



## Colorado Teacher's Quality Standards

### Observable Practices

### Standard 1 – Know Content

#### **Element a:**

##### **THE TEACHER:**

Uses lesson plans that reflect: ☐ Opportunities to review prior learning. ☐ Instructional objectives appropriate for students.  
☐ Connections to specific learning objectives and approved curriculum.  
Implements lesson plans based on: ☐ Student needs. ☐ Colorado Academic Standards. ☐ District's plan of instruction.

##### **STUDENTS:**

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

#### **Element b: ALL TEACHERS**

##### **THE TEACHER:**

☐ Demonstrates an understanding of literacy content and skills.  
Makes complex reading accessible to students by: ☐ Adjusting content to students' skill levels.  
☐ Integrating literacy skills and knowledge into lessons. ☐ Providing relevant content that addresses students' interests.  
Provides instructional support that enhances students':

☐ Critical thinking and reasoning. ☐ Information literacy. ☐ Literacy skill development.

##### **STUDENTS:**

Meet or exceed expectations for: ☐ Oral communication. ☐ Written communication. ☐ Critical thinking. ☐ Problem-solving skills.  
☐ Literacy skills.  
☐ Apply literacy skills to understand complex materials.

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

##### **THE TEACHER:**

☐ Integrates literacy connections into lessons regardless of the content being taught.  
Integrates literacy skills into lessons and assignments across subject areas, including:  
☐ Phonological awareness. ☐ Phonics. ☐ Vocabulary. ☐ Comprehension.  
☐ Fluency. ☐ Writing. ☐ Speaking. ☐ Listening skills.  
Engages students in instruction that is: ☐ Purposeful. ☐ Explicit. ☐ Systematic.  
Provides literacy instruction that is: ☐ Needs-based. ☐ Intensive. ☐ Of sufficient duration to accelerate learning.

##### **STUDENTS:**

Apply literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening): ☐ To new/unfamiliar material. ☐ While communicating during unstructured time.  
Exceed teacher's expectations for their age, grade, and/or ability levels in: ☐ Reading. ☐ Writing. ☐ Speaking. ☐ Listening.

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

### **THE TEACHER:**

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

Integrates literacy skills into lessons, including:

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

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

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

### **STUDENTS:**

Apply literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening): ☐ To new/unfamiliar material. ☐ While communicating during the school day.

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

- ☐ Listening.

## **Element c: ALL Teachers**

### **THE TEACHER:**

- ☐ Encourages students to make math connections across content.
- ☐ Emphasizes to students why they need to learn math content and skills.
- ☐ Uses instructional strategies that require students to apply and transfer mathematical knowledge to different content areas.
- ☐ Emphasizes interdisciplinary connections to math.

### **STUDENTS:**

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

## **Element c: ALL TEACHERS RESPONSIBLE FOR TEACHING MATH**

### **THE TEACHER:**

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

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

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

☐ Helps students understand mathematics as a discipline.

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

☐ Models mathematical thinking.

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

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

### **STUDENTS:**

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

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### **Element d:**

#### **THE TEACHER:**

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

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

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

#### **STUDENTS:**

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

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

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

### **Element e:**

#### **THE TEACHER:**

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

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

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

#### **STUDENTS:**

- ☐ Make connections between other disciplines and/or content areas and the current lesson.
- ☐ Apply literacy skills across academic content areas.
- ☐ Apply math skills across academic content areas
- ☐ Accelerate their learning by elaborating on current lesson with connections to prior lessons within the content area and/or with other disciplines.

### **Element f:**

#### **THE TEACHER:**

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

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

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

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

#### **STUDENTS:**

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

### **Comments:**

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## Standard 2 – Establish Environment

### **Element a:**

#### **THE TEACHER:**

Creates a classroom environment that facilitates: ☐ Mutual respect. ☐ Positive relationships between and among students. ☐ Empathy for each student.

- ☐ Creates a classroom environment conducive to learning.
- ☐ Creates a classroom environment which values diverse perspectives.
- ☐ Establishes a nurturing and caring relationship with each student.

#### **STUDENTS:**

- ☐ Respect their classmates and teacher(s).

Interactions with their teacher(s) and each other:

- ☐ Are respectful. ☐ Demonstrate mutual support.

### **Element b:**

#### **THE TEACHER:**

- ☐ Creates a classroom environment in which diversity is used to further student learning.
- ☐ Uses instructional approaches and materials that reflect diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- ☐ Acknowledges the value of each student's contributions to the quality of lessons.
- ☐ Is welcoming to diverse family structures.

Establishes processes that result in: ☐ A sense of community among students. ☐ Effective interactions among students. ☐ Respect for individual differences. ☐ Positive social relationships. ☐ Common goals for all students.

#### **STUDENTS:**

- ☐ Respect the uniqueness of fellow students.
- ☐ Seek a variety of perspectives to complete group assignments.

### **Element c:**

#### **THE TEACHER:**

- ☐ Implements lessons that reflect student interests.
- ☐ Encourages students to expand and enhance their learning.
- ☐ Acknowledges students for their accomplishments.
- ☐ Asks appropriately challenging questions of all students.
- ☐ Scaffolds questions.
- ☐ Gives wait time equitably.
- ☐ Ensures that all students participate in class activities.

#### **STUDENTS:**

- ☐ Actively engage in classroom activities.
- ☐ Discuss content and make connections between current lesson and their interests.
- ☐ Encourage fellow students to participate and challenge themselves.
- ☐ Engage in collaborative learning and group processes.

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**Element d:****THE TEACHER:**

- ☐ Adapts lesson plans to address individual student needs.
- ☐ Monitors the quality of student participation and performance.
- ☐ Implements recommendations of specialists and colleagues to address student needs.
- ☐ Challenges and supports students to learn to their greatest ability.

**STUDENTS:**

Advocate for themselves by:

- ☐ Articulate their learning needs to their teacher and/or parent.
- ☐ Communicating freely and openly with teachers about circumstances that affect their classroom performance.
- ☐ Apply coping skills such as self-reflection, self-regulation and persistence to classroom situations.
- ☐ Help fellow classmates by offering support.

**Element e:****THE TEACHER:**

- ☐ Establishes a classroom environment that is inviting to families and significant adults.
- ☐ Maintains respectful relationships with students, their families, and/or significant adults.

**Element f:****THE TEACHER:**

- ☐ Provides clear expectations to guide student classroom behavior.
- ☐ Holds students accountable for adherence to school and/or class rules.
- ☐ Puts procedures in place to maximize instructional time.
- ☐ Makes maximum use of instructional time.
- ☐ Maintains a safe and orderly environment.

**STUDENTS:**

- ☐ Stay on task during class periods.
- ☐ Abide by school and class rules.
- ☐ Accept responsibility for their behavior and use of time.
- ☐ Help other students stay on task.

**Comments:**

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## Standard 3 – Facilitate Learning

### Element a:

#### THE TEACHER:

- ☐ Modifies content to assure that students are able to work at their ability levels.
- ☐ Builds on the interrelatedness of students' intellectual, social and emotional development.
- ☐ Applies knowledge of current developmental science to address student needs.

#### STUDENTS:

- ☐ Seek materials and resources appropriate for their personal approach to learning.

Seek to understand: ☐ How they learn best. ☐ Where their time and efforts are best used.

### Element b:

#### THE TEACHER:

- ☐ Has explicit student outcomes in mind for each lesson.
- ☐ Aligns instruction with academic standards and student assessment results.
- ☐ Monitors instruction against student performance and makes real-time adjustments.
- ☐ Encourages students to take academic risks.
- ☐ Makes sure students meet learning objectives while increasing mastery levels.

#### STUDENTS:

- ☐ Monitor their level of engagement.
- ☐ Confer with the teacher to achieve learning objectives.
- ☐ Initiate activities to address their learning strengths and next steps.
- ☐ Take academic risks.

### Element c:

#### THE TEACHER:

- ☐ Incorporates evidence-based strategies into lessons.
- ☐ Individualizes instructional approach to meet unique needs of each student.

#### STUDENTS:

- ☐ Embrace new and unique ways of learning as they are introduced through research-based lessons.
- ☐ Apply skills and knowledge learned in the classroom.

### Element d:

#### THE TEACHER:

- ☐ Uses available technology to facilitate classroom instruction.
- ☐ Employs strategies and procedures to ensure that students have equitable access to available technology.
- ☐ Monitors the use of available technology in the classroom.

Uses available technology to: ☐ Enhance student learning. ☐ Develop students' knowledge and skills. ☐ Enhance creative and innovative skills. ☐ Provide engaging and motivating learning experiences.

#### STUDENTS:

Use available technology to engage in: ☐ Virtual or face-to-face learning activities. ☐ Real world applications.

Use available technology to: ☐ Accelerate their learning. ☐ Apply team building and networking skills. ☐ Deepen critical thinking skills. ☐ Communicate effectively.

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### **Element e:**

#### **THE TEACHER:**

- ☐ Has high expectations for all students.
- ☐ Holds students accountable for their learning.
- ☐ Sets student expectations at a level that challenges students.
- ☐ Incorporates critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- ☐ Challenges all students to learn to their greatest ability.
- ☐ Teaches higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills.
- ☐ Ensures that students perform at levels meeting or exceeding expectations.

#### **STUDENTS:**

- ☐ Help set their learning objectives.
- ☐ Apply higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills to address challenging issues.
- ☐ Monitor their progress toward achieving teacher's high expectations.
- ☐ Seek opportunities to test their problem-solving and higher order thinking skills.

### **Element f:**

#### **THE TEACHER:**

- ☐ Includes all students in individual and group activities.

Plans lessons that: ☐ Provide opportunities for students to participate using various roles and modes of communication.

- ☐ Flexibly groups students.
- ☐ Adjusts team composition based on lesson objectives and student needs.
- ☐ Varies group size, composition, and tasks to create opportunities for students to learn from each other.

#### **STUDENTS:**

- ☐ Fulfill their assigned roles within the team.
- ☐ Assume leadership roles in their teams.
- ☐ Utilize group processes to build trust and promote effective interactions among team members.
- ☐ Participate in teams in ways that build trust and ownership of ideas among team members.

### **Element g:**

#### **THE TEACHER:**

- ☐ Communicates effectively with students.
- ☐ Models effective communication skills.
- ☐ Encourages students to communicate effectively.
- ☐ Teaches students to be effective communicators.
- ☐ Provides opportunities for students to practice communication skills.

#### **STUDENTS:**

- ☐ Apply effective written and oral communication skills in their work.
- ☐ Use academic language in spoken and written work.

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**Element h:****THE TEACHER:**

- ☐ Involves students in monitoring their learning.
- ☐ Assesses learning outcomes appropriately.

Provides actionable, timely, specific and individualized feedback about the quality of student work to: ☐ Students.

- ☐ Teaches students to use feedback to improve their learning.

**STUDENTS:**

- ☐ Self-assess on a variety of skills and concepts.
- ☐ Articulate their personal strengths and needs based on self-assessment.
- ☐ Effectively use formal and informal feedback to monitor their learning.

Assume ownership for: ☐ Monitoring their progress. ☐ Setting learning goals. ☐ Applying teacher feedback to improve performance and accelerate their learning.

**Comments:**

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## Standard 5 – Demonstrate Leadership

### **Element d:**

#### **THE TEACHER:**

- ☐ Models ethical behavior, including honesty, integrity, fair treatment and respect for others.
- ☐ Helps students understand the importance of ethical behavior as an individual and member of society.

#### **STUDENTS:**

Demonstrate: ☐ Honesty. ☐ Respect for others.

#### **Comments:**