



# Importance of Cultural Programming

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# Context

- Personal experience in Lincoln Park High School
  - We had one day, one hour assembly for Latinx and Black History Month
    - No student input other than writing essays about important figures.
  - Students were not supported in their cultural events





# What are we Advocating for...



## I-Night

- Personal experience in Von Steuben High School
  - School had multiple cultural clubs and activities after-school
  - School had yearly International Night and Day
    - Students were given autonomy to lead these clubs with teachers being present for adult supervision

# What are we Advocating for pt. 2

- ❖ International Night is a school-wide event that involves students performing, interacting, and eating multiculturally, depending on the budget and inventories of the staff and students. The purpose is to spread awareness about diverse cultures in a social space rather than an academic one, especially in giving students a chance at leadership.
- ❖ We want teachers and students to be involved in International Night or I Night as a way to learn about and more importantly celebrate our various cultures that are displayed by our population
  - This will enhance the knowledge the student body has about other cultures, but will also have students feeling more connected to their *own* cultures
    - Specifically for ELL students, this could be a great opportunity for them to show pride in their multilingualism and share that with their classmates who may not know
- ❖ As *all* schools are multicultural, we believe I Night is essential to every school. Even schools with high percentages of “same race students” will find different cultures in their homes and histories and be able to celebrate our collective diversity.

# I-Night Testimonies

Rockville is a city of diversity. Our residents come from around the world. Our International Night is a celebration of the living, breathing example of Rockville's success as a truly cosmopolitan city, one that respects and encourages people of all cultures, creeds and colors. [...] International Night showcases dance performances and traditional clothing displays, with an opportunity for attendees to sample unique and traditional foods from around the world, engage with and learn the customs of people from different countries, and discover our community's different cultures.

- From the Lincoln Park Community Center and Rockville Village (<https://www.rockvillemd.gov/1965/International-Night>)

[I-Night is] A grand celebration of various cultures at ASU. [...] As the largest cultural festival happening annually at ASU, the event aims to bring together people from around the world to celebrate their unique cultures through various performances, interactive games and cuisines.

- From ASU, a college in Arizona(<https://asuevents.asu.edu/internationalnight>)

# Define/Explain what we Advocating for...

- **We are advocating for students social integration in schools. We want both students and staff to have culturally inclusive and responsive activities for all students in the building.**
- Considering how rapidly the U.S. is changing demographically, it is important for CPS educators to include these activities for students.
- We want teachers and students to **cocreate these activities** to give students the opportunity to have their voices heard
  - Great Leadership opportunities

# Students

- We want all of you as students to be considered in our clubs
- We need YOUR voices when planning inclusive programs
- This is your demographic. You are a very diverse group of students and will meet more diverse people outside of class.

## 2023 Lincoln Park Race/Ethnicity Demographics

Demographics	School
White	31.6% / 654
Black	21% / 435
Hispanic	31.9% / 660
Asian	10.2% / 212
Am. Indian	Redacted
Pacific Islander	Redacted
Two or More	4.7% / 98

# Teachers

- You must be aware of who makes up the student population
  - You know your kids best!  
Advocate for your students.
- It is important for your students to feel empowered in who they are so they can feel belonging in their classroom and set them up for the world.

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# Arguments

- I-Nights and other social integrations of multiculturalism into schools are essential for creating an inclusive environment for ELLs. Creating an inclusive environment then leads to the highest learning outcomes
  - Beyond educational scaffolding, ELLs need to feel belonging and bring their authentic selves to their schools and classes to develop healthy social identities.
- Schools need to show the entire student body multiculturalism as it is crucial for general empathy and awareness of humanity
  - That diversity, equity, and inclusion applies to real people who have real cultures outside of textbooks
- Monolingual practices, like transitional English courses, degrade other cultures and purport close-mindedness.

# Research & Theories

- Having culturally responsive practices incorporated in activities. “We argue that cultural responsiveness is inseparable from quality and should not be an add-on or separate component” (Gay, 2010; Kumagai & Lypson, 2009; Shivers & Sanders, 2011; Simpkins et al., 2017).
- When integrating representation there are benefits not only for ELL students to feel represented, but this also provides students with a global understanding that enriches everyone’s learning. Yet, school administration has to be conscious in how they approach integrating representation as there can be “dangers of developing a “master narrative” or representations of ethnic groups through patterned depictions” (Dei, 2003)
- “Educators must decide whether it is a cultural fair that they are choosing to “display” for their students or whether they seek to develop a pedagogy that will allow students the broadest academic possibilities for understanding the world and the multiple histories and ways of being that continue to propel human social and cultural development.”

# Research/Theories Pt II

- “ELLs want to fit in with their American peers, but at the same time they want their identities and cultures validated. This is an ongoing, internal struggle for most students. This struggle may also follow them home where their desire to adopt certain U.S. cultural values clashes with their parents' desire to uphold their own traditional values.” (Lawrence, 2009)

# Reference List

Simpkins, S. D., Riggs, N. R., Ngo, B., Vest Ettekal, A., & Okamoto, D. (2017). Designing Culturally Responsive Organized After-School Activities. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 32(1), 11–36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558416666169>

Dei, George J. Sefa. *Removing the Margins: The Challenges and Possibilities of Inclusive Schooling*. Canadian Scholars' Press, 2003.

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