

Action plan proposal: lack of teacher training on multiethnic education



There are innumerable teacher education programs but are they efficient enough to lead a multiethnic classroom? This is a question that dawned on me after a cooperating teacher I was working with mentioned her concerns to me. She felt that she did not receive enough pre-service education and teacher training to be able to effectively implement those skills into her new classroom. Mrs. A moved from a majority Caucasian school to an African American and Hispanic lead school. The transition was tough for her because she felt a disconnect with her students. She hoped for the school to provide her with training on how to educate the diverse youth and tips on incorporating multiethnic education into her classroom, however this was not the case. The school was focused primarily on improving their technology and holding special school events. The school held several meetings, however training and development on multicultural education specifically, was not the hot topic of conversation at the meetings.

Due to this, I am realizing that there is a lack of proper training given to teachers to implement multiethnic lessons in their classroom. This problem is creating a disconnect between the teachers and their students as well as forming a barrier where teachers are unable to expand their cultural knowledge and spread that knowledge amongst their students. According to a roundtable discussion lead by Representative Susan Davis, there was an agreement that there are several new teachers who are not prepared to be in a classroom and do not have enough experience working with diverse students. Morrier et al. (2007) discovered that 82% of states expect a certain amount of multicultural training for pre-service courses, however, only 37% of these states have a particular prerequisite as part of acquiring teacher

accreditation. (Morrier, M. J., Irving, M. A., Dandy, E., Dmitriyev, G., & Ukeje, I. C. (2007, Spring). Teaching and learning within and across cultures: Educator requirements across the United States. *Multicultural Education*, 14(3), 32-40. doi: 216510029)

Teacher education programs should be more responsible for implementing training programs to educate pre-service and in-service teachers on how to teach in multicultural classrooms. Miretzky and Stevens (2012) mentioned that millions of black male and female students go to low-performing schools around the country that have teachers who lack training in dealing with multicultural education. Gollnick and Chinn (2013) emphasized on hiring faculty members who are qualified and trained to deal with diverse learners. Thus, the role of teachers is inevitable in empowering and enhancing schools that serve diverse learners. Third, the implementation of teacher education programs that prepare pre-service teachers for a multicultural education system have started since 1981 (Cochran-Smith, 2003). Hence, teacher education departments should be aligned with school reform policies to provide teachers with training programs that enable them to create an environment that values a multicultural education system. These institutions are also responsible to enhance in-service teachers with training programs that promote their awareness of multicultural education (Gay & Howard, 2000). A new study from the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) and U. S. News & World Report shows that the majority of teacher preparation programs in the United States are not providing adequate training to aspiring teachers, leaving them unable to accommodate increasingly rigorous instructional goals of public schools. Kate Walsh, president of NCTQ, “ While

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we know a lot about how to train teachers, those practices are seldom evident in the vast majority of programs.” Too many new teachers are unprepared for the classroom and especially lack experience working with diverse, low-income students and the trauma that can impact students from those backgrounds.(That was the consensus at a roundtable discussion of educators and teacher trainers, which was hosted by Rep. Susan Davis)

According to data that have been disaggregated on the national level, one of the most significant problems yet to be effectively addressed by public schools is class, ethnic,

language, and racial disparities in student performances (Lorence, Dworkin, Lawrence, Toenjes, & Hill, 2002; McMillian, 1999; Valenzuela, 2002ab). In contrast, there is evidence to suggest that teachers who have been engaged in programs with more critical models of multicultural education are more receptive and responsive to diverse students who may need additional academic support (Ball, 2009). Morrier et al. (2007) uncovered that 82% of states expect a certain amount of multicultural training for pre-service courses, however, only 37% of these states have a particular prerequisite as part of acquiring teacher accreditation.

- Have an easily identifiable multiethnic/multicultural children’s literature or literacy focus and incorporate graduate-level, literacy terminology.
- Clearly identify the data that will be collected and the ways in which the data will be analyzed.

- Present a detailed plan for change that addresses teacher buy-in and an attendant funding plan.

- Present the rudimentary elements of an evaluation plan to assess the potential efficacy of the proposed workshop or presentation.

- Morrier, M. J., Irving, M. A., Dandy, E., Dmitriyev, G., & Ukeje, I. C. (2007). Teaching and learning within and across cultures: Educator requirements across the United States. *Multicultural Education*, 32-40.