

September 2015

Thank you for your request to our REL Reference Desk on **professional development for administrators and teachers on American Indian cultural diversity**. Ask REL Southwest is part of a collaborative Ask-A-REL reference desk service provided by the 10 regional educational laboratories (REL). This service functions, by design, much in the same way as a technical reference library, providing references, referrals, and brief responses in the form of citations for research-based education questions.

Please note that REL Southwest has not done an evaluation of the resources themselves, but offers this list to you for your information only.

QUESTION

What steps, initiatives, or actions does the research literature on professional development suggest are potentially promising for administrators and teachers' professional development on American Indian cultural diversity?

Carjuzaa, J., & Hunts, H. (2013). Thinking outside discipline boundaries to integrate Indian education for all across the curriculum. *Collected Essays on Learning and Teaching*, 6, 93-98. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1059090.pdf>

From the ERIC abstract: "The Montana Indian Education for All (IEFA) Act is an unprecedented reform effort 40 years in the making. In this paper we summarize the IEFA professional development opportunities provided to faculty at a land grant university in the western United States while highlighting a faculty member's personal efforts to integrate IEFA in a culturally responsive manner. We explain how, instead of limiting the transmission of ideas, expanding discipline boundaries has opened a flood-gate to new information and other "ways of knowing" for the faculty member and her students."

Carjuzaa, J., Jetty, M., & Munson, M. (2010). Montana's Indian Education for All: Applying multicultural education theory. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 12(4), 192-198. *Although we typically limit our referrals to publicly available resources, based upon the abstract, we determined that this resource may be of interest to you. It may be found through university or public library systems.*

From the ERIC abstract: "Montana's constitutional commitment to the cultural heritages of American Indians exemplifies the practical application of multicultural education. In this article, the authors explore the goals and evolution of Indian Education for All within a multicultural education framework, and discuss how educators are best prepared to implement this transformative educational policy".

Mead, N., Grigg, W., Moran, R., National Center for Education Statistics. (2010). *National Indian Education Study—Part II: The educational experiences of American Indian and Alaska native students in grades 4 and 8*. (NCES 2010-463.) Washington, DC: Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED510597.pdf>

From the ERIC abstract: “Since 2005, the National Indian Education Study (NIES) has provided educators, policymakers, and the public with information about the background and academic performance of fourth- and eighth-grade American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students in the United States. This report, the second in a two-part series based on the 2009 NIES survey, describes AI/AN students, their teachers and schools, and the integration of native culture and language in their education.”

From the report: “The 2009 NIES teacher questionnaire collected information about the classroom experiences of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) students. The results presented...focus on teachers’ responses to questions about the integration of native culture and language into instruction, use of content standards and assessments to promote the academic achievement of their AI/AN students, and use of different types of resources. Teachers may draw upon a variety of strategies to address the unique needs of their AI/AN students. It is possible that integrating native culture and language into the curriculum could be a way to connect these students with academic content and skills. The extent to which teachers use different strategies in their classrooms may vary based on their knowledge and experience. Several questions were included on the NIES teacher survey to collect information about their experiences.”

Nam, Y., Roehrig, G., Kern, A., & Reynolds, B. (2013, February). Perceptions and practices of culturally relevant science teaching in American Indian classrooms. *International Journal of Science & Mathematics Education*, 11(1), 143-167. *Although we typically limit our referrals to publicly available resources, based upon the abstract, we determined that this resource may be of interest to you. It may be found through university or public library systems.*

From the Education Source abstract: “This study explores the perceptions of culturally relevant science teaching of 35 teachers of American Indian students. These teachers participated in professional development designed to help them better understand climate change science content and teaching climate change using both Western science and traditional and cultural knowledge. Teacher perceptions of practices using culturally relevant instruction were evaluated. The data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The results from the survey analysis show that the teachers’ existing practices of culturally relevant science teaching were limited in choosing topics relevant to American Indian culture. We found three common themes from the teachers’ perceptions of culturally relevant science teaching, meaning of culturally relevant science teaching, teaching strategies, and purpose of culturally relevant science teaching from the qualitative data. We also found that teachers with higher survey scores perceive culturally relevant science teaching differently than teachers with lower survey scores, specifically for the purposes and teaching strategies of culturally relevant science teaching. The results show that teachers with higher

survey scores tended to perceive culturally relevant science teaching as a two-way learning process between teachers and students where the teachers can learn traditional science knowledge from the students. They also tend to perceive using concrete traditional science examples as effective teaching strategy for culturally relevant science teaching and building strong relationships with American Indian students as the most important purpose of culturally relevant science teaching. We also discuss common challenges faced by science teachers when trying to implement culturally relevant science teaching with American Indian students.”

National Center for Education Statistics (2012). *National Indian Education Study 2011* (NCES 2012–466). Washington, DC: Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED533306.pdf>

This report presents performance results of fourth- and eighth-grade American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) U.S. students on the NAEP reading and mathematics assessments, as well as information on their educational experiences based on responses to the National Indian Education Study (NIES) student, teacher, and school questionnaires.

From the report: “Teachers of AI/AN students were asked questions about their background and the classroom experiences of their AI/AN students. Both fourth- and eighth-grade teachers were asked about the extent to which they acquired information specific to teaching AI/AN students from various sources.

In 2011, at least 56 percent of AI/AN fourth-graders had teachers who reported acquiring knowledge about AI/AN students to a small extent or more from [(1) independent reading and study, (2) own personal or family background and experience, (3) locally sponsored AI/AN cultural orientation program, and (4) living and working in an AI/AN community]. Eighteen percent of students had teachers who reported acquiring knowledge to a large extent from their own personal experiences, and 27 percent had teachers who acquired knowledge to a large extent from living and working in an AI/AN community. The percentage of students whose teachers did not acquire information from a local orientation program at all was smaller in 2011 than in 2009, and the percentage of students whose teachers reported doing so to a small extent was larger in 2011.”

Native American Community Academy. (2013, March). *Principal Leadership*, 13(9), 49-52. Retrieved from http://www.nassp.org/Content/158/PLmay13_nativeamer.pdf

From the Education Source abstract: “The article focuses on Native American Community Academy (NACA) founded in 2006 as a school for Native American students in Albuquerque, New Mexico, that integrates personal wellness and cultural identity with academic success. It is the first collaborative and the only urban public charter school in New Mexico serving the academic, cultural and wellness needs of Native American youth. The school is viewed as a holistic school for improving academic achievement of Native Americans.”

From the article: “[F]ounding principal, [Kara] Bobroff...recognized the need for ongoing professional development opportunities for the entire staff. To meet those responsibilities, she worked collaboratively with the University of New Mexico and Central New Mexico Community College (CNMCC) to found and host the Growing Educators for Native American Communities initiative. This initiative is a post-baccalaureate alternative teacher licensure and professional development program. Participants complete six courses (equaling 18 credit hours for secondary education and 21 for elementary) and engage in supervised field experiences at the Native American Community Academy, while developing relationships with colleagues, families, and students in their communities. A yearlong fellows program provides opportunities for new school leaders to gain hands-on experiences that they can take to other Native American communities.”

Ngai, P. B., & Koehn, P. H. (2011, April). Indigenous education for critical democracy: Teacher approaches and learning outcomes in a K-5 Indian education program for all. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 44*(2), 249-269. *Although we typically limit our referrals to publicly available resources, based upon the abstract, we determined that this resource may be of interest to you. It may be found through university or public library systems.*

From the Education Source abstract: “The writers explored the impact of the introduction of various instructional approaches when implementing an innovative Indian Education for All education program at a K–5 school in Montana on various dimensions of critical democracy preparation. The dimensions considered in the study include place-based geographical knowledge, social and political awareness of American Indian history and culture, and orientations conducive to the development of personal connections with American Indians. Findings showed that indigenous education contributes to critical-democracy learning. Specific outcomes of the indigenous-education program differed according to the instructional approaches teachers opted to pursue. Combining place-based instruction with guided reflection on personal connections with American Indian people through “boundary-breaking” approaches triggered the most impressive changes in learners' orientations.”

Richards, H.V., Brown, A. F., Forde, T.B. (2007). Addressing diversity in schools: Culturally responsive pedagogy. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 39*(3), 64-68. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED482325.pdf>

From the ERIC abstract: “Culturally responsive teaching cannot be approached as a recipe or series of steps that teachers can follow to become effective with American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students. Instead, it relies on the development of certain dispositions toward learners and a holistic approach to curriculum and instruction. This digest draws on a five-part conceptual framework first derived from the broader multicultural literature by Phuntsog and ties these concepts to recent research in AI/AN education. This framework reflects elements that researchers found to be crucial to culturally responsive education: (1) cultural literacy (teachers' knowledge of Native cultures and history and awareness of Native learning styles); (2) teachers' self-

reflection and analysis of their own attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes; (3) caring, trusting, and inclusive classrooms; (4) actions of the school that model respect for diversity, Indigenous knowledge, and alternative ways of knowing; and (5) a transformative curriculum that promotes critical thinking and the advancement of society toward equality of opportunity and social justice.”

Richardson, B. C., & Dinkins, E. G. (2014, Fall). Life on the reservation: cross-cultural field experiences and student learning. *AILACTE Journal*, 11(1), 57-72. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1052577.pdf>

From the ERIC abstract: “Twenty-first century classrooms are filled with increasingly diverse student populations. Effective teacher preparation programs must include explicit course work in culturally responsive pedagogies and field experiences that place educators in new sociocultural contexts. Field experiences in cross-cultural, place-based settings have the potential to help educators recognize injustice and develop empowering. In this article, we describe our recent collaboration with Oglala Lakota College (OLC) and the Center for American Indian Research and Native Studies (CAIRNS) to provide both undergraduate teacher candidates and graduate students with rich, field-based cross-cultural experiences. We discuss the research and theories shaping this collaboration and describe the formation of these partnerships. Student learning in both the undergraduate and graduate field experiences indicates how spending intensive time in a unique cultural setting can promote critical thinking about the self, the world, and the role of educators in creating change.”

Rogers, C. A., & Jaime, A. M. (2010). Listening to the community: Guidance from Native community members for emerging culturally responsive educators. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 43(2), 188-201. *Although we typically limit our referrals to publicly available resources, based upon the abstract, we determined that this resource may be of interest to you. It may be found through university or public library systems.*

From the ERIC abstract: “Critical race theory (CRT) emphasizes the importance of listening to the counter-narratives of people from marginalized groups. However, the applicability of CRT in practical settings often remains unclear for educators and scholars. This project offers not only a place for Native community members to share their experiences and ideas, it also provides practical guidance for emerging culturally responsive educators and ways to use themes from narratives to guide future scholarship. As a result of interviews with five Native community members, three themes emerged for non-Native educators working in Native communities: (a) learning from the community, (b) transforming thinking through discomfort, and (c) gaining awareness of positive values. These themes can be used to guide future projects, including reservation-based field experiences and research projects exploring educator thinking in reservation communities.”

Sparapani, E. F., Seo, B., & Smith, D. L. (2011, Fall). Crossing borders by “walking around” culture: Three ethnographic reflections on teacher preparation. *Issues in Teacher Education*, 20(2), 53-66. Retrieved from

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ954571.pdf>

From the report: In this article the authors offer “a method teachers can use to learn about culture, both theirs and their students.” We call this method “walking around” culture, and each of us related stories about “walking around” culture. As we have analyzed our experiences, several common themes have emerged. We have combined these themes into five critical factors. We have labeled these critical factors ‘key principles’ because we believe they are essential (key) for teacher preparation.” The key principles are: (1) Culture is communication, (2) Culture is personal, (3) Culture has boundaries, (4) Culture is perceived by those who stand outside the culture, (5) Culture is defined by the people in that culture.

Williams, S. V. (2013, Winter). Outsider teacher/insider knowledge: Fostering Mohawk cultural competency for non-native teachers. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 40(1), 25-43. *Although we typically limit our referrals to publicly available resources, based upon the abstract, we determined that this resource may be of interest to you. It may be found through university or public library systems.*

From the Eric abstract: “Research has suggested that mainstream teachers, and the institutions they work for, are often disconnected from the language, culture, and approaches to learning that facilitate Native students' achievement in school. Yet, while the overall Native population has increased over the past few decades, the number of Native teachers has decreased. As a result, many Native students will be taught by non-Native teachers with limited training in cultural competency. Cultural competency in this context refers to teachers' knowledge of and ability to incorporate their students' cultural, social, and linguistic backgrounds into curriculum and instruction. Similar to other school districts serving Native students, all of the classroom teachers and administrators in this study in Farmingdale, New York are non-Native. Farmingdale is a reservation border town district with a rapidly growing Mohawk student population. Despite this growth and the persistent cultural divide between faculty and students, Farmingdale has provided limited professional development opportunities on Mohawk cultural competency for the non-Native staff. The primary goal of this research was to study the interactions between Native and non-Native participants as they worked to create a professional development program for the district. The points of conflict and contention were then used as a platform for addressing the issues through teacher education. By uncovering Native and non-Native stakeholders' perspectives, four general areas of conflict between the communities were found including: contrasting conceptions of cultural competency, cultural disconnect, intercultural miscommunication, and issues of trust. Through uncovering and analyzing these areas of conflict, a model of cultural competency professional development intended for the Farmingdale District with implications for other schools serving Native students was developed.”

Wiseman, A. M. (2014, Spring-Summer). Documenting literacy in the community: Preservice teachers' engagement and learning with students outside of school. *Multicultural Education*, 21(3-4), 51-55. *Although we typically limit our referrals to publicly available resources, based upon the abstract, we determined that this*

resource may be of interest to you. It may be found through university or public library systems.

From the ERIC abstract: “According to a recent report, by the year 2020, more than 50% of the U.S. public school population will be classified as persons of color; that is, students from African, African-American, American Indian, Latino, and Pacific Islander backgrounds. As a result of these changing demographics, it is essential for teachers to understand how to teach students who are diverse both linguistically and culturally. Course readings and assignments should build upon classroom experiences and increase knowledge and skills related to teaching diverse populations, with the goal of increasing teachers' capacity for instruction and efficacy concerning their students. This article examines an assignment that is part of the author's language arts methods class. This course was designed as part of her undergraduate program's focus on diversity and as a way to address preservice teachers' cultural understanding in the context of literacy pedagogy. The article begins by presenting research on preservice teachers and cultural diversity. After a description of the research methods used in this study, the findings and recommendations based on this research are presented.”

Additional Resources

Demmert, W. (2001). *Improving academic performance among Native American students: A review of the research literature*. Charleston, WV: Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. Retrieved from http://inpathways.net/Improving_Performance.pdf

From the report: “This literature review and annotated bibliography will help readers locate research projects that provide information on factors and programs associated with improved academic performance of Native students. This review began with a search of the Educational Resource Information Center's (ERIC) more than 8,000 document and article abstracts related to American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and other Indigenous education; master's degree and doctoral dissertations; and other sources of research information on the education of Native America.”

This report contains an annotated bibliography more than 100 sources and a bibliography of footnoted material.

Demmert, W. & Townsend, J. (2003). A review of the research literature on the influences of culturally based education on the academic performance of Native American students. Washington, DC: Northwest Regional Educational Lab. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED474128.pdf>

From the ERIC abstract: “There is a widespread, firm belief among Native American communities (American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians) and among professional Native educators that meaningful educational experiences require an appropriate language and cultural context. From their perspective, such context supports the traditions, knowledge, and language(s) of the community as a starting place for learning new knowledge. This review collects, reports on, and critically

analyzes the research literature to determine whether a culturally based education (CBE) curriculum improves the school performance of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian students. Introductory sections discuss events of the past three decades supporting development of CBE, three theories underlying CBE interventions, an operational definition of the elements of CBE, definitions of experimental and quasi-experimental research, and the difficulties in conducting such research. The review found only four studies that could legitimately be classified as experimental or quasi-experimental. Because of these limited numbers, a small number of non-experimental comparative studies were added. Only one research project was found that provides insights on how researchers might show a direct connection between CBE and improved academic performance. Recommendations are presented for improving the research base on CBE for Native Americans. Data tables summarize the studies examined. Appendices describe the resources used in the literature search and present a lengthy annotated bibliography.”

This report includes a Bibliography (41 sources), a List of Resources Utilized, in the Literature Search (bibliographies, abstracts, databases, and lists of descriptors used) and an Annotated Bibliography of the Research Literature on CBE Programs Serving Native American Students (more than 100 sources).

Additional Organizations to Consult:

[American Indian Higher Education Consortium](http://www.aihec.org) (<http://www.aihec.org>)

[Bureau of Indian Education](http://www.bie.edu) (<http://www.bie.edu>)

[National Indian Education Association](http://www.niea.org) (<http://www.niea.org>)

[Smithsonian Education: American Indian Heritage Teaching Resources](http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/resource_library/american_indian_resources.html)
(http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/resource_library/american_indian_resources.html)

METHODS

Search of Databases and Websites

[Institute of Education Sciences \(IES\) website](http://www.ies.ed.gov) (<http://www.ies.ed.gov>)

[ERIC database](http://www.eric.ed.gov) (www.eric.ed.gov)

EBSCO’s Academic Search Premier database

EBSCO’s Education Source database

[Google Scholar](http://scholar.google.com) (scholar.google.com)

Keywords and Search Strings Used in the Searches

(Native American students OR American Indian students) AND (professional development) AND (cultural identity OR cultural values OR cultural awareness OR culturally relevant education OR cultural diversity).

Criteria for Inclusion

REL Southwest selected resources that provide research on professional development on American Indian cultural diversity for administrators and teachers. Because few resources were found specifically on this topic, additional resources that deal with teaching American Indian students in general are included. When REL Southwest staff reviewed the resources, we considered—among other things—three factors:

Date of Publication: The most current information (published from 2010 to the present) is included.

Source and Funder of the Report/Brief/Article: Priority was given to publications written in relevant, peer-reviewed journals or reports produced by well-known research organizations.

Methodology: Sources include literature reviews and government reports.

Ask-A-REL is a service provided by a collaborative of the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Program, funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES). This response was prepared by REL Southwest, administered by SEDL under contract ED-IES-12-C-0012 with IES. The content of this document does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.