

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 F

Teachers provide students with opportunities to work in teams and develop leadership qualities.

When learning groups are established successfully, positive independence results in students' recognizing that their individual success is inextricably linked to the success of every other member of the group.

—Frey, Fisher, & Everlove

Professional practices referenced under each element of the Rubric for Evaluating Colorado Teachers are cumulative. Therefore, for teachers to be proficient in providing students with opportunities to work in teams and develop leadership qualities, students must be included in individual and group activities that are flexible and adjusted based on lesson objectives and student needs. To ensure group activities result in high levels of student engagement and increase student learning, lesson plans must include opportunities for students to participate using various roles and modes of communication that create opportunities for students to learn from each other.

ACCOMPLISHED AND EXEMPLARY RATING LEVELS

The impact of a proficient implementation of the professional practices referenced in Element F will be students who are able to assume leadership roles by fulfilling assigned roles and participating in teams in ways that build trust and ownership of ideas among team members. Interactions among team members will be positive and supportive of all members in reaching mastery of learning outcomes.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES: 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.***



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An essential component of cooperative learning is group processing. Group processing exists when group members discuss how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships. Groups need to describe what member actions are helpful and unhelpful and make decisions about what behaviors to continue or change. Continuous improvement of the process of learning results from the careful analysis of how members are working together.

Classroom Examples

Early childhood: Kindergarten students are working on Colorado Academic Standard 1: Oral Expression and Listening, Grade Level Expectation 2-- Communication relies on effective verbal and nonverbal skills. *(Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards)*

The teacher implements group learning using centers in her classroom, but she observes that the classroom is noisy and many students are off-task. An observer notes that students move from one center to another when the bell rings, but expectations for what students should accomplish at the centers is unclear. This insight helps the teacher realize the importance of having clear expectations and accountability for what students do in groups independently. By answering the questions below, she is able to construct reasonable outcomes for each center.

- What learning outcome do I expect students to accomplish at each center?
- How will students work individually and with peers at each center?
- How will students work with the materials at each center?
- How will I communicate expectations to students? *(Includes all students in individual and group activities. Provide opportunities for students to participate using various roles and modes of communication.)*

She then creates and displays a visual with text and graphics at each center for everyone to reference. This chart provides steps for using materials appropriately and contains vocabulary related to the center's outcome. *(Varies group size, composition, and tasks to create opportunities for students to learn from each other.)* Clear expectations allow students to meet learning objectives and interact cooperatively with one another.

High school civics: Students are working on the Colorado Academic Standard 4: Civics, Grade Level Expectation 2—Purposes of and limitations on the foundations, structures and functions of government. *(Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards)*



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Students are learning to what extent the events of September 11, 2001, had an impact on governmental decisions. The teacher facilitates a discussion on the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Homeland Security, which was created immediately after the September 11 attacks and is charged with the protection of U.S. citizens within our borders. Students are told that Homeland Security recommends all citizens prepare an emergency response plan. Working in collaborative groups of four, students explore the elements needed to create an effective plan as outlined on the Homeland Security website. Students are provided a list of individuals they may contact for additional information, i.e., local and federal Homeland Security employees, policemen, etc. *(Includes all students in individual and group activities.)* They identify a potential problem within their community or school that would require an emergency response and establish an appropriate plan for the problem. *(Varies group size, composition, and tasks to create opportunities for students to learn from each other.)* Upon completion, students present their plans to the appropriate community or school leadership in charge of adopting emergency response plans. Each group member is responsible for presenting a specific aspect of the plan to the class. *(Provide opportunities for students to participate using various roles and modes of communication. Students fulfill their assigned roles within the team.)* Students use a rubric to evaluate each group's plan and provide feedback to peers. *(Varies group size, composition, and tasks to create opportunities for students to learn from each other.)*

Planning/Coaching Questions

- How will all students be included in individual and group activities?
- How will I decide on the instructional grouping of students during a lesson?
- How will I communicate to students their individual and group responsibilities?
- How will I hold individual students and groups accountable?
- How will I assess the learning of groups and individuals?



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