

Documents, Tools, Templates, and Forms for Instructional and Classroom Practices

| Questions | Note Key Documents, Tools, Templates, Forms | Indicators and Explanations |
|---|---|---|
| Planning | | |
| What kind of curriculum map guides your teachers' classroom instruction? Do teachers share an active role in creating that map? Have the <i>Common Core State Standards</i> been integrated with your current map? | | <p>Indicator: All teachers are guided by a document that aligns standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.</p> <p>A map for <i>classroom instruction</i> must include objectives aligned to grade level standards, assessments, curriculum and instruction. The <i>Common Core State Standards</i> are a powerful source for current and interdisciplinary alignment and should be incorporated.</p> |
| How do your teachers plan for learning activities that will help students master the instructional objectives? Do they plan in teams? What resources guide their decisions in planning? What tool (e.g., lesson template) helps to clearly document the intent of lessons they will teach? Do you review the plans? | | <p>Indicator: Units of instruction include specific learning activities aligned to objectives.</p> <p>Indicator: All teachers develop weekly lesson plans based on aligned units of instruction.</p> <p>A tool that provides a teacher with aligned assignments, activities, and homework based on the resources of the school/classroom and matched to the ability or skill level of pre-tested students is a powerful "toolbox" to have on hand.</p> |
| What kinds of diagnostic tools do teachers use to assess the students in their classrooms? How do they "monitor" individual student progress through the curriculum? | | <p>Indicator: All teachers individualize instruction based on pre-test results to provide support for some students and enhanced learning opportunities for others.</p> <p>Well-defined unit tests or classroom assessments indicate the expertise of each student by instructional objective. Identifying the best diagnostic instrument allows the teacher to provide logical instruction for each student. Careful monitoring of all students requires meticulous record-keeping.</p> |
| Instruction | | |
| How would you describe the consistent pattern of whole class direct instruction your teachers lead in their classrooms? Do teachers use a common template to outline their direct instruction? | | <p>Indicator: All teachers use a variety of instructional modes.</p> <p>Mode: Whole class, teacher-directed instruction.</p> <p>Whole class direct instruction, done well, is a confirmed strategy for student achievement. Practices that guarantee consistency and success are well-planned and include proven tactics of sound instruction.</p> |
| Do your teachers' lesson plans reflect instructional opportunity in a variety of modes? What modes are most common? What modes are seldom employed? How do you know? Does your classroom observation instrument note modes? | | <p>Indicator: All teachers use a variety of instructional modes.</p> <p>Modes: Independent, student-directed groups, teacher-directed groups, computer-based, homework.</p> <p>Independent, student-directed groups (cooperative), computer-based, teacher-directed small groups, and co-teacher groups vary the modes of</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | instruction and enhance active learning. |
| How do your teachers differentiate instruction for each student? What various types of assessments do your teachers use to “ pre-test ” students to determine their level of background knowledge? Do they differentiate instruction based on that assessment? How do they continue to assess students at work in the classroom? Are differentiated plans documented? Do you review them? | | Indicator: All teachers differentiate assignments (individualize instruction) in response to individual student performance on pre-tests and other methods of assessment. Meeting the needs of individual learning must begin with a formative assessment. Previous instructional planning provides the teacher with a variety of strategies to ensure that on-target, struggling, and advanced students are challenged and can proceed to the next phase of learning. |
| Do you currently require teachers to maintain a record of student mastery of standards-aligned objectives? Does the tracking of student mastery guide their instructional differentiation? Is the record maintained on a common template ? Do you review the documents? | | Indicator: All teachers maintain a record of each student’s mastery of specific learning objectives. Monitoring classroom activities in a variety of instructional modes requires strong record-keeping by the teacher. Offering students different modalities to acquire the mastery of instructional objectives means that the teacher is continuously monitoring and diagnosing to provide the best possible learning strategy. Keeping track of the outcomes is essential to keep students moving forward. Establishing ways for students to assume some of the record-keeping helps them to strengthen self-management skills. |
| Interaction | | |
| Do your teachers interact with students in ways that are instructional, managerial, and social? Are teachers active in the classroom even during student independent and group work? Does your classroom observation instrument note teacher-student interactions? | | Indicator: All teachers interact instructionally with students (explaining, checking, giving feedback). Indicator: All teachers interact managerially with students (reinforcing rules, procedures). Indicator: All teachers interact socially with students (noticing and attending to an ill student, asking about the weekend, inquiring about the family). Effective teachers ensure that the process of learning is enhanced by social interaction, and the context of learning is accommodated with emotional and structural supports. Active learning is a result of the teacher that moves throughout the classroom to encourage attention and monitor student progress, and persuades students to work collaboratively and help one another. |
| | | |
| | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Classroom management | | |
| What variety of instructional materials do your teachers have in their classroom? Classroom libraries? When and how do students access those materials that benefit their learning? Does your classroom observation instrument note the organization of instructional materials? | | Indicator: All teachers maintain well-organized student learning materials in the classroom. Teacher-created and school purchased materials enrich the instruction, practice and interest in the curriculum. Well-organized and accessed at appropriate times and according to practiced procedures guarantees maximum learning potential. |
| What kinds of rules and procedures do your teachers teach their students that aid classroom management? Are rules and procedures fairly uniform across the school or do they vary by teacher? Does your classroom observation instrument note classroom management practices? | | Indicator: All teachers display classroom rules and procedures in the classroom. Indicator: All teachers correct students who do not follow classroom rules and procedures. Indicator: All teachers reinforce classroom rules and procedures by positively teaching them. Classroom management is enhanced with established rules and procedures for daily tasks and activities. Students thriving in a differentiated classroom adhere to the rules and are practiced in the given procedures. Well-learned procedures become routine, and encourage self-management. |
| What helps students stay on task and not be disruptive when the teacher is busy working with other individuals or small groups? Do you find consistent on-task behavior in your students in all classrooms? Do teachers provide students with wait-time activities ? | | Indicator: Students are engaged and on task. Indicator: When waiting for assistance from the teacher, students are occupied with curriculum-related activities provided by the teacher. Tools that help to manage student-needs can be simple in form while maintaining on-task behavior. With developmentally appropriate and curriculum-related materials in use, teaching time is maximized and students stay focused at the work on hand. |
| Communication with Parents | | |
| How do your teachers communicate student progress to parents How often? How does your school manage this communication so that it is consistent and timely? Does the communication include reports of the student's progress toward standards-aligned objectives? | | Indicator: All teachers maintain a file of communication with parents. Indicator: All teachers systematically report to parents the student's mastery of specific standards-based objectives. Communication between home and school/parents and teachers must flow in both directions. Traditional modes may need to be updated, and newer programmatic means to systematize communication should be considered. |