

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 B

Teachers plan and consistently deliver instruction that draws on results of student assessments, is aligned to academic standards and advances students' level of content knowledge and skills.

Effective assessment can motivate the unmotivated, restore the desire to learn, encourage students to keep learning, and ultimately increase student achievement.

—Richard Stiggins

Professional practices referenced under each element of the Rubric for Evaluating Colorado Teachers are cumulative. Therefore, for teachers to be proficient in delivering instruction that is aligned to academic standards and student assessment data, they must create specific student outcomes and monitor student performance in order to make necessary adjustments in their instructional planning as well as “in-the-moment” adjustments that support students in mastering learning objectives. Armed with knowledge of students’ strengths and areas of need, teachers encourage and motivate students to take risks that increase their conceptual understanding of content and effective application of skills.

See also Standard III, Element H and Standard IV, Element A.

PROFICIENT RATING LEVEL

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES: THE TEACHER:

- *Encourages students to take academic risks.*



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

Creating an environment that promotes risk taking:

- The freedom to make mistakes and learn from them is critical for risk taking. Teachers should teach students the value of making mistakes during the learning process. Learning from mistakes enables students and teachers to identify strengths and next steps.
- Getting it wrong and then getting it right is one of the fundamental processes for schooling. Teachers should respond to both parts of the sequence, the wrong and right, as completely normal. (Lemov, 2010, p. 222)
- Emphasis needs to be placed on the value of learning, rather than grades or test scores. Students need to find meaning in learning the content or skill itself.
- Demonstrate to students that their success is dependent upon their effort, rather than innate ability. This understanding can motivate students to take risks in areas outside of their “comfort zone.”

In Carol Dweck’s book *Mindset*, she describes the importance of teaching students that success is based on effort and resilience, as opposed to talent and intelligence.

In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talents are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. Virtually all great people have had these qualities. It is important for teachers to communicate to students, you are a developing person, and I am interested in your development. (Dweck, 2006)

Refer to this external resource for additional information:

- Interview: How Can Teachers Develop Students' Motivation — and Success? with Carol Dweck by Education World
http://www.educationworld.com/a_issues/chat/chat010.shtml

Common challenges:

- ***Test scores and grades are how schools are evaluated:*** These are an important part of a school’s and teacher’s accountability. However, many students have high grades and test scores, but do not have the skills to persist when tasks become challenging. Students must understand that struggle is part of the learning process and is a necessary element for problem solving in the real world. They need to develop the confidence to take risks and persevere even when challenges arise.
 - ***Students aren’t motivated to move beyond their “comfort zone”:*** Make sure that an environment in which mistakes are seen as part of the learning process has been established. Students need to know that the teacher and their peers are not looking to catch them making mistakes, but to encourage them to extend their thinking. Provide examples of individuals who have persevered through mistakes in order to achieve success.
- ***Makes sure students meet learning objectives while increasing mastery levels.***



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

As teachers become proficient in using assessments that are based on explicit student outcomes and required skills, they will be able to use the collected data to ensure students are meeting learning objectives. Teachers then should provide the supports and encouragement necessary for students to continue increasing their levels of mastery. Teachers might provide opportunities for students to apply the standards (skills, content, and concepts) in novel and/or “real-world” situations *or* allow students to advance vertically within the standards (beyond the current grade level). The approach taken should be based on content and student needs.



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