

Culturally Diverse Gifted Students

Characteristics of Culturally Diverse Gifted Children

- Limited English proficiency-blocks the acquisition of reading skills
- (LEP) Isolation-emotional, cultural barriers-frustration may be perceived negatively
- Use of nonstandard language-may be equated as a deficit when have strong skills
- Questions may be perceived as challenges
- Underachievement-lack of support
- Negatively affected by peer pressure
- Performance on tests significantly lower
- Differences mask talents
- Conflict between need for achievement and affiliation
- Black students-verbal, vocal, physically active, creative, communal, sensitive & emotional

Potential Challenges in School

- Are underrepresented in schools by 50-70%
- Under referred b/c teachers lack the understanding of culturally diverse students
- Biased tests-intelligence & achievement tests scores inadequately capture strengths of culturally & linguistically diverse students-may be capable but lack experiences to be successful
- “Deficit Perspective” philosophy that hinders educators from seeing students’ potential-(blames the victim-environment inferior-genetics/intelligence)
- Inadequate policies & practices, i.e. 1st screening-teacher referral which is subjective-GPA for referral or to remain in program

Suggested Interventions, If Needed:

- Improve quality of education by closing the achievement gap between white and diverse students. How?: School improvement plan-professional development for teachers-reduce class size-increase student participation in challenging courses-increase the number of highly qualified teachers-family & community involvement
- Educators need to shed “deficit thinking”-teachers must acquire multicultural competence-examine their attitudes and perceptions
- Use accurate information to improve teaching and learning
- Adopt culturally sensitive instruments to measure intelligence of diverse groups to capture their cognitive strengths. Provide less culturally loaded tests as the non-verbal test
- Provide supportive strategies, intrinsic and remedial strategies to affirm the worth of diverse students
- Eliminate barrier of the economically disadvantaged students
- Infuse multicultural perspectives and materials into the curriculum to enhance cognitive, social-emotional and cultural development of all students

Further Reading: Handbook of Gifted Education by N. Colangel & Davis *Equity and Excellence: Culturally Diverse Students in Gifted Education* Ch.39
Identifying and Serving the Gifted Immigrant-Problems and Strategies by Carole Ruth Harris
A Challenge for Culturally Diverse Families of Gifted Children: Forced Choices Between Achievement or Affiliation by Donna Ford