



CEJ's 2018 Educational Justice Priorities

With at least half a million students in NYC schools whose families are immigrants to this country, and hundreds of thousands of Muslim students, undocumented students, LGBTQ students, Jewish students, students with disabilities, girls and other identities that have been targets in the current political climate, there is a moral imperative for the NYC Department of Education to help schools develop expertise in confronting racism and bias, and building a culture in which students are honored for all aspects of their identities.

One critical way to do that, and to make New York City schools free from racism, sexism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, homophobia, ableism and other biases, is Culturally Responsive Education (CRE). CRE is a research-based method of rigorous, student-centered education that relates academic study to students' experiences and cultures; fosters positive academic, racial and cultural identities; develops students' ability to connect across cultures; empowers students as agents of social change; cultivates critical thinking, and inspires students to fall in love with learning. CRE is grounded in brain science and learning development.

In 2018, parents of the NYC Coalition for Educational Justice (CEJ) challenge Mayor de Blasio to make Culturally Responsive Education a cornerstone of his education agenda by:

1. Expanding the current anti-bias trainings to thousands more teachers, administrators and school and district staff

Conduct regular trainings that are regular, ongoing and connected to pedagogy, in order to raise awareness of our biases and how to combat them, deepen understanding of equity research, and help staff develop an equity lens on classroom practices and school policies such as discipline, special education referrals, and advanced placement.

2. Developing curriculum, resource materials and courses that engage students with diverse voices and perspectives in every subject, every grade, every day

Drawing from the model used to create the DOE's K-8 Social Studies Curriculum, convene teachers to revamp curricula in various disciplines and grades to better represent the histories and cultures of African, Latino, Asian, Middle Eastern and Native heritage people, and the intersections with gender, LGBTQ, disability, and religious diversity.

3. Creating and adequately staffing an Office of Culturally Responsive Education to help integrate Culturally Responsive Education throughout the school system

There are numerous CRE efforts scattered across the Department of Education, but they are not coordinated or aligned with each other. An Office of CRE will allow the DOE to strategize, lead, and learn from all the valuable CRE work that is already happening.