



UCLA Community School Core Beliefs

Language and Culture

We believe that culture is central to learning and human development.

Culture refers to concepts, ways of thinking, and belief systems that may be utilized and even negotiated through daily interactions by members of a community. Culture occurs in a variety of settings, each facilitating or requiring particular forms of expertise, multiple viewpoints, voices, and practices. In the same way, classrooms serve as micro-cultures where teachers and students interact with content mediated through artifacts, tools, symbols, and language in a meaningful way.

- 1) Language is a primary tool that transforms thinking, mediates learning, and guides our roles in a sociocultural classroom.
- 2) Because knowledge is socially constructed and socially mediated, people acquire knowledge through participation in joint-activity.
- 3) Learners, both students and teachers, are challenged and developed by others within their zone of proximal development.
- 4) Students are engaged in meaningful work with peers or the teacher that targets real-life problems that require problem-solving, critical thinking, and application of strategies and skills.
- 5) Teaching and learning must validate, enrich, and support the culturally, socially, and linguistically, diverse student population.

Community

We believe that every individual is an important member who contributes and participates in the community that is respectful, productive, and inclusive.

- 1) The spatial arrangement, social relationships of the participants, and norms for participation directly affect classroom talk.
- 2) Multiple perspectives and viewpoints and diverse forms of participation are encouraged.
- 3) The individual and collective needs of the students are addressed in order to utilize the cultural assets, or funds of knowledge students bring into the school community.
- 4) Schools are sites for transformative teaching practices for educators to become reflective practitioners as they constantly interpret theory and develop practice in a professional community.
- 5) Teachers need to be engaged in joint-activity with other colleagues, experts, administrators, and instructional coaches to reflect and transform their practices.

Social Justice and Civic Participation

We believe that the purpose of schooling is to guide all learners, both students and adults, to think critically of the world around them, empower them as agents of social change, and promote democratic practices.

- 1) School communities serve as social transformers, by empowering and validating the linguistic and cultural background of the students to actively eliminate racism, sexism, and classism.
- 2) Our school commits to challenge the status quo by rethinking and demanding teaching and learning that is dynamic, culturally relevant, and heterogeneous.
- 3) All stakeholders will participate the decision-making process of every aspect of the school.
- 4) Students are equipped to solve problems, develop social skills, and learn to be responsible members of our world.
- 5) Students critically question the content and are actively involved in negotiating the process of learning.