

Teacher Quality Standard I

Teachers demonstrate mastery of and pedagogical expertise in the content they teach. The elementary teacher is an expert in literacy and mathematics and is knowledgeable in all other content that he or she teaches (e.g., science, social studies, arts, physical education, or world languages). The secondary teacher has knowledge of literacy and mathematics and is an expert in his or her content endorsement area(s).

The key to distinguishing the knowledge base of teaching rests at the intersection of content and pedagogy.

—L. S. Shulman

To teach all students according to today's standards, teachers need to understand subject matter deeply and flexibly so they can help students create useful cognitive maps, relate one idea to another, and address misconceptions. Teachers need to see how ideas connect across fields and to everyday life. This kind of understanding provides a foundation for pedagogical content knowledge that enables teachers to make ideas accessible to others. (Shulman, 1987)

Although Shulman's work dates back to the late 1980s, the importance of teacher content knowledge and pedagogical expertise has never been more important than it is now as teachers ensure students are college and career ready for the demands of the 21st century.

Element A

Teachers provide instruction that is aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards; their district's organized plan of instruction; and the individual needs of their students.

A teacher translates instructional outcomes into learning experiences for students through the design of instruction; it is here that a teacher's knowledge of the content, knowledge of his/her students, clarity of instructional outcomes, and knowledge of resources come together to result in a plan of action. Even in classrooms where students assume considerable responsibility for their learning, the teacher is in charge of organizing the environment, managing the learning process, and establishing the framework for assessment.

—Charlotte Danielson

Professional practices referenced under each element of the Rubric for Evaluating Colorado Teachers are cumulative. Therefore, for teachers to be proficient in providing instruction that is aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards, their district's plan of instruction and the needs of their students, they must implement lesson plans that provide for review of prior learning and are based on objectives appropriate for students. As a support in implementation of lesson plans, the teacher collaborates with other school staff to vertically and horizontally align, articulate, and deliver the approved curriculum.

PARTIALLY PROFICIENT RATING LEVEL

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES: THE TEACHER:

Implements lesson plans based on:

Designing instruction is a different skill from implementing a plan in the classroom, and both skills are critical to the enhancement of learning. On the other hand, even the best-prepared lessons may need modification in the face of real students; so there is, inevitably, a balance between careful planning and flexibility in execution. (Danielson, 2007, p. 57)



[Click here to go back to the table of contents and view the resource guide in its entirety.](#)

- **Student needs.**

It should be clear from looking at instructional plans how the concepts are developed and how students are to engage with the content. Besides teacher-created plans, it is also important for teachers to think through program-specific lesson plans and adjust them as needed to best meet the needs of *all* students. Anticipating the needs of *all* students before they walk into the classroom helps the teacher make thoughtful decisions related to grouping and differentiation. (*Eagle County Schools Professional Practices Rubric*, 2012, p. 9)

Any lesson planning must begin with a deep understanding of what each student already knows and can do, and how the instruction is aimed at increasing the progress and levels of achievement for each of the students. The primary concern is to add value to all students, wherever they start from, and to get *all* students to attain the targeted outcomes. (Hattie, 2012, p. 42)

See also Standard III, Element A.

- **Colorado Academic Standards.**

The Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) are the expectations of what students need to know and be able to do at the end of each grade. They also stand as the values and content organizers of what Colorado sees as the future skills and essential knowledge for the next generation to be more successful. State standards are the basis for the state assessments.

Colorado Academic Standards are available at:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/coloradostandards>

Colorado Academic Standards are based on a trajectory of learning across grade levels and within a grade. For students to be successful with these **standards**, instruction at each grade must be aligned to the grade level standards. A strong alignment to academic standards ensures students have opportunities to gain the foundational knowledge and skills necessary for success at subsequent grades as well as to be college and career ready.

In addition, English Language Proficiency standards are required by Colorado state and federal law. In 2009, the state adopted the World-Class Instruction Design and Assessment standards as the Colorado English Language Proficiency standards. The standards, which center on the English language needed and used by English Language Learners (ELLs) to succeed in school, exceed minimum legal requirements. They guide all educators who teach ELLs and help students' access grade level academic content while learning English.

Colorado English Language Proficiency Standards are available at:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/CoEngLangProf/StateStandards.asp>

See also Standard III, Element B.

- **District's plan of instruction.**

Instructional objectives and implementation of instruction should always align to state academic standards and district approved curriculum. When developing lesson plans, teachers should reference their district's scope and sequence and/or units of study or curriculum maps.

See also Standard III, Elements B and G.



[Click here to go back to the table of contents and view the resource guide in its entirety.](#)