

2012  
2013

# Providence Schools

Framework for Effective Teaching

Providence  
Schools



# Framework for Effective Teaching

## introductory message from Dr. Susan Lusi

July 27, 2012

Dear Providence Educators,

As I reflect on my first year back in PPSD, I have been continually inspired by our students' talents, resilience, and great energy. And I firmly believe that you, the educators in our schools, are the key to unleashing their great potential and succeeding in a world of possibilities.

Because so much depends on our ability to serve our students with excellence, we are introducing the Providence Framework for Effective Teaching. The Framework arrives at a crucial time for Providence Schools – a time in which we need to pull together and do our work in ways that will dramatically improve student achievement. To do this, we need a common language and framework for talking about the kind of teaching we want for our students in every classroom.

We know that teaching is complex and much more than a bell-to-bell endeavor. Effective teaching is a cycle of preparation, instruction and reflection. The Framework for Effective Teaching illustrates this cycle with examples and resources. Further, the Framework assists teachers in thinking about how to make learning accessible and engaging for all students.

Our fall Instructional Culture Insight Survey results indicated that fewer than 65% of Providence educators agree that teachers share a common vision for effective teaching. We must work together to establish a common vision for effective teaching in our district. Further, we must ensure alignment between our vision of effective teaching, our district's systems and processes that support quality teaching, and the educator evaluation system. In concert with the release of this Framework, the Division of Teaching and Learning and the Office of Performance Management are working to ensure coordination between our vision of teaching, implementation of the Common Core standards, educator evaluation, and the supports needed for teachers and administrators to do this work well.

This document is a small step in moving our district forward by providing us with a vision. To realize this vision, we must create an instructional culture that fosters professional growth and collaboration. This work is pivotal to improving student outcomes. By establishing a clear vision of effective teaching, educators will have a common language and set of expectations in which to anchor our collaborative work.

Engaging in this effort together recognizes the shared desire and responsibility we all have to ensure that each of our students is on the path to success. Let us approach this year with renewed energy, trust and focus.

With Great Respect for All You Do,

Susan F. Lusi, Ph.D.  
Superintendent



**In its endeavor to be a national leader in educating urban youth, the Division of Teaching and Learning developed the first version of The Framework for Effective Teaching. According to the Providence School Board's 2008 Strategic Direction Policy, **we must do things differently to meet the needs of our students.** The Framework demonstrates how the current teachers and administrators in Providence Schools are doing things differently.**

To bring about dramatic positive improvements in student outcomes, the Providence School Board adopted a Strategic Direction Policy that articulates an organized, coherent framework for an Aligned Instruction System that articulates the connections between curriculum, assessment, and professional development. These connections are intended to directly and effectively support the students, teachers, administrators, parents and school community – each one a valuable stakeholder in the district's core business of teaching and learning.

The Framework for Effective Teaching supports the connections between curriculum, assessment and professional development by providing a coherent classroom resource for teachers and administrators. The Framework serves as a central resource to support teachers as they persist to develop their craft by illustrating the principles within the teaching cycle - preparation, instruction and reflection. As a resource, the Framework complements district professional development, educator evaluation, curricular guidance and intervention program content.

The Framework for Effective Teaching principles focus, most importantly, on the needs of all Providence students. The Framework impresses upon teachers how differentiated instruction is the embodiment of the district's core value to appreciate our diversity. As the district persists to fulfill its mission to prepare all students to succeed in the nation's colleges and universities, and in their chosen profession, instruction - the way in which the curriculum is presented - will focus on the needs of students. In this way, The Framework for Effective Teaching leaves no doubt to stakeholders that the teachers and administrators of Providence Schools embracing the Framework are doing things differently.

## About the Providence Public School District

The Providence Public School District is the largest school district in Rhode Island, serving a culturally diverse population of 23,561 students. The racial and ethnic breakdown of the student population is as follows: 19 percent Black, 63 percent Hispanic, 9 percent White, 5 percent Asian, 3 percent Multi-racial and 1 percent Native American. Providence, like many urban school districts, faces challenges in educating our students, many of whom face significant barriers to learning, including poverty, limited language proficiency, and special education needs. 86 percent are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch; nearly 60 percent come from homes where English is not the primary language spoken; and 17 percent receive special education services to support their learning.

The Providence Public School District is composed of 22 elementary schools, 6 middle schools, 9 high schools, 2 charter schools, and 1 school for students with significant disabilities. A 9-member School Board, appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council, oversees the school district. The School Board has the authority and responsibility for developing policy to guide the management and strategic direction of the school district.

## About TNTP

TNTP strives to end the injustice of educational inequality by providing excellent teachers to the students who need them most and by advancing policies and practices that ensure effective teaching in every classroom. A national nonprofit organization founded by teachers, TNTP is driven by the knowledge that effective teachers have a greater impact on student achievement than any other school factor. For more information, please visit [www.tntp.org](http://www.tntp.org).

## ***Table of Contents***

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Prepare</b>	
<b>Instruction</b>	
<b>P1</b> Develop time-bound student achievement goals	5
<b>P2</b> Master their content and pedagogical tactics	7
<b>P3</b> Create standards-based unit plans	9
<b>P4</b> Create standards-based assessments	11
<b>P5</b> Create focused lesson plans with clear objectives	13
<b>P6</b> Anticipate misconceptions	15
<b>Learning Environment</b>	
<b>P7</b> Build a collaborative culture for learning	17
<b>P8</b> Establish a firm behavior management system	19
<b>P9</b> Develop classroom procedures, rituals and routines	21
<b>P10</b> Organize classroom space and materials	22
<b>Teach</b>	
<b>T1</b> Lead focused, objective-driven lessons	24
<b>T2</b> Present content clearly	27
<b>T3</b> Engage all students at all levels in rigorous learning activities	29
<b>T4</b> Provide multiple ways for students to interact with content	31
<b>T5</b> Check for understanding	33
<b>T6</b> Clarify misconceptions	35
<b>T7</b> Push for deeper understanding through effective questioning	37
<b>T8</b> Maximize instructional time	39
<b>T9</b> Create a community of learners	41
<b>Evaluate for Student Achievement</b>	
<b>E1</b> Assess student progress	43
<b>E2</b> Track student achievement data	46
<b>E3</b> Re-teach in response to data	48
<b>E4</b> Reflect on data to improve practice	49

# Prepare

## Instruction

### P1

Effective teachers develop time-bound student achievement goals.

#### Why this matters

Developing time-bound student achievement goals can improve classroom results by:

*Ambitious, measurable and time-bound student achievement goals give both teachers and students a sense of direction and purpose for every moment in the classroom.*

Clarifying to teachers what students should know and be able to do by the end of a year, semester, unit or lesson	Driving teacher's decision-making about instructional methods and materials
Informing teachers' design of individual scaffolds and supports	Providing clear academic expectations to students

When students have clear, attainable, relevant goals, and are able to connect their daily tasks back to them, they are able to focus on achieving those goals. By setting and working toward ambitious goals, a sense of urgency and perseverance around attaining them within the given timeframe is shared by both teachers and students.

## What this looks like

Effective teachers develop ambitious and measurable student achievement goals that align to content standards for each increment of instruction (i.e. year, semester, unit, or lesson).

**Ambitious goals drive students to achieve more than one year's worth of academic progress in a given school year.**

**Measurable goals can be clearly assessed to allow teachers, students, administrators and parents to communicate and monitor student progress toward achievement.**

In an effective teacher's classroom, students are able to communicate their goals in a developmentally appropriate manner that shows understanding, not merely memorization. Additionally, students in an effective teacher's classroom should be able to connect their learning activities back to ambitious and measurable goals at any time.

## What this doesn't look like

Without achievement goals, students cannot connect their learning activities to objectives or measure their progress. Lessons may be unclear, units may be disjointed and pacing may be off over the course of an entire year. Additionally, without goals to measure progress by, there may not be any real way of knowing whether students are progressing. Without setting clear, ambitious, measurable goals, and checking student progress toward meeting them regularly, valuable instructional time is wasted and students are at risk of failure.

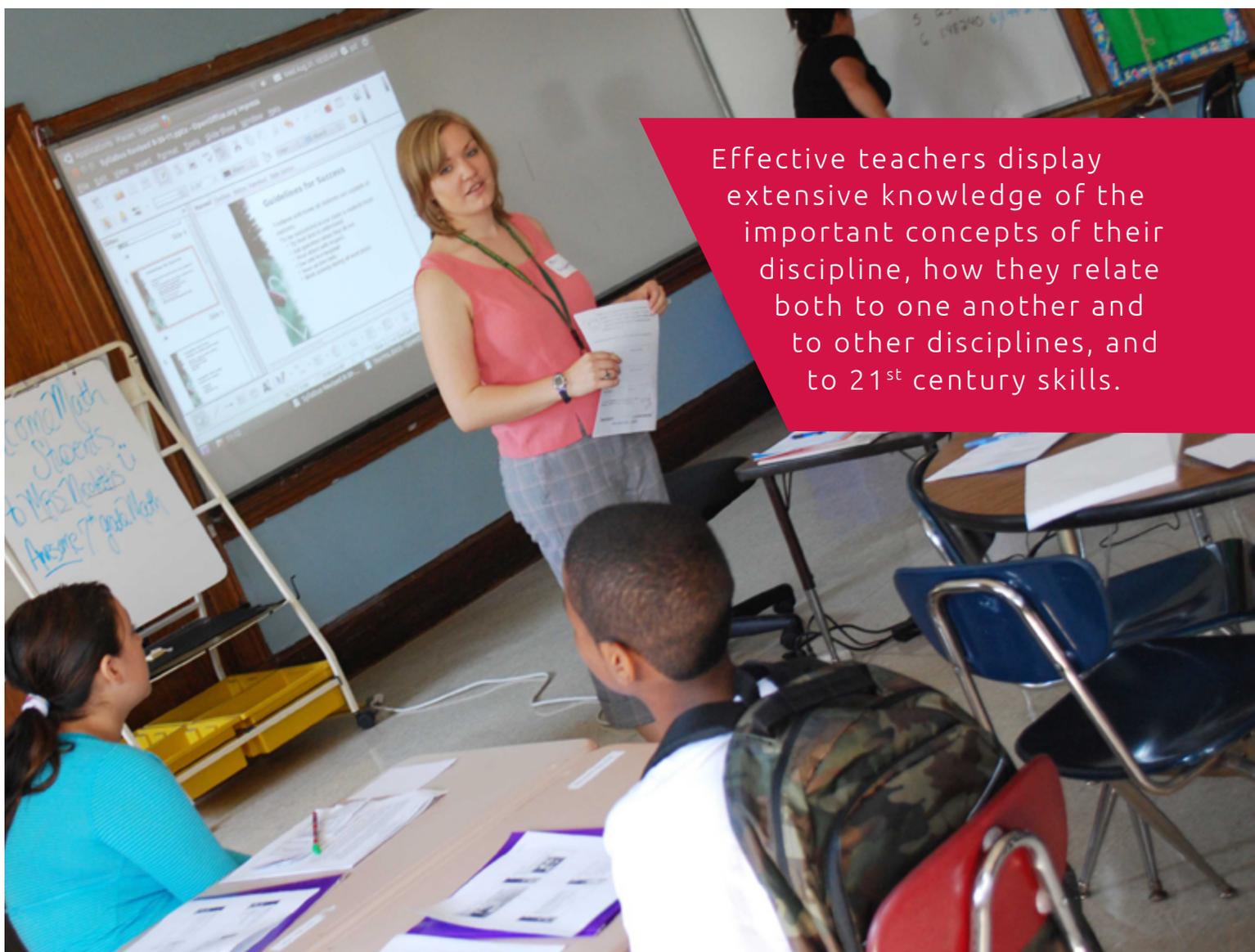


# P2

## Effective teachers master their content and pedagogical tactics.

### Why this matters

Teachers that have a deep understanding of their content are confident in teaching the important ideas of discipline from a variety of approaches to meet the needs of every student in their classroom, including linguistically and culturally diverse students, those with IEPs and other different types of learners. With mastery of their content, teachers can focus their preparation time on honing a wide range of pedagogical skills and tactics as well as embed the use of appropriate technology to ensure that every student meets the learning objectives.



Effective teachers display extensive knowledge of the important concepts of their discipline, how they relate both to one another and to other disciplines, and to 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

## What this looks like

An effective teacher knows that every student in their class does not learn in exactly the same way. It is not enough for a teacher to be a master of their content alone. Effective teachers understand the prerequisite knowledge their students must have in order to achieve a learning objective and provide a link to students' cognitive learning experiences. Effective teachers understand how linguistically and culturally diverse populations, as well as those with IEPs, may need more explicit or different types of supports to cognitive learning experiences.

Effective teachers design their instruction to:

- Present information and content in different ways
- Support the learning of special populations, both culturally and linguistically diverse
- Support the learning of special populations, including students with IEPs/504 plans
- Differentiate the ways students can express whaty they know
- Build 21st century skills

## What this doesn't look like

When delivering instruction without content mastery, it is difficult to correct student misunderstandings. It can be challenging to pay attention to the prerequisite knowledge a student must have in order to master new concepts. Therefore, it can be impossible to provide an appropriate entry point into the lesson. With limited content mastery, pedagogical techniques are limited and those utilized may only work for a portion of students and alienate special populations.

# P3

## Effective teachers create standards-based unit plans.

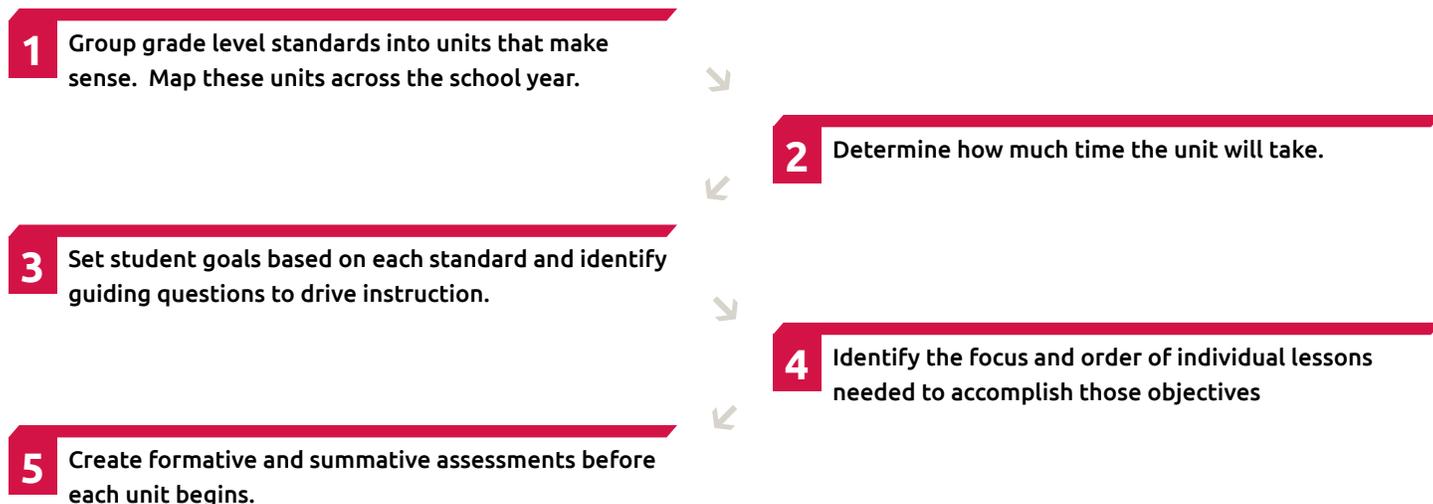
### Why this matters

By designing a unit plan with the end in mind, teachers create lesson plans focused on specific student achievement outcomes. Effective teachers logically group content standards into units of study, identify several guiding questions to drive student learning and design formative and summative assessments for their units. Each lesson within a unit is taught in a logical order, with each day's learning objective building off the previous day's learning objective.

### What this looks like

Effective teachers utilize the district's Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum or intervention programs as a starting point for planning and recognize that instructional programs and resources are tools to support the delivery of these plans. Further, effective teachers think about the connections between the standards in each unit as they map student learning expectations across the school year. Planning is required to appropriately deliver scripted, intervention programs. While these research-based programs provide clear unit and lesson guidance, a teacher must plan for engagement and may need to add elements to a scripted lesson or adjust pacing to best meet the diverse needs of students.

### Effective teachers carefully plan each unit using the following steps:



Assessments are an integral part of standards-based unit design.

Effective teachers use:

### **Formative assessments**

to assist and guide classroom instruction. Types of formative assessment include informal observation, worksheets, short quizzes, exit slips and diagnostic tests. This enables the teacher to assess how well students understand the material.

### **Formative assessments**

to better design their course of instruction but do not typically use the results as contributing factors to a student's grade.

### **Summative assessments**

to evaluate the learning of students and the effectiveness of the instruction at the end of a unit.

## What this doesn't look like

Curriculum guidance is not a substitute for a unit plan. The Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum, instructional kits and materials are valuable instructional planning tools but they are not the plan themselves. The district's curriculum frameworks provide an understanding of what should be taught across the year. District teachers and administrators collaborated to develop standards-driven units to guide teacher planning efforts.

It is critical to keep in mind that effective instruction results from organizing, aligning and synthesizing all of these resources to create a focused unit plan that provides for differentiation to appropriately support the diverse needs of students. Eliminating those preparation steps leaves a unit plan missing some or all of these combined elements.

Planning is required to appropriately deliver scripted, intervention programs. Without reviewing unit goals and lesson objectives, teachers are unable to add to the program when needed to support diverse student needs. A lack of planning for the delivery of intervention programs results in poorly paced, disconnected learning for students.

# P4

## Effective teachers create standards-based assessments.

### Why this matters

Effective teachers constantly assess students to determine if students are meeting their instructional goals, reflecting on assessment results to adjust instruction. There are two types of assessments that an effective teacher will utilize in the course of a unit or lesson: formative assessments and summative assessments.

#### **Formative assessments**

Help monitor student learning and uncover any student misconceptions or misunderstandings so instruction can be adjusted.

#### **Summative assessments**

Help evaluate the learning of students and the effectiveness of instruction at the end of a unit.

An effective teacher creates a unit plan for each subject based on the standards from within the Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum and any core and intervention programs utilized in the classroom. Oftentimes, core and intervention programs come with their own assessments. Effective teachers analyze and modify these as well as create their own assessments tied directly to the standards each unit is addressing.

## What this looks like

In designing assessments, effective teachers:

- ◆ **Identify** essential standards to test at various intervals throughout the year (semester, trimester, unit, week, lesson)
- ◆ **Develop** item specifications for each standard addressed. For example, type of question, purpose of question (to be used as a diagnostic or to determine mastery), how question is presented and answer recorded, and level of complexity.
- ◆ **Map** all items to standards and ensure that items meet the cognitive demand of the specified standard(s).
- ◆ **Develop** or select questions that measure selected standards several times.
- ◆ **Prepare** a sufficient number of items to assess each standard. Interpretation of student proficiency on each assessed standard will be based on viewing the data collectively for item sets. If there are too few items it is difficult to determine whether a student has mastered the standard or not.

Effective teachers modify and adapt assessments to meet special population students' needs (linguistically and culturally diverse students as well as students with IEPs/504 plans) while maintaining the strength of the assessment in indicating student proficiency. Additionally, effective teachers involve students in the creation of assessments (i.e. rubrics, criteria charts), exemplars. They incorporate peer and student self-assessment as part of the process for improving student work.

## What this doesn't look like

Without assessing students often, using both formative and summative assessments, teachers have no way of knowing whether or not their students are learning. Teachers who rely solely on one type of assessment do not gather sufficient data to understand their students' learning. If a teacher relies only on program or pre-made assessments, results yield only some indication of student learning, but it may not be the complete picture of what they need to learn. If a teacher does not go through the process of mapping all assessment items back to the standards, and ensuring that all standards are taught and assessed, students receive incomplete instruction. By not modifying and differentiating assessments based on the needs of special populations of students, teachers miss out on assessment data that shows what students really know.

# P5

## Effective teachers create focused lesson plans with clear objectives.

### Why this matters

Daily lesson planning ensures the construction of meaningful and complete learning experiences for every learner in the classroom. Planning for these learning experiences requires careful consideration. When planning focused lessons with clear objectives, a teacher must consider the different types of learners in the class, special populations of students including culturally and linguistically diverse students as well as those with IEPs/504 plans, the highest-impact instructional materials and strategies, the most effective utilization of time and the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners.

*When lessons are planned with student interest, student level and student performance in mind, they facilitate authentic learning and inspire higher levels of student engagement, motivation and performance.*

Clear lesson objectives give teachers a starting point for determining the means by which they will ensure all learners in their class achieve the objectives. Clearly defined lesson objectives paired with effective and differentiated instructional strategies result in all students moving toward mastery.

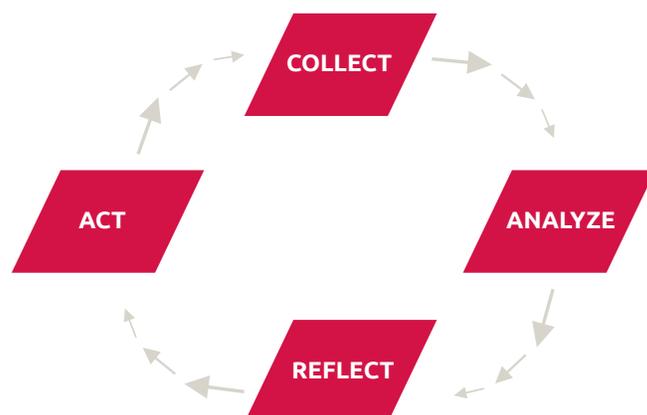


## What this looks like

When effective teachers create lesson plans they:

- ◆ **Consider the goals of the unit and guiding questions to determine a focused lesson objective**
- ◆ **Ensure that the lesson objective(s) aligns with the content standards**
- ◆ **Consider the needs of learners in their class to provide multiple means of representation, action, expression and engagements**
- ◆ **Consider the supports needed by linguistically and culturally diverse students as well as those students with IEPs/504 plans to provide specific modifications and supports**
- ◆ **Identify, select and design instructional strategies, resources and activities that will move all learners toward mastery of the objective**
- ◆ **Determine how mastery will be assessed**

Effective teachers constantly assess all of their students in multiple ways to create a wealth of data indicating a student's progress toward mastery. Effective teachers reflect on this data to adjust their instruction and inform the planning of their daily lessons.



## What this doesn't look like

Instructional time is lost without clearly defined objectives for every lesson. Likewise, without a clearly defined objective for each lesson, it is difficult to make thoughtful decisions around instructional methods, strategies and materials to be used during the lesson. Finally, knowing whether or not students are moving toward mastery of all the standards cannot happen when no clearly-defined objective based on the standard exists.

# P6

## Effective teachers anticipate misconceptions.

### Why this matters

When teachers are able to anticipate the misconceptions of their students, they are able to tailor their instruction to quickly interrupt students' flawed thinking. In doing this, teachers maximize instructional time and get students on the right track early in the lesson.

A crucial piece of anticipating misconceptions is formative assessment. A teacher may be able to think about the students in their class in terms of the topic being presented and predict several misconceptions individual or groups of student may have.

When teachers are able to anticipate the misconceptions of their students, they are able to ... interrupt students' flawed thinking.



## What this looks like

Effective teachers anticipate misconceptions by:

- ◆ **Considering the objective of the lesson and planning initial and follow-up questions to probe student thinking**
  - ◆ What skills and knowledge must students have to learn what I am trying to teach?
  - ◆ Do all of my students have the pre-requisite knowledge required?
  - ◆ Are certain groups stronger than others?
  - ◆ Are there any individuals I need to give special support to?
  - ◆ What supports can I provide my linguistically and culturally diverse students?
  - ◆ What supports do I need to provide my students with IEPs/504 plans?
  - ◆ What is the complexity of the learning I am presenting?
  - ◆ Is this a brand new topic or an extension of a topic they already know something about?
  - ◆ What might be confusing for my students as a group about this topic?
  - ◆ What might be confusing for my English Language Learners?
  - ◆ What might be confusing for my students that are lower performers in this area?
- ◆ **Structuring their lesson to address anticipated misconceptions early in the lesson and in a clear, systematic way**
- ◆ **Checking to see if there are additional misconceptions that were not anticipated**
- ◆ **Coaching students toward the learning objective**

Effective teachers pay attention to the misconceptions of their students, and monitor and adjust their instruction accordingly to ensure that all students meet the learning objective.

## What this doesn't look like

When misconceptions arise, teachers who have not planned for them may not be prepared to teach a concept in multiple different ways in order to clear up the misconception. This can cause further misunderstanding and wasted instructional time. If misconceptions are not anticipated, students are not able to strategically correct flawed thinking.

# Prepare

## Learning Environment

**P7**

Effective teachers build a collaborative culture for learning.

### Why this matters

*Classroom culture can be influenced by larger school culture, but is mostly constructed by the individual teacher and their respective students.*

Classroom culture can be thought of as anything that contributes to a student's experience inside a specific classroom. It summarizes the way teachers and students interact and distinguish what they value as a group. While individual teachers may bring their own personality to a classroom culture, each teacher's role in creating a collaborative culture for learning is the same: to encourage and guide students through rigorous learning activities, create authentic opportunities for students to collaborate with each other, make clear the importance of the content being presented, set clear expectations for learning and achievement and create opportunities for students to feel proud of their work and accomplishments.

## What this looks like

Classroom culture has a significant impact on student engagement, motivation and achievement. A collaborative culture for learning can be characterized in the following way:

- ◆ **Teacher interaction with students**
  - ◆ Reflect sincere respect, caring and cultural understanding
  - ◆ Students trust the teacher with sensitive information and have a mutual respect and open dialogue
- ◆ **Student interactions with each other**
  - ◆ Demonstrate sincere caring for one another
  - ◆ Monitor and respectfully correct their peers' treatment of one another
  - ◆ Assume and demonstrate personal responsibility
- ◆ **Importance of content**
  - ◆ Students show that they value the content by actively participating, exhibiting curiosity and taking initiative
- ◆ **Expectations for learning and achievement**
  - ◆ Instructional goals, activities and assignments as well as classroom interactions convey high expectations for all students and are aligned with content standards
  - ◆ Students have internalized and can verbalize expectations
- ◆ **Student pride in work**
  - ◆ Students know that high quality work is expected
  - ◆ Students work hard and persevere to meet expectations
  - ◆ Students show pride in their efforts and accomplishments

## What this doesn't look like

Just as a collaborative culture for learning in a classroom can significantly impact student engagement, motivation and achievement in a positive way, a negative classroom culture not focused on learning can significantly decrease student engagement, motivation and achievement.

# P8

## Effective teachers establish a firm behavior management system.

### Why this matters

Before teaching and learning can happen inside a classroom, a firm and effective behavior management system needs to be in place. When teachers establish firm expectations for classroom behavior and hold students to meeting them from the very start, instructional time throughout the year is focused on instruction, rather than behavior management.

Firm and effective behavior management systems are the foundation of building a supportive learning environment for students. When students know exactly what is expected of them, are explicitly taught what those expectations look and sound like, and that there are consequences for inappropriate behavior, their instructional time is focused on the content of the lesson rather than on behavior issues in the classroom.

### What this looks like

Effective behavior management systems must be taught explicitly and practiced with students.

#### Tracking Systems

- ◆ Promote desired behaviors
- ◆ Hold students accountable
- ◆ Are easy to manage
- ◆ Provide insightful behavioral data
- ◆ Engage parents

#### Rules / Norms / Agreements

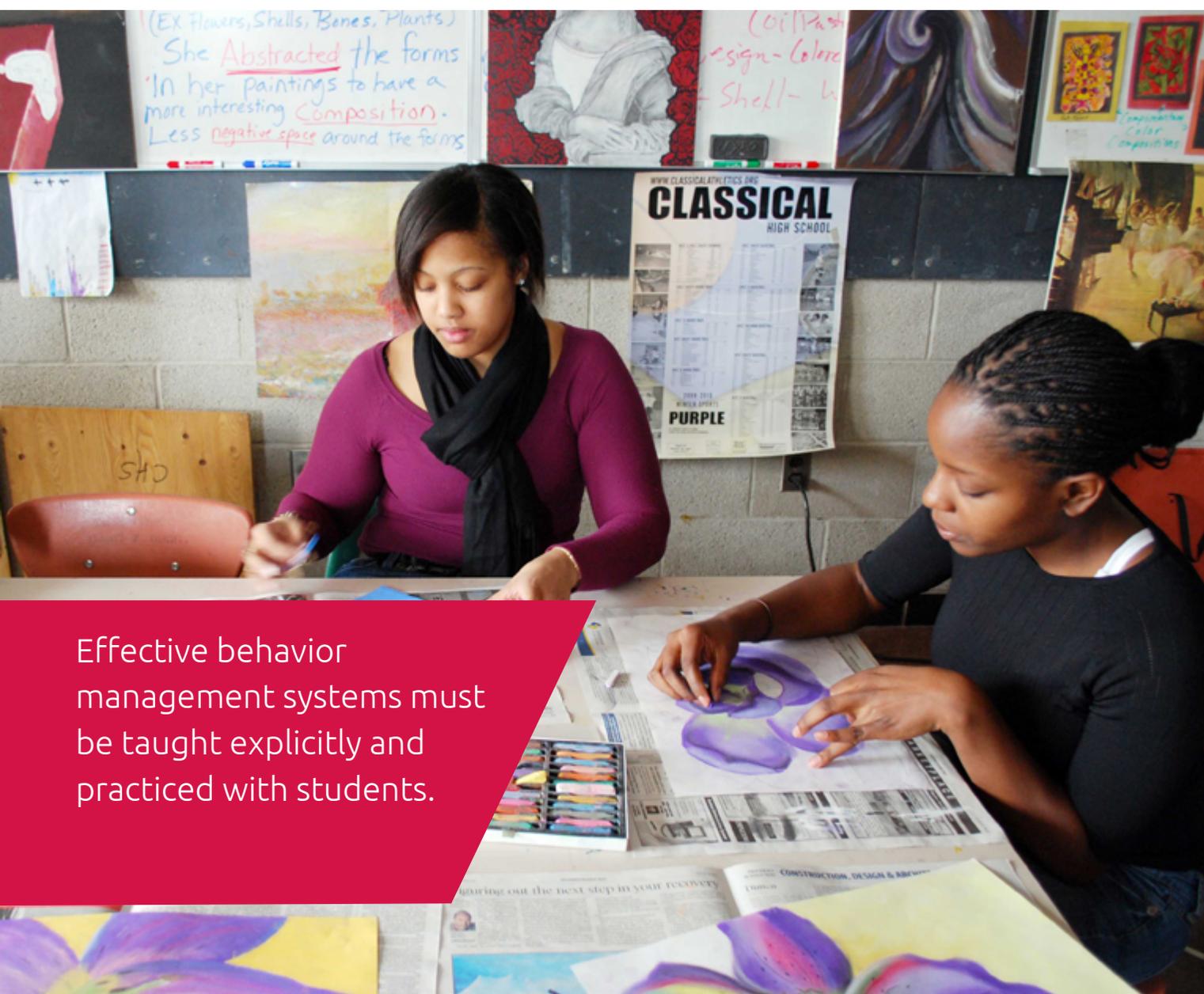
- ◆ Clear
- ◆ Age-appropriate
- ◆ Brief

#### Positive and negative consequences

- ◆ Logical
- ◆ Gradual

## What this doesn't look like

Effective teaching and learning cannot take place in a classroom without an effective behavior management system. If there are no enforced rules or procedures to guide behavior, students can become disrespectful, off-task and out of control. In a classroom like this, it doesn't take long for chaos to become the norm. In these situations, both teachers and students suffer. Teachers cannot teach and students will fall behind because they will not receive instruction.



Effective behavior management systems must be taught explicitly and practiced with students.

# P9

## Effective teachers develop classroom procedures, rituals and routines.

### Why this matters

Effective teaching cannot happen in a chaotic environment. While an effective behavior management system is an important part of preventing disorder in the classroom, establishing classroom procedures, rituals and routines also helps foster a supportive learning environment.

*Classroom instructional time is a precious resource. Teachers make seemingly small decisions all day, every day that maximize or waste instructional time.*

When teachers carefully think through and establish expectations for classroom procedures, rituals and routines, and they are utilized in the classroom; both the teacher and students move efficiently through instruction and instructional time is maximized.

### What this looks like

Effective teachers think through and plan classroom procedures, rituals and routines in advance. Effective teachers explicitly teach students the procedures, rituals and routines giving step-by-step expectations for all common classroom routines, including (but not limited to):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Attendance</li> <li>◆ Correcting work</li> <li>◆ Distribution of materials</li> <li>◆ Handing in work</li> <li>◆ Homework</li> <li>◆ Receiving grades</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Bringing the class to attention</li> <li>◆ Lining up and walking in line</li> <li>◆ Restroom or water breaks</li> <li>◆ Transitions between activities or spaces</li> <li>◆ Working with a partner or working in groups</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

### What this doesn't look like

A classroom without fully implemented procedures, rituals and routines cannot maximize instructional time. Without planning for common classroom routines and teaching behaviors explicitly, students fall behind. More time is spent correcting student misbehavior.

# P10

## Effective teachers organize classroom space and materials.

### Why this matters

The layout of the classroom space, physical arrangement of the desks and organization of learning materials affects interactions between teacher and students. A well-organized classroom creates a safe environment for instruction, reinforces learning and expectations, showcases students work and promotes student achievement.

*A teacher draws upon their knowledge of the students in their class when designing the most effective seating arrangement for a particular group of students.*

When designing seating arrangements, a teacher must consider several factors, including the needs of groups or individuals in the class, the type of learning taking place, the physical parameters of the classroom space and the proximity to learning materials. Some seating arrangements will be more effective than others at fostering meaningful student interactions and discouraging misbehavior and disengagement.

When classroom space is used to reinforce learning and expectations as well as celebrate student work it contributes to a positive learning environment. Bulletin boards with charts outlining key instructional strategies, important vocabulary, expectations and guidelines posted in the classroom support student learning. Exemplars, student work and rubrics posted in the classroom celebrate and encourage student achievement.

### What this looks like

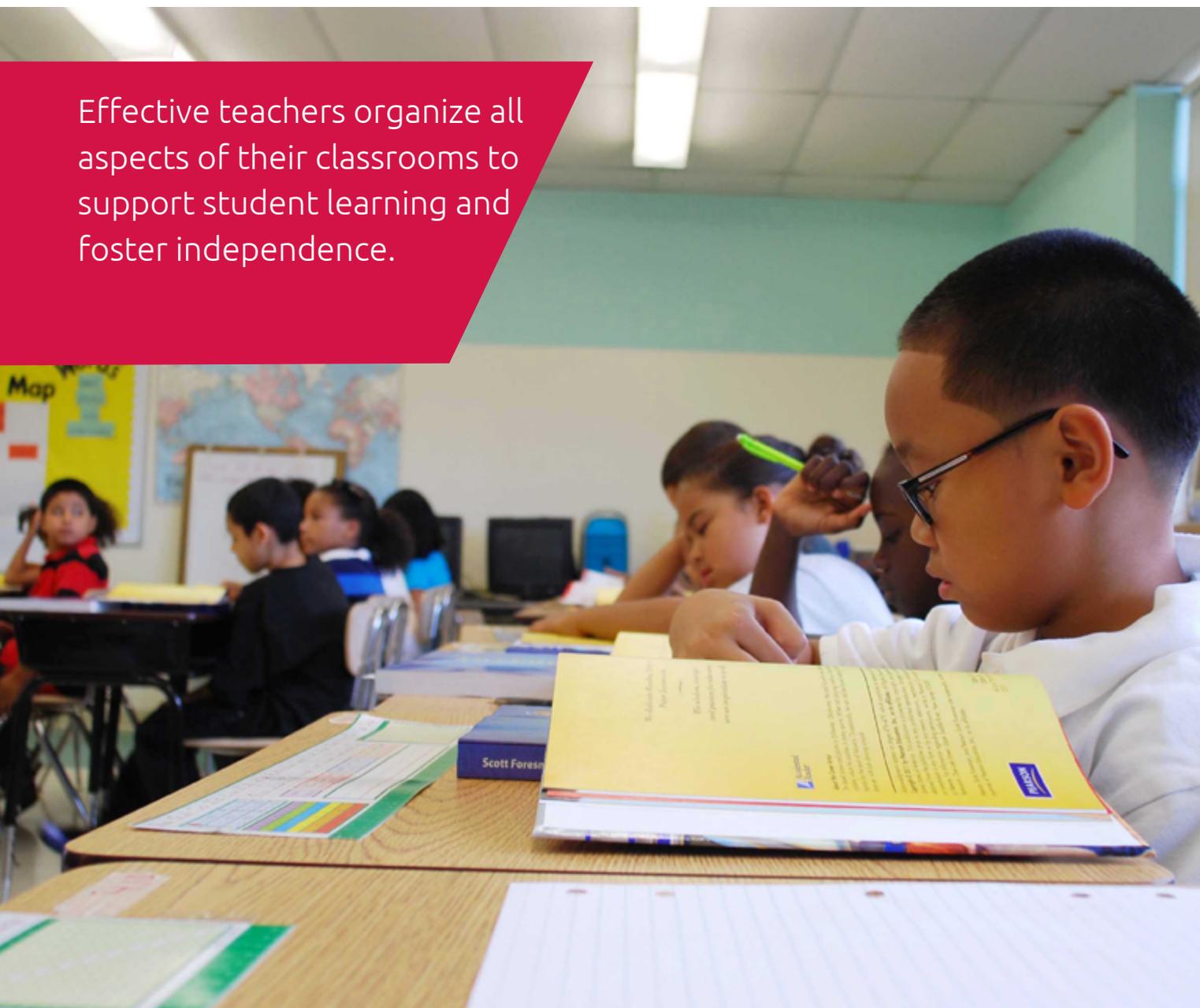
Effective teachers organize all aspects of their classrooms to support student learning and foster independence, including:

- ◆ Seating arrangements that support the needs of groups and individuals within a class and take into account the type of learning taking place
- ◆ Bulletin boards serving as resources to support student learning and expectations while highlighting student work
- ◆ Materials are easily accessible and clearly marked

## What this doesn't look like

A disorganized classroom can lead to wasted instructional time, student misbehavior and student disengagement. An ineffective seating arrangement encourages off-task behavior and creates missed learning opportunities. Classroom walls that lack visual displays supporting instruction and showcase student work, or are decorated with items not related to instruction, waste the opportunity to reinforce learning and expectations. This can contribute to a classroom culture not focused on learning.

Effective teachers organize all aspects of their classrooms to support student learning and foster independence.



# Teach

## T1

Effective teachers lead focused, objective driven lessons.

### Why this matters

*When the objective of the lesson is clear, teachers focus all of their instruction and activities on it, and students are more likely to achieve it.*

Well organized, focused and objective-driven lessons that build upon prior knowledge are the key for facilitating student learning. Further, focused language objectives are necessary alongside content objectives to appropriately scaffold instruction for English language learners and develop English language proficiency.

Teachers can increase student engagement during lessons by ensuring students understand the purpose and relevance of the objective. Teachers that build upon students' background knowledge by connecting the objective to prior learning help students construct new understandings. Effective teachers consider special populations of students in their classroom, and integrate specific supports into their explanations of content.

Explicit, clear explanations of content paired with complete directions for well designed, differentiated learning activities create opportunities for students to build knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers that utilize both formative and summative assessment during lessons are able to evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction and each student's progress toward achieving the objective.

## What this looks like

The following best describes an effective teacher's instruction:

- ♦ The lesson objective is specific, measurable and aligned to content standards. It describes exactly what students are learning and what they should be able to do at the end of the lesson.
- ♦ Students understand the importance of the objective and can articulate its importance beyond repeating the teacher's explanation or the posted objective. Students understand how the lesson's objective fits into the broader unit goals and the teacher engages students in the process of connecting the lesson to their prior knowledge.
- ♦ The objective builds upon students' prior knowledge in a significant, meaningful and logical way. The teacher provides specific and meaningful supports to special populations of students in their classroom to ensure that the content is accessible to them.
- ♦ The lesson is well-organized: all components of the lesson are connected to each other, aligned to the objective, and logically progress students toward mastery of the objective.



## What this doesn't look like

A lesson that lacks a focus and isn't objective-driven can be characterized in the following way:

- ◆ The objective is missing, unclear or not aligned to content standards.
- ◆ The purpose of the lesson is unclear to students or they are unsure what they are supposed to learn.
- ◆ Directions and procedures are unclear to students or they are unsure what they are supposed to be doing.
- ◆ Learning activities are not focused on a learning objective or differentiated for student needs.
- ◆ The lesson does not build upon prior knowledge or connect back to the greater objectives of a unit.
- ◆ The lesson is disorganized: components of the lesson are missing or disconnected, and are not aligned to a clear learning objective



When the objective of the lesson is clear, teachers focus all of their instruction and activities on it, and students are more likely to achieve

# T2

## Effective teachers present content clearly.

### Why this matters

Clear delivery of content is essential in helping students meet lesson objectives. Explaining content clearly decreases confusion, builds students' knowledge and skills and increases their motivation and engagement in the lesson.

Clear presentation of content connected to the learning objective ensures that:



Key concepts are highlighted



New skills are explained and modeled procedurally



The purpose of the content is illustrated and understood



Student confusion, distraction and misunderstanding is avoided

Effective communication of concepts and skills requires teachers not only to be masters of their subject matter, but to understand how to effectively convey that subject matter to students in a meaningful way and in a variety of modalities (including auditory and visual representations) to meet the needs of all populations of students.

Students make sense of content and develop new understandings based on the teacher's use of language and explanations. Therefore, it is important that the teacher's communication is correct, uses specific academic language to build vocabulary, conforms to Standard English and enriches the lesson.

## What this looks like

The following best describes an effective teacher's instruction:

- ◆ Explanations of content are clear, coherent, and build student understanding
- ◆ Teacher makes connections with other content areas, current events or student interests to illustrate content relevance.
- ◆ Teacher uses developmentally appropriate language and includes specific academic vocabulary in explanations.
- ◆ Teacher models efficient and correct communication, conforming to the rules of Standard English.
- ◆ Teacher emphasizes key concepts.
- ◆ Teacher explains and models new skills procedurally.
- ◆ Teacher involves students in content explanation, providing opportunities for students to explain content to each other and demonstrate understanding.
- ◆ Students ask more extension questions than clarifying questions because they understand the explanation.

## What this doesn't look like

The following best characterizes a classroom where content is not presented clearly:

- ◆ Explanations of content are unclear, do not build student understanding, and may cause confusion or misconceptions.
- ◆ No connection between content and other subjects.
- ◆ No illustrations of the content relevance for students.
- ◆ Vocabulary may be inappropriate, vague or used incorrectly, leaving students confused
- ◆ Communication is unintelligible, inaudible or contains grammatical or syntax errors.
- ◆ Explanation of new skills is uneven, difficult to follow and confusing.
- ◆ Students ask more clarifying questions than extension questions because they do not understand the explanation.

# T3

## Effective teachers engage all students at all levels in rigorous learning activities.

### Why this matters

When students at all learning levels are consistently engaged in rigorous learning activities, the following can be expected:



Students are engaging in projects, activities and assignments that are appropriately challenging



Students attention and engagement are maximized



Students believe that their teacher has confidence in their ability to meet high expectations and therefore develop perseverance and self-confidence



Students develop critical thinking skills and necessary to achieve content mastery

Ensuring that all students at all levels are engaged in rigorous work is essential because rigorous work demands students' attention and effort. When students work at appropriately challenging levels, they engage in work that appropriately supports them to advance what they are able to achieve independently. When students accept that their teachers believe in their abilities to engage in rigorous work and meet high expectations, they are motivated to do so. They come to understand that high levels of achievement are not accomplished by innate ability, but by effort, focus and concentration.

*When the objective of the lesson is clear, teachers focus all of their instruction and activities on it, and students are more likely to achieve it.*

## What this looks like

The following best describes an effective teacher's instruction:

- ◆ The lesson is accessible to all students at different learning levels as well as linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with IEPs/504 plans. The teacher differentiates the content, process or product to meet all students.
- ◆ The lesson is challenging to all students at different learning levels as well as linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with IEPs/504 plans. The teacher differentiates their questioning, assignments, activities and scaffolds to push all students forward from their starting point.
- ◆ Students work in instructional groups, are responsible and accountable for their roles in the team, and are able to manage their goals and time. Students interact effectively with team members and support each other in achieving learning goals.
- ◆ There is a balance between teacher-directed instruction and rigorous student-centered learning during the lesson. Students have an appropriate amount of time to practice, apply and demonstrate what they are learning.

## What this doesn't look like

The following best describes when students of all levels are not engaged:

- ◆ The lesson is accessible to some students, but is not differentiated. The content, process or product to make the lesson accessible to all learners is missing.
- ◆ The lesson is not appropriately challenging to all students at different learning levels or with different needs. The lesson may be far too challenging for some while others are not challenged enough. Questioning, assignments, activities or scaffolds to move students forward in their learning is not differentiated.
- ◆ Students may not work in instructional groups at all or groups may be inappropriate for supporting student learning toward instructional goals.
- ◆ There is an imbalance between teacher-directed instruction and rigorous student-centered learning during the lesson. Too much time is spent on teacher-driven instruction and it fails to give students an appropriate amount of time to practice, apply and demonstrate what they are learning.

# T4

## Effective teachers provide multiple ways for students to interact with content.

### Why this matters

Individuals and groups of learners within a class differ in the ways they perceive and comprehend information as well as in how they can be engaged or motivated to learn. Some sources of this variation can include neurology, culture, personal relevance, subjectivity, and background knowledge, along with a variety of other factors. These factors contribute to learner preferences regarding how they are presented with content and how they engage with it.

Some ways of interacting with content may cause some learners to be highly engaged, while the same ways might cause others to be disengaged or even frightened. Some learners might prefer to work alone, while others would prefer to work in groups. In reality, there is not one way of interacting with content that will be the perfect fit for all learners in all contexts.

### What this looks like

The following best describes an effective teacher's instruction:

- ♦ **The teacher provides multiple ways for students to interact with the content to reach the lesson objective. The teacher includes ways for students to interact with content that are specifically geared toward supporting linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with IEPs/504 plans.**
- ♦ **Students initiate the choice, adaptation or creation of materials to enhance their learning and build understanding.**
- ♦ **Students respond positively to differentiated learning materials and are engaged in the work.**
- ♦ **The ways in which students interact with content all promote student mastery of the learning objective.**

## What this doesn't look like

The following indicators describe instruction that does not provide students multiple ways to engage:

- ◆ Students are provided only one way to interact with the content to reach the lesson objective.
- ◆ Students have no choice in how they interact with the content.
- ◆ Learning materials are not created or adapted to meet the needs of different types of learners.
- ◆ Students are disengaged in the work.
- ◆ The ways in which students interact with content distract them from achieving the learning objective.



Some ways of interacting with content may cause some learners to be highly engaged.

# T5

## Effective teachers check for understanding.

### Why this matters

When teachers check for the understanding of the class as a whole, they get real-time feedback about the effectiveness of their instruction. Based on the feedback they receive from the class, teachers are able to monitor student learning and the progress of the class and individuals, as well as uncover any misunderstandings and misconceptions. Teachers can then make instructional adjustments to differentiate learning for individual students and the class as a whole to support students in developing new knowledge and skills.

When teachers check for understanding during the course of a lesson and make meaningful, real-time adjustments, several things occur:

- ◆ **Teachers become more effective at delivering instruction and raising student achievement**
- ◆ **Students understand that their teacher cares about their learning and may feel more comfortable in indicating when they need support**
- ◆ **Misconceptions and misunderstandings are corrected quickly**
- ◆ **Teachers establish a routine of providing consistent, high-quality, specific, timely and frequent feedback to students that they are able to use to revise and improve their work**
- ◆ **Students assume responsibility for monitoring their learning against achievement standards**

Teachers that check for understanding and adjust instruction appropriately can expect to see considerable student achievement gains.

## What this looks like

The following best describes an effective teacher's instruction:

- ♦ The teacher checks for understanding of content at all key moments during instruction, such as before moving on to the next step of the lesson or before transitioning into independent work
- ♦ The teacher checks for understanding using a variety of methods and in a way that yields an accurate assessment of individual and group understanding. In doing so, teachers ensure that they have enough information to adjust their instruction effectively if necessary.
- ♦ The teacher integrates the information gained from checks by making adjustments to the lesson content or delivery, as necessary, without disrupting the flow of instruction.

## What this doesn't look like

The following best describes a teacher who struggles with checking for student understanding:

- ♦ Instruction moves forward without any checks for understanding of content at key moments
- ♦ Instruction moves forward without knowing if some or all students understand content
- ♦ Checks for understanding inaccurately assess understanding
- ♦ Different instructional strategies are used to address misconceptions or misunderstandings; instead the content is restated

# T6

## Effective teachers clarify misconceptions.

### Why this matters

While checking for student understanding during the course of a lesson is an essential component of effective teaching, appropriately responding to the feedback a teacher gets from the class during those checks is equally essential. When teachers do not respond to student misconceptions and misunderstandings, the strength of the instruction is weakened and students are less likely to achieve the learning objective.

Addressing misconceptions as soon as they are identified increases the chances of a teacher's clarifications to be successful. By checking for misunderstandings often and adjusting instruction to correct misunderstandings as soon as they are identified teachers avoid student confusion and frustration, prevent the fossilization of incorrect information, increase motivation and support students in mastering the content.

By responding to misconceptions using effective scaffolding techniques, teachers support students in understanding their misconceptions and help students to develop their critical thinking skills.



## What this looks like

The following best describes an effective teacher's instruction:

- ♦ The teacher recognizes when student misconceptions interfere with learning and makes a seamless adjustment to a task or lesson that enhances student understanding and supports the learning objective. The teacher pays special attention to misconceptions that may stem from students' linguistic and cultural diversity and/or needs outlined in their IEPs/504 plans.
- ♦ The teacher responds to student misconceptions by using effective scaffolding techniques such as coaching, questioning and modeling think-alouds.
- ♦ The teacher anticipates misconceptions through the planning process and is able to preemptively address them both directly and through lesson design.
- ♦ The teacher accepts the responsibility for individual student learning, and persists in seeking effective approaches for students that need help.

## What this doesn't look like

The following best describes a teacher who struggles to address student misconceptions during instruction:

- ♦ Adjustments are not made when misconceptions arise. Instead, the instructional plan is adhered to strictly.
- ♦ Misconceptions are ignored or misconceptions from specific populations are ignored.
- ♦ Scaffolding techniques like coaching, questioning and model of think-alouds are not used to clarify misconceptions.
- ♦ Misconceptions are not anticipated in the planning process.
- ♦ Scaffold supports are ineffectively employed during the course of a lesson because misconceptions weren't anticipated.
- ♦ Students are blamed.

# T7

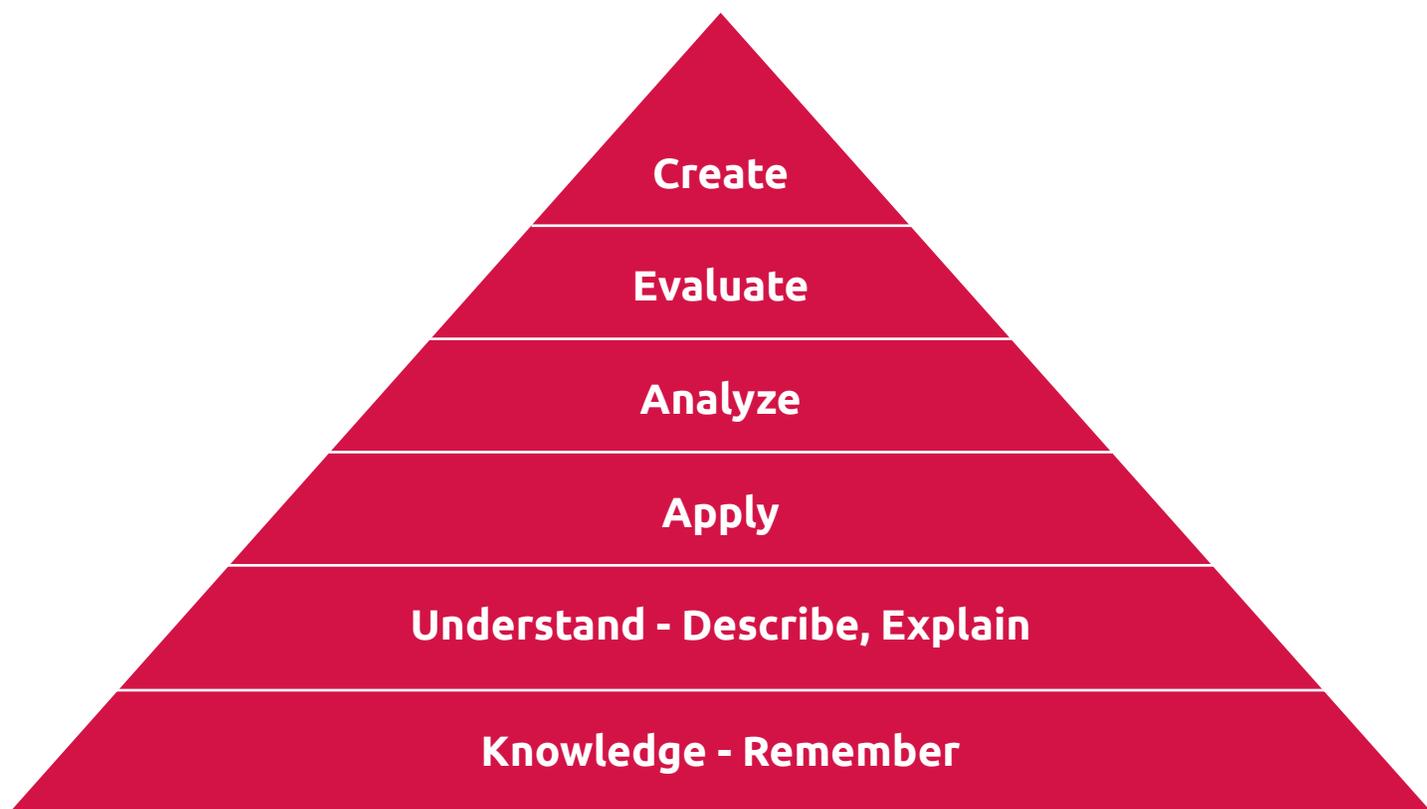
## Effective teachers push for deeper understanding through effective questioning.

### Why this matters

Effective questioning is an essential component of effective teaching. When teachers skillfully use questioning and discussion techniques in their lessons, they help students to build a deeper understanding of what they already know and support them in developing a higher level understanding of new content. By using effective questioning during lessons, teachers push students to reflect on and provide evidence for their learning.

Student engagement and motivation are significantly increased by the use of effective questioning during lessons. When teachers pose questions using techniques that require all students to engage cognitively and prepare to respond, students are less likely to be off-task.

Figure 1 Bloom's Taxonomy (Revised)



There is a clear relationship between the use of effective questioning techniques and student achievement. When teachers use high-level questioning during their instruction they help students investigate new concepts, synthesize complex ideas and construct new understandings.

## What this looks like

The following best describes an effective teacher's instruction:

- ♦ The teacher uses questions that are high quality and require high-level thinking. They challenge students to think and invite students to engage cognitively and demonstrate reasoning.
- ♦ The teacher delivers questions in a way that requires all students to engage cognitively and prepare to answer the question.
- ♦ The teacher uses a wide variety of questions to engage all students in the discussion.
- ♦ Students answer questions with high-level responses.
- ♦ Students ask high-level questions back to the teacher and to each other.

## What this doesn't look like

The following best describes a teacher who struggles with questioning during instructional delivery:

- ♦ Questions do not challenge students to think or require them to demonstrate reasoning.
- ♦ Questions are delivered in a way that allows students not directly being asked the question to disengage.
- ♦ Students who do engage only field a few questions.
- ♦ Students answer questions with minimal responses that do not explain their reasoning.
- ♦ Students engage in discussion only with the teacher, not with each other.

# T8

## Effective teachers maximize instructional time.

### Why this matters

Effective teachers understand the importance of maximizing every minute of instructional time they have in the day. Effective teachers are aware of the implications of wasted instructional time. Effective teachers look for opportunities to maximize instructional time by improving their classroom operations and always teach with urgency from bell to bell. When teachers have firmly established classroom routines, rituals and procedures that do not require a lot of teacher prompting or redirection, classroom operations run smoothly, interruptions and off-task behavior are minimized and students can focus on achieving the learning objective.

*If a teacher were able to increase instructional time by 5 minutes per day, students would gain 15 hours of learning over the course of a year. 15 more minutes per day would mean 45 hours of additional learning over the course of the year!*

### What this looks like

The following best describes an effective teacher's instruction:

- ◆ Classroom routines, rituals and procedures run smoothly with minimal prompting or correcting by teacher
- ◆ Transitions are efficient, orderly and systematic and require minimal prompting or correcting by teacher.
- ◆ The teacher prepares lesson materials in a way that students are never waiting on teacher to gather materials.
- ◆ The teacher spends an appropriate amount of time on each part of the lesson while maintaining the feeling of teaching with urgency.
- ◆ The teacher progresses through the lesson at a rapid pace, so that students are never disengaged.
- ◆ The teacher prepares meaningful work or extension activities for students that complete their work early.
- ◆ Off-task or misbehavior does not interrupt the instructional flow.

## What this doesn't look like

The following best describes instructional time that is not maximized:

- ♦ A lack of firmly established classroom routines, rituals and procedures requires excessive direction and re-direction by teacher.
- ♦ Transitions are slow, disorderly and often cause off-task behaviors or misbehavior that requires correcting by teacher.
- ♦ Students often wait for the teacher to gather and distribute lesson materials.
- ♦ Instruction is not paced. An imbalanced amount of time is spent on each portion of the lesson. A lesson requires more time than allotted and students do not have the chance to apply what they learn.
- ♦ Instruction is too slow. Students direct the conversation toward tangential topics through their questions.
- ♦ Students do not receive prepared and meaningful work when they finish early.

Effective teachers understand the importance of maximizing every minute of instructional time they have in the day



# T9

## Effective teachers create a community of learners.

### Why this matters

By creating a classroom community focused on learning, all students are more likely to achieve at higher levels. Students that are part of a classroom community of learners understand the importance of the work they engage in and support each other in meeting instructional objectives. In this environment, teachers are better able to deliver instruction effectively.

The creation of a community of learners starts with relationships between all people in the classroom, including teachers, students and paraprofessionals/aides. When relationships between these parties convey trust and support, students are more likely to take risks, ask questions, try new skills, and learn from mistakes. When students understand that they are supported in their learning process, they are more likely to participate, and less likely to get discouraged when something is difficult.

By being a part of a community of learners, students develop perseverance, responsibility, problem-solving, leadership skills and independence. Students learn to accept that all members strengths and limitations and understand that learning may look different for different members of the community. Students understand that members of the community may come from different cultural or linguistic backgrounds and welcome those differences. As a part of a community of learners, students become invested in the achievement of the community as a whole, work cooperatively to master content and celebrate their success and those of their peers.



## What this looks like

The following best describes an effective teacher's instruction:

- ♦ The teacher conveys high expectations for all students through instructional outcomes, activities and assignments as well as classroom interactions.
- ♦ The teacher has strong relationships with all students in the class and is able to utilize those relationships to encourage strong academic work.
- ♦ Students demonstrate that they value the content's importance through their curiosity, active participation and questions.
- ♦ Students feel safe in taking on challenges, taking risks and making mistakes. All members of the classroom community contribute to this safety in their words, actions and body language.
- ♦ All members of the classroom community are respectful and supportive of one another.
- ♦ All members of the classroom community reinforce positive behavior and high quality academic work.

## What this doesn't look like

The following best describes when a community of learners does not exist:

- ♦ There are mixed expectations for students based on perceived ability through instructional outcomes, activities and assignments, and classroom interactions.
- ♦ There are imbalanced relationships with students and the teacher may show favoritism.
- ♦ Students demonstrate a negative attitude toward the content, suggesting that it is not important or that they are teaching and learning out of compliance.
- ♦ Students do not feel safe in taking on challenges, taking risks and making mistakes because they are afraid of being ridiculed or embarrassed.
- ♦ Interactions between members of the classroom community may be disrespectful and unsupportive, causing distraction from academic work.
- ♦ Students demonstrate little or no pride in their work.

# Evaluate

## for Student Achievement

### E1

Effective teachers assess student progress.

#### Why this matters

Assessing student progress is a crucial element of effective teaching. Without frequent assessment, teachers have no way of knowing whether their students are learning and whether their instruction is effective. By assessing students frequently and by various methods, teachers can understand where individuals or groups of students are struggling, what concepts need to be re-taught to the whole class, and whether or not students are on-track to master the content in amount of time allocated in the planning process.

Regular assessment is a priority for effective teachers. They build it into their unit and lesson plans, and develop systems and routines for checking student progress. By using a variety of formative and summative assessments, teachers receive real-time data about the progress of their students and are able to adjust their instruction accordingly.

Effective teachers are thoughtful about the design of their assessments, and make sure that the assessment they are using accurately measures student progress toward the instructional objective identified. Effective teachers provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate their learning progress toward instructional objectives while maintaining the validity of all assessments utilized.

## What this looks like

Effective teachers use formative and summative assessments to measure student learning.

Formative assessment methods include, but are not limited to:

Discussion	Informal quizzes	Think, pair, share
Exit Slips	Learning/response logs	Turn & talk
Graphic organizers	Observations	Visual cues
	Questioning	

Summative assessment methods include, but are not limited to:

End-of-term exams	Interim assessments
End-of-unit/End-of-chapter exams	Quizzes
In-program assessments	State mandated assessments

## Assessment Design

Effective assessments accurately measure instructional objectives, unit goals and standards

Effective assessments provide valuable feedback about the effectiveness of the instruction

**Summative assessments typically utilize the following types of questions:**

### Selected Response

- True/False
- Multiple Choice
- Matching

### Performance Task

- Project
- Presentation
- Inquiry tasks

### Constructed Response

- Fill in the blank
- Short Answer
- Essay

## Assessment Variety & Opportunities

Effective teachers use a variety of assessment methods and question types/formats to gather rich data about each student's learning progress.

Effective teachers re-teach concepts according to the assessment data and provide additional opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery

## Assessment frequency

**Effective teachers use assessments to measure student progress and adjust instructions:**

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly

### And/or at the end of a :

- Unit
- Quarter/Trimester/Semester
- Year

# E2

## Effective teachers utilize student achievement data.

### Why this matters

Effective teachers utilize student achievement data to adjust their instructional planning in the short-term, and improve their instructional planning in the long-term. Student achievement data provides information about the progress of individuals and groups of students, and allows teachers to quickly target learning that surface in the data. Effective teachers look at the progress of the class as a whole to assess their instructional efficacy. When the majority of the class does not demonstrate understanding of a concept or skill taught, effective teachers take responsibility for improving their instructional approach.

It is uncommon that students interact with only one teacher in the course of a school year. It is more likely that students spend their instructional day in the care of multiple educators, even at the elementary level. In some cases, students receive instruction in the same content by different educators. Utilizing student achievement data allows teachers, school administrators and support staff a common language by which to discuss individual students' progress, identify school-based supports for students that are struggling, and evaluate the effectiveness of those supports.

By diligently monitoring student progress, teachers make it known to students in their class that progress towards mastery matters. When students understand that their teacher cares about their progress it sets the tone for persistent effort toward content mastery. When achievement data is shared with students in a productive and supportive manner, it serves as a powerful motivator and drives students to high levels of achievement.

## What this looks like

Effective teachers maintain accurate instructional and non-instructional data, such as:

- Assignment completion
- Assessment data
- Accommodations data (IEP goals, 504 plans)
- Observational data
- Attendance data
- Behavioral data

Effective Teachers maintain records that:

- Monitor growth over time
- Provide information about students' progress toward instructional objectives
- Are detailed
- Are accurate
- Are regularly updated and maintained
- Are used to communicate with students, colleagues, administration and families

# E3

## Effective teachers re-teach in response to data.

### Why this matters

Effective teachers use the multiple sources of data they collect to increase student achievement. Effective teachers assess students often and analyze the results to reflect upon the effectiveness of their instruction. A rich student achievement data landscape provides teachers a starting point from which to strategize and modify their approach, and, when necessary, re-teach in response to data.

Teachers that routinely monitor student progress and modify their instruction in response to data are better able to support students toward mastering content. When misconceptions are identified early, teachers are able to prevent simple misunderstandings from turning into larger ones and prevent potential roadblocks to learning.

### What this looks like

Effective teachers collect various sources of data and analyze it to inform their instruction. Data sources include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Assignment data
- ◆ Assessment data
- ◆ Observational data
- ◆ Attendance data
- ◆ Behavioral data

Effective teachers analyze these data sources to identify trends, including:

- ◆ Percent achievement toward mastering objective
- ◆ Frequency of disruption to instruction, including student misbehavior
- ◆ Absenteeism/chronic absenteeism/tardiness/early dismissal

Effective teachers modify their instructional strategies in response to the data and adjust their planning, instructional delivery, learning materials and classroom management to ensure all students are on track to mastering the learning objective.

# E4

## Effective teachers reflect on data to improve practice.

### Why this matters

Effective teachers understand that reflecting on their practice is an essential component of professional practice. Teachers that reflect on their teaching teach with the understanding that their practice can continuously be improved. When teachers routinely engage in meaningful, honest reflection, they become better able to identify their strengths and weaknesses and are able to use their reflection to increase their effectiveness. Effective teachers understand the importance of reflecting in isolation, but also understand the importance of reflecting with colleagues and working collaboratively to improve the effectiveness of teams of teachers as a whole.

Teachers that are skilled in reflection accurately analyze the effectiveness of their instruction, are able to identify specific successes and errors, and actively utilize their analysis to improve their practice.

### What this looks like

Effective teachers reflect on their teaching in the following ways:

- ◆ Effective teachers make an accurate assessment of a lesson's effectiveness by measuring the extent to which it reached its goals. Effective teachers don't guess about a lesson's effectiveness; they use data to determine if a lesson achieved its goals. An effective teacher is able to pinpoint specific moments from the lesson that either helped or hindered the lesson in reaching its goals.
- ◆ Effective teachers gather multiple perspectives to inform their reflection, including video-taping, journaling, observation feedback, co-teaching, discussion and research to improve the quality of their practice.
- ◆ Effective teachers use their reflection to identify and justify instructional options in planning for future teaching, and can predict the probable success of different approaches.



# Glossary

**21st century learners:** Authentic learning typically focuses on real-world, complex problems and their solutions, using role-playing exercises, problem-based activities, case studies, and participation in virtual communities of practice. The learning environments are inherently multidisciplinary. A learning environment is similar to some "real world" application or discipline. Going beyond content, authentic learning intentionally brings into play multiple disciplines, multiple perspectives, ways of working, habits of mind, and community. Students immersed in authentic learning activities cultivate the kinds of "portable skills" that newcomers to any discipline have the most difficulty acquiring on their own.

**21st century skills:** Effective teaching helps to prepare student for college and careers. A national consortium of business and education leaders uses this term to define college and career readiness.

**504 Plan:** Refers to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the American with Disabilities Act. The 504 Plan spells out the modifications and accommodations that will be needed for students to have an opportunity to perform at the same level.

**Academic expectations:** Standard of performance.

**Accommodations:** Instructional or test adaptations. They allow the student to demonstrate what he/she knows without fundamentally changing the target skill that is being taught in the classroom or measured in testing situations. Accommodations do not reduce learning or performance expectations that we might hold for students.

**Align -(Alignment):** The degree to which assessments, curriculum, instruction, textbooks and other instructional materials, teacher preparation and professional development, and systems of accountability all reflect and reinforce the educational program's objectives and standards.

**Anchor papers:** Papers which can be used as examples or non-examples when scored against a rubric.

**Behavior management system:** The focus is on maintaining order. It is a system that will include all of the actions and conscious inactions to enhance the probability people, individually and in groups, choose behaviors which are personally fulfilling, productive, and socially acceptable.

**Classroom culture:** An educational environment that fosters trust and acceptance in which students are empowered and comfortable with providing feedback to continuously improve classroom teaching and learning, learning from mistakes to enhance achievement and establishing high expectations for all learners.

**Coaching:** Involves modeling by the teacher followed by student demonstration, and is accompanied by immediate corrective feedback with further opportunities to practice and receive feedback in order to attain

the learning objective. Coaching could be done individually, in a small group, or as a whole group.

**Complexity of learning:** Effective teachers are well versed in the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy, and are precisely aware of the level of cognitive complexity that learning objectives require of students. Are students being asked to Remember? Understand? Apply? Analyze? Evaluate? Or Create? What type of knowledge is called for? Is it Factual, Procedural, Conceptual, or Meta-Cognitive? Think of Bloom's Taxonomy as steps in a ladder, or stacked Lego blocks, rising from simple to complex. For example, in order for students to analyze, they must be able to first remember, then understand academic content, and have applied it in familiar and unfamiliar contexts. In other words, students cannot apply if they are unable to effectively recall and understand. Resources for teaching with the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy can be found at: <http://www.niu.edu/facdev/programs/handouts/blooms.shtml>.

**Complexity:** Used to characterize something with many parts in intricate arrangement.

**Content standards:** A written description of what students should know and be able to do in a particular content or subject area. The expectations articulated in the content standard outline the knowledge, skills, and abilities for all students in the subject area.

**Developmentally appropriate:** Developmentally appropriate practice is the teacher, school, or school district's careful selection of curriculum based on the student's reasoning, communication, and interpretation skills, and on the student's ability to focus and interact in the classroom. These abilities and skills change over time as students mature and develop. The selection of course content, instruction, and assessment techniques are important to maximize each student's potential in the classroom.

**Diagnostic:** An assessment used to measure where a student is in terms of his knowledge and skills.

**Differentiated instructional strategies:** An approach to teaching and learning for students with different abilities in the same classroom. The theory behind differentiated instruction is that teachers should vary and adapt their approaches to fit the vast diversity of students in the classroom. Teachers can differentiate at least four classroom elements based on student readiness, interest, or learning profile: (1) Content ñ what the student needs to learn or how the student will get access to the information; (2) Process ñ activities in which the student engages in order to make sense of or master the content; (3) Products ñ projects that ask the student to demonstrate what he or she has learned in a unit; and (4) Learning Environment ñ the way the classroom works and feels.

**Disengagement:** Student disengagement is when students do not feel they are part of the school environment. These students may have increased absences, engage in delinquent activities, foster a dislike for school and may eventually drop out.

**Embed:** To integrate; in this context, teachers know when to integrate technology appropriately and effectively to help students reach learning objectives.

**Exemplar:** An ideal that serves as a pattern for others to follow based on specific criteria.

**Explicit teaching:** Involves directing student attention towards specific learning in a highly structured environment. It is teaching that is focused on producing specific learning outcomes.

**Formative assessment:** Is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes.

**Guiding questions:** The fundamental queries that direct the search for understanding. Everything in the curriculum is studied for the purpose of answering it." Guiding questions help provide focus and coherence for units of study.

**Highest impact instructional materials:** Strategies that have been found to influence learning and achievement, some in a very small way and some in very dynamic way. If used consistently and pervasively these strategies will increase student learning and understanding of their content areas.

**IEP (Individualized Education Program):** A legal document that defines the special education program and services that have been designed to meet the child's unique needs. Each child who receives special education or related services must have an IEP.

**Instructional objective:** An instructional objective of a lesson plan describes the teacher's educational intent for the students – that is, the desired learning outcomes.

**Instructional outcomes:** A spoken or written statement of what must be done, especially delivered formally, teaching or things taught, teaching process or profession.

**Learning objective:** Objectives are statements which describe what the learner is expected to achieve as a result of instruction.

**Lesson:** Material to be taught or studied.

**Mastery:** Expert knowledge or outstanding ability.

**Modalities:** Differences in the way students learn best, including through hearing, seeing, or doing the learning task. Approaches to assessment or instruction stressing the auditory, visual, or tactile avenues for learning that are dependent upon the individual.

**Modifications:** An instructional or test adaptation that allows the student to show what he or she knows or can do. Modifications may also reduce the target skill in some way so if a child is provided with a modification it generally will lower the performance expectations. A modification may do that by reducing the complexity of the skill.

**Modify:** To make changes to something; typically to improve it or make it less extreme.

**Monitor:** To keep track systematically with a view to collecting information.

**Multiple means of action and expression:** Learners differ in the ways that they can navigate a learning environment and express what they know.

**Multiple means of engagements:** Affect represents a crucial element to learning, and learners differ markedly in the ways in which they can be engaged or motivated to learn. Some learners might like to work alone, while others prefer to work with their peers. In reality, there is not one means of engagement that will be optimal for all learners in all contexts; providing multiple options for engagement is essential.

**Multiple means of representation:** Provide multiple means of representation to give learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge. Specifically, Remove barriers to learning, support improved access to information and to learning itself, and provide multiple, flexible approaches to learning that will result in success for diverse learners.

**Off task:** Off-task behavior is a symptom of disengagement from a learning experience. Off-task behavior refers to students who are inattentive, disengaged, distractible, or fail to complete assignments. Off-task behavior might serve the purpose of gaining adult or peer attention or access to more preferred activities, such as talking with peers or playing with materials; or the off-task behavior might serve the purpose of escaping or avoiding undesirable activities such as writing or reading.

**Outcomes:** Student learning outcomes are defined in terms of the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students have attained as a result of their involvement in a particular set of educational experiences.

**Pedagogical skills and tactics:** in this context, pedagogical skills and tactics pertains to a teacher's ability to choose and use a wide range of instructional strategies correctly and effectively to enable students to reach learning objectives.

**Perseverance:** Determined continuation with something; steady and continued action or belief, usually over a long period and especially despite difficulties or setbacks.

**Predict:** To state, tell about, or make known in advance, especially on the basis of special knowledge.

**Prerequisite skills and knowledge:** Knowledge and skills required beforehand.

**Prior knowledge:** Can be explained as a combination of the learner's preexisting attitudes, experiences, and knowledge.

**Progress:** Development, usually of a gradual kind, toward achieving a goal or reaching a higher standard.

**Prompting:** Teachers may use prompting in many situations across ability groups. Prompting is a way of assisting a child to perform a specific response after a given instruction. The instructor/teacher provides a cue to elicit a specific behavior from a child/student. Prompts can range from physical, verbal, model, gestural, and positional. Physical prompting can be as elementary as *hand over hand* where the teacher writes the letter with their hand over the student's hand. Verbal prompting is the most common prompt where teachers may hint, queue, or suggest helping students achieve the appropriate response. Model prompting is when a teacher models the behavior he/she wants the child to exhibit. *Raise Arms* and you raise your arms to show him. Gestural prompting includes pointing to, looking at, moving or touching an item or area to indicate a correct response. Positional prompting involves arranging materials so that the correct item is in a position obvious to the child.

**Rigorous instruction:** Instruction that is designed to help students develop the capacity to understand content that is complex, ambiguous, provocative, and personally or emotionally challenging.

**Routines and Rituals:** A routine is something that is done at the same time in the same way every day (or on any regular schedule). Routines are considered the silver bullet in managing behaviors in children. Routines and procedures provide the classroom management structure that enable teachers and students to use class time productively. Classroom routines are prescribed ways of doing things in the classroom. Rituals are routines with meaning. Rituals are procedures of how you want something done. Rituals/routines should be taught and reinforced until students know the proper procedure for each.

**Rubrics:** A scoring tool that lists the criteria for a piece of work.

**Scaffold:** Scaffolding is used by teachers to move students beyond their current developmental stage or skill set and into progressively more difficult tasks. Scaffolding relies on socio-cognitive (describes integrated cognitive and social properties of systems, processes, functions, models) learning where the student learns by observing a more competent person solving a problem or completing a task. The teacher provides support and models strategies for the student.

**Self-assessment:** An evaluation of one's own strengths, weaknesses, personal characteristics, and abilities.

**Special populations:** Refers to any population of students that may have unique instructional needs: gifted & talented, English language learners, special needs, career technical, etc.

**Student centered learning:** Shifts the focus of activity from the teacher to the learner. These methods include active learning in which students solve problems, answer questions, formulate questions of their own, discuss, explain, debate or brainstorm during class. Cooperative learning and inductive learning in which students learn or are presented with challenges (questions or problems) learn the course material in that context of addressing challenges.

**Summative assessment:** Typically used to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs and services at the end of an academic year or at a pre-determined time.

**Synthesize:** Refers to the ability to make judgments based on criteria or standards or to combine parts to form a new concept or idea.

**Teacher directed instruction:** Involves explicitly teaching and using direct instructional techniques to teach procedures, concepts, strategies, and/or skills. This often includes modeling a variety of examples and guiding the student to review and practice.

**Topic:** The main organizing principle of a discussion, either verbal or written.

**Transitions:** Transition activities define the transition periods in classrooms providing a framework for school-aged children. They allow for transitioning from one activity to another. Activity-to-activity transitions include ending an activity, moving from one activity to another, and beginning the new activity.

**Unit:** part of an academic course that focuses on a specific topic.

# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank members of the Division of Teaching and Learning, as well as the administrators and teachers from across Providence Schools who voluntarily participated in the focus groups that ultimately shaped the content and perspective of the document. Also, we would like to express our gratitude to the document's primary author, Lindsey Tavares.

## Teachers

Emily Hayes	Kelly Reyes	Maria Laurenzo	Brooke Adams
Natasha White	Erin Cirello	Zac Pinto	Tina Pelit
Carol Pagan	Ariana Testa	Judy Ristigian	Dena Nunez
Susan Read	Linda Colapietro	Sarah Kelly	Janet Cambio

## Administrators

Thomas Bacon	Gara Field	Brent Kermen	Larry Roberti
Brian Baldizar	Joyce Fitzpatrick	Dinah Larbi	Sandra Stuart
Scott Barr	Colin Grimsey	Michael Lazzareschi	Scott Sutherland
Mari-Ellen Boisclair	Edward Halpin	Eusebio Lopes	Mercedes Torres
Susan Chin	Lori Hughes	Nicole Mathis	Ramon Torres
Derrick Ciesla	John Hunt	Denise Missry-Milburn	Jose Valerio
Janelle Clarke	Gloria Jackson	Javier Montanez	Regina Winkfield
Carolina Creel	Carolyn Johnston	Gina Picard	Brearn Wright
Susan DeAthos	Alicia Jones	Christine Riley	

## Division of Teaching and Learning

Solidad Barretto	Dennis McHugh	Gina Picard	Paula Shannon
Earnest Cox	Rachel Mellion	Donna O'Connor	Lisa Vargas-Sinapi
J. Luke Driver	Rudolph Moseley	Cynthia Scheller	Karen Vessella
Kimberly Luca			



Providence  
Schools