IRVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2024-2025 UNIFORM GRADING PROFILE

Office of Curriculum and Instruction

Board Approved: August 21, 2024

UNIFORM GRADING PROFILE: 2024 - 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Preparing students with college and career-readiness skills in the 21st Century is our shared goal. To that end, improving student achievement in Irvington Public Schools must guide every facet of our daily work as we strive to develop district-wide procedures to accurately assess the progress of our students using rigorous, varied, and authentic assessments.

The New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) are designed to provide a universal framework for teaching and learning based upon national standards of excellence. We will utilize the best research-based instructional practices as well as core and supplemental materials in Irvington Public Schools to achieve these standards. Our students deserve our best thinking and your input has been and will continue to be instrumental in informing this living document. As we utilize this document throughout the school year, you will be asked to provide feedback on its usefulness and clarity.

Our feedback to students has the power to encourage or discourage, motivate or deflate, and uplift or damage them as individuals and groups. As teachers who may individually or collectively design lesson plans, we must balance our art with science by providing consistency in our grading practices and expectations if students are to be well-prepared as readers, thinkers, and learners in the 21st Century.

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BACKGROUND

When examining the need to prepare our students for college and career readiness, we must remember that as educators, we are often provided with multiple opportunities to take performance and summative assessments. For example, every individual desirous of obtaining a driver's license must sit for a summative examination (written test) that assesses a person's basic knowledge of the rules of the road. If successfully passed, individuals are able to schedule a performance assessment (a road test) that measures how well they can apply the information previously learned.

In order to move forward with the sense of urgency that is needed in our field, we must design assessments that provide multiple measures for our students. This also includes speaking the same language, which is essential to the success of scholars. In this document you will find a Lexicon of Learning that will provide us with a common vernacular when speaking about various facets of our shared work such as formative assessments, direct instruction, constructed response, etc. It addition, there is an Appendix that defines rigor, all adapted from peer reviewed resources. The time that you take to read and refer to this document will greatly enhance your daily practice.

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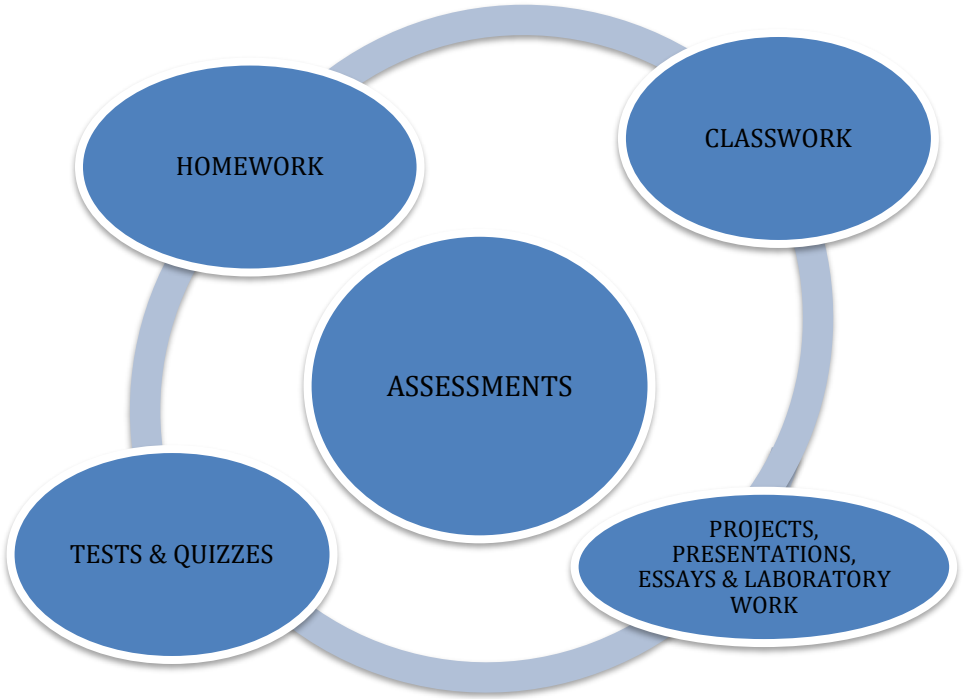
FEATURES



We Believe:

- ✓ *Students learn best by doing and owning the learning. A deliberate increase in student voice in every lesson should balance a decrease in teacher voice. Thus, the teacher moves from "a sage on the stage" to "a coach on the sideline."*
- ✓ *Providing timely feedback to students is essential to their short and long-term growth and development.*
- ✓ *The purpose of homework is to provide additional practice and/or to provide preparation toward the accomplishment of a task or a defined measure for concepts previously taught. It is to develop student independence and ownership of their learning with minimal parental monitoring and must be relevant to the on-going instruction.*
- ✓ *Effective teachers find ways to help their students succeed.*
- ✓ *Teacher quality is vital to engaging students in relevant, authentic tasks and improving student achievement.*

SPECIAL EDUCATION & 504 PLAN

All teachers must adhere to accommodations within an Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan when implementing the Uniform Grading Profile for students with disabilities.

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Accommodations - Services or supports used to enable a student to fully access the subject matter and instruction. An accommodation does not alter the content or expectations; instead it is an adjustment to instructional methods. Accommodations should be specified in a student's IEP or 504 Plan. Examples include books on tape, content enhancements, and allowing additional time to take a test.

Modifications - Refer to changes made to curriculum expectations in order to meet the needs of the student. Modifications are made when the expectations are beyond the students' level of ability and must be clearly stated in the IEP. These changes are made to provide a student the opportunity to participate meaningfully and productively in learning experiences and environments. They can include changes in goals, expectations, level of performance, or content.

Examples of modifications include:

- omitting assignments that require timed situations
- restriction of certain types of assignments
- adapting or simplifying texts for lower level of understanding
- modifying content areas by simplifying vocabulary, concepts and principles
- modifying weights of examinations and assignments
- picture supports
- modifying assignments and tests
- adapting worksheets with simplified vocabulary

Inclusive Education - Refers to the opportunity for all students, regardless of their disability, to be educated in age-appropriate general education classes with supports provided to students and teachers that will enable them to be successful in their neighborhood school. Every child is entitled to serious consideration of their placement within the general education classroom with supplementary supports and services, regardless of the nature or severity of their disability.

"A child should not have to earn his way into an integrated school setting by first functioning successfully in a segregated setting. Inclusion is a right, not a privilege for a select few. Success in special schools and special classes does not lead to successful functioning in an integrated society, which is clearly one of the goals for IDEA. "Oberti v. Bd. of Educ. of Borough of Clementon Sch. Dist., (3d Cir. 1993).

Individualized Education Program (IEP) - A legal document that guides the delivery of education services within IDEA guidelines. The IEP includes a description of the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP), identifies annual learning/behavioral goals and objectives along with methods for assessing progress toward goals and objectives. In addition, the IEP includes any necessary supports, accommodations, adaptations, and/or related services, which must be followed.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) - Refers to the concept that children with disabilities should be educated to the maximum extent possible with children who are not disabled, while meeting all of their learning needs and physical requirements. In addition, it refers to the extent special education services are provided to a student in a setting with the student's non-disabled peers and as close to the student's home as possible. The continuum of services identifies different service delivery models to provide specially designed instruction to a student with a disability. Some of the services, i.e. consultant teacher and integrated co-teaching, are directly designed to support the student in his/her general education class. Others services may or may not be provided in settings with non-disabled peers, depending on the needs of the student. This is why the documentation of "location" in the IEP is critically important.

LRE is defined in the New Jersey Administrative Code (6A: 14- 2.10): "each public agency shall ensure that: to the maximum extent appropriate, a pupil with an educationally disability shall be educated with children who are not educationally disabled; special classes, separate schooling or other removal of a pupil with an educational disability from the pupil's regular class occurs only when the nature or severity of the educational disability is such that education in the pupil's regular class with the use of appropriate supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily."

Section 504 - A component of the U.S. Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education. Section 504 regulations require a school district to provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability who is in the school district's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. Section 504 does require development of a 504 plan, which outlines 504 accommodations.

EDUCATING MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS (MLs)

Programs: English as a Second Language (ESL) and Bilingual Education (BE)

*"No ML student is **given** a grade! ML students must **EARN** a grade!"*

Federal requirements mandate that districts take affirmative steps to open their educational programs to national origin-minority group students. This means that while Multilingual Learners (MLs) must meet the same educational requirements as other students. These requirements must be presented in a manner appropriate to MLs' cultural and linguistic needs and in a period that facilitates their learning.

Experts in the field of ESL and Bilingual education (*V. Collier, S. Krashen, J. Cummins, G. Ofelia, K. Hakuta, P. Nogera, S. Betance, etc.*) say that the average amount of time for a newly arrived ML to attaining oral fluency (*Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills – BICS*) is between 1 to 2 years, if students come with basic academics' in their native language. However, English skills in reading and writing take 5 to 7 years to achieve (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency - CALP), based on prior schooling.

If a ML enrolls as a Student with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) who have missed a significant amount of educational time, often two or more academic years, this student may never be able to reach grade academic level expectations. SIFE students may also have complex social and psychological needs (*how they entered the US*), and may need a nurturing school environment with appropriate supports. Many SIFE students are overage for their grade level due to their weak academic skills. There is the need to be careful in rushing to refer SIFE student to Special Services, as they do not have a learning disability, they just have never been properly educated.

Districts are required to accommodate MLs in ways that allow students to benefit from the educational experience – *"***A student cannot be penalized for his/her lack of the English language, or prior**

educational experiences" *(2015 Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) produced by the Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, and the Department of Justice,).* A valid interpretation would mean that a student must never be given the grade of "**F**", when the student's lack of academic success is attributed to their **limited English proficiency** *(U.S. Department of Education's - Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA); Download the entire English Learner Tool Kit (PDF, 9MB)).*

Teachers grading process should be designed to:

- Reflect each student's individual progress (What they can do)
- Relate directly to the body of knowledge or skills taught
- Include numerous indicators of student progress, rather than relying on limited opportunities for students to show their academic progress

The MLs should be instructed and assessed at the level in which they are functioning (proficiency levels). The goal is to use assessment as an instructional tool for students to verify what they know and build on what they do not know.

How to Grade MLs:

Students at Level I and II proficiency levels should be graded according to their academic performance at the grade level in which they are functioning, not at the grade level in which they are placed.

Students at Level III to V proficiency levels are orally proficient and should find most classroom instruction comprehensible. These students should be graded according to the same standards as other mainstream students. They will need occasional support with emphasis on vocabulary development.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR ML STUDENTS

Connection between - "Performance Definitions" and "Can Do Descriptors"
Additional Reference Material: WIDA Can Do Descriptors (*https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/can-do/descriptors*)

The Performance Definitions provide criteria that shape each of the six levels of English language proficiency. The three bullets within each proficiency level in the Performance Definitions represent:

- **Linguistic Complexity**—the amount and quality of speech or writing for a given situation
- **Vocabulary Usage**—the specificity of words or phrases for a given context
- **Language Control**—the comprehensibility of the communication based on the amount and types of errors

The Performance Definitions provide a concise, global overview of language expectations for each level of English language proficiency. They span the spectrum of grade levels which means that educators must interpret the meaning of the definitions according to students' cognitive development due to age, their grade level, their diversity of educational experiences, and any diagnosed learning disabilities (if applicable).

For example, in level 5, "extended oral or written discourse" would probably be indicated by a first grade student's ability to orally retell a story in a series of sentences using simple transition words. However, a middle school student might be expected to exhibit linguistic complexity at level five (5) by incorporating a variety of sentence structures in an essay several paragraphs in length. It is important to recognize that the Performance Definitions are the basis for use of other standards-based resources such as the Can Do Descriptors.

The WIDA Can Do Descriptors are designed to support teachers by providing them with information on the language students are able to understand and produce in the classroom. What is unique about the Can Do Descriptors is that they apply to all five English language proficiency standards, which means they provide an opportunity to link language development across all academic content areas. The Descriptors are intended to be used in tandem with the Performance Definitions. This is because the quantity and quality of language expected at a particular level of language proficiency may not be fully indicated within the Can Do Descriptor for each language domain and proficiency level.

For example, the Can Do Descriptors show that students may be able to *"identify"* at various levels of language proficiency, but the language (linguistic complexity, vocabulary usage, and language control) they use will vary tremendously. At one end of the spectrum, beginning English language learners may *identify* by pointing or using short words or phrases, whereas at the end of the language development continuum, students will begin to *identify* complex themes and ideas described in detailed technical language.

If you have questions on how to assign grades, retain or start a referral process for MLs, please reach out to the Department of ESL, Bilingual, and WL.

For a comprehensive review of all services and programs for MLs, please visit the ML Department Handbook - ***Policy and Procedure Handbook For English Language Learners (ELLs) and Bilingual Education Programs*** *on the department web page: https://irvington.k12.nj.us/curriculum/bilingual-esl-world-language/.*

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MARKING PERIOD TIMELINES

In Irvington Public Schools, there are four marking periods, each approximately 46 days in duration. This equates to approximately 9 weeks of instruction. In the Uniform Grading Cycle Guide (p. 13) the minimum number of assignments is identified for the various assessments that occur during each learning period. These guidelines promote greater consistency across all grade levels, within all academic departments, and apply equally to general education, special education, and English Language Learners. All timelines listed below apply to entering grades into PowerSchool grade book. Mid-term and final exams at the middle school level will constitute a test grade within the cycle in which it is administered. Mid-term and final exams at the high school level constitute a fifth cycle grade for students.

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TEST & QUIZZES

(a) TEST – must be graded and returned within 5 school days.

A test is an extensive, formal written, oral, or electronic assessment of student learning over an elongated period of time that covers multiple topics/skills.

(b) QUIZ – must be graded and returned within 3 school days.

A quiz is a brief, informal written, oral, or electronic assessment of student learning that covers a few topics/skills.

HOMEWORK

(c) PRACTICE - must be reviewed and corrected with 2 school days.

Assign at every class meeting per block at the high school with the exception of art, music, and physical education.

Assign at a minimum of four (4) times per week in grades K – 8 with the exception of world languages, art, music, and physical education. Teachers will decide which assignment(s) are graded for accuracy.

At a minimum differentiate one (1) homework assignment per week in order to ensure that you are meeting students where they are on the learning continuum.
Ensure that all assignments are relevant to the content being taught and graded for accuracy as well as provide meaningful feedback to students.
If you are experiencing difficulty with the turn-around timeline above, please consider revising the amount of homework assigned each night.

PROJECTS, PRESENTATIONS, REPORTS, LABORATORY EXPERIMENTS (PPRL)

(d) PROJECTS – must be graded and returned within 5 school days.

A Project is an extensive assessment that may include a presentation and/or report. It utilizes a rubric to score its various components over a period of time, e.g. various due dates for different parts of the project. It results in the production of an artifact that can be viewed by others.

(e) PRESENTATIONS – must be graded and returned within 5 school days.

A presentation is an oral assessment that may be a part of a report or a project or a stand-alone activity. It utilizes a rubric to score its various components.

(f) REPORTS – must be graded and returned within 5 school days.

A report is a written assessment that may be a part of a project, accompany a presentation, or is a stand-alone activity. It utilizes a rubric to score its various components over a period of time, e.g. various due dates for different parts of the report.

(g) LABORATORY EXPERIMENTS – must be graded and returned within 5 school days.

Laboratory work is intended to include experiments that require utilization of the Scientific Method, in full or part, as well as a rubric to score its various components.

CLASSWORK/CLASS PARTICIPATION

(h) CLASSWORK – must be reviewed, commented on, graded (when applicable), and returned within 2 school days.

May include (but is not limited to) the following:

1) *Do Now Activities*
2) *Cooperative Group Tasks*
3) *Graphic Organizers*
4) *Exit Slips*
5) *Notebook/Binder Checks*
6) *Portfolio Checks*
7) *Journal Writing*

REASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

To improve Academic Achievement for All Students within the Irvington Public School District, it must be recognized and understood that every student can demonstrate mastery of the Standards set forth by the State of New Jersey. It must also be accepted that students will arrive at mastery of Standards at different times and may require interventions in order to achieve this level of performance. Therefore, every student must have opportunities for reassessment on classroom-issued tests and quizzes even if they have demonstrated a basic level of proficiency measured at 70% or higher. *Furthermore, the grading floor of 50% for marking periods 1, 2, and 3 at the middle and high schools is a necessary support to aid students in having a chance to recover from low performance earlier in the school year. However, this grading floor does not apply to mid-term exams, final exams, and marking period 4.*

MINIMAL GUIDELINES

- All students must be given opportunities for re-assessment when initial grade is below 70% **in grades K - 12**. All students who score 70% or above will be afforded the opportunity to reassess **in grades 9 – 12 only**.
- **District assessments that are exempt: Cycle Tests, Midterm and Final Examination, and all SGO Fall- and Spring Assessments.**

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- Homework and classwork are exempt as they are meant as practice and not as demonstrations of mastery.
- Performance assessments, by nature, will not always permit opportunities for re-assessment. There cannot be a uniform policy for all courses and must be left to the discretion of the teacher.
- All re-assessments must be completed within the grading cycle in which it was initiated.
- **For all re-assessment results, two scores (initial and reassessment) will be averaged and should be used for calculating the student's average in grades 9 – 12 versus solely using the higher assessment score in grades K - 8.**
- Re-assessments can be given on a section or part in question instead of the entire document. This can be done over time, within the current grading cycle.
- The teacher following a re-teaching of the content/skill may conduct whole class reassessments.
- Absent students must be given opportunity to make-up assignments, or be issued alternative assignments, in all grading categories. Students must be given **2- class equivalent days** to make-up assignments for every day absent.

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REPORT CARD DISTRIBUTION DATES
Grades K -12
2024-2025 School Year

First Marking Period	**45 Days**
Ø Progress Report Distribution	**September 23, 2024**
Ø Marking Period Ends	**November 12, 2024**
Ø Report Card Distribution:	
- Day Conferences Elementary and Middle Schools	**December 2 & 3, 2024**
- Evening Conferences Elementary and Middle Schools	**December 4, 2024**
- Evening Conferences High School	**December 5, 2024**
Second Marking Period	**45 Days**
Ø Progress Report Distribution	**December 17, 2024**
Ø Marking Period Ends	**January 28, 2025**
Ø Report Card Distribution	**February 6, 2025**
Third Marking Period	**45 Days**
Ø Progress Report Distribution	**March 3, 2025**
Ø Marking Period Ends	**April 3, 2025**
Ø Report Card Distribution	**April 21, 2025**
Fourth Marking Period	**45 Days**
Ø Progress Report Distribution	**May 13, 2025**
Ø Marking Period Ends	**June 18, 2025 or last day of school**
Ø Report Card Distribution (Grade 1-8)	**June 18, 2025 or last day of school**
Ø High School Report Cards Mailed	**June 18, 2025 or last day of school**

Dr. April Vauss
Superintendent of Schools

7.10.2023

100% In-Person Instruction

Uniform Grading Cycle Guide by DISCIPLINE	Elementary Grades K – 2	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Elementary Grades 3 - 5	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Middle School 6-8	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	High School 9-12	*Minimum Number of Assignments*
English Language Arts and English as a Second Language:								
TEST	30%	*2*	20%	*2*	20%	*2*	20%	*2*
QUIZ	25%	*4*	25%	*4*	25%	*4*	25%	*4*
HOMEWORK	25%	*8*	25%	***8***	25%	*8*	25%	***16***
PPRL	5%	*2*	15%	*2*	15%	*4*	15%	*4*
CLASS WORK	15%	***8***	15%	***8***	15%	***15***	15%	***10***

*Supervisor/Director will provide guidance

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Uniform Grading Cycle Guide by DISCIPLINE	Elementary, Grades K – 2	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Elementary, Grades 3 - 5	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Middle School 6-8	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	High School 9-12	*Minimum Number of Assignments*
World Languages 4 - 12:								
TEST	N/A	N/A	30%	*2*	30%	*2*	30%	*2*
QUIZ	N/A	N/A	10%	*2*	10%	*2*	10%	*4*
HOMEWORK / Mango	N/A	N/A	30%	*4*	30%	*4*	30%	***4***
PPRL	N/A	N/A	15%	*1*	15%	*1*	15%	*2*
CLASS WORK	N/A	N/A	15%	***Teacher's Decision****	15%	***Teacher's Decision****	15%	***Teacher's Decision****

*Supervisor/Director will provide guidance

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Uniform Grading Cycle Guide by DISCIPLINE	Elementary Grades K – 2	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Elementary Grades 3 - 5	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Middle School 6-8	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	High School 9-12	*Minimum Number of Assignments*
Physical Education								
***SKILL TEST**	0%	*4**	40%	*4*	25%	*5*	25%	*5*
***WRITTEN TEST**	0%	*0*	0%	*0*	0%	*0*	0%	*0*
HOMEWORK	0%	*0*	0%	*0*	0%	*0*	0%	*0*
CLASS PARTICIPATION	100%	*6*	60%	*6*	75%	*10*	75%	*10*
Health								
SKILL TEST	40%	*4*	40%	*4*	25%	*5*	25%	*5*
WRITTEN TEST	0%	*0*	0%	*0*	0%	*0*	0%	*0*
HOMEWORK	0%	*0*	0%	*0*	0%	*0*	0%	*0*
CLASS PARTICIPATION	60%	*6*	60%	*6*	75%	*10*	75%	*10*

* For K-2 scholars, skills tests will be used for data and grouping purposes only, not as formal assessments that will be counted towards their grade.

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Uniform Grading Cycle Guide by DISCIPLINE	Elementary, Grades K - 2	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Elementary, Grades 3 - 5	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Middle School 6-8	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	High School 9-12	*Minimum Number of Assignments*
Music & Art: VAPA								
(ORAL/WRITTEN) TEST	15%	*2*	15%	*2*	15%	*2*	15%	*3*
HOMEWORK	0%	*0*	0%	*0*	5%	*3*	5%	*4*
EXHIBITIONS OR PPRL	40%	*2*	50%	*2*	60%	*3*	60%	*4*
CLASS WORK	45%	*3*	35%	*2*	20%	*4*	20%	*5*

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Uniform Grading Cycle Guide by DISCIPLINE	Elementary, Grades K – 2	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Elementary, Grades 3 - 5	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Middle School / High School	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	High School Advanced Placement	*Minimum Number of Assignments*
Science & Engineering, K - 12								
TEST	25%	*2*	25%	*2*	30%	*2*	30%	*2*
QUIZ	0%	*0*	10%	*3*	20%	*4*	20%	*4*
HOMEWORK	10%	*6*	10%	*6*	5%	*6*	5%	*6*
PPRL	35%	*4*	35%	*4*	35%	*4*	35%	*4*
CLASS WORK	30%	*6*	20%	*6*	10%	*6*	10%	*6*

	Advanced Placement / Dual Enrollment	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Engineering/ Electives	*Minimum Number of Assignments*
Science & Engineering, 9-12+				
TEST	40%	*3*	25%	*2*
PPRL	30%	*3*	40%	*4*
QUIZ	20%	*5*	20%	*4*
CLASSWORK / HOMEWORK	10%	*2*	15%	*8*

Note: Courses using the PLTW program will use the grading profile provided by the PLTW.

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Uniform Grading Cycle Guide by DISCIPLINE	Elementary, Grades K – 2	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Elementary, Grades 3 - 5	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Middle School 6-8	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	High School 9-12	*Minimum Number of Assignments*
Applied Technology:								
TEST	**10%**	*1*	**20%**	*1*	**20%**	**3**	**20**	**3**
QUIZ	**5%**	*2*	**10%**	*2*	**10%**	**3**	**10%**	**3**
HOMEWORK	**0**	*0*	**0%**	*0*	**5%**	**5**	**5%**	**10**
PPRL	**25%**	*2*	**40%**	*2*	**35%**	**3**	**40%**	**3**
CLASS WORK	**60%**	*6*	**30%**	*6*	**30%**	**12**	**25%**	**12**

Career Technical Education Programs of Study High School		
Uniform Grading Cycle Guide	***High School (9-12)***	***Minimum Number of Assignments***
TEST	**20%**	**3**
QUIZ	**10%**	**3**
HOMEWORK	**5%**	**10**
PPRL	**40%**	**3**
CLASS WORK	**25%**	**12**

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Uniform Grading Cycle Guide by DISCIPLINE	Elementary, Grades K – 2	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Elementary, Grades 3 - 5	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Middle School 6-8	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	High School 9-12	*Minimum Number of Assignments*
Social Studies:								
TEST	**25%**	*2*	**25%**	2	**25%**	2	**25%**	2
QUIZ	**15%**	*2*	**15%**	2	**15%**	4	**15%**	4
HOMEWORK	**10%**	*6*	**10%**	8	**10%**	8	**10%**	10
PPRL	**10%**	*2*	**20%**	2	**30%**	2	**30%**	2
CLASS WORK	**40%**	*8*	**30%**	8	**20%**	8	**20%**	10

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Uniform Grading Cycle Guide by DISCIPLINE	Elementary, Grades K – 2	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Elementary, Grades 3 - 5	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	Middle School 6-8	*Minimum Number of Assignments*	High School 9-12	*Minimum Number of Assignments*
Mathematics								
TEST	**15%**	*2*	**25%**	2	**25%**	2	**25%**	2
QUIZ	**20%**	*2*	**20%**	4	**20%**	4	**20%**	4
HOMEWORK	**10%**	*8*	**10%**	8	**10%**	6	**10%**	6
PPRL	**10%**	*2*	**5%**	1	**5%**	2	**5%**	1
CLASS WORK	**45%**	*8*	**40%**	8	**40%**	8	**40%**	8

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Weekly Lesson Plan Review Matrix

Lesson plans are to be posted by teachers in OnCourse Lesson Planner no later than 3:00 pm every Friday. Consultative teachers are to post their lesson plans no later than 3:00 pm on the following Monday. Administrators will post written feedback to every teacher, every week.

DISCIPLINES:	K – 2	3 – 5	6 – 8		9 – 12	
			Odd Month	Even Month	Odd Month	Even Month
English Language Arts	Building Administrator	Davis-Drain	Doherty	A.P. *	A.P. *	Doherty
Mathematics	Building Administrator	Taylor	Jean-Pierre	A.P. *	A.P. *	Jean-Pierre
Social Studies	Building Administrator	Building Administrator	Steele-Hunter	A.P. *	A.P. *	Steele-Hunter
Science	Building Administrator	Building Administrator	Severs	A.P. *	A.P. *	Severs
Special Education	Building Administrator/ Allen (Self-Contained)	Building Administrator/ Allen (Self-Contained)	Beaubrun	Building Administrator *	Building Administrator *	Beaubrun
World Languages	Not Applicable	Ruiz	Ruiz	A.P. *	A.P. *	Ruiz
ESL/Bilingual	Perkins	Perkins	Perkins	A.P. *	A.P. *	Ruiz
Media Specialists	Walton	Walton				
Applied Technology Courses			Amberg	A.P. *	A.P. *	Amberg
Carl Perkins Grant Courses					A.P. *	Amberg
Art	Harte	Harte	Harte	A.P. *	A.P. *	Harte
Music	Harte	Harte	Harte	A.P. *	A.P. *	Harte
Physical Education	Cotton	Cotton	Bowers	A.P. *	A.P. *	Bowers
JROTC					Principal *	

LOCATIONS:	Augusta Pre School	Thurgood, Mt. Vernon, & UES	Berkeley , Grove , & Madison
Early Childhood	Chase	Moreland	Varsalona
DEPARTMENT LOGS:	Guidance/HSSC	Parent Coordinator	Tech Coaches
	Pettiford	Wilson	Amberg

NOTE: (*) - The Principal reserves the right to assign his or her building administrator(s) to various disciplines. If this occurs, the Principal will promptly notify all affected staff and the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

A Lexicon of Learning

1) Action Research – Systematic investigation by teachers of some aspect of their work in order to improve their effectiveness. Involves identifying a question or problem and then collecting and analyzing relevant data. (Differs from conventional research because in this case the participants are studying an aspect of their own work and they intend to use the results themselves.) For example, a teacher might decide to give students different assignments according to their assessed learning styles. If the teacher maintained records comparing student work before and after the change, he would be doing action research. If several educators worked together on such a project, it would be considered collaborative action research.

2) Active Learning – Any situation in which students learn by moving around and doing things, rather than sitting at their desks reading, filling out worksheets, or listening to a teacher. Active learning is based on the premise that if students are not active, they are neither fully engaged nor learning as much as they could. Some educators restrict the term to mean activities outside of school, such as voluntary community service, but others would say that acting out a Shakespeare play in the classroom is active learning.

3) Alternative Assessment – Use of assessment strategies, such as performance assessment, constructed response items, and portfolios, to replace or supplement assessment by machine-scored multiple-choice tests.

4) Assessment – Measuring the learning and performance of students. Different types of assessment instruments include achievement tests, minimum competency tests, developmental screening tests, aptitude tests, observation instruments, performance tasks, and authentic assessments. The effectiveness of a particular approach to assessment depends on its suitability for the intended purpose. For instance, multiple-choice, true-or-false, and fill-in-the-blank tests can be used to assess basic skills or to find out what students remember. To assess other abilities, performance tasks may be more appropriate.

    i) Performance assessments require students to perform a task, such as serving a volleyball, solving a particular type of mathematics problem, or writing a short business letter to inquire about a product. Sometimes the task may be designed to assess the student's ability to apply knowledge learned in school. For example, a student might be asked to determine what types of plants could be grown in various soil samples by measuring their pH levels.

ii) Authentic assessments are performance assessments that are not artificial or contrived. Educators who want assessments to be more authentic worry that most school tests are necessarily contrived. Writing a letter to an imaginary company only to demonstrate to the teacher that you know how is different from writing a letter to a real person or company in order to achieve a real purpose. One way to make an assessment more authentic is to have students choose the particular task they will use to demonstrate what they have learned. For example, a student might choose to demonstrate her understanding of a unit in chemistry by developing a model that illustrates the problems associated with oil spills.

5) Authentic Learning – Schooling related to real-life situations—the kinds of problems faced by adult citizens, consumers, or professionals. Authentic learning situations require teamwork, problem-solving skills, and the ability to organize and prioritize the tasks needed to complete the project. Students should know what is expected before beginning their work. Consultation with others, including the instructor, is encouraged. The goal is to produce a high-quality learning experience, not to see how much the student can remember.

6) Basal Reader – Textbooks and anthologies (collections of stories or other writings) used to teach beginning reading. Many basal readers used to have mostly stories written especially for teaching (only certain words were used, as in the Dick and Jane stories), but many now contain a wider variety of children's literature.

7) Bloom's Taxonomy – A classification of educational objectives developed in the 1950s by a group of researchers headed by Benjamin Bloom of the University of Chicago. Commonly refers to the objectives for the cognitive domain, which range from knowledge and comprehension (lowest) to synthesis and evaluation (highest). The taxonomy has been widely used by teachers to determine the focus of their instruction and is probably the original reference of the term higher-order thinking.

8) Classroom Climate – The "feel" or tone of a classroom, indicated by the total environment, including especially the way teacher and students relate to one another. Some classrooms have a cold, impersonal, or even antagonistic, climate, while others are warm and friendly. Some are business-like and productive, others disorganized and inefficient.

9) Classroom Management – The way a teacher organizes and administers routines to make classroom life as productive and satisfying as possible. What some people might describe narrowly as "discipline." For example, teachers with good classroom management clarify how various things (such as distribution of supplies and equipment) are to be done and may even begin the school year by having students practice the expected procedures.

10) Coaching – Educators use this term, commonly used in athletics, to refer to any situation in which someone helps someone else learn a skill. The late Mortimer Adler, who devised the Paideia program, maintained that coaching is one of three basic modes of teaching (the other two are presenting and leading discussions). Coaching is also considered an important part of training programs in which teachers learn new teaching methods. A process in which teachers visit each other's classes to observe instruction and offer feedback is known as peer coaching.

11) Cognitive Development – The process, which begins at birth, of learning through sensory perception, memory, and observation. To stimulate the cognitive development of such children, teachers use strategies such as placing learning into a meaningful context, providing situations in which students can be active participants, and combining general information with specific learning situations.

12) Cognitive Learning – The mental processes involved in learning, such as remembering and understanding facts and ideas. Educators have always been interested in how people learn but are now becoming better informed about cognition from the work of cognitive psychologists, who in recent years have compiled a great deal of new information about thinking and learning.

13) Constructed Response – Test items on which students must provide an answer (short answer, explanation of the process for determining the answer, etc.) in contrast with items (known as selected response or multiple-choice) on which students choose from among answers provided. Some psychometricians say that selected response items are preferable because they are scored by machine and the results are therefore more reliable. Others, however, believe constructed response items are a better test of what students can actually do.

14) Cooperative Learning – A teaching strategy combining teamwork with individual and group accountability. Working in small groups, with individuals of varying talents, abilities, and backgrounds, students are given one or more tasks. The teacher or the group often assigns each team member a personal responsibility that is essential to successful completion of the task.

    i) Used well, cooperative learning allows students to acquire both knowledge and social skills. The students learn from one another and get to know and respect group members that they may not have made an effort to meet in other circumstances. Studies show that, used properly, cooperative learning boosts student achievement. Schools using this strategy report that attendance improves because the students feel valuable and necessary to their group.

15) Core Curriculum – The body of knowledge that all students are expected to learn. High schools often require a core curriculum that may include, for example, four years of English, three years of science and mathematics, two or three years of History, one or two years of a foreign language, and one year of Health Studies. Courses that are not required are called electives.

    i) The term core curriculum was used in the mid-20th century to refer to a block-of-time program (two or more class periods) in which students and their teacher chose the topics they would study, but few of today's schools have such programs now.

16) Criterion-Referenced Tests – Tests designed to measure how thoroughly a student has learned a particular body of knowledge without regard to how well other students have learned it. Most nationally standardized achievement tests are norm-referenced, meaning that a student's performance is compared to how well students in the norming group did when the test was normed. Criterion-referenced tests are directly related to the curriculum of a particular school district or state and are scored according to fixed criteria.

17) Critical Thinking – Logical thinking based on sound evidence; the opposite of biased, sloppy thinking. Some people take the word critical to mean negative and faultfinding, but philosophers consider it to mean thinking that is skillful and responsible. A critical thinker can accurately and fairly explain a point of view that he does not agree with.

18) Curriculum – Although this term has many possible meanings, it usually refers to a written plan outlining what students will be taught (a course of study). Curriculum documents often also include detailed directions or suggestions for teaching the content. Curriculum may refer to all the courses offered at a given school, or all the courses offered at a school in a particular area of study. For example, the English curriculum might include English literature, literature, world literature, essay styles, creative writing, business writing, Shakespeare, modern poetry, and the novel. The curriculum of an elementary school usually includes language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and other subjects.

19) Data-Based Decision Making – Analyzing existing sources of information (class and school attendance, grades, test scores) and other data (portfolios, surveys, interviews) to make informed decisions at classroom and school levels. The process involves organizing and interpreting the data and creating action plans.

20) Differentiation Instruction – A form of instruction that seeks to "maximize each student's growth by meeting each student where she is and helping the student to progress. In practice, it involves offering several different learning experiences in response to students' varied needs. Learning activities and materials may be varied by difficulty to challenge students at different readiness levels, by topic in response to students' interests, and by students' preferred ways of learning or expressing themselves."

    i) Source: Quote from "Lesson 1: What Is Differentiated Instruction?" in Differentiating Instruction, an ASCD PD Online course by L. Kiernan, 2000, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

21) Disaggregated Data – Test scores or other data broken down so that various categories can be compared. For example, schools may break down the data for the entire student population (aggregated into a single set of numbers) to determine how English Language Learners (ELLs) are doing compared with the non-ELLs, or how scores of females compare with those for males.

22) Direct Instruction – Instruction in which the teacher explains the intended purpose and presents the content in a clear, orderly way. Contrasts with inductive, discovery, or constructive teaching, in which students are led, by means of investigation or discussion, to develop their own ideas.

23) Enrichment – Topics and activities that are valuable and interesting to learn but are not basic education—knowledge that is "nice to know" but not necessarily what people need to know. Examples might include study of Wordsworth's poetry or a biography of Alexander Hamilton, although people will not necessarily agree on what is basic and what is enrichment.

24) Essential Questions – Basic questions, such as "What is distinctive about the American experience?" used to provide focus for a course or a unit of study. Such questions need to be derived from vitally important themes and topics whose answers cannot be summarized neatly and concisely.

25) Exemplar – An example chosen to illustrate characteristics of a concept. In schools, the term exemplar sometimes refers to samples of student work used to show other students what they are expected to do. An exemplar can also help teachers (and students themselves) evaluate student work when it is completed.

    i) For example, a teacher might have students write a letter suitable for publication in the local newspaper commenting on a community issue. The teacher could provide rubrics specifying the criteria for evaluating the letters, along with sample letters (exemplars) written by previous students on a different topic at each level of quality (e.g., 4, 3, 2, 1 or A, B, C, D). Exemplars are sometimes called model papers.

26) Formative Test - A test given primarily to determine what students have learned in order to plan further instruction. By contrast, an examination used primarily to document students' achievement at the end of a unit or course is considered a summative test.

27) Heterogeneous Grouping – Intentionally mixing students of varying talents and needs in the same classroom (the opposite of homogeneous grouping). The success of this method, also called mixed-ability grouping, depends on the teacher's skill in differentiating instruction so that all students feel challenged and successful. Advocates say heterogeneous grouping prevents lower-track classes from becoming dumping grounds and ensures that all students have access to high-status content. Opponents say it is difficult for teachers to manage, hampers the brightest children from moving at an accelerated pace, and contributes to watering down the curriculum.

28) Homogeneous Grouping – Assigning students to separate classes according to their apparent abilities. Placing students in groups for all their classes based supposedly on their general learning ability has been called tracking. For example, college-bound students might have all of their classes together while vocational students and special education students would attend other classes. In its most extreme form, tracking has been declared illegal by the U.S. Supreme Court and is considered a violation of students' civil rights. Alternatively, students may be grouped according to their achievement in particular subjects. For example, a student might be in an above-average science course but an average English course. Strictly speaking, this form of ability grouping is not tracking, although the results may be similar, so opponents sometimes call it tracking anyway.

    i) Proponents of ability grouping believe it allows students to excel within their levels. Less capable students are not intimidated by their more capable peers, and gifted students are not bored by the slower pace considered necessary for regular students. Critics say tracking is undemocratic, allows unequal access to higher-level content, and creates low self-esteem. Opponents also say that students who learn more slowly become subject to lower expectations from teachers.

29) Higher-Order Thinking – Researcher Lauren Resnick has defined higher-order thinking as the kind of thinking needed when the path to finding a solution is not specified, and that yields multiple solutions rather than one. Higher-order thinking requires mental effort because it involves interpretation, self-regulation, and the use of multiple criteria, which may be conflicting.

    i) Teachers who seek to develop students' higher-order thinking abilities engage them in analyzing, comparing, contrasting, generalizing, problem solving, investigating, experimenting, and creating, rather than only in recalling information. Other terms used to refer to higher-order thinking include critical thinking, complex reasoning, and thinking skills.

30) Integrated Curriculum - A way of teaching and learning that does not depend on the usual division of knowledge into separate subjects. Topics are studied because they are considered interesting and valuable by the teachers and students concerned, not necessarily because they appear in a required course of study. Both integrated curriculum and interdisciplinary curriculum are intended to help students see connections, but unlike an integrated curriculum, an interdisciplinary curriculum draws its content from two or more identifiable disciplines.

31) Interactive Learning – Occurs when the source of instruction communicates directly with the learner, shaping responses to the learner's needs. Tutoring—one teacher teaching a single student—is highly interactive. Computers and other modern technological applications have made it theoretically possible to provide effective interactive instruction to any learner on any subject.

32) Metacognition – The ability to be conscious of and, to some degree, control one's own thinking. Educators have come to use the prefix "meta" to refer to the application of a process to the process itself. (For example, meta-analysis is analysis of a large number of research studies on a particular topic.) In this case, cognition is thinking, so metacognition means thinking about one's own thinking.

    i) You are using metacognition when you can track your progress in solving a multistep problem or when you realize that you have been looking at a page in a book without following the meaning and backtrack until you find the place where your mind began to wander.

33) Mixed-Ability Grouping –Intentionally mixing students of varying talents and needs in the same classroom. The success of this method, also called heterogeneous grouping, depends on the teacher's skill in differentiating instruction so that all students feel challenged and successful. Advocates say mixed-ability grouping prevents lower-track classes from becoming dumping grounds and ensures that all students have access to high-status content. Opponents say it is difficult for teachers to manage, hampers the brightest students from moving at an accelerated pace, and contributes to a watered-down curriculum.

34) Pedagogy – The art of teaching—especially the conscious use of particular instructional methods. If a teacher uses a discovery approach rather than direct instruction, for example, she is using a different pedagogy.

35) Performance Assessment – A form of assessment that is designed to assess what students know through their ability to perform certain tasks. For example, a performance assessment might require a student to serve a volleyball, solve a particular type of mathematics problem, or write a short business letter to inquire about a product as a way of demonstrating that they have acquired new knowledge and skills. Advocates believe such assessments—sometimes called performance-based assessments—provide a more accurate indication of what students can do than traditional assessments, which might require a student to fill in the blank, indicate whether a statement is true or false, or select a right answer from multiple given choices.

    i) Evaluating students through task performance can be more time-consuming and therefore more expensive. Most large-scale assessments (such as state testing programs) use this form of assessment sparingly, if at all. But many educators believe it is worth the extra cost because it provides a more accurate and realistic picture of student learning.

36) Performance Tasks – Activities, exercises, or problems that require students to show what they can do. Some performance tasks are intended to assess a skill, such as solving a particular type of mathematics problem. Others are designed to have students demonstrate their understanding by applying knowledge. For example, students might be given a current political map of Africa showing the names and locations of countries and a similar map from 1945 and be asked to explain the differences and similarities. To be more authentic (more like what someone might be expected to do in the adult world), the task might be to prepare a newspaper article explaining the changes.

    i) Performance tasks often have more than one acceptable solution. They may call for a student to create a response to a problem and then explain or defend it. Performance tasks are considered a type of assessment (used instead of, or in addition to, conventional tests), but they may also be used as learning activities.

37) Portfolio – A collection of student work chosen to exemplify and document a student's learning progress over time. Just as professional artists assemble portfolios of their work, students are often encouraged or required to maintain a portfolio illustrating various aspects of their learning. Some teachers specify what items students should include, while others let students decide. Portfolios are difficult to score reliably and may be a logistical problem for teachers, but advocates say they encourage student reflection and are a more descriptive and accurate indicator of student learning than grades or changes in test scores.

38) Problem-Based Learning – An approach to curriculum and teaching that involves students in solution of real-life problems rather than conventional study of terms and information. Developed in leading medical schools, problem-based learning begins with a real problem that connects to the student's world, such as how to upgrade a local waste treatment plant. Student teams organize their methods and procedures around specifics of the problem, not around subject matter as such. Students explore various avenues before arriving at a solution to present to the class. Teachers report that students using problem-based learning become more interested in their studies, more motivated to explore in-depth, and more likely to see the value of the lesson.

i) Problems are chosen for their appropriateness and power to illuminate core concepts in the curriculum. They must be carefully selected to ensure that students learn the intended content.

39) Rigor – Academically challenging. (See Appendix A)

40) Rubric – Specific descriptions of performance of a given task at several different levels of quality. Teachers use rubrics to evaluate student performance on performance tasks. Students are often given the rubric, or may even help develop it, so they know in advance what they are expected to do. For example, the content of an oral presentation might be evaluated using the following rubric:

i) Level 4—the main idea is well developed, using important details and anecdotes. The information is accurate and impressive. The topic is thoroughly developed within time constraints.

ii) Level 3—the main idea is reasonably clear and supporting details are adequate and relevant. The information is accurate. The topic is adequately developed within time constraints but is not complete.

iii) Level 2—the main idea is not clearly indicated. Some information is inaccurate. The topic is supported with few details and is sketchy and incomplete.

iv) Level 1—the main idea is not evident. The information has many inaccuracies. The topic is not supported with details.

41) Scaffolding – The way a teacher provides support to make sure students succeed at complex tasks they couldn't do otherwise. Most teaching is done as the students go about the task, rather than before they start. For example, as a group of elementary students proceed to publish a student newspaper, the teacher shows them how to conduct interviews, write news stories, and prepare captions for photographs. Because the teacher supports the students to make sure they don't fail in their effort, it reminds researchers of the scaffolding that workers sometimes place around buildings. As the students become more skillful, the teacher gives them more responsibility, taking away the scaffolding when it is no longer needed. (This gradual withdrawal has been called "fading.")

42) School Climate – The sum of the values, cultures, safety practices, and organizational structures within a school that cause it to function and react in particular ways. Some schools are said to have a nurturing environment that recognizes children and treats them as individuals; others may have the feel of authoritarian structures where rules are strictly enforced and hierarchical control is strong. Teaching practices, diversity, and the relationships among administrators, teachers, parents, and students contribute to school climate. Although the two terms are somewhat interchangeable, school climate refers mostly to the school's effects on students, whereas school culture refers more to the way teachers and other staff members work together.

43) School Culture – The sum of the values, cultures, safety practices, and organizational structures within a school that cause it to function and react in particular ways. Some schools are said to have a nurturing environment that recognizes children and treats them as individuals; others may have the feel of authoritarian structures where rules are strictly enforced and hierarchical control is strong. Teaching practices, diversity, and the relationships among administrators, teachers, parents, and students contribute to school climate. Although the two terms are somewhat interchangeable, school climate refers mostly to the school's effects on students, whereas school culture refers more to the way teachers and other staff members work together.

44) Special-Needs Students – Students who, because of physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional disabilities, require special instructional help to reach their potential. This may include specially trained teachers, innovative technology or instructional materials, access to a resource room, or even external placement. The term sometimes (but not usually) includes students classified as gifted and talented.

45) Standards – In current usage, the term usually refers to specific criteria for what students are expected to learn and be able to do. These standards usually take two forms in the curriculum:

    i) Content standards tell what students are expected to know and be able to do in various subject areas.

    ii) Performance standards, which specify what levels of learning are expected. Performance standards assess the degree to which content standards have been met. The term "world-class standards" refers to the content and performances that are expected of students in other industrialized countries. In recent years, standards have also been developed specifying what teachers should know and be able to do.

46) Standards-Based Education – Teaching directed toward student mastery of defined standards. Now that nearly all states have adopted curriculum standards, teachers are expected to teach in such a way that students achieve the standards. Experts say this means that teachers must have a clear idea what each standard means, including how it can and will be assessed, and that teachers should monitor individual student achievement of each important standard.

47) Student-Led Conference – A variation of the usual parent-teacher conference in which the student plays a major part. The student prepares for the conference and leads it by showing the parents or family members samples of her work, often in the form of portfolios, and discussing areas of strengths and weaknesses.

    i) Proponents believe that having students analyze and explain samples of their own work makes them feel more responsible. It also provides an opportunity for them to practice presentation skills. If parents need a private talk with the teacher, a separate meeting or phone conversation is usually arranged.

48) Summative Test – A test given to evaluate and document what students have learned. The term is used to distinguish such tests from formative tests, which are used primarily to diagnose what students have learned in order to plan further instruction.

49) Teaching for Understanding – Engaging students in learning activities intended to help them understand the complexities of a topic. Teaching for understanding is different from teaching simply for recall, which results in students being able to answer questions without knowing what their answers really mean. Specialists advise that a good way to know whether students understand is to ask them to perform a task that shows they can apply and make use of what they have learned in a realistic setting. For example, students might participate in a mock trial to demonstrate that they have developed their understanding of the rights of the accused.

50) Thematic Instruction – Organizing all or part of the instruction of a particular group of students around a theme, such as the Dependence and Independence. Advocates say it makes the curriculum more coherent and helps students see relationships among things they are learning.

51) Thematic Unit – A segment of instruction focused on a given theme. School courses are frequently divided into units lasting from one to six weeks. For example, a literature course might include a four-week unit on The Individual and Society.

52) Unit of Study – A segment of instruction focused on a particular topic. School courses are frequently divided into units lasting from one to six weeks. For example, an American history course might include a four-week unit on the Westward Movement.

(Adapted from: ASCD at http://www.ascd.org/Publications/Lexicon-of-Learning.aspx)

53) The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model

The SIOP Model is a research-based and validated instructional model that has proven effective in addressing the academic needs of English learners throughout the United States.

The SIOP Model consists of eight interrelated components:

- Lesson Preparation
- Building Background
- Comprehensible Input
- Strategies
- Interaction
- Practice/Application
- Lesson Delivery
- Review & Assessment

Using instructional strategies connected to each of these components, teachers are able to design and deliver lessons that address the academic and linguistic needs of English learners.

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As the number of English learners increases in schools across the United States, educators are seeking effective ways to help them succeed in K-12 ESL, content area, and bilingual classrooms. Research shows that when teachers fully implement the SIOP Model, English learners' academic performance improves.

In addition, mainstream classroom teachers report that SIOP-based teaching benefits all students, not just those who are learning English as an additional language.

Rigor in the Classroom

While everyone agrees that rigorous instruction is important, few agree on what rigor is. In most cases, educators believe that they know rigor when they see it without really having a fully defined idea of what it looks like.

Rigor is a quality of instruction that requires students to construct meaning for themselves, impose structure on information, integrate individual skills into processes, operate within but at the outer edge of their abilities, and apply what they learn in more than one context and to unpredictable situations.

Let's examine each of these qualities of rigor more closely:

Construct meaning for themselves: Rigorous instruction goes beyond helping students memorize facts, acquire understanding of concepts, and develop basic skill proficiency. Students learn how to unpack concepts, ask interesting questions, develop their own ideas and standards of evaluation, and think critically about the content.

- **Impose structure on information:** By imposing structure on information, students learn how to organize concepts, make connections among and between concepts, and deal with ambiguity and complexity. Doing so helps them to think accurately, consider multiple meanings and interpretations, and engage in disciplined inquiry and thought.

- **Integrate skills into processes:** Students aren't just asked to know information or perform a skill; students are asked to develop individual thinking skills about what they are learning and then combine those thinking skills into thinking processes, which they then apply to the content.

- **Operate within but at the outer edge of their current abilities:** Rigorous instruction pushes students to reach for meaning rather than find it already apparent. Students must work independently and constantly stretch just beyond their present abilities. In doing so, they develop new ways of thinking and understanding.

- **Apply what they learn in more than one context and to unpredictable situations:** Rigorous instruction teaches students to use or adapt what they have learned and how they have learned to think to solve real-world problems in multiple contexts, even when the "correct" answer is unclear and they are faced with perplexing unknowns.

(Adapted from: Mindsteps at http://mindstepsinc.com/2012/04/what-is-rigor/)

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Rigor is not:

- Rote memorization
- Only accepting the first response
- Lesson design that does not include scaffolding
- A synonym for “harder”
- Assigning tons of questions/problems for homework when fewer will achieve mastery.
- Just for a select group of students
- The utilization of more materials
- Patching concepts together
- A special program or curriculum for select students
- About severity or hardship
- A measure of quantity of content to be covered
- Defining terms in isolation
- Reading passages aloud while others listen
- Copying diagrams from one medium to another
- Answering questions from which the correct and definitive answers can be derived from reading passages, current discussions, or video clips.
- Responding to questions for which an acceptable answer is either ‘yes’ or ‘no’
- Doing things for students that they can do for themselves because it is faster or less messy
- Over scheduling activities so that students become exhausted from too many activities without a designed break for absorption of the material
- A primary utilization of workbooks, ditto sheets, flash cards, and other materials that focus on skill and drill to the exclusion of problem-solving and other higher-order thinking skills
- A singular presentation of a topic that fails to provide opportunities for revisiting content that may lead to a deeper, refined understanding by students
- Treating students’ hypothesis as simply wrong answers rather than clues to how they think

Examples of Academic Rigor in the Classroom

Below are numerous examples of rigorous learning tasks listed by discipline that you may adapt to improve student achievement.

SCIENCE *examples of Rigorous Learning Tasks for Students:* *(Submitted by: Dr. Severs, Supervisor of Science)*
(Elementary School) 1. Given materials necessary to build an electric circuit, design operational series and parallel circuits and compare/contrast the two models. 2. You are a volunteer on a farm, and the farmer needs some help trying to identify which young animals are related to which parents. The farmer has given you pictures of all the animals on the farm, and she would like you to use each animal's distinguishing characteristics to determine the relationships. After reviewing the pictures, share your ideas with your classmates. State your claims, using the animals' characteristics as physical evidence (markings, color, etc.) to support your claim. As a class, come to consensus about the relationships on the farm.
(Middle School) 1. Devise a sound nutritional plan for a group of 3 year-olds who are "picky" eaters. 2. Obtain historical data about local weather to predict the chance of snow, sun, or rain during a given time period.
(High School) 1. Some vegetarians argue that their choice of diet is not just a moral issue but also an environmental good. Argue for or against this point of view using your knowledge of how matter and energy move through ecosystems. Use a mathematical argument to help make your point. 2. A local politician has learned that your biology class has been studying cell differentiation and discussing the possible applications in health and biotechnology. She is particularly interested in gaining support from young people, so she has requested that you share your thoughts on embryonic and adult stem cell research. Because stem cell research is a topic embroiled in much controversy, you have decided to hold a town hall debate to share your diverse thoughts about the topic as a group. Divide into groups based on your class' positions (pro vs. con, pro-adult stem cells vs. con-adult stem cells, pro-embryonic stem cells vs. con-embryonic stem cells, etc.) and conduct research. Both sides should seek out and use specific data and scientific evidence to support their claims about how stem cell research has or has not led to improved therapies or disease prevention efforts. Each group should also consider the moral, ethical, and political questions related to stem cell research. Engage in the town hall discussion, inviting elected officials and the community to take part in the event.

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PRESCHOOL *examples of Rigorous Learning Tasks for Students:*
(*Submitted by: Ms. Moreland, Director of Early Childhood)*

(Early Childhood)

1. Teaching to enhance development and learning that is developmentally appropriate.
- Teachers plan a variety of concrete learning experiences with materials and people relevant to children's own life experiences that promote their interest, engagement in learning, and conceptual development.
- Teachers provide opportunities for children to plan and select many of their own activities from among a variety of learning areas and projects they make available, based on program goals and information gathered about children's varying interests and abilities.
- Teachers model appropriate use of language for students and encourage children's developing language and communication skills by conversing with them throughout the day, speaking clearly and listening to their responses and providing opportunities for them to talk amongst each other.
- Teachers engage individual children and groups in conversations about real experiences, projects, and they respond attentively to children's verbal initiatives.

2. Extend the learning.
- Teachers observe and interact with individual and small groups in all contexts (including teacher-planned and child-chosen learning experiences) to maximize their knowledge of what children can do and what each child is capable of doing with and without coaching, scaffolding, or other supportive assistance. To help children acquire new skills or understandings, teachers select from a range of strategies such as: asking questions, offering cues or suggestions, demonstrating a skill, adding more complex materials or ideas to a situation, and/or providing an opportunity for collaboration with peers.
- Teachers focus on effective instructional interactions, which provide children rich opportunities to think deeply, answer challenging questions, receive feedback on their learning, and develop their growing language skills.

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MATHEMATICS *examples of Rigorous Learning Tasks for Students:*
(Submitted by: Mrs. K. Taylor and Mr. W. Jean-Pierre, Supervisors of Mathematics, K-5 and 6-12)

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) defines rigor in mathematics as a comprehensive approach that involves a balance of three components:

- *Conceptual Understanding:* Grasping the underlying principles and concepts behind mathematical procedures and reasoning.
- *Procedural Skill and Fluency:* Developing the ability to carry out mathematical procedures accurately and efficiently.
- *Application:* Applying mathematical concepts and procedures to solve problems in various contexts.

Rigor ensures that students not only learn how to perform mathematical operations but also understand why these operations work and how they can be applied in different situations. This balanced approach helps students build a deep and connected understanding of mathematics, making them capable of reasoning, problem-solving, and making connections across different mathematical ideas and real-world applications.

(Grades K-2)

1. *Number Composition and Decomposition*: Students are given a number, say 10, and are asked to find as many ways as possible to compose and decompose the number using addition and subtraction (e.g., 10 = 7 + 3, 10 = 5 + 5, 10 = 8 + 2).
2. *Shape Exploration and Attribute Identification:* Provide students with a variety of shapes and ask them to sort and classify them based on different attributes, such as number of sides, vertices, and symmetry. Then, have them explain their reasoning for the classifications and compare with peers.

(Grades 3-5)

1. *Fraction Equivalence and Comparison:* Students are given a set of fractions and asked to find different ways to show that two fractions are equivalent. They might use fraction bars, number lines, or area models. They also compare fractions by finding common denominators or by reasoning about their size relative to benchmarks like 0, ½, and 1.
2. *Multi-Step Word Problems:* Students are presented with complex, real-world problems that require multiple steps to solve. For example, they might need to plan a party with a given budget, calculating costs for different supplies and determining how much money is left after each purchase.

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(Grades 6-8)

1. *Solving Real-World Problems with Ratios and Proportions:* Students solve problems involving scale drawings and maps. They might calculate the actual distance between two locations on a map by using the map's scale.
2. *Investigating Linear Relationships:* Students collect data on the growth of a plant over time and create a graph to represent the relationship between time and height. They then develop an equation to describe this relationship.

(Grades 9-12)

1. *Exploring Quadratic Functions through Projectile Motion:* Students analyze the trajectory of a ball thrown in the air, using quadratic equations to model its path. They calculate the maximum height and the time it takes for the ball to hit the ground.
2. *Exploring Mathematical Proofs:* Students develop and understand proofs for key geometric theorems, such as the Pythagorean Theorem or properties of circles, as well as for algebraic properties and theorems, such as the distributive property or the quadratic formula.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS *examples of Rigorous Learning Tasks for Students*
(Submitted by: Dr. Davis, Supervisor of Language Arts Literacy, K-5.)

Grades K-1: Reading Standard-Informational Text

Grade K, Standard RI-6
Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.

Grade K, Standard RI-7
With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts).

Grade 1, Standard RI-6
Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text.

Grade 1, Standard RI-7
Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.

Tasks:

- **Students identify Edith Thacher Hurd as the *author* of *Starfish* and Robin Brickman as the *illustrator* of the text and *define* the role and materials *each* contributes to the *text*.**
- **Students use the *illustrations* along with *textual details* in Wendy Pfeffer's *From Seed to Pumpkin* to *describe* the *key idea* of how a pumpkin grows.**
- **Students will select an illustration from an informational text after a shared reading and write an appropriate caption for the illustration**.

Targeted instruction/small groups: Model and practice each day with different texts during guided reading time, selecting from a range of informational texts appropriate to independent reading levels. Using oral language to elicit background knowledge and develop understanding of each text. Call attention to how informational texts are different from literary texts/stories.

Informational Comprehension Stems:

Thinking Within the Text-

1. Look at the illustration on page ___. What does it tell you?
2. What did you learn from the graphics?
3. What do you see on this page? How can you use that to help you get information while reading this text?

Thinking About the Text-

1. What did this writer do to make the topic interesting?

2. What are some specific examples of how the writer interested you?
3. What information did the writer choose to put in the graphics?
4. What do you think is important about the information in the graphics?
5. Why do you think the writer chose to put that information in the graphics?

Thinking Beyond the Text-

1. What details have you learned from the description?
2. What examples of descriptions did you find in the text?

Grades 2-3: Reading Standard-Literature

Grade 2, Standard RL-1

Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

Grade 2, Standard RL-6

Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

Grade 3, Standard RL-1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as a basis for the answers.

Grade 3, Standard RL-6

Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

Tasks:

- **Students read Aliki's description of *A Medieval Feast* and *demonstrate* their *understanding of all that goes* into such an *event* by *asking questions* pertaining to *who, what, where, when, why,* and *how* such a meal happens and by *answering using key details*.**
- **Students *ask and answer questions* regarding the plot of Patricia MacLachlan's *Sarah, Plain and Tall, explicitly referring to the book* to form the *basis for their* answers.**
- **When discussing E. B. White's book *Charlotte's Web,* students *distinguish their own point of view* regarding Wilbur the Pig *from* that of Fern Arable as well as *from* that of *the narrator*.**
- **Students *describe how the character* of Bud in Christopher Paul Curtis' story *Bud, Not Buddy responds* to a *major event* in his life of being placed in a foster home.**

Targeted instruction/small groups: Model and practice each day with different texts during guided reading time, selecting from a range of informational texts appropriate to independent reading levels. Using oral language to elicit background knowledge and develop understanding of each text. Call attention to how informational texts are different from literary texts/stories.

Narrative Comprehension Stems:

Thinking Within the Text: (literal)

1. What important information did the writer tell you about…..
2. What was?
3. What do you know about…..
4. What did you learn about…..
5. What else did you learn?
6. Summarize the main events of the story.

Thinking About the Text

1. In your opinion, how well did the writer show character dealing with a difficult situation? Why do you think that?
2. What else do you think the author should have included?
3. What do you think the writer meant by …..
4. The writer talked about …… What was the writer really describing?
5. How did the writer describe …..
6. Did the author give a balanced view of the …. Use evidence from the text to support your opinion.

Thinking Beyond the Text

1. What in the text helps you understand the character?
2. What connections did you make in the text? (Text to Text, Text to Self, Text to World)
3. Justify predictions using evidence.

Grades 4-5: Reading –Informational Text

Grade 4, Standard RI-2

Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Grade 4, Standard RI-6

Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.

Grade 5, Standard RI-1

Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Grade 5, Standard RI-3

Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

Tasks:

- **Students *determine the main idea* of Colin A. Ronan's "Telescopes" and create a *summary* by *explaining how key details support* his distinctions regarding different types of telescopes.**
- **Students *compare and contrast a firsthand account* of African American ballplayers in the Negro Leagues to *a secondhand account* of their treatment found in books such as Kadir Nelson's *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball*, attending to the *focus* of each account *and the information provided* by each.**
- **Students *quote accurately and explicitly from* Leslie Hall's "Seeing Eye to Eye" to *explain statements* they make and ideas they *infer* regarding sight and light.**
- **Students *explain the relationship between* time and clocks using *specific information* drawn from Bruce Koscielniak's *About Time: A First Look at Time and Clocks*.**

(Reading Tasks adopted from Common Core State Standards: Exemplary Performance Tasks)

Grade K-1 Writing Standard

Grade K, Standard 2

Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.

Task:

Students will write about a community helper in their neighborhood. Be sure to name the community helper and to tell what she/he does to help the community. (For example, "A trash collector picks up stinky garbage all over our city and takes it to the dump.")

Grade 1, Standard 2

Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

Task:

After listening to a variety of texts describing animals, students will write about their favorite animal. They will include interesting facts about the animal and include a catchy beginning, some facts, and a strong ending. Allow students to begin by working in teams to gather information. Using nonfiction texts, remind them to use the index or table of contents to locate more information about the animal. When they have some basic information, have them write the first draft.

Grade 2- 3, Standard 7

Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

Task:

Students will write an informative bio-poem based on an American president they chose to research. Students may use the format described below to organize the poem. Students should use the process of revising and editing before publishing their work. (Note: The example about George Washington that follows is for the teacher, though you may decide to share it with the class to explain the activity.) To help struggling students, the teacher may want to create a graphic organizer to aid with gathering the necessary information for the bio-poem. (Students should read a number of texts on their selected president).

Formatting Guidelines

Line 1: First, middle, and last name

Line 2: Four jobs held by the man during his life (other than presidency)

Line 3: Birthplace, child of

Line 4: Lover of

Line 5: Educated

Line 6: Resident of

Line 7: Three contributions

Line 8: Number order of president (ordinal number)

Line 9: Nickname

Sample Poem George Washington Surveyor, planter, soldier, commander Born in Virginia, son of Mary Lover of Martha, math, and farming Educated in elementary school Resident of Mount Vernon Revolutionary commander, government creator, humble leader First president Father of our country.

Grade 4, Standard 1

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

Task:

Students can be instructed to think about a current event that you believe everyone should understand. Write a speech, supported by two pieces of evidence, about your thoughts and ideas, and present it to the class. Edit your work for the use of prepositional phrases and spelling.

Grade 5, Standard 7

Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

Task:

Students will read and research different scientists and inventors from a variety of texts and other formats including the web, keeping track of information in categories similar to those in their science or social studies journal. After taking notes in their journal, they will select the most relevant and useful information gathered and create a plan for presenting their findings in a short report that is logically ordered and cites at least two sources of information. Work should be edited for correct use of conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections. They can be asked to publish the report in a variety of ways, which should include a picture of the person from the web.

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS *examples of Rigorous Learning Tasks for Students:*
(Dr. Doherty, Supervisor of Language Arts Literacy, 6 – 12)

(Middle School)

Writing

Prompt: Should the electoral college be abolished?

1. Write an ***argument*** to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

d. Establish and maintain a formal style.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Reading

Text: *Battling Malaria*, Connie Goldsmith

Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories.

(High School)

Writing

Prompt: Should the electoral college be abolished?

1. Write an ***argument*** to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Reading

Text: *Society and Solitude*, Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

***ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL) and WORLD LANGUAGE** examples of Rigorous Learning Tasks for Students:*
(Dr. Ruiz, Director & Dr. Perkins, Supervisor of Bilingual, ESL and World Languages)

ELL students will follow the same criteria / tasks presented in the all content curriculum and grade level standards, with the understanding that ELL students will use a variety of strategies to show understanding of the required criteria / tasks:

- Pointing to objects or pictures
- Using one or two word sentences to answer a question. For example: Big house. Small dog.
- Using their native language to show knowledge of topic and/or comprehension of task.

Teachers can use the WIDA -Can Do Descriptors (Link: https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/can-do/descriptors) to help them understand what to expect of ELL students based on their English proficiency by the four language domains (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking)

In addition, please be aware that ELL students typically achieve proficiency in social language long before they have mastered a grade-appropriate level of academic language. As a result, a student's ability to use language in social settings is not necessarily an accurate indicator of their mastery of academic language. Academic Language is the language of school and it is used in textbooks, essays, assignments, class presentations, and assessments. Academic language is used at all grade levels, although its frequency increases as students get older. See sample of Social and Academic language below:

Social English	Academic English
I like this book more.	This story is more exciting than the first one we read.
It worked.	Our experiment was successful.
Because they were brave.	The soldiers received the medal because of their courage.

Also keep in mind that some key words or terms may have different meanings across disciplines and may be used as different parts of speech in different contexts (i.e., noun vs. verbs), this is very confusing for recent ELL arrivals still learning the complexity of the English language:

Word	Meaning/Use
Table	Lunch table (Social language) Periodic Table of Elements (Science)

	Table of Contents (ELA) Multiplication tables (Math) To table (delay) the discussion (Social Studies)
Plot	Plot of a story (ELA) Plot of land (Geography) Plot ordered pairs on a graph (Math) To plot a government coup (History)
Branch	Branch of government (Social Studies) Branch of a river (Geography) To branch out (Idiom)
Foot	Your foot (Health) One foot in length (Math) Foot in your mouth (Idiom) Foot of the mountain (Geography) To foot the bill (Idiom)

Finally, as you identify academic vocabulary / language in your classrooms, please be mindful of "I**dioms", "**P**hrases"**, **"Words"** or "T**erms"** we use daily that are confusing to our ELLs. See sample of each below:

Idioms	She comes to town ***once in a blue moon.***
Phrases	***Based on the data,*** we agree with the scientists' conclusion.
Words	The ***Declaration*** is now on display in Washington, DC.
Terms	The ***boiling point*** of water is 212° F.

ELLs may need some extra preparation to draw upon or build background knowledge in order to fully understand the academic language being used in the classroom. Be thoughtful as well of their acculturation needs and what they bring to our classrooms (*years of schooling, work, life, etc.).*

It is important for world language teachers to identify the learning styles of their students so they can restructure their teaching strategies to allow students to process material more efficiently. Adaptations / modifications are often idea generators or good teaching techniques for adding variety and interests that are beneficial to many students and may be used with all students. English Language Learners (ELLs) or bilingual students, who speak a native language other than English, should be considered as resources to the World Language Program. Students who speak a language that is offered as a world language in the district can provide a natural context for language practice for English-speaking students. Having opportunities to interact with native

speakers of a language increases the potential for second language learners to approximate native-like fluency in the target language. By providing structured and unstructured opportunities for English speakers to interact with target-language-speaking peers, we not only motivate students to communicate but also create opportunities for authentic, purposeful interaction—an essential component of effective second language learning.

The following are general instructional strategies which are characteristic of both elementary and secondary communicative-based language classrooms:

- Keep the use of English to a minimum, with most instructions, directions and explanations given in the target language.
- Use real objects, gestures, pictures, and other visuals to convey meaning.
- Focus on language that is concerned with functional situations and authentic utterances.
- Do not always insist on complete sentences, but mirror natural speech patterns.
- Adopt a conversational approach replicating "real" situations likely to occur.
- Teach vocabulary in context, including all kinds of idiomatic phrases.
- Use paired activities and small-group learning.
- Use technology.
- Use a variety of print and non-print materials.
- Strive to develop cultural awareness using authentic cultural realia as a springboard for communication in the language (realia = objects from real life used in classroom instruction by educators to improve students' understanding of other cultures and real life situations).
- Emphasize acceptable communication, rather than near-native pronunciation.
- Ensure a match between the learner and the language in terms of relevance and learning styles.

These additional strategies support using the target language in an immersive environment include:

- Provide a language-rich environment
- Support comprehension and production through context/gestures/visual support
- Focus on meaning before details
- Conduct comprehension checks to ensure understanding
- Negotiate meaning with students and encourage negotiation among students
- Elicit talk that increases in fluency, accuracy, and complexity over time
- Encourage self-expression and spontaneous use of language
- Teach students strategies for requesting clarification and assistance when faced with comprehension difficulties
- Don't use English (one's native language) as the default for checking on meaning or understanding:

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PHYSICAL EDUCATION *examples of Rigorous Learning Tasks for Students:*
(Submitted by: Mr. T. Bowers & Ms. R. Cotton, Director& Supervisor of Athletics & Physical Education)

The curriculum in health and physical education at Irvington Public Schools offers students instruction aimed towards improving student proficiencies in sports-related, motor, cognitive, affective, cooperative, and leadership skills. By implementing these objectives within the curriculum, rigor can be seen within every IPS health and physical education class in student work and instructional activities in the following ways:

Students:
-Highly engaged
-Active participation
-Maximum activity time
-Constant movement

Instructional Activities:
-Student-centered activities with structured lessons
-Developmentally appropriate activities
-Health concepts incorporated within each lesson
-Authentic assessments

SOCIAL STUDIES *examples of Rigorous Learning Tasks for Students:*
(Submitted By: Ms. Steele-Hunter, Supervisor of Social Studies)

(Elementary School)

1. Write a contract between yourself and a friend that includes an allegiance to a symbol that stands for something you both firmly believe in.
2. With the ideas of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech in mind, have students write their own speech that could inspire change and tolerance within today's society.

(Middle School)

1. Participate in a debate on election issues.
2. Locate and interpret current and historic data using graphics (e.g. unemployment, employment, gross national product (GNP)).

(High School)

1. Participate in a seminar on a policy issue, such as "privacy" or "immigration".
2. Analyze a community problem, suggest a solution, and prepare a plan to solve it (e.g., create an emergency evacuation plan for the township of Irvington and present it to the Irvington Mayor and Town Council).

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Visual and Performing Arts *examples of Rigorous Learning Tasks for Students:*
(Submitted By: Ms. Harte, Supervisor of Visual and Performing Arts)

Art Education is an integral part of the Irvington Public Schools experience from Pre-K through Grades 12. Studies show that students who receive Art Education, including music, perform better on tests involving reading, math, problem solving, and logical thinking.

In Music students will sing, move, listen, imitate, explore, experience, analyze, classify, create, share, perform, notate, read, improvise, cooperate, and most importantly HAVE FUN while learning.

The teachers and students strive to create innovative, engaging lesson plans which include singing, playing instruments, and moving in each of our lessons.

In Visual Arts students draw, paint, and create 2-D and 3-D projects using the principles and elements of art. Students are also required to submit the following:

- Written reflections
- Group presentations
- Individual and class critiques
- One-on-one conversations
- Artwork for public display
- Use Rubrics to create, grade and adjust artwork.

In Theatre, students participate in the artistic processes of creating, performing and responding. Students will use physical and vocal characterization to interpret, through a planned improvisation, a scene from a work of literature or folk story. They will perform their improvisation for an audience and will reflect on a peer's performance using drama/theatre vocabulary. Students will choose a character from a suggested genre (fairy tale, nursery rhyme, or other literary source) with which they are familiar and complete the Character Analysis Worksheet. Working with an assigned partner, students will improvise and perform a three-minute scene in character, revealing as much of the information from the worksheet as possible. They will then revise the scene based on oral or written teacher/peer feedback and personal reflection, and perform it again.

In Dance, students demonstrate the ability to adapt dance to alternative performance venues by modifying spacing and movements to the performance space and relate them to the elements of dance in genres, styles, or cultural movement practices. Use basic dance terminology to describe characteristics that make a dance artistic and meaningful. Students will replicate, recall and retain dance movement sequences for class, school and public performances.