

## 18 (Self-) Critical Things I Can Do to Be a Better Multicultural Educator\*

1. **I will learn** to pronounce every student's full given name correctly. I won't ask any student to shorten or change a name to make it easier for me or classmates to pronounce. This is a first step in being respectful and inclusive.
2. **I will include** students in conversations about their own education, actively listening to their voices, interests, and experiences, inside and outside of my classroom. I will model a willingness to be changed by their perspective.
3. **I will reflect on** how my own identity and experience impacts the way I experience different people and how my own biases may impact my expectations for – and relationships with – others.
4. **I will be open to** feedback (and even criticism) from colleagues and others. Even if I feel defensive, I will thank the person for their time and the courage it takes to offer their ideas and suggestions.
5. **I will never stop** being a student myself. Being open to different ideas and perspectives will help me stay in touch with the lives and experiences of my students and with current events as they relate to my teaching.
6. **I will consider** the relationship between the intent and the impact of my actions and attitudes. When my impact is different than what I intend, I will take responsibility for and learn from my actions.
7. **I will remember** that, although I would like to think that I view everyone in a 'color-blind' way, I don't want to deny anyone the validation of their whole person, including the ways they are different from me.
8. **I will think about** how my social identity group memberships may affect my students' experiences. I will remember that a student's initial reaction may be based on a lifetime of experiences and I won't take such reactions personally.
9. **I will build** partnerships with staff who are different from me in terms of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, religion, first language, disability, and other identities and value these relationships for their trust and honest critique.
10. **I will improve** my skills as a facilitator, so that when issues of diversity and equity arise, I can help my students with their conversations. I don't want learning opportunities to slip away because I am uncomfortable or unprepared.
11. **I will think critically** about how my preferred learning styles impact my teaching. I will fight the temptation to fall back into what's most comfortable for me and will choose approaches to address my students' diverse learning styles.
12. **I will reflect on** my own experiences as a student and how they inform my teaching. I know that drawing on these experiences, positive and negative, will provide important insights regarding my teaching practice.
13. **I will affirm** and model appreciation for all forms of intelligence and the wide variety of ways students illustrate understanding and mastery of skills and knowledge.
14. **I will encourage** my students to think critically and ask critical questions about all information they receive including that which they receive from me.
15. **I will challenge** myself to take personal responsibility before finding fault in someone else. If a student is falling behind or disruptive, I will consider what I am doing or not doing that may be contributing to that disengagement.
16. **I will remember** that I touch and change many lives and the depth of my impact on society is profound. Although I may not identify myself as a social activist, I will acknowledge the tremendous power and responsibility I have and guide my efforts toward equity and social justice in my work.
17. **I will fight for** equity for all underrepresented or disenfranchised students. When I find myself justifying my inattention to any group students due to the pressures of society or the way I was socialized, I will step back and reevaluate the values that guide me.
18. **I will celebrate** myself as an educator and total person. I can, and should, also celebrate every moment I spend in self-critique, however difficult and painful. It will make me a better educator. And that is something to celebrate!