

In education, an inclusive and safe environment is based on the notion that schools should provide for the needs of all students in the community regardless of culture or ability (Foreman & Kelly, 2014). Foreman and Kelly (2014) argue that this type of environment should raise the question of "how will we provide for the needs of this student?" not "can we?" (Foreman & Kelly, 2014, p19). An inclusive environment should focus on supporting students diverse needs so that, they too, have access to quality education (Jacob & Olisaemeka, 2016). The characteristics of this environment should be concerned with removing the barriers of stereotypical labels, so that these students are able to participate in normal day-to-day activities, and be selected for roles that are valued by the school community (Jacob & Olisaemeka, 2016; Foreman & Kelly, 2012). An inclusive and safe environment incorporates the use of collaborative team work, family involvement, student ownership and effective assessment in order to aid students in achieving their fullest potential (Jacob & Olisaemeka, 2016). In this way, students themselves are able to breakdown barriers and work in collaboration with others without the fear of judgment (Foreman & Kelly, 2012). Research indicates that facilitating a safe environment means students are able to feel at ease in knowing that their differences can contribute positively to the school community. Teachers are encouraged to respond to the needs of these individuals by adopting and using teaching strategies and learning spaces that are more culturally inclusive, cooperative and allow for reciprocal teaching and learning (Yeo, et al., 2016). In a classroom that creates a dialogue for students to share their own personal experiences and feel a sense of belonging, creates the optimal learning space for students with diversity (Yeo, et al., 2016).