

1a Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

In order to guide student learning, accomplished teachers have command of the subjects they teach. They must know which concepts and skills are central to a discipline, and which are peripheral; they must know how the discipline has evolved into the 21st century, incorporating such issues as global awareness and cultural diversity, as appropriate. Accomplished teachers understand the internal relationships within the disciplines they teach, knowing which concepts and skills are prerequisite to the understanding of others. They are also aware of typical student misconceptions in the discipline and work to dispel them. But knowledge of the content is not sufficient; in advancing student understanding, teachers are familiar with the particularly pedagogical approaches best suited to each discipline.

Elements of component 1a:

Knowledge of content and the structure of the discipline

Every discipline has a dominant structure, with smaller components or strands as well as central concepts and skills.

Knowledge of prerequisite relationships

Some disciplines, for example mathematics, have important prerequisites; experienced teachers know what these are and how to use them in designing lessons and units.

Knowledge of content-related pedagogy

Different disciplines have “signature pedagogies” that have evolved over time and have been found to be most effective in teaching.

Indicators:

- Lesson and unit plans that reflect important concepts in the discipline
- Lesson and unit plans that accommodate prerequisite relationships among concepts and skills
- Clear and accurate classroom explanations
- Accurate answers to student questions
- Feedback to students that furthers learning
- Interdisciplinary connections in plans and practice

1a Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

Highly Effective

Teacher displays extensive knowledge of the important concepts in the discipline and the ways they relate both to one another and to other disciplines.

Teacher's plans and practice reflect understanding of prerequisite relationships among topics and concepts and provide a link to necessary cognitive structures needed by students to ensure understanding.

Teacher's plans and practice reflect familiarity with a wide range of effective pedagogical approaches in the discipline.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of "proficient": Teacher cites intra- and interdisciplinary content relationships.

Teacher is proactive in uncovering student misconceptions and addressing them before proceeding.

Effective

Teacher displays solid knowledge of the important concepts in the discipline and the ways they relate to one another.

Teacher's plans and practice reflect accurate understanding of prerequisite relationships among topics and concepts.

Teacher's plans and practice reflect familiarity with a wide range of effective pedagogical approaches in the discipline.

Critical Attributes

The teacher can identify important concepts of the discipline and their relationships to one another.

The teacher consistently provides clear explanations of the content.

The teacher answers student questions accurately and provides feedback that furthers their learning. The teacher seeks out content-related professional development.

Ineffective

In planning and practice, teacher makes content errors or does not correct errors made by students.

Teacher's plans and practice display little understanding of prerequisite relationships important to student's learning of the content.

Teacher displays little or no understanding of the range of pedagogical approaches suitable to student's learning of the content.

Critical Attributes

Teacher makes content errors.

Teacher does not consider prerequisite relationships when planning.

Teacher's plans use inappropriate strategies for the discipline

Developing/Partially Effective

Teacher is familiar with the important concepts in the discipline but displays lack of awareness of how these concepts relate to one another.

Teacher's plans and practice indicate some awareness of prerequisite relationships, although such knowledge may be inaccurate or incomplete.

Teacher's plans and practice reflect a limited range of pedagogical approaches to the discipline or to the students.

Critical Attributes

Teacher is familiar with the discipline but does not see conceptual relationships.

Teacher's knowledge of prerequisite relationships is inaccurate or incomplete.

Lesson and unit plans use limited instructional strategies, and some may not be suitable to the content.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

1b Demonstrating Knowledge of Students

Teachers don't teach content in the abstract; they teach it to students. In order to ensure student learning, therefore, teachers must know not only their subject content and its related pedagogy but the students to whom they wish to teach that content. In ensuring student learning, teachers must appreciate what recent research in cognitive psychology has confirmed: namely, that students learn through active intellectual engagement with content. While there are patterns in cognitive, social, and emotional developmental stages typical of different age groups, students learn in their individual ways and may come with gaps or misconceptions that the teacher needs to uncover in order to plan appropriate learning activities. In addition, students have lives beyond school, lives that include athletic and musical pursuits, activities in their neighborhoods, and family and cultural traditions. Students, whose first language is not English, as well as students with other special needs, must be considered when planning lessons and identifying resources that will ensure their understanding.

Elements of component 1b:

Knowledge of child and adolescent development

Children learn differently at different stages of their lives.

Knowledge of the learning process

Learning requires active intellectual engagement.

Knowledge of students' skills, knowledge, and language proficiency

Children's lives beyond school influence their learning.

Knowledge of students' interest and cultural heritage

Children's backgrounds influence their learning.

Knowledge of students' special needs

Children do not all develop in a typical fashion.

Indicators:

- Formal and informal information about students gathered by teacher for use in planning instruction
- Student interests and needs learned and used by teacher in planning
- Teacher participation in community cultural events
- Teacher-designed opportunities for families to share heritage
- Teacher-created database of students with special needs available for teacher use

1b Demonstrating Knowledge of Students

Highly Effective

Teacher actively seeks knowledge of students' levels of development and their backgrounds, cultures, skills, language proficiency, interests, and special needs from a variety of sources.

This information is acquired for individual students.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of "proficient":

The teacher uses ongoing methods to assess students' skill levels and designs instruction accordingly.

The teacher seeks out information about their cultural heritage from all students.

The teacher maintains a system of updated student records and incorporates medical and/or learning needs into lesson plans.

Effective

Teacher understands the active nature of student learning and attains information about levels of development for groups of students.

The teacher also purposefully seeks knowledge from several sources of students' backgrounds, cultures, skills, language proficiency, interests, and special needs and attains this knowledge about groups of students.

Critical Attributes

The teacher knows, for groups of students, their levels of cognitive development.

The teacher is aware of the different cultural groups in the class.

The teacher has a good idea of the range of interests of students in the class.

The teacher has identified "high," "medium," and "low" groups of students within the class.

The teacher is well informed about students' cultural heritage and incorporates this knowledge in lesson planning.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

Developing/Partially Effective

Teacher indicates the importance of understanding how students learn and the students' backgrounds, cultures, skills, language proficiency, interests, and special needs, and attains this knowledge about the class as a whole.

Critical Attributes

Teacher cites developmental theory but does not seek to integrate it into lesson planning.

Teacher is aware of the different ability levels in the class but tends to teach to the "whole group."

The teacher recognizes that children have different interests and cultural backgrounds but rarely draws on their contributions or differentiates materials to accommodate those differences.

The teacher is aware of medical issues and learning disabilities with some students but does not seek to understand the implications of that knowledge.

Ineffective

Teacher demonstrates little or no understanding of how students learn and little knowledge of students' backgrounds, cultures, skills, language proficiency, interests, and special needs and does not seek such understanding.

Critical Attributes

Teacher does not understand child development characteristics and has unrealistic expectations for students.

Teacher does not try to ascertain varied ability levels among students in the class.

Teacher is not aware of student interests or cultural heritages.

Teacher takes no responsibility to learn about students' medical or learning disabilities.

1c Setting Instructional Outcomes

Teaching is a purposeful activity; even the most imaginative activities are directed towards certain desired learning. Therefore, establishing instructional outcomes entails identifying exactly what students will be expected to learn; the outcomes describe not what students will do but what they will learn. The instructional outcomes should reflect important learning and must lend themselves to various forms of assessment so that all students are able to demonstrate their understanding of the content. Insofar as the outcomes determine the instructional activities, the resources used, their suitability for diverse learners, and the methods of assessment employed, they hold a central place in Domain 1.

Learning outcomes are of a number of different types: factual and procedural knowledge, conceptual understanding, thinking and reasoning skills, and collaborative and communication strategies. In addition, some learning outcomes refer to dispositions; not only is it important for students to learn to read, but educators also hope that they will like to read. In addition, experienced teachers are able to link their learning outcomes with others both within their discipline and in other disciplines.

Elements of component 1c:

Value, sequence, and alignment

Students must be able to build their understanding of important ideas from concept to concept.

Clarity

Outcomes must refer to what students will learn, not what they will do, and must permit viable methods of assessment.

Balance

Outcomes should reflect different types of learning, such as knowledge, conceptual understanding, and thinking skills.

Suitability for diverse students

Outcomes must be appropriate for all students in the class.

Indicators:

- Outcomes of a challenging cognitive level
- Statements of student learning, not student activity
- Outcomes central to the discipline and related to those in other disciplines
- Assessment of student attainment
- Outcomes differentiated for students of varied ability

1c Setting Instructional Outcomes

Highly Effective

All outcomes represent rigorous and important learning in the discipline.

The outcomes are clear, are written in the form of student learning, and permit viable methods of assessment.

Outcomes reflect several different types of learning and, where appropriate, represent opportunities for both coordination and integration.

Outcomes take into account the varying needs of individual students.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of “proficient”:

Teacher plans make reference to curricular frameworks or blueprints to ensure accurate sequencing.

Teacher connects outcomes to previous and future learning.

Outcomes are differentiated to encourage individual students to take educational risks.

Effective

Most outcomes represent rigorous and important learning in the discipline.

All the instructional outcomes are clear, are written in the form of student learning, and suggest viable methods of assessment.

Outcomes reflect several different types of learning and opportunities for coordination.

Outcomes take into account the varying needs of groups of students.

Critical Attributes

Outcomes represent high expectations and rigor.

Outcomes are related to the “big ideas” of the discipline.

Outcomes are written in terms of what students will learn rather than do.

Outcomes represent a range: factual, conceptual understanding, reasoning, social, management, communication.

Developing/Partially Effective

Outcomes represent moderately high expectations and rigor.

Some reflect important learning in the discipline and consist of a combination of outcomes and activities.

Outcomes reflect several types of learning, but teacher has made no attempt at coordination or integration.

Most of the outcomes are suitable for most of the students in the class in accordance with global assessments of student learning.

Critical Attributes

Outcomes represent a mixture of low expectations and rigor.

Some outcomes reflect important learning in the discipline.

Outcomes are suitable for most of the class.

Ineffective

Outcomes represent low expectations for students and lack of rigor, and not all of them reflect important learning in the discipline.

Outcomes are stated as activities rather than as student learning.

Outcomes reflect only one type of learning and only one discipline or strand and are suitable for only some students.

Critical Attributes

Outcomes lack rigor.

Outcomes do not represent important learning in the discipline.

Outcomes are not clear or are stated as activities.

Outcomes are not suitable for many students in the class.

Teacher takes no responsibility to learn about students’ medical or learning disabilities.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

1d Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources

Student learning is enhanced by a teacher's skillful use of resources; some of these are provided by the school as "official" materials; others are secured by teachers through their own initiative. Resources fall into several different categories: those used in the classroom by students, those available beyond the classroom walls to enhance student learning, those for teachers to further their own professional knowledge and skill, and those that can provide non-instructional assistance to students. Teachers recognize the importance of discretion in the selection of resources, choosing those that align directly with the learning outcomes and that will be of most use to the students. Accomplished teachers also ensure that the selection of materials and resources is appropriately challenging for every student; texts, for example, are available at various reading levels to guarantee all students access to the content and successfully demonstrate understanding of the learning outcomes. Furthermore, expert teachers look beyond the school for resources to bring their subjects to life and to assist students who need help in both their academic and nonacademic lives.

Elements of component 1d:

Resources for classroom use

Materials align with learning outcomes.

Resources to extend content knowledge and pedagogy

Materials are available to further teachers' professional knowledge.

Resources for students

Materials are appropriately challenging.

Indicators:

- District-provided materials
- A range of texts
- Guest speakers
- Internet resources
- Materials provided by professional organizations
- Teachers participating in continuing professional education courses or professional groups
- Community resources

1d Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources

Highly Effective

Teacher displays extensive knowledge of resources—not only through the school and district but also in the community, through professional organizations and universities, and on the Internet—for classroom use, for the expansion of his or her own knowledge, and for students.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of “proficient”:
Texts are matched to student skill level.

The teacher has ongoing relationship with colleges and universities that support student learning.

The teacher maintains log of resources for student reference.

The teacher pursues apprenticeships to increase discipline knowledge

The teacher facilitates student contact with resources outside the classroom.

Effective

Teacher displays awareness of resources—not only through the school and district but also through sources external to the school and on the Internet—available for classroom use, for the expansion of his or her own knowledge, and for students.

Critical Attributes

Texts are at varied levels.

Texts are supplemented by guest speakers and field experiences.

Teacher facilitates Internet resources.

Resources are multidisciplinary.

Teacher expands knowledge with professional learning groups and organizations.

Teacher pursues options offered by universities.

Teacher provides lists of resources outside the class for students to draw on.

Developing/Partially Effective

Teacher displays basic awareness of school or district resources available for classroom use, for the expansion of his or her own knowledge, and for students, but no knowledge of resources available more broadly.

Critical Attributes

The teacher uses materials in the school library but does not search beyond the school for resources.

The teacher participates in content-area workshops offered by the school but does not pursue other professional development.

The teacher locates materials and resources for students that are available through the school but does not pursue any other avenues.

Ineffective

Teacher is unaware of school or district resources for classroom use, for the expansion of his or her own knowledge, or for students.

Critical Attributes

The teacher uses only district-provided materials, even when more variety would assist some students.

The teacher does not seek out resources available to expand his or her own skill.

Although aware of some student needs, the teacher does not inquire about possible resources.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

1e Designing Coherent Instruction

Designing coherent instruction is the heart of planning, reflecting the teacher's knowledge of content and the students in the class, the intended outcomes of instruction, and the available resources. Such planning requires that educators have a clear understanding of the state, district, and school expectations for student learning, and the skill to translate these into a coherent plan. It also requires that teachers understand the characteristics of the students they teach and the active nature of student learning. Educators must determine how best to sequence instruction in a way that will advance student learning through the required content. It further requires the thoughtful construction of lessons that contain cognitively engaging learning activities, the incorporation of appropriate resources and materials, and the intentional grouping of students.

Proficient practice in this component recognizes that a well-designed instruction plan addresses the learning needs of various groups of students; one size does not fit all. At the distinguished level the teacher plans instruction that takes into account the specific learning needs of each student and solicits ideas from students on how best to structure the learning. This plan for implementation is then manifested in Domain 3.

Elements of component 1e:

Learning activities

Instruction is designed to engage students and advance their learning through the content.

Instructional materials and resources

Materials and resources are appropriate to the learning needs of the students.

Instructional groups

Groups are intentionally organized to support student learning.

Lesson and unit structure

Organization is clear and sequenced to advance students' learning.

Indicators:

- Lessons that support instructional outcomes and reflect important concepts
- Instructional maps that indicate relationships to prior learning
- Activities that represent high-level thinking
- Opportunities for student choice
- The use of varied resources
- Thoughtfully planned learning groups
- Structured lesson plans

1e Designing Coherent Instruction

Highly Effective

Plans represent the coordination of in-depth content knowledge, understanding of different students' needs, and available resources (including technology), resulting in a series of learning activities designed to engage students in high-level cognitive activity.

Learning activities are differentiated appropriately for individual learners. Instructional groups are varied appropriately with some opportunity for student choice.

The lesson's or unit's structure is clear and allows for different pathways according to diverse student needs.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of "proficient":

Activities permit student choice.

Learning experiences connect to other disciplines.

Teacher provides a variety of appropriately challenging resources that are differentiated for students in the class.

Lesson plans differentiate for individual student needs.

Effective

Teacher coordinates knowledge of content, of students, and of resources, to design a series of learning experiences aligned to instructional outcomes and suitable to groups of students.

The learning activities have reasonable time allocations; they represent significant cognitive challenge, with some differentiation for different groups of students.

The lesson or unit has a clear structure, with appropriate and varied use of instructional groups.

Critical Attributes

Learning activities are matched to instructional outcomes.

Activities provide opportunity for higher-level thinking. Teacher provides a variety of appropriately challenging materials and resources.

Instructional student groups are organized thoughtfully to maximize learning and build on student strengths.

The plan for the lesson or unit is well structured, with reasonable time allocations.

Ineffective

The series of learning experiences is poorly aligned with the instructional outcomes and does not represent a coherent structure.

The activities are not designed to engage students in active intellectual activity and have unrealistic time allocations.

Instructional groups do not support the instructional outcomes and offer no variety.

Critical Attributes

Learning activities are boring and/or not well aligned to the instructional goals.

Materials are not engaging, or do not meet instructional outcomes.

Instructional groups do not support learning.

Lesson plans are not structured or sequenced and are unrealistic in their expectations.

Developing/Partially Effective

Some of the learning activities and materials are suitable to the instructional outcomes and represent a moderate cognitive challenge but with no differentiation for different students. Instructional groups partially support the instructional outcomes, with an effort by the teacher at providing some variety.

The lesson or unit has a recognizable structure; the progression of activities is uneven, with most time allocations reasonable.

Critical Attributes

Learning activities are moderately challenging. Learning resources are suitable, but there is limited variety.

Instructional groups are random or only partially support objectives.

Lesson structure is uneven or may be unrealistic in terms of time expectations.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

If Designing Student Assessments

Good teaching requires both assessment of learning and assessment for learning. Assessments of learning ensure that teachers know that students have learned the intended outcomes. These assessments must be designed in such a manner that they provide evidence of the full range of learning outcomes; that is, to assess reasoning skills and factual knowledge, different methods are needed. Furthermore, such assessments may need to be adapted to the particular needs of individual students; an ESL student, for example, may need an alternative method of assessment to allow demonstration of understanding. Assessment for learning enables a teacher to incorporate assessments directly into the instructional process, and to modify or adapt instruction as needed to ensure student understanding. Such assessments, although used during instruction, must be designed as part of the planning process. Such formative assessment strategies are ongoing and may be used by both teachers and students to monitor progress towards the understanding the learning outcomes.

Elements of component 1f:

Congruence with instructional outcomes

Assessments must match learning expectations.

Criteria and standards

Expectations must be clearly defined.

Design of formative assessments

Assessments for learning must be planned as part of the instructional process.

Use for planning

Results of assessment guide future planning.

Indicators:

- Lesson plans indicating correspondence between assessments and instructional outcomes
- Assessment types suitable to the style of outcome
- Variety of performance opportunities for students
- Modified assessments available for individual students as needed
- Expectations clearly written, with descriptors for each level of performance
- Formative assessments designed to inform minute-to-minute decision making by the teacher during instruction

1f Designing Student Assessments

Highly Effective

Teacher's plan for student assessment is fully aligned with the instructional outcomes and has clear criteria and standards that show evidence of student contribution to their development.

Assessment methodologies have been adapted for individual students, as needed.

The approach to using formative assessment is well designed and includes student as well as teacher use of the assessment information.

Teacher intends to use assessment results to plan future instruction for individual students.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of "proficient":

Assessments provide opportunities for student choice.

Students participate in designing assessments for their own work.

Teacher-designed assessments are authentic with real-world application, as appropriate.

Students develop rubrics according to teacher specified learning objectives.

Students are actively involved in collecting information from formative assessments and provide input.

Effective

Teacher's plan for student assessment is aligned with the instructional outcomes; assessment methodologies may have been adapted for groups of students.

Assessment criteria and standards are clear.

Teacher has a well-developed strategy for using formative assessment and has designed particular approaches to be used.

Teacher intends to use assessment results to plan for future instruction for groups of students.

Critical Attributes

All the learning outcomes have a method for assessment.

Assessment types match learning expectations.

Plans indicate modified assessments for some students as needed.

Assessment criteria are clearly written.

Plans include formative assessments to use during instruction.

Lesson plans indicate possible adjustments based on formative assessment data.

Developing/Partially Effective

Some of the instructional outcomes are assessed through the proposed approach, but others are not.

Assessment criteria and standards have been developed, but they are not clear.

Approach to the use of formative assessment is rudimentary, including only some of the instructional outcomes.

Teacher intends to use assessment results to plan for future instruction for the class as a whole.

Critical Attributes

Only some of the instructional outcomes are addressed in the planned assessments.

Assessment criteria are vague.

Plans refer to the use of formative assessments, but they are not fully developed.

Assessment results are used to design lesson plans for the whole class, not individual students.

Ineffective

Assessment procedures are not congruent with instructional outcomes; the proposed approach contains no criteria or standards.

Teacher has no plan to incorporate formative assessment in the lesson or unit, nor any plan to use assessment results in designing future instruction.

Critical Attributes

Assessments do not match instructional outcomes.

Assessments have no criteria.

No formative assessments have been designed.

Assessment results do not affect future plans.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

2a Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport

An essential skill of teaching is that of managing relationships with students and ensuring that those among students are positive and supportive. Teachers create an environment of respect and rapport in their classrooms by the ways they interact with students and by the interaction they encourage and cultivate among students. An important aspect of respect and rapport relates to how the teacher responds to students and how students are permitted to treat one another. Patterns of interactions are critical to the overall tone of the class. In a respectful environment, all students feel valued and safe.

Elements of component 2a:

Teacher interactions with students, including both words and actions

A teacher's interactions with students set the tone for the classroom. Through their interactions, teachers convey that they are interested in and care about their students.

Student interactions with other students, including both words and actions

As important as a teacher's treatment of students is, how students are treated by their classmates is arguably even more important to students. At its worst, poor treatment causes students to feel rejected by their peers. At its best, positive interaction among students is mutually supportive and creates an emotionally healthy school environment. Teachers model and teach students how to engage in respectful interactions with one another and acknowledge respectful interactions among students.

Indicators:

- Respectful talk and turn taking
- Respect for students' background and life outside the classroom
- Teacher and student body language
- Physical proximity
- Warmth and caring
- Politeness
- Encouragement
- Active listening
- Fairness

2a Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport

Highly Effective

Classroom interactions among the teacher and individual students are highly respectful, reflecting genuine warmth and caring and sensitivity to students as individuals.

Students exhibit respect for the teacher and contribute to high levels of civil interaction among all members of the class. The net result of interactions is that of connections with students as individuals.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of “proficient”:
Teacher demonstrates knowledge and caring about individual students’ lives beyond school.

When necessary, students correct one another in their conduct toward classmates.

There is no disrespectful behavior among students.

The teacher’s response to a student’s incorrect response respects the student’s dignity.

Effective

Teacher-student interactions are friendly and demonstrate general caring and respect. Such interactions are appropriate to the ages of the students.

Students exhibit respect for the teacher. Interactions among students are generally polite and respectful.

Teacher responds successfully to disrespectful behavior among students. The net result of the interactions is polite and respectful, but impersonal.

Critical Attributes

Talk between teacher and students and among students is uniformly respectful.

Teacher responds to disrespectful behavior among students.

Teacher makes superficial connections with individual students.

Developing/Partially Effective

Patterns of classroom interactions, both between the teacher and students and among students, are generally appropriate but may reflect occasional inconsistencies, favoritism, and disregard for students’ ages, cultures, and developmental levels.

Students rarely demonstrate disrespect for one another. Teacher attempts to respond to disrespectful behavior, with uneven results. The net result of the interactions is neutral, conveying neither warmth nor conflict.

Critical Attributes

The quality of interactions between teacher and students, or among students, is uneven, with occasional disrespect.

Teacher attempts to respond to disrespectful behavior among students, with uneven results.

Teacher attempts to make connections with individual students, but student reactions indicate that the efforts are not completely successful or are unusual.

Ineffective

Patterns of classroom interactions, both between the teacher and students and among students, are mostly negative, inappropriate, or insensitive to students’ ages, cultural backgrounds, and developmental levels. Interactions are characterized by sarcasm, put-downs, or conflict.

Teacher does not deal with disrespectful behavior.

Critical Attributes

Teacher uses disrespectful talk towards students; student’s body language indicates feelings of hurt or insecurity.

Students use disrespectful talk towards one another with no response from the teacher.

Teacher displays no familiarity with or caring about individual students’ interests or personalities.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

2b Establishing a Culture for Learning

A “culture for learning” refers to the atmosphere in the classroom that reflects the educational importance of the work undertaken by both students and teacher. It describes the norms that govern the interactions among individuals about the activities and assignments, the value of hard work and perseverance, and the general tone of the class. The classroom is characterized by high cognitive energy and by a sense that what is happening there is important and that it is essential to get it right. There are high expectations for all students. The classroom is a place where the teacher and students value learning and hard work.

Elements of component 2b:

Importance of the content and of learning

In a classroom with a strong culture for learning, teachers convey the educational value of what the students are learning.

Expectations for learning and achievement

In classrooms with robust cultures for learning, all students receive the message that while the work is challenging, they are capable of success if they are prepared to work hard.

Student pride in work

When students are convinced of their capabilities, they are willing to devote energy to the task at hand, and they take pride in their accomplishments. This pride is reflected in their interactions with classmates and with the teacher.

Indicators:

- Belief in the value of the work
- High expectations, supported through both verbal and nonverbal behaviors
- Expectation and recognition of quality
- Expectation and recognition of effort and persistence
- Confidence in students’ ability evident in teacher’s and students’ language and behaviors
- Expectation for all students to participate

2b Establishing a Culture for Learning

Highly Effective

The classroom culture is a cognitively vibrant place, characterized by a shared belief in the importance of learning. The teacher conveys high expectations for learning by all students and insists on hard work.

Students assume responsibility for high quality by initiating improvements, making revisions, adding detail, and/or helping peers.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of “proficient”:

The teacher communicates a genuine passion for the subject. Students indicate that they are not satisfied unless they have complete understanding.

Student questions and comments indicate a desire to understand the content rather than, for example, simply learn a procedure for getting the correct answer.

Students recognize the efforts of their classmates.

Students take initiative in improving the quality of their work.

Effective

The classroom culture is a cognitively busy place where learning is valued by all, with high expectations for learning being the norm for most students.

The teacher conveys that with hard work students can be successful.

Students understand their role as learners and consistently expend effort to learn.

Classroom interactions support learning and hard work.

Critical Attributes

The teacher communicates the importance of learning and the assurance that with hard work all students can be successful in it.

The teacher demonstrates a high regard for student abilities.

Teacher conveys an expectation of high levels of student effort.

Students expend good effort to complete work of high quality.

Developing/Partially Effective

The classroom culture is characterized by little commitment to learning by teacher or students.

The teacher appears to be only going through the motions, and students indicate that they are interested in completion of a task, rather than quality.

The teacher conveys that student success is the result of natural ability rather than hard work; high expectations for learning are reserved for those students thought to have a natural aptitude for the subject.

Critical Attributes

Teacher’s energy for the work is neutral, indicating neither indicating a high level of commitment nor “blowing it off.”

The teacher conveys high expectations for only some students.

Students comply with the teacher’s expectations for learning, but they don’t indicate commitment on their own initiative for the work.

Many students indicate that they are looking for an “easy path.”

Ineffective

The classroom culture is characterized by a lack of teacher or student commitment to learning and/or little or no investment of student energy into the task at hand.

Hard work is not expected or valued.

Medium or low expectations for student achievement are the norm, with high expectations for learning reserved for only one or two students.

Critical Attributes

The teacher conveys that the reasons for the work are external or trivializes the learning goals and assignments.

The teacher conveys to at least some students that the work is too challenging for them.

Students exhibit little or no pride in their work.

Class time is devoted more to socializing than to learning.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

2c Managing Classroom Procedures

A smoothly functioning classroom is a prerequisite to good instruction and high levels of student engagement. Teachers establish and monitor routines and procedures for the smooth operation of the classroom and the efficient use of time. Hallmarks of a well-managed classroom are that instructional groups are used effectively, non-instructional tasks are completed efficiently, and transitions between activities and management of materials and supplies are skillfully done in order to maintain momentum and maximize instructional time. The establishment of efficient routines, and success in teaching students to employ them, may be inferred from the sense that the class “runs itself.”

Elements of component 2c:

Management of instructional groups

Teachers help students to develop the skills to work purposefully and cooperatively in groups, with little supervision from the teacher.

Management of transitions

Many lessons engage students in different types of activities—large-group, small-group, independent work. Little time should be lost as students move from one activity to another; students know the “drill” and execute it seamlessly.

Management of materials and supplies

Experienced teachers have all necessary materials at hand and have taught students to implement routines for distribution and collection of materials with a minimum of disruption to the flow of instruction.

Performance of non-instructional duties

Overall, little instructional time is lost in activities such as taking attendance, recording the lunch count, or the return of permission slips for a class trip.

Indicators:

- Smooth functioning of all routines
- Little or no loss of instructional time
- Students playing an important role in carrying out the routines
- Students knowing what to do, where to move

2c Managing Classroom Procedures

Highly Effective

Instructional time is maximized because of efficient classroom routines and procedures.

Students contribute to the management of instructional groups, transitions, and the handling of materials and supplies.

Routines are well understood and may be initiated by students.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of “proficient”:

Students take the initiative with their classmates to ensure that their time is used productively.

Students themselves ensure that transitions and other routines are accomplished smoothly.

Students take initiative in distributing and collecting materials efficiently.

Effective

There is little loss of instructional time because of effective classroom routines and procedures.

The teacher’s management of instructional groups and the handling of materials and supplies are consistently successful.

With minimal guidance and prompting, students follow established classroom routines.

Critical Attributes

The students are productively engaged during small-group work.

Transitions between large- and small-group activities are smooth.

Routines for distribution and collection of materials and supplies work efficiently.

Classroom routines function smoothly.

Developing/Partially Effective

Some instructional time is lost through only partially effective classroom routines and procedures.

The teacher’s management of instructional groups, transitions, and/or the handling of materials and supplies is inconsistent, the result being some disruption of learning.

With regular guidance and prompting, students follow established routines.

Critical Attributes

Small groups are only partially engaged while not working directly with the teacher.

Procedures for transitions and for distribution/ collection of materials seem to have been established, but their operation is rough.

Classroom routines function unevenly.

Ineffective

Much instructional time is lost through inefficient classroom routines and procedures.

There is little or no evidence that the teacher is managing instructional groups, transitions, and/or the handling of materials and supplies effectively.

There is little evidence that students know or follow established routines.

Critical Attributes

Students not working with the teacher are not productively engaged or are disruptive to the class.

There are no established procedures for distributing and collecting materials.

Procedures for other activities are confused or chaotic.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

2d Managing Student Behavior

In order for students to be able to engage deeply with content, the classroom environment must be orderly; the atmosphere must feel businesslike and productive, without being authoritarian. In a productive classroom, standards of conduct are clear to students; they know what they are permitted to do and what they can expect of their classmates. Even when their behavior is being corrected, students feel respected; their dignity is not undermined. Skilled teachers regard positive student behavior not as an end in itself, but as a prerequisite to high levels of engagement in content.

Elements of component 2d:

Expectations

It is clear, either from what the teacher says, or by inference from student actions, that expectations for student conduct have been established and that they are being implemented.

Monitoring of student behavior

Experienced teachers seem to have eyes in the backs of their heads; they are attuned to what's happening in the classroom and can move subtly to help students, when necessary, reengage with the content being addressed in the lesson. At a high level, such monitoring is preventive and subtle and thus a challenging to observe.

Response to student misbehavior

Even experienced teachers find that their students occasionally violate one or another of the agreed-upon standards of conduct; how the teacher responds to such infractions is an important mark of the teacher's skill. Accomplished teachers try to understand why students are conducting themselves in such a manner (are they unsure of the content, are they trying to impress their friends?) and respond in such a way that they respect the dignity of the student. The best responses are those that address misbehavior early in an episode, although doing so is not always possible.

Indicators:

- Clear standards of conduct, possibly posted, and possibly referred to during a lesson
- Absence of acrimony between teacher and students concerning behavior
- Teacher awareness of student conduct
- Preventive action when needed by the teacher
- Fairness
- Absence of misbehavior
- Reinforcement of positive behavior

2d Managing Student Behavior

Highly Effective

Student behavior is entirely appropriate.

Students take an active role in monitoring their own behavior and that of other students against standards of conduct.

Teachers' monitoring of student behavior is subtle and preventive.

Teacher's response to student misbehavior is sensitive to individual student needs and respects students' dignity.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of "proficient":

Student behavior is entirely appropriate; there no evidence of student misbehavior.

The teacher monitors student behavior without speaking – just moving about.

Students respectfully intervene as appropriate with classmates to ensure compliance with standards of conduct.

Developing/Partially Effective

Standards of conduct appear to have been established, but their implementation is inconsistent.

Teacher tries, with uneven results, to monitor student behavior and respond to student misbehavior.

There is inconsistent implementation of the standards of conduct.

Critical Attributes

Teacher attempts to maintain order in the classroom but with uneven success; standards of conduct, if they exist, are not evident.

Teacher attempts to keep track of student behavior, but with no apparent system.

The teacher's response to student misbehavior is inconsistent, at times very harsh, other times lenient.

Effective

Student behavior is generally appropriate.

The teacher monitors student behavior against established standards of conduct.

Teacher response to student misbehavior is consistent, proportionate, respectful to students, and effective.

Critical Attributes

Standards of conduct appear to have been established.

Student behavior is generally appropriate.

The teacher frequently monitors student behavior. Teacher's response to student misbehavior is effective.

Teacher acknowledges good behavior.

Ineffective

There appear to be no established standards of conduct and little or no teacher monitoring of student behavior.

Students challenge the standards of conduct. Response to students' misbehavior is repressive or disrespectful of student dignity.

Critical Attributes

The classroom environment is chaotic, with no apparent standards of conduct.

The teacher does not monitor student behavior.

Some students violate classroom rules, without apparent teacher awareness.

When the teacher notices student misbehavior, s/he appears helpless to do anything about it.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

2e Organizing Physical Space

The use of the physical environment to promote student learning is a hallmark of an experienced teacher. Its use varies, of course, with the age of the students: in a primary classroom, centers and reading corners may structure class activities, while with older students, the position of chairs and desks can facilitate, or inhibit, rich discussion. Naturally, classrooms must be safe (no dangling wires or dangerous traffic patterns), and all students must be able to see and hear what's going on so they can participate actively. Both the teacher and students make effective use of computer (and other) technology.

Elements of component 2e:

Safety and accessibility

Physical safety is a primary consideration of all teachers; no learning can occur if students are unsafe or if they don't have access to the board or other learning resources.

Arrangement of furniture and use of physical resources

Both the physical arrangement of a classroom and the available resources provide opportunities for teachers to advance learning; when these are skillfully used, students can engage with the content in a productive manner. At the highest levels of performance, the students themselves contribute to the physical environment.

Indicators:

- Pleasant, inviting atmosphere
- Safe environment
- Accessibility for all students
- Furniture arrangement suitable for the learning activities
- Effective use of physical resources, including computer technology, by both teacher and students

2e Organizing Physical Space

Highly Effective

The classroom is safe, and learning is accessible to all students, including those with special needs.

Teacher makes effective use of physical resources, including computer technology. The teacher ensures that the physical arrangement is appropriate to the learning activities.

Students contribute to the use or adaptation of the physical environment to advance learning.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of “proficient”:

Modifications are made to the physical environment to accommodate students with special needs.

There is total alignment between the goals of the lesson and the physical environment.

Students take the initiative to adjust the physical environment.

Teachers and students make extensive and imaginative use of available technology.

Effective

The classroom is safe, and learning is accessible to all students; teacher ensures that the physical arrangement is appropriate to the learning activities.

Teacher makes effective use of physical resources, including computer technology.

Critical Attributes

The classroom is safe, and all students are able to see and hear.

The classroom is arranged to support the instructional goals and learning activities.

The teacher makes appropriate use of available technology.

Developing/Partially Effective

The classroom is safe, and essential learning is accessible to most students.

The teacher’s use of physical resources, including computer technology, is moderately effective.

Teacher makes some attempt to modify the physical arrangement to suit learning activities, with partial success.

Critical Attributes

The physical environment is safe, and most students can see and hear.

The physical environment is not an impediment to learning but does not enhance it.

The teacher makes limited use of available technology and other resources.

Ineffective

The physical environment is unsafe, or many students don’t have access to learning resources.

There is poor coordination between the lesson activities and the arrangement of furniture and resources, including computer technology.

Critical Attributes

There are physical hazards in the classroom, endangering student safety.

Many students can’t see or hear the teacher or the board.

Available technology is not being used, even if its use would enhance the lesson.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

3a Communicating with Students

Teachers communicate with students for several independent, but related, purposes. First, they convey that teaching and learning are purposeful activities; they make that purpose clear to students. They also provide clear directions for classroom activities, so that students know what it is that they are to do. When teachers present concepts and information, those presentations are made with accuracy, clarity, and imagination; when expanding upon the topic is appropriate to the lesson; skilled teachers embellish their explanations with analogies or metaphors, linking them to students' interests and prior knowledge. Teachers occasionally withhold information from students (for example in an inquiry-based science lesson) to encourage them to think on their own, but what information they do convey is accurate and reflects deep understanding. And the teacher's use of language is vivid, rich, and error free, affording the opportunity for students to hear language well used and to extend their own vocabularies. Teacher presents complex concepts in ways that provide scaffolding and access to students.

Elements of component 3a:

Expectations for learning

The goals for learning are communicated clearly to students. Even if goals are not conveyed at the outset of a lesson (for example, an inquiry-based lesson in science), by the end of the lesson students are clear about what they have been learning.

Directions and procedures

Students are clear about what they are expected to do during a lesson, particularly if they are working independently or with classmates, without direct teacher supervision. The directions for the lesson activities may be provided orally, in writing, or in some combination of the two.

Explanations of content

Skilled teachers, when explaining concepts to students, use vivid language and imaginative analogies and metaphors, connecting explanations to students' interests and lives beyond school. The explanations are clear, with appropriate scaffolding, and, when opportunity arises, anticipate possible student misconceptions.

Use of oral and written language

For many students, their teachers' use of language represents their best model of both accurate syntax and a rich vocabulary; these models enable students to emulate such language, making their own more precise and expressive.

Indicators:

- Clarity of the purpose of the lesson
- Clear directions and procedures specific to the lesson activities
- Absence of content errors and clear explanations of concepts
- Students comprehension of content
- Correct and imaginative use of language

3a Communicating with Students

Highly Effective

The teacher links the instructional purpose of the lesson to student interests; the directions and procedures are clear and anticipate possible student misunderstanding.

The teacher's explanation of content is thorough and clear, developing conceptual understanding through artful scaffolding and connecting with students' interests.

Students contribute to extending the content and help explain concepts to their classmates.

The teacher's spoken and written language is expressive, and the teacher finds opportunities to extend students' vocabularies.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of "proficient":

The teacher points out possible areas for misunderstanding.

Teacher explains content clearly and imaginatively, using metaphors and analogies to bring content to life.

All students seem to understand the presentation.

The teacher invites students to explain the content to the class or to classmates.

Teacher uses rich language, offering brief vocabulary lessons where appropriate.

Effective

The teacher clearly communicates instructional purpose of the lesson, including where it is situated within broader learning, and explains procedures and directions clearly.

Teacher's explanation of content is well scaffolded, clear and accurate, and connects with students' knowledge and experience.

During the explanation of content, the teacher invites student intellectual engagement.

Teacher's spoken and written language is clear and correct and uses vocabulary appropriate to the students' ages and interests.

Critical Attributes

The teacher states clearly, at some point during the lesson, what the students will be learning.

If the tactic is appropriate, the teacher models the process to be followed in the task.

Students engage with the learning task, indicating that they understand what they are to do.

The teacher makes no content errors.

The teacher's explanation of content is clear and invites student participation and thinking.

The teacher's vocabulary and usage are correct and completely suited to the lesson.

The teacher's vocabulary is appropriate to the students' ages and levels of development.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

Developing/Partially Effective

The teacher's attempt to explain the instructional purpose has only limited success, and/or directions and procedures must be clarified after initial student confusion.

The teacher's explanation of the content may contain minor errors; some portions are clear; other portions are difficult to follow.

The teacher's explanation consists of a monologue, with no invitation to the students for intellectual engagement.

Teacher's spoken language is correct; however, his or her vocabulary is limited, or not fully appropriate to the students' ages or backgrounds.

Critical Attributes

The teacher refers in passing to what the students will be learning, or has written it on the board with no elaboration or explanation.

The teacher must clarify the learning task so that students can complete it.

The teacher makes no serious content errors but may make a minor error.

The teacher's explanation of the content consists of a monologue or is purely procedural, with minimal participation by students.

Vocabulary and usage are correct but unimaginative.

Vocabulary is too advanced or too juvenile for the students.

Ineffective

The instructional purpose of the lesson is unclear to students, and the directions and procedures are confusing.

The teacher's explanation of the content contains major errors.

The teacher's spoken or written language contains errors of grammar or syntax.

The teacher's vocabulary is inappropriate, vague, or used incorrectly, leaving students confused.

Critical Attributes

At no time during the lesson does the teacher convey to the students what they will be learning.

Students indicate through their questions that they are confused about the learning task.

The teacher makes a serious content error that will affect students' understanding of the lesson.

Students indicate through body language or questions that they don't understand the content being presented.

Teacher's communications include errors of vocabulary or usage.

The teacher's vocabulary is inappropriate to the age or culture of the students.

3b Questioning and Discussion Techniques

Questioning and discussion are the only instructional strategies specifically referred to in the framework for teaching; this fact reflects their central importance to teachers' practice. But in the framework it is important that questioning and discussion are used as techniques to deepen student understanding are being used rather than serving as recitation or a verbal quiz. Good teachers use divergent as well as convergent questions, framed in such a way that they invite students to formulate hypotheses, make connections, or challenge previously held views. Students' responses to questions are valued; effective teachers are especially adept at responding to and building upon student responses and making use of their ideas. High-quality questions encourage students to make connections among concepts or events previously believed to be unrelated, and arrive at new understandings of complex material. Effective teachers also pose questions for which they do not know the answers. Even when a question has a limited number of correct responses, the question, being non-formulaic, is likely to promote thinking by students. Class discussions are animated, engaging all students in important issues and in using their own language to deepen and extend their understanding. These discussions may be based on questions formulated by the students themselves. Not all questions must be at a high cognitive level in order for a teacher's performance to be rated at a high level; that is, when exploring a topic, a teacher might begin with a series of questions of low cognitive challenge to provide a review, or to ensure that everyone in the class is "on board." Furthermore, if the questions are at a high level, but only a few students participate in the discussion, the teacher's performance on the component cannot be judged to be at a high level. In addition, in lessons involving students in small-group work, the quality of the students' questions and discussion in their small groups may be considered part of this component. In order for students to formulate high-level questions, they must have learned how to do so. Therefore, high-level questions from students, either in the full class, or in small group discussions, provide evidence that these skills have been taught.

Elements of component 3b:

Quality of questions/prompts

Questions of high quality cause students to think and reflect, to deepen their understanding, and to test their ideas against those of their classmates. When teachers ask questions of high quality, they ask only a few of them, and provide students with sufficient time to think about their response to reflect on the comments of their classmates, and to deepen their understanding. Occasionally, for the purposes of review, teachers ask students a series of (usually low-level) questions in a type of verbal quiz. This strategy may be helpful for the purpose of establishing the facts of a historical event, for example, but should not be confused with the use of questioning to deepen students' understanding.

Discussion techniques

Effective teachers promote learning through discussion. Some teachers report, "We discussed x" when what they mean is "I said x." That is, some teachers confuse discussion with explanation of content; as important as that is, it's not discussion. Rather, in a true discussion, a teacher poses a question and invites all students' views to be heard, enabling students to engage in discussion directly with one another, not always mediated by the teacher.

Student participation

In some classes a few students tend to dominate the discussion; other students, recognizing this pattern, hold back their contributions. Teacher uses a range of techniques to ensure that all students contribute to the discussion and enlists the assistance of students to ensure this outcome.

Indicators:

- Questions of high cognitive challenge, formulated by both students and teacher
- Questions with multiple correct answers, or multiple approaches even when there is a single correct response
- Effective use of student responses and ideas
- Discussion in which the teacher steps out of the central, mediating role
- High levels of student participation in discussion

3b Questioning and Discussion Techniques

Highly Effective

Teacher uses a variety or series of questions or prompts to challenge students cognitively, advance high-level thinking and discourse, and promote metacognition.

Students formulate many questions, initiate topics, and make unsolicited contributions.

Students themselves ensure that all voices are heard in the discussion.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of “proficient”:

Students initiate higher-order questions.

Students extend the discussion, enriching it.

Students invite comments from their classmates during a discussion.

Effective

Although the teacher may use some low-level questions, he or she asks the students questions designed to promote thinking and understanding.

Teacher creates a genuine discussion among students, providing adequate time for students to respond and stepping aside when appropriate.

Teacher successfully engages most students in the discussion, employing a range of strategies to ensure that most students are heard.

Critical Attributes

Teacher uses open-ended questions, inviting students to think and/or offer multiple possible answers.

The teacher makes effective use of wait time.

The teacher effectively builds on student responses to questions.

Discussions enable students to talk to one another without ongoing mediation by the teacher.

The teacher calls on most students, even those who don't initially volunteer.

Many students actively engage in the discussion.

Developing/Partially Effective

Teacher's questions lead students through a single path of inquiry, with answers seemingly determined in advance.

Alternatively, the teacher attempts to frame some questions designed to promote student thinking and understanding, but only a few students are involved.

Teacher attempts to engage all students in the discussion and to encourage them to respond to one another, but with uneven results.

Critical Attributes

Teacher frames some questions designed to promote student thinking, but only a small number of students are involved.

The teacher invites students to respond directly to one another's ideas, but few students respond.

Teacher calls on many students, but only a few actually participate in the discussion.

Ineffective

Teacher's questions are of low cognitive challenge, require single correct responses, and are asked in rapid succession.

Interaction between teacher and students is predominantly recitation style, with the teacher mediating all questions and answers.

A few students dominate the discussion

Critical Attributes

Questions are rapid-fire, and convergent, with a single correct answer.

Questions do not invite student thinking.

All discussion is between teacher and students; students are not invited to speak directly to one another.

A few students dominate the discussion.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

3c Engaging Students in Learning

Student engagement in learning is the centerpiece of the framework for teaching; all other components contribute to it. When students are engaged in learning, they are not merely “busy,” nor are they only “on task.” Rather, they are intellectually active in learning important and challenging content. The critical distinction between a classroom in which students are compliant and busy and one in which they are engaged is that in the latter students are developing their understanding through what they do. That is, they are engaged in discussing, debating, answering “what if?” questions, discovering patterns, and the like. They may be selecting their work from a range of (teacher-arranged) choices and making important contributions to the intellectual life of the class. Such activities don’t typically consume an entire lesson, but they are essential components of engagement.

A lesson in which students are engaged usually has a discernible structure: a beginning, a middle, and an end, with scaffolding provided by the teacher or by the activities themselves. The teacher organizes student tasks to provide cognitive challenge and then encourages students to reflect on what they have done and what they have learned. That is, the lesson has closure, in which students derive the important learning from their own actions. A critical question for an observer in determining the degree of student engagement is “What are the students being asked to do?” If the answer to that question is that they are filling in blanks on a worksheet or performing a rote procedure, they are unlikely to be cognitively engaged. In observing a lesson it is essential not only to watch the teacher but also to pay close attention to the students and what they are doing. The best evidence for student engagement is what students are saying and doing as a consequence of what the teacher does, or has done, or has planned.

Elements of component 3c :

Activities and assignments

The activities and assignments are the centerpiece of student engagement, since they determine what it is that students are asked to do. Activities and assignments that promote learning are aligned with the goals of the lesson, and require student thinking that both emphasizes depth over breadth and that may allow students to exercise some choice.

Grouping of students

How students are grouped for instruction is one of the many decisions teachers make every day. There are many options: students of similar background and skill may be clustered together, or the more advanced students may be spread around into the different groups. Alternatively, a teacher might permit students to select their own groups or to form them randomly.

Instructional materials and resources

The instructional materials a teacher selects to use in the classroom can have an enormous impact on students’ experience. Although some teachers are obliged to use a school or district’s officially sanctioned materials, many teachers use these selectively or supplement them with others of their choosing that are better suited to engaging students in deep learning—for example, the use of primary source materials in social studies.

Structure and pacing

No one, whether adults or students, likes to be either bored or rushed in completing a task.

Keeping things moving, within a well-defined structure, is one of the marks of an experienced teacher. And since much of students’ learning results from their reflection on what they have done, a well-designed lesson includes time for reflection and closure.

Indicators:

- Activities aligned with the goals of the lesson
- Student enthusiasm, interest, thinking, problem-solving, etc.
- Learning tasks that require high-level student thinking and are aligned with lesson objectives
- Students highly motivated to work on all tasks and persistent even when the tasks are challenging
- Students actively “working,” rather than watching while their teacher “works”
- Suitable pacing of the lesson: neither dragging nor rushed, with time for closure and student reflection

3c Engaging Students in Learning

Highly Effective

Virtually all students are intellectually engaged in challenging content through well-designed learning tasks and suitable scaffolding by the teacher and fully aligned with the instructional outcomes.

In addition, there is evidence of some student initiation of inquiry and of student contribution to the exploration of important content.

The pacing of the lesson provides students the time needed to intellectually engage with and reflect upon their learning and to consolidate their understanding.

Students may have some choice in how they complete tasks and may serve as resources for one another.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of “proficient”:

Virtually all students are highly engaged in the lesson.

Students take initiative to modify a learning task to make it more meaningful or relevant to their needs

Students suggest modifications to the grouping patterns used.

Students have extensive choice in how they complete tasks. Students suggest modifications or additions to the materials being used.

Students have an opportunity for both reflection and closure after the lesson to consolidate their understanding.

Developing/Partially Effective

The learning tasks and activities are partially aligned with the instructional outcomes but require only minimal thinking by students, allowing most to be passive or merely compliant.

The pacing of the lesson may not provide students the time needed to be intellectually engaged.

Critical Attributes

Some students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.

Learning tasks are a mix of those requiring thinking and recall.

Students are in large part passively engaged with the content, learning primarily facts or procedures.

Students have no choice in how they complete tasks.

The teacher uses different instructional groupings; these are partially successful in achieving the lesson objectives.

The materials and resources are partially aligned to the lesson objectives and only in some cases demand student thinking.

The pacing of the lesson is uneven— suitable in parts, but rushed or dragging in others.

Effective

The learning tasks and activities are aligned with the instructional outcomes and designed to challenge student thinking, the result being that most students display active intellectual engagement with important and challenging content and are supported in that engagement by teacher scaffolding.

The pacing of the lesson is appropriate, providing most students the time needed to be intellectually engaged.

Critical Attributes

Most students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.

Learning tasks have multiple correct responses or approaches and/or demand higher-order thinking.

Students have some choice in how they complete learning tasks.

There is a mix of different types of groupings, suitable to the lesson objectives.

Materials and resources support the learning goals and require intellectual engagement, as appropriate.

of the lesson provides students the time needed to be intellectually engaged.

Ineffective

The learning tasks and activities, materials, resources, instructional groups and technology are poorly aligned with the instructional outcomes or require only rote responses.

The pace of the lesson is too slow or too rushed.

Few students are intellectually engaged or interested.

Critical Attributes

Few students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.

Learning tasks require only recall or have a single correct response or method.

The materials used ask students to perform only rote tasks.

Only one type of instructional group is used (whole group, small groups) when variety would better serve the instructional purpose.

Instructional materials used are unsuitable to the lesson and/or the students.

The lesson drags or is rushed.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

3d Using Assessment in Instruction

Assessment of student learning plays an important role in instruction; no longer does it signal the end of instruction; it is now recognized to be an integral part of instruction. While assessment of learning has always been and will continue to be an important aspect of teaching (it's important for teachers to know whether students have learned what was intended), assessment for learning has increasingly come to play an important role in classroom practice. And in order to assess student learning for the purposes of instruction, teachers must have a "finger on the pulse" of a lesson, monitoring student understanding and, where appropriate, offering feedback to students.

Of course, a teacher's monitoring of student learning, though the action may superficially appear to be the same as that of monitoring student behavior, has a fundamentally different purpose in each case. When teachers are monitoring behavior, they are alert to students who may be passing notes, or bothering their neighbors; when teachers are monitoring student learning, they look carefully at what students are writing, or listen carefully to the questions students ask, in order to gauge whether they require additional activity or explanation in order to grasp the content. In each case, the teacher may be circulating in the room, but his/her purpose in doing so is quite different in the two situations.

Similarly, on the surface, questions asked of students for the purpose of monitoring learning are fundamentally different from those used to build understanding; in the former, teachers are alert to students' revealed misconceptions, whereas in the latter the questions are designed to explore relationships or deepen understanding. For the purpose of monitoring, many teachers create questions specifically to determine the extent of student understanding and use techniques (such as exit tickets) to ascertain the degree of understanding of every student in the class. Indeed, encouraging students (and actually teaching them the necessary skills) of monitoring their own learning against clear standards is demonstrated by teachers at high levels of performance.

Elements of component 3d:

Assessment criteria

It is essential that students know the criteria for assessment. At its highest level, students themselves have had a hand in articulating the criteria for, for example, a clear oral presentation.

Monitoring of student learning

A teacher's skill in eliciting evidence of student understanding is one of the true marks of expertise. This is not a hit-or-miss effort but one planned carefully in advance. Even after careful planning, however, the teacher must weave monitoring of student learning seamlessly into the lesson, using a variety of techniques.

Feedback to students

Feedback on learning is an essential element of a rich instructional environment; without it, students are constantly guessing about how they are doing, and how their work can be improved. Valuable feedback must be timely, constructive, and substantive and provide students the guidance they need to improve their performance.

Student self-assessment and monitoring of progress

The culmination of students' assuming responsibility for their learning is when they monitor their own learning and take appropriate action. Of course, they can do these things only if the criteria for learning are clear and they have been taught the skills of checking their work against clear criteria.

Indicators:

- Teacher paying close attention to evidence of student understanding
- Teacher posing specifically created questions to elicit evidence of student understanding
- Teacher circulating to monitor student learning and to offer feedback
- Students assessing their own work against established criteria

3d Using Assessment in Instruction

Highly Effective

Assessment is fully integrated into instruction through extensive use of formative assessment.

Students appear to be aware of, and there is some evidence that they have contributed to, the assessment criteria.

Students self-assess and monitor their progress.

A variety of feedback, from both their teacher and their peers, is accurate, specific, and advances learning.

Questions, prompts, assessments are used regularly to diagnose evidence of learning by individual students.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of “proficient”:

There is evidence that students have helped establish the evaluation criteria.

Teacher monitoring of student understanding is sophisticated and continuous: the teacher is constantly “taking the pulse” of the class.

Teacher makes frequent use of strategies to elicit information about individual student understanding.

Feedback to students is specific and timely, and is provided from many sources including other students.

Students monitor their own understanding, either on their own initiative or as a result of tasks set by the teacher.

Effective

Assessment is used regularly by teacher and/or students during the lesson through monitoring of learning progress and results in accurate, specific feedback that advances learning.

Students appear to be aware of the assessment criteria; some of them engage in self-assessment.

Questions, prompts, assessments are used to diagnose evidence of learning.

Critical Attributes

Students indicate that they clearly understand the characteristics of high-quality work. The teacher elicits evidence of student understanding during the lesson.

Students are invited to assess their own work and make improvements.

Feedback includes specific and timely guidance, at least for groups of students.

The teacher attempts to engage students in self-assessment or peer assessment.

Developing/Partially Effective

Assessment is used sporadically by teacher and/or students to support instruction through some monitoring of progress in learning.

Feedback to students is general, students appear to be only partially aware of the assessment criteria used to evaluate their work, and few assess their own work.

Questions, prompts, and assessments are rarely used to diagnose evidence of learning.

Critical Attributes

There is little evidence that the students understand how their work will be evaluated.

Teacher monitors understanding through a single method, or without eliciting evidence of understanding from all students.

Teacher requests global indications of student understanding.

Feedback to students is not uniformly specific and not oriented towards future improvement of work.

The teacher makes only minor attempts to engage students in self-assessment or peer assessment.

Ineffective

There is little or no assessment or monitoring of student learning; feedback is absent or of poor quality.

Students do not appear to be aware of the assessment criteria and do not engage in self-assessment.

Critical Attributes

The teacher gives no indication of what high-quality work looks like.

The teacher makes no effort to determine whether students understand the lesson.

Feedback is only global.

The teacher does not ask students to evaluate their own or classmates' work.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

3e Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

“Flexibility and responsiveness” refers to a teacher’s skill in making adjustments in a lesson to respond to changing conditions. When a lesson is well planned, there may be no need for changes during the course of the lesson itself. Shifting the approach in midstream is not always necessary; in fact, with experience comes skill in accurately predicting how a lesson will go and readiness for different possible scenarios. But even the most-skilled and best-prepared teachers will on occasion find that either a lesson is not going as they would like or that a teachable moment has presented itself. They are ready to respond to such situations. Furthermore, teachers who are committed to the learning of all students persist in their attempts to engage each student in learning, even when confronted with initial setbacks.

Elements of component 3e:

Lesson adjustment

Experienced teachers are able to make both minor and (when needed) major adjustments to a lesson, a mid-course correction. Such adjustments depend on a teacher’s store of alternate instructional strategies and his or her confidence to make a shift when needed.

Response to students

Occasionally during a lesson an unexpected event will occur which presents a true teachable moment. It is a mark of considerable teacher skill to be able to capitalize on such opportunities.

Persistence

Committed teachers don’t give up easily; when students encounter difficulty in learning (which all do at some point) these teachers seek alternate approaches to help their students be successful.

In these efforts, teachers display a keen sense of efficacy.

Indicators:

- Incorporation of student interests and events of the day into a lesson
- Visible adjustment in the face of student lack of understanding
- Teacher seizing on a teachable moment

Highly Effective

Teacher seizes an opportunity to enhance learning, building on a spontaneous event or student interests, or successfully adjusts and differentiates instruction to address individual student misunderstandings.

Teacher persists in seeking effective approaches for students who need help, using an extensive repertoire of instructional strategies and soliciting additional resources from the school or community.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of “proficient”:

The teacher’s adjustments to the lesson are designed to assist individual students.

Teacher seizes on a teachable moment to enhance a lesson.

The teacher conveys to students that s/he won’t consider a lesson “finished” until every student understands and that s/he has a broad range of approaches to use.

In reflecting on practice, the teacher can cite others in the school and beyond whom s/he has contacted for assistance in reaching some students.

Developing/Partially Effective

Teacher attempts to modify the lesson when needed and to respond to student questions and interests, with moderate success.

Teacher accepts responsibility for student success but has only a limited repertoire of strategies to draw upon.

Critical Attributes

Teacher’s efforts to modify the lesson are only partially successful.

Teacher makes perfunctory attempts to incorporate student questions and interests into the lesson.

The teacher conveys a sense to students of their own responsibility for their learning but is uncertain about how to assist them.

In reflecting on practice, the teacher indicates the desire to reach all students but does not suggest strategies to do so.

Effective

Teacher promotes the successful learning of all students, making minor adjustments as needed to instruction plans and accommodating student questions, needs, and interests.

Drawing on a broad repertoire of strategies, the teacher persists in seeking approaches for students who have difficulty learning.

Critical Attributes

When necessary, the teacher makes adjustments to the lesson to enhance understanding by groups of students.

Teacher incorporates students’ interests and questions into the heart of the lesson.

The teacher conveys to students that s/he has other approaches to try when the students experience difficulty.

In reflecting on practice, the teacher cites multiple approaches undertaken to reach students having difficulty.

Ineffective

Teacher adheres to the instruction plan in spite of evidence of poor student understanding or lack of interest.

Teacher ignores student questions; when students experience difficulty, the teacher blames the students or their home environment.

Critical Attributes

Teacher ignores indications of student boredom or lack of understanding.

Teacher brushes aside student questions.

Teacher makes no attempt to incorporate student interests into the lesson.

The teacher conveys to students that when they have difficulty learning it is their fault.

In reflecting on practice, the teacher does not indicate that it is important to reach all students.

3e Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

4a Reflecting on Teaching

Reflecting on teaching encompasses the teacher's thinking that follows any instructional event—an analysis of the many decisions made both in planning and implementation of a lesson. By considering these elements in light of the impact they had on student learning, teachers can determine where to focus their efforts in making revisions and what aspects of the instruction they will continue in future lessons. Teachers may reflect on their practice through collegial conversations, journal writing, examining student work, informal observations and conversations with students, or simply thinking about their teaching.

Reflecting with accuracy, specificity, and ability to use what has been learned in future teaching is a learned skill; mentors, coaches, and supervisors can help teachers acquire and develop the skill of reflecting on teaching through supportive and deep questioning. Over time, this way of thinking and analyzing instruction through the lens of student learning becomes a habit of mind, leading to improvement in teaching and learning.

Elements of component 4a:

Accuracy

As teachers gain experience, their reflections on practice become more accurate, corresponding to the assessments that would be given by an external and unbiased observer. Not only are the reflections accurate, but teachers can provide specific examples from the lesson to support their judgments.

Use in future teaching

In order for the potential of reflection to improve teaching to be fully realized, teachers must use their reflections to make adjustments in their practice. As their experience and expertise increases, teachers draw on an ever-increasing repertoire of strategies to inform these plans.

Indicators:

- Accurate reflections on a lesson
- Citations of adjustments to practice, drawing on a repertoire of strategies

4a Reflecting on Teaching

Highly Effective

Teacher makes a thoughtful and accurate assessment of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which it achieved its instructional outcomes, citing many specific examples from the lesson and weighing the relative strengths of each.

Drawing on an extensive repertoire of skills, teacher offers specific alternative actions, complete with the probable success of different courses of action.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of "proficient":

Teacher's assessment of the lesson is thoughtful and includes specific indicators of effectiveness.

Teacher's suggestions for improvement draw on an extensive repertoire.

Effective

Teacher makes an accurate assessment of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which it achieved its instructional outcomes and can cite general references to support the judgment.

Teacher makes a few specific suggestions of what could be tried another time the lesson is taught.

Critical Attributes

The teacher accurately assesses the effectiveness of instructional activities used.

The teacher identifies specific ways in which a lesson might be improved.

Developing/Partially Effective

Teacher has a generally accurate impression of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which instructional outcomes were met.

Teacher makes general suggestions about how a lesson could be improved.

Critical Attributes

The teacher has a general sense of whether or not instructional practices were effective.

The teacher offers general modifications for future instruction.

Ineffective

Teacher does not know whether a lesson was effective or achieved its instructional outcomes, or he/she profoundly misjudges the success of a lesson.

Teacher has no suggestions for how a lesson could be improved.

Critical Attributes

The teacher considers the lesson but draws incorrect conclusions about its effectiveness.

The teacher makes no suggestions for improvement.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

4b Maintaining Accurate Records

An essential responsibility of professional educators is keeping accurate records of both instructional and non-instructional events. This record keeping includes student completion of assignments, student progress in learning, and records of non-instructional activities that are part of the day-to-day functions in a school setting, including such things as the return of signed permission slips for a field trip and money for school pictures.

Proficiency in this component is vital, because these records inform interactions with students and parents and allow teachers to monitor learning and adjust instruction accordingly. The methods of keeping records vary as much as the type of information that is being recorded. For example, records of formal assessments may be recorded electronically with the use of spreadsheets and databases, that allow for item analysis and individualized instruction. A less formal means of keeping track of student progress may include anecdotal notes that are kept in student folders.

Elements of component 4b:

Student completion of assignments

Most teachers, particularly at the secondary level, need to keep track of student completion of assignments, including not only whether the assignments were actually completed, but students' success in completing them.

Student progress in learning

In order to plan instruction, teachers need to know where each student "is" in his or her learning. This information may be collected formally or informally, but must be updated frequently.

Non-instructional records

Non-instructional records encompass all the details of school life for which records must be maintained, particularly if they involve money. Examples are such things as knowing which students have returned their permissions slips for a field trip, or which students have paid for their school pictures.

Indicators:

- Routines and systems that track student completion of assignments
- Systems of information regarding student progress against instructional outcomes
- Processes of maintaining accurate non-instructional records

4b Maintaining Accurate Records

Highly Effective

Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments, student progress in learning, and non-instructional records is fully effective.

Students contribute information and participate in maintaining the records.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of "proficient":

Students contribute to and maintain records indicating completed and overdue work assignments.

Students both contribute to and maintain data files indicating their own progress in learning.

Students contribute to maintaining non-instructional records for the class.

Effective

Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments, student progress in learning, and non-instructional records is fully effective.

Critical Attributes

The teacher's process for recording student work completion is efficient and effective; students have access to information about completed and/or missing assignments.

The teacher has an efficient and effective process for recording student attainment of learning goals; students are able to see how they're progressing.

The teacher's process for recording non-instructional information is both efficient and effective.

Developing/Partially Effective

Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments and student progress in learning is rudimentary and only partially effective.

Teacher's records for non-instructional activities are adequate but require frequent monitoring to avoid errors.

Critical Attributes

The teacher has a process for recording completion of student work. However, it is out of date or does not permit students to gain access to the information.

The teacher's process for tracking student progress is cumbersome to use.

The teacher has a process for tracking some, but not all, non-instructional information, and it may contain some errors.

Ineffective

Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments and student progress in learning is nonexistent or in disarray.

Teacher's records for non-instructional activities are in disarray, resulting in errors and confusion.

Critical Attributes

There is no system for either instructional or non-instructional records.

The record-keeping systems are in disarray so as to provide incorrect or confusing information.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

4c Communicating with Families

Although the ability of families to participate in their child's learning varies widely due to other family or job obligations, it is the responsibility of teachers to provide opportunities for them to both understand the instructional program and their child's progress. Teachers establish relationships with families by communicating to them about both the instructional program and about individual students, and they invite families to be part of the educational process itself.

The level of family participation and involvement tends to be greater at the elementary level, when young children are just beginning school. However, the importance of regular communication with families of adolescents cannot be overstated. A teacher's effort to communicate with families conveys an essential caring on the part of the teacher, a quality valued by families of students of all ages.

Elements of component 4c:

Information about the instructional program

Frequent information is provided to families, as appropriate, about the instructional program.

Information about individual students

Frequent information is provided to families, as appropriate, about students' individual progress.

Engagement of families in the instructional program

Successful and frequent engagement opportunities are offered to families so that they can participate in the learning activities.

Indicators:

- Frequent and culturally appropriate information sent home regarding the instructional program and student progress
- Two-way communication between the teacher and families
- Frequent opportunities for families to engage in the learning process

4c Communicating with Families

Highly Effective

Teacher's communication with families is frequent and sensitive to cultural traditions, with students contributing to the communication.

Response to family concerns is handled with professional and cultural sensitivity.

Teacher's efforts to engage families in the instructional program are frequent and successful.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of "proficient":

On a regular basis, students develop materials to inform their families about the instructional program.

Students maintain accurate records about their individual learning progress and frequently share this information with families.

Students contribute to regular and ongoing projects designed to engage families in the learning process.

Effective

Teacher communicates frequently with families about the instructional program and conveys information about individual student progress.

Teacher makes some attempts to engage families in the instructional program.

Information to families is conveyed in a culturally appropriate manner.

Critical Attributes

Information about the instructional program is available on a regular basis.

The teacher sends information about student progress home on a regular basis.

Teacher develops activities designed to successfully engage families in their children's learning, as appropriate.

Developing/Partially Effective

Teacher makes sporadic attempts to communicate with families about the instructional program and about the progress of individual students but does not attempt to engage families in the instructional program.

Communications are one-way and not always appropriate to the cultural norms of those families.

Critical Attributes

School or district-created materials about the instructional program are sent home.

Infrequent or incomplete information is sent home by teachers about the instructional program.

Teacher maintains school-required grade book but does little else to inform families about student progress.

Teacher communications are sometimes inappropriate to families' cultural norms.

Ineffective

Teacher communication with families— about the instructional program, about individual students—is sporadic or culturally inappropriate.

Teacher makes no attempt to engage families in the instructional program.

Critical Attributes

Little or no information regarding the instructional program is available to parents.

Families are unaware of their children's progress.

Family engagement activities are lacking.

Communication is culturally inappropriate.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

4d Participating in a Professional Community

Schools are, first of all, environments to promote the learning of students. But in promoting student learning, teachers must work with their colleagues to share strategies, plan joint efforts, and plan for the success of individual students. Schools are, in other words, professional organizations for teachers—organizations whose full potential is realized only when teachers regard themselves as members of a professional community.

This community is characterized by mutual support and respect and by recognition of the responsibility of all teachers to be constantly seeking ways to improve their practice and to contribute to the life of the school. Inevitably, teachers' duties extend beyond the doors of their classrooms and include activities related to the entire school and/or larger district. These activities include such things as school and district curriculum committees or engagement with the parent-teacher organization. With experience, teachers assume leadership roles in these activities.

Elements of component 4d:

Relationships with colleagues

Teachers maintain a professional collegial relationship that encourages sharing, planning and working together toward improved instructional skill and student success.

Involvement in a culture of professional inquiry

Teachers contribute to and participate in a learning community that supports and respects its members' efforts to improve practice.

Service to the school

Teachers' efforts move beyond classroom duties by contributing to school initiatives and projects.

Participation in school and district projects

Teachers contribute to and support larger school and district projects designed to improve the professional community.

Indicators:

- Regular teacher participation with colleagues to share and plan for student success
- Regular teacher participation in professional courses or communities that emphasize improving practice
- Regular teacher participation in school initiatives
- Regular teacher participation and support of community initiatives

4d Participating in a Professional Community

Highly Effective

Teacher's relationships with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation, with the teacher taking initiative in assuming leadership among the faculty.

Teacher takes a leadership role in promoting a culture of professional inquiry.

Teacher volunteers to participate in school events and district projects making a substantial contribution, and assuming a leadership role in at least one aspect of school or district life.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of "proficient":

The teacher takes a leadership role in promoting activities related to professional inquiry.

The teacher regularly contributes to and oversees events that positively impact school life.

The teacher regularly contributes to and serves as head of significant school district and community projects.

Effective

Teacher's relationships with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation; teacher actively participates in a culture of professional inquiry.

Teacher volunteers to participate in school events and in school and district projects, making a substantial contribution.

Critical Attributes

The teacher has supportive and collaborative relationships with colleagues.

The teacher regularly participates in activities related to professional inquiry.

The teacher frequently volunteers to participate in school activities, as well as school district and community projects.

Developing/Partially Effective

Teacher maintains cordial relationships with colleagues to fulfill duties that the school or district requires.

Teacher becomes involved in the school's culture of professional inquiry when invited to do so.

Teacher participates in school events and school and district projects when specifically asked to do so.

Critical Attributes

The teacher has pleasant relationship with colleagues.

When invited, the teacher participates in activities related to professional inquiry.

When asked, the teacher participates in school activities, as well as school district and community projects.

Ineffective

Teacher's relationships with colleagues are negative or self-serving.

Teacher avoids participation in a professional culture of inquiry, resisting opportunities to become involved.

Teacher avoids becoming involved in school events or school and district projects.

Critical Attributes

The teacher's relationship with colleagues is characterized by negativity or combativeness.

The teacher purposefully avoids contributing to activities promoting professional inquiry.

The teacher avoids involvement in school activities and school district and community projects.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

4e Growing and Developing Professionally

As in other professions, the complexity of teaching requires continued growth and development in order to remain current. Conscientiousness about continuing to stay informed and increasing their skills allows teachers to become ever more effective and to exercise leadership among their colleagues. The academic disciplines themselves evolve, and educators constantly refine their understanding of how to engage students in learning; thus growth in content, pedagogy, and information technology are essential to good teaching. Networking with colleagues through such activities as joint planning, study groups, and lesson study provides opportunities for teachers to learn from one another. These activities allow for job-embedded professional development.

In addition, professional educators increase their effectiveness in the classroom by belonging to professional organizations, reading professional journals, attending educational conferences, and taking university classes. As they gain experience and expertise, educators find ways to contribute to their colleagues and to the profession.

Elements of component 4e:

Enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skill

Teachers remain current by taking courses, reading professional literature, and remaining current on the evolution of thinking regarding instruction.

Receptivity to feedback from colleagues

Teachers actively pursue networks that provide collegial support and feedback.

Service to the profession

Teachers are active in professional organizations so that they can continually improve their personal practice and provide leadership and support to colleagues.

Indicators:

- Frequent teacher attendance in courses and workshops; regular academic reading
- Participation in learning networks with colleagues; regular sharing of feedback
- Participation in professional organizations supporting academic inquiry

4e Growing and Developing Professionally

Highly Effective

Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development and makes a systematic effort to conduct action research.

Teacher seeks out feedback on teaching from both supervisors and colleagues.

Teacher initiates important activities to contribute to the profession.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of “proficient”:

The teacher seeks regular opportunities for continued professional development, including initiating action research.

The teacher actively seeks feedback from supervisors and colleagues.

The teacher takes an active leadership role in professional organizations in order to contribute to the teaching profession.

Effective

Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.

Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues—either when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration.

Teacher participates actively in assisting other educators.

Critical Attributes

The teacher seeks regular opportunities for continued professional development.

The teacher welcomes colleagues and supervisors into the classroom for the purpose of gaining insight from their feedback.

The teacher actively participates in professional organizations designed to contribute to the profession.

Developing/Partially Effective

Teacher participates in professional activities to a limited extent when they are convenient.

Teacher accepts, with some reluctance, feedback on teaching performance from both supervisors and colleagues.

Teacher finds limited ways to contribute to the profession.

Critical Attributes

The teacher participates in professional activities when they are required or when provided by the school district.

The teacher reluctantly accepts feedback from supervisors and colleagues.

The teacher contributes in a limited fashion to educational professional organizations.

Ineffective

Teacher engages in no professional development activities to enhance knowledge or skill.

Teacher resists feedback on teaching performance from either supervisors or more experienced colleagues.

Teacher makes no effort to share knowledge with others or to assume professional responsibilities.

Critical Attributes

The teacher is not involved in any activity that might enhance knowledge or skill.

The teacher purposefully resists discussing performance with supervisors or colleagues.

The teacher ignores invitations to join professional organizations or attend conferences.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

4f Showing Professionalism

Expert teachers demonstrate professionalism in service both to students and to the profession. Teaching at the highest levels of performance in this component is student focused, putting students first, regardless of how this sense of priority might challenge long-held assumptions, past practices, or simply what is easier or more convenient for teachers. Accomplished teachers have a strong moral compass and are guided by what is in the best interest of students. Such educators display professionalism in a number of ways. For example, they conduct their interactions with colleagues with honesty and integrity. They know their students' needs and seek out resources in order to step in and provide help that may extend beyond the classroom.

Teachers advocate for their students in ways that might challenge traditional views and the educational establishment, seeking greater flexibility in the ways school rules and policies are applied. These dedicated educators also display their professionalism in the ways they approach problem solving and decision making, with student needs in mind. Finally, teachers consistently adhere to school and district policies and procedures but are willing to work to improve those that may be outdated or ineffective.

Elements of component 4f:

Integrity and ethical conduct

Teachers act with integrity and honesty.

Service to students

Teachers put students first in all considerations of their practice.

Advocacy

Teachers support their students' best interests, even in the face of traditional practice or beliefs.

Decision making

Teachers solve problems with students' needs as a priority.

Compliance with school and district regulations

Teachers adhere to policies and procedures.

Indicators:

- Teacher having a reputation as someone who can be trusted and often being sought as a sounding board
- Teacher frequently reminding participants during committee or planning work that students are the highest priority
- Teacher supporting students, even in the face of difficult situations or conflicting policies
- Teacher challenging existing practice in order to put students first
- Teacher consistently fulfilling school district mandates regarding policies and procedures

4f Showing Professionalism

Highly Effective

Teacher takes a leadership role with colleagues and can be counted on to hold to the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and confidentiality.

Teacher is highly proactive in serving students, seeking out resources when needed.

Teacher makes a concerted effort to challenge negative attitudes or practices to ensure that all students, particularly those traditionally underserved, are honored in the school.

Teacher takes a leadership role in team or departmental decision making and helps ensure that such decisions are based on the highest professional standards.

Teacher complies fully with school and district regulations, taking a leadership role with colleagues.

Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of “proficient”:

Teacher is considered a leader in terms of honesty, integrity, and confidentiality.

Teacher is highly proactive in serving students.

Teacher makes a concerted effort to ensure that opportunities are available for all students to be successful.

Teacher takes a leadership role in team and departmental decision making.

Teacher takes a leadership role regarding school district regulations.

Effective

Teacher displays high standards of honesty, integrity, and confidentiality in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public.

Teacher is active in serving students, working to ensure that all students receive a fair opportunity to succeed.

Teacher maintains an open mind in team or departmental decision making.

Teacher complies fully with school and district regulations.

Critical Attributes

Teacher is honest and known for having high standards of integrity.

Teacher actively addresses student needs.

Teacher actively works to provide opportunities for student success.

Teacher willingly participates in team and departmental decision making.

Teacher complies completely with school district regulations.

Evidence:

Highly Effective (10): _____

Effective (8): _____

Developing (4): _____

Ineffective (0): _____

Developing/Partially Effective

Teacher is honest in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public.

Teacher attempts, though inconsistently, to serve students. Teacher does not knowingly contribute to some students' being ill served by the school.

Teacher's decisions and recommendations are based on limited but genuinely professional considerations.

Teacher complies minimally with school and district regulations, doing just enough to get by.

Critical Attributes

Teacher is honest.

Teacher notices the needs of students but is inconsistent in addressing them.

Teacher does not notice that some school practices result in poor conditions for students.

Teacher makes decisions professionally but on a limited basis.

Teacher complies with school district regulations.

Ineffective

Teacher displays dishonesty in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public.

Teacher is not alert to students' needs and contributes to school practices that result in some students' being ill served by the school.

Teacher makes decisions and recommendations based on self-serving interests.

Teacher does not comply with school and district regulations.

Critical Attributes

Teacher is dishonest.

Teacher does not notice the needs of students.

The teacher engages in practices that are self-serving.

The teacher willfully rejects school district regulations.



The Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument

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by Charlotte Danielson

Charlotte Danielson **The Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument**
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