a numeric response of 1-100 to 26 questions about their level of certainty that a target behavior would lead to a specified outcome in regard to CRT practices. Each participant received a total CRTOE score and a CRTOE index score. The CRTOE total scores were the sum of all participant responses. The CRTOE index scores were the total score divided by 26 for the total number of questions. The higher index score corresponded to a higher sense of certainty that a behavior aligned with a specified outcome. The CRTOE index scores were analyzed. Comparisons were made between the following groups: all survey participants, district-sponsored professional development participants, and non-participants. See Table 14 for the CRTOE mean index comparisons.

The level of certainty for all survey participants is reflected in the total mean index score of 84.27 (SD = 16.37). In contrast, the level of certainty for survey participants who participated in district-sponsored professional development was 89.67 (SD = 10.97). The level of teacher certainty for survey participants who did not participate in the year-long district-sponsored professional development was 83.48 (SD = 16.79).

**Table 14**

*Comparison of CRTOE Mean Index Scores*

	Mean index score	sd
All survey participants	84.27	16.37
District-sponsored professional development participants	89.67	10.97
Non-participants for district-sponsored professional development	83.48	16.79

In summary, the results indicate that educators who participated in year-long district-sponsored professional development collectively had a higher level of certainty that a target behavior would lead to a specified outcome in regard to CRT practices in comparison to non-participants of the professional development.

### ***Summary of Research Question 3***

The third research question examined whether implementation of a district-sponsored professional development program impacted student achievement as measured on the 2019-2020 reading, math, and science benchmark assessments. The outcome variables for this study were student scores on the two state assessment benchmark tests for third-, fifth-, sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade reading, math, and science. These measures were chosen because of the district's ethnic disparity in these subject areas. In addition, these assessments were used to prepare students for taking the official end-of-

year standardized test. Teachers also used these benchmark tests to determine how to maximize student success in core academic areas; however, COVID-19, a global pandemic, negatively hindered data collection for this phase of the research study. Due to the issuance of an executive stay-at-home order effective March 16, 2020, all schools within the state closed because of impending health risks. Therefore, student standardized assessment data could not be collected on the third benchmark or the end-of-grade assessments in reading, math, and science.

The findings for the third-grade benchmark tests in reading and math showed higher performances for students with teachers who did not participate in the district-sponsored professional development. The mean test scores of six third-grade teachers were analyzed, one of whom participated in ongoing district-sponsored professional development. Non-participant class mean scores were higher on four of four benchmark tests during the 2019-2020 school year. Mean benchmark results for reading benchmarks 1 and 2 were 58.1 and 49.6 for the professional development participant. In contrast, mean benchmark results for reading benchmarks 1 and 2 were 58.5 and 58.8 for five teachers who did not participate in the district's professional development program. This means that the class mean scores were higher for study participants who did not take the year-long professional development course. An analysis of growth or mean difference from benchmark 1 to benchmark 2 was higher for teachers who did not participate in the professional development. Overall, students made greater improvements in reading in the classes of teachers who did not participate in year-long professional development.

There were similar findings for math assessments. Mean benchmark results for math benchmarks 1 and 2 were 45 and 44 for the professional development participant. In



contrast, mean benchmark results for math benchmarks 1 and 2 were 45 and 48.4 for five teachers who did not participate in professional development. An analysis of growth or mean difference from benchmark 1 to benchmark 2 was higher for teachers who did not participate in the professional development (3.4 compared to -0.9). As shown in Table 15, overall, third-grade students made greater improvements in math in the classes of teachers who did not participate in year-long professional development.

**Table 15**

*Grade 3 Reading and Math Student Outcomes*

	Reading Benchmark 1	Reading Benchmark 2	Mean Difference	Math Benchmark 1	Math Benchmark 2	Mean Difference
Professional development participant mean scores	58.1	49.6	-8.5	44.9	44.0	-0.9
Non-participant mean scores	58.5	58.8	0.3	45	48.4	3.4

The findings for the fourth-grade benchmark tests in reading and math were inconclusive. There were zero fourth-grade study participants in the year-long district-sponsored professional development. Therefore, mean scores were collected for non-participants only, as there were no comparison data. The mean test scores of five fourth-grade teachers were analyzed, none of whom participated in ongoing district-sponsored professional development. Mean benchmark results for reading benchmarks 1 and 2 were 59.4 and 58.8 for the nonprofessional development participant. An analysis of growth or mean difference from benchmark 1 to benchmark 2 was -0.6. Mean benchmark results for math benchmarks 1 and 2 were 48.3 and 55.2 for the nonprofessional development participant. An analysis of growth or mean difference from benchmark 1 to benchmark 2 was 6.9 (see Table 16).

**Table 16***Grade 4 Reading and Math Student Outcomes*

	Reading Benchmark 1	Reading Benchmark 2	Mean Difference	Math Benchmark 1	Math Benchmark 2	Mean Difference
Non-participant mean scores	59.4	58.8	-0.6	48.3	55.2	6.9

The findings for fifth-grade benchmark tests in reading, math, and science showed higher performances for students with teachers who did participate in the district-sponsored professional development. The mean test scores of seven fifth-grade teachers were analyzed, two of whom participated in ongoing district-sponsored professional development. Professional development participant class mean scores were higher on five of six benchmark tests during the 2019-2020 school year. Mean benchmark results for reading benchmarks 1 and 2 were 65.0 and 71.0 for professional development participants. In contrast, mean benchmark results for reading benchmarks 1 and 2 were 62.5 and 66.9 for five teachers who did not participate in professional development. An analysis of growth or mean difference from benchmark 1 to benchmark 2 was higher for teachers who did participate in the professional development at 6.1 in contrast to 4.4. Mean benchmark results for math benchmarks 1 and 2 were 55.0 and 63.3 for the professional development participants. In contrast, mean benchmark results for math benchmarks 1 and 2 were 48.5 and 50.1 for five teachers who did not participate in the professional development program. An analysis of growth or mean difference from benchmark 1 to benchmark 2 was higher for teachers who did participate in the professional development (8.4 compared to 4.3). Mean benchmark results for science benchmarks 1 and 2 were 58.4 and 54.4 for the professional development participants. In contrast, mean benchmark results for science benchmarks 1 and 2 were 51 and 55.3 for

five teachers who did not participate in professional development. Non-participant mean scores were higher for benchmark test 2 in comparison to professional development participants. As shown in Table 17, an analysis of growth or mean difference from benchmark 1 to benchmark 2 was higher for teachers who did not participate in the professional development (4.3 compared to -4.0).

**Table 17**

*Grade 5 Reading, Math, and Science Student Outcomes*

Participants	Benchmark 1	Benchmark 2	Mean Differences
	Reading Benchmark 1	Reading Benchmark 2	Mean Difference
Professional development participant mean scores	65.0	71.0	6.1
Non-participant mean scores	62.5	66.9	4.4
	Math Benchmark 1	Math Benchmark 2	Mean Difference
Professional development participant mean scores	55.0	63.3	8.4
Non-participant mean scores	48.5	50.1	4.3
	Science Benchmark 1	Science Benchmark 2	Mean Difference
Professional development participant mean scores	58.4	54.4	-4.0
Non-participant mean scores	51	55.3	4.3

The findings for the sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade benchmark tests in reading showed higher performances for students with teachers who did not participate in the district-sponsored professional development. The mean test scores of three sixth- through eighth-grade teachers were analyzed, two of whom participated in ongoing district-sponsored professional development. Non-participant class mean scores were higher on one of two benchmark tests during the 2019-2020 school year. Mean benchmark results

for reading benchmarks 1 and 2 were 49.8 and 50.9 for the professional development participants. In contrast, benchmark results for reading benchmarks 1 and 2 were 48.7 and 54.8 for one teacher who did not participate in professional development. As shown in Table 18, an analysis of growth or mean difference from benchmark 1 to benchmark 2 was higher for teachers who did not participate in the professional development (6.1 compared to 1.1).

**Table 18**

*Grades 6-8 Reading Student Outcomes*

	Reading Benchmark 1	Reading Benchmark 2	Mean Difference
Professional development participant mean scores	49.8	50.9	1.1
Non-participant mean scores	48.7	54.8	6.1

In summary, the student outcome results indicate mixed results. When comparing class means for standardized benchmark assessments between study participants who took the district-sponsored year-long professional development course to non-participants across Grades 3-8, the mean scores of professional development participants were higher in six of 12 benchmarks. I sought to analyze student outcome data of 43 study participants spanning Grades 3-8; six of whom participated in district-sponsored professional development; six were Grade 3 teachers; five were Grade 4 teachers; seven were fifth-grade teachers; four were six-, seventh-, and eighth-grade math teachers; three were sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade reading teachers; and 18 study participants did not have a tested subject. All kindergarten, first-, second-, ninth-, 10<sup>th</sup>-, 11<sup>th</sup>- and 12<sup>th</sup>-grade teachers were excluded from the student outcome analysis, as there was no comparable

standardized student outcome data available.

### ***Summary***

This section of the mixed methods study described the various quantitative analyses and results implemented to answer the research questions. A more extensive discussion of the findings of both the quantitative and qualitative results and their potential application to culturally responsive teacher practices are outlined in Chapter 5 following the qualitative findings section of this paper.

### **Qualitative Findings**

The research questions and findings are presented in Table 19.

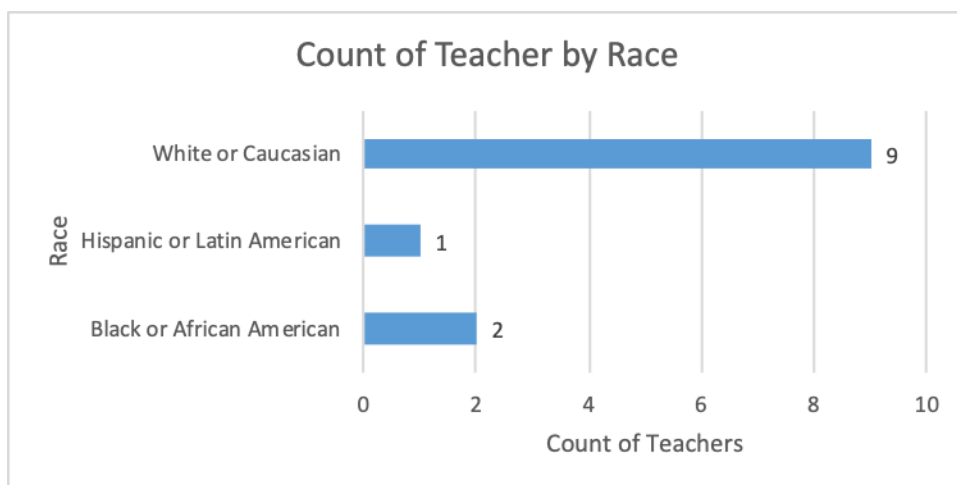
**Table 19**

#### *Research Questions and Findings*

Research questions/hypotheses results research		
Question 4: What do classroom teachers do differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development?	Ho4: There is no difference in teachers' instructional practices after completion of district-sponsored professional development.	Ho4: (Null) Rejected
	Ha4: There is a difference in teachers' instructional practices after completion of district-sponsored professional development.	Ha4: Retained

The purpose of collecting the qualitative data in this mixed methods study was to provide complimentary data to further explain the quantitative results. As mentioned in the previous methodology section, qualitative data would be drawn from a convenience and purposeful sampling. Data collected during Phase 1 was used to identify a potential sample for the second phase of the research study. A random sampling was drawn from

teachers who had a range of efficacy scores ranging from high to low. A random sampling was also drawn from teachers who had completed the district-sponsored professional development program and study participants who had not completed the professional development program. Data were collected through focus groups to determine what classroom teachers do differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development. Four focus group sessions were facilitated by me, and Table 20 and Figures 26-35 outline the demographics of focus group participants. Focus group participants consisted of 11 (92%) female participants and one (8%) male participant. As shown in Figure 26, the racial makeup of the focus group participants was two (17%) Black or African American, one (8%) Hispanic, and nine (75%) White or Caucasian. The focus groups were attended by teachers ranging from highly efficacious to teachers with low self-efficacy levels as indicated by the CRSTE Strength Index scores ranged from 56 to 99. Teacher level of certainty about target behaviors also spanned a range as indicated by the CRTOE Index scores ranging from 76 to 100. Mean number of years taught for the focus group participants was 15, ranging from 1 year to 24 years. More specifically, two participants taught 1-10 years; eight participants taught 11-20 years, and two participants taught 21-30 years (see Table 20).

**Figure 26***Racial Demographics of Focus Group Participants*

**Table 20***Demographics of Focus Group Participants with CRSTE and CRTOE Mean Scores*

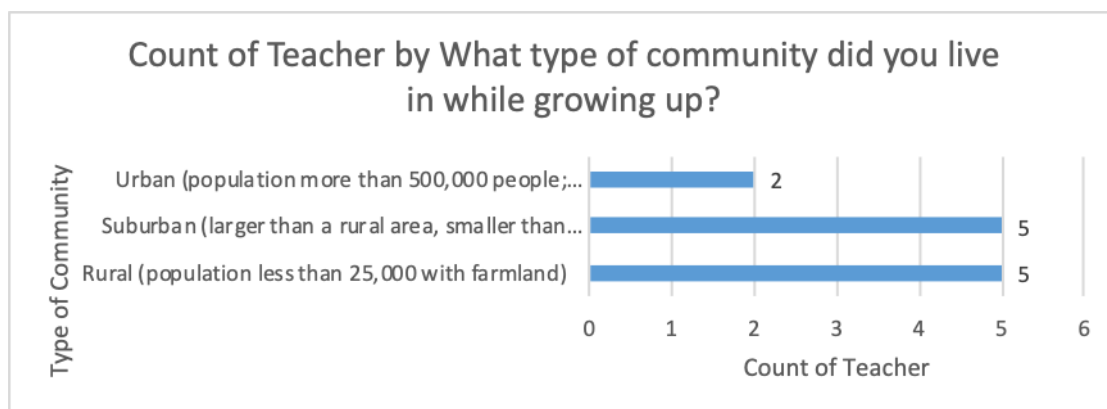
Teacher	Age	Gender	Race	Years taught	Current teaching level	PD	CRSTE strength index	CRTOE index
Wat9552	43	Female	Black or African American	15	5th	No	99	100
ele2059	34	Female	Hispanic or Latin American	12	K	Yes	84	93
BRA1514	53	Female	White or Caucasian	24	6th-8th	Yes	79	97
Wat1399	61	Female	White or Caucasian	14	11th-12th	Yes	83	88
Jac750	37	Female	White or Caucasian	14	7th-8th	Yes	81	91
Slo5958	50+	Female	White or Caucasian	20	5th	Yes	84	94
wil600	68	Female	White or Caucasian	16	K-2nd	No	75	96
Dan3062	43	Male	Black or African American	19	7th	No	66	98
Klo2841	25	Female	White or Caucasian	1	K-5th, 9th-12th	No	74	76
Fal7093	33	Female	White or Caucasian	6	6th	No	85	82
And1296	44	Female	White or Caucasian	22	7th-8th	No	83	84
owe4632	41	Female	White or Caucasian	12	3rd	Yes	56	85

Focus group participants represented a variety of backgrounds. Two participants grew up in urban communities, while five participants grew up in suburban communities, and another five participants described the communities they grew up in as rural with a population less than 25,000 with farmland (see Figure 27).



**Figure 27**

*What Type of Community Did You Live in While Growing Up?*

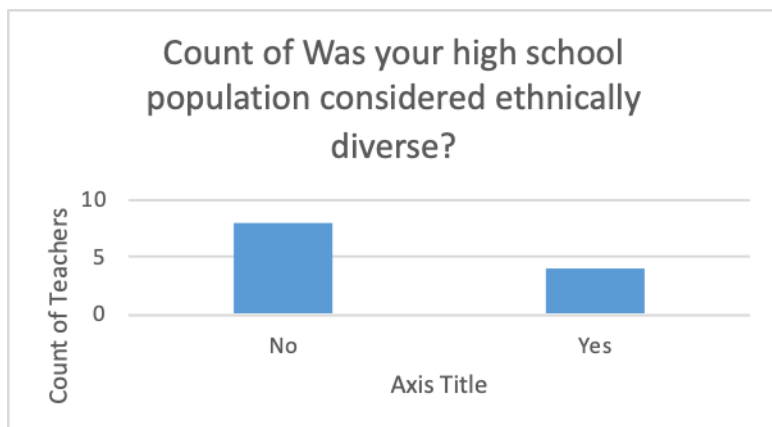


Eight focus group participants (67%) indicated the high school they attended was not ethnically diverse, while four (33%) indicated they attended an ethnically diverse high school. Ten focus group participants (83%) speak one language, while two (17%) speak two languages (see Figures 28-29). Two participants (17%) considered the teaching staff of their school district to be ethnically diverse, while 10 participants (88%) indicated the teaching staff of their school districts were not ethnically diverse (see Figure 30). Four participants (33%) indicated their communities in which they were raised were diverse, while eight (67%) indicated the community in which they were raised was not considered ethnically diverse (see Figure 31). Figure 32 shows that nine focus group participants (75%) have a master's degree, while three (25%) do not have a master's degree. Figure 33 shows that one focus group participant (8%) has an advanced National Board certification, while 11 (92%) do not have the advanced certification. Six focus group participants (50%) did not attend the year-long district-sponsored professional development course, while six (50%) did attend the professional development (see Figure 34). As shown in Figure 35, focus group participants had a range of self-efficacy and

outcome expectancy beliefs ranging from low to high.

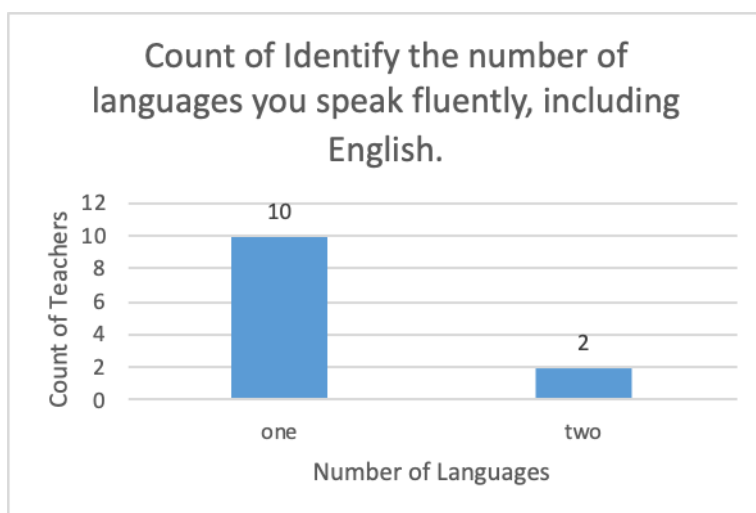
**Figure 28**

*Was Your High School Population Considered Ethnically Diverse?*



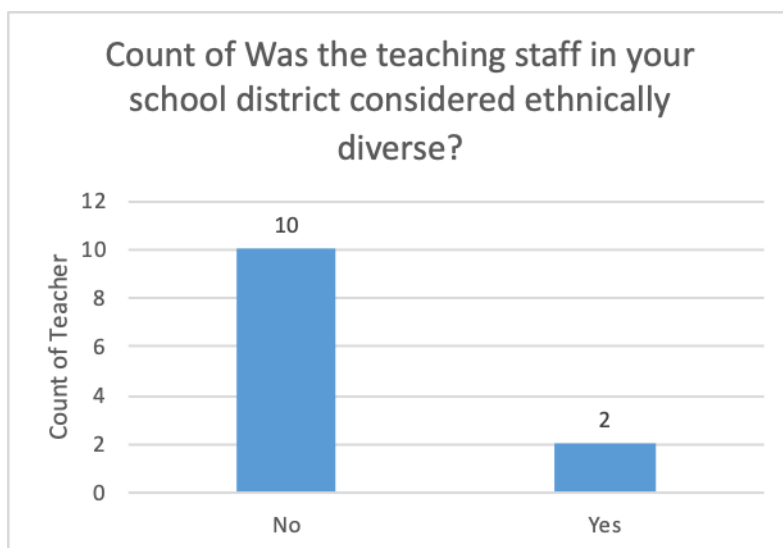
**Figure 29**

*Identify the Number of Languages You Speak Fluently, Including English*

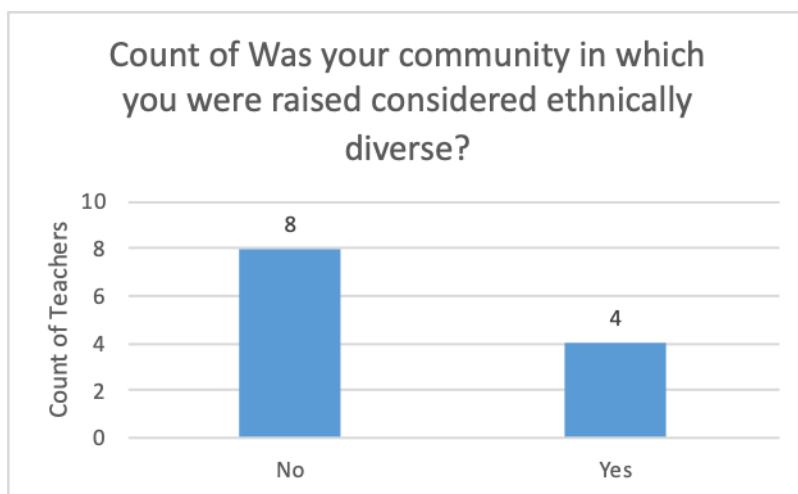


**Figure 30**

*Was the Teaching Staff in Your School District Ethnically Diverse?*

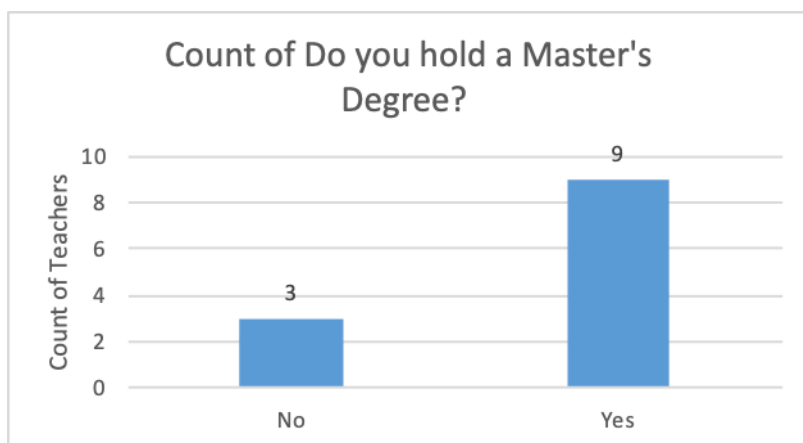
**Figure 31**

*Was Your Community in Which You Were Raised Considered Ethnically Diverse?*

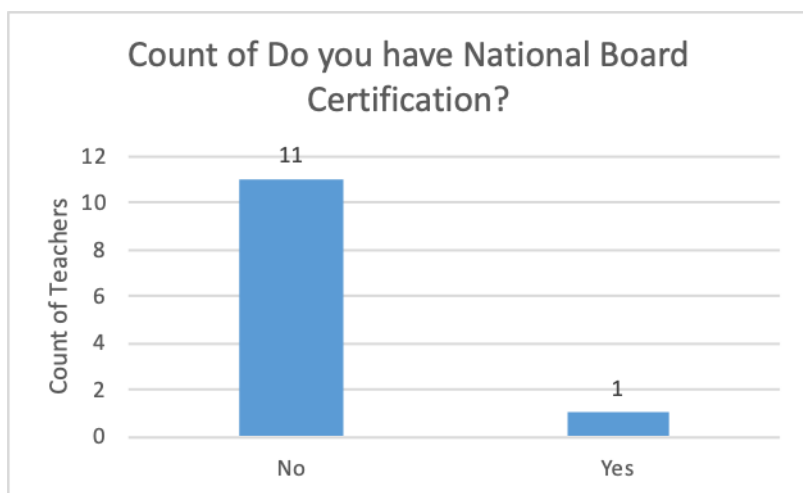


**Figure 32**

*Do You Hold a Master's Degree?*

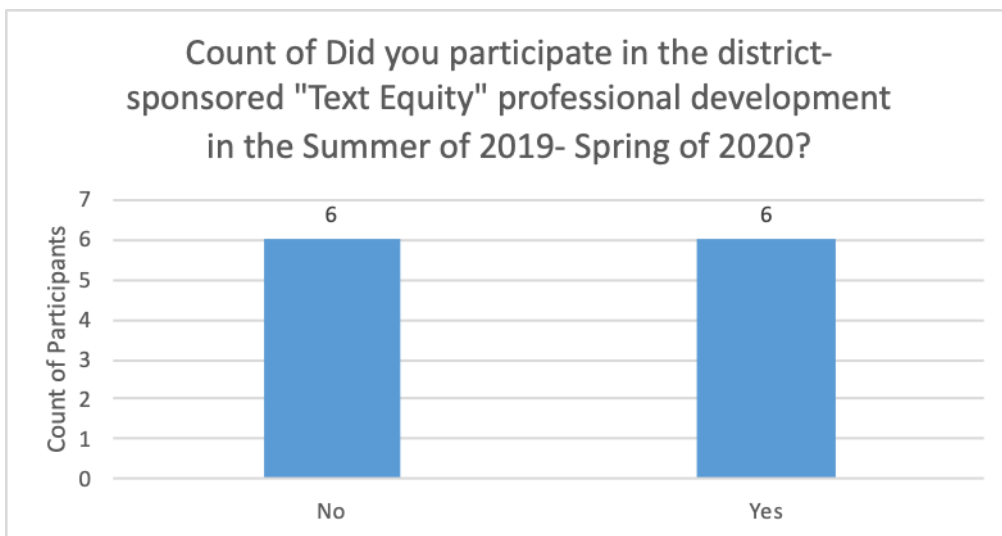
**Figure 33**

*Do You Have National Board Certification?*



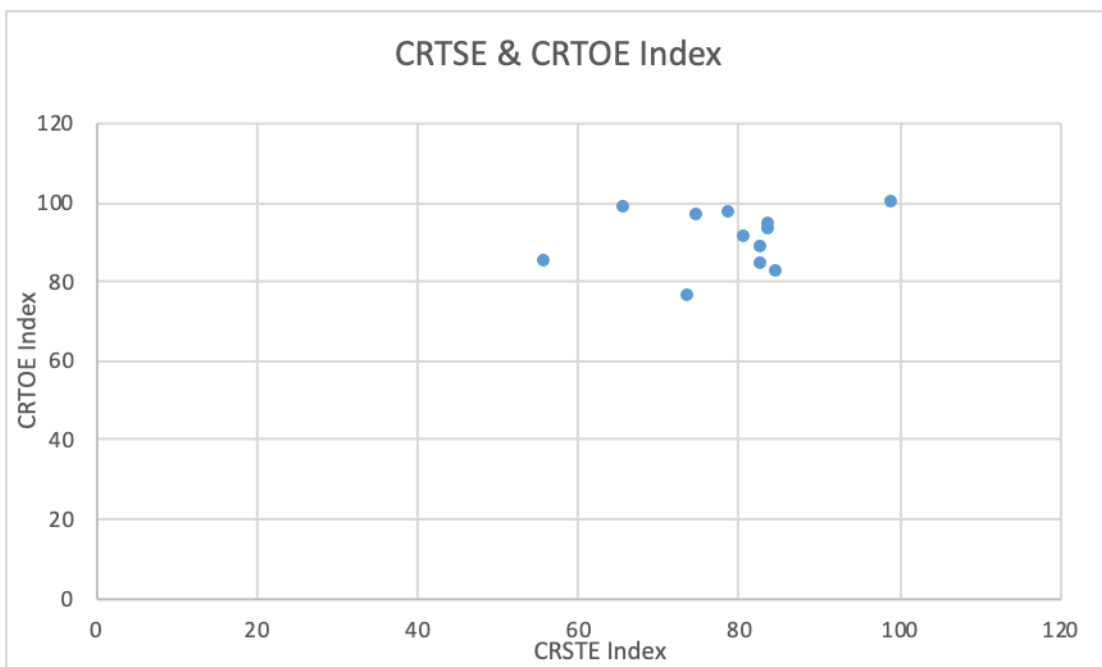
**Figure 34**

*Did You Participate in the District-Sponsored Professional Development Program?*



**Figure 35**

*Distribution of CRTSE & CRTOE Mean Scores of Focus Group Participants*



Data were collected through focus groups to determine what classroom teachers do differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional

development (see Appendix J). Analysis of focus group data further provided several themes concerning teacher level of confidence in regard to teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students (see Appendix K). To identify themes from the discussion, I coded themes that emerged once as low frequency. Themes that emerged two to three times were coded as moderate frequency, and themes that emerged more than four times were considered to have high frequency. Eleven questions were asked during the focus group discussion.

1. Please interpret what you see in the painting and the cultural connections the artwork and its title has for you. What does it make you think of when you look at it, in terms of cultural diversity? The following themes were identified from the focus group discussion. Five focus group participants indicated cultural diversity involved matters involving the appearance of someone such as skin tone and facial features. This response was coded as high frequency. Three focus group participants described cultural diversity by referring to clothing and jewelry. These responses were coded as moderate frequency. One focus group participant described cultural diversity in terms of food, spoken language, or country of origin. These responses were coded as low frequency. All responses of the focus groups were transcribed (see Appendix K).
2. What are your thoughts of these preliminary findings? Invite participants to analyze the data associated with items from CRTSE Scale with the lowest and highest mean scores and items from the CRTOE Scale with the lowest and highest mean scores. The following themes were identified from the focus

group discussion. Five focus group participants indicated fear as a hindrance for trying to be inclusive to all the students in their classes. Four focus group participants indicated uncertainty and confusion about culturally responsive pedagogy and practices. These responses were coded as high frequency. Three focus group participants talked about either the lack of or their efforts to integrate their core content with student cultures. These responses were coded as moderate frequency. Two focus group participants indicated test bias was a contributing factor for disparities in student achievement. These responses were coded as low frequency. All responses of the focus groups were transcribed (see Appendix K).

3. What do you think of when I use the phrase “culturally diverse students?” The following themes were identified from the focus group discussion. Four focus group participants indicated cultural diversity means a sample of students who are representative of different races and different cultures and come from varying geographic locations. These responses were coded as high frequency. One focus group participant indicated that culturally diverse students also refer to the uniqueness of individual students within a larger cultural group. The participant indicated there were lots of different layers to cultural diversity. This response was coded as low frequency. One focus group participant indicated that culturally diverse students are students who have an awareness of the cultures of others. These responses were coded as low frequency. All responses of the focus groups were transcribed (see Appendix K).

4. How confident are you in your ability to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students? The following themes were identified from the focus group discussion. Six focus group participants indicated they felt confident in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Likewise, six focus group participants did not directly answer this question but rather indicated that upon reflection, they wanted to continue to grow in this area. These responses were coded as high frequency. Zero participants indicated that they were not confident to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. All responses of the focus groups were transcribed (see Appendix K).
5. How prepared did you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse students prior to your participation in the district-sponsored “Text Equity” professional development program? No data were collected on this question, as it was omitted during the discussion.
6. How prepared did you feel in your ability to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students after your participation in district-sponsored “Text Equity” professional development program? The following themes were identified from the focus group discussion. Six focus group participants indicated they either felt more comfortable or more confident to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students after participating in a district-sponsored professional development program. These responses were coded as high frequency. All responses of the focus groups were transcribed (see Appendix K).
7. What aspect of the “Text Equity” professional development program is most



beneficial in preparing teachers to teach in a diverse setting? The following themes were identified from the focus group discussion. Three focus group participants indicated that teacher empowerment was the most beneficial aspect of the professional development program. Participants discussed fearing backlash from being White women trying to teach about someone else's culture. They indicated that receiving the license to be a facilitator and not having to be the sole bearer of knowledge liberated them from having to have all the answers. This response was coded as moderate frequency. Three focus group participants indicated that strategies for increasing student engagement was the most beneficial aspect of the professional development program. This response was coded as moderate frequency. Two focus group participants indicated that a newfound awareness and a sense of responsibility was the most beneficial aspect of the professional development program. Participants indicated they felt a sense of responsibility to bring about change after participating in the professional development. They discussed being honor bound once they were given the knowledge and tools. This response was coded as low frequency. Two focus group participants indicated that either understanding students developmentally or connecting with students and their families was the most beneficial aspect of the professional development program. This response was coded as low frequency. All responses of the focus groups were transcribed (see Appendix K).

8. Are there any personal and/or professional factors that positively impacted your confidence in teaching culturally diverse students? The following themes

were identified from the focus group discussion. Four focus group participants indicated having an influential role model while growing up has positively impacted their level of confidence in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Role models included grandparents or collective family units. These responses were coded as high frequency. Two focus group participants indicated that their personal life experiences while growing up positively impacted their level of confidence when teaching culturally diverse students. Participants mentioned personal experiences such as having a multicultural family, traveling to and living in various foreign countries while growing up, and being very rich while growing up and then experiencing culture shock at the loss of wealth. These responses were coded as low frequency. One focus group participant indicated that their willingness and personal humility were personal factors that positively influenced their level of confidence. This response was coded as low frequency. All responses of the focus groups were transcribed (see Appendix K).

9. Are there any personal and/or professional factors that negatively impacted your confidence in teaching culturally diverse students? The following themes were identified from the focus group discussion. Six focus group participants indicated fear was a personal factor that negatively impacted their level of confidence when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Teachers recounted experiences of receiving backlash from students for being White women trying to teach about a culture other than their own. Teachers also discussed the fear of being wrong and offending others due to their lack

of knowledge about the intricate nuances of different cultures. These responses were coded as high frequency. Four focus group participants indicated lack of community or teacher diversity as a negative influence on their level of confidence in regard to teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Focus group participants discussed the impact of having only one teacher of color during their entire educational career. Participants also discussed the impact of being the only person who looked like them while growing up and while currently working in the profession. These responses were coded as moderate frequency. Two focus group participants indicated that fixed mindsets and a lack of humility negatively impact teacher confidence in teaching culturally diverse students. These responses were coded as low frequency. All responses of the focus groups were transcribed (see Appendix K).

10. Is there anything else you would like to add to assist district leaders in preparing teachers to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students? The following themes were identified from the focus group discussion. Five focus group participants indicated district leaders need to provide opportunities for staff to develop cultural and racial awareness by participating in training so teachers can be prepared to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. Participants indicated that the CRT webinars, Racial Equity Training, and district-sponsored “Text Equity” professional development program were very beneficial to them. Reeducating current employees was discussed, and involving volunteer and community stakeholders was also mentioned.

Participants indicated the year-long professional development allowed them to learn more every time they met. They learned more and were then able to do better. They touted that when you know better, you do better. Participants indicated that the year-long professional development model was a great way to collaborate with colleagues, learn and work together, and design lessons/resources/units. Participants also indicated that they felt encouraged to make the world a better place. These responses were coded as high frequency. Five focus group participants indicated that district leaders needed to improve the culture of the schools by increasing staff diversity through improved recruitment efforts and by getting buy-in from the faculty in regard to CRT practice beliefs. Participants indicated that leaders can mitigate a lack of staff diversity by bringing in outside stakeholder groups who are diverse during the interim period when trying to employ ethnically and culturally diverse staff. These responses were coded as high frequency. Two focus group participants indicated that district leaders can prepare teachers to teach culturally diverse students by encouraging global projects or using online learning platforms to facilitate cultural awareness. These responses were coded as low frequency. All responses of the focus groups were transcribed (see Appendix K).

11. Do you have any suggestions for better preparing colleagues to teach in a diverse setting? The following themes were identified from the focus group discussion. Two focus group participants indicated people need to listen. Teachers need to listen to other teachers, staff, and children. Participants indicated teachers need to listen and make students feel valued, learn from

them, and engage students in sharing about their cultural experiences.

Participants indicated that everybody needs to be willing to listen and have tough conversations that will not always be comfortable. These responses were coded as low frequency. Two focus group participants indicated that teachers need to be provided with safe options for learning new content and safe options for presenting controversial topics to students. Participants discussed that teachers need to have a choice in selecting differentiated professional learning activities. They discussed the need for colleagues to feel safe in discussing topics with others in a safe learning environment.

Participants also discussed using literature or characters in books to discuss the things that are happening right now in our society. These responses were coded as low frequency. One focus group participant indicated that colleagues need to understand the important distinction between what CRT is and is not. This response was coded as low frequency. One focus group participant indicated that we need to get students involved through lessons or classroom meetings. All responses of the focus groups were transcribed (see Appendix K).

Six themes emerged as a result of the qualitative data analysis that described the seven underlying factors and are described in Table 21.

**Table 21***Underlying Factors Increasing or Decreasing CRTSE of Teacher*

Emergent themes: Underlying factors increasing or decreasing CRTSE	
Theme 1	Confidence in working with students
Theme 2	Experiences with fear decrease CRTSE
Theme 3	Lack of knowledge about culturally responsive pedagogy
Theme 4	Knowing better and doing through teacher empowerment
Theme 5	Influencers on teacher confidence
Theme 6	Improved school culture

**Discussion of Each Theme*****Theme 1: Confidence Working with Students***

Focus group participants indicated they felt confident in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. A quantitative analysis of focus group participant CRTSE survey results revealed a mean score of 77. During focus groups, six focus group participants indicated they felt confident, while six participants did not directly answer this question. The six participants did not indicate they were or were not confident but rather indicated that upon reflection, they wanted to continue to grow in this area.

Participant And1296 described their level of confidence as,

I'm going to say that I'm cautiously confident. I don't want to be this all-knowing, you know, this teacher who has all the information and I'm going to give it out. I am holding cautiously in the fact that I am continually learning and the fact that I want to know more and see more and understand more. I tell my students that and just because I maybe have done this for 20 plus years doesn't mean that your story is not unique or that you have [inaudible] or that you don't have something to teach me. So, I am confident. I like having those conversations. I want to have those lessons and bring about the learning especially if it is about a culture that

they have questions about or that they have heard about or that happens to be popular in a new movie or something to that effect. But then again, I don't want to be so confident in the fact that I put off as being, you know kind of all-knowing and unwilling to have that be a two-way street, so I'm cautiously confident.

Analysis of the focus group data reveals that participants are confident in working with students in general; but in regard to using culturally responsive practices, teachers lack both knowledge and confidence. When one participant was asked specifically about ways to incorporate other cultures into mathematics, Participant Wat1399 responded,

I really don't teach anything related to mathematics so I would not have felt confident in that in any fashion [Laughing] whether it's cultural or not. But with the contribution to Science, that is something that I have worked on. And personally, I have tried to go back and find contributors to healthcare development.

Another participant indicated she spoke one language and therefore could not praise her students in their native language. Participant Jac750 shared, "To be able to praise English language learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language; I don't know that. I don't speak any other languages to be able to give that praise."

***Theme 2: Experiences with Fear Decrease CRTSE***

Overwhelmingly, fear was presented as a hindrance to teacher level of self-efficacy. Five focus group participants indicated fear kept them from talking about cultural topics with the students in their classes. Additionally, six focus group participants indicated fear was a personal factor that negatively impacted their level of confidence when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Teachers recounted

experiences of receiving backlash from students for being White women trying to teach about a culture other than their own. Teachers also discussed the fear of being wrong and offending others due to their lack of knowledge about the intricate nuances of different cultures. Participant Wat1399 explained her fear of offending students:

You know, you have the experience where you're not totally sensitive to all the nuances of the Asian culture. For example, it is very insulting for a Japanese person to be assumed to be Chinese. [Laughing] So I happen to know a little bit of Mandarin Chinese and if I need to use it, then I will. You know? So, you're almost afraid that in your effort you might be offensive. And even in Black culture? Not everyone is from Africa, but maybe you know Haiti or you know, there may be some other [country] and so sometimes we can assume something and it gets us in trouble. And I think we are fearful that we might step the wrong way.

Another participant explained that she has a multicultural family but is still overly cautious so as not to offend anyone. Participant Fal7093 indicated,

I have a sister who's adopted. She's Chinese. She's married to an African-American. They have beautiful kids. My brother-in-law's family has basically become my own. So, I live in a multicultural family. I still don't want to ostracize anybody; focus on one group too much or not enough for you know.... You don't want to offend and make it worse either.

Participants talked about the uncomfortable feeling that fear causes. Participant And1296 stated,

Yeah, so it's just ... I don't want to feel uncomfortable, because I think that's important. But then again, I don't want to cause uncomfortable situations,



especially with students ... that yeah, you know, I don't want to add fuel to the fire.... That was my you know, you know, my lower score right? ... Maybe it's just me and my own, you know, personal bias or fear or you know my not wanting to step out.

***Theme 3: Lack of Knowledge About Culturally Responsive Pedagogy***

Analysis of the focus group data revealed that participants either had a lack of knowledge about CRT practices or had misconceptions about ways to implement CRT practices. While four participants described cultural diversity as a sample of students who are representative of different races, different cultures, and various geographic locations, five participants indicated cultural diversity involved matters involving appearance, such as skin tone and facial features. Three focus group participants described cultural diversity in regard to clothing and jewelry, while one participant described cultural diversity in terms of food, spoken language, and country of origin. One focus group participant indicated that culturally diverse students also refer to the uniqueness of individual students within a larger cultural group. The participant indicated there were lots of different layers to cultural diversity. One focus group participant indicated that culturally diverse students are students who have an awareness of the cultures of others. One focus group participant indicated that colleagues need to understand the important distinction between what CRT is and is not. Participant Fal7093 stated,

And I know, I mean it's so much easier and that's why so many people slap a poster on a wall because that's easy that surface level. I did my part here. I showed up to the PD even though I was checking email and on Facebook the whole time. Hey, I'm here. I checked, you know, check a box kind of thing. But

it's so much more than that.

Four focus group participants indicated uncertainty and confusion about culturally responsive pedagogy and practices. Participant And1296 indicated that she did not know how to meet all of the needs of the diverse population of students she serves. This participant indicated,

To be honest with you about the one question in regards to changing the structure of my classroom so that it's compatible with the student's home culture; you know I'm worried there. I guess for lack of a better term, what culture do I pick? We have such a mix of students. However, I don't want to make a group of students feel unwelcome because I may be focusing on another group of students and then I don't want to, you know stop looking at that to bring in another culture and they're like wait a minute. You were just doing this; we're getting on a roll and now we're over here, you know, and yeah if we could find a great way, maybe the kids can help us with this. But you know, I guess wanting to include all of our kids is kind of holding me back from really working with the students' home culture. You know school's its own culture and that's my concern as I don't want to alienate one particular section of my student body for the sake of another but they're both equally important.

Participants indicated that when making decisions about which culture to include, it is hard to determine an abstract concept such as the culture of students. Three focus group participants talked about either the lack of or their efforts to integrate their core content with student cultures. Participant And1296 stated,

Basically, there's just there's so many differences. So, to your point and I agree

with that a hundred percent. Like I don't like to; you can't just you know, honor and incorporate Hispanic people or African American people because they I mean it's just it's so vastly different. And you know to do it with fidelity and to do it where I don't just look like, what do I do? Hang a Mexican flag in the classroom? Like what does that look like? You don't want to mess it up and especially with all of these things going on in our society right now with all of the racial tension.

Participant FA17093 went on to say,

And some of these kids, they've been born in America. So, some of them even more identify with American culture than maybe what they came from because they don't know about Guatemalan culture. They've never been there. You know what I mean? Like it's just hard.

#### ***Theme 4: Knowing Better and Doing Better***

Analysis of qualitative data revealed the theme of when you know better, you can do better. Teachers elaborated on the ideas of teacher and student empowerment. Teachers felt empowered after having attended professional development. Six focus group participants indicated they either felt more comfortable or more confident to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students after participating in a district-sponsored professional development program. Participants indicated the effectiveness of professional development and other training opportunities. Participants BRA1514 and Jac750 stated,

For me, the entire year long professional development. Every time we met, I learned more and was then able to do better. And I think that's just the theme the whole way through. When you know better, you do better. And this is just a great

way to get to be with our colleagues and learn together and work together to create lessons and resources and to be able to be united together in making the world a better place.

Well, this is where you wanted to know the impact of doing professional development. I feel a lot more comfortable this school year. The curriculum that I walked into was pretty heavy in like looking at like, you said, one picture of an American. That's literally one article that we read. Like what is an American and it goes all through that. So, we discussed a lot of that last year and read diverse texts like ... my.... What I read in class didn't change a whole lot but the discussion around it changed so much. Like my confidence has really gone up.

Well, I would say confidence and necessity. Like to me. I didn't feel like I needed to get into all of that. But after going through this workshop, if I don't do it then whose gonna do it? Nobody. I need to have these conversations and I think that by product made my confidence go up.

Participants indicated that teachers can improve their cultural teaching practices by listening to all stakeholders. Two focus group participants indicated people need to listen. Teachers need to listen to other teachers, staff, and children. The participants indicated that teachers need to listen and make students feel valued and learn from them and engage them in sharing about their culture. Participants indicated that everybody needs to be willing to listen and have tough conversations that will not always be comfortable. Participant Wil600 stated,

I just think that we need to listen as teachers. We need to listen to other teachers and staff and the children. We need to listen and make them feel valued and learn

from them and let them teach the class, you know about their cultures.

Three focus group participants indicated that teacher empowerment was the most beneficial aspect of the professional development program. Participants discussed fearing backlash from being White women trying to teach about someone else's culture. They indicated that receiving the license to be a facilitator and not having to be the sole bearer of knowledge liberated them from having to have all of the answers. Two focus group participants indicated that a newfound awareness and a sense of responsibility was the most beneficial aspect of the professional development program. Participants indicated that they felt a sense of responsibility to bring about change after participating in the professional development. They discussed being honor bound once they were given the knowledge and tools. Participant Jac750 stated,

Well, I would say just having well maybe like the license of you don't have to know everything. Your kids already know a lot of stuff. Just be the facilitator. Like you don't have to go into it because like right when I was doing my student teaching, that was back in 2006 and I was in Pseudo Name State and I had mostly White students. I did a whole Black History Month unit in my language arts class because the history teacher, the social studies teacher, wasn't doing that. And because they weren't, so I was like I should do Black History Month. You know? It was great and my students they really loved it. And then when I moved to the study school district during my first year of teaching I tried to just do my same Black History Month Unit. I really got some backlash like who are you to teach us? I was like, okay never mind. I'm not going to do that. You know, I don't think there's any way that's not even my area but then coming in doing this workshop it

was kind of like it doesn't matter that I'm White. I am your teacher and we need to talk about this. Everybody needs to talk about this. Let's talk about it. And here's what I look like. It's kind of ... I felt ... and it was especially when we had our session October. It was when The Lumbee lady spoke, and she said if you are not teaching Native American history, you are causing the problem and I was like, well, I'm not teaching Native American history.

Participant BRA1514 stated,

I think that was my aha moment to. It was that, you know... awareness and responsibility. I think for me I didn't have great confidence in who I was and how well it would be received as a White woman. And I want to say that maybe I used that as an excuse and through our professional development know now, I feel Honor bound to be culturally responsive and to have that discussion with students and to go there. I think that you know, our confidence has increased because of the dynamics and in our professional development and with each other and realizing that you know that we have a responsibility to bring change.

#### ***Theme 5: Influencers on Teacher Confidence***

Analysis of qualitative data from the focus groups revealed the theme of personal and/or professional factors that positively impacted teacher confidence in teaching culturally diverse students. Four focus group participants indicated having an influential role model while growing up had positively impacted their level of confidence in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Role models included grandparents or collective family units. This response was coded as high frequency. Participant Dan3062 stated,

Personally, that's who you know, I try to model my life after and like I said, he was my biggest role model (my grandfather). And so, you know, I just try not to see ... try to see no color. I just look at people as individuals and try to look at their heart and try to you know, try to love everybody. And that's what I try to teach my kids; my daughter and my son. You know try to teach them. So, yeah, that's personally for me. I would say that's my biggest. He's my biggest role model.

Two focus group participants indicated that their personal life experiences while growing up positively impacted their level of confidence when teaching culturally diverse students. Participants mentioned personal experiences such as having a multicultural family, traveling to and living in various foreign countries while growing up, and being very rich while growing up and then experiencing culture shock at the loss of wealth. These responses were coded as low frequency. Participant Fal7093 stated,

I have a sister who's adopted. She's Chinese. She married to an African-American. They have beautiful kids. My brother-in-law's family has basically become my own. So, I live in a multicultural home family.... So, I actually, I went to Costa Rica and lived on-site at an orphanage for a month, you know taking care of the kids there and just seeing their experiences and making friends. I mean, I'm still Facebook friends with some of the people that I met in Italy. We chat and talk and that was crazy too because you're [inaudible] as a handle on all of this culturally diverse stuff because even like I lived in Italy but I had was friends with people who were you know from Holland, like the Netherlands, Albania, Romania, Poland, like everybody's everywhere over there.

One focus group participant indicated that their willingness and personal humility were personal factors that positively impacted their level of confidence. These responses were coded as low frequency. An1296 stated,

I think my confidence comes from experiences and comes from me (being) willing to say I made a mistake or I didn't know what I was saying or explain this to me and being willing to admit that I need to know more or that here's my point of view now tell me yours. A lot of people don't realize how I grew up in Southern California in a huge house with lots of you know, where Orange County Housewives was filmed, you know, and in the same neighborhood and you know, yeah and things happened with my family and stuff like that and all that was lost. So, I was kind of thrown into a you know different dichotomy going whoa, you know, and it was kind of it was culture shock.

Fal7093 stated,

Having an attitude of humility plays a huge role in it and knowing that we are forever learners. That we're always learning more; doing more and for me to be part of my own personal experiences. I've lived in other countries. I've been to a number of different places so that has been my experience as well because I've lived in Mexico. I spent a month in Costa Rica. I lived in Italy, in Europe. I lived or I went and visited Tanzania for a couple of weeks.

Further analysis of qualitative data from the focus groups revealed negative influences on teacher confidence. Four focus group participants indicated lack of community or teacher diversity as a negative influence on their level of confidence in regard to teaching culturally diverse students. Focus group participants discussed the



impact of having only one teacher of color during their entire educational career.

Participant Klo2841 stated,

We're not very diverse out in the country and I think that definitely going to school ... not having a teacher that wasn't White until my 11<sup>th</sup>-grade year, which was my Spanish teacher; that was something that until I got older I didn't realize that that wasn't normal. And that well it might be normal. I'm not really sure of everybody's experience. But you know, coming to my current school and having a very diverse teacher population that also reflects our student population.... I do feel like by younger childhood years really, I guess hindered my ability to fully be aware and competent of others.

Participants also discussed the impact of being the only person who looks like them while growing up and while currently working in the profession. This response was coded as moderate frequency. Participant Pra3170 stated,

It was the same for me with not having a teacher that was culturally diverse until High School. I thought that I was just the only crazy person who's never had an African-American teacher until my 12<sup>th</sup>-grade year. It was by my last year of high school! I went to an elementary school where no one in the school looked like me and no one in middle school looked like me. I just thought okay, cool.

Two focus group participants indicted that fixed mindsets and a lack of humility negatively impact teacher confidence in teaching culturally diverse students. Fal7093 stated,

I think an attitude of humility; knowing that I don't have all the answers. Some people are so like fixated in their mindset and they're kind of stuck in a certain

way and they're not willing to learn. They're not willing to admit. Okay, maybe I am wrong in this respect.

***Theme 6: Improved School Culture Increases CRTSE***

Five focus group participants indicated district leaders need to provide opportunities for staff to develop cultural and racial awareness and to participate in training so teachers can be prepared to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. Participants indicated that the CRT webinars, Racial Equity Training, and the district-sponsored “Text Equity” professional development program were very beneficial to them. Reeducating current employees was discussed, and involving volunteer and community stakeholders was also mentioned. Participants indicated that the year-long professional development allowed them to learn more every time they met. They learned more and were then able to do better. They touted that when you know better, you do better. The year-long professional development model was a great way to be with colleagues, learn and work together, and design lessons/resources/units. These responses were coded as high frequency. Participant Dan3062 indicated,

I was able to attend the Racial Equity training. That has been very beneficial. Just in understanding the history of our country and just you know, things like that and how culture impacts that. So anyway, if as many teachers as possible that can participate in that I think that would really be helpful for us as a district and the teachers that we have.

Five focus group participants indicated that district leaders need to improve the culture of the schools by increasing staff diversity through improved recruitment efforts and by getting buy-in from the faculty in regard to CRT practice beliefs. Participants

indicated that leaders can mitigate a lack of staff diversity by bringing in outside stakeholder groups who are diverse during the interim period when you are trying to employ ethnically and culturally diverse staff. This response was coded as high frequency. Participant Fal7093 stated, “So having that heart, that mindset from the top down for even valuing the differences of teachers, you know if you want culturally responsive teachers, our faculty should be as diverse as our students are.”

Two focus group participants indicated that district leaders can prepare teachers to teach culturally diverse students by encouraging global projects or using online learning platforms to facilitate cultural awareness. Participant BRA1514 stated, “Just reading or something that we do together that we have a discussion that can be generated whether it’s school or districtwide where we’re reading and discussing things”; and Ele2059 stated, “Yeah, that’s my feeling. Like we are reading this book that we have for the professional development. We could have like a Zoom book discussion about that.”

Two focus group participants indicated teachers need to be provided with safe options for learning new content and safe options for presenting controversial topics to students. Participants discussed that teachers need to have a choice in selecting differentiated professional learning activities. Participant And1296 stated,

One thing that the principal and the instructional coach did for our distance learning professional development is we had three different categories with three different topics and we had options. Yes, and I think we teachers are just like the kids we teach you know? I want options and I want a safe place that I can go to look into this. So, everybody reading the same book, it sounds great, but it’s to cookie-cutter. It did not fit everybody. And again, teachers we are our kids and I

liked the fact that I can go you know what? This is a subject that I really want to know more about or I don't know anything about it. What is this that you're talking about and having those choices.

They discussed the need for colleagues to feel safe in discussing topics with others in a safe learning environment. Participants also discussed using literature or characters in books to discuss the things that are happening right now in our society. These responses were coded as low frequency. Fal7093 indicated,

I don't like moving out of my comfort zone, but I like being pushed out of there safely. I think a lot of teachers are afraid to move out of that comfort and that safety of knowing what I know and doing this is comfortable. I'm not going to deal with it because it's easy and it's not worrisome and it's not going to bring trauma to them or their students. I think a lot are worried about that. Whereas if you can find a group of people where you can do it and move past that safety and that comfort, but do it so that you're okay and that you come out of it better.

Sometimes a little uneasiness is necessary. You know, sometimes moving past that comfort is necessary and then all of a sudden that uncomfortableness becomes, you know better and you move to the next level, so you're not stuck.

One focus group participant indicated that we need to get students involved through lessons or classroom meetings, and responses of the focus groups were transcribed.

### **Summary of Conclusions**

The purposes of this mixed methods study were to examine the CRTSE and outcome expectancy beliefs of practicing teachers in the study school district and to examine the effects of CRT practices. The effects were examined as changes in student

outcomes and teaching practices. This summary of conclusions section will report the quantitative results first, the qualitative results second, and the limitations of the study last.

### ***Summary of Quantitative Findings – CRTSE and CRTOE***

The quantitative results of this study population indicated that 185 professionally licensed educators in the study school district had a mean score of 74.85 (SD = 19.66) on the CRTSE Scale. Previous studies found that 275 teacher candidates were not prepared to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students as indicative of a mean score of 83.94 (SD = 13.38) on the same instrument (Siwatu, 2007). Participants expressed a need for courses and professional development training. Additionally, comparisons of mean scores were made between district-sponsored professional development participants and non-participants. The level of self-efficacy for survey participants who participated in the district-sponsored professional development was 78.32. In contrast, the level of teacher self-efficacy for survey participants who did not participate in the year-long district-sponsored professional development was 74.03.

The study finding also indicated that 185 professionally licensed educators had a mean score of 84.27 (SD = 16.37) on the CRTOE Scale. This reflects the level of certainty survey participants had in a specified outcome. Siwatu's (2007) findings of 275 study participants had a mean score of 86.36 (SD = 12.94) on the same instrument. Comparisons of mean scores were made between district-sponsored professional development participants and non-participants. The level of certainty for survey participants who participated in district-sponsored professional development was 89.67 (SD = 10.97). The level of teacher certainty for survey participants who did not

participate in the year-long district-sponsored professional development was 83.48 (SD = 16.79).

In summary, the results indicate that educators who participated in year-long district-sponsored professional development collectively had a higher level of self-efficacy and outcome expectancy in regard to CRT practices.

### ***Summary of Qualitative Findings***

The summary discussion below relates to the findings regarding how efficacious teachers are in their ability to teach students from culturally diverse backgrounds and what classroom teachers do differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development about CRT practices. The qualitative results gleaned from focus groups of participants identified frequently occurring themes that contributed to teacher levels of efficacy. The following themes emerged: confidence in working with students, experiences with fear decreasing teacher self-efficacy, lack of knowledge about culturally responsive pedagogy, teacher empowerment through professional learning experiences, positive and negative influences on teacher confidence, and a need for improved school culture as a contributing factor to CRT. Furthermore, participants who reported having participated in ongoing professional learning experiences reported higher rates of efficacy and feelings of teacher empowerment.

### **Limitations of the Study**

There were several limitations to the generalization of the study results. The limitation that had the most potential impact on the findings was the unexpected closure of all schools within the study school district due to both national and statewide health risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. School closure prevented students from

receiving equitable high-quality instruction and participating in benchmark and end-of-grade assessments. These assessments served as the dependent variable in this mixed methods study. Study findings included two of the anticipated five data points for student outcomes. Though the use of a convenience sample of practicing teachers in one study school district (N = 185) was advantageous, generalization of the results is limited to the total population of the study school district. Furthermore, enforceable stay-at-home orders enacted by state and local governments due to COVID-19 hindered my ability to physically assemble groups of five or more participants as well as travel to access the maximum number of program participants during this research.

Test bias is also a limitation in this research. African American students score lower than European American students on vocabulary, reading, and math tests as well as scholastic aptitude (Jencks & Phillips, 1988). With a limited timeline for research, it is difficult to collect and analyze all data necessary to truly define how students are impacted by the adoption of the professional development program. A multi-year timeline would allow for an in-depth district-wide analysis of multiple data sources encompassing achievement, social emotional learning competencies of students, student efficacy, and discipline referral data.

In addition to the health pandemic, heightened racial equity unrest in society as highlighted in the media could influence self-reporting instruments about CRT practices. The potential impact of self-reported results of participants on the survey instruments (CRTSE and CRTOE) and the demographic questionnaire may be subject to “social desirability bias,” especially where perceptions of race or racism were present and where participants may have self-reported their beliefs and attitudes inaccurately in order to

present themselves in a more positive light. Individual surveys comprising position statements that depicted attitudes or beliefs towards specific groups of children and the participants' own perception of their teaching abilities along with their perception of the importance of particular instructional practices were included in this study. Self-report measures can be limiting because various biases may influence a participant's response, such as social desirability or acquiescence bias (Gall et al., 2007). The study was also limited by the scope and definition of CRTSE beliefs of teachers. During focus group discussions, participant responses indicated some teachers do not have a strong understanding of the concept of CRT and have received little or no professional development on this topic.

Other limitations include limitations present in the lack of ethnic diversity represented in the focus group. Though 19 focus group candidates were randomly selected from survey participants, the sampling only came from survey participants who volunteered to participate in Phase 2 of the research study. Ultimately, there were 12 focus group participants. Several other limitations of this study included the low sample size of male and minority participants in Phase 2 of the data collection process, as participation was voluntary. Focus group participants consisted of 11 (92%) females and one (8%) male participant. The racial composition of the focus group participants was two (17%) Black or African American, one (8%) Hispanic, and nine (75%) White or Caucasian. The focus group participants' ethnic backgrounds were not comparable to student diversity within the study school district.

Characteristics of the primary researcher included potential biases including race (African American), gender (female), socioeconomic class (lower class), and profession



(teacher educator). Creswell (2003) indicated researcher interpretations or analysis of data may be influenced by the researcher's own experiences and perspectives, thus potentially impacting the researcher's biases.

Given the study's limitations, future research is suggested to more extensively examine CRTSE of teachers who might be generalized to additional populations. In addition, future research including CRT practices and multiple measures of student outcomes would be valuable.

### **Conclusion**

Chapter 4 presented answers to the questions for this research study. Preliminary analysis indicated that practicing teachers' CRTSE beliefs varied from highly efficacious to low efficacy levels. Chapter 5 includes the discussion of these study results within four sections: conclusions, discussions, limitations, and suggestions for future research based on these results. The Chapter 5 discussion includes data analysis, a synthesis of the data as it builds upon previous studies, and a presentation of recommendations for future practice and further research.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

The most effective tool for improved student achievement are efficacious teachers. When educators believe in their combined ability to influence student outcomes, there are significantly higher levels of academic achievement (Bandura, 1993).

Chapter 4 presented the results of the research questions of this explanatory mixed methods study. Chapter 5 includes the discussion of these results within four sections: restatement of the problem, overview of results, discussion, and reflections and conclusions. The Chapter 5 discussion includes data analysis and a synthesis of the data for each of the research questions presented in this study.

The purpose of this study was to examine how experiences, education, and professional development informed culturally responsive pedagogy for educators in the study school district. The study included an examination of CRTSE levels of teachers in the study school district. Self-efficacy levels were determined by teachers who completed the CRTSE and CRTOE Scales and participated in focus groups. Desired outcomes included gaining a better understanding of factors that contribute to the development and implementation efforts of teacher CRT approaches. My hope was that these insights would inform education leaders in both preparing and supporting educators in their efforts to equitably meet the needs of all students. It was anticipated that data collection would reveal a deeper understanding about the impact of district-sponsored professional development on self-efficacy levels of teachers who participated in year-long district-sponsored professional learning experiences.

### **Restatement of the Problem**

Due to persistent disparities in student achievement among culturally and

linguistically diverse students and an increasingly diverse student population, it is prudent that education leaders improve the capacity of educators to teach diverse students who often do not represent teachers' own cultural backgrounds (Public School Forum of North Carolina, 2016; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). This phenomenon was also characterized in the study school district. In previous years, student demographics in the district changed significantly. As of the 2019-2020 school year, 72% of the student population was represented by culturally and linguistically diverse students in contrast to previous years when the majority of the student population was represented by White students. Eighty-six percent of the district's faculty were not culturally and linguistically diverse, and it was unknown whether teachers had CRTSE. This is important, as a lack of understanding and knowledge about CRTSE can lead to further achievement gaps and the perpetuation of social inequities. Research and literature regarding CRT indicate that by studying the CRTSE of preservice and in-service teacher candidates, researchers can inform best practices in regard to culturally relevant teaching and CRT (Siwatu, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011). In addressing the issue of culturally responsive teacher self-efficacy, there is great potential to affect the abilities of teachers to meet the needs of culturally diverse students and to potentially decrease disparities in achievement and behavioral data. My review of literature revealed studies that illustrate this concept, one of which was the findings of Hines (2008).

Findings from Hines's (2008) research highlighted the positive correlation between teacher self-efficacy beliefs and the academic achievement, performance, and success of students. Hines investigated the interactive effects of race and teacher self-efficacy on the achievement gap in middle school math scores. The research of Hines

showed a significant positive effect between teacher self-efficacy and student scores on benchmark tests. In this study, students with highly efficacious teachers earned higher test scores than students of teachers with low self-efficacy. Findings from the three benchmark assessments consistently showed higher student outcomes for highly efficacious teachers. Hines's findings had implications for addressing the role of self-efficacy and student performance. I sought to determine the role culturally responsive self-efficacy had on student performance in the study school district, as there was a pattern of student inequities represented in the disparities of student achievement data, behavioral data, and dropout data. Student disparities were noted specifically in the following areas: evidence-based reading and writing and math scores on the SAT, state standardized math and reading tests, and OSS and ISS data.

Utilizing a mixed methods explanatory design, both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered and analyzed. Data gathered for this study included survey and focus group data on teacher levels of CRTSE and student outcome data. Professionally licensed educators volunteered to complete surveys and participated in focus groups. Participant responses were examined based on the following topics: teacher background, teacher age, teacher gender, teacher ethnicity, grade level taught, type of community, community diversity, high school diversity, diversity of high school staff, advanced certifications such as master's degree and National Board certification, participation in district-sponsored professional development, and number of languages spoken fluently. Additionally, survey responses were used to select participants for focus groups. Qualitative analysis of focus group data revealed common themes about teacher experiences and how professional development influenced teacher levels of culturally

responsive self-efficacy. In the final phase of this study, I analyzed quantitative student outcome data from 2019-2020 benchmark assessments in English language arts/reading, math, and science. Through the collection of these various forms of data, the research questions were presented, and findings were reported in Chapter 4. These data were analyzed to answer the following research questions:

### ***Guiding Research Questions***

1. How efficacious are teachers in their ability to teach students from culturally diverse backgrounds?
2. Do teachers believe in the positive outcomes associated with CRT?
3. Does implementation of the district-sponsored professional development program impact student achievement as measured on 2019-2020 reading, math, and science benchmark assessments?
4. What do classroom teachers do differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development?

### **Overview of the Results**

The results from this study were needed as student inequities existed in multiple data sources for the study school district with reference to student outcomes and behavioral data. It was unknown whether teachers in the district had CRTSE. It is understood that educators are charged with teaching all students and have confidence that all students can learn. In essence, this means that educators believe student achievement is not determined by genetics. Therefore, there has been an expectation that equal access to educational opportunities should result in equal results. However, despite equal access to curriculum, different testing results exist for racial groups of students.

The findings of this study revealed quantitative data indicating an overall low level of teacher confidence in their ability to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students except for survey participants who had year-long professional development learning experiences. An analysis of qualitative data from focus group responses revealed insight into teacher experiences that influenced this finding. Another finding was that overall, teachers had a high level of certainty that CRT practices would lead to positive student outcomes. There were inconclusive findings with reference to the impact of professional development on student outcomes due to study limitations. However, several interesting nuances were noted about teacher efficacy levels in regard to student outcomes. Most interestingly, the paramount finding of this mixed methods study was gathered through qualitative processes. The paramount finding was that the process of learning to utilize culturally relevant pedagogy was in and of itself a transformative process. The act of learning to teach in culturally responsive ways may be supported through opportunities to critically reflect about cultural awareness and through ongoing learning experiences supported by education leaders. Results indicated that teachers can benefit from professional development experiences that provide skills training and modeling of culturally and linguistically responsive instructional strategies. Table 22 presents an overview of the findings.

**Table 22***Overview of Study Findings*

Study findings
There is a low level of teacher confidence in their ability to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students except for survey participants who had year-long professional development learning experiences.
Teachers had a high level of certainty that CRT practices would lead to positive student outcomes.
Study findings were inconclusive with reference to the impact of professional development on student outcomes due to study limitations.
The process of learning to utilize culturally relevant pedagogy was a transformative process.
Pervasive communication barriers exist between the teaching faculty and a diverse population in the school and community.
Educators lack in-depth knowledge of unique student and group characteristics.
Educators have undeveloped evaluative curriculum skills.
A lack of knowledge about culturally responsive pedagogy can decrease teacher self-efficacy.
Institutional supports influenced teachers' perceptions.
Educators have varying motivators with reference to their action or inaction. Teachers were motivated by emotions, such as responsibility and fear. Motivation also came from influential role models included grandparents and collective family units.
<u>There is a lack of urgency in understanding students' cultural background.</u>

**Discussion**

Study participants were drawn from a population of 856 district personnel of which surveys were distributed to 431 professionally licensed faculty. A 43% response rate resulted in (N = 185) survey participants and a sample of 12 focus group participants. The sample of study participants was an accurate representative sample of the district's

faculty. Overwhelmingly, 83% of district faculty were female, while only 17% were male. Additionally, 80% of survey respondents were White or Caucasian, while 10% were African American; 5% were Hispanic; 1% was Asian; 3% were Multi-Racial; and 1% indicated Other. However, it is worth noting that an analysis of demographics revealed a mismatch between faculty and student demographics. This is significant, as a review of literature reveals that as today's society becomes more globally diverse, institutions of higher education are failing to prepare educators to be competent in working cross-culturally with individuals whose beliefs and values are different from their own (Jayakumar, 2008). In contrast, 70% of students in the study school district are culturally and linguistically diverse: 35% of the student population is Hispanic; 30% are White; 27% are African American; 6% are Two or More; 0.3% are American Indian; 1% is Asian; and 0.1% is Pacific Islander. An analysis of demographic data illustrates both the degree of diversity in the district's student population and the contrast between faculty and students. A review of literature reveals that educators who are not aware of their own cultural attributes and worldviews run the risk of misinterpreting the worldviews of others and this may perpetuate deficit perspectives that perpetuate achievement gaps (Walters et al., 2009). The incongruence between faculty and student demographics, a lack of diversity experiences while growing up, and a lack of teacher preparation from institutions of higher education have likely led to teacher low self-efficacy levels in CRT practices. Hines's (2008) findings showed that the impact of ethnicity on student achievement is influenced by teacher self-efficacy.

Further analysis of teacher demographic data illustrates the level of incongruence. In contrast to both a culturally and linguistically diverse student population, 88% of



survey participants spoke only one language fluently, and that language was English. That leaves only 12% of district faculty with the capacity to effectively communicate with students and their guardian when approximately 35% of the student population in the study school district is comprised of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

As the vast majority of study participants were aged 30s to 50s and had a mean level of 14 years of teaching experience, I anticipated that the many years of teaching experience would positively influence total mean CRTSE and CRTOE rates of study participants, as Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) asserted that it is the experience of teaching that provides the teacher the greatest confidence in his or her abilities.

However, study findings would refute this as the total mean self-efficacy score was not high among district staff despite their many years of teaching experience. Perhaps this was influenced by a lack of diversity experiences among survey participants. Over half (61%) of the survey participants grew up in communities with no ethnic diversity.

Additionally, approximately half (52%) of the survey participants lacked experiences of diversity as their high schools were not diverse as represented in the student population and the teacher staff. This leads me to the conclusion that district faculty have experienced well-established trends in which there has been a lack of diversity in the educational settings in which they were raised.

Despite the fact that nearly half of the district's faculty possess advanced certifications such as a master's degree and National Board certification, these advanced studies did not positively influence their confidence in teaching the district's culturally and linguistically diverse student population as evidenced by the CRTSE Scale mean score of 74.85 (SD = 19.62); rather, the lack of diversity experiences and lack of

scholarly preparation to teach diverse students has influenced low self-efficacy rates. According to educational scholars, teacher education programs provide only rudimentary knowledge in the foundations of educating underserved populations and do little to provide training in the skills needed to translate this knowledge into effective practices (Evans & Gunn, 2012; Gorski, 2009; Lucas & Villegas, 2013; Lynn, 2014; Sleeter, 2011). Perhaps, this explains why district faculty though highly credentialed are not highly confident in their ability to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students.

In the literature review, I found evidence of a lack of experiences that increase teacher candidate CRTSE beliefs and multi-culturally responsive practices that translate into classroom practices (Debs & Brown, 2017; Gay, 2010a; Ladson-Billings, 2011; Siwatu, 2011; Sleeter, 2011). However, research on the CRTSE of preservice and in-service teacher candidates asserted that when teacher education programs do invest in developing student CRTSE, they are more likely to transfer these beliefs to classroom practices (Cantrell et al., 2013-2014; Chu & Garcia, 2014; Frye et al., 2010; Sarker, 2012; Siwatu, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2011; Siwatu et al., 2009; Skepple, 2011; Snider, 2015). This lack of sufficient curriculum in teacher education programs motivated me to collect and analyze data from the 12% of survey respondents who participated in district-sponsored professional development during the 2019-2020 school year. The goal of the professional learning experiences was to develop cultural awareness and equip teachers to use CRT practices. I will share my interpretation of their responses throughout the following research questions.

### ***Research Question 1***

How efficacious are teachers in their ability to teach students from culturally

diverse backgrounds? Quantitative data analysis collected from a convenience sample of practicing educators ( $N = 185$ ) through surveys revealed professionally licensed educators in a suburban North Carolina school district are not highly confident in their ability to meet the needs of a culturally and linguistically diverse student population. Data analysis of responses on the CRTSE Scale revealed a mean score of 74.85 ( $SD = 19.62$ ). Similarly, low levels of self-efficacy were found in Siwatu's (2007) previous study. Siwatu (2007) found that 275 teacher candidates were not prepared to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students as indicative of a mean score of 83.94 ( $SD = 13.38$ ) on the same instrument. Participants expressed a need for courses and professional development training. Additionally, a comparison of mean scores was made between district-sponsored professional development participants and non-participants. Study findings revealed that professional development participants were more efficacious in comparison to non-participants. The level of self-efficacy for survey respondents who participated in the district-sponsored professional development was 78.32. In contrast, the level of teacher self-efficacy for survey participants who did not participate in the year-long district-sponsored professional development was 74.03.

Educators in the study school district had varying levels of confidence to teach culturally diverse students. Some had high self-efficacy levels, while others had extremely low self-efficacy levels, as illustrated by an analysis of individual study participant means ranging from 52.72 ( $SD = 28.79$ ) to 89.40 ( $SD = 13.4$ ). District educators have the highest perceived ability to develop personal relationships with students, build a sense of trust students, and help students feel like important members of the classroom. However, 34% (14) of the 41 mean scores fell in the bottom two quintiles,

indicating a plethora of areas in which educators feel underprepared to meet diversity needs. As Table 23 shows, these areas of low confidence include communication barriers, demonstrating in-depth knowledge of students, possessing culturally responsive content knowledge and pedagogy, and proficiency with evaluative curriculum skills.

**Table 23**

*Areas of Low Self-Efficacy*

Communication	In-depth knowledge of students	Content knowledge & culturally responsive pedagogy	Evaluative curriculum skills
...greet English language learners with a phrase in their native language.	...use a learning preference inventory to gather data about how my students like to learn.	...implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture.	...identify ways that standardized tests may be biased toward linguistically diverse students.
...communicate with the parents of English language learners regarding their child's achievement.	...identify ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) is different from my students' home culture.	...teach students about their cultures' contributions to society.	...identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards culturally diverse students.
	...use my students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful.	...use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds.	...critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes.
	...determine whether my students feel comfortable competing with other students.	...design a classroom environment using displays that reflect a variety of cultures.	...revise instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups.
Institutional Supports		Motivators	

District educators had the lowest perceived ability to design a lesson that shows how other cultural groups have made use of mathematics, teach students about their cultures' contribution to science, and praise English language learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language. This is not surprising, as demographic data revealed that 80% of survey participants were White, 88% spoke one

language fluently, 61% indicated no diversity in their communities while growing up, and 74% indicated no ethnically diverse teaching staff in their school district while growing up. Teachers were more confident in their ability to perform general teaching practices that do not require the integration of student cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In contrast, teachers were far less confident in their ability to use specific CRT tasks. According to Bandura's (1997b) research, mastery and vicarious experiences are sources for teacher self-efficacy. However, that theory is not illustrated in this study, as these data were drawn from practicing teachers with 14 mean years of teaching experience. An analysis of demographic data revealed a lack of diversity experiences while growing up for participants; so unless teachers had explicit diversity training, they would lack cultural competence. The experience of teaching alone without demonstrated mastery in cultural responsiveness or an influential model through vicarious experiences will not positively influence teacher self-efficacy or, simply stated, teacher confidence in their ability to teach diverse students.

These findings are comparable to the findings of Siwatu's (2008) mixed methods study about the CRTSE beliefs and multicultural teaching concerns of (N = 104) midwestern preservice teachers. Siwatu (2008) also found teachers were most efficacious in their abilities to help students feel like important members of the classroom and to build a sense of trust and relationships. Comparable to my study, Siwatu's (2008) findings indicated preservice teachers were less efficacious in being able to greet students in their native languages, communicate student achievement effectively with parents of English language learners, and implement strategies that minimized the effect of the mismatch between the home culture and the school culture. I believe these areas of

perceived low ability are influenced by the contrast between student and faculty demographics and lack of teacher preparation and support.

It is understandable that having the capacity to praise English language learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language would be an area of low capacity for district educators, as only 12% of faculty currently have the capacity to effectively communicate in a second language with students and their guardian. It is encouraging to note that with action and support, the capacity of all educators can be developed in this area, as 35% of the student population is comprised of linguistically diverse students.

Other areas that influenced the low CRTSE levels of educators were communication, in-depth knowledge of students, evaluative curriculum skills, and content knowledge about culturally responsive pedagogy.

**Communication.** In addition to lacking confidence in their ability to praise English language learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language, there were other communication tasks that were also rated low, indicating levels of low efficacy. Educators indicated they had low confidence in their ability to greet English language learners with a phrase in their native language and communicate with the parents of English language learners regarding their child's achievement. There is a general trend that pervasive communication barriers exist between the teaching faculty and diverse populations in the school and community. Participant Jac750 indicated that she spoke one language and therefore could not praise her students in their native language. She stated, “To be able to praise English language learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language; I don't know that. I don't speak

any other languages to be able to give that praise.”

**In-Depth Knowledge of Students.** Another interesting trend emerged in data analysis. Though district educators have the most perceived ability to develop personal relationships, build a sense of trust, and help students feel like important members of the classroom, they overwhelmingly lacked in-depth knowledge of those same students. Areas of critical importance when incorporating CRT practices include being able to identify ways the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) is different from student home cultures. This knowledge of the difference between the values, norms, and practices of school and home cultures will enable educators to implement strategies that will minimize the effects of this mismatch. District educators have low perceptions of their ability to implement strategies that minimize the effects of the mismatch between student home cultures and the school culture. Minimizing the effects between two different cultures requires you to first have an awareness of student home cultures. This can be challenging when the teaching faculty and the student population represent different cultures. Teachers can gain in-depth knowledge about their students by using learning preference inventories and interest inventories, but district faculty revealed they had low perceptions about their abilities with these tools. Not only do district teachers have a low perception about implementing strategies, they also have low perceptions about their ability to use a learning preference inventory to gather data about how their students like to learn. District educators lacked confidence in their ability to determine whether their students feel comfortable competing with other students. All of these areas indicate a lack of comprehensive cultural knowledge of the unique characteristics of the individual learners in teacher classrooms.

Hammond's (2015) work highlighted some teacher misconceptions about CRT and really knowing your students. Hammond informed us that CRT is not about sparking student interest by developing racial pride through practices such as integrating African American or Latino content into lessons; rather, Hammond stated that it is about mimicking students' cultural learning styles and tools; the same strategies used by their moms, dads, grandmas and other community folks to teach them life skills and basic concepts long before they came to school or while they are not in school. (para. 5)

CRT uses the brain's memory systems and information processing structures to help students learn. For example, many culturally diverse students come from cultures that primarily use active and oral traditions as a way to transfer knowledge and make meaning. This includes African American, Latino, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander cultures.

**Evaluative Curriculum Skills.** Educators in the study school district have undeveloped evaluative skills in regard to evaluating curriculum and assessment materials using an equity lens. Educators perceived low confidence in their ability to critically examine curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes and in their ability to revise instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups. Similarly, teachers also need to develop evaluative skills to analyze and evaluate standardized assessments. It is important to identify ways standardized tests may be biased toward linguistically diverse and culturally diverse students in order to improve student outcomes and create culturally responsive learning environments. Identifying test bias will help educators design equitable assessment



instruments and interpret student outcome data appropriately.

**Content Knowledge and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.** In general, there was an overwhelming sense that district educators lacked culturally responsive content knowledge. There was a sense that faculty knew a lot about teaching core academic content but not about issues of diversity. This was evidenced by low self-efficacy scores on four CRTSE items that solicited information about cultural background knowledge. Survey participants had low confidence in their ability to teach students about their cultures' contributions to society and use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds. This demonstrates a lack of basic content knowledge about diverse cultural groups. When asked specifically about ways of incorporating other cultures into mathematics, Participant Wat1399 responded,

I really don't teach anything related to mathematics so I would not have felt confident in that in any fashion [Laughing].... But in reference to the contribution to science, that is something that I have worked on. And personally, I have tried to go back and find contributors to healthcare development.

This lack of knowledge about different cultures also permeated classroom environments. Survey respondents had low confidence in their ability to design classroom environments using displays that reflected a variety of cultures and to use student cultural background to help make learning meaningful. This is perhaps influenced by the lack of experiences with diversity of the survey participants while growing up, as a majority indicated they grew up in settings that lacked ethnic diversity.

Analysis of qualitative data revealed additional comprehensive information about teacher perceptions in designing classroom environments. Teachers were not confident in

making decisions about how to integrate culturally responsive practices. Some of the focus group participant responses indicated hesitancy about promoting one culture over another and lacked knowledge of strategies for being inclusive of all cultures. Participant And1296 indicated that she did not know how to meet all the needs of the diverse population of students she served. This participant indicated,

To be honest with you, in regards to changing the structure of my classroom so that it's compatible with the students' home culture; you know I'm worried there. I guess for lack of a better term, what culture do I pick? We have such a mix of students. However, I don't want to make a group of students feel unwelcome because I may be focusing on another group of students and then I don't want to, you know stop looking at that to bring in another culture and they're like, "Wait a minute. You were just doing this; we're getting on a roll and now we're over here." I guess wanting to include all of our kids is kind of holding me back from really working with the students' home culture. You know school's its own culture and that's my concern as I don't want to alienate one particular section of my student body for the sake of another. But they're both equally important.

Participants indicated that when making decisions about which culture to include, it is hard to determine an abstract concept such as the culture of students. Teachers reflected on either the lack of or their efforts to integrate their core content with student cultures. Participant And1296 stated,

Basically, there's just so many differences ... you can't just you know, honor and incorporate Hispanic people or African American people because it's so vastly different.... What do I do? Hang a Mexican flag in the classroom? Like what does

that look like? You don't want to mess it up and especially with all of these things going on in our society right now with all of the racial tension.

Participant FA17093 went on to say,

And some of these kids, they were born in America. So, some of them even identify more with American culture than maybe what they came from. They don't know about Guatemalan culture. They've never been there. You know what I mean? Like it's just hard.

**Institutional Supports Influenced Teacher Perceptions.** Despite preexisting limiting conditions which included lack of teacher preparation and a lack of diversity experiences, in this study, institutional supports influenced teacher perceptions about their level of confidence. A comparison of CRTSE index scores between survey participants who participated in district-sponsored professional development and those who did not participate in professional development revealed a difference in mean scores of teacher self-efficacy. Results indicate that educators who participated in year-long district-sponsored professional development collectively had a higher level of self-efficacy in regard to CRT practices. According to participants, available coaching and modeling influenced self-efficacy of professional development participants. In fact, self-efficacy rates were highest for teachers who participated in ongoing culturally responsive learning experiences in comparison to all participants and teachers who did not have the professional development.

There were similar findings in Frye et al.'s (2010) study of a western university's undergraduate and graduate preservice teachers who participated in a pre/posttest study of their CRTSE. Frye et al.'s findings showed that participant CRTSE and awareness

increased significantly in addition to their capacity to assess student needs prior to lesson planning and connect cultures to planned lessons after participating in a semester-long training on integrating culturally responsive lessons in all subject areas.

**Motivators.** Qualitative data analysis revealed additional insight into confidence in teacher ability to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. Educators are either already confident or acknowledged that they are developing their confidence to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. During the focus group discussion, participants indicated that upon reflection, they wanted to continue to grow in developing their proficiency in CRT. The professional development experiences of educators enlightened them to a sense that there is more to be learned. Educators feel as though they are at the precipice of their quest and acknowledge there is more work to be done in the area of CRT.

Further discussion from the focus groups revealed both positive and negative influences on participant perceptions about their ability to teach diverse students. A critical theme was teacher action or inaction, in terms of CRT, was motivated by emotions such as responsibility and fear. Influential role models included grandparents and collective family units. Participants recollected positive experiences while growing up with influential role models who positively impacted their level of confidence in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Personal life experiences such as having a multicultural family, traveling to and living in various foreign countries, and the culture shock of being rich and then losing wealth were also positive influencers.

Study participants also identified personal factors that negatively impacted their level of confidence when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Teachers

discussed their emotions of fear and apprehension as sources of negative influences, indicating fear kept them from talking about cultural topics with the students in their classes. They also identified lack of community and faculty diversity as a negative influence on their level of confidence. Participants recounted experiences of receiving backlash from students for being White women trying to teach about a culture other than their own. Participants also discussed the fear of being wrong and offending others due to their lack of knowledge about the intricate nuances of different cultures. Participant Wat1399 explained her fear of offending students:

You know, you have the experience where you're not totally sensitive to all the nuances of the Asian culture. For example, it is very insulting for a Japanese person to be assumed to be Chinese. [Laughing] So you're almost afraid that in your effort you might be offensive. And even in Black culture? Not everyone is from Africa, but maybe you know Haiti. There may be some other (country) and so sometimes we can assume something and it gets us in trouble. And I think we are fearful that we might step the wrong way.

Another participant explained that she has a multicultural family but is still overly cautious so as not to offend anyone. Participant Fal7093 indicated,

I have a sister who's adopted. She's Chinese. She's married to an African-American. They have beautiful kids. My brother-in-law's family has basically become my own. So, I live in a multicultural family. I still don't want to ostracize anybody; focus on one group too much. I don't want to offend and make it worse either.

Participants talked about the uncomfortable feeling fear causes. Participant

And1296 stated, “I don’t want to feel uncomfortable, because I think that's important. But then again, I don't want to cause uncomfortable situations, especially with students.” She went on to state, “I don't want to add fuel to the fire.... Maybe it's just me and my own, you know, personal bias or fear or you know my not wanting to step out.”

Participants experienced negative emotions as a result of a lack of diversity during their educational and/or professional career. Participants discussed their perplexing emotions recalling they had only one teacher of color during their entire educational career. Participants also discussed the impact of being the only person who looked like them while growing up and while currently working in the profession.

### ***Research Question 2***

Do teachers believe in the positive outcomes associated with CRT? The second research question examined whether or not teachers believed in the positive outcomes associated with CRT. Quantitative data analysis collected from a convenience sample of practicing educators (N = 185) through surveys revealed professionally licensed educators in a suburban North Carolina school district have a high degree of certainty that a behavior would lead to a specified outcome. Data analysis of responses on the CRTOE Scale revealed a mean score of 84.27 (SD = 16.37). These study findings were comparable to Siwatu’s (2007) findings. Siwatu’s (2007) findings revealed that 275 study participants had a mean score of 86.36 (SD = 12.94) on the same instrument.

An analysis of individual participant CRTOE means highlighted varying outcome expectancy levels for the positive outcomes associated with CRT of educators in the study school district. The mean scores for individual items on the CRTOE Scale ranged from 71.49 (SD = 23.03) to 92.37 (SD = 10.99). Analysis of the CRTOE survey results

allowed me to identify areas in which teachers had the most and least amount of certainty that a target behavior would lead to a specified outcome in regard to CRT practices.

Participants in the study school district are most certain that a positive teacher-student relationship can be established by building a sense of trust in their students and confidence that student self-esteem can be enhanced when their cultural background is valued by the teacher.

Analysis of the CRTOE results further revealed that participants have the lowest perceived certainty that changing the structure of their classroom so it is compatible with student home cultures will increase student motivation to come to class. I believe this finding is associated with the low confidence levels depicted on the CRTSE Scale in the following areas: being able to identify ways the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) is different from student home cultures and teacher low confidence in their ability to implement strategies that will minimize the effects of this mismatch. Further analysis of CRTOE results revealed that participants do not think the frequency of student abilities being misdiagnosed will decrease when standardized test scores are interpreted with caution. Likewise, study participants have a low degree of certainty that acknowledging the ways school culture is different from home culture will minimize the likelihood of discipline problems. Study participants have a low level of certainty that encouraging students to use their native language will help them maintain their cultural identity. This finding contradicts a major tenant of Gay's (2010b) work. Gay (2010b) described the importance of acknowledging the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect student dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught. Perhaps participants feel this

way because they believe school is its own culture or they think cultural diversity means that kids need to learn about the cultures of others instead of the teacher highlighting aspects of student cultures to make learning meaningful. I find these results most troubling, as they reveal a lack of consideration for nondominant cultures and demonstrate cultural insensitivities.

Thirty-five percent (nine) of the 26 mean scores fell in the bottom two quartiles of the distribution range, indicating multiple areas in which educators have low levels of certainty about the outcome of specific behaviors.

**Lack of Importance Understanding Student Cultural Backgrounds.** Other areas of interest discovered in teacher outcome expectancy levels included a lack of importance on understanding student cultural backgrounds and low confidence in responsive teaching practices. I believe these results are indicative of a lack of cultural awareness and sensitivity. They are evidence of the lack of value placed on student backgrounds. A review of literature revealed that CRT affirms and includes student cultures in the teaching and learning process rather than viewing student cultures as deficits. Santamaria (2009) asserted that CRT is an empowering process that increases achievement.

Survey participants had low confidence that student-teacher misunderstandings would decrease when their students' cultural background is understood. They also had a low level of confidence that student attendance would increase when personal relationships between teachers and students were developed. Finally, study participants had low confidence that conveying the message that parents are an important part of the classroom would increase parent participation. Again, these are troubling findings.



**Responsive Teaching Practices.** Gay (2010b) asserted that teaching to and through the cultural lens of students is the cornerstone of a more CRT theory. However, study participants have low level confidence that responsive teaching practices will lead to positive outcomes for students. Evidence of this belief is revealed in low outcome expectancy mean scores in the areas of simplifying presentation language and the utilization of familiar concepts when introducing new concepts. Participants do not think that simplifying the language they use during presentations will enhance the comprehension of English language learners. Likewise, educators do not think that using culturally familiar examples will make learning new concepts easier for students. Gay (2010b) described this concept as a fundamental characteristic of the theory of CRT. Gay (2010b) asserted that CRT builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well. A review of literature reveals that CRT theory values using student experiences that are reflective of individual cultural, linguistic, familial, academic, and other forms of knowledge in order to engage in meaning making, learning, and critical thinking (Banks, 1979).

The construct of CRT is important, as preparing teachers to teach students from diverse backgrounds is one of the greatest challenges for teacher education programs and schools today (Gay, 2002; Nieto & Bode, 2008). CRT that affirms and includes student cultures in the teaching and learning process rather than viewing student cultures as deficits is an empowering process that increases achievement and has the potential for increased participation in society (Santamaria, 2009).

**Institutional Supports Influenced Teacher Perceptions.** Institutional supports influenced teacher outcome expectancy beliefs. Research indicated that effective models

of professional development should include collaborative practices that promote active engagement (Archibald et al., 2011; Gibbs, 2011; Hirsh & Killion, 2007; Learning Forward, 2011; Loveless, 2013; Tournaki et al., 2011). Professional learning experiences provided year-long opportunities of collaboration and active engagement. Therefore, results indicated educators who participated in year-long district-sponsored professional development collectively had a higher level of certainty that a target behavior would lead to a specified outcome in regard to CRT practices in comparison to non-participants of the professional development. The outcome expectancy levels predicted high levels of certainty for survey participants who participated in district-sponsored professional development.

### ***Research Question 3***

Does implementation of the district-sponsored professional development program about CRT practices impact student achievement as measured on 2019-2020 reading, math, and science benchmark assessments? The third research question examined whether implementation of a district-sponsored professional development program impacted student achievement as measured on two state benchmark tests for third-, fifth-, sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade reading, math, and science. As a researcher, I wanted to examine the impact of teacher self-efficacy on student outcomes. Research has continuously documented higher achievement levels for students with highly efficacious teachers (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Coladarchi, 1992; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001). I sought to determine if developing teacher efficacy as a strategy would decrease student outcome disparities; however, forced school closures due to the health risks associated with COVID-19 pandemic negatively hindered data

collection, as there were unprecedented school closures throughout the nation. This prevented data collection for benchmark 3 and the final standardized comprehensive assessment. Therefore, student standardized assessment data could not be collected on the third benchmark nor the summative end-of-year assessments in reading, math, and science; and results of this study reflect only two student outcome data points for each benchmark assessment instead of the anticipated five.

The findings for the third-grade student outcomes showed higher performances for students with teachers who did not participate in the district-sponsored professional development. The mean test scores of six third-grade teachers were analyzed, one of whom participated in ongoing district-sponsored professional development. Non-participant class mean scores were higher on four of four benchmark tests during the 2019-2020 school year. In addition, an analysis of growth from benchmark 1 to benchmark 2 was higher for teachers who did not participate in the professional development. Overall, these are inconclusive results for third-grade students in reading.

There were similar findings for math assessments. An analysis of individual assessment and growth data revealed third-grade students made greater math improvements in the classes of teachers who did not participate in year-long professional development.

These results are interesting and it is worth noting that the third-grade study participant who had the year-long district-sponsored professional development experience and consequently the lowest student outcome scores also had the lowest CRTSE mean score (CRTSE mean = 55.7) of all the district staff who participated in the professional development. This study participant, OWE4632, also had one of the two

lowest CRTOE scores (CRTOE mean = 84.85) for all district faculty who participated in the year-long professional development experience. These findings align with previous research; low teacher self-efficacy has negative effects on student outcomes. Bandura (1997a, 1986) provided descriptions of high and low efficacious teachers. Low teaching self-efficacy fosters less effort and poorer student outcomes. Siwatu's (2011) findings of 192 preservice teachers revealed that teachers with higher self-efficacy beliefs reported practicing more skills and tasks outlined the CRTSE Scales.

Conclusions were unable to be drawn about fourth-grade student outcomes, as findings for the fourth-grade benchmark tests in reading and math were inconclusive due to there being zero fourth-grade study participants in the year-long district-sponsored professional development.

It is important to note that an analysis of student outcome data for fifth-grade revealed higher performances in reading, math, and science for students with teachers who did participate in the district-sponsored professional development. The mean test scores of seven fifth-grade teachers were analyzed, two of whom participated in ongoing district-sponsored professional development. Professional development participant class mean scores were higher on five of six benchmark tests during the 2019-2020 school year. Mean benchmark results were higher for professional development participants when compared to teachers who did not participate in professional development. In addition, mean benchmark results were higher for math benchmarks 1 and 2 for the professional development participants when compared to five teachers who did not participate in the professional development program. An analysis of growth was higher for teachers who did participate in the professional development. Study findings revealed

comparable success in science. Class mean scores were higher for teachers who participated in the professional development.

Again, these results align with previous research; high teacher self-efficacy has positive effects on student outcomes. Bandura (1986, 1997a) provided descriptions of high and low efficacious teachers. High teaching self-efficacy fosters more teacher effort and improved student outcomes.

An analysis of middle school outcomes revealed that institutional supports such as professional learning experiences influenced student growth. Though student outcome data were higher for non-participants, student growth data was higher for participants who had professional development.

**Summary of Quantitative Conclusions.** This section presents a conclusion of the quantitative findings of the research study. In summary, student outcome results are inconclusive. This was influenced by the lack of data due to unexpected school closures as a result of the health pandemic. When comparing class means for standardized benchmark assessments between study participants who took the district-sponsored year-long professional development course to non-participants across Grades 3-8, the mean scores of professional development participants were higher in six of 12 benchmarks. I sought to analyze student outcome data of 43 professionally licensed study participants spanning Grades 3-8, six of whom participated in district-sponsored professional development; six were Grade 3 teachers; five were Grade 4 teachers; seven were fifth-grade teachers; four were sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade math teachers; and three were sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade reading teachers. Eighteen study participants did not have student outcome data, as they were not solely responsible for a tested subject. In

addition, all kindergarten, first-, second-, ninth-, 10<sup>th</sup>-, 11<sup>th</sup>-, and 12<sup>th</sup>-grade teachers were excluded from the student outcome analysis, as there were no comparable standardized student outcome data available.

Unexpected school closures prevented the collection of additional student outcome data for the third and final standardized assessment. I attribute the inconclusive student outcome results to three factors: lack of anticipated student outcome data, lack of time to implement learned teaching practices from the professional development due to school closure, and lack of time to participate in the full professional development opportunity. A state-enforced stay-at-home order forced schools in the study school district to close on March 16, 2020 for the remainder of the school year. In effect, this hindered and even halted learning for select students and the professional learning of staff for 13 weeks. Educators who participated in the year-long professional learning experience did not receive the full benefit of the district-sponsored professional development program.

#### ***Research Question 4***

What do classroom teachers do differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development about CRT practices? Analysis of qualitative data provided complimentary data to further explain this study's quantitative results. Qualitative data were drawn from a convenience and purposeful sampling of teachers who had a range of efficacy scores ranging from high to low and included teachers who had completed the district-sponsored professional development program and study participants who had not completed the professional development program. Data were collected through focus groups to identify what teachers did differently in their

instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development.

**Focus Group Demographics.** As a researcher, it is important to consider the context of the qualitative data source. In this section, I describe the characteristics of the focus group participants. Eleven (92%) participants in the focus group were females, while there was one (8%) male participant. The majority (nine; 75%) of focus group participants were White. The remaining racial makeup of the focus group participants were two (17%) Black and one (8%) Hispanic. Focus group participants ranged from highly efficacious to teachers with low self-efficacy levels (CRSTE Strength Index 56-99). Confidence levels of outcome expectancy spanned 76 to 100. Most participants were experienced teachers having taught an average of 15 years; however, years of experience did span 1 to 24 years among all group participants.

The majority of focus group participants grew up in suburban and rural communities and did not have diversity experiences while growing up. This is reflected in the lack of diversity in student body populations of their high school, high school teaching staff, communities, and number of fluently spoken languages.

An important insight from the study findings revealed that focus group participants had extensive educational experiences from additional degrees, certification, and/or professional development. The majority of focus group participants (nine; 75%) have a master's degree; 8% had National Board certification; and 50% attended the year-long district-sponsored professional development course.

This background demographic data coupled with participant responses provided insight into what classroom teachers did differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development about CRT practices. Background data

provided additional insight into the experiences of participants. The next section reveals how teachers changed.

Teachers have confidence in working with their students. Six of 12 focus group participants indicated they either felt more comfortable or confident to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students after participating in a district-sponsored professional development program. Participants indicated that teacher empowerment was the most beneficial aspect of the professional development program, while others indicated that learning strategies for increasing student engagement was the most beneficial.

Participants provided insight into the experiences with fear that decreased their self-efficacy levels. Participants experienced emotions of fear associated with fearing backlash for being White women trying to teach about someone else's culture. They indicated that having support from a masterful mentor was critical. The work of scholars informs us about adult learning theory. A review of Oja's (1990) research indicates key elements of adult learning include (a) continuous available supervision, (b) encouragement to take on more complex rules, and (c) the use of support and feedback when implementing new strategies. Participants experienced feelings of relief by receiving the license to be a facilitator and understanding they did not have to be the sole bearer of knowledge. This newfound knowledge liberated participants from having to have all the answers.

Participation in professional learning experiences caused participants to develop a sense of awareness of both social and cultural issues with reference to cultural diversity and issues of social justice. The newfound awareness and a sense of responsibility were the most beneficial aspects of the professional development program. Participants



indicated they felt a sense of responsibility to bring about change after participating in the professional development. They discussed being honor bound once they were given the knowledge and tools. Further review of the literature revealed Li's (2013) model known as the "cultural worker continuum." Li's findings indicated that teachers move through three stages in order to be considered effective cultural workers. These stages include cultural reconciliation (knowing self and others), cultural translation (developing competencies and skills to bridge differences in instruction needed), and cultural transformation (becoming change agents and skilled cultural workers; Li, 2013). Participants described the cultural transformation they experienced as a result of the learning experience. The sense of responsibility to bring about change after developing awareness is an illustration of this concept.

### *Summary of Conclusions*

The purposes of this mixed methods study were to examine the CRTSE and outcome expectancy beliefs of practicing teachers in the study school district and to examine the effects of CRT practices. The theory of self-efficacy is based on the premise that an individual's beliefs in their capabilities lead to desired outcomes from their own actions (Bandura, 1977). The effects were examined as changes in student outcomes and teaching practices. This summary of conclusions section will report the quantitative results first, the qualitative results second, and the limitations of the study last.

**Summary of Quantitative Conclusion.** This section presents a conclusion of the quantitative findings of the research study. In summary, student outcome results are inconclusive. This was influenced by the lack of data due to unexpected school closures as a result of the health pandemic. When comparing class means for standardized

benchmark assessments between study participants who took the district-sponsored year-long professional development course to non-participants across Grades 3-8, the mean scores of professional development participants were higher in six of 12 benchmarks. I sought to analyze student outcome data of 43 professionally licensed study participants spanning Grades 3-8, six of whom participated in district-sponsored professional development; six were Grade 3 teachers; five were Grade 4 teachers; seven were fifth-grade teachers; four were sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade math teachers; and three were sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade reading teachers. Eighteen study participants did not have student outcome data, as they were not solely responsible for a tested subject. In addition, all kindergarten, first-, second-, ninth-, 10<sup>th</sup>-, 11<sup>th</sup>-, and 12<sup>th</sup>-grade teachers were excluded from the student outcome analysis, as there were no comparable standardized student outcome data available.

Unexpected school closures prevented the collection of additional student outcome data for the third and final standardized assessment. I attribute the inconclusive student outcome results to three factors: lack of anticipated student outcome data, lack of time to implement learned teaching practices from the professional development due to school closure, and lack of time to participate in the full professional development opportunity. A state-enforced stay-at-home order forced schools in the study school district to close on March 16, 2020 for the remainder of the school year. In effect, this hindered and even halted learning for students and the professional learning of staff for 13 weeks. Educators who participated in the year-long professional learning experience did not receive the full benefit of the district-sponsored professional development program.

**Summary of Qualitative Findings.** The summary discussion below relates to the findings regarding how efficacious teachers are in their ability to teach students from culturally diverse backgrounds and what classroom teachers do differently in their instruction after participating in district-sponsored professional development about CRT practices. The qualitative results gleaned from focus groups of participants identified frequently occurring themes that contributed to teacher levels of efficacy. The following themes emerged: confidence in working with students, experiences with fear decreasing teacher self-efficacy, lack of knowledge about culturally responsive pedagogy, teacher empowerment through professional learning experiences, positive and negative influences on teacher confidence, and a need for improved school culture as a contributing factor to CRT. Furthermore, participants who reported having participated in ongoing professional learning experiences reported higher rates of efficacy and feelings of teacher empowerment. Teachers want to benefit from being able to discuss practices and problem solve with others in interactive situations in order to reflect and grow in their learning and teaching capacities. Teachers benefited from learning with others over a sustained period of time.

As a result of both the mixed methods study and my findings from the literature review, there is a lack of experience that increases CRTSE (Debs & Brown, 2017; Gay, 2010a; Ladson-Billings, 2011; Siwatu, 2011; Sleeter, 2011). Professional learning emerged from both the results of the mixed method study and a review of the current literature. Study results and the literature review showed professional development should utilize the principles of adult learning to effect change in participants that equips them to transfer their learning to their real world situations (Caffarella, 2002; Closson,

2013; Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2015; Harris et al., 2008; Mandell, 2014).

### **Reflections and Conclusions**

In this section, I offer reflections regarding the limitations and potential barriers of the research study and the potential the study offers for social change. In addition, I offer reflections and conclusions regarding myself as a scholar, educational leader, and change agent.

Recent reforms that try to eliminate the achievement gaps of diverse students are centered on evaluations of teacher effectiveness (Irvine & Hawley, 2011). This shows a lack of consideration for developing educator levels of preparation and confidence for working with culturally and linguistically diverse students. Focusing on teacher effectiveness without considerations for teacher level of efficacy limits teacher effectiveness. This research study's findings identified a need for explicit training and support systems for culturally and linguistically responsive teaching practice skills and the development of teacher awareness in meeting the needs of ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse students. This research study has the potential to influence the future design of the district's culturally responsive professional development by including more culturally responsive experiences for the district's professionally licensed educators. These suggested educational experiences will result in improved professional practices for the district's diverse students.

### ***Study Limitations and Potential Barriers***

Participants for this study voluntarily completed a survey on an individual basis. The surveys were comprised of position statements that depicted attitudes or beliefs towards specific groups of children and the participants' own perceptions of their

teaching abilities along with their perceptions of the importance of particular instructional practices. Participant self-reports regarding their CRT beliefs may have limitations. Self-report measures can be limiting because various biases may influence a participant's response such as social desirability or acquiescence bias (Gall et al., 2007). Self-reported data may be skewed and influenced by current societal factors, as educators may be reluctant to reveal honest reflections for fear of being perceived as a racist or culturally insensitive.

Moreover, participants vary by age, race, school type, school experiences, and years of experience, which may influence their interpretation of the statements on the questionnaire. Participants could have variations in their responses based on the time frame within the data collection window in which they completed the survey, as perceived stressors may have influenced participant responses. Economic and political factors also posed limitations to this research study, as study participants responded to an unprecedented global pandemic of historical significance. Enforceable stay-at-home orders enacted by state and local governments due to COVID-19 hindered my ability to physically assemble groups of five or more participants as well as travel to access the maximum number of program participants during this research. A global health crisis caused historical school closures that restricted access to school campuses and students. This meant NCDPI canceled standardized testing which eliminated two data points for each student in the study. The cancellation of the test eliminated data needed to calculate growth in student outcomes. A state enforced stay-at-home order forced schools in the study school district to close on March 16, 2020 for the remainder of the school year. In effect, this hindered and even halted learning for students and the professional learning of

staff for 13 weeks. Educators who participated in the year-long professional learning experience did not receive the full benefit of the district-sponsored professional development program.

Additionally, with a limited timeline for research, it is difficult to collect and analyze all the data necessary to truly define how students are impacted by the adoption of the professional development program. A multi-year timeline would allow for an in-depth district-wide analysis of multiple data sources encompassing achievement and social emotional learning of students and teacher efficacy. Another limitation is the sensitivity of the culturally responsive topic. Many district faculty were likely uncomfortable discussing issues involving race and matters of cultural diversity in the wake of national protests about racial disparities and injustices.

Further limitations include issues related to sample size. I used a convenience sampling from the district's 856 staff ( $N < 856$ ), and it was contingent upon voluntary participation in the study by educators. The overall sample size was ( $N = 185$ ).

There are numerous challenges related to integrating effective CRT practice training into the study school district's professional development initiatives. During previous years, culturally responsive, multicultural, and bilingual approaches to teaching have not been promoted due to a sense of urgency for standards-driven curricula and collective improved student achievement. The change was precipitated as a result of (a) persistent underachievement of the study school district's marginalized student populations, (b) persistent disparities in behavior consequences, and (c) a lack of faculty diversity in light of increasing numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse enrollment.

Sleeter (2011) stated that the following barriers are frequently encountered in regard to CRT practices:

- a. teachers have a rudimentary understanding of CRT often defining persons according to a socio-cultural group then applying cultural practices associated with that group;
- b. pedagogical confusions of teachers who think CRT is teaching the students about their culture instead of using what the students know as a resource for teaching;
- c. the tendency for educators to search for a one-size-fits-all approach to improve academic achievement; and
- d. “the problem of viewing culturally responsive pedagogy as something to do when students of color are present, rather than examining oneself and one’s teaching as culturally constructed” (p. 3).

According to Sleeter (2011), challenging western conceptualizations of knowledge learning by encouraging a truly culturally responsive pedagogy may illicit resistance based on clashing political and worldviews. This potentially could be especially sensitive in a community and school district where there is a trend for more than 80% of district faculty to be comprised of White females. The fact that, as the researcher, I am not a part of the majority population represented in the study school district but rather a very small minority population is to be considered a barrier in this study as well.

One major limitation of this type of research study is the recognition that a single ongoing professional development experience spanning an anticipated 3 school semesters

cannot be expected to provide the comprehensive and complex, culturally and linguistically responsive professional development teachers need. Culturally and linguistically responsive reform efforts require a sustained process that needs to continue throughout the duration of the entire career of educators. Hence, a single professional development experience cannot provide the overall reform that is required to create a significant influence on teaching practices. Therefore, consider this initial research study as an initial exercise in a continuum of strategic and intentional practices that support the development of culturally and linguistically responsive educators in the study school district.

### *Analysis of Self as a Scholar*

Prior to undertaking my doctoral journey, I was in a position as a school administrator and school-level literacy specialist. These positions required me to constantly inquire into the academic research necessary to improve student achievement. My intent as a lifelong learner is to deepen my scholarly inquiry while continuing to develop my ability to serve the culturally and linguistically diverse student population that is emerging at unprecedented rates in my school community. I have been fortunate to instruct, mentor, and supervise faculty who directly teach these students.

I chose Gardner-Webb University specifically because the course offerings and program administration in educational leadership was supportive of my vision of the importance of a much-needed social change agenda while affording me the time to continue to meet my professional and personal responsibilities. I felt Gardner-Webb's learning environment would support my belief that with greater knowledge and scholarship, my character would be improved and my responsibility as a change agent for



equity and social justice in teacher education would also be enhanced. I was further encouraged by faculty supervisors to use my Christian compassion to think critically about the importance for social change as it will affect tomorrow's students. By choosing to conduct a mixed methods study, I was challenged to grow in my capacity to both collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data. Furthermore, being able to critically synthesize and analyze the scholarly research of others, recognize generalizations of study results, and apply this knowledge to a longstanding genuine research problem has been an invaluable part of my development as a scholar. I have been motivated to conduct further research about the effect of CRT practices on the social emotional development of students in the study school district, as eliminating test bias is a lofty barrier when analyzing standardized student achievement data to determine the effects of the implementation of CRT practices. More scholarly research is needed to inform current information about the development of CRTSE in teachers.

### *Analysis of Self as a Practitioner*

As a school administrator, I am often called upon to support students and faculty in divergent ways. I have designed and implemented professional development courses, mentored colleagues, and developed systems of supports for teachers. My academic journey toward my doctorate has also allowed me to encourage teachers to become more scholarly practitioners. Throughout my dissertation preparation, my own personal growth as a more culturally and linguistically responsive educator has been what I would consider my greatest accomplishment throughout this entire endeavor. My research has enhanced my ability to support the growth and development of educators in developing culturally and linguistically responsive teaching practices. The most satisfying aspect of

the doctoral research process has been observing how teachers have improved teaching self-efficacy in regard to CRT practices.

### ***Analysis of Self as a Research Developer***

As a result of my doctoral studies, I have grown the most in the area of research development. As a scholar, I have enhanced my capacity to offer faculty support as the district designs systems to meet the diverse needs of our student population. My desire to measure the effects of the district's professional development design and to see its impact on teacher self-efficacy drove my attention to the research study results. Widening gaps among the district's marginalized student populations created a sense of urgency for me to conduct an extensive search of the professional literature required of this study experience. It allowed me to identify research on effective strategies for implementing culturally responsive professional development.

### ***Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research***

In the following section, I discuss implications of this study as they relate to each of six themes that emerged as a result of the study. Results and insights from the study revealed several implications. As a changing demographic trend continues to emerge in our society so too emerges a need for social change. Pervasive achievement gaps in our educational system necessitate a socially responsible and equitable change initiative in order to meet the needs of a growing diverse student population. Teachers teach in complex, dynamic, and rapidly changing classrooms; and therefore, we must provide ongoing and dynamic professional development throughout the teaching careers of our faculty. Eaker et al. (2002) asserted that real school reform cannot happen unless it starts in the classroom. Many school reform initiatives start outside the classroom, usually in a

“top down” manner and have little, if any, impact on improved student achievement. True school reform must not forget what happens in the classroom. In order for reform to be systemic, it should focus on what is happening in the classroom. One should change where it counts the most (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Changing the daily interactions of teachers and students will affect the systemic reform that will improve student outcomes.

Though the quantitative data analysis provided information about the collective self-efficacy levels of the district’s faculty, the qualitative data collection provided the most insightful data. Additional transformative research would further reveal data about dispositions and experiences that have influenced self-efficacy levels of teachers.

**Implication 1: Development of Teacher Confidence.** There is a need for explicit learning experiences for CRT for district faculty. Results indicated varying levels of teacher confidence in teaching culturally diverse students. While quantitative results indicated a collective low level of efficacy, qualitative analysis indicated a need for continued growth in the area of developing teacher confidence in CRT. I would like to suggest that district teachers have high confidence working with students using general teaching practices such as developing relationships but need to develop cultural competency through an acquisition of knowledge about CRT pedagogy.

Leading researcher Bandura (1986) asserted that teacher self-efficacy beliefs predicted their future behavior and performance. If teacher beliefs predict their future behavior and performance, it is imperative for education leaders to discover what teachers believe in. Bandura (1993) stated, “Teachers' beliefs in their personal efficacy to motivate and promote learning affect the types of learning environments they create and the level of academic progress their students achieve” (p. 117). In response to disparities

in the district's student achievement and behavioral data, I suggest that Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy framework be integrated with the CRT competencies to examine teacher beliefs with reference to CRT.

**Implication 2: Experiences with Fear Decrease CRTSE.** Overwhelmingly, it was determined that faculty experiences with fear decreased their level of CRTSE. Fear was presented as a hindrance to teacher levels of self-efficacy and their hesitancy to implement CRT practices with culturally and linguistically diverse students. This fear kept them from talking about cultural topics with the students in their classes. A mismatch between faculty and student demographics is likely one of the leading causes for the emotions of fear and hesitancy. District educators need to be afforded a safe environment in which to learn about culturally responsive practices without the fear of receiving backlash. Ongoing CRT learning experiences should be designed for current and future faculty. Two focus group participants indicated teachers need to be provided with safe options for learning new content and safe options for presenting controversial topics to students. Participants discussed that teachers need to have a choice in selecting differentiated professional learning activities. Participant And1296 stated,

One thing that the principal and the instructional coach did for our distance learning professional development is we had three different categories with three different topics and we had options. Yes, and I think we teachers are just like the kids we teach you know? I want options and I want a safe place that I can go to look into this. So, everybody reading the same book, it sounds great, but it's to cookie-cutter. It did not fit everybody. And again, teachers we are our kids and I liked the fact that I can go you know what? This is a subject that I really want to

know more about or I don't know anything about it. What is this that you're talking about and having those choices.

They discussed the need for colleagues to feel safe in discussing topics with others in a safe learning environment. Participants also discussed using literature or characters in books to discuss the things that are happening right now in our society. Fal7093 indicated,

I don't like moving out of my comfort zone, but I like being pushed out of there safely. I think a lot of teachers are afraid to move out of that comfort and that safety of knowing what I know and doing this is comfortable. I'm not going to deal with it because it's easy and it's not worrisome and it's not going to bring trauma to them or their students. I think a lot are worried about that. Whereas if you can find a group of people where you can do it and move past that safety and that comfort, but do it so that you're okay and that you come out of it better. Sometimes a little uneasiness is necessary. You know, sometimes moving past that comfort is necessary and then all of a sudden that uncomfortableness becomes, you know better and you move to the next level, so you're not stuck.

**Implication 3: Lack of Knowledge About Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.**

Analysis of both survey and focus group data revealed that participants either had a lack of knowledge about CRT practices or had misconceptions about ways to implement CRT practices. Participant descriptions of cultural diversity ranged from a sample of students who are representative of different races, different cultures, and various geographic locations; descriptions of appearance such as skin tone, facial features, clothing, and jewelry; and descriptions of food, spoken language, and country of origin. Incorrect

perceptions included concepts such as students developing awareness of the cultures of others. There was a general consensus that colleagues need to understand the important distinction between what CRT is and is not because there are so many misconceptions about CRT. Participant Fal7093 stated, “And I know it’s so much easier for so many people to slap a poster on a wall because that's easy; that surface level. But it's so much more than that.”

Study participants suggested that in order for their colleagues to improve their capacity to teach in a diverse setting, they needed to listen. Teachers need to listen to other teachers, staff, and children. Participants indicated teachers need to listen in order to make students feel valued, learn from them, and engage students in sharing about their cultural experiences. Participants indicated that educators need to be willing to listen and have tough conversations that will not always be comfortable though they are needed.

Focus group participants indicated that teachers need to be provided with safe options for learning new content and safe options for presenting controversial topics to students. Safe learning environments for faculty to discuss topics are needed. Participants suggested using literature to discuss the things that are happening right now in our society. I think this sentiment speaks volumes, as there is much to be learned about CRT practices. The prevalence of fear and insecurity could be preventing teachers from understanding the cultural content about the district’s diverse population. An analysis of the study school district’s 2018 North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey highlights the third largest aspect affecting working conditions of teachers is instructional practices and support. Issues that are closest to the heart of the problem involve what happens directly in classrooms.

Recommendation for future practice should include mandatory comprehensive faculty development.

**Implication 4: Knowing Better and Doing Better.** A lack of cultural awareness allows educators to continue with current teaching practices that are not equalizing educational opportunities for culturally diverse students. Study participants found a myriad of ways to say that they felt a duty or responsibility to change their perspectives and teaching practices once they became aware of the need for responsive practices. Participants said educators need to listen; when you know better, you do better; and my eyes are open. District faculty should be afforded opportunities for the development of teacher empowerment through participation in professional learning opportunities. Findings of this study revealed that participants were more comfortable and more confident to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students after participating in a district-sponsored professional development program. All faculty should be given this nonvoluntary opportunity. Study participants indicated the effectiveness of professional development and other training opportunities. District leaders need to provide opportunities for staff to develop cultural and racial awareness and to participate in training so teachers can be prepared to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. Participants indicated that the CRT webinars, Racial Equity Training, and the district-sponsored “Text Equity” professional development program were very beneficial to them. Reeducating current employees was discussed, and involving volunteer and community stakeholders was also mentioned. Participants indicated that the year-long professional development allowed them to learn more every time they met. They learned more and were then able to do better. They touted that when you know better, you do

better. Participants proclaimed that the year-long professional development model was a great way to be with colleagues, learn and work together, and design lessons/resources/units. This concept is supported by findings from a literature review of Smyth's (2013) research. Smyth asserted that effective professional development should be conducted over time, include learning with others, and tap into the prior knowledge of the trainees. The work of Pelayo (2012) further elaborated on this premise. Findings from Pelayo's qualitative multiple case study of early childhood teachers examined how teacher beliefs, knowledge, and practices changed over time. Participant Dan3062 indicated,

I was able to attend the Racial Equity training. That has been very beneficial. Just in understanding the history of our country and just you know, things like that and how culture impacts that. So anyway, if as many teachers as possible that can participate in that I think that would really be helpful for us as a district and the teachers that we have.

Teachers need to know what CRT is and what it is not. Further analysis of working conditions survey results reveal educators want professional development so they can improve. Additionally, five focus group participants indicated district leaders need to provide opportunities for teachers to develop cultural and racial awareness by participating in training. They indicated these professional development opportunities are necessary so teachers can be prepared to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. Participants indicated that the CRT webinars, Racial Equity Training, and district-sponsored "Text Equity" professional development program were very beneficial in helping them transform their practices.

This research study was intended to ascertain teacher sense of self-efficacy. It can



be used to potentially inform an integrated and continuous culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum that embraces the social changes many educators are experiencing in their classrooms. With ongoing support, the impact for social change in CRT practices can be pervasive in our education institutions locally, nationally, and globally. With sustained support, focus group participants experienced transformational changes by simply participating in the ongoing professional development experience. In this study, opportunities for critical reflection increased teacher awareness of the need for culturally relevant pedagogy.

Participants indicated that the year-long professional development allowed them to learn more every time they met. They learned more and were then able to do better. They touted that when you know better, you do better. Participants indicated that the year-long model was a great way to be with colleagues, learn and work together, and create lessons/resources/units.

Implications from this study's findings may inform future research that examines how culturally and linguistically responsive professional development that provides skills training is sustained throughout the tenure of practicing teachers. The professional development genre that has been demonstrated to be especially effective in changing teacher practices and having an impact on student outcomes is workshops and summer institutes (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). District leaders should design summer institutes directed toward cultural responsiveness. Such a pilot project could occur during the summer of 2021 over 5 weeks to coincide with the study school district's 5-week summer reading camp. Sessions could be held Monday through Thursday beginning in June and ending in July. Each session could be 8 hours long which includes 4 hours of professional

development and 4 hours of implementing learned strategies in a remedial classroom. Limiting the number of participants to 20 during the pilot launch would ensure that all participants had the ongoing support, modeling, and coaching that would be needed to sustain each participant's professional development growth. Eligible participants would be drawn from the current professionally licensed staff of the study school district with first consideration going to 2019-2020 "Text Equity" participants. District leaders should be encouraged to develop working partnerships with local university professors to facilitate the ongoing professional development. The project could be implemented and sponsored by the local school district, and faculty from each school could be invited to participate with the expressed intention of encouraging their feedback, collaboration, and facilitation in future workshops. The professional learning experience can serve as a beginning for ongoing learning experiences that examine what is truly needed to prepare practicing teachers in the study school district to facilitate optimal culturally and linguistically responsive learning environments and improve outcomes for all students.

**Implication 5: Improved School Culture Increase CRTSE.** Additional implications of this study reveal a need for further improved school climate and culture. A lack of diversity negatively affects school culture and climate. District leaders should increase staff diversity through improved recruitment efforts. Concerted efforts to get buy-in from the faculty in regard to CRT practice beliefs could also improve school climate and culture. Participants indicated that leaders can mitigate a lack of staff diversity by bringing in outside stakeholder groups that represent the diversity seen in the study school district's student population during the interim period when you are trying to employ ethnically and culturally diverse staff. Participant Fal7093 stated, "So having

that heart, that mindset from the top down for even valuing the differences of teachers, you know if you want culturally responsive teachers, our faculty should be as diverse as our students are.”

School culture can also be improved by designing global projects or using online learning platforms to facilitate cultural awareness. Negative influences on teacher confidence include a lack of community or teacher diversity. As much as possible, steps should be taken to reduce the influence of negative influencers such as a lack of faculty diversity or the placement of only one culturally diverse person in a setting. This includes students and district faculty. A clear implication is that district leaders need to improve recruitment efforts for diverse faculty. Study participants discussed the impact of having only one teacher of color during their entire educational career. Participant Klo2841 stated,

We're not very diverse out in the country and I think that definitely going to school... not having a teacher that wasn't White until my 11th grade year, which was my Spanish teacher; that was something that until I got older I didn't realize that that wasn't normal. And that well it might be normal. I'm not really sure of everybody's experience. But you know, coming to my current school and having a very diverse teacher population that also reflects our student population... I do feel like my younger childhood years really, I guess hindered my ability to fully be aware and competent of others.

Participants also discussed the impact of being the only person who looks like them while growing up and while currently working in the profession. Participant Pra3170 stated,

It was the same for me with not having a teacher that was culturally diverse until High School. I thought that I was just the only crazy person who's never had an African-American teacher until my 12th grade year. It was by my last year of high school! I went to an elementary school where no one in the school looked like me and no one in middle school looked like me. I just thought okay, cool.

District staff should model cultural sensitivity toward staff in an effort to both build culturally sensitive work environments and to model cultural awareness and develop the content knowledge so many faculty lack. Sponsoring global projects and using online platforms to facilitate cultural awareness are intentional strategies district leaders should employ. Participants suggested that this can be done by encouraging participation in global projects and by using online platforms to facilitate cultural awareness.

**Implication 6: Influencers on Teacher Confidence.** Findings revealed that both personal and/or professional factors either positively or negatively impacted teacher confidence in teaching culturally diverse students. I would like to suggest that though the majority of district faculty have advanced certifications and degrees, those advanced certifications and degrees did little to influence teacher confidence in regard to CRT. Data analysis revealed personal life experiences were the most influential factors to boost teacher confidence. This speaks to the need for diversity experiences for both district students and faculty. It is encouraging to note that targeted professional development can mitigate a lack of meaningful diversity experiences. Influential role models and modeling by master CRT facilitators should be provided to positively influence self-efficacy of teachers. Participant Dan3062 stated,

Personally, that's who I try to model my life after. He was my biggest role model (my grandfather). I just try not to see color. I just look at people as individuals and try to look at their heart and to love everybody. That's what I try to teach my kids; my daughter and my son. He's my biggest role model.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, my extensive literature review described in previous chapters, coupled with the results of a mixed method study, reveals the need for expanding the district's pilot professional development project geared toward encouraging an increase in the implementation of CRT practices in the district's curriculum programs. The research study highlighted the need for initial experiences and for ongoing professional development that would continually increase the CRTSE among the district's professionally licensed and practicing educators. The intended result of this study is that teachers will be able to evaluate and influence the district's curriculum in regard to cultural and linguistic characteristics, thereby increasing the educational opportunities and outcomes among their culturally diverse students. Furthermore, I hope this initiative will grow, develop, and spread to other local education units, creating social change in the region and across the nation resulting in teachers meeting the diverse needs of all their students.

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Appendix A

Permission to Use Instrument



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
College of Education™

**Permission To Use Instrument(s)**

Dear Researcher:

You have my permission to use the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale, the Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectations Scale, and/or the Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy Scale in your research. A copy of the instruments are attached. Request for any changes or alterations to the instrument should be sent via email to [kamau.siwatu@ttu.edu](mailto:kamau.siwatu@ttu.edu). When using the instrument(s) please cite accordingly.

- **Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale**

Siwatu, K. O. (2007). Preservice teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and outcome expectancy beliefs. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23, 1086-1101.

- **Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectations Scale**

Siwatu, K. O. (2007). Preservice teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and outcome expectancy beliefs. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23, 1086-1101.

- **Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy Scale**

Siwatu, K. O., Putnam, M., Starker, T. V., & Lewis, C. (2015). The development of the culturally responsive classroom management self-efficacy scale: Development and initial validation. *Urban Education*. Prepublished September 9, 2015.

Best wishes with your research.

Sincerely,

Kamau Oginga Siwatu, PhD  
Professor of Educational Psychology

Box 41071 | Lubbock, Texas | 79409-1071 | T 806-834-5850 | F 806-742-2179

An EEO/Affirmative Action Institute

### Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale

Rate how confident you are in your ability to successfully accomplish each of the tasks listed below. Each task is related to teaching. Please rate your degree of confidence by recording a number from 0 (no confidence at all) to 100 (completely confident). Remember that you may use any number between 0 and 100.

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
No Confidence At All					Moderately Confident					Completely Confident

I am able to:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. adapt instruction to meet the needs of my students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. obtain information about my students' academic strengths.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. determine whether my students like to work alone or in a group.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. determine whether my students feel comfortable competing with other students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. identify ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) is different from my students' home culture.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. assess student learning using various types of assessments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. obtain information about my students' home life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. build a sense of trust in my students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. establish positive home-school relations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. use a variety of teaching methods.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. develop a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse backgrounds.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. use my students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. use my students' prior knowledge to help them make sense of new information.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. identify ways how students communicate at home may differ from the school norms.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. obtain information about my students' cultural background.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. teach students about their cultures' contributions to science.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. greet English Language Learners with a phrase in their native language.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. design a classroom environment using displays that reflects a variety of cultures.

0      10      20   30      40      50      60      70   80      90      100  
 No      Moderately      Completely  
 Confidence      Confident      Confident  
 At All

I am able to:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. develop a personal relationship with my students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. obtain information about my students' academic weaknesses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. praise English Language Learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards linguistically diverse students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. communicate with parents regarding their child's educational progress.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. structure parent-teacher conferences so that the meeting is not intimidating for parents.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. help students to develop positive relationships with their classmates.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. revise instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. design a lesson that shows how other cultural groups have made use of mathematics.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. model classroom tasks to enhance English Language Learner's understanding.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. communicate with the parents of English Language Learners regarding their child's achievement.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. help students feel like important members of the classroom.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards culturally diverse students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. use a learning preference inventory to gather data about how my students like to learn.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. explain new concepts using examples that are taken from my students' everyday lives.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. obtain information regarding my students' academic interests.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. use the interests of my students to make learning meaningful for them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39. implement cooperative learning activities for those students who like to work in groups.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. design instruction that matches my students' developmental needs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. teach students about their cultures' contributions to society.

### Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy Scale

Read each statement below and rate your degree of certainty that the behavior will lead to the specified outcome. You may indicate your certainty by rating each statement on a scale of 0 (entirely uncertain) to 100 (completely certain). The scale below is for reference only; you do not need to use only the given values. You may assign ANY number between 0 and 100 as your degree of certainty.

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Entirely Uncertain	Very Uncertain		Somewhat Uncertain		Not Too Certain		Somewhat Certain		Very Certain	Completely Certain

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. A positive teacher-student relationship can be established by building a sense of trust in my students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Incorporating a variety of teaching methods will help my students to be successful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Students will be successful when instruction is adapted to meet their needs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Developing a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse cultural backgrounds will promote positive interactions between students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Acknowledging the ways that the school culture is different from my students' home culture will minimize the likelihood of discipline problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Understanding the communication preferences (e.g., the value of eye-contact; protocol for participating in a conversation) of my students will decrease the likelihood of student-teacher communication problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Connecting my students' prior knowledge with new incoming information will lead to deeper learning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Matching instruction to the students' learning preferences will enhance their learning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Revising instructional material to include a better representation of the students' cultural group will foster positive self-images.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Providing English Language Learners with visual aids will enhance their understanding of assignments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Students will develop an appreciation for their culture when they are taught about the contributions their culture has made over time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Conveying the message that parents are an important part of the classroom will increase parent participation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. The likelihood of student-teacher misunderstandings decreases when my students' cultural background is understood.



0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Entirely Uncertain	Very Uncertain	Somewhat Uncertain	Not Too Certain	Somewhat Certain	Very Certain	Completely Certain				

- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Changing the structure of the classroom so that it is compatible with my students' home culture will increase their motivation to come to class.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Establishing positive home-school relations will increase parental involvement.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Student attendance will increase when a personal relationship between the teacher and students has been developed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Assessing student learning using a variety of assessment procedures will provide a better picture of what they have learned.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Using my students' interests when designing instruction will increase their motivation to learn.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Simplifying the language used during the presentation will enhance English Language Learners comprehension of the lesson.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. The frequency that students' abilities are misdiagnosed will decrease when their standardized test scores are interpreted with caution.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. Encouraging students to use their native language will help them to maintain their cultural identity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. Students' self-esteem can be enhanced when their cultural background is valued by the teacher.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. Helping students from diverse cultural backgrounds succeed in school will increase their confidence in their academic ability.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. Students' academic achievement will increase when they are provided with unbiased access to the necessary learning resources.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. Using culturally familiar examples will make learning new concepts easier.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. When students see themselves in the pictures (e.g., posters of notable African Americans, etc) that are displayed in the classroom they develop a positive self-identity.

Appendix B

Statement of Pending IRB Approval

As I enter into the last year as a doctoral student at Gardner-Webb University, I am required to do a dissertation study. The topic of my study is *Examining the Effects of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices of Educators*. This study will examine how efficacious professionally licensed staff in the subject school district feel in regards to meeting the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students during the 2019-2020 academic school year.

With the approval of the Institutional Review Board, I would like to administer a survey to all K-12 teachers and professionally licensed staff in the subject school district. The participants will be asked to complete a closed-ended survey on culturally responsive teaching practices, using Survey Monkey and district email accounts. Based on trends and patterns of this quantitative survey, I will ask smaller groups of teachers to participate in focus groups to respond to open-ended questions with the hopes of clarifying quantitative data that was shared in the survey. My goal is to solicit consenting participants from a range of high to low confidence levels and from the cohort of educators that participated in district-sponsored Text Equity professional development during the 2019-2020 academic school year. An analysis of each participants' survey results will yield a range of "strength" scores from a potential score of 0-100. I will sum all of the ratings for each respondent's scale and divide by the total number of items to yield a total confidence level for each respondent. This confidence score will represent each respondent's level of confidence and will range from 0 to 100. Collective confidence scores will be sorted into three levels of high, medium and low.

Participation will be voluntary and I will protect against breach of confidentiality by using a password protected computer to handle participant data. I understand that the data collected will not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Study School District and Gardner-Webb University. There are no known risk to participants and all responses will be identified as anonymous. Pending IRB approval, the principal of each school will be notified of the solicitation for study participants.

Pending IRB approval I will conduct research through all schools within the Study School District. I agree to administer surveys, conduct focus groups and complete data analysis by following appropriate guidelines and procedures.

██████████ Thompson  
Doctoral Candidate  
Home Address  
Email Address

## Appendix C

### IRB Informed Consent Forms for Online Survey and Focus Group

Gardner-Webb University IRB  
Informed Consent Form for Online Survey

My name is Lenore Thompson, and I am the [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] School. I am in the last year of my doctoral program and am required to complete a research study for my dissertation. The topic of my study is *Examining the Effects of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices of Educators*. This study will examine how prepared teachers feel to meet the needs of the growing culturally and linguistically diverse student population in our community. Additionally, I would like to study the effects of teacher self-efficacy on student outcomes in the areas of Reading, Math and Science. Therefore, I would love to have feedback from all professionally licensed educators in [REDACTED]. Your participation is voluntary and much appreciated.

The online survey is attached and is available for the next 9 days until June 26<sup>th</sup>. It will take about 20 minutes to complete. I am proud of the work that we have all contributed during the last few years to make learning meaningful for all students including our ethnically diverse student population. I look forward to our continued efforts to use students' cultural knowledge and learning styles to make learning effective for them.

The purpose of this research is to examine how prepared teachers feel to meet the needs of the culturally and linguistically diverse student population in our community. As a participant in the study, you will be asked to complete an online survey about your beliefs and level of confidence in regards to culturally responsive teaching practices. It is anticipated that the study will require about 20 minutes of your time.

Participation in this study is voluntary. By completing this survey, you are voluntarily agreeing to participate. You have the right to withdraw from the research study at any time without penalty. You also have the right to refuse to answer any question(s) for any reason without penalty. The information that you give in the study will be handled confidentially. I will protect against breach of confidentiality by using a password protected computer to store participant information and data. Your data will be confidential which means that your name will not be linked to the data. Non identifying information will be provided through the use of pseudonyms and or numbers instead of names to protect your identity in the reporting of study results. A list of study participants and assigned pseudonyms/numbers will be kept in a locked file in the researcher's home office and on a password-protected computer. There are no anticipated risks in this study. You will receive no payment for participating in the study. Data from this study may be used or distributed for future research studies with permission from the Study City School District and Gardner-Webb University.

Right to Withdraw From the Study

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you choose to withdraw from the study, your survey results and/or responses to interview questions will be deleted and not used for data analysis.

How to Withdraw From the

If you want to withdraw from the study, please send me an email at [REDACTED] There is no penalty for withdrawing.

I wholeheartedly and sincerely appreciate your input and willingness to complete the survey as it will inform educational practices for meeting the needs of all students in our district.

**If you have questions about the study, contact:**

[REDACTED] Thompson  
Telephone: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

Dr. William Steve Stone  
Telephone: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

Dr. Sydney K. Brown  
IRB Institutional Administrator  
Telephone: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

Clicking the link below to continue on to the survey indicates your consent to participate in the study.

If you are not 21 years of age or older or you do not consent to participate, please close this window.

Questions will follow on Survey Monkey.

## Informed Consent Script for Focus Groups

The focus group in which you are about to participate involves research for [REDACTED] Thompson's doctoral dissertation. The purpose of the research is to determine the effects of culturally responsive teaching practices of educators. This is not an endeavor on [REDACTED] Thompson's part as an employee for [REDACTED] Schools through her regular job role. This endeavor is a component of her doctoral studies at Gardner-Webb University in Boling Springs, North Carolina.

Participation in this study involves your participation in a focus group which will last approximately 45-minutes. The focus group will be recorded via the Zoom format and all other information will be confidential and kept in locked cabinets at the home of the researcher.

If at any point, you feel uncomfortable answering a question, you may refuse to answer. You may also refuse to participate in the research at any point, and you may ask me to not use information that you have already disclosed, and you may ask me to turn off the recording at any point. I vow to do no harm with the study results.

Participant names will not be available to anyone. The results of the research will be published in the form of dissertation and may be published in a professional journal or presented at professional meetings. The information will help our educators, policy makers and others to better understand the effects of culturally responsive teaching practices in our schools. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact [REDACTED] Thompson

Do you want to participate in the focus group?

Do I have your permission to record video and audio from our meeting?

Appendix D

Superintendent Permission to Study



Thompson

NC

January 27, 2020

Dear Dr.

My name is . Thompson and I am an at School in the School District. I am honored to have been an employee of the for years. I am proud of this school district, what it stands for, as well as the accomplishments and achievements I have witnessed during my years as a , and .

As I enter into the last year as a doctoral student at Gardner-Webb University, I am required to do a dissertation study. The topic of my study is *Examining the Effects of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices of Educators*. This study will examine how efficacious professionally licensed staff in the local school district feel in regards to meeting the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students during the 2019-2020 academic school year.

With your permission, I would also like to administer a survey to all K-12 educators and professionally licensed staff in the school district. The participants will be asked to complete a closed-ended survey on culturally responsive teaching practices, using Survey Monkey and district email accounts. Based on trends and patterns of this quantitative survey, I will ask smaller groups of teachers to participate in focus groups to respond to open-ended questions with the hopes of clarifying quantitative data that was shared in the survey. My goal is to solicit consenting participants from a range of high to low confidence levels and from the cohort of educators that participated in district-sponsored Text Equity professional development during the 2019-2020 academic school year.

Participation will be voluntary and I will protect against breach of confidentiality by using a password protected computer to handle participant data. I understand that the data collected will not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from School District and Gardner-Webb University. There are no known risk to participants and all responses will be identified as anonymous. The principal of each school will be notified of the solicitation for study participants; however, I wanted to secure your approval before actively beginning this process. If you have comments or concerns, please feel free to contact me by email at or by phone at . I appreciate you very much. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Thompson

I agree for Ms. . Thompson to conduct research through all schools within . I agree that she may administer surveys and conduct focus groups by following appropriate guidelines and procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Appendix E

Principal Letter (Email)

Thursday, June 18, 2020

Principals:

[REDACTED]

Message:

Principals, can you help me by resharing the following information with your certified staff? With the Superintendent's permission, I shared this *Survey Monkey* message with your staff via their district email on Thursday, 6/18/2020 at 2:45 p.m. I hope to gather as much data from district staff as possible about their levels of confidence and beliefs when meeting the needs of diverse students and am hopeful that a "*reiterated message*" from you will encourage them to consider voluntarily providing their feedback on this survey. The deadline for completion is midnight Friday, June 26, 2020 and I estimate that it will take about 20 minutes.

I stand together with you looking for ways to support our hardworking educators and believe that feedback is a good place to start. Please let me know if I can clarify anything. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

.....message sent to professionally licensed (certified) staff

I am conducting a voluntary survey and your input would be appreciated. Click the button below to start the survey. Thank you for your participation!

My name is [REDACTED], and I am the [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] School. I am in the last year of my doctoral program and am required to complete a research study for my dissertation. The topic of my study is *Examining the Effects of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices of Educators*. This study will examine how prepared teachers feel to meet the needs of the growing culturally and linguistically diverse student population in our community. Therefore, I would love to have feedback from all professionally licensed educators in [REDACTED]. Your participation is voluntary and much appreciated. The online survey is attached and is available through Friday, June 26, 2020. It will take about 20 minutes to complete.

I am proud of the work that we have all contributed during the last few years to make learning meaningful for all students including our ethnically diverse student population. I look forward to our continued efforts to use students' cultural knowledge and learning styles to make learning effective for them.

Appendix F

Teacher Letter for Permission to Study

My name is [REDACTED], and I am an [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] Schools. As I enter the last year as a doctoral student at Gardner-Webb University, I am required to complete a dissertation study. The topic of my study is *Examining the Effects of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices of Educators*. This study will examine how prepared teachers feel to meet the needs of the culturally and diverse student population in our community. Therefore, I would like to survey all teachers in the [REDACTED].

The survey will be sent within the next week about your beliefs in regards to culturally responsive teaching practices in your classroom. This survey, through Survey Monkey, will be sent to your school's email address on Thursday, June 18, 2020. Due to our sensitive email filtering system, this email will come from [REDACTED]. It will take @ 20 minutes and the window will be open for 9 days, with an ending date of Friday, June 26, 2020.

I will protect against breach of confidentiality by using a password protected computer to handle participant data. Data collected will not be provided to anyone outside of research team without permission from the [REDACTED] School District and Gardner-Webb University. There are no known risks to participants and all responses will be identified as anonymous. I vow to do no harm with the study results. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me at [REDACTED]. I wholeheartedly and sincerely appreciate your input and willingness to complete the survey as it will inform educational practices for meeting the needs of all students in our district.

#### Right to Withdraw From the Study

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you choose to withdraw from the study, your survey results and/or responses to interview questions will be deleted and not used for data analysis.

#### How to Withdraw From the Study

If you want to withdraw from the study, please send me an email at [REDACTED]. There is no penalty for withdrawing.

Warmest regards,  
[REDACTED]

Appendix G

Demographic Survey, CRTSE, and CRTOE

Electronic Version of Culturally Responsive Teaching Survey  
*Distributed via Survey Monkey through district email due to school closure*

**Part One: Demographic Survey**

1. First three letters of your mother's maiden name; last four digits of your best friend's phone number.
2. What is your gender?
3. How do you identify your ethnicity?
4. What is your age?
5. How many years of educational work experience do you have?
6. What grade(s) do you work with?
7. What type of community did you live in while growing up?
8. Identify the number of languages you speak fluently, including English.
9. Was your high school population considered ethnically diverse?
10. Was the teaching staff in your school district considered ethnically diverse?
11. Was your community in which you were raised considered ethnically diverse?
12. Do you hold a Master's Degree?
13. Do you have National Board certification?
14. Identify your school site.
15. Did you participate in the district-sponsored "Text Equity" professional development in the Summer of 2019 through Spring of 2020?

**Part Two: Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (Siwatu, 2007)**

Rate how confident you are in your ability to successfully accomplish each of the tasks listed below. Each task is related to teaching. Please rate your degree of confidence by recording a number from 0 (no confidence at all) to 100 (completely confident). Remember that you may use any number between 0 and 100. (Use the sliding scale 0-100 to indicate your response.)

**I am able to:**

16. adapt instruction to meet the needs of my students.
17. obtain information about my students' academic strengths.
18. determine whether my students like to work alone or in a group.
19. determine whether my students feel comfortable competing with other students.
20. identify ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) is different from my students' home culture.
21. implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture.
22. assess student learning using various types of assessments.
23. obtain information about my students' home life.
24. build a sense of trust in my students.
25. establish positive home-school relations.
26. use a variety of teaching methods.
27. develop a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse backgrounds.
28. use my students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful.
29. use my students' prior knowledge to help them make sense of new information.
30. identify ways how students communicate at home may differ from the school norms.
31. obtain information about my students' cultural background.
32. teach students about their cultures' contributions to science.
33. greet English Language Learners with a phrase in their native language.
34. design a classroom environment using displays that reflects a variety of cultures.
35. develop a personal relationship with my students.
36. obtain information about my students' academic weaknesses.
37. praise English Language Learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language.



38. identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards linguistically diverse students.
39. communicate with parents regarding their child's educational progress.
40. structure parent-teacher conferences so that the meeting is not intimidating for parents.
41. help students to develop positive relationships with their classmates.
42. revise instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups.
43. critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes.
44. design a lesson that shows how other cultural groups have made use of mathematics.
45. model classroom tasks to enhance English Language Learner's understanding.
46. communicate with the parents of English Language Learners regarding their child's achievement.
47. help students feel like important members of the classroom.
48. identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards culturally diverse students.
49. use a learning preference inventory to gather data about how my students like to learn.
50. use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds.
51. explain new concepts using examples that are taken from my students' everyday lives.
52. obtain information regarding my students' academic interests.
53. use the interests of my students to make learning meaningful for them.
54. implement cooperative learning activities for those students who like to work in groups.
55. design instruction that matches my students' developmental needs.
56. teach students about their cultures' contributions to society.

**Part Three: Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy Scale**  
**(Siwatu, 2007)**

Read each statement below and rate your degree of certainty that the behavior will lead to the specified outcome. You may indicate your certainty by rating each statement on a scale of 0 (entirely uncertain) to 100 (completely certain). The scale below is for reference only: you do not need to use only the given values. You may assign ANY number between 0 and 100 as your degree of certainty. (Use the sliding scale 0-100 to indicate your response.)

57. A positive teacher-student relationship can be established by building a sense of trust in my students.

58. Incorporating a variety of teaching methods will help my students to be successful.

59. Students will be successful when instruction is adapted to meet their needs.

60. Developing a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse cultural backgrounds will promote positive interactions between students.

61. Acknowledging the ways that the school culture is different from my students' home culture will minimize the likelihood of discipline problems.

62. Understanding the communication preferences (e.g., the value of eye-contact; protocol for participating in a conversation) of my students will decrease the likelihood of student-teacher communication problems.

63. Connecting my students' prior knowledge with new incoming information will lead to deeper learning.

64. Matching instruction to the students' learning preferences will enhance their learning.

65. Revising instructional material to include a better representation of the students' cultural group will foster positive self-images.

66. Providing English Language Learners with visual aids will enhance their understanding of assignments.
67. Students will develop an appreciation for their culture when they are taught about the contributions their culture has made over time.
68. Conveying the message that parents are an important part of the classroom will increase parent participation.
69. The likelihood of student-teacher misunderstandings decreases when my students' cultural background is understood.
70. Changing the structure of the classroom so that it is compatible with my students' home culture will increase their motivation to come to class.
71. Establishing positive home-school relations will increase parental involvement.
72. Student attendance will increase when a personal relationship between the teacher and students has been developed.
73. Assessing student learning using a variety of assessment procedures will provide a better picture of what they have learned.
74. Using my students' interests when designing instruction will increase their motivation to learn.
75. Simplifying the language used during the presentation will enhance English Language Learners comprehension of the lesson.
76. The frequency that students' abilities are misdiagnosed will decrease when their standardized test scores are interpreted with caution.
77. Encouraging students to use their native language will help them to maintain their cultural identity.
78. Students' self-esteem can be enhanced when their cultural background is valued by the teacher.
79. Helping students from diverse cultural backgrounds succeed in school will increase their confidence in their academic ability.
80. Students' academic achievement will increase when they are provided with unbiased access to the necessary learning resources.
81. Using culturally familiar examples will make learning new concepts easier.

82. When students see themselves in the pictures (e.g., posters of notable African Americans, etc.) that are displayed in the classroom they develop a positive self-identity.

83. Please indicate your willingness to participate (if chosen) in a follow up focus group.

Yes

Maybe

No

## Appendix H

### Focus Group Protocol and Prompts

## Focus Group Protocol and Prompts

Date: June 29, June 30, July 1, 2020

### Welcome and Introductions

- Facilitator
  - As facilitator, the researcher will encourage discussion within the group
- Participants
  - Remind participants about video recording

### Purpose and Assurances

- The purpose of this focus group is to examine teachers' perceptions concerning their professional preparedness to implement culturally responsive teaching practices in our school district. Another purpose is to examine how the district sponsored "text equity" professional development program impacted your knowledge of culturally responsive teaching and the implementation of these practices in your classroom during the 2019-2020 academic school year. Each focus group member will have the opportunity to share his or her thoughts about a series of questions.
- Conducting this focus group is part of research conducted for a dissertation study designed to complete and explore teacher beliefs about culturally responsive teaching practices. Thank you for your willingness to participate in the focus group. I have prepared several questions regarding your culturally responsive teaching philosophy and practices. Everyone's thoughts and opinions are welcome and respected.
- Discussion will be audio taped to analyze the points discussed. Participation in the group and thoughts shared are confidential. At the end of the interview, I will provide you an opportunity to make any closing remarks regarding the issues discussed in this interview

### Read the Informed Consent Script for Focus Groups

- Informed Consent Script for Focus Groups
  - The focus group in which you are about to participate involves research for ██████████ Thompson's doctoral dissertation. The purpose of the research is to determine the effects of culturally responsive teaching practices of educators. This is not an endeavor on Lenore Thompson's part as an employee for ██████████ Schools through her regular job role. This endeavor is a component of her doctoral studies at Gardner-

Webb University in Boiling Springs, North Carolina.

- Participation in this study involves your participation in a focus group which will last approximately 30-45 minutes. The focus group will be recorded via the Zoom format and all other information will be confidential and kept in locked cabinets at the home of the researcher.
- If at any point, you feel uncomfortable answering a question, you may refuse to answer. You may also refuse to participate in the research at any point, and you may ask me to not use information that you have already disclosed, and you may ask me to turn off the recording at any point.
- Participant names will not be available to anyone. The results of the research will be published in the form of dissertation and may be published in a professional journal or presented at professional meetings. The information will help our educators, policy makers and others to better understand the effects of culturally responsive teaching practices in our schools. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lenore A. Thompson
- Do you want to participate in the focus group?
- Do I have your permission to record video and audio from our meeting?

#### Focus Group Prompts/Questions

##### *Directions: Essential –ask everyone*

10. To provide context for the focus group conversation, unveil a print of the painting, #Asia, by artist Mohtz (2019). Centering discussion on artwork has been called El Arte elicitation (Lahman, Mendoza, Rodriguez, & Schwartz, 2001). In this case, participants will examine the image of multiple Asian women in indigenous apparel, t. They will interpret what they see in the painting and the cultural connections the artwork and its title has for each of them. The El Arte elicitation process will create a culturally appropriate segue to the discussion on culturally responsive teaching practices.
11. Share preliminary findings and invite participants to analyze the data. In traditional focus group settings, the researcher claims sole authority in the analysis of participants' lived experiences (Delgado Bernal, 1998). As the participants make meaning of the data, they also become cocreators of

knowledge (Sandoval, 1998), rather than objectified 'subjects' of the research (Villenas, 1996).

Sample data from survey.

Items from CRTSE scale with the lowest and highest mean scores.

Items from the CRTOE scale with the lowest and highest mean scores.

12. What do you think of when I use the phrase —culturally diverse students?  
*Look at themes of culturally responsive teaching practices.*

13. How confident do you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse students?

*Note: If participants have difficulty responding to this question due to a lack of knowledge about culturally responsive teaching practices, I will ask them to consider the following aspects of culturally responsive teaching practices.*

*Supplemental questions available for probing by the facilitator if necessary*

1. How do you feel you develop a sense of caring in the classroom?
2. In what ways do you develop relationships with your students?
3. When you are lesson planning, how do you respect the diversity and learning differences of your students?
4. Would you tell me how you involve the real life experiences of your students into your lessons?
5. In what way do you teach about other cultures?
6. Are students able to "speak their mind" about a topic and can you give me an example?
7. How do you hold students accountable for their learning?
8. Tell me how you develop and use collaboration and groups?
9. Are students held accountable for the learning of their peers and if so how?
10. How do you incorporate students' cultural knowledge, or allow them to make cultural connections to what is being taught? How do plan for this in your lesson planning?
11. In what ways if any, do students use different ways to talk or code switch?
12. If students do code switch, how do you model the social contexts that are appropriate for that code of language?
13. Can you give me examples of the various types of writing students read and write in the classroom?



14. How are language and literacy skills developed across the content areas?
15. What examples of multiethnic literature do you use in your lessons?
16. Can you tell me how you teach students how to take tests, study for tests, and understand their own learning style?
17. In what way do you scaffold your lessons so students learn how to be critical thinkers? What are critical thinking skills the students are engaged in?
18. How do you academically challenge and maintain high expectations for all students in your classroom?
19. Can you give me the process you go through when developing a student assessment?
20. In what way do you feel the assessments you give truly reflect the knowledge the students have?

*Directions: Ask these questions to people that participated in the district-sponsored professional development.*

14. How prepared did you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse students prior to your participation in district sponsored "Text Equity" professional development program?
15. How prepared did you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse after your participation in district sponsored "Text Equity" professional development program?
16. What aspect of the "Text Equity" professional development program is most beneficial in preparing teachers to teach in a diverse setting?

*Directions: Essential Questions to ask everyone*

17. Are there any personal and/ or professional factors that positively impacted your confidence in teaching culturally diverse students?
18. Are there any personal and/ or professional factors that negatively impacted your confidence in teaching culturally diverse students?
19. Is there anything else you like to add to assist district leaders in preparing teachers to teach culturally diverse students?

20. Do you have any suggestions for better preparing colleagues to teach in a diverse setting?

Appendix I

Email Inviting Teachers to Participate in Focus Group

## Permission to Participate in Focus Groups

### “Email Inviting Teachers to Participate in Focus Group”

Thank you for taking the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Survey! Based on preliminary results, teachers across the district have varying levels of confidence about their ability to meet the needs of diverse student populations. These results are interesting and make me wonder, 🤔 what kinds of experiences teachers have encountered that have influenced their confidence level.

You indicated either "yes or maybe" on the survey that you were willing to participate in 1 focus group session. Congratulations, you have been randomly selected to participate! I appreciate any insight that you are willing to share with me about your experiences.

**Focus Group Purpose** This group provides an opportunity for participants to share your thoughts about your level of preparedness in regards to culturally responsive teaching practices. In addition, if applicable you are encouraged to share your thoughts about your level of preparedness in regards to culturally responsive teaching practices after having participated in the year-long district sponsored “Text Equity” professional development program.

Information gathered from this focus group will be used as part of a formative assessment of the program and is part of a dissertation study. This study seeks to discover the effect of teachers’ beliefs about culturally responsive teaching practices on student outcomes and the impact of professional development on teacher efficacy and how it supported the implementation of culturally responsive teaching practices in your classroom.

The focus group will meet once and participation in the group will require approximately forty-five minutes to one hour of your time. Your participation in the group is confidential. Your name will never be made public or recorded in data.

Please indicate your willingness to participate or your desire not to participate in the group by responding to this email upon request. By indicating your willingness to be a member of this focus group, you give your consent to participate in this study. Due to school closure, the focus group will meet via the Zoom platform on June 29<sup>th</sup>, June 30<sup>th</sup>, and July 1<sup>st</sup>. Focus groups will be facilitated by [REDACTED]. Thank you for your consideration.

Appendix J  
Transcription Records

## Transcription of Focus Group 1

Date: 6/29/2020

38-minute focus group session was held via Zoom platform beginning at 1:00 p.m.  
4 participants attended from 3 different schools

Silence: *(for 31 seconds)*

Facilitator: Hi. Thank you so much for joining me today. I really appreciate you.

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: I can't hear you.

Silence: *(for 5 seconds)*

Wat1399: Yeah, must have automatically muted coming in your meeting.

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: Can you hear me?

BRA1514: Yes ma'm.

Facilitator: Okay. Sorry. I think I had my sound muted. Thank you all so much for joining me.

I really appreciate your passion because I know you've got to be passionate in order to devote your time. But, I also appreciate your time as well. Can I go ahead and get started?

Do you all have any questions for me before we get started?

Wat1399: I just wanted to remind you I'm not trying to be rude, but I have my faculty meeting at 2. So I'll jump off just a couple minutes before that so I can log into that meeting.

Facilitator: Perfect. Perfect. I understand. Okay, so there are a couple of housekeeping things that I unfortunately have got to take care of before I get started. I really don't want to do any of the talking. I want you guys to do all the talking, but you know, I have to

take care of the housekeeping stuff real quick. So welcome Jac750. Thank you so much for joining me. For joining us. I'm just going to share my screen real quick. Alright. So this is a focus group and the university requires me to go over this protocol. So welcome. Thank you for coming. My name is Facilitator. Do I have your permission to record video and audio from our meeting?

Participants: (gives thumbs up symbol and nod their heads)

Jac750: Yes ma'm

.Facilitator: Okay. All right. The welcome. Facilitator. Participants. Please y'all do all the talking. I don't want to do the talking and I don't want to take up a whole lot of your time either. I am supposed to read the informed consent form. They may make me promise to do that. So let me do that real quick and then we can get started. The focus group in which you are about to participate involves research for Facilitator's doctoral dissertation. The purpose of the research is to determine the effects of culturally responsive teaching practices of educators. I'm doing a dissertation on culturally responsive teaching practices and basically how effective or how prepared do teachers feel in order to teach and respond to the needs of the culturally and linguistically diverse kids are in our district. This is not an endeavor on the facilitator's part as an employee for the subject School district through her regular job role. This endeavor is a component of her doctoral studies at Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, North Carolina. Participation in this study involves your participation in a focus group which will last approximately 30-45 minutes. The focus group will be recorded via the Zoom format and all other information will be confidential and kept in locked cabinets at the home of the researcher. The only reason why I'm recording is because I have to transcribe what participants are saying. I'm

not going to associate your name with anything. I'm going to use that unique code that you came up with. If at any point, you feel uncomfortable answering a question, you may refuse to answer. You may also refuse to participate in the research at any point, and you may ask me to not use information that you have already disclosed, and you may ask me to turn off the recording at any point. Participant names will not be available to anyone. The results of the research will be published in the form of dissertation and may be published in a professional journal or presented at professional meetings. The information will help our educators, policy makers and others to better understand the effects of culturally responsive teaching practices in our schools. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask me. Do you want to participate in the focus group? Do I have your permission to record video and audio from our meeting?

Participants: (gives thumbs up symbol and nod their heads)

Silence: (*for 4 seconds*)

Facilitator: Okay, so the focus group from which are about to participate involves research for me. This is not associated with the subject school district. It is all about me. It's going to have benefits for the subject school district. I anticipate that it's going to take about 30 -45 minutes. I'm going to respect your time. I've only got about 11 questions that I'm going to discuss. At any point if you feel uncomfortable answering a question, you can refuse to answer the question. You don't have to do that. Also at any point if you feel uncomfortable, and you want to just log off you can do that as well. If you don't want us to see you, you can stop your video, that's fine as well. If you want to change your name, that's cool. But I assure you I'm not going to use your name in any way in the



research. So that's basically it. That's the nuts and bolts of it. All right, any questions? All right.

Ele2059: (enters the session) Hello.

Facilitator: Hello, how are you?

Ele2059: I'm fine. Thank you. How are you all?

Group: *(for 3 seconds)*

Student: Nice to see you.

Silence: *(for 2 seconds)*

Facilitator: (inaudible) So you've already given me your consent to participate. So really the purpose of this focus group is to just follow up to that long, long survey that you all took. And really it's an opportunity for you guys to share your thoughts about how prepared you feel in regards to culturally responsive teaching practices. This particular focus group is unique because all of you have participated in some form of professional development and I particularly want to know if basically that professional development had an impact on your level of confidence, preparedness or what some would call efficacy. So when you take a look at ... and let me go to a different? How do I do that is it? Okay, can ya'll see this picture? I know you can.

Wat1399: Yeah, what you trying to do?

Facilitator: Present.

Wat1399: Oh go.

Facilitator: All right. Well, when ya'll see this.... You know what I forgot to hit record.

Let me go back.

Silence: *(for 4 seconds)*

Facilitator: Somebody, tell me how do I hit record?

Wat1399: (inaudible) It says that you are recording.

Facilitator: Let me go back then. Can ya'll tell that I'm nervous? (Laughing)

Wat1399: We are not. (Laughing)

Group: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: Take a look at this artwork. Tell me what you think or discuss your thoughts.

What does it make you think of when you look at it, in terms of cultural diversity? Please interpret what they you see in the painting and the cultural connections the artwork and its title has for you.

Silence: *(for 0 seconds)*

Wat1399: Well, I see people that have a garment that is different than what we would normally consider traditional American.

Silence: *(for 4 seconds)*

BRA1514: It representative culturally yes dress that is representative of a culture.

Ele2059: Yes, I also agree. I think it represents the diversity. That our population is diverse. I think those are probably races that we don't see so often in our daily lives.

Well, maybe in our daily life, but not like educationally or in books or in the media. For example, also in the movies, right?

Facilitator: Um huh. So one of the things that is interesting about or that struck me about this artwork is that the figures represents Asian culture. This is artwork titled, #Asia, by artist Mohtz (2019). But, as we know the Asian culture is quite different. There are lots of different countries and so even though someone might think of Asia representing one culture it does not. It's a very diversified continent. And so, that's what this picture

represents to me. It reminds me of American culture. We have a lot of diversity within our American culture.

Facilitator: I thought it might be interesting to you guys for me to share quickly with you just some highlights of preliminary data. If you look at this very blurry, screen and look at maybe the items on the bottom; the last 3. These are the beliefs that people felt the most confident about and then the ones on the top were the ones that people across the district felt the least confident about. There was like a hundred and eighty-five people who took the survey. Those were the three things that they felt the least confident about. Take a look at those.

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: What are your thoughts?

Silence: *(for 2 seconds)*

Wat1399: Well, in thinking about how I might have responded, that top one about mathematics. I really don't teach anything related to mathematics at the level that I teach so I would not have felt confident in that in any fashion (Laughing) whether its cultural or not, but with the contribution to science that is something that I have worked on. And personally, I have tried to go back and find contributors to healthcare development and I've tried to identify a group of people that the students can choose from who were from different cultures or races so that they could self-identify. Whether it is a male Hispanic, a female Hispanic, and Asian female. You know; all different things. So I feel like I do that I think part of that is my healthcare background. And working in practice you had to

consider these things sort of I guess in front of the curve. But, so whereas I might feel comfortable with that I can see how others might have expressed discomfort.

Silence: (*for 3 seconds*)

Jac750: Same here. I teach Middle School language arts. So, those top two would be you know, probably middle line for me and then to praise English language learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language. I don't know that. I don't speak any other languages to be able to give that praise. Do you understand what I'm saying? Like, that's why I didn't have a high comfort level for that one. Just me personally.

Facilitator. Yes, yes. I understand most of the participants in the survey indicated that they only spoke one language. However, there were some participants; I don't recall the information right now. They are trilingual. We do have some staff that are trilingual. But, I just think it's interesting. I think these points are interesting. I think that these are areas where we as a district or as a profession could definitely make improvements. I think that's definitely the case.

Ele2059: Facilitator? I think for, in the part you were speaking of language learners. For this year, I had a student who was an Asian American so I got to learn some Japanese in order to praise him and this was an impact of this culturally responsive teaching professional development that we've been doing in the district. I think that is something I read somewhere and I was like, oh, I really only have him. I can praise him in Japanese. So even though teachers don't know another language, teachers can learn a couple of words. I think that is very valuable for the students' confidence. Like when I learn *Arigato, konnichiwa* or things like that. Because I know, as I am a natural bilingual, as you know, I can praise students in English, Spanish or a little bit of French. But, even

though we don't know any other language if we have a little corner in our classroom with ways to say good job in different languages according to your students' needs, I think that would be very great for your students.

Facilitator: Thank you. Thank you. So I'm interested in knowing something. I'm going to start asking you a couple questions. If you see me looking down, I'm just looking at my paper. How confident do you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse kids? How confident are you in general?

Silence: *(for 4 seconds)*

Jac750: Well, this is where you wanted to know the impact of doing professional development. I feel a lot more comfortable this school year and this was my second year teaching eighth grade and eighth grade does... There. The curriculum that I walked into was pretty ummm heavy in like looking at like, you said, one picture of an American. That's literally one article that we read. Like what is an American and it goes all through that. So we discussed a lot of that last year. And you know read diverse texts like...my... What I read in class didn't change a whole lot but the discussion around it changed so much like my confidence has really gone up. Well, I would say confidence and necessity. Like to me. I didn't feel like I needed to get into all of that. Thank you.[inaudible] But after going through this workshop, if I don't do it then whose gonna do it? Nobody. I need to have these conversations and I think that by product made my confidence go up. Because I was like, well, you know and I have not had any negative impact or students anything- they were all you know eager to talk about it and it was really valid and good lessons. And we were having the discussions.

Facilitator: So Leslie, you indicated that after you participated in the professional development that you felt more confident. What about the professional development made you more confident?

Silence: *(for a second)*

Jac750: (Inaudible) Well, I would say just having well maybe like the license of you don't have to know everything. Your kids already know a lot of stuff. Just be the facilitator. Like you don't have to go into it because like right when I was doing my student teaching, that was back in 2006 and I was in Ohio and I had mostly white students. I did a whole Black History Month unit in my language arts class because the history teacher, the social studies teacher, wasn't doing that. Hang on Baby and because they weren't, so I was like I should do Black History Month. You know? It was great and my students they really loved it. And then when I moved to the study school district during my first year of teaching I tried to just do my same Black History Month Unit. I really got some backlash like who are you to teach us? I was like, okay never mind. I'm not going to do that. You know, I don't think there's any way that's not even my area but then coming in doing this workshop it was kind of like it doesn't matter that I'm white. I am your teacher and we need to talk about this. Everybody needs to talk about this. Let's talk about it. And here's what I look like. It's kind of... I felt..... and it was especially when we had our session October. It was when The Lumbee lady spoke, and she said if you are not teaching Native American history, you are causing the problem and I was like, well, I'm not teaching Native American history.

BRA1514: I think that was my aha moment to. It wa was that, you know, awareness and responsibility. I think for me I didn't have great confidence in who I was and how well it

would be received as a white woman. And I want to say that maybe I use that as an excuse and through our professional development know now, I feel Honorbound to be culturally responsive and to have that discussion with students and to go there. I think that you know, our confidence has increased because of the dynamics and in our professional development and with each other and realizing that you know that we have a responsibility to bring change.

Wat1399: I am teaching at the high school level. I think one of the things in developing your strategies, you have to understand some things about them developmentally. You know, you can't ever do... can't do a something that is going to make them not participate or uncomfortable. But, teenagers like to talk about themselves. [Laughing] So, you know leveraging that I have a couple of things that I try to work into and this is after you make rules in the classroom and you develop some level of trust and that type of thing but it's always fun. There's two things that I can think of that always had a really nice discussion and one is what does your family eat for Thanksgiving? And they will really loosen up about oh, this is what we always have or it's not Thanksgiving unless my Grandma makes this and you know, then they all start really participating because that is not a dangerous area food. You know. [Laughing] Everybody likes food. And so they do really well with that discussion and the other one that I get really good results with like I say I teach in Health sciences is, "When you're sick, what does your mom do? Like, are you chicken noodle soup or are you [inaudible]? You know and that always stimulates a really good discussion and sometimes some interesting cultural things come out related to that. So they get more comfortable sharing and if you can get them sharing and hearing each other

there seems to be a better. It's not just you the teacher; it's them accepting each other and them

seeing hey well, I think that's kind of cool. My family doesn't do that, but, I like that idea. So those are a couple of things and I've tried to do that are I guess safe cultural open up the conversation.

Ele2059: As Wat1399 said, I think she teaches High School where I teach kindergarten. So something that worked very well for me was connecting with parents by sending surveys. Please share something about your family's heritage. Even if it was, I don't know from Ohio or New York or maybe they had Italian roots or they were coming from Cuba or things like that. I think it was very nice. Seeing how the little kids in kindergarten are able to understand that our differences make us unique. I think that is something that they understood how we have to be respectful to others; how to appreciate culture; and as I am a language teacher I think that was easier for me in a way because I teach not only Spanish but I am also teaching my culture. And also to share about other Spanish-speaking countries. So I think I'm reinforcing my views as a global educator and I have been loving sharing all of what we have been learning with the professional development facilitator. Yeah in our meetings, and yes, I think it's been very positive.

Facilitator: So thank you. I'm interested in knowing though, are there any personal or professional factors that negatively impacted your confidence? So what that means is like I heard I think it was Leslie or it may have been Kelly. Someone said, "Well, I wasn't... I didn't feel confident to be talking about black history because I was a white lady." I feel like that's maybe a personal factor that may be negatively influencing your confidence



level. So are there other things like that that perhaps cause us to have negative feelings or that negatively influence us and cause us to have lower confidence?

Silence: *(for 2 seconds)*

Wat1399: You know, you have the experience where because you're not totally sensitive to all the nuances. Like Hispanics the all the different or Asian. It is very insulting for a Japanese person to be assumed to be Chinese. (Laughing) So I happen to know a little bit of Mandarin Chinese and if I need to use it then I will. You know? So you're almost afraid that in your effort you might be offensive. Any even in black culture? Not everyone is from Africa, but maybe you know Haiti or you know, there may be some other and so sometimes when we can assume something and it gets us in trouble. And I think we are fearful that we might step the wrong way.

Silence: *(for 4 seconds)*

Facilitator: Okay. All right. Thank you. And so we have talked about confidence level and what it was like before you participated in the PD and what it's like now. Can we talk a little bit about sort of like preparing educators and preparing others? What suggestions do you have for us or for everybody to better prepare your colleagues so that teach effectively in a diverse setting?

Wat1399: So I just I just thought about this this week and I'm going to say this and then jump off because I'm sorry, but you know, we had that federal government tracking for English as a second language.

Silence: *(for 2 seconds)*

Facilitator: Any thoughts?

Student: Yeah, it's the clever charm. Elevate. I don't know if you are familiar but I'm required if someone's exited out of the English as a second language. They still track them for so many years and I've been teaching for two and a half years at subject school district, and I had never heard of it. I had to fill out this form this week. So I felt like you know, we really need an orientation piece for new instructors coming in so that they are exposed to this whole concept because you are not exposed at all. So it needs to be in an orientation piece. That's my suggestion. Anyway, (inaudible).

Facilitator: What do you mean? You're not exposed at all? What do you mean?

Wat1399: No one goes to you know to Rapid identity. And then you have canvas and you have different things on there. Okay. There's been this blue charm there with a c on it that I had no idea what that was. Nobody said anything. Come to find out that is clever and that's how you get to your elevation form to fill out that the federal government mandates that you do and tracking these English as a second language students. Okay. So for two and a half years, I've not done this. That's why I felt terrible. I felt like I didn't even know. I might have a kid in here. So where did I go wrong with them? So then I started digging around and saying hey, how do I get to this form? Where is it? Blah, blah blah. Then I realized that was not a part of any orientation that I had coming in as a new instructor. I can be very sensitive to these issues. But if I don't have the access to the form or knowledge that this is what I need to do then I'm going to fall down on my job. So, I would just suggest that this whole idea of sensitivity not just be a professional development after you've been in the system for a while, but that it become part of a regulated or monitored orientation piece.

BRA1514: part of a mentorship component, perhaps.

Wat1399: Yes. Yes.

Facilitator: Thank you, Ms. Wat1399. I appreciate you. Thank you. (Wat1399 logs off of the video conference).

Ele2059: I just wanted to say that an idea that come up to me like to encourage educators and to develop more global awareness or cultural awareness could be as a district like encourage global projects. For example in each school, okay, like it's not necessary to have like a formal global school to do this.

BRA1514: Just reading or something that we do together that we have a discussion that can be generated whether it's a school or a district wide where we're reading and discussing things. I think that's very fine.

Ele2059: Yeah. That's my feeling like we are we are reading this book that we have been for the professional development. So we could have like a Zoom book discussion about that. I know we cannot say mandatory. With these recent times it is so sensitive about what happened with George in Minneapolis. And I think now it is mandatory as teachers. I think we know this but I think we have to speak up also for all our colleagues. We have to find a way now we know that Zoom is available forever, we could have discussions at our house. You know what I mean? Like maybe Saturday at 11 in the morning. Okay, we're going to join this racial discussion about this book of cultural awareness on a chapter. Okay, let's join together. A lot of teachers are in book clubs and they like book clubs. So this could be like a book club of global awareness.

BRA1514. I love it, ele2950. I agree with you completely. I think that you know the online learning that we've been doing can translate into what we're doing professionally

and people can voluntarily be involved in this when you can have you know, two three four hundred people in a virtual conference. We can do the same thing with our professional development and our cultural development. Yes.

Facilitator: So what book were you holding up BRA1514?

Jac750: Well, she has my book.

BRA1514: That's right. Jac750 was sharing with me. Jason Reynolds is one of our favorite YA authors and he just he presents history in a very real and relatable manner and our kids really, you know, they can touch with him. Ms. Jac750 and I have been shopping on First Book and finding treasures and this was one that you know, I didn't read the adult version. This is the kid version but the original It talks about the history of America and racism in America in a very real and relatable way. And I think this is something that we can bring into our classroom to start and have those discussions with the kids and you know, whether it's the library working with the classroom teacher. Or through book clubs and things where we can open up that conversation and hopefully expand our knowledge or understanding and think about change through literature. That's that safe area where we can through a book or through a character where we can discuss the things that we see that are not right in our world.

Facilitator: Wonder what that would look like right now if we were in school; if we were in session because you guys are in the Middle School. What would that look like in your middle school classrooms?

Jac750: Whoa! I can tell you. If I had class this past week, like if we had school this week, my kids would have come in Tuesday fired up (inaudible)

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Jac750: Because we've been talking about this all year. So I don't know and I think it is just about even though it's difficult to talk about and you know with the little kindergarteners your conversation could be totally different but where I'm sitting with eighth graders, they are hearing everything and getting some of it. They're not understanding everything of course. But I was reading the book, *Lies My Teacher Told Me* all year and that really (inaudible). I would just be reading on my own during silent reading at the beginning of class and going (gasping, shaking head). And the kids were like, "What?! Well, are you gonna tell us what you are reading that was causing you to get so mad?" And I'm like, well I can read it to you but it's so hard to understand. That's why I love *Stamped* because it is he breaks it down and like when he drops the sentence that makes you huh. He'll say, "Let me say that again." And then you get the whole sentence again. Like to emphasize and to highlight. Y'all this is what the people thought and that's how we are where we are today and when you let the students and all that history. It's just going to empower them. You know what I mean. And I'm saying let them in on the history like because I did teach about Native Americans this year and the kids said to me, I cannot believe I never knew any of this and I am [inaudible]! And I said, "I never knew any of this and I am 37! So there you go." So they want to know it and I don't know why I was well, I know why; I was nervous before. Because I'd had a backlash. So, but now I'm kind of like, even if a couple of kids say something negative, I don't care because I know like I'm not gonna let that stop me. I should say I do care but I'm not going to let that stop me. I'm going to keep going because the majority are enjoying feeling empowered getting out in front.

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: Wow, thank you guys. That, that, that's why this is so important. And I'm so proud of us for being participants in it. I don't think that the work is going to stop with us; I think it is going to continue to regenerate. That's excellent! Well, does anyone have any questions or closing comments that you want to make?

Ele2059: I'm just want to say thank you. Thank you Jac750, BRA1514. Thank you so much for being there to support my learning journey about this. I didn't know about... to be honest when I moved to the United States that there was so many racism. I didn't know that. I should have known that. Like when someone, a previous teacher said to me....All people who look Hispanic are from Mexico. And I was like no. I'm from South America. Peru. Next to the Pacific Ocean. I mean, I need a try and then I realized after our conversations another understanding with the American education policy. And then we learned about American history at the (location) with that training that was so powerful. Then I realized. I understood more about the American history and of course. It's not maybe that this generation's fault. I mean, I still believe that there is Google and you can read about that and be educated. But okay, I'm not going to say that. But I think we as teachers, we are building this future in our students and this is my hope. And I feel so blessed to work with you and I feel so thankful for your understanding and your open-mindedness. That really melts my heart that there is a better future for all of us. I mean this pandemic shows how global we are. We are global citizens. It is not just one nationality. It is not just one country. We need an understanding and we need to unite our world in a way to be more caring and loving and supportive to each other. So thank you for that.

Facilitator: Jac750 and BRA1514, I think Ele2059 mentioned that she went to the REI training. Ele2059, is that what you were talking about? Ele2059?

Ele2059: Yes.

Facilitator: Have you all, BRA1514 and Jac750, have y'all had an opportunity to be a part of that too?

Jac750: It was like in August when we were on the list. Right? They wanted all of those social studies teachers in my building because if you recall we had a bit of a scandal in December. So they were pushed to the front of the line and I did not get to go. However, one of the social studies teachers when she came back she said you probably still want to go but she's like she was telling me a lot of the things and she's like you already know all this I think. And I was like, but I still want to go. So, I don't know when. I don't know when they'll be able to do another one. We don't know what's going on with anything, but hopefully it'll come and I'll get to go.

BRA1514: For me, the entire year long professional development. Every time we met, I learned more and was then able to do better. And I think that's just the theme the whole way through. When you know better, you do better. And this is just a great way to get to be with our colleagues and learn together and work together to create lessons and resources and to be able to be united together in making the world a better place.

Jac750: Which makes me want to ask are you all presenting at the, the, I don't even remember what it's called.

Facilitator: Director of Student Service's event?

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: I'm not. Are you guys?

Jac750: Beckham and I are going to and with Ms. Britt. We're all three going to just talk about what we did this year. You know, we're presenting I want to make sure I go to your session, but I think you still have another day if you want to submit a proposal. I don't know because I think that's where I'm at right now. But I feel like I need adult collaboration. I'm doing a good job with my little eighth grader. I need to talk to more adults because this like she said when we know better we do better. So I think there's a lot of people that are doing the best they can in there. Just haven't heard this.

Facilitator: It's a good [inaudible]

BRA1514: Ms. Facilitator, you should present all of the data that you're collecting. You should present. Yes, just share what you've been doing.

Facilitator: Thank you all for encouraging me. I would like to do that because there's a purpose. There's a real purpose behind this and it will affect children. It will affect their lives and I believe that wholeheartedly. I just got to get finished first. [Laughing]

Jac750: Understood.

Facilitator: Maybe at the next one. I'm a bit slow to analyze and think about things. I am still processing. But, I promise you that I will. I do need that collaboration with adults to hold me accountable and to help me to continue to grow. So I'm glad that you said that I will push myself. I can't push it this year.

Student: You've got a lot on your plate right now. We totally understand.

Facilitator: I do want to say thank you all so much. I love you. I love the work that you're doing and I respect you. I appreciate you for consenting to participate in this focus group.

BRA1514: Thank you for the opportunity. We appreciate what you're doing.



Facilitator: You're welcome. I look forward to having more conversations with you about culturally responsiveness in the future. All right, bye-bye. Enjoy your afternoon!

Student: [Inaudible] You, too.

Transcription of Focus Group #2  
Date: 6/30/2020

6/30/2020 9:00

60 - minute focus group session was held via Zoom platform beginning at 9:00 p.m.  
4 participants attended from 4 different schools

**Facilitator:** Are there any personal and/ or professional factors that positively impacted your confidence in teaching culturally diverse students?

Silence: *(for 4 seconds)*

Dan3062: Personally, that's who you know, I try to model my life after and like I said, he was my biggest role model (my grandfather). And so, you know, I just try not to see... try to see no color. I just look at people as individuals and try to look at their heart and try to you know, try to love everybody. And that's what I try to teach my kids; my daughter and my son. You know try to teach them. So, yeah, that's personally for me. I would say that's my biggest. He's my biggest role model.

Facilitator: Thank you.

**Wil600:** That's the greatest one.

Silence: *(for 6 seconds)*

Facilitator: Okay, [inaudible]

**Pra3170:** That is totally the best thing; are our role models in life because I know that if it had not been for certain people in my past, then I would not have been prepared to have students from various cultures and various religious backgrounds. There is some of everything; there are so many subcategories in a classroom. And be able to adapt to the situation but what Dan3062 was saying was so powerful and having that role model to teach me how to be flexible and that everybody has a purpose. There's a purpose for everyone. We aren't the end-all-be-all. You aren't perfect. Everybody's here to help

everyone else and so having that role model to help navigate us through to be a little bit better and a little bit more flexible with other people and of cultures. All those other categories that there are in a classroom, I think is most powerful things. So, I want to go to Georgia, Dan3062.

Silence: *(for 4 seconds)*

Facilitator: Well, if it helps us all, we all might need to go to Georgia [Laughing]

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Klo2841: Let's take America to Georgia,

Silence: *(for 5 seconds)*

Klo2841: For me, I grew up in a very rural small town in, Tennessee. And I was very blessed that my family and my extended family are very huge advocates on loving everybody and it's what's on the inside that counts and you know your actions speak louder than your words. All that good stuff, but the town I was in didn't always necessarily reflect that. We're not very diverse out in the country and I think that definitely going to school

Silence: *(for a second)*

Klo2841: Umm

Silence: *(for a second)*

Klo2841: not having a teacher that wasn't white until my 11th grade year, which was my Spanish teacher; that was something that until I got older I didn't realize that that wasn't normal. And that well it might be normal. I'm not really sure of everybody's experience. But you know, coming to my current school and having a very diverse teacher population

that also reflects our student population... I do feel like by younger childhood years really, I guess hindered my ability to fully be aware and competent of others.

Silence: *(for 5 seconds)*

Facilitator: All right, thank you. Is there....So we're wrapping up. Is there anything that you would like to add to assist District leaders in preparing teachers to teach culturally diverse students?

Silence: *(for 8 seconds)*

Dan3062: [inaudible]

Wil600: No, go ahead

Dan3062: [inaudible] I've been talking a lot. I don't want to monopolize the conversation. I was able to attend the Racial Equity training. That has been very beneficial. Just in understanding the history of our country and just you know, things like that and how you know culture impacts that. So anyway, so I think that you know, if as many teacher as possible that can participate in that I think that would really be helpful for us as a district and the teachers that we have. A couple of other things. I was just looking up some things. I was having a conversation with friends recently. We had some friends over this weekend. It was my son's birthday and so we were celebrating. We were just talking about everything that's been going on lately. And you know, one thing we talked about was, you know my big thing is I'm an educator. So we kind of talked about, you know, the systemic things as far as education. But one thing my friend talked about was just the breakdown of just, you know, American families in general. And I was looking up some statistics just on African-American families, you know, this morning. And you know by far, you know 65% of African-American families are single household

families. So that's just something, you know, just kind of something like I say. I don't have all the solutions or anything like that and we're not going to fix this stuff, you know easily, but that's just something to kind of keep in mind, you know going forward. And per thousand households, per thousand births there are about twenty seven point one African-American mother's that are seeking out abortion. So they aren't even allowing their kids to be born because they feel like they're not adequate enough to raise those children effectively. And so, anyway. So I was listening to the Governor's address yesterday. I don't know if you all had an opportunity to see that? But he just talked a lot about systemic things as far as healthcare and things such as that. And how you know, you know people from the African American population and just in general how the pandemic is affecting those families and you know that they have to work, you know, those service jobs and they're not as apt to take care of themselves physically and health-wise and so, you know, we just have kind of a greater problem in America dealing with that. I think we just got to take those things into account, you know as educators moving forward those different things. So...

Facilitator: So Dan3062, you said a whole lot. I'm glad you did. I'm glad you did. I want to respect people's time, so if anybody has to hop off you can. But you said something interesting about Racial Equity training. We may not all know about the REI or racial equity training. I want you talk about that real quick. And then also you mentioned something about systemic things that we might be doing in education. That might kind of be hindering kids. I think that's what you implied. So what do you think that we're doing in education? That might be...

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: Discriminatory, is that what you mean?

Dan3062: Well, [Laughing] I don't know that I mean ..I don't. One thing that I have been a part of because of the Racial Equity training. One thing that you know, I can say that I'm sure you know, we had a focus group meeting. Even now in the district, you know to continue that. We are continuing those discussions and one thing that I learned about at the last meeting that we had, was and this is like I said, this is no one's fault. I'm not... there's no blame being placed here or anything like that. But, this is just the statistics. I mean we have and this is across America. Eight-five percent of the teachers that we have in America are white. You know, white females. So. You know if we. And if you look at the subject school district, you know our population of students, you know, we have 30, 30, 30 and then you know others.

So, you know, if 85% of the teachers are white female then you know, that's kind of a systemic thing that you know, just kind of kind of needs to be, you know looked at, you know and talked about and see how we can, what are the solutions. Like I said, maybe. It just something that needs to kind of be talked about. So anyway, so that's just kind of thing.

Facilitator: Thank you Dan3062. You are just scratching the surface. I got you. Here's what's interesting though about that. Despite the fact that and that's not just in the subject school district; that's across the nation. There are lots of demographics out there about what the teaching force looks like across America, and those statistics are pretty comparable. That's why I think that this work is interesting because we need to know despite the fact that we may have 88 percent of the population or the teaching force in the subject school district is white teachers, I want to know how efficacious are they. How do

they feel about their confidence? How prepared do they feel; how confident do they feel to teach culturally diverse kids? What's interesting about that I think also is to take that mean score for that demographic and compare it to other demographic groups like the Hispanic teachers and the Asian teachers and compare it to the African-American teachers. Then see if those means scores are different. Is there a different confidence level. I know I'm going way, way too deep but that's one of the interesting things that I'm hoping is going to come out of this research. I'm sorry, so my question is what is the difference? I think what you're saying is that the district needs to continue to provide opportunities like the REI training for as many teachers as possible to participate. So the REI training is a two-day off campus event. I don't want to say it's a professional development, but it's sort of like professional development and you learn about...it's called it stands for racial Equity Institute, right? Do all of you know about the racial Equity Institute Training?

Pra3170: I attended the groundwater piece of that. So I didn't go to the 2 day training. I went to the one-day training but it was I think it's like the base level piece of ground water.

Facilitator: Okay in in like two sentences, what could you say? How would you describe REI training?

Silence: *(for 4 seconds)*

Facilitator: Dan3062

Dan3062: It is basically. I would say it's a historical account of the establishment of our country and just how culturally and ethnically. It is from different perspectives. It's about how our country was established from back then even until today. Like Pra3170 was

saying, just how different systemic and different kinds programs have been established. How we act and how and why they have kind of come to be; how things are kind of right now in our country. How did those things kind of come to be the way they are; through a historical account with analysis .So it kind of talks about that.

Facilitator: it talks about that in terms of Educational Systems, the healthcare system, and lots of different American systems that are in place. It highlights which structures were put in place; what laws were put in place and it tells the real history of it. Then of course, you take that real history and then you compare it to like current phenomenon or statistics. You analyze and compare it to what is happening and you will understand the reason why there were protests in the streets of the nation.

Pra3170: I think the Governor sort of skimmed the surface in his speech on yesterday to where he was like really, really going surface level with how it's looking in our state. To where COVID is affecting the population. But, also how other things such as how people are being treated and how it's less likely for a female in our state to be able to actually have a kid of normal birth weight. They went into so many statistics with that at the groundwater session. I was really interested in the REI training; the full REI training because all of the statistics of how its so different for one culture. And it's totally different for other cultures. So actually taking a look at that, but I think the Governor sort of scratched the surface on yesterday with his speech. But looking in depth with that and noticing that it's not actually the case and that's been one of my things; it's not Equitable in any way, shape, form or fashion. I want to piggyback off of what Klo2841 said. It was the same for me with not having a teacher that was culturally diverse until High School. I thought that I was just the only crazy person who's never had an African-American



teacher until my 12th grade year. It was by my last year of high school! I went to an elementary school where no one in the school looked like me and no one in middle school looked like me. I just thought okay, cool. Then it goes into the religion and church being the most segregated place on the planet and how it's totally different there. You see a lot of people that look like you more so there and then how that's actually evolving and changing now.

Silence: *(for a second)*

Facilitator: [inaudible] What can district leaders do to prepare teachers?

Silence: *(for a second)*

Pra3170: But for the district, I think actually looking in

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: Tell me what I can write. It's just...Tell me what we can do.

Pra3170: for the district. I think continuously looking at how the

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Pra3170: how how it looks different because for me it was and you know this and I hope that I'm not stepping on anybody's toes, but for me as a 40 something [muffled] woman who has been in the educational system for more than a single digit number of years to walk into a school where there are only two people of color in the entire building?! That was just like wow and so in this day and time whenever the school population does not mirror that and that was just a wow for me. We're in 2020. Okay. So who do they have as an advocate? Because there aren't people who actually know what they're going through. So like I said, to walk in the school system or to walk into a school at this day and time

and to have that be the case. It's changed a lot since the first day that I walked in but to have that happen. And as an adult and not have somebody except for one other. Be able to go to them and say hey, how you doing? You don't know how different it is until...so I can only imagine for a little kid who is five or six years old to not see anybody that actually looks comparable to them. They don't know what to do and they feel uneasy. So...

Facilitator: So recruitment. You would advise district leaders to work on recruitment right?

Pra3170: Recruitment. To work on flexibility of those that are in place because recruitment depends on people. Because the teaching profession is something that because of funding people aren't really looking to actually go into the teaching profession any longer. So that's not one of those big fields that a lot of people are wanting to actively go into so recruitment. Getting [inaudible]. Re-educating people that are there. And actually even bringing in volunteers from other places and getting all of the stakeholders in the community to buy into your mission and vision.

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Pra3170: Educating these people because it takes more than just the people that are standing there because oftentimes like I said, they don't look like or mirror the population. So actually bringing in some of those other stakeholders. It'll help.

Facilitator: Okay, that's fair. So a diverse teaching population; training the teachers, the current teacher population and involving stakeholders and sending as many people as possible to REI training or comparable training. Okay, any other suggestions for how we need to prepare our colleagues to teach diverse kids?

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Wil600: Listen

Silence: *(for a second)*

Student: Sorry, Wil600. Go ahead. Oh, I'm just gonna say we just need to listen, you know, we need to listen to...

Silence: *(for 11 seconds)*

Facilitator: I can't hear you. Can you check your [inaudible]

Silence: *(for 6 seconds)*

Facilitator: It it doesn't look like you're muted.

Wil600: Okay, I know your [inaudible]

Facilitator: okay. Can you say that again?

Wil600: I just think that we need to listen as teachers. We need to listen to other teachers and staff and the children. We need to listen and make them feel valued and learn from them and let them teach the class, you know about their cultures.

Silence: *(for 2 seconds)*

Facilitator: Excellent. I love that Wil600.

Klo2841: I was going to say I absolutely think that more training. I also think that encouraging staff through any of the schools to find a way to get the students involved. I think that you know, the way the experiences they have especially in high school because that's the most recent they'll remember going out into the workforce or to college getting them involved in acceptance and inclusion of anything. Be that religion or cultures. I think that getting the students involved is something that the staff can work on, be it

through their lessons when they are sharing some good news in the morning. Make sure that you include people from all different cultures and all different backgrounds.

Silence: *(for 2 seconds)*

Facilitator: Guys, I just want to say thank you. I want to give you an opportunity to make closing remarks.

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: And if they're not [inaudible]

Wil600: I enjoyed hearing everybody's views.

Facilitator: I want to say guys we went way longer than 30 minutes. We went for 60 mins plus and I'm sorry for that but I do want to say thank you. With schools being closed. I don't always have as many opportunities now to have adult interaction and to have these kinds of a conversations, particularly during complicated times like we're having right now, so I really appreciate your perspective. Thanks for this opportunity to talk with you. I do want to say that I absolutely love that you were so passionate about this and that you're open and that you're willing to have those conversations because having that awareness and having that willingness to have those conversations is going to eventually affect the change that we all want to happen. So thank you very much. I appreciate you.

Dan3062: [inaudible] Facilitator for what you doing? I know it's part of your graduate work and something that you have to do but it's very timely right now. And so I really appreciate that and then the second thing is I appreciate everybody else. Just everybody sharing and everybody listening. Like you said Wil600 just everybody being willing to listen being willing to have you know, these tough conversations because it's not always

comfortable, you know to have these conversations but right now it's definitely needed.

So, yeah, so I really appreciate everybody being willing to listen and willing to share

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: Thank you all so much. You all have a wonderful rest of your day and have a wonderful summer break.

Dan3260: Yes, you too. Have a great summer.

Facilitator: Bye.

Silence: *(for 19 seconds)*

## Transcription of Focus Group #3

Date: 7/1/2020

1:00 pm

7/1/2020 1:00

70-minute focus group session was held via Zoom Platform beginning at 1:00 p.m.  
2 participants attended from 1 school

Silence: *(for 57 seconds)*

Facilitator: I am sorry.

Silence: *(for 6 seconds)*

Facilitator: Hello. Hello.

Fal7093: Hello

Facilitator: I am so sorry for my tardiness, but I was in an interview. So I was trying to wrap it up really quickly.

And1296: All right?

Facilitator: Okay. I don't think I know you all. I have never met you. My name is

Facilitator. I'm the assistant principal over here at Pseudo Name School and I am the person behind that long survey about culturally responsive teaching practices that you took a couple of weeks ago. I got some interesting results, but the results are just numbers at this point. I'm really looking forward to getting some insight and clues as to why people believe certain things. And so, that's what the purpose of this focus group is. So I'm glad that you all are interested in sharing your insights with me. I will respect your time. So I'm anticipating that this will take about 30 -45 minutes. We will end it whenever you want to end it. In the group this morning, they talked for about an hour, but that's not because of me. They just kept talking.

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: Okay, I am going to share my screen for just a moment.

Silence: *(for 4 seconds)*

Facilitator: But while I'm trying to figure out how to share my screen with y'all, do you feel comfortable introducing yourself?

Fal7093: Sure. My name is Fal7093. I have been a sixth grade teacher at Pseudo Name School. Next year they are switching me. I will do eighth grade science, but I'm a 6th grade science teacher up until now. I taught at Pseudo Name School for two years and then when that school moved then I came up with everyone to the new school. So I'm going to my seventh year of teaching. I've done all of my teaching including my student teaching in the subject school district. So I'm pretty well versed in the community and demographics and all of that.

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: [inaudible]

Silence: *(for a second)*

Facilitator: Thank you.

And1296: And I am And1296. I've been teaching for 23 years. I started off in Arizona. My first teaching job was actually at the Apache Indian Reservation. So I was one of for non-native teachers that went there and I taught there for two years. My husband was transferred to nearby Urban City and I started in Pseudo Name School with Pseudo Name Principal. Well, he hired me so it's his fault. I have been at Pseudo Name School either

teaching language-arts or social studies in seventh and eighth grade since 2001. So we're excited to have Fal7093 up in 8<sup>th</sup> grade dealing with us and our creativity. So wow.

Facilitator: That's some interesting experiences. That's awesome. I have been teaching 26 years, excuse me, 25 years. 26 or something like that. I started at Pseudo Name School 25 years ago, then they tore that school down so I transferred to the replacement school. I've spent my entire career there until I came here this year. We've done the welcome and introductions. So let's start our discussion. I've just got about eight questions that I'd like for you all to respond to as a participant. I'm really excited. There's just two of you because that means I won't have to do as much typing.

Silence: *(for 2 seconds)*

Facilitator: [inaudible] I will not associate your name on anything you all say. I'm going to give you the opportunity to respond to 8-10 questions and then at the end if you want to make any closing remarks you can. I do have to read the informed consent form to get your permission. So this focus group and what you are about to participate in is for my doctoral dissertation. The purpose of the research is to determine the effects of culturally responsive teaching practices. This work is my own and I am not doing it as a condition of my employment of the Subject School Day. I have to make that clear. This endeavor is a component of my doctoral studies. It is ironic though that the district in my opinion is already doing a lot of work in this area. So I do believe that this will definitely help us. So participation in this study. Hold on. I'm trying to ad-lib. I anticipate that participation in the study as a participant in a focus group will last about 30 – 45 minutes. Do I have



your permission to record the focus group? If you consent it will make it easier for me to transcribe your comments. Do I have your consent to record?

And1296: Yes. Yes.

Facilitator: All right and if at any point though, you feel uncomfortable answering a question; you don't have to answer the questions. You may also refuse to participate in the study at any point. Just let me know that you no longer want to participate and none of your information will be included. I will not use your name whenever I'm recording anything. I'm going to use that unique identifying acronym that you came up with and the results of this research is going to be published in my dissertation and hopefully that'll be the most talking that I do and then I'll let you all do all of the talking. This is some artwork. Look. I'm using this as my icebreaker for us to begin talking about cultural diversity. This is an artwork that I found by this artist Mohtz. She wanted to depict the cultural diversity that is representative of Asia. So tell me what do you think? What do you think of whenever you look at this in terms of cultural diversity?

Silence: *(for 6 seconds)*

Fal7093: I notice a lot of differences among skin tones and kinds of dress. I see various kinds of head coverings that some people, some cultures use as opposed to others. Even as far as jewelry, makeup, different kinds of markings and things on faces or...

Silence: *(for 2 seconds)*

And1296: Like that, I see. I mean everybody there is beautiful for sure. I just love all the differences there. I love that she used all ladies so much. As a social studies teacher my first thing when I think of Asia is I started trying to go country with person and go okay this person is southeast Asia and this person must be more so towards the mountainous

region or something to that effect, but to look at you know, their faces and their features. Their outfits are absolutely stunning and beautiful so that part, you know from the girl perspective is very, you know, intriguing. I guess but like Fal7093 said the head covering. Some of the head coverings are very drastic and others are very, you know minute or non-existent. So that's one thing and then the difference in the skin tones that they go from very pale to very beautifully brown red tones. So almost Native American ish.

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: You will have some really keen insight when I looked at this and I was simply thinking of China but wasn't aware. I have to be transparent. I wasn't aware that there are 48 different countries in Asia, you know China, Pakistan, Turkey Iran, Thailand, Malaysia Nepal, there's so... In contrast, it reminds me... The diversity that we have here in the United States. There are so many different cultures.

And1296: Right and one thing our students. I know from the social aspect. They think automatically, you know, either Chinese food or Asian food or they'll think Japanese or technology. And I don't think a lot of the students do associate India or Turkey or those, you know southeastern nations as being part of being the whole continent of Asia, what is truly Asian, you know, or they'll think it's one language, you know sort of thing and there's a difference between language and culture. And so it's this kind of thing. I love using this in the classroom because it opens a lot of those conversations with, you know, terminology and kids are amazing. Really insightful, you know and they'll be the first to be transparent about themselves too.

Facilitator: [inaudible] be good. So thank you for that. I thought that it would be interesting for me to share with you some preliminary results from the survey. This data

was collected a couple of weeks ago. There were two parts to the survey. The first part was about teacher self-efficacy, how confident do you feel to teach. How do you feel about certain beliefs and the second part was about teaching outcomes. So this data is from the teacher confidence part. The top three beliefs were...

Silence: *(for a second)*

Facilitator: [inaudible] depict the areas across the district that teachers felt the least confident in. There are pretty low mean scores there that you probably see and the bottom three those were the areas where teachers feel the most confident. I'm going to give you a second to take a look at that and comment if you like.

Silence: *(for 19 seconds)*

Fal7093: I think it's interesting that the ones that teachers felt most confident in had to do with the students in their room. So either building relationships making them feel important building a sense of trust or something like that. Like we know how to deal with the kids right in front of us. Like I know how to make, you know, Victor or whoever my Hispanic students or you know students from those kind of cultures. They know how to make them feel welcome and accepted. I know how to make African-American students feel equal and trusted or you know, trusting of me, build those relationships, but when it comes to specific contributions, that's where teachers,

Silence: *(for 2 seconds)*

Fal7093: you know don't have as much confidence. I can honestly say that, you know, I probably you know these ones here that you showed like least confident most confident. I would agree with those even for myself and I vaguely remember answering in that way

when I took the survey, you know, I will say though for the praise English language learners for their accomplishments using the phrase in their native language. I do speak Spanish. So I'm able to at least the Spanish-speaking ELLs which is primarily what we have in the subject school district.. I am able to even hold conversations on the phone with their parents and do that. So that's a skill that I have found useful to myself that I can do. But but you know when it comes to contributions and stuff like I don't know. Laughs Mexico's contribution to Science and Mathematics through whatever, you know, like, I don't really I don't have a ready knowledge of those things

Facilitator: right and to kind of bounce off what you just said. The three lowest ones are almost knowledge-based.

And1296: It's things that we could look up or research. Whereas the things that we seem to be most confident in are the ones that are sometimes the most difficult for teachers to do. Make those connections and how do I build a classroom community and work with our kids and trust and all of that. And I feel like we can really work on those three low and one with just some you know classwork or informational searches and things like that, but I'm kind of proud of us as a district for having high scores in trusting of students and wanting them to be important members of our classroom. I think we've worked really hard on doing that as teachers. And sometimes the relationship is a little more important in the long run than just the content knowledge are knowing who did what on what date. I think that this data on just a surface level is kind of showing up.

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: [inaudible] for the highest and lowest areas in terms of outcome expectations. So I think the way this is organized, these at the.... ones on the top are the highest.

Silence: *(for 2 seconds)*

Facilitator: So, teachers really believe in these outcome expectations. They believe that if they incorporate a variety of teaching methods that it can successfully impact student achievement. They believe that their students' self-esteem can be enhanced when their cultural background is valued and teachers across the district also believe that a positive teacher-student relationship can be established by building a sense of trust. However, they collectively don't think that changing the structure of our classroom so that it's compatible with the students' home culture will increase the motivation of our kids to come to class. And we don't think that the frequency that students' abilities are misdiagnosed will decrease whenever we start looking at standardized test scores and interpreting them with caution or acknowledging the ways that the school culture is different from the students' home culture. We don't think that's going to really help minimize the likelihood of discipline problems in the classroom.

Silence: *(for a second)*

And1296: Those are some interesting findings on the lower end because I don't know I mean and they're still in the 70 percent. They're not in like the ten or twenty percent. So it is the lower ones but I would I mean I think frequently students of ethnically different backgrounds or racially different backgrounds that they really are... I mean, let's face it. Our standardized tests are made for white kids. It just is you know, and they it just is and the background knowledge and everything else. So I do think that there's a huge discrepancy and really being able to tell what students can do using standardized test scores. I also think that the standardized tests we use to test for

Silence: *(for a second)*

Fal7093: [inaudible]

Silence: *(for a second)*

Fal7093: AIG or you know anything like honors students or students with higher IQs. I think that's also an example of those standardized test scores that are it's you know, historically it's made for white kids, you know that come from a certain particular background. So I think we miss a lot of those. I mean, we all know that historically speaking that African-American students are much more likely to be considered for EC. Even I've noticed even at our school that there's a significantly higher ESL population in EC that probably shouldn't be there. They probably should be you know, just it more intensive language help and all of that; I think if we increase their language skills. So with the standardized test, I think I think the standardized test I think of more than just the EOG. I think of those kinds of tests as well. So I think there's a great percentage that are misdiagnosed because of those kinds of considerations.

And1296: I think you know teachers we kind of we get frustrated with standardized test scores. We want to look at what our student can do and what we know they can do and what we've seen them do and then we look at what's on the paper and it just doesn't jive. Confusion about how to meet needs of diverse cultures. A lot of time and although to be honest with the one question changing the structure of the classroom compatible with the students home culture; You know I'm worried there. I guess for lack of a better term, what culture do I pick? We have such a mix of students. You know when I was on the reservation, I only have one culture there. So it was very easy for me to adapt. However, I don't want to make a group of students feel unwelcome because I may be focusing on another group of students and then I don't want to You know, you know stop looking at

that to bring in another culture and they're like wait a minute. You were just doing this; we're getting on a roll and now we're over here, you know, and yeah if we could find a great way, you know, and maybe the kids can help us with this or something. But you know, I guess I want to include all of our kids is kind of holding me back from really working with the students home culture. You know school's its own culture and that's my concern as I don't want to alienate one particular section of my student body for the sake of another but they're both You know equally I guess they're all

Fal7093: they're all equally important.

And1296: Yes, and they're all unique and special and wanted and we need to focus on them. And so if I could find a way to you know, move it without doing that. Maybe it's just me and my own, you know, personal bias or fear or you know may not wanting to step out. Do that maybe the kids, you know, I'm assuming that it may be this way and they're like no teacher, you're fine, you know. Yeah because

FAI7093: you don't want to offend and make it worse either

And1296: that yeah, you know, I don't want to add fuel to the fire. So that was my specifically with that one question. That was my you know, you know, my lower score right?

Fal7093: Because even if you think about it, like even so many people and I hate when people do this. Like they lump all Hispanic students like the same. They all come from Mexico. No, they can come from dozens and dozens and a half different countries. They even have I mean, even if they all speak Spanish like it's different from one country to the next. There are words that mean different things in different countries, and it's you know,

and I when people assume like every Hispanic person is Mexican, I just want to throw up.  
[inaudible]

And1296: What don't you understand? You know and even get some [inaudible].

And1296: Basically, there's just there's so many differences. So to your point and I agree with that a hundred percent. Like I don't like to; you can't just you know, honor and incorporate Hispanic people or African American people because they I mean it's just it's so vastly different. And you know it to do it with fidelity and to do it where I don't just look like what do I do? Hang a Mexican flag in the classroom? Like what does that look like? And how does that like, how do I you know, you don't want to mess it up and especially with all of these things going on in our society right now with all of the racial tension all of these issues going on like I want to be culturally sensitive. And I happen to come from; I actually posted something on Facebook the other day. Like I'm I'm like that. I have a sister who's adopted. She's Chinese. She married to an African-American. They have beautiful kids. My brother-in-law's family has basically become my own. So I live in a multicultural home family. But I don't want to. I don't know look even with that like I still don't want to ostracize anybody; focus in one group too much or not enough for you know, and some of these kids they've been born in America. So some of them even be more identify with American culture than maybe what they came from because they don't know about Guatemalan culture. They've never been there. You know what I mean? Like it's just hard.

And1296: Yeah, so it just I don't want to feel uncomfortable because I think that's important. But then again, I don't want to cause uncomfortable situations, especially with students.



Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: You all are grappling with the some pretty weighty things there. We'll make it easy. Let's make it easier.

Silence: *(for 5 seconds)*

Facilitator: So this phrase culturally diverse students. What does that mean? What does that mean to you?

Silence: *(for 4 seconds)*

And1296: For me, it's twofold for me. Culturally diverse students is a mix of my student body. My student population that is made up from lots of different locations, lots of different cultures. And then I guess a new version of that is really diverse students. I have lots of students that are made up of lots of different cultures and they are diverse and unique in themselves. So not only do I have my mass population; my classroom population or my team population that is made up of lots of different cultures and their awareness of the different cultures, but they themselves are not of just one specific culture. So the diversity and the layers I guess is what makes us a culturally diverse student is having multiple layers [inaudible].

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: It's complex. It's a complex entity. So here, I'm going to start asking questions. How confident do you feel in your ability to teach the kids in your classroom?

How confident do you feel in your ability to teach all of those different cultures?

And1296: I'm going to say that I'm cautiously confident. I don't want to be this all-knowing, all seeking. I'm, you know, this teacher who has all the information and I'm going to give it out. I am holding cautiously in the fact that I am continually learning and

the fact that I want to know more and see more and understand more. I tell my students that and just because I maybe have done this for 20 plus years doesn't mean that your story is not unique or that you have [inaudible] or that you have something to teach me. So I am confident. I like having those conversations. I want to have those lessons and bring about the learning especially if it is about a culture that they have questions about or that they have heard about or that happens to be popular in a new movie or something to that effect, you know, but then again, I don't want to be so confident in the fact that I put off as being, you know kind of all-knowing and unwilling to have that be a two-way street, so I'm consciously confident.

Facilitator: Okay.

Fal7093: Yeah, I like that. Cautiously confident.

And with knowing that I always seek to improve. I always seek to reflect and you know, I look at myself. My attitudes, my beliefs, my thoughts, my knowledge always adding to that making

things better, you know that phrase, you know, if you know better do better.

Like I, I don't think that I'm perfect. I know that I'm not.

But I do honor and value students as individuals regardless of what their cultural background is. Like that's not like I don't use that to define their abilities or their value they're worth their ability to contribute or or to even pigeonhole them into like oh, well, they're going to behave a certain way because of their cultural background.

Like in making those kinds of stereotypes and judgments. So I do feel confident that I can teach culturally diverse students and valuing and honoring contributions of all.

Facilitator: Okay, so I'm going to ask you all something that's a little bit different. So when we talk, different than what I presented to the other groups just because y'all ....I think we can go there. So in terms of like, you know teaching culturally diverse kids, they're all kinds of different things that you have to think about. Right? You have to think about like ways that you're going to develop relationships with your kids. You have to think about how are you going to develop a sense of caring in your classroom? You have to think about respecting diversity and respecting, you know, learning differences. These are some things that you've already been talking about. And then you have to think about how you can involve real life experiences of your kids into the classroom. Or ways that you can think how you can teach about other cultures. Are there opportunities where your kids get to speak their mind and in the classroom, do you allow that? Do you not allow it? Do you model it? Do you model when it's appropriate to do that? So there are lots of different nuances. Setting up an environment that would be conducive for you know culturally diverse kids. So when you think about all of those different things, do you still feel like you're consciously confident?

Silence: *(for 4 seconds)*

And1296: As a social studies teacher. Yes, because there are planned things that I specifically do that I specifically show or kind of like you did with the Icebreaker that I have a specific kind of goal in mind. I want that door to become open or when I was teaching language-arts. We would be reading a specific book or something would happen in the news and we would talk about that other thing. Things, you know with the district starting with the conversations on how do you have what are those conversations?

Fal7093: academic conversations?

And1296: Those ones. Okay with having those more so in the classroom a lot of times in social studies, they sort of come up spontaneously. Kids will ask a question. They'll come in and hey, hey, did you see this or I'll show Student News and know like wait, wait, wait, wait, wait and have a question or it'll be just a hey I heard this on the bus ,what you think and we're walking to lunch. So sometimes it's not necessarily a planned lesson and sometimes your lessons don't always go where you want them to because you'll be talking about a certain thing that happened and you'll diverge. I think being a teacher both of us will pretty much say it's okay to divert if the kids are going that way. It is ok. Also, I found that to kind of say put a hold stop and sometimes I'll let them write for 5 minutes what they want to think and say and then you know, they want to give it or something because it's not the time or place, but I don't want to ignore it. So am I confident in every single one of these questions? I would say a good majority, you know, but there are definitely things that you know, I want to hold them accountable for from learning to their peers. How did they talk to their peers and in middle school it is this is when they learn how to do that. Well, yeah.

Facilitator: So well, so I want to know okay, those are not for you. Sorry. Are there any personal or professional factors that positively impact your confidence? Like since you since you feel, you know, cautiously confident what makes you different than the teachers who say that they're not confident? Are there an personal factors?

Fal7093: I think it goes to mean personal factors and I mean even to thinking about like how each person was raised. What kind of family you came from? I think there's so much that is ingrained in subconscious that people don't even realize that they have specific

attitudes or have certain beliefs or stereotypes or you know, there's so much I didn't like that. Sub kind of subconscious below even you know what I mean, like there's just so much in that comes based on where you grew up. Your own family's beliefs and belief structures, you know coming from a multicultural family myself. I feel like my own personal experience helps me, you know, I think even religiously. You know that plays a factor into things, you know, seeing the value in all humans regardless of color or whatever, you know, people are just raised differently. So I feel like that's part of it. Also I think the subject school district in and of itself is very unique in that like you were saying before And1296 like the first school that you worked in; everybody was the same, you know. There was no diversity. When you look at different schools in Pseudo Name City or Pseudo name County; like it's more neighborhoods. So you'll have a lot less diversity even in one particularly school like at the elementary level because they're smaller schools that pull from specific neighborhoods. So you're like in the subject school district is basically from my experience; I've had basically a third, a third, a third. White, Caucasian, African American, Hispanic with a few, you know every now and again you'll get an Asian kid or like Chinese or Indian or something like that. And so I think the subject school district is unique in that we are pretty evenly split. Even among the elementary schools that I don't know the specific demographics among each of the elementary schools, but especially at the middle and high school level since it's literally everybody together from the town. In sixth grade till the time, they graduate it's the same cohort of students. So thinking about that. I think we as a district, especially teachers who've had a lot of experience within this district. We have a unique outlook because of how evenly split so to speak our students are racially.

And1296: I think my confidence comes from experiences, comes from my students in the district and comes from me willing to say I made a mistake or I didn't know what I was saying or explain this to me and being willing to admit that I need to know more or that here's my point of view now tell me yours. And the one thing that I tell my kids is we've got to be able to talk about this; not yell not say whatever not agree to disagree but to know each other's perspectives so know how they grew up, you know. A lot of people don't realize how I grew up in Southern California in a huge house with lots of you know, where Orange County Housewives was filmed, you know, and in the same neighborhood and you know, yeah and you know and things happened with my family and stuff like that and all that was lost. So I was kind of thrown into a you know different dichotomy going whoa, you know, and it was kind of it was culture shock. Literally I turned. Is real and you know for me to say, you know, I maybe didn't do this right when I started teaching or this is what I say, you know, why is this not considered appropriate? You know, I just had one last week why is saying All my students lives matter, why is that not good, you know and I had another teacher add Twitter blog saying no read this, you know, and being willing to read it and I talked and going okay now I get it or you know, what do I do here? How do I do this, you know conversations like these where you're not yelling and you're not, you know saying one is wrong or the other but really talking. In hearing and listening to each other and I love just sitting and listening to people's stories. And I think that's where I get my confidence is from my students and their parents and their families and the community and I love that. We have a third and a third and a third because you get that that mix.

Fal7093: I think yeah, I think too for me, which I just was thinking about you said a couple things that reminded me of other stuff. One, I think an attitude of humility not thinking of not knowing for knowing that I don't have all the answers. Some people are so like fixated in their mindset and they're kind of stuck in a certain way and they're not willing to learn. They're not willing to admit. Okay, maybe I am wrong in this respect and like you were saying with you know that conversation you were having and you were able to read that article be like, oh, well. Okay. Now I see now I understand. So having an attitude of humility plays a huge role in it and knowing that we are forever learners. That were always learning more doing more and for me to be part of my own personal experiences. I've lived in other countries. I've been to a number of different places so that has been my experience as well because I've lived in Mexico. I spent a month in Costa Rica. I lived in Italy, in Europe. I lived or I went and visited Tanzania for a couple of weeks and

And1296: I'm so jealous of you. Yeah, that's that's

Group: *(for 4 seconds)*

Fal7093: I know when I was young I was able to take those opportunities in fact like my first time out of the country like I went by myself and my parents were like right by but I was like when I was the Adventurous middle child then they just trusted me and knew where I was headed. So I actually, I went to Costa Rica and lived on-site at an orphanage for a month, you know taking care of the kids there and just seeing their experiences and making friends. I mean, I'm still Facebook friends with some of the people that I met in Italy. We chat and talk and that was crazy too because you're [inaudible] as a handle on all of this culturally diverse stuff because even like I lived in Italy but I had was friends

with people who were you know from Holland like the Netherlands, Albania, Romania, Poland, like everybody's everywhere over there. So I feel like they just do this so much better than we do. But um,

And1296: They've been in this part of a lot longer.

Fal7093: Yeah, that's true. So I just I feel like and even just society as a whole like they're good things that are happening. Right. Now people are being really awakened and seeing okay. This is still a problem, you know racism is still a problem and you know to try to and I'll be interested to see when we come back in the classroom like the change in the shift in the conversations that students have particularly since I'm going from 6th grade to 8th grade. Because 6th grade, they're still babies. They are just came out of elementary school. They were sheltered and kept from a lot of things but now dealing with older students; how much more sort of worldly knowledge are they going to have to sort of bring to the table? You know what I mean? Right and you know, I I like I don't like moving out of my comfort zone, but I like being pushed out of there safely. I think a lot of teachers are afraid to move out of that comfort and in that safety of knowing what I know and doing this is comfortable. I'm not going to deal with it because it's easy and it's not worrisome and it's not going to bring trauma to them or their students. I think a lot are worried about that. Whereas if you can find a group of people where you can do it and move past that safety and that comfort but do it so that you're okay and that you come out of it better. Sometimes a little uneasiness is necessary. You know, sometimes moving past that comfort is necessary and then all of a sudden that uncomfortableness becomes, you know better and you move to the next level, so you're not stuck.



Facilitator: So with that thought in mind, is there anything that district leaders or school principals can do to prepare our colleagues so that they can teach culturally diverse kids.

Fal7093: I think one thing that's important and important distinction is that teaching culturally like culturally responsive teaching is not you know slapping a poster on the wall. It's not, you know hanging up a picture of you know, three different scientists or people who have contributed to society. It's not reading one book. It's not Black History Month. It's something that has to [inaudible]

Group: *(for 5 seconds)*

Fal7093: you know, like that's not what culturally responsive teaching is because those are very surface level. Those things are very just like slap a Band-Aid on a gunshot wound kind of like I kind of equate it to that. Like it's so much more. It is so much deeper and it goes even into the like those subconscious and unconscious beliefs and structures. I one of the PDS that they did for us for this like while we've been home. I did actually do one on culturally responsive teaching and it was I actually I want to go and watch the webinar again.

And1296: I did the same one that one. It was so awesome. I will find it and I will share it with you!

Fal7093: Yes, it wasn't a webinar. It was a webinar and it was like a pre-recorded one. Like we I'll see if I can find the link and then I'll email it to you because it really it went beyond the Black History Month, the poster on the wall, the whatever kind of culturally responsive teaching even to point out that. You know as a country America, if you're

looking at like individualism versus like Community cult-like operative. What was the word? What was the other

Facilitator: Collectivist?

Fal7093: I think that was it. So, you know thinking more of an individualistic mindset versus collectivist mindset like America was like number one most individualistic ever. Yes. You this the individual like I value your individual contribution yours yours yours and then value in structure from there. Whereas in even some of the cultures that were very more of a collectivist mindset were a lot of the ones that we have in our school. Lot of the Latin American countries. I noticed yes many American so like, you know, I know Guatemala was really high on the collectivist. One that stuck out to me. It was a couple other too. Mexico was kind of mid-range. Puerto Rico's kind of mid-range but like Guatemala, El Salvador, that one was really collectivistic. So even allowing for you know, and everyone says, oh I hate group projects because one kid ends up doing everything but that's probably the individualistically minded one who's just like, you know, forget it. I'm not sacrificing the grade and letting you all do stuff. Let me just do everything you know, and what can I do my own and let them do their thing or you know, sometimes that yes, you know that it noticing that you know, the collective that everybody works together and puts together and we create this product or this idea or whatever that they take little pieces from everybody. It was a very interesting webinar. It was very very good.

Facilitator: I would be really interested in finding and you all sharing that with me.

Fal7093: I got ya. I'll look for it. I think I answered that question. Yeah, the what you can do as a district.

And1296: One thing that the principal and the instructional coach did for our distance learning professional development is we had three different categories with three different topics and we had options. Yes, and I think we teachers are just like the kids we teach you know? I want options and I want a safe place that I can go to look into this. So everybody reading the same book, it sounds great, but it's too cookie-cutter. It did not fit everybody. And again, teachers we are our kids and I'd liked the fact that I can go you know what? This is a subject that I really want to know more about or I don't know anything about it. What is this that you're talking about and having those choices and then being able to respond in a kind of we had a text feedback kind of thing going on. But I'll send that pd that you did during the shutdown of fourth quarter.

Facilitator: So I worked with that principal over at Pseudo Name School. We did differentiated PD. We did ongoing book clubs or book studies. They were facilitated by lead teachers in the school and participants selected from a choice of topics. So I'm glad to see that he's continuing to do that.

And1296: Oh, yeah, you know and if they're difficult topics, they're not necessarily, you know, the fun stuff of teaching but by providing us with the choice and then providing that there were fellow teacher leaders and people to talk with on different levels and from different backgrounds and experiences. It really opens those doors and those windows and provides for that. So from a principal point of view to teacher, I like that and I like having that choice. Here's your three topics which one will best suit you. So there's safety in that.

And1296: Uh-huh. I think so

Facilitator: there's Choice.

And1296: Okay. All right,

Facilitator: and it's differentiated.

And1296: Yes, you know and and you can you can still I think meet your goals of getting those topics out there, but you can really introduce a new topic to your staff or you can really dive down in to something more deeper. So it was it was I felt it was good.

Facilitator: Guys we're way over on time and I don't want to keep you. I want to respect your time, but

Fal7093: No, I am actually really enjoying this

Group: *(for 3 seconds)*

And1296: conversation.

Group: *(for 3 seconds)*

Facilitator: Fal7093, did you make your point that you were trying to make? You started talking about what culturally responsive teaching is....

Fal7093: [inaudible] talk? I don't even know if I mean, I'm also pregnant so my brain is mush.

Group: *(for 2 seconds)*

And1296: [inaudible] Yeah, so

And1296: I really like that you were saying like, you know culturally responsive teaching is not about putting posters on the wall. It's about knowing that

Fal7093: it's like a oh, I remember I was going for it like so it's more than just that it's like it almost has to be the culture of a school and that's so hard to define and do because there needs to be by in. There needs to be, you know, you need to have the right people in place to begin with. You know some people they're just not going to mesh with that

regardless of what you know, an administrator or a district person or even a facilitator or coach whatever. No matter what they say there has to be buy in. It has to be kind of built into the culture and the structure. Even how we structure classrooms. How we structure teams. Even teams of teachers. How we structure, you know, which students are on what teams how we split them up and how we try to combine them and make sure there's a good healthy mixture. You know what I mean? So, I mean it's a hard thing. To sort of move that mindset. I did find that email. I was working on forwarding that to you. So, but you're welcome. So, you know it it's just it's so hard because it has to be something that's innate. It has to be something that's ingrained. It has to be something that comes from the heart. So to build that from so I guess just like casting that vision. And I know I mean it's so much easier and that's why so many people slap a poster on a wall because that's easy that surface level. I did my part here. I showed up to the PD even though I was checking email and on Facebook the whole time. Hey, I'm here. I checked, you know, check a box kind of thing, but it's so much more than that. So having that heart, that mindset from the top down for even valuing. the differences of teachers, you know if your if you want culturally responsive teachers, if you want like are our faculty should be as diverse as our students are often times. That is not the case. And I mean, I know you're dealing with you know, who chooses this profession who goes there who goes to college for it. I mean even to look at I'm just you know, thinking of our staff as a whole, you know, first of all, predominantly women, although at the middle school. You do have more men that are there. [inaudible] versus our students are in the neighborhoods. We come from most of us who teach it. I mean, it's more than 50% white Caucasian, you know so I can think of [silence]

Silence: *(for 4 seconds)*

And1296: How many other than Pseudo name who's the translator? You know how many Hispanic teachers do we have? Do we have any? We have the one ESL teacher that I can think of

And1296: and I think we possibly have one other. But not Hispanic in the

Silence: *(for 6 seconds)*

And1296: I don't know. I can't you know, so if even our faculty doesn't match What our students come from? I mean, that's honestly that's a hard sell for me for culturally responsive teaching and even thinking about even the number of African-American teachers that we have. It's I mean the white teachers far outnumber them. Like empty. Even just thinking because I was in the sixth grade last year. So thinking sixth grade building only. There is one.

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

Fal7093: Pseudo Name leaving but he's Hispanic.

And1296: That's who. [inaudible]

to pull that out. Yeah, well he's going to some other Pseudo Name School, that's where he's going. But um I can think of two. Yeah, so not a white teacher in like the whole of sixth grade. So like if that's not what our faculty looks like, how do you expect us to be culturally responsive to you know, like it's it's just hard it's hard and that's why I love that. We bring in outside groups like Trails like our Trails teachers are culturally diverse and we bring in different group Church groups and things like that. They need to see that there's other adults responsible for their learning and that they're not necessarily quote-

unquote teachers, right? So bringing in different groups bringing in different people to help with coaching or whatever it is that they may not have that diploma degree, you know, they didn't choose teaching but they still care about kid. So that I think it is very basic beginning step, you know, but really I trying to find our kids that have that, you know just natural teaching flare.

You know your teacher kids and you know, really telling them hey, you know, you've got this gift and really because they may never have thought about it before, you know plant that seed and and do more consistently that you can't just do a week of you know, passing on you know, this culture that culture that it starts from day one when they walk in and it ends when they walk out and graduate. I'm gone and I yeah, and I think that's important I like what you said too because look like, you know if you have a young hispanic lady and all she's ever had her entire life is white lady teachers. She's going to think that teachings not for her, you know, just because of her experience in what she has so letting kids know that they can do those things and I think that's a huge buy in for particularly in our community are African A

merican males, like think seeing that they have options. You know and especially the ones that come from the poorer neighborhoods think of the you know, Section 8 housing neighborhoods that we pull from, you know, like you have options. You don't have to just join a gang like these kids. Like that's all they think that they can do and that's the available even so that's why culturally responsive teaching is so important because if I don't show value in who you are where you are and where you come from and you're going to think you have this limited set of options for your life which are usually you know, like really setting them up for success and letting them know. Hey, you're valu

able. You're intelligent like you have all of this this this going for you. You can really be and do something. You know what I mean? That's why I love eighth-grade! It's the time to do seed planting.

We get to talk a lot about that and those options and what does brown have for them? And what can they do? And what options are there out there in our community and things like that and they say they're really transitioning from that old child to that young adult and really working with them and giving them, you know, the little hunch, you know, and really making it their choice, you know and say I don't want to pigeonhole you into this. But I want you to know it's that availability. And the door is open and if you walk through that door that's your choice and I will support and be proud of you. But I want you to know that door is there.

You have that option and that's like she said very much that's the responsiveness that we have.

Facilitator: I think that was a great way to sum this up.

Group: *(for 8 seconds)*

Facilitator: Do you have any closing remarks that you want to make?

Fal7093: No, I just want to thank you for your time and for doing this project. I think it's something that there's not enough focus on in the education system as a whole and you know doing this research and really trying to be responsive to all because we I mean you would think that America being such a melting pot or a, you know, a salad bowl, whatever you want to call it for us to have been this from the beginning. We still really haven't gotten it. Right like how did we screw this up so much systemically and at like

Facilitator: a high level



And1296: high high level even think. And I think this is at a really appropriate time to be having these conversations as well with everything that's going on in our society right now.

Fal7093: I'm thinking about just this systemic separation of races and you're over here and you're worth this and you are like that and you behave this way because you're black or the way, you know, there's so much of that and so much unconscious and subconscious. Is so thank you for doing this and thank you for allowing us to speak because this is something that is very important to me and it's something it's just super timely and something that's very important. So thank you for doing it and I just think the only way we're going to move forward as a country is having honest conversations like this and just really being able to listen to each other. Be heard and being willing to say, you know, I can't fix that but I can work on it for today and tomorrow and that research it works but it also works with our kiddos and you know, just I'm I love what I do. I'm with subject school district. We're here for the long haul, you know, we would have we would have been gone a long time ago if we didn't, you know, want this, you know and it's a want. Thank you for doing it.

Teacher: Well, I have to say thank you all for your contributions today. I learned from you. I've gotten great insight. I mean not even thinking about the dissertation just the adult conversation, but I have to admit that of course, you know, I didn't have anything to do with the timeliness of this, it just happened that, you know, our nation is going through this at this time. And then also I will be honest with you. I'm embarrassed that this has not been my life's passion. I just recently developed my interest in this topic. It

did not develop until the district brought it to us whenever the district started a couple of years ago sending teachers to the racial Equity

And1296: Isn't that great.

Facilitator: Yes. It was great. And then you know the last year or two years we've been doing some things with the culturally responsive teaching practices. And then this year actually it was in November; November was when I was like, you know, wait a minute. I [inaudible] already. I'm interested in this. Number one and I had to tackle my own fears. I asked you a while ago about what are some personal factors that have positively influence your confidence, but for me, I've had some personal factors that have negatively influenced my confidence levels so that I didn't take the opportunities or make opportunities to talk about this. I was afraid to talk about this. So because of the efforts, I believe of the district I have stepped out on faith and and

And1296: That's just the way we felt. You felt safe in going to the places and reading those things you felt comfortable enough to be uncomfortable and you were given permission by your leaders just like we were given permission by my principal, you know, and we will it's you know, it's just everything happens for a reason it's all and

Facilitator: I just hate that it took me so long to get there.

Fal7093: I know but you're here.

Group: *(for 5 seconds)*

Facilitator: Yeah, but you know what? Planting those seeds then enables and empowers others. I think we'll eventually get where we need to be. So thank you all so much, and I'm sorry for taking more than 30 minutes, but I really did enjoy.

Fal7093: This was a pleasure. No, no, I enjoyed it.

Facilitator: All right look. Thank you all so much and take care over there with those wildly students.

And1296: They're crazy. They're a hot mess, but I love them.

Facilitator: [inaudible] ...somebody does. Alright. Take care. Bye. Thank you.

Fal7093: Thank you.

Silence: *(for 8 seconds)*

Appendix K

Focus Group Discussion Response Chart

**Dates: June 29, June 30, & July 1****Question #1**

To provide context for the focus group conversation, unveil a print of the painting, #Asia, by artist Mohtz (2019). Participants will examine the image of multiple Asian women in indigenous apparel.

Please interpret what you see in the painting and the cultural connections the artwork and its title has for you. What does it make you think of when you look at it, in terms of cultural diversity?

BRA1514: It's **representative culturally**. Yes, dress that is representative of a culture.

Ele2059: Yes, I also agree. I think it **represents the diversity**. That our **population is diverse**. I think those are probably races that we don't see so often in our daily lives. Well, maybe in our daily life, but not like educationally or in books or in the media. For example, also in the movies, right?

Facilitator: Um huh. So one of the things that is interesting about or that struck me about this artwork is that the figures represents Asian culture. But, as we know the Asian culture is quite different. There are lots of different countries and so even though someone might think of Asia representing one culture it does not. It's a very diversified continent. And so, that's what this picture represents to me. It reminds me of American culture. We have a lot of diversity within our American culture.

Fal7093: I notice a lot of **differences among skin tones and kinds of dress**. I see various kinds of head coverings that some people, some cultures use as opposed to others. Even as far as jewelry, makeup, different kinds of markings and things on faces or...

And1296: Like that, I see. I mean everybody there is beautiful for sure. I just love all the differences there. I love that she used all ladies so much. As a social studies teacher my first thing when I think of Asia is I started trying to go **country with person** and go okay this person is southeast Asia and this person must be more so towards the mountainous region or something to that effect, but to look at you know, **their faces and their features**. Their **outfits are absolutely stunning and beautiful** so that part, you know from the girl perspective is very, you know, intriguing. I guess but like Fal7093 said the **head covering**. Some of the head coverings are very drastic and others are very, you know minute or non-existent. So that's one thing and then the difference in the **skin tones that they go from very pale to very beautifully brown red tones. So almost Native American ish**.

Facilitator: You will have some really keen insight when I looked at this and I was simply thinking of China but wasn't aware. I have to be transparent. I wasn't aware that there are 48 different countries in Asia, you know China, Pakistan, Turkey Iran, Thailand, Malaysia Nepal, there's so... In contrast, it reminds me... The diversity that we have here in the United States. There are so many different cultures.

And1296: Right and one thing our students. I know from the social aspect. They think automatically, you know, either **Chinese food or Asian food or they'll think Japanese or technology**. And I don't think a lot of the students **do associate India or Turkey or those, you know southeastern nations as being part of being the whole continent of Asia, what is truly**

Asian, you know, or they'll think it's one language, you know sort of thing and there's a difference between language and culture. And so it's this kind of thing. I love using this in the classroom because it opens a lot of those conversations with, you know, terminology and kids are amazing. Really insightful, you know and they'll be the first to be transparent about themselves too.

## Question 2

Share preliminary findings and invite participants to analyze the data.  
Items from CRTSE scale with the lowest and highest mean scores.  
Items from the CRTOE scale with the lowest and highest mean scores.

Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE) Scale Means and Standard Deviations of Appraisal Items

Appraisal Item Inventory	(n=185)	
	M	sd
...design a lesson that shows how other cultural groups have made use of mathematics.	52.72	28.29
...teach students' about their cultures' contributions to science.	58.07	25.97
...praise English Language Learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language.	60.2	29.83
...help students feel like important members of the classroom.	88.21	12.96
...build a sense of trust in my students.	88.23	12.98
...develop a personal relationship with my students.	89.4	13.4

Facilitator: What are your thoughts?

Wat1399: Well, in thinking about how I might have responded, that top one about mathematics. I really don't teach anything related to mathematics at the level that I teach so I would not have felt confident in that in any fashion (Laughing) whether its cultural or not, but with the contribution to science that is something that I have worked on. And personally, I have tried to go back and find contributors to healthcare development and I've tried to identify a group of people that the students can choose from who were from different cultures or races so that they could self-identify. Whether it is a male Hispanic, a female Hispanic, and Asian female. You know; all different things. So I feel like I do that I think part of that is my [REDACTED] background. And working in practice you had to consider these things sort of I guess in front of the curve. But, so whereas I might feel comfortable with that I can see how others might have expressed discomfort.

Jac750: Same here. I teach [REDACTED] language arts. So, those top two would be you know, probably middle line for me and then to praise English language learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language. I don't know that. I don't speak any other languages to be able to give that praise. Do you understand what I'm saying? Like, that's why I didn't have a high comfort level for that one. Just me personally.

Facilitator. Yes, yes. I understand most of the participants in the survey indicated that they only spoke one language. However, there were some participants; I don't recall the information right now. They are trilingual. We do have some staff that are trilingual. But, I just think it's interesting. I think these points are interesting. I think that these are areas where we as a district or as a profession could definitely make improvements. I think that's definitely the case.

Ele2059: Facilitator? I think for, in the part you were speaking of language learners. For this year, I had a student who was an Asian American so I got to learn some Japanese in order to

praise him and this was an impact of this culturally responsive teaching professional development that we've been doing in the district. I think that is something I read somewhere and I was like, oh, I really only have him. I can praise him in Japanese. So even though teachers don't know another language, teachers can learn a couple of words. I think that is very valuable for the students' confidence. Like when I learn *Arigato, konnichiwa* or things like that. Because I know, as I am a natural bilingual, as you know, I can praise students in English, Spanish or a little bit of French. But, even though we don't know any other language if we have a little corner in our classroom with ways to say good job in different languages according to your students' needs, I think that would be very great for your students.

Fal7093: I think it's interesting that the ones that teachers felt most confident in had to do with the students in their room. So either building relationships making them feel important building a sense of trust or something like that. Like we know how to deal with the kids right in front of us. Like I know how to make, you know, Victor or whoever my Hispanic students or you know students from those kind of cultures. They know how to make them feel welcome and accepted. I know how to make African-American students feel equal and trusted or you know, trusting of me, build those relationships, but when it comes to specific contributions, that's where teachers, you know don't have as much confidence. I can honestly say that, you know, I probably you know these ones here that you showed like least confident most confident. I would agree with those even for myself and I vaguely remember answering in that way when I took the survey, you know, I will say though for the praise English language learners for their accomplishments using the phrase in their native language. I do speak Spanish. So I'm able to at least the Spanish-speaking ELLs which is primarily what we have in the subject school district.. I am able to even hold conversations on the phone with their parents and do that. So that's a skill that I have found useful to myself that I can do. But but you know when it comes to contributions and stuff like I don't know. [Laughs] Mexico's contribution to Science and Mathematics through whatever, you know, like, I don't really I don't have a ready knowledge of those things

And1296: Right and to kind of bounce off what you just said. The three lowest ones are almost knowledge-based. It's things that we could look up or research. Whereas the things that we seem to be most confident in are the ones that are sometimes the most difficult for teachers to do. Make those connections and how do I build a classroom community and work with our kids and trust and all of that. And I feel like we can really work on those three low and one with just some you know classwork or informational searches and things like that, but I'm kind of proud of us as a district for having high scores in trusting of students and wanting them to be important members of our classroom. I think we've worked really hard on doing that as teachers. And sometimes the relationship is a little more important in the long run than just the content knowledge are knowing who did what on what date. I think that this data on just a surface level is kind of showing up.

Facilitator: [inaudible] for the highest and lowest areas in terms of outcome expectations. So I think the way this is organized, these at the.... ones on the top are the highest.

Facilitator: So, teachers really believe in these outcome expectations. They believe that if they incorporate a variety of teaching methods that it can successfully impact student achievement. They believe that their students' self-esteem can be enhanced when their cultural background is valued and teachers across the district also believe that a positive teacher-student relationship

can be established by building a sense of trust. However, they collectively don't think that changing the structure of our classroom so that it's compatible with the students' home culture will increase the motivation of our kids to come to class. And we don't think that the frequency that students' abilities are misdiagnosed will decrease whenever we start looking at standardized test scores and interpreting them with caution or acknowledging the ways that the school culture is different from the students' home culture. We don't think that's going to really help minimize the likelihood of discipline problems in the classroom.

#### Test Bias

And1296: Those are some interesting findings on the lower end because I don't know I mean and they're still in the 70 percent. They're not in like the ten or twenty percent. So it is the lower ones but I would I mean I think frequently students of ethnically different backgrounds or racially different backgrounds that they really are... I mean, let's face it. Our standardized tests are made for white kids. It just is you know, and they it just is and the background knowledge and everything else. So I do think that there's a huge discrepancy and really being able to tell what students can do using standardized test scores. I also think that the standardized tests we use to test for AIG or you know anything like honors students or students with higher IQs. I think that's also an example of those standardized test scores that are it's you know, historically it's made for white kids, you know that come from a certain particular background. So I think we miss a lot of those. I mean, we all know that historically speaking that African-American students are much more likely to be considered for EC. Even I've noticed even at our school that there's a significantly higher ESL population in EC that probably shouldn't be there. They probably should be you know, just it more intensive language help and all of that; I think if we increase their language skills. So with the standardized test, I think I think the standardized test I think of more than just the EOG. I think of those kinds of tests as well. So I think there's a great percentage that are misdiagnosed because of those kinds of considerations.

#### Test Bias

And1296: I think you know teachers we kind of we get frustrated with standardized test scores. We want to look at what our student can do and what we know they can do and what we've seen them do and then we look at what's on the paper and it just doesn't jive. Confusion about how to meet needs of diverse cultures. A lot of time and although to be honest with the one question changing the structure of the classroom compatible with the students home culture; You know I'm worried there. I guess for lack of a better term, what culture do I pick? We have such a mix of students. You know when I was on the reservation, I only have one culture there. So it was very easy for me to adapt. However, I don't want to make a group of students feel unwelcome because I may be focusing on another group of students and then I don't want to You know, you know stop looking at that to bring in another culture and they're like wait a minute. You were just doing this; we're getting on a roll and now we're over here, you know, and yeah if we could find a great way, you know, and maybe the kids can help us with this or something. But you know, I guess I want to include all of our kids is kind of holding me back from really working with the students home culture. You know school's its own culture and that's my concern as I don't want to alienate one particular section of my student body for the sake of another but they're both You know equally I guess they're all

Fal7093: they're all equally important.

#### Fear



And1296: Yes, and they're all unique and special and wanted and we need to focus on them. And so if I could find a way to you know, move it without doing that. Maybe it's just me and my own, you know, personal bias or **fear or you know may not wanting to step out**. Do that maybe the kids, you know, I'm assuming that it may be this way and they're like no teacher, you're fine, you know. Yeah because

FAI7093: **you don't want to offend and make it worse either**

And1296: **that yeah, you know, I don't want to add fuel to the fire**. So that was my specifically with that one question. That was my you know, you know, my lower score right?

Fal7093: Because even if you think about it, like even so many people and I hate when people do this. Like they lump all Hispanic students like the same. They all come from Mexico. No, they can come from dozens and dozens and a half different countries. They even have I mean, even if they all speak Spanish like it's different from one country to the next. There are words that mean different things in different countries, and it's you know, and I when people assume like every Hispanic person is Mexican, I just want to throw up. [inaudible]

And11296: What don't you understand? You know and even get some [inaudible].

#### **Fear of offending**

And1296: Basically, there's just there's so many differences. So to your point and I agree with that a hundred percent. Like I don't like to; you can't just you know, honor and incorporate Hispanic people or African American people because they I mean it's just it's so vastly different. And you know it to do it with fidelity and to do it where I don't just look like what do I do? Hang a Mexican flag in the classroom? Like what does that look like? And how does that like, how do you know, you don't want to mess it up and especially with all of these things going on in our society right now with all of the racial tension all of these issues going on like I want to be culturally sensitive. And I happen to come from; I actually posted something on Facebook the other day. Like I'm I'm like that. I have a sister who's adopted. She's Chinese. She married to an African-American. They have beautiful kids. My brother-in-law's family has basically become my own. So I live in a multicultural home family. But I don't want to. I don't know look even with that like I still don't want to ostracize anybody; focus in one group too much or not enough for you know,

#### **Hard to determine culture of students**

and some of these kids they've been born in America. So some of them even be more identify with American culture than maybe what they came from because they don't know about Guatemalan culture. They've never been there. You know what I mean? Like it's just hard.

#### **Fear**

And1296: Yeah, so it just I don't want to feel uncomfortable because I think that's important. But then again, I don't want to cause uncomfortable situations, especially with students.

#### Question 3

What do you think of when I use the phrase —culturally diverse students?

And1296: For me, it's twofold for me. Culturally diverse students **is a mix of my student body**.

My student population that is made up from lots of different locations, lots of different cultures. And then I guess a new version of that is really diverse students. I have lots of students that are made up of lots of different cultures and they are diverse and unique in themselves. So not only do I have my mass population; my classroom population or my team population that is made up of lots of different cultures and their awareness of the different cultures, but they themselves are not of just one specific culture. So the diversity and the layers I guess is what makes us a culturally diverse student is having multiple layers [inaudible].

#### Question 4

How confident do you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse students?

And1296: I'm going to say that I'm cautiously confident. I don't want to be this all-knowing, all seeking. I'm, you know, this teacher who has all the information and I'm going to give it out. I am holding cautiously in the fact that I am continually learning and the fact that I want to know more and see more and understand more. I tell my students that and just because I maybe have done this for 20 plus years doesn't mean that your story is not unique or that you have [inaudible] or that you have something to teach me. So I am confident. I like having those conversations. I want to have those lessons and bring about the learning especially if it is about a culture that they have questions about or that they have heard about or that happens to be popular in a new movie or something to that effect, you know, but then again, I don't want to be so confident in the fact that I put off as being, you know kind of all-knowing and unwilling to have that be a two-way street, so I'm consciously confident.

Facilitator: Okay.

Fal7093: Yeah, I like that. Cautiously confident.

And with knowing that I always seek to improve. I always seek to reflect and you know, look at myself. My attitudes, my beliefs, my thoughts, my knowledge always adding to that making things better, you know that phrase, you know, if you know better do better. Like I, I don't think that I'm perfect. I know that I'm not. But I do honor and value students as individuals regardless of what their cultural background is. Like that's not like I don't use that to define their abilities or their value they're worth their ability to contribute or or to even pigeonhole them into like oh, well, they're going to behave a certain way because of their cultural background. Like in making those kinds of stereotypes and judgments. So I do feel confident that I can teach culturally diverse students and valuing and honoring contributions of all.

Facilitator: Okay, so I'm going to ask you all something that's a little bit different. So when we talk, different than what I presented to the other groups just because y'all ....I think we can go there. So in terms of like, you know teaching culturally diverse kids, they're all kinds of different things that you have to think about. Right? You have to think about like ways that you're going to develop relationships with your kids. You have to think about how are you going to develop a sense of caring in your classroom? You have to think about respecting diversity and respecting, you know, learning differences. These are some things that you've already been talking about. And then you have to think about how you can involve real life experiences of your kids into the classroom. Or ways that you can think how you can teach about other cultures. Are there opportunities where your kids get to speak their mind and in the classroom, do you allow that? Do you not allow it? Do you model it? Do you model when it's appropriate to do that? So there are lots of different nuances. Setting up an environment that would be conducive for you know culturally diverse kids. So when you think about all of those different things, do you still feel like

you're consciously confident?

And1296: As a social studies teacher. Yes, because there are planned things that I specifically do that I specifically show or kind of like you did with the Icebreaker that I have a specific kind of goal in mind. I want that door to become open or when I was teaching language-arts. We would be reading a specific book or something would happen in the news and we would talk about that other thing. Things, you know with the district starting with the conversations on how do you have what are those conversations?

Fal7093: academic conversations?

And1296: Those ones. Okay with having those more so in the classroom a lot of times in social studies, they sort of come up spontaneously. Kids will ask a question. They'll come in and hey, hey, did you see this or I'll show Student News and know like wait, wait, wait, wait, wait and have a question or it'll be just a hey I heard this on the bus ,what you think and we're walking to lunch. So sometimes it's not necessarily a planned lesson and sometimes your lessons don't always go where you want them to because you'll be talking about a certain thing that happened and you'll diverge. I think being a teacher both of us will pretty much say it's okay to divert if the kids are going that way. It is ok. Also, I found that to kind of say put a hold stop and sometimes I'll let them write for 5 minutes what they want to think and say and then you know, they want to give it or something because it's not the time or place, but I don't want to ignore it. So am I confident in every single one of these questions? I would say a good majority, you know, but there are definitely things that you know, I want to hold them accountable for from learning to their peers. How did they talk to their peers and in middle school it is this is when they learn how to do that. Well, yeah.

#### Question 5

How prepared did you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse students prior to your participation in district sponsored "Text Equity" professional development program?

#### Question 6

How prepared did you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse after your participation in district sponsored "Text Equity" professional development program?

Teacher empowerment  
Student engagement

Jac750: Well, this is where you wanted to know the impact of doing professional development. I feel a lot more comfortable this school year and this was my second year teaching eighth grade and eighth grade does...There. The curriculum that I walked into was pretty ummm heavy in like looking at like, you said, one picture of an American. That's literally one article that we read. Like what is an American and it goes all through that. So we discussed a lot of that last year. And you know read diverse texts like...my... What I read in class didn't change a whole lot but the discussion around it changed so much like my confidence has really gone up. Well, I would say

**confidence and necessity.** Like to me. I didn't feel like I needed to get into all of that. Thank you.[inaudible] But after going through this workshop, if I don't do it then whose gonna do it? Nobody. I need to have these conversations and **I think that by product made my confidence go up.** Because I was like, well, you know and I have not had any negative impact or students anything- **they were all you know eager to talk about** it and it was really **valid** and **good lessons.** And we were having the discussions.

#### Question 7

**What aspect of the "Text Equity" professional development program is most beneficial in preparing Facilitators to teach in a diverse setting?**

#### Teacher Empowerment

Jac750: (Inaudible) Well, I would say just having well **maybe like the license of you don't have to know everything.** Your kids already know a lot of stuff. **Just be the facilitator.** Like you don't have to go into it because like right when I was doing my student teaching, that was back in 2006 and I was in Ohio and I had mostly white students. I did a whole Black History Month unit in my language arts class because the history teacher, the social studies teacher, wasn't doing that. Hang on Baby and because they weren't, so I was like I should do Black History Month. You know? It was great and my students they really loved it. And then when I moved to the study school district during my first year of teaching I tried to just do my same Black History Month Unit. I really got some **backlash** like who are you to teach us? I was like, okay never mind. I'm not going to do that. You know, I don't think there's any way that's not even my area but then coming in doing this workshop it was kind of like it **doesn't matter that I'm white.** I am your teacher and we need to talk about this. Everybody needs to talk about this. Let's talk about it. And here's what I look like. It's kind of... I felt..... and it was especially when we had our session October. It was when The Lumbee lady spoke, and she said if you are not teaching Native American history, you are causing the problem and I was like, well, I'm not teaching Native American history.

BRA1514: I think that was my aha moment to. It was was that, you know, **awareness and responsibility.** I think for me **I didn't have great confidence in who I was and how well it would be received as a white woman.** And I want to say that maybe I use that as an excuse and through our **professional development** know now, I **feel Honorbound** to be culturally responsive and to have that discussion with students and to go there. I think that you know, **our confidence has increased because of the dynamics and in our professional development** and with **each other** and realizing that you know that we have a **responsibility to bring change.**

Wat1399: I am teaching at the high school level. I think one of the things in developing your strategies, you have to **understand some things about them developmentally.** You know, you can't ever do... **can't do a something that is going to make them not participate or uncomfortable.** But, teenagers like to talk about themselves. [Laughing] So, you know leveraging that I have a couple of things that I try to work into and this is after you make rules in the classroom and you develop some level of trust and that type of thing but it's always fun. There's two things that I can think of that always had a really nice discussion and one is what does your family eat for Thanksgiving? And they will really loosen up about oh, this is what we always have or it's not Thanksgiving unless my Grandma makes this and you know, **then they all start really participating** because that is not a dangerous area food. You know. [Laughing] Everybody likes food. And so they do really well with that discussion and the other one that I get really good

results with like I say I teach in Health sciences is, "When you're sick, what does your mom do? Like, are you chicken noodle soup or are you [inaudible]? You know and that always stimulates a really good discussion and sometimes some interesting cultural things come out related to that. So they **get more comfortable sharing** and if you can get them sharing and hearing each other there seems to be a better. It's not just you the teacher; **it's them accepting each other and them**

#### Student engagement

**seeing hey well, I think that's kind of cool.** My family doesn't do that, but, I like that idea. So those are a couple of things and I've tried to do that are I guess safe cultural open up the conversation.

Ele2059: As Wat1399 said, I think she teaches High School where I teach kindergarten. So something that worked very well for me **was connecting with parents by sending surveys.** Please share something about your family's heritage. Even if it was, I don't know from Ohio or New York or maybe they had Italian roots or they were coming from Cuba or things like that. I think it was very nice. Seeing how the little kids in kindergarten are able to understand that our **differences make us unique.** I think that is something that they understood how we have to be **respectful to others; how to appreciate culture;** and as I am a language teacher I think that was easier for me in a way because I teach not only Spanish but I am also teaching my culture. And also to share about other Spanish-speaking countries. So I think I'm reinforcing my views as a global educator and **I have been loving sharing all of what we have been learning with the professional development facilitator.** Yeah in our meetings, and yes, I think it's been very positive.

#### Question 8

Are there any personal and/ or professional factors that positively impacted your confidence in teaching culturally diverse students?

##### **Role models as personal factors that positively impact confidence**

Dan3062: Personally, that's who you know, I try to model my life after and like I said, he was my biggest **role model** (my grandfather). And so, you know, I just try not to see... try to see no color. I just look at people as individuals and try to look at their heart and try to you know, try to love everybody. And that's what I try to teach my kids; my daughter and my son. You know try to teach them. So, yeah, that's personally for me. I would say that's my biggest. He's my biggest role model.

Facilitator: Thank you.

Wil600: That's the greatest one.

Pra3170: That is totally the best thing; are **our role models in life** because I know that if it had not been for **certain people in my past,** then I would not have been prepared to have students from various cultures and various religious backgrounds. There is some of everything; there are so many **subcategories in a classroom.** **And be able to adapt to the situation** but what Dan3062 was saying was so powerful and having that role model to **teach me how to be flexible** and that everybody has a purpose. **There's a purpose for everyone. We aren't the end-all-be-all. You aren't perfect. Everybody's here to help everyone else and so having that role model to help navigate us through to be a little bit better and a little bit more flexible with other people and of cultures. All those other categories that there are in a classroom, I think is most powerful things.** So, I want to go to Georgia, Dan3062.

Facilitator: Well, if it helps us all, we all might need to go to Georgia [Laughing]

Klo2841: Let's take America to Georgia,

*Lack of teacher, community diversity*

Klo2841: For me, I grew up in a very rural small town in, Tennessee. And I was very blessed that my family and my extended family are very huge advocates on loving everybody and it's what's on the inside that counts and you know your actions speak louder than your words. All that good stuff, but the town I was in didn't always necessarily reflect that. **We're not very diverse out in the country and I think that definitely going to school**

Klo2841: not having a teacher that wasn't white until my 11th grade year, which was my Spanish teacher; that was something that until I got older I didn't realize that that wasn't normal. And that well it might be normal. I'm not really sure of everybody's experience. But you know, coming to my current school and having a very diverse teacher population that also reflects our student population... I do feel like by younger childhood years really, I guess hindered my ability to fully be aware and competent of others.

Facilitator: So well, so I want to know okay, those are not for you. Sorry. Are there any personal or professional factors that positively impact your confidence? Like since you since you feel, you know, cautiously confident what makes you different than the teachers who say that they're not confident? Are there an personal factors?

Fal7093: I think it goes to mean **personal factors** and I mean even to thinking about like how **each person was raised**. What **kind of family you came from**? I think there's so much that is ingrained in subconscious that people don't even realize that they have specific attitudes or have certain beliefs or stereotypes or you know, there's so much I didn't like that. Sub kind of subconscious below even you know what I mean, like there's just so much in that comes based on where you grew up. Your own family's beliefs and belief structures, you know coming from a multicultural family myself. I feel like my own personal experience helps me, you know, I think even religiously. You know that plays a factor into things, you know, seeing the value in all humans regardless of color or whatever, you know, people are just raised differently. So I feel like that's part of it. Also I think the subject school district in and of itself is very unique in that like you were saying before And1296 like the first school that you worked in; everybody was the same, you know. There was no diversity. When you look at different schools in Pseudo Name City or Pseudo name County; like it's more neighborhoods. So you'll have a lot less diversity even in one particularly school like at the elementary level because they're smaller schools that pull from specific neighborhoods. So you're like in the subject school district is basically from my experience; I've had basically a third, a third, a third. White, Caucasian, African American, Hispanic with a few, you know every now and again you'll get an Asian kid or like Chinese or Indian or something like that. And so I think the subject school district is unique in that we are pretty evenly split. Even among the elementary schools that I don't know the specific demographics among each of the elementary schools, but especially at the middle and high school level since it's literally everybody together from the town. In sixth grade till the time, they graduate it's the same cohort of students. So thinking about that. I think we as a district, especially teachers who've had a lot of experience within this district. We have a unique outlook because of how evenly split so to speak our students are racially.

And1296: I think my confidence comes from experiences, comes from my students in the district and comes from me willing to say I made a mistake or I didn't know what I was saying or explain this to me and being willing to admit that I need to know more or that here's my point of view now tell me yours. And the one thing that I tell my kids is **we've got to be able to talk** about this; not yell not say whatever not agree to disagree but to know each other's perspectives so know

how they grew up, you know. A lot of people don't realize how I grew up in Southern California in a huge house with lots of you know, where Orange County Housewives was filmed, you know, and in the same neighborhood and you know, yeah and you know and things happened with my family and stuff like that and all that was lost. So I was kind of thrown into a you know different dichotomy going whoa, you know, and it was kind of it was culture shock. Literally I turned. Is real and you know for me to say, you know, I maybe didn't do this right when I started teaching or this is what I say, you know, why is this not considered appropriate? You know, I just had one last week why is saying All my students lives matter, why is that not good, you know and I had another teacher add Twitter blog saying no read this, you know, and being willing to read it and I talked and going okay now I get it or you know, what do I do here? How do I do this, you know conversations like these where you're not yelling and you're not, you know saying one is wrong or the other but really talking. In hearing and listening to each other and I love just sitting and listening to people's stories. And I think that's where I get my confidence is from my students and their parents and their families and the community and I love that. We have a third and a third and a third because you get that that mix.

Fal7093: I think yeah, I think too for me, which I just was thinking about you said a couple things that reminded me of other stuff. One, I think an attitude of humility not thinking of not knowing for knowing that I don't have all the answers. Some people are so like fixated in their mindset and they're kind of stuck in a certain way and they're not willing to learn. They're not willing to admit. Okay, maybe I am wrong in this respect and like you were saying with you know that conversation you were having and you were able to read that article be like, oh, well. Okay. Now I see now I understand. So having an attitude of humility plays a huge role in it and knowing that we are forever learners. That were always learning more doing more and for me to be part of my own personal experiences. I've lived in other countries. I've been to a number of different places so that has been my experience as well because I've lived in Mexico. I spent a month in Costa Rica. I lived in Italy, in Europe. I lived or I went and visited Tanzania for a couple of weeks and

And1296: I'm so jealous of you. Yeah, that's that's

Fal7093: I know when I was young I was able to take those opportunities in fact like my first time out of the country like I went by myself and my parents were like right by but I was like when I was the Adventurous middle child then they just trusted me and knew where I was headed. So I actually, I went to Costa Rica and lived on-site at an orphanage for a month, you know taking care of the kids there and just seeing their experiences and making friends. I mean, I'm still Facebook friends with some of the people that I met in Italy. We chat and talk and that was crazy too because you're [inaudible] as a handle on all of this culturally diverse stuff because even like I lived in Italy but I had was friends with people who were you know from Holland like the Netherlands, Albania, Romania, Poland, like everybody's everywhere over there. So I feel like they just do this so much better than we do. But um,

And1296: They've been in this part of a lot longer.

Fal7093: Yeah, that's true. So I just I feel like and even just society as a whole like they're good things that are happening. Right. Now people are being really awakened and seeing okay. This is still a problem, you know racism is still a problem and you know to try to and I'll be interested to see when we come back in the classroom like the change in the shift in the conversations that students have particularly since I'm going from 6th grade to 8th grade. Because 6th grade,

they're still babies. They are just came out of elementary school. They were sheltered and kept from a lot of things but now dealing with older students; how much more sort of worldly knowledge are they going to have to sort of bring to the table? You know what I mean? Right and you know, I I like I don't like moving out of my comfort zone, but I like being pushed out of there safely. I think a lot of teachers are afraid to move out of that comfort and in that safety of knowing what I know and doing this is comfortable. I'm not going to deal with it because it's easy and it's not worrisome and it's not going to bring trauma to them or their students. I think a lot are worried about that. Whereas if you can find a group of people where you can do it and move past that safety and that comfort but do it so that you're okay and that you come out of it better. Sometimes a little uneasiness is necessary. You know, sometimes moving past that comfort is necessary and then all of a sudden that uncomfortableness becomes, you know better and you move to the next level, so you're not stuck.

#### Question 9

Are there any personal and/ or professional factors that negatively impacted your confidence in teaching culturally diverse students?

fearful

Wat1399: You know, you have the experience where because you're not totally sensitive to all the nuances. Like Hispanics the all the different or Asian. It is very insulting for a Japanese person to be assumed to be Chinese. (Laughing) So I happen to know a little bit of Mandarin Chinese and if I need to use it then I will. You know? So you're almost afraid that in your effort you might be offensive. Any even in black culture? Not everyone is from Africa, but maybe you know Haiti or you know, there may be some other and so sometimes when we can assume something and it gets us in trouble. And I think we are fearful that we might step the wrong way.

#### Question 10

Is there anything else you like to add to assist district leaders in preparing teachers to teach culturally diverse students?

Wat1399: So I just I just thought about this this week and I'm going to say this and then jump off because I'm sorry, but you know, we had that federal government tracking for English as a second language.

Student: Yeah, it's the clever charm. Elevate. I don't know if you are familiar but I'm required if someone's exited out of the English as a second language. They still track them for so many years and I've been teaching for two and a half years at subject school district, and I had never heard of it. I had to fill out this form this week. So I felt like you know, we really need an orientation piece for new instructors coming in so that they are exposed to this whole concept because you are not exposed at all. So it needs to be in an orientation piece. That's my suggestion. Anyway, (inaudible).

Facilitator: What do you mean? You're not exposed at all? What do you mean?

Wat1399: No one goes to you know to Rapid identity. And then you have canvas and you have different things on there. Okay. There's been this blue charm there with a c on it that I had no idea what that was. Nobody said anything. Come to find out that is clever and that's how you get to your elevation form to fill out that the federal government mandates that you do and tracking these English as a second language students. Okay. So for two and a half years, I've not



done this. That's why I felt terrible. I felt like I didn't even know. I might have a kid in here. So where did I go wrong with them? So then I started digging around and saying hey, how do I get to this form? Where is it? Blah, blah blah. Then I realized that was not a part of any orientation that I had coming in as a new instructor. I can be very sensitive to these issues. But if I don't have the access to the form or knowledge that this is what I need to do then I'm going to fall down on my job. So, I would just suggest that this whole idea of sensitivity **not just be a professional development after you've been in the system for a while**, but that it become part of a regulated or monitored orientation piece.

BRA1514: part of a **mentorship component**, perhaps.

Wat1399: Yes. Yes.

#### **Racial Equity Training**

Dan3062: [inaudible] I've been talking a lot. I don't want to monopolize the conversation. **I was able to attend the Racial Equity training. That has been very beneficial. Just in understanding the history of our country and just you know, things like that and how you know culture impacts that. So anyway, so I think that you know, if as many teacher as possible that can participate in that I think that would really be helpful for us as a district and the teachers that we have.** A couple of other things. I was just looking up some things. I was having a conversation with friends recently. We had some friends over this weekend. It was my son's birthday and so we were celebrating. We were just talking about everything that's been going on lately. And you know, one thing we talked about was, you know my big thing is I'm an educator. So we kind of talked about, you know, the **systemic things as far as education**. But one thing my friend talked about was just the breakdown of just, you know, American families in general. And I was looking up some statistics just on African-American families, you know, this morning. And you know by far, you know 65% of African-American families are single household families. So that's just something, you know, just kind of something like I say. I don't have all the solutions or anything like that and we're not going to fix this stuff, you know easily, but that's just something to kind of keep in mind, you know going forward. And per thousand households, per thousand births there are about twenty seven point one African-American mother's that are seeking out abortion. So they aren't even allowing their kids to be born because they feel like they're not adequate enough to raise those children effectively. And so, anyway. So I was listening to the Governor's address yesterday. I don't know if you all had an opportunity to see that? But he just talked a lot about **systemic things as far as healthcare** and things such as that. And how you know, you know people from the African American population and just in general how the pandemic is affecting those families and you know that they have to work, you know, those service jobs and they're not as apt to take care of themselves physically and health-wise and so, you know, we just **have kind of a greater problem in America** dealing with that. I think we just got to take those things into account, you know as educators moving forward those different things. So...

Facilitator: So Dan3062, you said a whole lot. I'm glad you did. I'm glad you did. I want to respect people's time, so if anybody has to hop off you can. But you said something interesting about Racial Equity training. We may not all know about the REI or racial equity training. I want you talk about that real quick. And then also you mentioned something about systemic things that we might be doing in education. That might kind of be hindering kids. I think that's what you implied. So what do you think that we're doing in education? That might be...

Facilitator: Discriminatory, is that what you mean?

### Faculty Diversity

Dan3062: Well, [Laughing] I don't know that I mean ..I don't. One thing that I have been a part of because of the Racial Equity training. One thing that you know, I can say that I'm sure you know, we had a **focus group** meeting. Even now in the district, you know to continue that. **We are continuing those discussions and one thing that I learned about at the last meeting that we had, was and this is like I said, this is no one's fault. I'm not... there's no blame being placed here or anything like that. But, this is just the statistics. I mean we have and this is across America. Eight-five percent of the teachers that we have in America are white. You know, white females. So, You know if we. And if you look at the subject school district, you know our population of students, you know, we have 30, 30, 30 and then you know others. So, you know, if 85% of the teachers are white female then you know, that's kind of a systemic thing that you know, just kind of kind of needs to be, you know looked at, you know and talked about and see how we can, what are the solutions. Like I said, maybe. It just something that needs to kind of be talked about. So anyway, so that's just kind of thing.**

Facilitator: Thank you Dan3062. You are just scratching the surface. I got you. Here's what's interesting though about that. Despite the fact that and that's not just in the subject school district; that's across the nation. There are lots of demographics out there about what the teaching force looks like across America, and those statistics are pretty comparable. That's why I think that this work is interesting because we need to know despite the fact that we may have 88 percent of the population or the teaching force in the subject school district is white teachers, I want to know how efficacious are they. How do they feel about their confidence? How prepared do they feel; how confident do they feel to teach culturally diverse kids? What's interesting about that I think also is to take that mean score for that demographic and compare it to other demographic groups like the Hispanic teachers and the Asian teachers and compare it to the African-American teachers. Then see if those means scores are different. Is there a different confidence level. I know I'm going way, way too deep but that's one of the interesting things that I'm hoping is going to come out of this research. I'm sorry, so my question is what is the difference? I think what you're saying is that the **district needs to continue to provide opportunities like the REI training** for as many teachers as possible to participate. So the REI training is a two-day off campus event. I don't want to say it's a professional development, but it's sort of like professional development and you learn about...it's called it stands for racial Equity Institute, right? Do all of you know about the racial Equity Institute Training?

Pra3170: I attended the groundwater piece of that. So I didn't go to the 2 day training. I went to the one-day training but it was I think it's like the base level piece of ground water.

Facilitator: Okay in in like two sentences, what could you say? How would you describe REI training?

Dan3062: It is basically. I would say it's a historical account of the establishment of our country and just how culturally and ethnically. It is from different perspectives. It's about how our country was established from back then even until today. Like Pra3170 was saying, just how **different systemic and different kinds programs have been established**. How we act and how and why they have kind of come to be; how things are kind of right now in our country. How did those things kind of come to be the way they are; through a historical account with analysis .So it kind of talks about that.

Facilitator: it talks about that in terms of Educational Systems, the healthcare system, and lots of different American systems that are in place. It highlights which structures were put in place; what laws were put in place and it tells the real history of it. Then of course, you take that real history and then you compare it to like current phenomenon or statistics. You analyze and compare it to what is happening and you will understand the reason why there were protests in the streets of the nation.

Pra3170: I think the Governor sort of skimmed the surface in his speech on yesterday to where he was like really, really going surface level with how it's looking in our state. To where COVID is affecting the population. But, also how other things such as how people are being treated and how it's less likely for a female in our state to be able to actually have a kid of normal birth weight. They went into so many statistics with that at the groundwater session. I was really interested in the REI training; the full REI training because all of the statistics of how its so different for one culture. And it's totally different for other cultures. So actually taking a look at that, but I think the Governor sort of scratched the surface on yesterday with his speech. But looking in depth with that and noticing that it's not actually the case and that's been one of my things; it's **not Equitable** in any way, shape, form or fashion. I want to piggyback off of what Klo2841 said.

#### Lack of cultural diversity of teachers

It was the same for me with not having a teacher that was culturally diverse until High School. I thought that I was just the only crazy person who's never had an African-American teacher until my 12th grade year. It was by my last year of high school! I went to an elementary school where no one in the school looked like me and no one in middle school looked like me. I just thought **okay, cool**. Then it goes into the religion and church being the most segregated place on the planet and how it's totally different there. You see a lot of people that look like you more so there and then how that's actually evolving and changing now.

Facilitator: [inaudible] What can district leaders do to prepare teachers?

Pra3170: But for the district, I think actually looking in

Facilitator: Tell me what I can write. It's just....Tell me what we can do.

Pra3170: for the district. I think continuously looking at how the

Pra3170: **how how it looks different because for me it was and you know this and I hope that I'm not stepping on anybody's toes, but for me as a 40 something [muffled] woman who has been in the educational system for more than a single digit number of years to walk into a school where there are only two people of color in the entire building?! That was just like wow and so in this day and time whenever the school population does not mirror that and that was just a wow for me. We're in 2020. Okay. So who do they have as an advocate? Because there aren't people who actually know what they're going through.** So like I said, to walk in the school system or to walk into a school at this day and time and to have that be the case. It's changed a lot since the first day that I walked in but to have that happen. And as an adult and not have somebody except for one other. Be able to go to them and say hey, how you doing? You don't know how different it is until...so I can only imagine for a little kid who is five or six years old to not see anybody that actually looks comparable to them. They don't know what to do and they feel

uneasy. So...

Facilitator: So recruitment. You would advise district leaders to work on **recruitment** right?

Pra3170: Recruitment. To work on **flexibility** of those that are in place because recruitment depends on people. Because the teaching profession is something that because of funding people aren't really looking to actually go into the teaching profession any longer. So that's not one of those big fields that a lot of people are wanting to actively go into so recruitment. Getting [inaudible]. **Re-educating people that are there**. And actually even bringing in **volunteers from other places and getting all of the stakeholders in the community** to buy into your mission and vision.

Pra3170: **Educating these people** because it takes more than just the people that are standing there because oftentimes like I said, they don't look like or mirror the population. So actually bringing in some of those other stakeholders. It'll help.

Facilitator: Okay, that's fair. So a **diverse teaching population; training the teachers, the current teacher population and involving stakeholders and sending as many people as possible to REI training or comparable training**. Okay, any other suggestions for how we need to prepare our colleagues to teach diverse kids?

Wil600: **Listen**

Student: Sorry, Wil600. Go ahead. Oh, I'm just gonna say we just need to listen, you know, we need to listen to...

Facilitator: I can't hear you. Can you check your [inaudible]

Facilitator: It it doesn't look like you're muted.

Wil600: Okay, I know your [inaudible]

Facilitator: okay. Can you say that again?

Wil600: I just think that we need **to listen** as teachers. We need to listen to other teachers and staff and the children. **We need to listen and make them feel valued and learn from them and let them teach the class, you know about their cultures.**

Facilitator: Excellent. I love that Wil600.

Klo2841: I was going to say I absolutely think that **more training**. I also think that encouraging staff through any of the schools to find a way **to get the students involved**. I think that you know, the way the experiences they have especially in high school because that's the most recent they'll remember going out into the workforce or to college getting them involved in acceptance and inclusion of anything. Be that religion or cultures. **I think that getting the students involved is something that the staff can work on, be it through their lessons when they are sharing some good news in the morning. Make sure that you include people from all different cultures and all different backgrounds.**

Dan3062: [inaudible] Facilitator for what you doing? I know it's part of your graduate work and something that you have to do but it's very timely right now. And so I really appreciate that and then the second thing is I appreciate everybody else. Just everybody sharing and everybody listening. Like you said Wil600 just everybody being willing to listen being willing to have you know, these tough conversations because it's not always comfortable, you know to have these conversations but right now it's definitely needed. So, yeah, so I really appreciate everybody being willing to listen and willing to share

#### Question 10

Do you have any suggestions for better preparing colleagues to teach in a diverse setting?

Fal7093: I think one thing that's important and important distinction is that teaching culturally like culturally responsive teaching is not you know slapping a poster on the wall. It's not, you know hanging up a picture of you know, three different scientists or people who have contributed to society. It's not reading one book. It's not Black History Month. It's something that has to [inaudible]

Fal7093: you know, like that's not what culturally responsive teaching is because those are very surface level. Those things are very just like slap a Band-Aid on a gunshot wound kind of like I kind of equate it to that. Like it's so much more. It is so much deeper and it goes even into the like those subconscious and unconscious beliefs and structures. I one of the PDS that they did for us for this like while we've been home. I did actually do one on culturally responsive teaching and it was I actually I want to go and watch the webinar again.

And1296: I did the same one that one. It was so awesome. I will find it and I will share it with you!

Fal7093: Yes, it wasn't a webinar. It was a webinar and it was like a pre-recorded one. Like we'll see if I can find the link and then I'll email it to you because it really it went beyond the Black History Month, the poster on the wall, the whatever kind of culturally responsive teaching even to point out that. You know as a country America, if you're looking at like individualism versus like Community cult-like operative. What was the word? What was the other

Facilitator: Collectivist?

Fal7093: I think that was it. So, you know thinking more of an individualistic mindset versus collectivist mindset like America was like number one most individualistic ever. Yes. You this the individual like I value your individual contribution yours yours yours and then value in structure from there. Whereas in even some of the cultures that were very more of a collectivist mindset were a lot of the ones that we have in our school. Lot of the Latin American countries. I noticed yes many American so like, you know, I know Guatemala was really high on the collectivist. One that stuck out to me. It was a couple other too. Mexico was kind of mid-range. Puerto Rico's kind of mid-range but like Guatemala, El Salvador, that one was really collectivistic. So even allowing for you know, and everyone says, oh I hate group projects because one kid ends up doing everything but that's probably the individualistically minded one who's just like, you know, forget it. I'm not sacrificing the grade and letting you all do stuff. Let me just do everything you know, and what can I do my own and let them do their thing or you know, sometimes that yes, you know that it noticing that you know, the collective that everybody

works together and puts together and we create this product or this idea or whatever that they take little pieces from everybody. It was a very interesting webinar. It was very very good.

Facilitator: I would be really interested in finding and you all sharing that with me.

Fal7093: I got ya. I'll look for it. I think I answered that question. Yeah, the what you can do as a district.

And1296: One thing that the principal and the instructional coach did for our distance learning professional development is we had three different categories with three different topics and we had options. Yes, and I think we teachers are just like the kids we teach you know? I want options and I want a safe place that I can go to look into this. So everybody reading the same book, it sounds great, but it's too cookie-cutter. It did not fit everybody. And again, teachers we are our kids and I'd liked the fact that I can go you know what? This is a subject that I really want to know more about or I don't know anything about it. What is this that you're talking about and having those choices and then being able to respond in a kind of we had a text feedback kind of thing going on. But I'll send that pd that you did during the shutdown of fourth quarter.

Facilitator: So I worked with that principal over at Pseudo Name School. We did differentiated PD. We did ongoing book clubs or book studies. They were facilitated by lead teachers in the school and participants selected from a choice of topics. So I'm glad to see that he's continuing to do that.

And1296: Oh, yeah, you know and if they're difficult topics, they're not necessarily, you know, the fun stuff of teaching but by providing us with the choice and then providing that there were fellow teacher leaders and people to talk with on different levels and from different backgrounds and experiences. It really opens those doors and those windows and provides for that. So from a principal point of view to teacher, I like that and I like having that choice. Here's your three topics which one will best suit you. So there's safety in that.

And1296: Uh-huh. I think so

Facilitator: there's Choice.

Fal7093: it's like a oh, I remember I was going for it like so it's more than just that it's like it almost has to be the culture of a school and that's so hard to define and do because there needs to be buy in. There needs to be, you know, you need to have the right people in place to begin with. You know some people they're just not going to mesh with that regardless of what you know, an administrator or a district person or even a facilitator or coach whatever. No matter what they say there has to be buy in. It has to be kind of built into the culture and the structure. Even how we structure classrooms. How we structure teams. Even teams of teachers. How we structure, you know, which students are on what teams how we split them up and how we try to combine them and make sure there's a good healthy mixture. You know what I mean? So, I mean it's a hard thing. To sort of move that mindset. I did find that email. I was working on forwarding that to you. So, but you're welcome. So, you know it's just it's so hard because it has to be something that's innate. It has to be something that's ingrained. It has to be something that comes from the heart. So to build that from so I guess just like casting that vision. And I

know I mean it's so much easier and that's why so many people slap a poster on a wall because that's easy that surface level. I did my part here. I showed up to the PD even though I was checking email and on Facebook the whole time. Hey, I'm here. I checked, you know, check a box kind of thing, but it's so much more than that. So having that heart, that mindset from the top down for even valuing the differences of teachers, you know if you want culturally responsive teachers, if you want like are our faculty should be as diverse as our students are often times. That is not the case. And I mean, I know you're dealing with you know, who chooses this profession who goes there who goes to college for it. I mean even to look at I'm just you know, thinking of our staff as a whole, you know, first of all, predominantly women, although at the middle school. You do have more men that are there. [inaudible] versus our students are in the neighborhoods. We come from most of us who teach it. I mean, it's more than 50% white Caucasian, you know so I can think of [silence]

And1296: How many other than Pseudo name who's the translator? You know how many Hispanic teachers do we have? Do we have any? We have the one ESL teacher that I can think of

And1296: and I think we possibly have one other. But not Hispanic in the

And1296: I don't know. I can't you know, so if even our faculty doesn't match What our students come from? I mean, that's honestly that's a hard sell for me for culturally responsive teaching and even thinking about even the number of African-American teachers that we have. It's I mean the white teachers far outnumber them. Like empty. Even just thinking because I was in the sixth grade last year. So thinking sixth grade building only. There is one.

Fal7093: Pseudo Name leaving but he's Hispanic.

And1296: That's who. [inaudible] to pull that out. Yeah, well he's going to some other pseudo Name School, that's where he's going. But um I can think of two. Yeah, so not a white teacher in like the whole of sixth grade. So like if that's not what our faculty looks like, how do you expect us to be culturally responsive to you know, like it's it's just hard it's hard and and that's why I love that. We bring in outside groups like Trails like our Trails teachers are culturally diverse and we bring in different group Church groups and things like that. They need to see that there's other adults responsible for their learning and that they're not necessarily quote-unquote teachers, right? So bringing in different groups bringing in different people to help with coaching or whatever it is that they may not have that diploma degree, you know, they didn't choose teaching but they still care about kid. So that I think it is very basic beginning step, you know, but really I trying to find our kids that have that, you know just natural teaching flare. You know your teacher kids and you know, really telling them hey, you know, you've got this gift and really because they may never have thought about it before, you know plant that seed and and do more consistently that you can't just do a week of you know, passing on you know, this culture that culture that it starts from day one when they walk in and it ends when they walk out and graduate. I'm gone and I yeah, and I think that's important like what you said too because look like, you know if you have a young hispanic lady and all she's ever had her entire life is white lady teachers. She's going to think that teachings not for her, you know, just because of her experience in what she has so letting kids know that they can do those things and I think that's a huge buy in for particularly in our community are African A merican males, like think seeing that they have options. You know and especially the ones that come from the poorer neighborhoods think of the you know, Section 8 housing neighborhoods that we pull from, you know, like you

have options. You don't have to just join a gang like these kids. Like that's all they think that they can do and that's the available even so that's why culturally responsive teaching is so important because if I don't show value in who you are where you are and where you come from and you're going to think you have this limited set of options for your life which are usually you know, like really setting them up for success and letting them know. Hey, you're valuable. You're intelligent like you have all of this this this going for you. You can really be and do something. You know what I mean? That's why I love eighth-grade! It's the time to do seed planting. We get to talk a lot about that and those options and what does brown have for them? And what can they do? And what options are there out there in our community and things like that and they say they're really transitioning from that old child to that young adult and really working with them and giving them, you know, the little hunch, you know, and really making it their choice, you know and say I don't want to pigeonhole you into this. But I want you to know it's that availability. And the door is open and if you walk through that door that's your choice and I will support and be proud of you. But I want you to know that door is there. . You have that option and that's like she said very much that's the responsiveness that we have.

Facilitator: I think that was a great way to sum this up.

Facilitator: Do you have any closing remarks that you want to make?

Fal7093: No, I just want to thank you for your time and for doing this project. I think it's something that there's not enough focus on in the education system as a whole and you know doing this research and really trying to be responsive to all because we I mean you would think that America being such a melting pot or a, you know, a salad bowl, whatever you want to call it for us to have been this from the beginning. We still really haven't gotten it. Right like how did we screw this up so much systemically and at like

Facilitator: a high level

And1296: high, high level even think. And I think this is at a really appropriate time to be having these conversations as well with everything that's going on in our society right now.

Fal7093: I'm thinking about just this systemic separation of races and you're over here and you're worth this and you are like that and you behave this way because you're black or the way, you know, there's so much of that and so much unconscious and subconscious. Is so thank you for doing this and thank you for allowing us to speak because this is something that is very important to me and it's something it's just super timely and something that's very important. So thank you for doing it and I just think the only way we're going to move forward as a country is having honest conversations like this and just really being able to listen to each other. Be heard and being willing to say, you know, I can't fix that but I can work on it for today and tomorrow and that research it works but it also works with our kiddos and you know, just I'm I love what I do. I'm with subject school district. We're here for the long haul, you know, we would have we would have been gone a long time ago if we didn't, you know, want this, you know and it's a want. Thank you for doing it.

Teacher: Well, I have to say thank you all for your contributions today. I learned from you. I've gotten great insight. I mean not even thinking about the dissertation just the adult conversation, but I have to admit that of course, you know, I didn't have anything to do with the timeliness of



this, it just happened that, you know, our nation is going through this at this time. And then also I will be honest with you. I'm embarrassed that this has not been my life's passion. I just recently developed my interest in this topic. It did not develop until the district brought it to us whenever the district started a couple of years ago sending teachers to the racial Equity

And1296: Isn't that great.

Facilitator: Yes. It was great. And then you know the last year or two years we've been doing some things with the culturally responsive teaching practices. And then this year actually it was in November; November was when I was like, you know, wait a minute. I [inaudible] already. I'm interested in this. Number one and I had to tackle my own fears. I asked you a while ago about what are some personal factors that have positively influence your confidence, but for me, I've had some personal factors that have negatively influenced my confidence levels so that I didn't take the opportunities or make opportunities to talk about this. I was afraid to talk about this. So because of the efforts, I believe of the district I have stepped out on faith and and

And1296: That's just the way we felt. You felt safe in going to the places and reading those things you felt comfortable enough to be uncomfortable and you were given permission by your leaders just like we were given permission by my principal, you know, and we will it's you know, it's just everything happens for a reason it's all and

Facilitator: I just hate that it took me so long to get there.

Follow up Question based on participant responses

Facilitator: Wonder what that would look like right now if we were in school; if we were in session because you guys are in the Middle School. What would that look like in your middle school classrooms?

Jac750: Whoa! I can tell you. If I had class this past week, like if we had school this week, my kids would have come in Tuesday fired up (inaudible)

Silence: *(for 3 seconds)*

#### Curriculum Relevant Issues of Social Justice

Jac750: Because **we've been talking about this all year**. So I don't know and I think it is just about even though it's difficult to talk about and you know with the little kindergarteners your conversation could be totally different but where I'm sitting with eighth graders, they are hearing everything and getting some of it. They're not understanding everything of course. But I was reading the book, Lies My Teacher Told Me all year and that really (inaudible). I would just be reading on my own during silent reading at the beginning of class and going (gasping, shaking head). And the kids were like, "What?! Well, are you gonna tell us what you are reading that was causing you to get so mad?" And I'm like, well I can read it to you but it's so hard to understand. That's why I love **Stamped** because it is he breaks it down and like when he drops the sentence that makes you huh. He'll say, "Let me say that again." And then you get the whole sentence again. Like to emphasize and to highlight. Y'all this is what the people thought and that's how we are where we are today and when you let the students and all that history. It's just going to **empower** them. You know what I mean. And I'm saying let them in on the history

like because I **did teach about Native Americans** this year and the kids said to me, I cannot believe I never knew any of this and I am [inaudible]! And I said, "I never knew any of this and I am 37! So there you go." So they want to know it and I don't know why I was well, I know why; **I was nervous before. Because I'd had a backlash.** So, but now I'm kind of like, even if a couple of kids say something negative, I don't care because I know like I'm not gonna let that stop me. I should say I do care but I'm not going to let that stop me. I'm going to keep going because the majority are enjoying **feeling empowered** getting out in front.

Facilitator: Wow, thank you guys. That, that, that's why this is so important. And I'm so proud of us for being participants in it. I don't think that the work is going to stop with us; I think it is going to continue to regenerate. That's excellent! Well, does anyone have any questions or closing comments that you want to make?

Ele2059: I'm just want to say thank you. Thank you Jac750, BRA1514. Thank you so much for being there to support my learning journey about this. I didn't know about... to be honest when I moved to the United States that there was so many racism. I didn't know that. I should have known that. Like when someone, a previous teacher said to me....All people who look Hispanic are from Mexico. And I was like no. I'm from South America. Peru. Next to the Pacific Ocean. I mean, I need a try and then I realized after our conversations another understanding with the American education policy. And then we learned about **American history at the (location) with that training that was so powerful.** Then I realized. I understood more about the American history and of course. It's not maybe that this generation's fault. I mean, I still believe that there is Google and you can read about that and be educated. But okay, I'm not going to say that. But I think we as teachers, we are building this future in our students and this is my hope. And I feel so blessed to work with you and I feel so thankful for your understanding and your open-mindedness. That really melts my heart that there is a better future for all of us. I mean this pandemic shows how global we are. We are global citizens. It is not just one nationality. It is not just one country. We need an understanding and we need to unite our world in a way to be more caring and loving and supportive to each other. So thank you for that.

Facilitator: Jac750 and BRA1514, I think Ele2059 mentioned that she went to the REI training. Ele2059, is that what you were talking about? Ele2059?

Ele2059: Yes.

Facilitator: Have you all, BRA1514 and Jac750, have y'all had an opportunity to be a part of that too?

Jac750: It was like in August when we were on the list. Right? They wanted all of those social studies teachers in my building because if you recall we had a bit of a scandal in December. So they were pushed to the front of the line and I did not get to go. However, one of the social studies teachers when she came back she said you probably still want to go but she's like she was telling me a lot of the things and she's like you already know all this I think. And I was like, but I still want to go. So, I don't know when. I don't know when they'll be able to do another one. We don't know what's going on with anything, but hopefully it'll come and I'll get to go.

BRA1514: For me, the entire **year long professional development. Every time we met, I learned more and was then able to do better. And I think that's just the theme the whole way through.**

When you know better, you do better. And this is just a great way to get to be with our colleagues and learn together and work together to create lessons and resources and to be able to be united together in making the world a better place.

Jac750: Which makes me want to ask are you all presenting at the, the, I don't even remember what it's called.

Facilitator: Director of Student Service's event?

Facilitator: I'm not. Are you guys?

Jac750: Beckham and I are going to and with Ms. Britt. We're all three going to just talk about what we did this year. You know, we're presenting I want to make sure I go to your session, but I think you still have another day if you want to submit a proposal. I don't know because I think that's where I'm at right now. But I feel like I need adult collaboration. I'm doing a good job with my little eighth grader. I need to talk to more adults because this like she said when we know better we do better. So I think there's a lot of people that are doing the best they can in there. Just haven't heard this.

Facilitator: It's a good [inaudible]

BRA1514: Ms. Facilitator, you should present all of the data that you're collecting. You should present. Yes, just share what you've been doing.

Facilitator: Thank you all for encouraging me. I would like to do that because there's a purpose. There's a real purpose behind this and it will affect children. It will affect their lives and I believe that wholeheartedly. I just got to get finished first. [Laughing]

Jac750: Understood.

Facilitator: Maybe at the next one. I'm a bit slow to analyze and think about things. I am still processing. But, I promise you that I will. I do need that collaboration with adults to hold me accountable and to help me to continue to grow. So I'm glad that you said that I will push myself. I can't push it this year.

Student: You've got a lot on your plate right now. We totally understand.

Facilitator: I do want to say thank you all so much. I love you. I love the work that you're doing and I respect you. I appreciate you for consenting to participate in this focus group.

BRA1514: Thank you for the opportunity. We appreciate what you're doing.

Facilitator: You're welcome. I look forward to having more conversations with you about culturally responsiveness in the future. All right, bye-bye. Enjoy your afternoon!

Student: [Inaudible] You, too.