

WHAT IS

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE-SUSTAINING EDUCATION

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE-SUSTAINING EDUCATION (CRSE)
advances educational justice by:

1

Centering and valuing students' cultures and identities

2

Using rigorous and relevant curriculum, and anti-oppressive teaching practices

3

Building strong, positive relationships between students, families, and school staff

4

Supporting students to develop the knowledge, skills, and vision to transform the world toward liberation

"I want all my students to feel seen in the classroom, to be seen in the curriculum. I want my daughter not to wonder if people that look like her made contributions to the world."

—AARON HARRIS, NYC HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHER

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WHY WE NEED CRSE IN OUR SCHOOLS

Students deserve a quality public education that honors their cultures, backgrounds, and communities. Their education should connect academic learning to their lives, passions, and struggles outside of school. From racism to harsh discipline policies, public schools are full of inequities that impact students' lives every day.

We need culturally responsive-sustaining education to transform schooling.

1

Culturally responsive-sustaining education works.

- CRSE has been shown to **increase grade point averages, student engagement, self-image, critical thinking skills, and graduation rates, and decrease dropout rates and suspensions.**¹
- K-12 students who participated in Tucson's Mexican American Studies program and San Francisco's Ethnic Studies program were **more likely to be engaged in literature and history lessons, pass state standardized tests, graduate, and increase their attendance and GPAs.**²

2

Students excel in school when they see themselves reflected in the classroom and have strong, authentic relationships with their teachers.

- Studies show that **White teachers have lower expectations for students of color.** They are significantly less likely to expect Black students to finish high school and college.³
- Nationally, over 50% of students are Black, Latinx, Asian, or Native. **86% of teachers are White.**
- A survey of NYC public school teachers shows that **86% of teachers want to discuss race in the classroom,** but most do not receive the training or support to do so.

3

The public school curriculum does not reflect the diversity and needs of students.

- Across 16 commonly-used English Language Arts curricula and booklists in Pre-K to 8th grade, **83% of the books are written by White authors.**⁴
- A majority of the curricula were found to **portray people of color in inferior, stereotypical, and destructive ways.**

About the Education Justice Research and Organizing Collaborative

The Education Justice Research and Organizing Collaborative (EJ-ROC) at the NYU Metro Center brings together researchers, data and policy analysts, and community organizers to provide critical research, data, policy and strategic support for the education justice movement. EJ-ROC builds on the long tradition of movement-driven, community-derived research and uses an explicit racial justice lens in its two main areas of work: rapid-response research and strategic assistance to education organizing groups.



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1. Some examples of studies are: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.3102/0034654315582066>; <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/cdev.12995>; <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11162-005-2966-1>.

2. <http://news.stanford.edu/2016/01/12/ethnic-studies-benefits-011216/>

3. http://research.upjohn.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1248&context=up_workingpapers

4. <http://www.nyccej.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Diverse-City-White-Curriculum.pdf>