# Cultural Proficiency: The Continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Destructiveness</th>
<th>Cultural Incapacity</th>
<th>Cultural Blindness</th>
<th>Cultural Pre-Competence</th>
<th>Cultural Competence</th>
<th>Cultural Proficiency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeking to eliminate the cultures of others in all aspects of the school and in relationship to the community served</td>
<td>Trivializing and stereotyping other cultures; seeking to make the cultures of others appear to be wrong or inferior to the dominant culture</td>
<td>Not noticing or acknowledging the cultures of others within the school community; treating everyone in the educational system without recognizing the needs that require differentiated interaction</td>
<td>Increasing awareness of what you and the school don’t know about working in diverse settings; at this level of development, you and the school can move in a positive, constructive direction, or you can falter, stop, and possibly regress</td>
<td>Aligning your personal values and behaviors, and the school’s policies and practices in a manner that is inclusive of cultures that are new or different from yours and the school’s; enables healthy and productive interactions</td>
<td>Holding the vision that you and the school are instruments for creating a socially just democracy; interacting with your colleagues, students, families, and the community as an advocate for life-long learning to serve effectively the educational needs of all cultural groups</td>
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</tbody>
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**See the difference and stamp it out.**

**See the difference and make it wrong.**

**See the difference and act like you don’t.**

**See the difference and at times, respond inappropriately.**

**See the difference and value it.**

**Seek the difference and esteem it as an advocate for equity.**

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“**In this class, we speak English only.**”

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“If we could get rid of our special needs students, our scores would improve.”

“You know that those parents never show up to school functions.”

“Asian students come to this country and succeed. Why wouldn’t the other students do so as well?”

“I don’t see color. I just see kids.”

“Racism and discrimination don’t exist anymore. I really hate it when parents use the race card.”

“During Christmas time I have a menorah in my classroom.”

“We value all cultures. We have a night where parents bring food representing their country.”

“A student made a derogatory remark and I used it as a teachable moment to remind students of the right thing to do.”

“The co-teach model with the push-in Special Education teacher is allowing us to have honest conversations about differentiation in the classroom.”

“Our school’s Social Justice and Equity Vertical Team is doing a great job of embedding culturally relevant lessons into our curriculum.”

“My job as an educator is not only to teach content. I also openly embrace my role as an advocate for each child and their family.”

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Adapted from Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell (2009)