

Colorado Teacher's Quality Standards

Observable Practices

Standard 1 – Know Content

Element a:

THE TEACHER:

- Uses lesson plans that reflect: ☐ Daily review and revision. ☐ Instructional objectives appropriate for students.
- ☐ Explicit connections to specific learning objectives and approved curriculum.
- Implements lesson plans based on: ☐ Student needs. ☐ Colorado Academic Standards. ☐ District's plan of instruction.
- ☐ Stated learning objectives.
- ☐ Collaborates with other school staff to vertically and horizontally align, articulate, and deliver the approved curriculum.

STUDENTS:

- ☐ Interact with the rigorous and challenging content.
- ☐ Perform at a level consistent with or above expectations.
- ☐ Discuss strengths and next steps regarding their learning with their teachers.

Element b: ALL TEACHERS

THE TEACHER:

- ☐ Demonstrates an understanding of literacy content and skills.
- ☐ Emphasizes literacy connections while teaching content.
- Makes complex reading accessible to students by: ☐ Adjusting content to students' skill levels.
- ☐ Integrating literacy skills and knowledge into lessons. ☐ Providing relevant content that addresses students' interests.
- Provides instruction that enhances students':
- ☐ Critical thinking and reasoning. ☐ Information literacy. ☐ Literacy skill development.

STUDENTS:

- Meet or exceed expectations for: ☐ Oral communication. ☐ Written communication. ☐ Critical thinking. ☐ Problem-solving skills.
- ☐ Literacy skills.
- Apply literacy skills: ☐ Across academic content areas. ☐ To understand complex materials.

Element b: ELEMENTARY TEACHERS – LANGUAGE ARTS AND/OR READING

THE TEACHER:

- ☐ Emphasizes literacy connections while teaching content other than reading, English, or language arts.
- Integrates literacy skills into lessons and assignments across subject areas, including:
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| ☐ Phonological awareness. | ☐ Phonics. | ☐ Vocabulary. | ☐ Comprehension. |
| ☐ Fluency. | ☐ Writing. | ☐ Speaking. | ☐ Listening skills. |
- Engages students in instruction that is: ☐ Purposeful. ☐ Explicit. ☐ Systematic.
- Provides literacy instruction that is: ☐ Needs-based. ☐ Intensive. ☐ Of sufficient duration to accelerate learning.

STUDENTS:

- Apply literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening): ☐ Across academic content areas. ☐ To new/unfamiliar material.
- ☐ To understand complex materials. ☐ While communicating with peers and staff during the school day.
- Exceed teacher's expectations for their age, grade, and/or ability levels in: ☐ Reading. ☐ Writing. ☐ Speaking. ☐ Listening.

Element b: SECONDARY TEACHERS – LANGUAGE ARTS AND/OR READING

THE TEACHER:

- ☐ Teaches and provides opportunities for students to apply literacy skills.

Integrates literacy skills into lessons, including:

- ☐ Vocabulary. ☐ Comprehension. ☐ Fluency. ☐ Writing. ☐ Speaking. ☐ Listening skills.

Engages students in instruction that is: ☐ Purposeful. ☐ Explicit. ☐ Systematic.

Provides literacy instruction that is: ☐ Needs-based. ☐ Intensive. ☐ Of sufficient duration to accelerate learning.

STUDENTS:

Apply literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening): ☐ Across academic content areas. ☐ To new/unfamiliar material.

- ☐ To understand complex materials. ☐ While communicating during the school day.

Exceed teacher's expectations for students of their age, grade, and/or ability levels in: ☐ Reading. ☐ Writing. ☐ Speaking.

- ☐ Listening.

Element c: ALL Teachers

THE TEACHER:

- ☐ Includes relevant math concepts in discussions that do not have math as the primary focus.
- ☐ Promotes and encourages students to make explicit math connections across content.
- ☐ Emphasizes to students why they need to learn math content and skills.
- ☐ Uses instructional strategies that require students to apply and transfer mathematical knowledge to different content areas.
- ☐ Emphasizes interdisciplinary connections to math.
- ☐ Models mathematical thinking.

STUDENTS:

- ☐ Share ideas and solutions to challenging problems.
- ☐ Use the language of math to talk about what they are doing.
- ☐ Interpret mathematical information in ways that make it relevant to their learning.

Element c: ALL TEACHERS RESPONSIBLE FOR TEACHING MATH

THE TEACHER:

Focuses math instruction beyond: ☐ Recall of facts. ☐ Development of computational skills. ☐ Math as a series of rote procedures.

Models: ☐ Appropriate mathematical communication. ☐ A variety of mathematical practices.

Presents concepts: ☐ In sequence. ☐ In a manner appropriate to students' age and grade.

- ☐ Helps students understand mathematics as a discipline.

- ☐ Provides a balance of teaching for conceptual understanding and teaching for procedural fluency.

Establishes an effective mathematics environment by: ☐ Challenging students to think deeply about the problems.

- ☐ Requiring students to explain their solutions. ☐ Posing questions that stimulate students' curiosity and encourage them to investigate further. ☐ Actively engaging students in doing math. ☐ Using real-world examples for problems whenever possible.

STUDENTS:

- ☐ Solve problems in a variety of ways.
- ☐ Demonstrate mathematical thinking by explaining their thinking to each other and to their teacher.
- ☐ Recognize when they make procedural errors and take steps to correct them.
- ☐ Expand their learning by using mathematical concepts in subjects other than math.

Disclaimer: This tool can be used to gather information during observations (formal, informal, and walk-throughs) in conjunction with the Rubric for Evaluating Colorado's Teachers. This tool, by itself, is not to be considered an evaluation.

Element d:

THE TEACHER:

- ☐ Breaks down concepts into instructional parts and teaches each part using appropriate, effective strategies and/or tools.
- ☐ Uses instructional materials that are accurate and appropriate for the lesson being taught.
- ☐ Employs a variety of instructional strategies to address student needs.

Provides explanations of content that are: ☐ Accurate. ☐ Clear. ☐ Concise. ☐ Comprehensive.

Engages students in: ☐ A variety of explanations and multiple representations of concepts and ideas. ☐ A variety of inquiry methods to explore new ideas and theories.

STUDENTS:

- ☐ Develop a variety of explanations and multiple representations of concepts.
- ☐ Build on the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom to engage in more complex concepts, ideas, and theories.

Use a variety of inquiry tools and strategies to: ☐ Learn content. ☐ Understand central concepts. ☐ Answer complex questions.

- ☐ Problem solve.

Routinely: ☐ Choose challenging tasks and instructional materials. ☐ Apply newly learned content skills to unique situations and different disciplines. ☐ Discuss ideas and content that are intellectually challenging to them.

Element e:

THE TEACHER:

- ☐ Emphasizes key concepts and connects them to other powerful ideas within the content area.
- ☐ Connects lessons to other disciplines and/or content areas.

Implements instructional strategies to ensure that instruction: ☐ Articulates content and interdisciplinary connections. ☐ Integrates literacy skills across content areas.

- ☐ Clarifies and elaborates on interdisciplinary connections for students.
- ☐ Provides instructional strategies that include literacy, numeracy, and language development across content areas.

STUDENTS:

Make connections between: ☐ Prior learning and the current lesson. ☐ Other disciplines and/or content areas and the current lesson.

- ☐ Employ instructional strategies that include literacy, numeracy, and language development across content areas.

☐ Accelerate their learning by elaborating on current lesson with connections to prior lessons within the content area and/or with other disciplines.

Element f:

THE TEACHER:

Selects instructional materials and strategies based on their: ☐ Relevance. ☐ Central contexts. ☐ Foundational evidence base.

- ☐ Links lessons to students' prior knowledge.
- ☐ Encourages and provides opportunities for students to make connections to prior learning.

Delivers lessons and units and uses instructional strategies that: ☐ Help students connect to their learning by linking the current lesson with prior knowledge, experiences, and/or cultural contexts.

- ☐ Provide supports that facilitate engagement.
- ☐ Delivers lessons and uses materials to ensure that students' backgrounds and contextual knowledge are considered.
- ☐ Provides opportunities for students to self-select tasks that accelerate their learning.

STUDENTS:

- ☐ Interact with materials that are relevant to them.
- ☐ Ask questions and solve problems that are relevant to them.
- ☐ Make connections to prior learning to understand current content.
- ☐ Select tasks that demonstrate transfer of knowledge to other theories, ideas, and/or content.

Comments:

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