Teach Away: Bridging the culture gap between teachers and their students

As America's public schools enter a new demographic era, how can we prepare teachers to work with culturally diverse students and their families? A professional development course has been launched with the aim of training educators to better relate to students from a broad range of racial, cultural, socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds.

Toronto, Canada (PRWEB) April 27, 2017 -- There is a cultural gap in many schools across the United States. The most recent projections from the Census Bureau shows that minority students will account for more than half of all students in US public schools by 2020. One out of every five students now speaks a language other than English at home. As a result of this significant student demographic shift, a growing number of US teachers are struggling with how they can better serve students from cultures other than their own.

Teachers have a unique responsibility to boost student learning for every student in the classroom. However, this can be challenging for teachers unfamiliar with their students’ backgrounds and communities. To address this critical need, Teach Away, a leading careers and professional development platform for education professionals, today announced the launch of its new online professional development course: Culturally Responsive Teaching: Connecting with Students and Parents of Different Cultures.

Culturally Responsive Teaching focuses on culturally relevant teaching techniques and equips teachers with the essential teaching methods and strategies needed to connect effectively with students and parents of all cultural backgrounds. “Classrooms today are more diverse than ever, and teachers everywhere are attempting to make their classrooms more culturally sensitive in order to reach - and teach - students from a broad spectrum of backgrounds,” stated Rene Frey, Teach Away’s co-founder and president, explaining the rationale behind developing a professional development course on culturally responsive teaching.

In late 2016, Teach Away undertook a survey of their extensive community of teachers, asking them to reflect on their areas of expertise and areas in which they wanted to improve, in order to identify the learning opportunities they needed most. Results showed the vast majority of teachers identified a critical gap in their teaching practice, specifically in the area of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Despite the steadily increasing numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations in schools worldwide, teacher preparation programs continue to lag behind when it comes to embracing culturally responsive teaching practices. Estimates show that only one third of US states require teachers to study cultural diversity or to have a teaching practicum in a culturally diverse setting. By using this specialized training, teachers can make the transition to becoming a culturally sensitive educator.

To develop the course, Teach Away partnered with leading elearning development company, Learnkit (who has developed courses for Lululemon, Hootsuite, Earls, University of Toronto, and Mayo Clinic) and Arti Joshi, a leading diversity expert from the College of New Jersey.

Teachers can sign up to enroll in the course directly via the Teach Away website. There are also special discounted rates available for school districts and charter school groups looking to offer training on culturally responsive teaching practices to their teaching staff.

Culturally Responsive Teaching marks the first in an ongoing series of online professional development
training delivered by Teach Away, focusing on delivering learning opportunities, directly relevant to a teacher’s practice, that respond to critical needs in the classroom. Additional Teach Away course offerings will be forthcoming in 2017.

About Teach Away

Teach Away is a careers and professional development platform for education professionals around the world. We ensure that students are learning from the best educators worldwide, and we're achieving this through commitment to quality hiring and world-class teacher development. We envision a world where every student experiences the power of a great teacher - allowing them to reach their full potential.
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