

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards

Position: SUPPORT

Issue: The Illinois State Board of Education has proposed a set of rules in response to the growing diversity of 21st century classrooms. These rules, the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards, are designed to help prepare educators for that increasing diversity. Educator preparation programs in colleges and universities will integrate these standards into their course content and field experiences, providing critical professional development opportunities to future educators. When properly implemented, these standards will enhance an educator's ability to understand and relate to the whole child, which is already an expectation for certified staff members.

Position: The Illinois Education Association supports the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards because it's what's best for all students. For far too long, the public education system has catered to the needs of one set of students. This one-size-fits-all approach is no longer applicable. It is not best practice. It is not inclusive. It is not trauma informed. These rules are a thoughtful approach to making sure all students feel welcome and safe in their schools.

Fact: More than 52 percent of Illinois students identify as students of color. English Language Learners make up the fastest growing student population. Despite these facts, Illinois' educator workforce hardly reflects these cultural demographics. It is a goal for all students to feel valued in the process of their education, regardless of their skin color or cultural background.

Fact: These learning standards are only for educator preparation courses and professional development programs. They will not be added to the K-12 curriculum standards. These standards are designed to help educators be more thoughtful and accepting of all their students. They are not designed to be punitive in any way. In other words, no one will be losing their job or their certification as a result of these rules.

Fact: There are no curriculum mandates associated with these rules. No educator will be forced to indoctrinate their students with specific political ideologies. No educator will be forced to turn their students into activists. No educator will be forced to incite their students into participating in any protests, riots or insurrections. The standards would simply ask that an educator consider how current events may be impacting certain segments of their student body and address them in a thoughtful, inclusive way.