









## Culturally Responsive & Sustaining Pedagogy Framework

### Rationale, Pre-Supposition, & Theory of Change

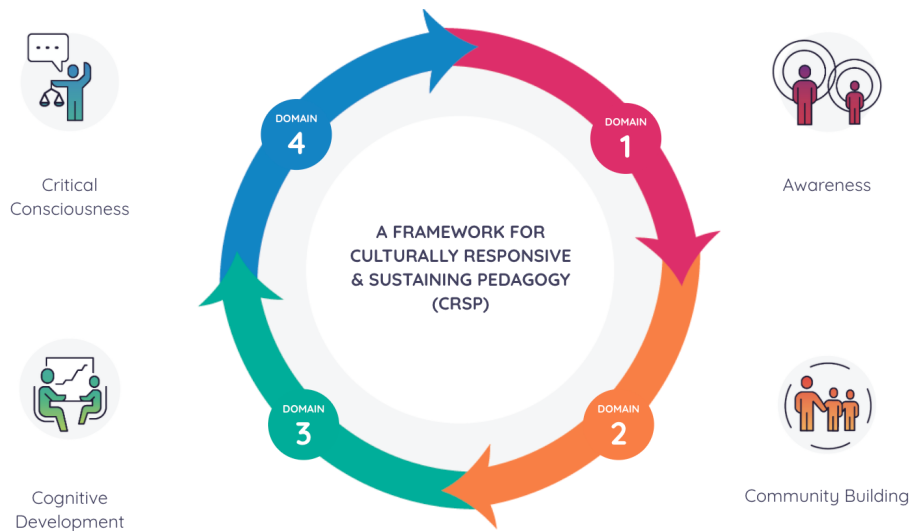
Highlander Institute's Culturally Responsive & Sustaining Pedagogy (CRSP) Framework is grounded in research, neuroscience, and the rationale of Geneva Gay, Zaretta Hammond, Gloria Ladson-Billings, Sami Alim, Django Paris, and others. The framework highlights the importance of sociocultural awareness, relationships, developing student ownership, and cultivating higher-order thinking skills within an anti-racist approach that builds the capacity of teachers and students to disrupt inequitable systems and create more relevant and self-directed learning environments.

Our current education system breeds compliance which results in dependent thinking and an atmosphere of low expectations - particularly for Black and Hispanic/Latinx students, students who live in poverty, and multilingual learners. Without an awareness of how systems of inequity and learner identity connect to teacher expectations, we have found that the implementation of personalized practices does not sufficiently empower all students. The CRSP framework is built on the presupposition that inequity by design breeds compliance and under-develops students' natural cognitive capacity. According to our pedagogical theory of change:

IF WE	THEN
 Build awareness about how systemic inequities translate into our schools	 Students' cognitive skills, mastery, competence, and engagement will improve.
 Learn about students' cultures and build trust & belonging	 Students' self efficacy and confidence will improve.
 Nurture cultures of thinking by developing academic mindsets	 Students will be empowered to use their skills in meaningful and transformative ways.

It is our imperative to align aspirational instructional shifts with a process that restores and elevates the natural confidence and competence of students who have been marginalized by systemic inequity. The four domains of the CRSP framework - Awareness, Community Building, Cognitive Development, and Critical Consciousness - support the development of specific practices and competencies for both students and teachers. Through ongoing feedback loops and accountable talk, teachers and students move through framework domains together to build the foundations we believe to be critical for long term student success.

# Framework Overview



<b>Domain 1</b>	<b>Awareness</b>	When we start with ourselves and recognize that we all operate within an inequitable system, we can start to understand how systemic inequity translates into our schools. In this domain, we build awareness about: 1) the layers of context around our students and 2) who is carrying the cognitive load in the classroom. Then we can use this awareness to move away from compliance-oriented teaching that produces passive learners.
<b>Domain 2</b>	<b>Community Building</b>	Rooted in this awareness, we learn to build community and nurture academic mindsets so that when a student is under the load of a challenging task, their peers can support the learner through it. We start this work by building a culture of trust and belonging, before then developing a culture of thinking.
<b>Domain 3</b>	<b>Cognitive Development</b>	We leverage relationships, a mindset centered around equity, and learning science principles to disrupt a culture of low expectations and shift the cognitive load to students. Teachers work to develop information-processing skills with students in the areas of problem solving, effective reasoning, decision-making, and perspective-taking.
<b>Domain 4</b>	<b>Critical Consciousness</b>	As we build our students' cognitive skills, we support them to think critically about the world, to understand the levers of change available to them, and to use that understanding and motivation to act in ways that promote justice. Ultimately they will feel empowered to use their knowledge and skills to transform their lives, communities, and society.



## CRSP Practices

	Teacher Practices*	Student Practices*
<b>Domain 1: Awareness</b>	1.1 Develop socio-cultural awareness 1.2 Examine and address power and privilege as they show up in the classroom <b>1.3 Examine and disrupt dominant and deficit-based narratives in the curriculum and the classroom</b> 1.4 Assess expectations and demonstrations of cognitive lift, particularly for students whose communities have been marginalized by systemic inequity	1S1 Develop socio-cultural awareness 1S2 Examine power and privilege as they show up in the classroom dynamics 1S3 Set high expectations for themselves and their classmates
<b>Domain 2: Community Building</b>	2.1 Cultivate individual relationships <b>2.2 Develop positive academic mindsets</b> <b>2.3 Nurture a culture of trust and belonging</b> <b>2.4 Promote a culture of thinking</b> 2.5 Elevate voices and honor agency 2.6 Foster and sustain students' cultural and linguistic expressions	<b>2S1 Feel a sense of belonging to the academic community</b> <b>2S2 Support one another through learning challenges</b> <b>2S3 Believe they will be successful and that their ability and competence grow with their effort</b> 2S4 Provide input and feedback on learning experiences 2S5 Collaborate effectively
<b>Domain 3: Cognitive Development</b>	3.1 Leverage students' cultures and funds of knowledge to make learning meaningful <b>3.2 Scaffold and develop students' thinking skills and dispositions</b> 3.3 Facilitate feedback and reflection processes that drive learning 3.4 Effectively use data-driven differentiation 3.5 Establish formative assessment structures that support student ownership of learning journeys	3S1 Engage in tasks that require higher order thinking <b>3S2 Use structures to process their thinking and make it visible</b> 3S3 Own their learning journeys and talk about themselves as learners 3S4 Engage in academic conversations 3S5 Express and demonstrate learning in ways that sustain their cultural identities
<b>Domain 4: Critical Consciousness</b>	4.1 Develop essential questions and supporting activities and resources that elevate non-dominant perspectives <b>4.2 Invite students' questioning of status quo</b> 4.3 Nurture students' motivation to address issues of injustice 4.4 Support students to act in ways that promote justice	<b>4S1 Engage in critical reflection around topics that relate to justice</b> 4S2 Feel motivated to act in ways that promote justice 4S3 Build on learning by taking informed action in meaningful ways 4S4 Believe what they are learning has value for them

\*Practices highlighted in bold text are the focus practices for schools partnering with Highlander Institute during SY 2021-2022

