WHAT IS CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY?

Developed by Ladson-Billings (1995), culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) is an approach to teaching that integrates education into students' cultures and reconnects students' lived experiences outside the classroom with their classroom experiences. The three main pillars of CRP are:

- **Academic Success**: Teachers guiding students to complete learning objectives and choose academic success for themselves
- **Cultural Competence**: Teachers using students' cultures as the basis for their learning in the classroom
- **Critical Consciousness**: Teachers leading students to critique social institutions' inequities and to participate in democratic society
HOW DOES THIS CONNECT TO MATHEMATICS?

Students often experience trauma related to mathematics from an early age. Students of color, specifically, describe a disconnect from mathematics because of a lack of connection between the material and their lives (Gutierrez, 2018). Therefore, mathematics educators are called to rebuild their students’ relationship with mathematics. When CRP is being implemented in their mathematics classroom students are more likely to:

- find mathematics useful outside of the classroom
- feel more prepared to discuss societal issues

This encourages "rehumanizing" mathematics, reconnecting students with mathematics, and giving students Power back in the mathematics classroom (Gutierrez, 2018).

WHAT CAN YOU DO IN YOUR MATHEMATICS CLASSROOM TO IMPLEMENT CRP?

Before implementing CRP strategies in the classroom, it is important for educators to prepare by researching about CRP, learning about their students’ lives, and analyzing their own socio-cultural identity. These actions are essential for teachers to begin implementing CRP in their mathematics classrooms (Krasnoff, 2016). The resources provided are good opportunities to extend your math and CRP repertoire.

Hold high expectations
Both high behavior and academic expectations set a supportive, motivational environment and encourage students to choose academic success.

Modify given curriculum to promote student voice
Some examples of this are encouraging mathematical discourse, creating discovery-based lessons, and providing choice assignments for students.

Start lessons and/or units with connections to students' lives
Rather than adding a project at the end, start a lesson or unit with real-world, cultural connections to pique students' interest and bond them with the material

Build relationships across schools and communities
Create a classroom that promotes inclusion and connects students with the material and the communities around them.

REFERENCES