

Teacher Quality Standard II

Teachers establish a safe, inclusive and respectful learning environment for a diverse population of students.

The most important action an effective teacher takes at the beginning of the year is creating a climate for learning.

—Mary Beth Blegan, former U.S. Department of Education teacher-in-residence

A positive classroom environment enhances the academic achievement of all students, promotes appropriate classroom behavior, and is welcoming to families and adults. A respect for diversity and the uniqueness of each individual is valued. A sense of community is created in which members encourage and promote the learning of each other through collaboration, communication, and mutual respect as they work to achieve individual and common goals.

Element F

Teachers create a learning environment characterized by acceptable student behavior, efficient use of time and appropriate intervention strategies.

Effective classroom management is essentially invisible, because when students are well-behaved and engaged, the focus is on instruction and learning.

—Rick Smith

Professional practices referenced under each element of the Rubric for Evaluating Colorado Teachers are cumulative. Therefore, for teachers to be proficient in creating a learning environment characterized by acceptable student behavior, they must communicate clear behavioral expectations and hold students accountable to adhere to their expectations. Teachers must also implement procedures that create a safe and orderly learning environment that results in instructional time being maximized by all students.

ACCOMPLISHED AND EXEMPLARY RATING LEVELS

The impact of a proficient implementation of the professional practices referenced in Element F will be students who stay on task during class, abide by school and class rules, and accept responsibility for themselves while also helping other students stay on task.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES: 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.**

It is important to use effective management strategies to facilitate learning and avoid disruptions. In a smoothly running classroom, standards of conduct must be inferred because an observer may not witness explicit attention to those standards. Rather, student behavior indicates that a teacher has established those standards at the beginning of the year and has maintained them consistently. In a well-managed classroom, students are able to explain the agreed-upon standards of conduct and monitor their own behavior. (Danielson, 2007, p. 57)



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Classroom Examples

All content areas: Students are working on Colorado Academic Standard 3: Emotional and Social Wellness in Health, Grade Level Expectation 1: Utilize knowledge and skills to treat self and others with care and respect. *(Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards)*

On the third-grade classroom wall, expectations for student behavior are displayed in a manner that can be easily read by all students. (Pictures of students displaying each expectation may be included on the chart to support younger students and second-language speakers.) Although the teacher communicated and taught these expectations at the beginning of the school year, he continues to use the chart to both redirect student behavior and to recognize appropriate behavior. *(Provides clear expectations to guide student classroom behavior.)*

Students know that the learning objective and criteria for student success are always displayed at the front of the room. Baskets for handouts and homework are labeled and placed near the door so they are easily accessible when students enter the classroom. The teacher, or student helper, ensures they are emptied at the end of each class period, and new handouts are placed in the basket as needed. Materials and learning stations are clearly labeled in students' native languages. *(Maintains a safe and orderly environment.)* The teacher ensures the room stays organized by establishing procedures for accessing and organizing materials and assigning jobs that place the responsibility for maintaining order and organization on the students. *(Puts procedures in place to maximize instructional time.)*



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