

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 content to students' skill levels.
- Integrating literacy skills and knowledge into lessons. Providing relevant content that addresses students' 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 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 teacher's 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.

- Employ 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.
- 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 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 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.
- 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:

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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 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: