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Closing the Achievement Gap II:
Building Community to Support Academic Success
Offered by the Institute for Educational Renewal
in cooperation with John Carroll University: ED 483B/583B

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January 2006 –   Thursday, 3:15 p.m.-7:15 p.m.
May 2006   January 26, February 16, March 30,
                          April, 13, April 27, May 18
                      Euclid School District
                      Memorial Park Professional Development Center

Session 1: Introduction of Culturally Responsive Classroom
Session 2: Morning Meeting within a Developmental Curriculum
Session 3: Rules and Logical Consequences
Session 4: Guided Discovery
Session 5: Academic Choice
Session 6: Celebration/Evaluation

Course Description: This course is a key component of the partnership between the Euclid City School District and the Institute for Educational Renewal.   "Building Community to Support Academic Success" will provide clarity that will assist teachers in developing strong culturally responsive classrooms that integrate academic rigor and social competence in an overall K-8 program. The course will explore principles of child development, racial identify development theory, and cultural values in education. The course will be guided by sound principles of culturally responsive teaching, child development and effective classroom instruction that are essential to closing the achievement gap.   In addition, teachers will consider ways in which they may serve as catalysts for effective change in classroom practice throughout the school.

Required Text:
 Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria and other Conversations About Race, Beverly Daniel Tatum, Ph.D.
OR
Assigned readings and/or texts from references

Rationale: Work on culturally responsive-based curriculum design will be rooted in research that student achievement increases substantially in schools and classrooms which address how children develop cognitive competencies through social interactions (Williams, 2003).   Often teachers trained in a Piagetian approach see cognitive development primarily as an individual orientation rather than in a social context (Piaget, 1932/1965). Exploring how children's social interactions are culturally constituted may

prove particularly salient for children from ethnically diverse cultures in U.S. schools (Greenfield, 1984; Rogoff, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978) in closing the achievement gap and minimizing cultural misunderstandings which can lead to low academic performance (Orange and Horowitz, 1999), disengagement, disinterest, and boredom for students and frustration for teachers. By [1] fostering a professional learning community among teachers and others, [2] focusing continuously on improving instructional practices in light of student performance data, and [3] linking external standards and staff development support (Newmann and Wehlange, 1995; Fullan, 1998), this course can lead to a richer, more challenging curriculum. Teachers can foster conversation and collaboration within and across schools. They can create more productive dialogue among students, parents, and themselves. And they can help focus everyone's attention on raising student achievement. (Gandal and Vranek, 2001) There is a burgeoning body of research that children learn most effectively from culturally responsive teaching based on their developmental, academic, cultural, and social needs.

Desired Outcomes:
 <u>**Knowledge:**</u> The teacher/learner will:
1. strengthen knowledge of current theory in child development, balanced literacy instruction, and standards-based curriculum to design strategies.
2. acquire knowledge of a variety of strategies that increase student investment in active learning.
3. develop an interpretive framework to help them understand what is happening in their cross-racial/ethnic interactions with students, parents, and colleagues.
4. expand knowledge of teaching strategies that support a balanced academic and social curriculum.
5. acquire knowledge of factors that contribute to meaningful change in classroom communities and schools.

<u>**Performances:**</u> The teacher/learner will:
1. work collaboratively to develop lesson plans that are based on the Ohio Language Arts Standards.
2. implement standards-based curriculum, using effective learning strategies that support a balanced social and academic curriculum.
3. identify ways in which racism impacts classroom life and what they can do about it.
4. create a classroom environment that is based on respect and cooperation, and that supports children's efforts to attain State of Ohio standards.

<u>**Attitudes:**</u> The teacher/learner will:
1. develop high expectations for all children and renewed respect for the child's role in creating his/her own learning.
2. recognize his/her ability to effect meaningful change in the classroom and in the school.
3. acknowledge the importance of the social curriculum and the power of the affective domain in cognitive growth and academic success.

4. appreciate the impact of structured social interaction in the classroom and in collaborative professional development with colleagues.
5. value becoming a reflective practitioner

Course Outline: This two credit course will consist of 24 classroom hours. The course will address selected topics including the following:

- Principles of child development
- Racial identify development theory
- Cultural values in education
- Social curriculum (including cooperative interaction, discipline, responsibility, and academic choice) for a community of learners
- Listening, speaking, viewing in a standards-based curriculum
- School climate/Classroom climate
- Collaboration/Team building (at the classroom and school level)
- Literature circles and other text-based protocols

Models of Instruction: Observation, personal reflection, discussion, cooperative learning, classroom implementation activities, demonstration, lecture, portfolio sharing.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:
Requirements:
- Attend class and participate in class activities and discussion.
- Work with consultants to implement course content into actual classroom practice.
- Write reflections on assigned readings and assigned classroom activities.
- Develop a portfolio of lesson plans, student work, classroom materials, etc. for ongoing use in the classroom.
- Requirement for students registered for John Carroll University graduate credit: read and analyze at least three articles on a subject under study in class and prepare paper to be shared in a class discussion.

Evaluation: Each student will do a self-evaluation of his/her own professional development. The instructors will respond to assignments with written comments.

Final Grade if taken for workshop 400 level credit:
- Pass – Work demonstrates consistent commitment to course content and classroom implementation activities
- Fail – Work does not demonstrate commitment to course nor knowledge of course content

Final Grade if taken for graduate 500 level credit:
- A – Work demonstrates consistent commitment to course content and classroom implementation activities
- B – Work demonstrates knowledge of course content

- C – Work demonstrates minimal engagement with course content

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