Open Minds and Hearts

Diverse Learners in Lutheran Schools & Congregations

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LEA Monograph Fall 2003

Reflection & Discussion Guide

Lutheran Education Association

Address the Issues

- Why is it vital for Lutheran schools and congregations to address diversity issues?

- What do demographic projections suggest about the future of your community?

- Are you prepared to serve a diverse enrollment or membership?

Colorblind Perspective

- What does it mean to perceive your class within a colorblind perspective?
- Have you done it? (Provide a specific example.)
- What is the problem with this approach?

Multicultural Education

- How do you define multicultural education?
- What does multicultural education include?
- Cite specific examples of multicultural education in your school, VBS, Sunday School, etc.

Developing Relationships

- What strategies do you practice to develop relationships in your classroom?
- Do any of these have potential as unintended obstacles to students of other cultures?

Safe & Caring Environment

- What evidence of safety is observable in your school or congregation?

- What do you do to create a sense of belonging?

- What difficulties frustrate your attempt to fully appreciate diverse cultures?

Contributions Approach

- How do you recognize the contributions of other cultures?
- Identify specific sources of information, e.g., cultural calendars, famous people, etc.
- How might you include a contributions approach in religion lesson plans?

Additive Approach

- What have you added or might you add to content, themes, and concepts that are already part of your curriculum?

- Identify specific resources that you need to implement this approach.

Transformation Approach

- How does this approach differ from the previous two approaches?

- How can you stimulate students to view issues and ideas from more than one perspective?

- How often do you or should you use this approach?

Social Action Approach

- At what age or grade level is this approach appropriate? (How might it be possible to take this approach even earlier?)

- How is this approach related to living life as a child of God, saved by Jesus Christ?

Language

- Why is there a gap between "playground language" and "classroom language"?
- What strategies can you use as students work toward language proficiency?

Diversity in Lutheran Classrooms

- What will it cost your ministry to ignore issues of diversity?
- Will the cost be the same five years from now?
- What do you need to plan for next year?

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