

## Teacher Quality Standard III

**Teachers plan and deliver effective instruction and create an environment that facilitates learning for their students.**

Study after study shows the single most important factor determining the quality of the education a child receives is the quality of the teacher. Quality teachers have knowledge of content, curriculum, and standards. They are able to plan and implement instructional strategies in an effective and purposeful manner that enhances student learning and independence. Research shows that when implemented effectively and purposefully, the professional practices referenced in Standard III can result in an environment in which all students can learn and succeed.

### Element A

**Teachers demonstrate knowledge of current developmental science, the ways in which learning takes place, and the appropriate levels of intellectual, social, and emotional development of their students.**

*Not all students are alike. We must not differentiate who will learn what but rather how we will teach so that all students have access to, and support and guidance in, mastering the content.*

—Paula Rutherford

Professional practices referenced under each element of the Rubric for Evaluating Colorado Teachers are cumulative. Therefore, for teachers to be proficient in the application of current developmental science to address student needs, they must effectively differentiate instruction and modify content based on research of current studies and knowledge of students' intellectual, social, and emotional development. Proficient teachers expand their knowledge through collaboration with colleagues and apply this knowledge to improve the quality of lessons.

#### **BASIC RATING LEVEL**

##### **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES: THE TEACHER:**

- ***Modifies content to assure that students are able to work at their ability levels.***

**Differentiated content** adopts the concept of “readiness.” Some students will need to go back to prerequisite **content** in order to move ahead, when advanced learners may need to move ahead before their classmates are ready to do so, and when student Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) direct the teacher to change the content itself.

*Refer to these internal resources for additional information:*

- **Research on Differentiation of Content**  
Document defines content and discusses what is needed for it to be differentiated, how teachers can accomplish the differentiation, and why it is important to do so.
- **Examples of Modifications of Content**  
Document provides examples of this professional practice.



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