



CLR Scorecard for ELA Curricular Materials:

# An Equity Tool for New Mexico Educators **Implementation Guide**

## Introduction



In the spring of 2021, a team of roughly 90 New Mexico educators from across the state, under the guidance of NMPED, developed the *Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Scorecard for English Language Arts Curricular Materials*. The following guide explains the purpose of the equity tool, its value for teachers and students, and how to implement it effectively.

# What is cultural and linguistic responsiveness (CLR) and why is it important?

In its [Roadmap to Accelerated Learning and Renewal](#), NMPED unequivocally states that a critical part of its mission involves providing guidance and support that ensures “high expectations” and a “culturally responsive and equitable curriculum” for all students.

This mission is rooted in research. Compelling evidence from reports like [TNP’s \*The Opportunity Myth\*](#) demonstrates that students’ academic achievement significantly increases when their experience in school is responsive to their cultural and linguistic identities. Simply put, student learning accelerates when educators prioritize CLR.

In its [Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Guidance Handbook](#), NMPED defines CLR as “validating and affirming an individual’s home culture and language to create connections to other cultures and languages in various social contexts.” According to leading experts like Zaretta Hammond and Sharoky Hollie, bringing this definition of CLR to life in schools and classrooms demands that educators develop and refine both their *mindsets* and their *skillsets*. And among the skillsets equity-minded educators must develop is the ability to carefully select [high-quality instructional materials](#) that reflect a deep understanding of [cultural and linguistic responsiveness](#).

NMPED proudly presents the CLR Scorecard as a tool to help classroom practitioners as they strive to provide the equitable learning experiences their students deserve.

## What is New Mexico’s CLR Scorecard and how does it help teachers?

While it is difficult to separate curriculum and instruction (what one teaches and how one teaches are highly interrelated and mutually reinforcing), it is important to note that New Mexico’s CLR Scorecard focuses exclusively on helping teachers determine the extent to which their [English Language Arts \(ELA\)](#) *curricular materials* meet a specific set of research-based CLR indicators. Using the data they generate from the CLR Scorecard, teachers are empowered to consider how they might adjust or refine their curricular materials to ensure they are as responsive as possible to all students’ cultural and linguistic needs.

In this way, the CLR Scorecard gives teachers a powerful equity lens through which to assess the quality of their curricular materials and respond accordingly. The Scorecard is not meant to end a conversation about the cultural and linguistic responsiveness of a set of curricular materials but rather to start one – especially one aimed at determining how the materials teachers use can be strengthened to accelerate learning for all students.

### Is this tool relevant for educators of all content areas?

Absolutely. While the CLR Scorecard was developed with a focus on ELA, all of its indicators have relevance in other content areas as well. Educators of all subjects are encouraged to use the tool, adjusting and modifying it to meet their specific needs.

# How do educators use the CLR Scorecard?

The CLR Scorecard is most effective when used in collaborative teams – ideally ones that include educators from a wide range of backgrounds and identities. Once a team of teachers is formed that wishes to assess their curricular materials for CLR, it is recommended that they approach the process in three phases.

## PHASE

1

### Reflect

Prepare for using the tool by deepening your understanding of CLR and your self-awareness about your own cultural and linguistic identity.

## PHASE

2

### Apply

Following the guidance laid out in this implementation guide, score and rate the curricular materials you have selected.

## PHASE

3

### Respond

Take action on the data you receive from the tool and make adjustments to your curricular materials accordingly.

## PHASE 1: REFLECT

If your team is new to CLR or even if it is full of seasoned experts, spend time studying or reviewing the impact of culture and language on student learning.

Consider reading [NMPED's CLR Guidance Handbook](#) or [the scholarly work of leading experts like Zaretta Hammond, Sharroky Hollie, Gloria Ladson-Billings, and Geneva Gay](#). Then, as individuals, reflect on how your own identity and upbringing has shaped the conscious and unconscious ways you often see the world and in particular your students. Explore the ways you may or may not be meeting all of their cultural and linguistic needs. Articulate why it is important for all of your students to have experiences in school that validate and affirm their identities and that also help them connect with others whose cultures and languages differ from their own.

This phase is important because, as previously mentioned, the mindset one brings to CLR is as important as the skillset. It creates the lens through which teachers see the value of equitable learning for all students and shapes how they look at and evaluate the materials they use.

### Interested in learning more about CLR?

For more resources on deepening your understanding of CLR, consult the Appendix at the end of this guide.

## PHASE 2: APPLY

In this second phase, a team of teachers applies the CLR Scorecard to a specific set of ELA curricular materials they plan to use with their students.

### What is meant by the term *curricular materials*?

Drawing upon the definition used by the Great Schools Partnership’s “Glossary of Education Reform,” the term *curricular materials* broadly refers to “the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn, which includes the learning standards or learning objectives they are expected to meet; the units and lessons that teachers teach; the assignments and projects given to students; the books, materials, videos, presentations, and readings used in a course; and the tests, assessments, and other methods used to evaluate student learning. An individual teacher’s curriculum, for example, would be the specific learning standards, lessons, assignments, and materials used to organize and teach a particular course.”

As a first step, get to know how the tool is organized. Become aware that it is divided into four criteria and that within each individual criterion is a set of related CLR indicators.

#### CRITERION

1

### Representation

Who comes to life in these curricular materials?

#### CRITERION

2

### Portrayal

How are those individuals and groups portrayed?

#### CRITERION

3

### Critical Consciousness

How do the curricular materials develop critical thinking about cultural and linguistic diversity?

#### CRITERION

4

### Teacher Support

How are teachers supported to implement the curricular materials?

Begin by examining the guiding question and explanatory paragraph for each of the four criteria. Then, dive deeply into each individual criterion by reading and reflecting on its specific indicators. Consider annotating the indicators to gain a clear understanding of what each one seeks to determine about the curricular materials.

As a group, discuss what you notice about the tool and surface any questions you might have. When there is confusion, consult the glossary or the recommended texts for guidance and norm on how you will address that confusion in the scoring process.

After members of the team have become familiar with the tool and have resolved any areas of confusion, they are ready to select the set of curricular materials they wish to evaluate for CLR. When it comes to the quantity or amount of materials teachers should consider looking at, the tool has been intentionally designed with flexibility in mind. Ideally, teachers will dedicate time before the school year begins to examine all of the curricular materials they plan to use with students. This broad, comprehensive approach improves the accuracy of the scores, as it provides educators the opportunity to see where specific criteria or indicators are fully, partially, or not met from the beginning to the end of a student's experience in their class. Realistically, amidst the many responsibilities competing for their time and attention, a team of educators may not feel they have the time to look at all of their curricular materials at once. Should that be the case, teachers are encouraged to select any amount of curricular materials. Examining the materials used in a single day, week, or unit still yields valuable data on the extent to which students' cultural and linguistic needs are being met by the materials.

Once the team has identified the specific materials it will assess, establish a timeline for the scoring and rating process. Note, of course, that the time this requires will vary based on the quantity of materials selected. The materials for a single lesson may require as little as one planning period whereas those for an entire year may require several weeks. After finalizing the timeline, begin examining the materials. Each member should arrive at their own scores for each of the indicators, taking notes and providing rationales to support the scores they feel the materials deserve.

Once all members are done scoring, the team should reconvene and arrive at a consensus for each indicator. Rather than merely averaging their scores for each of the indicators, it is recommended that teams discuss their individual scores and come to a consensus. The discussion teachers have about each indicator will improve the accuracy of their scores, providing the opportunity for multiple points of view. Prior to having these discussions, teams may want to strongly consider how they will foster a safe, welcoming space for all team member voices to emerge. Discussions related to CLR can elicit a range of feelings and emotions. Teams that intentionally set norms for respectful discussion and spend time upfront building a spirit of trust help ensure that all members feel empowered to speak honestly about what they notice in the curricular materials.

Once teams have arrived at a mutually agreed upon score for each indicator and each criterion, they should use the final section of the tool to arrive at an overall score and rating. Equipped with scores and ratings that the CLR Scorecard has generated, teams are now ready to move into the final phase of the process. They are now ready to respond to the data, making skillful choices about how to modify, adapt, or supplement the materials to accelerate student learning.

## PHASE 3: RESPOND

As previously mentioned, the Scorecard is not intended to end conversations about the extent to which curricular materials meet expectations for CLR, but rather to start them. And it is here, in the final stage of the process, where teachers are poised to have impactful conversations about how they can skillfully respond to their data.

### Meet Expectations

When the Scorecard produces an "Overall" score/rating of "Meet Expectations," teachers can feel a high degree of confidence that the curricular materials they plan to use with students are culturally and linguistically responsive. However, this should not suggest that the materials are without room for improvement. Teachers should continue to look for strategic ways to refine even the most high-quality CLR materials, extending them to deepen their impact on student learning.

### Partially or Do Not Meet Expectations

When the Scorecard produces an "Overall" rating of "Partially Meet" or "Do Not Meet Expectations," teachers should begin considering how they will change or supplement the materials to increase their CLR qualities. As this data-driven planning process unfolds, teachers are encouraged to ask themselves the following questions

Criteria	Questions
<a href="#">Representation</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can I change or supplement the curricular materials to ensure that students have the opportunity to see and experience a broader range of people, including groups that exist or have existed in New Mexico?</li> <li>• How can I change or supplement the curricular materials to ensure that voices from a greater variety of authors are included?</li> <li>• How can I change or supplement the curricular materials to create more “windows” and “mirrors” for my students?</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Portrayal</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can I change or supplement the curricular materials to improve the extent to which they accurately reflect the complex, multi-dimensional histories and experiences of the people they include?</li> <li>• How can I change or supplement the curricular materials to ensure they validate and affirm the strengths of the broad range of people they feature, especially those from marginalized and underrepresented groups and those that exist or have existed in New Mexico, rather than focusing on their perceived weaknesses?</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Critical Consciousness</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can I change or supplement the curricular materials to provide my students with opportunities to engage with multiple points of view and to develop their own?</li> <li>• How can I change or supplement the curricular materials to provide my students with opportunities to learn about and challenge stereotypical images and ideas about the present and past?</li> <li>• How can I change or supplement the curricular materials to help students see its relevance to their own lives?</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Teacher Support</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What resources from NMPED and leaders in the field should I consult to strengthen my CLR mindsets and skillsets?</li> </ul>

As teachers seek to answer these questions, they should be mindful of the quantity of curricular materials they chose to assess. If a team decides to gather CLR data on one isolated lesson, it is unlikely that all indicators for all criteria will be fully met. This is not cause for concern so long as teachers are planning opportunities elsewhere in their curricular materials to ensure all indicators meet expectations regularly over the course of a teacher’s year-long curriculum.

Additionally, as teachers consider how to respond to their data, they should continue to keep in mind the importance of ensuring that any adjustments they make to their materials continue to allow them to meet all of [NMPED’s expectations for HQIM](#), specifically making sure that they continue to align with [New Mexico’s standards](#) and provide all students rigorous opportunities to practice and master those standards.



*A curriculum is not effective on its own. It requires a teacher who understands it, trusts it, and teaches it with integrity, creativity, and professional judgement. This means both knowing the curriculum well and knowing your students well so that you can make decisions that serve them best: speeding up, slowing down, reviewing or skipping a step, adding a resource, or innovating with extension. [Curriculum] is not meant to be simply delivered. It is a tool to be used, with your professional expertise, to accelerate literacy learning and excellence for all of your students.”*

– Libby Woodfin and Suzanne Nathan Plaut, EL Education

## In Closing



Creating culturally and linguistically responsive classrooms requires deep commitment and intentionality. Our students, however, deserve it. By prioritizing CLR, we move closer toward creating a reality in which all of New Mexico’s students have an equitable opportunity to reach their boundless potential.

# Appendix

## Glossary of Terms

The following definitions originate from NMPED resources and scholarly work in the field.

- **Affirm/Affirmation** – The intentional and purposeful effort to reverse the negative stereotypes, images, and representations of marginalized cultures and languages promoted by corporate mainstream media (Hollie, 2018)
- **Asset-Based** – An approach to teaching and learning that is grounded in what students can do rather than what they cannot do or areas of weakness (Ladson-Billings, 1994)
- **Bias** – An inclination or predisposition for or against a thing, person, or group when compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair (APA, 2021)
- **Culturally and Linguistically Responsive (CLR)** – Validating and affirming an individual’s home culture and language to create connections with other cultures and languages in various social contexts (NMPED, 2020)
- **Culture** – The deep patterns of values, beliefs, practices and traditions that have been compiled and normalized over a period of time, setting the standard for what is normal and expected (Muhammad & Hollie, 2012)
- **Curricular Materials** – The knowledge and skills students are expected to learn, which includes the learning standards or learning objectives they are expected to meet; the units and lessons that teachers teach; the assignments and projects given to students; the books, materials, videos, presentations, and readings used in a course; and the tests, assessments, and other methods used to evaluate student learning. An individual teacher’s curriculum, for example, would be the specific learning standards, lessons, assignments, and materials used to organize and teach a particular course (Great Schools Partnership, 2021)
- **Equity** – A measure of achievement, fairness, and opportunity for students and communities (NMPED, 2020)
- **High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM)** – Content-rich, fully accessible, culturally and linguistically relevant, free from bias, research-based, and aligned to New Mexico state standards (NMPED, 2021)
- **Identity** – An individual’s sense of self defined by a set of physical, psychological, and interpersonal characteristics as well as a range of affiliations and social roles (APA, 2021)
- **Indigenous** – Native or tribal groups of the Americas that maintain a cultural identity separate from the surrounding dominate cultures (Indian Education Act, 1978)
- **Stereotype** – A set of generalizations (e.g., beliefs, expectations) about the qualities and characteristics of the members of a group or social category that are often exaggerated, negative rather than positive, and resistant to revision even when perceivers encounter individuals with qualities that are not congruent with the stereotype (APA, 2021)
- **Validate/Validation** – The intentional and purposeful legitimization of the home culture and language of the student (Hollie, 2018)

# Guiding Resources

- Scholarly Texts
  - » Gay, Geneva, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice* (2018)
  - » Hammond, Zaretta, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students* (2015)
  - » Hollie, Sharroky, *Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning: Classroom Practices for Student Success* (2018)
  - » Ladson-Billings, Gloria, *Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy* (1995)
- Reports
  - » Education First + EdReports: [Culturally Centered Education: A Primer](#) (2021)
  - » NYU Steinhardt: [Culturally Responsive Education: A Primer for Policy and Practice](#) (2017)
  - » TNTP: [The Opportunity Myth](#) (2018)
- HQIM and CLR Review Tools
  - » EdReports: [ELA Review Tools](#) (2021)
  - » Great Lakes Equity Center: [Assessing Bias in Standards and Curricular Materials](#) (2017)
  - » Rhode Island Department of Education: [High-Quality Curriculum Selection & Implementation: Understanding Culturally Responsive & Sustaining Education \(CRSE\) in ELA](#) (2020)
  - » NYU Steinhardt: [Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecards](#) (2017)
- Organizations
  - » [The Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Workbook](#)
  - » [The Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools](#)
  - » [Indian Pueblo Cultural Center](#)
  - » [First Nations Development Institute](#)
  - » [NACA Schools](#)
  - » [New Mexico True](#)
- NMPED Resources
  - » [Language and Culture Bureau](#)
  - » [Indian Education Bureau](#)
  - » [HQIM Resource Manual](#)
  - » [Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Guidance Handbook](#)
  - » [Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Schooling by Design Tool](#)
  - » [Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Framework](#)

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In partnership with TNTP, the following educators participated in the creation of the *CLR Scorecard for ELA Curricular Materials*:

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Educators listed in **bold font** served as team leaders throughout the 14-week project and those marked with an asterisk\* participated in the additional work of creating the implementation guide.

The following New Mexico schools were represented in this work:

Alamogordo High School, Animas Elementary, Atrisco Heritage Academy High School, Bernalillo Middle School, Bluffview Elementary, Centennial High School, Chamisa Elementary, Chaparral Middle School, Cibola High School, Clovis High School, Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School, Cuba Independent School District, Deming High School, Eagle Nest Elementary/Middle School, El Capitan Elementary School, Emerson Elementary, Farmington Municipal Schools, Hanaadli Community School/Dormitory, Inc., Heights Middle School, Hot Springs High School, Las Montañas Charter High School, Mark Armijo Academy, McCurdy Charter School, Mesa View Elementary School, Monterrey Elementary School, Moriarty Elementary School, Navajo Middle School/High School, New Hope High School, New Mexico School for the Deaf, Parkview Elementary, Peñasco Independent Schools, Piedra, Vista High School, Rio Rancho Elementary, Rio Rancho High School, Riverside Elementary-Gadsden ISD, Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Charter High School, San Raphael Elementary School, Sandia Vista Elementary, Santa Teresa Middle School, Sunrise Elementary, SW Regional Education Cooperative, Taos Academy Charter School, Teaching and Learning Center, Tibbetts Middle School, Tobe Turpen Elementary, Tularosa High School, and Zia Middle School

# An Equity Tool for New Mexico Educators

## A Checklist for Collaborative Teams

### PHASE 1: REFLECT

- Study the impact of culture and language on student learning by consulting guidance from NMPED and experts in the field.
- Reflect on how your own identity has shaped the conscious and unconscious ways you often see your students.
- Explore the ways you may or may not be meeting all of your students' cultural and linguistic needs.
- Articulate why it is important for all of your students to have experiences in school that validate and affirm their identities and that also help them connect with others whose cultures and languages differ from their own.

### PHASE 2: APPLY

#### Teamwork:

- Form a collaborative team that includes educators from a range of backgrounds and identities
- Build a safe, welcoming space by getting to know one another and setting clear norms for discussion (using "I statements," for example)
- Get familiar with the tool by examining its criteria and indicators
- Norm on how you will address aspects of the tool that may initially be unclear or confusing
- Select the curricular materials you will assess
- Establish a timeline for having your materials scored/rated

#### Individual Work:

- Gather curricular materials
- Read through all curricular materials and any overviews that may be helpful
- Score/rate the materials, taking notes and gathering evidence to support your thinking

#### Teamwork:

- Discuss the scores/ratings as a team and achieve consensus for each indicator
- Tally indicator scores in each of the four criteria to determine specific criterion scores/ratings
- Tally the four criteria scores to determine an overall score/rating

### PHASE 3: RESPOND

- When the materials earn an "Overall" rating of "Meet Expectations," feel confident they are CLR and consider strategic ways to refine them
- When the materials earn an "Overall" rating of "Partially Meet" or "Do Not Meet Expectations," plan for ways to change or supplement them by using the questions in the "Phase 3: Respond" section of the Implementation Guide
- Capture any important implications from the CLR scoring/rating process that will continue to help your team/school improve its ability to deliver equitable instruction
- Determine when your team will evaluate its next set of curricular materials for CLR