COLORADO
DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

Colorado Teacher's Quality Standards

Observable Practices

Standard 1 – Know Content

Element a:

THE TEACHER:

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

STUDENTS:

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

Element b: ALL TEACHERS

THE TEACHER:

☐ Demonstrates an understanding of literacy content and skills.
☐ Emphasizes literacy connections while teaching content.
Makes complex reading accessible to students by: ☐ Adjusting literacy resources (text) to students' instructional skill levels
☐ Integrating literacy skills and knowledge into a balanced lesson ☐ Providing content relevant to student interests.
Provides instruction that enhances students':
☐ Critical thinking and reasoning. ☐ Information literacy. ☐ Literacy skill development.

STUDENTS:

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

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

THE TEACHER:

☐ Emphasizes literacy connections while teaching content other than reading, English, or language arts.
Integrates literacy skills into lessons and assignments across subject areas, including:

☐ Phonological awareness.	☐ Phonics.	☐ Vocabulary	☐ Comprehension.
☐ Fluency.	☐ Writing.	☐ Speaking.	☐ Listening skills.

Engages students in instruction that is: ☐ Purposeful. ☐ Explicit. ☐ Systematic.
Provides literacy instruction that is: ☐ Needs-based. ☐ Intensive. ☐ Of sufficient duration to accelerate learning.

STUDENTS:

Apply literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening): ☐ Across academic content areas. ☐ To new/unfamiliar material.
☐ To understand complex materials. ☐ While communicating with peers and staff during the school day.
Exceed 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): ☐ Across academic content areas. ☐ To new/unfamiliar material. ☐ To understand complex materials. ☐ While communicating during the school day.

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

Element c: ALL Teachers

THE TEACHER:

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

STUDENTS:

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

Element c: ALL TEACHERS RESPONSIBLE FOR TEACHING MATH

THE TEACHER:

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

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

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

☐ Helps students understand mathematics as a discipline.

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

Establishes an effective mathematics environment by: ☐ Challenging students to think deeply about the problems. ☐ Requiring students to explain their solutions. ☐ Posing questions that stimulate students' curiosity and encourage them to investigate further. ☐ Actively engaging students in doing math. ☐ Using real-world examples for problems whenever possible.

STUDENTS:

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

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

STUDENTS:

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

☐ Employs instructional strategies that include literacy, numeracy, and language development across content areas.
☐ Accelerate their learning by elaborating on current lesson with connections to prior lessons within the content area and/or with other disciplines.

Element f:

THE TEACHER:

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

☐ Links lessons to students' prior knowledge.
☐ Motivates students to make connections to prior learning.
☐ Implements lessons and uses materials to assure that learning objectives are addressed.
☐ Helps students solidify learning by linking curriculum with prior knowledge, experiences, and/or cultural contexts.
☐ Employs appropriate services, resources, and materials to facilitate student engagement.

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 challenging content and activities when given the choice.

Comments:

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