

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 G

Teachers communicate effectively, making learning objectives clear and providing appropriate models of language.

*Talk can cure, and talk can foster constructive change. But it must be the right kind of talk.
—Thomas Gordon, Teacher Effectiveness Training*

Professional practices referenced under each element of the Rubric for Evaluating Colorado Teachers are cumulative. Therefore, for teachers to be proficient in communicating clear learning objectives, they should provide a model of effective communication and provide opportunities for students to communicate with one another about their learning.

BASIC RATING LEVEL

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES: THE TEACHER:

- ***Communicates effectively with students.***

Teaching is more than imparting knowledge to students. For students to learn and understand the content being taught, teachers must be able to communicate effectively with each student.

Communicating effectively with students helps to ensure learning and behavior expectations are clearly understood by students. Communication is the interchange of information. Therefore, the term “**communicates**” implies that students know and understand a teacher’s expectations.

Effective communication involves the skills of speaking and listening as well as nonverbal and interpersonal skills.



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See also Standard II, Element F.

Refer to this internal resource for additional information:

- Communicating Effectively with Students
Document provides strategies for effectively communicating learning objectives to students.

When students' responses or questions lack clarity or are emotionally charged, the manner in which a teacher responds can support or inhibit communication. Teachers can display respect for students' ideas and promote further communication by summarizing or paraphrasing their comments.

- Summarizing
Summarizing requires teachers to listen and respond for accuracy and emphasis. Summarizing information can ensure that all students are clear on what has been discussed.

Examples of starter phrases that can lead to summarizing statements:

- "There seem to be some key ideas expressed here..."
- "If I understand you, you feel this way about [describe]..."
- "I think we agree on this. What we are saying is that we intend to..."
- "In talking about this issue, we have come up with three main points..."
- Paraphrasing
Paraphrasing is restating what someone said in an objective manner even when emotions may be interfering. This form of communication can be applied when there is a need to sort out fact from emotion or excitement.

Examples of starter phrases that can lead to paraphrasing statements:

- "You are saying..."
- "In other words..."
- "I gather that..."
- "If I understand what you are saying..."
- "You're suggesting..."
- "So, you..."
- "So there are a couple of things going on..."
- "You're thinking..."
- "You're wondering..."
- "You're feeling..."



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Communicating Learning Objectives

According to Marzano (2007), “Arguably, the most basic issue a teacher can consider is what she will do to establish and communicate learning goals, track student progress, and celebrate success.”

Implementing effective lessons aligned to Colorado Academic Standards depends upon a teacher’s ability to create and communicate clearly defined learning objectives appropriate for students and the content being taught. If a teacher is not clear about what she wants students to know and be able to do as a result of the lesson, it is difficult for the lesson to be properly developed or implemented. Both the students and the teacher must understand what is to be accomplished during each lesson and the goal for student learning.

See also Standard I, Element A.

Communicating learning objectives effectively goes beyond posting and/or stating an objective at the beginning of a lesson. It requires the teacher and students to continually reference the objective and ensure that each element of a lesson aligns to and supports the lesson goal.

Refer to these external resources for additional information:

- Article: “Objectives That Students Understand” by Robert Marzano
http://tcrpalliance.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/objectives_objectives-that-students-understand.pdf.
Article explains how teachers can effectively write learning objectives that are clear to students.
- Article: “What Drives Instruction” by Mark Prosis
<http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol7/702-prosis.aspx>
Article describes ways teachers can use essential questions to communicate learning objectives and engage students.
- Technique: “Post It” from Teach Like a Champion: 49 Techniques that Put Students on the Path to College, by Doug Lemov, pages 63-64
Techniques explain rationale for teachers visually displaying learning objectives.

Refer to this internal resource for additional information:

- Communicating Learning Objectives
Document provides strategies for effectively communicating learning objectives to students.



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