

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.

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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Standard 2 – Establish Environment

Element a:

THE TEACHER:

- Creates a classroom environment conducive to learning.

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

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

STUDENTS:

- Respect their classmates and their teacher(s).
- Engage in respectful and open dialogue with each other and their teacher.

Element b:

THE TEACHER:

Creates a classroom environment in which diversity is: Respected. Used to further student learning.

- Uses instructional approaches and materials that reflect students' backgrounds.
- 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.
- Actively seek a variety of perspectives to complete group assignments.

Element c:

THE TEACHER:

- Implements lessons that reflect student interests.
- Uses results of student interest inventories to design lessons and materials.
- 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.
- Actively engage in collaborative learning and group processes.

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Element d:**THE TEACHER:**

- Adapts lesson plans to address individual student needs.
- Designs instruction to address learning needs of all students.
- Monitors the quality of student participation and performance.
- Uses multiple strategies to teach and assess students.
- Challenges and supports students to learn to their greatest ability.

STUDENTS:

- Advocate for themselves.
- Articulate their learning needs to their teacher and/or parent.
- Apply coping skills to classroom situations.
- Share coping strategies with fellow students.
- 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.

STUDENTS:

- Communicate freely and openly with teachers.

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.
- Work without interruption.
- Abide by school and class rules.
- Accept responsibility for their behavior and use of time.
- Help other students stay on task.

Comments:

Standard 3 – Facilitate Learning

Element a:

THE TEACHER:

- Differentiates instruction.
- 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.
- Assesses required skills.
- 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 targets.
- Initiate activities to: Address their learning strengths and next steps. Take academic risks.

Element c:

THE TEACHER:

- Incorporates evidence-based strategies into lessons.
- Makes connections between student data and research-based practices.
- 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 all 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:

- Engage in virtual or face-to-face learning activities enhanced by appropriate use of available technology.
 - Produce creative and innovative products.
- 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.
- Explicitly 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 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.
- Uses a variety of assessment methods.
- Provides actionable, timely, specific and individualized feedback about the quality of student work.
- 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:

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: