**Cultural Bridging Takeaways**

**Long Term Relationship Building & Inclusion in Curriculum Development**

from Dr. Rose Borunda

**Reaching Out**

Who are the Original Nations in your Region? There may be more than one. Do these Original Nations have a local tribal office?

Are there families attending your school from these Original Nations? Are there Elder from the community who can provide guidance? There may be multiple cultural groups. There may be one. Invite them to participate with you on this journey.

**Always Honor the Original Nation & Always Acknowledge the *Source* of Information that you are Using. i.e. “The following story is from “Tribe” given to us by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**Identifying Resources**

Original Nations have persevered despite culturcide so it cannot be assumed that people from any community know all their stories, cultural practices, etc… For example, I am Purepecha and speak English and Spanish (two overlays of Conquest and Colonization) but do not know a single word of my tribal identity.

Identify Resources that may already be published. Primary Source Data is key. For this purpose, ascertain that information (stories, etc…) are what Original Nations have offered rather than what others have appropriated. i.e. There is original Native American Art and then there is “Native American Inspired.” There is nothing wrong with the latter… however to truly recognize and honor, you want to go to the source.

If you are not told “yes” then it is NO. Is the story from a book and did the author get the permission from the source?

Ask Permission; what do you have permission to use in the classroom. There are some stories that are shared openly however some are sacred and are not for the public.

**Identifying and Extracting Symbolically Violent Terms and Practices**

What is language & practices that promote “Master Narrative?” When these practices/words continue to be part of our reality, they promote the narrative of dominance & imply and condone genocide. What follows is a partial list… you may identify more: Building Missions as part of the curriculum. The use of terms such as “Natives Are Getting Restless,” “Circle the Wagons,” “New/Old World,” “Discovery of America,” “Primitive People,” “Civilized,” “Descendants,” “Informant,” etc.

**Multi-modality**

***Music:*** There are many forms by which to communicate; consider the steady beat of the heart. We carry a “constant drum” with us always. (our hands, our laps, our feet) The rhythmn from our percussion instruments synchronize our response so that we “listen” to one another. We become a collective. Everyone is included. All voices honored. When drumming actively participate in an experience that is greater than just ourselves. Instruments can consist of percussion instruments that are made or otherwise creatively made.

***Storytelling:*** Exemplified beautifully by the group that presented at the Conference. This story was from a book in which a Miwok Utenbu (Storyteller), Mr. Thomas Williams ***shared*** for publication in the early 1900’s. His stories were translated from Miwok to English. Our storytellers at the Conference keep the story alive. What are the local stories to your region? What are lessons/values being imparted?

**Always Give Thanks! (And, thank YOU for your Mindful efforts to Honor!)**

**For Classroom Use:**

Keepers of the Words

A Miwuk Dictionary (2016) (2nd edition). This publication was given to me by a former 2nd grade teacher, Linda Toren, from West Point. She worked with Miwuk students in her class and their elders to produce this publication. It opens with a Blessing and then has many words, terms, etc… This book can be purchased at Chaw-Se (also known as Indian State Grinding Rock Park) in Pine Grove

**Source for Stories:**

The Dawn of the World: Myths and Tales of the Miwok Indians of California. (1993) Collected and

edited by C.Hart Merriam.

**For Expanding our Understanding:**

An Indigenous People’s History of the United States. (2014). Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

Murder State; California’s Native American Genocide, 1846-1873 (2012). Brendan Lindsay

When the Great Spirit Died. The destruction of the California Indians (2003). William B. Secrest

A Cross of Thorns. The Enslavement of California’s Indians by the Spanish Missions. (2015). Elias Castillo.