

TEACHER HANDBOOK



T-TESS

Texas Teacher Evaluation & Support System

Introduction

T-TESS is the Texas recommended appraisal process designed to evaluate teachers and establish a system of support. During the spring of 2014, a steering committee finalized the development of this new evaluation system which directly correlates to the new Texas Teacher Standards outlined in Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 149. These standards inform the training, appraisal, and professional development of teachers, define a set of professional indicators that allow for a common understanding of and vocabulary for desired teaching practices, and measure teachers' pedagogy and professional responsibilities.

The comprehensive T-TESS rubric includes specific dimensions, descriptors and performance levels. An in-depth understanding of how their performance will be measured using this rubric is essential for teachers to thoroughly engage in T-TESS. Ongoing, systematic rollout processes and exposure to the rubric are critical to ensure that teachers have an opportunity to 'unwrap' the dimensions, create a pool of shared meaning and personally gather data to move from the current to desired levels of performance. Understanding the dimensions in isolation does not guarantee that all teachers will accurately and consistently implement them. Teachers also should see how each dimension is effectively represented in actual instructional practice to understand how they are accurately applied in multiple instructional contexts. Schools should establish processes which promote and safeguard time for this type of learning to occur. On campuses where the evaluation process truly leads to improved instruction and student performance, continuous improvement is an accepted norm and structures are established to support a community of learners.

This handbook emphasizes that it is the responsibility of every educator to consistently hold themselves to a high standard for individual development and performance. Educators also have a responsibility to identify methods to collaborate with other educational professionals within and beyond the school so they can engage in purposeful and targeted professional learning opportunities, seek feedback, and refine practices. The T-TESS Rubric provides the framework to define and demonstrate how the domains, dimensions and descriptors support teachers as they implement strategies in ways that address specific student learning needs. It is, therefore, essential for administrators, teachers, teacher leaders, and other instructional staff to understand all aspects of the T-TESS Rubric and how it describes teaching that leads to increased student performance. Using this handbook as a springboard for conversations and incorporating district- and campus-level context is the key to creating consistency and common understandings within and among teacher teams.

While many instructional strategies may be considered "proven best practices," consistent, high-quality implementation of these strategies is necessary to positively impact student performance. The evaluation system is intended to focus on quality planning, instructional delivery, and a learning environment which collectively maximizes teaching and learning.



Texas Teacher Standards

Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 149.1001 - Texas Teacher Standards.

Purpose: The standards identified in this section are performance standards to be used to inform the training, appraisal, and professional development of teachers.

Standard 1. Instructional Planning and Delivery. Teachers demonstrate their understanding of instructional planning and delivery by providing standards-based, data-driven, differentiated instruction that engages students, makes appropriate use of technology, and makes learning relevant for today's learners.

A. Teachers design clear, well organized, sequential lessons that build on students' prior knowledge.

(i) Teachers develop lessons that build coherently toward objectives based on course content, curriculum scope and sequence, and expected student outcomes.

(ii) Teachers effectively communicate goals, expectations, and objectives to help all students reach high levels of achievement.

(iii) Teachers connect students' prior understanding and real-world experiences to new content and contexts, maximizing learning opportunities.

B. Teachers design developmentally appropriate, standards-driven lessons that reflect evidence-based best practices.

(i) Teachers plan instruction that is developmentally appropriate, is standards driven, and motivates students to learn.

(ii) Teachers use a range of instructional strategies, appropriate to the content area, to make subject matter accessible to all students.

(iii) Teachers use and adapt resources, technologies, and standards-aligned instructional materials to promote student success in meeting learning goals.

C. Teachers design lessons to meet the needs of diverse learners, adapting methods when appropriate.

(i) Teachers differentiate instruction, aligning methods and techniques to diverse student needs, including acceleration, remediation, and implementation of individual education plans.

(ii) Teachers plan student groupings, including pairings and individualized and small-group instruction, to facilitate student learning.

(iii) Teachers integrate the use of oral, written, graphic, kinesthetic, and/or tactile methods to teach key concepts.

D. Teachers communicate clearly and accurately and engage students in a manner that encourages students' persistence and best efforts.

(i) Teachers ensure that the learning environment features a high degree of student engagement by facilitating discussion and student-centered activities as well as leading direct instruction.

(ii) Teachers validate each student's comments and questions, utilizing them to advance learning for all students.

(iii) Teachers encourage all students to overcome obstacles and remain persistent in the face of challenges, providing them with support in achieving their goals.

E. Teachers promote complex, higher-order thinking, leading class discussions and activities that provide opportunities for deeper learning.

(i) Teachers set high expectations and create challenging learning experiences for students, encouraging them to apply disciplinary and cross-disciplinary knowledge to real-world problems.

(ii) Teachers provide opportunities for students to engage in individual and collaborative critical thinking and problem solving.

(iii) Teachers incorporate technology that allows students to interact with the curriculum in more significant and effective ways, helping them reach mastery.

F. Teachers consistently check for understanding, give immediate feedback, and make lesson adjustments as necessary.

(i) Teachers monitor and assess student progress to ensure that their lessons meet students' needs.

(ii) Teachers provide immediate feedback to students in order to reinforce their learning and ensure that they understand key concepts.

(iii) Teachers adjust content delivery in response to student progress through the use of developmentally appropriate strategies that maximize student engagement.

Standard 2. Knowledge of Students and Student Learning. Teachers work to ensure high levels of learning, social-emotional development, and achievement outcomes for all students, taking into consideration each student's educational and developmental backgrounds and focusing on each student's needs.

A. Teachers demonstrate the belief that all students have the potential to achieve at high levels and support all students in their pursuit of social-emotional learning and academic success.

(i) Teachers purposefully utilize learners' individual strengths as a basis for academic and social-emotional growth.

(ii) Teachers create a community of learners in an inclusive environment that views differences in learning and background as educational assets.

(iii) Teachers accept responsibility for the growth of all of their students, persisting in their efforts to ensure high levels of growth on the part of each learner.

B. Teachers acquire, analyze, and use background information (familial, cultural, educational, linguistic, and developmental characteristics) to engage students in learning.

- (i) Teachers connect learning, content, and expectations to students' prior knowledge, life experiences, and interests in meaningful contexts.
- (ii) Teachers understand the unique qualities of students with exceptional needs, including disabilities and giftedness, and know how to effectively address these needs through instructional strategies and resources.
- (iii) Teachers understand the role of language and culture in learning and know how to modify their practices to support language acquisition so that language is comprehensible and instruction is fully accessible.

C. Teachers facilitate each student's learning by employing evidence-based practices and concepts related to learning and social-emotional development.

- (i) Teachers understand how learning occurs and how learners develop, construct meaning, and acquire knowledge and skills.
- (ii) Teachers identify readiness for learning and understand how development in one area may affect students' performance in other areas.
- (iii) Teachers apply evidence-based strategies to address individual student learning needs and differences, adjust their instruction, and support the learning needs of each student.

Standard 3. Content Knowledge and Expertise. Teachers exhibit a comprehensive understanding of their content, discipline, and related pedagogy as demonstrated through the quality of the design and execution of lessons and their ability to match objectives and activities to relevant state standards.

A. Teachers understand the major concepts, key themes, multiple perspectives, assumptions, processes of inquiry, structure, and real-world applications of their grade-level and subject-area content.

- (i) Teachers have expertise in how their content vertically and horizontally aligns with the grade-level/subject-area continuum, leading to an integrated curriculum across grade levels and content areas.
- (ii) Teachers identify gaps in students' knowledge of subject matter and communicate with their leaders and colleagues to ensure that these gaps are adequately addressed across grade levels and subject areas.
- (iii) Teachers keep current with developments, new content, new approaches, and changing methods of instructional delivery within their discipline.

B. Teachers design and execute quality lessons that are consistent with the concepts of their specific discipline, are aligned to state standards, and demonstrate their content expertise.

- (i) Teachers organize curriculum to facilitate student understanding of the subject matter.
- (ii) Teachers understand, actively anticipate, and adapt instruction to address common

misunderstandings and preconceptions.

(iii) Teachers promote literacy and the academic language within the discipline and make discipline-specific language accessible to all learners.

C. Teachers demonstrate content-specific pedagogy that meets the needs of diverse learners, utilizing engaging instructional materials to connect prior content knowledge to new learning.

(i) Teachers teach both the key content knowledge and the key skills of the discipline.

(ii) Teachers make appropriate and authentic connections across disciplines, subjects, and students' real-world experiences.

Standard 4. Learning Environment. Teachers interact with students in respectful ways at all times, maintaining a physically and emotionally safe, supportive learning environment that is characterized by efficient and effective routines, clear expectations for student behavior, and organization that maximizes student learning.

A. Teachers create a mutually respectful, collaborative, and safe community of learners by using knowledge of students' development and backgrounds.

(i) Teachers embrace students' backgrounds and experiences as an asset in their learning environment.

(ii) Teachers maintain and facilitate respectful, supportive, positive, and productive interactions with and among students.

(iii) Teachers establish and sustain learning environments that are developmentally appropriate and respond to students' needs, strengths, and personal experiences.

B. Teachers organize their classrooms in a safe and accessible manner that maximizes learning.

(i) Teachers arrange the physical environment to maximize student learning and to ensure that all students have access to resources.

(ii) Teachers create a physical classroom set-up that is flexible and accommodates the different learning needs of students.

C. Teachers establish, implement, and communicate consistent routines for effective classroom management, including clear expectations for student behavior.

(i) Teachers implement behavior management systems to maintain an environment where all students can learn effectively.

(ii) Teachers maintain a strong culture of individual and group accountability for class expectations.

(iii) Teachers cultivate student ownership in developing classroom culture and norms.

D. Teachers lead and maintain classrooms where students are actively engaged in learning as indicated by their level of motivation and on-task behavior.

(i) Teachers maintain a culture that is based on high expectations for student performance and

encourages students to be self-motivated, taking responsibility for their own learning.

(ii) Teachers maximize instructional time, including managing transitions.

(iii) Teachers manage and facilitate groupings in order to maximize student collaboration, participation, and achievement.

(iv) Teachers communicate regularly, clearly, and appropriately with parents and families about student progress, providing detailed and constructive feedback and partnering with families in furthering their students' achievement goals.

Standard 5. Data-Driven Practice. Teachers use formal and informal methods to assess student growth aligned to instructional goals and course objectives and regularly review and analyze multiple sources of data to measure student progress and adjust instructional strategies and content delivery as needed.

A. Teachers implement both formal and informal methods of measuring student progress.

(i) Teachers gauge student progress and ensure student mastery of content knowledge and skills by providing assessments aligned to instructional objectives and outcomes that are accurate measures of student learning.

(ii) Teachers vary methods of assessing learning to accommodate students' learning needs, linguistic differences, and/or varying levels of background knowledge.

B. Teachers set individual and group learning goals for students by using preliminary data and communicate these goals with students and families to ensure mutual understanding of expectations.

(i) Teachers develop learning plans and set academic as well as social-emotional learning goals for each student in response to previous outcomes from formal and informal assessments.

(ii) Teachers involve all students in self-assessment, goal setting, and monitoring progress.

(iii) Teachers communicate with students and families regularly about the importance of collecting data and monitoring progress of student outcomes, sharing timely and comprehensible feedback so they understand students' goals and progress.

C. Teachers regularly collect, review, and analyze data to monitor student progress.

(i) Teachers analyze and review data in a timely, thorough, accurate, and appropriate manner, both individually and with colleagues, to monitor student learning.

(ii) Teachers combine results from different measures to develop a holistic picture of students' strengths and learning needs.

D. Teachers utilize the data they collect and analyze to inform their instructional strategies and adjust short- and long-term plans accordingly.

(i) Teachers design instruction, change strategies, and differentiate their teaching practices to improve student learning based on assessment outcomes.

- (ii) Teachers regularly compare their curriculum scope and sequence with student data to ensure they are on track and make adjustments as needed.

Standard 6. Professional Practices and Responsibilities. Teachers consistently hold themselves to a high standard for individual development, pursue leadership opportunities, collaborate with other educational professionals, communicate regularly with stakeholders, maintain professional relationships, comply with all campus and school district policies, and conduct themselves ethically and with integrity.

A. Teachers reflect on their teaching practice to improve their instructional effectiveness and engage in continuous professional learning to gain knowledge and skills and refine professional judgment.

- (i) Teachers reflect on their own strengths and professional learning needs, using this information to develop action plans for improvement.
- (ii) Teachers establish and strive to achieve professional goals to strengthen their instructional effectiveness and better meet students' needs.
- (iii) Teachers engage in relevant, targeted professional learning opportunities that align with their professional growth goals and their students' academic and social-emotional needs.

B. Teachers collaborate with their colleagues, are self-aware in their interpersonal interactions, and are open to constructive feedback from peers and administrators.

- (i) Teachers seek out feedback from supervisors, coaches, and peers and take advantage of opportunities for job-embedded professional development.
- (ii) Teachers actively participate in professional learning communities organized to improve instructional practices and student learning.

C. Teachers seek out opportunities to lead students, other educators, and community members within and beyond their classrooms.

- (i) Teachers clearly communicate the mission, vision, and goals of the school to students, colleagues, parents and families, and other community members.
- (ii) Teachers seek to lead other adults on campus through professional learning communities, grade- or subject-level team leadership, committee membership, or other opportunities.

D. Teachers model ethical and respectful behavior and demonstrate integrity in all situations.

- (i) Teachers adhere to the educators' code of ethics in §247.2 of this title (relating to Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators), including following policies and procedures at their specific school placement(s).
- (ii) Teachers communicate consistently, clearly, and respectfully with all members of the campus community, including students, parents and families, colleagues, administrators, and staff.
- (iii) Teachers serve as advocates for their students, focusing attention on students' needs and concerns and maintaining thorough and accurate student records.

Texas Teacher Standards in Review

1. How are campus professionals engaged in ongoing study and application of the Texas Teacher Standards?
2. How are these standards used to guide professional expectations for teachers and continuously ensure that quality practices are embraced and implemented?
3. How are the standards used in conjunction with the T-TESS Rubric to self-assess and develop plans for improvement?

A Culture of Continuous Improvement

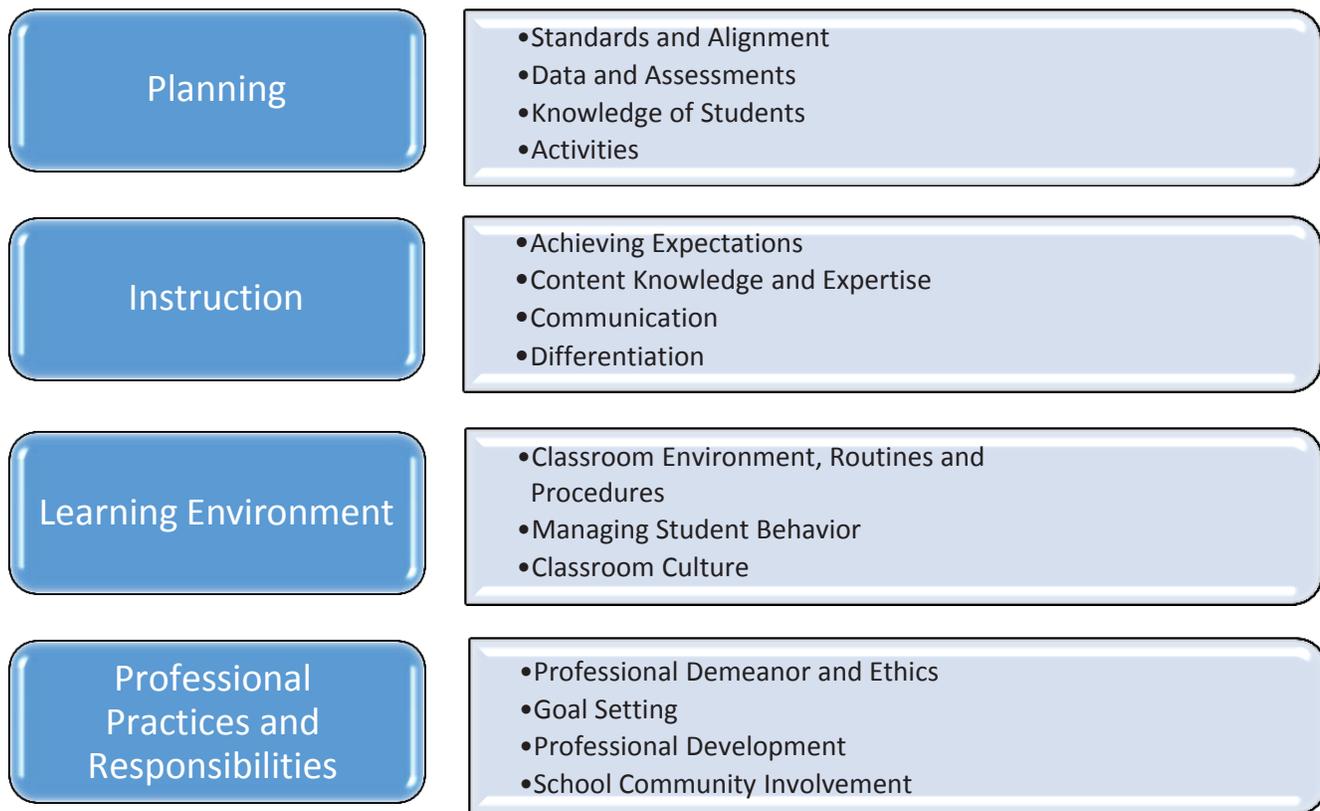
Given that student performance expectations continue to increase, effective schools establish cultures of continuous improvement where individuals are learning, growing and contributing to campus-wide success. Through ongoing communication, collaboration, information sharing, assessments, and acknowledgment of strengths and needs, individuals and teams can accomplish both personal and organizational goals. While T-TESS is used to evaluate teacher-specific knowledge, skills and responsibilities, continuous improvement processes ideally occur at varying levels within the organization: personal growth focused on instructional improvement at the classroom level; those focused on the team or department level; and those addressing system-wide growth with a collective impact on student performance. To yield these results, this work is planned and implemented in a thoughtful, rigorous, and transparent manner so that it is job-embedded, tied to the domains, dimensions, descriptors and performance levels of the T-TESS Rubric, and aligned with the goal-setting and professional development processes.

Four Domains of the T-TESS Rubric

The T-TESS Rubric includes four domains: Planning, Instruction, Learning Environment, and Professional Practices and Responsibilities. The domains and correlating dimensions are shown in the chart below. Individual rubrics are established for each dimension of the T-TESS Rubric to include specific descriptors of practices for each of the performance levels – *distinguished, accomplished, proficient, developing, and improvement needed*.

This handbook reviews the elements of each dimension, including how the dimensions are represented in classroom practices. This information is intended to initiate teacher discussions regarding the practical application of the knowledge and skills embedded in the rubric with extensions and other concrete examples for classroom and team meetings determined at the school level. **Figure 1** outlines the four domains of the T-TESS Rubric and the specific dimensions for each.

Figure 1. Four Domains of the T-TESS Rubric

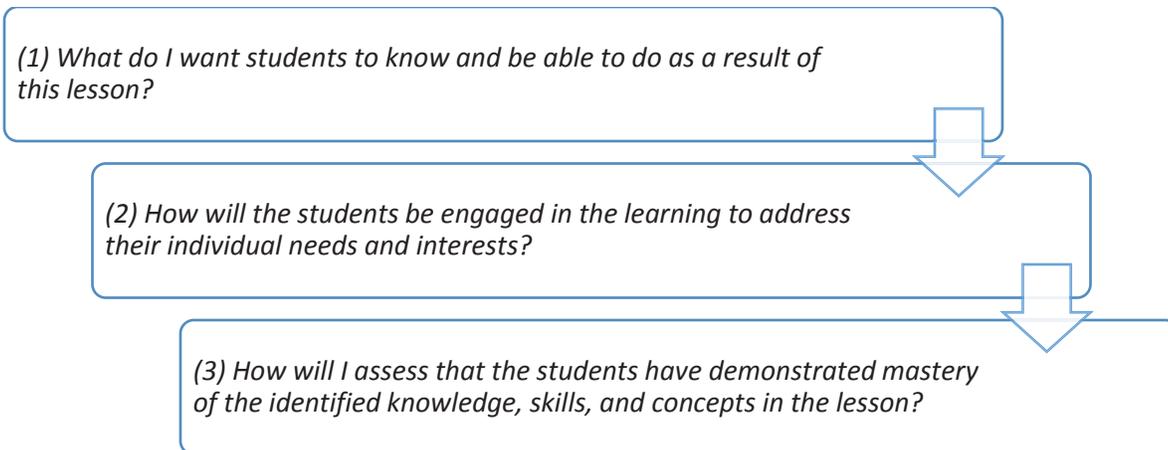


Planning *Domain*

This section provides guidance regarding the planning domain and correlating four dimensions:

- Standards and Alignment
- Data and Assessments
- Knowledge of Students
- Activities

Effective planning begins with measurable and explicit learning outcomes aligned to the TEKS and other relevant standards for learning. Planning is initially based on three driving questions:



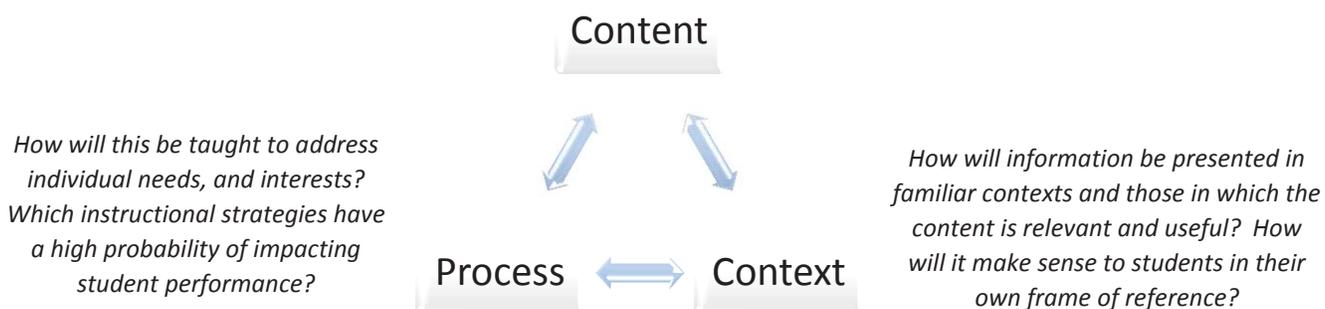
It is evident that the four planning dimensions are directly embedded in these questions to provoke rich discussions during team planning meetings and clarify the planning phase.

As a result of quality planning, lessons have a clear beginning, middle and end, and are scaffolded to follow a logical progression of basic to complex. Lessons connect students' prior knowledge and understanding to new content and contexts, including real-world applications, and consistently accommodate individual students' needs. They also include targeted large- and small-group instructional strategies, technology and resources which are appropriate to the content area, and before making the subject matter accessible to all students. A well-designed lesson, where appropriate planning time has been devoted, contributes to higher quality, student-centered learning experiences that are challenging and an efficient and effective learning environment where students assume responsibility for their own learning. During classroom instruction, this allows teachers to focus on the execution of the lesson and the impact on student outcomes.

Another way to think about this is with the relationship among content, process and context, as depicted in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2. Relationship Among Content, Process and Context

What do I want students to know and be able to do as a result of this lesson? Which curriculum standards will be addressed?



Evidence and data for the planning domain and dimensions are collected over the course of the year during individual and team planning meetings, through the review of lesson plans and artifacts, with student data management systems, pre-conferences and other applicable means. Effective planning is critical to the overall design and delivery of curriculum, instruction and assessments and how these three elements work together.

Standards and Alignment

Dimension 1.1

The teacher designs clear, well-organized, sequential lessons that reflect best practice, align with the standards, and are appropriate for diverse learners.

PLANNING DIMENSION 1.1

Standards and Alignment

The teacher designs clear, well-organized, sequential lessons that reflect best practice, align with standards and are appropriate for diverse learners.
Standards Basis: 1A, 1B, 3A, 3B, 3C

Distigulshed	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS				TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS
<p>Instructional Planning Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All rigorous and measurable goals aligned to state content standards. All activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are logically sequenced are relevant to students' prior understanding and real-world applications integrate and reinforce concepts from other disciplines provide appropriate time for student work, student reflection, lesson and lesson closure deepen understanding of broader unit and course objectives are vertically aligned to state standards are appropriate for diverse learners Objectives aligned and logically sequenced to the lesson's goal, providing relevant and enriching extensions of the lesson Integration of technology to enhance mastery of goal(s). 	<p>Instructional Planning Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All measurable goals aligned to state content standards. All activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are sequenced are relevant to students' prior understanding integrate other disciplines provide appropriate time for student work, lesson and lesson closure reinforce broader unit and course objectives are vertically aligned to state standards are appropriate for diverse learners All objectives aligned and logically sequenced to the lesson's goal. Integration of technology to enhance mastery of goal(s). 	<p>Instructional Planning Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All goals aligned to state content standards. All activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are relevant to students provide appropriate time for lesson and lesson closure fit into the broader unit and course objectives are appropriate for diverse learners. All objectives aligned to the lesson's goal. Integration of technology when applicable. 	<p>Instructional Planning Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most goals aligned to state content standards. Most activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are sequenced sometimes provide appropriate time for lesson and lesson closure Lessons where most objectives are aligned and sequenced to the lesson's goal. 	<p>Instructional Planning Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few goals aligned to state content standards. Few activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are sequenced rarely provide time for lesson and lesson closure Lessons where few objectives are aligned and sequenced to the lesson's goal.
				<p>Possible Sources of Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher Formal Observations/Walkthroughs Classroom Artifacts Student Growth Processes

This dimension focuses on how the lesson is designed to address specific standards, primarily the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in grades kindergarten through high school which are specific to the grade level and course/subject taught.

Content Standards

- TEKS – English (Spanish, where applicable)

- English Language Arts and Reading
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Languages Other Than English
- Health Education
- Physical Education
- Fine Arts
- Economics with Emphasis on the Free Enterprise System
- Technology Applications
- Career Development
- Spanish Language Arts and English as a Second Language
- Career and Technical Education

Other Standards

- English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)
- Prekindergarten Guidelines
- College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS)
- TEKS in Spanish

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- The standards describe the knowledge and skills that students should attain and are often called the “what” of “what students should know and be able to do.” They address the ways of thinking, working, communicating, reasoning, problem-solving, and investigating the important and enduring ideas, concepts, issues and knowledge essential to the discipline with connections across disciplines.
- The standards are selected as presented in the district’s scope and sequence and are aligned and logically sequenced.
- The teacher clearly understands what the standards specifically mean for the grade level and subject taught, including a common understanding among teachers responsible for teaching these standards.
- The verbs in the standards define the observable actions expected in classroom instruction and how students are expected to process the content. They are arranged in order of complexity in thinking.

- The standards and objectives are communicated in multiple ways so that students are clear about what they are supposed to know and be able to do as a result of the lesson.
- Technology is purposefully integrated in the lesson design and delivery to enhance the lesson and facilitate students' mastery of the objectives.
- The standards are spiraled and woven throughout the year to ensure that consistent exposure is occurring.
- Both content and process standards are strategically included in lesson design and delivery.
- There is a clear understanding regarding the vertical and horizontal articulation of the standards to ensure alignment within and among disciplines.
- Relevant and enriching extensions are incorporated as the standards are addressed throughout the lesson and are appropriate for diverse learners.
- Technology is integrated in deliberate ways as a means of enhancing learning outcomes.
- *What other considerations should the team address for standards and alignment?*

Key Questions:

1. How are the standards studied and understood both vertically and horizontally?
2. Why is aligning the lesson objectives to the standards important?
3. Which standards seem the most difficult for students to master? Why do you think students are having difficulty mastering those in particular?
4. Which sub-objectives need to be taught for students to master specific standards?
5. What was the connection between the students' mastery of the learning objective and the lesson plan?
6. How do lesson structure and pacing contribute to effective teaching and learning?
7. How did you choose the activities, materials, and assessments included in this lesson plan?
8. How did you accommodate students' individual interests and needs?
9. How are technology standards addressed and included in lesson design and delivery to maximize learning?

Descriptor 1	All measurable goals aligned to state content standards.
Clarification	Learning goals presented during instruction are derived from the state content standards as outlined in the district scope and sequence and also include other standards which address the unique learning needs of individual and groups of

<p>students, e.g., the ELPS, CCRS, etc. Planning effective lessons aligned to the standards is dependent upon the teacher’s ability to create and communicate clearly defined learning goals, objectives, and outcomes. The learning goal refers to the broader definition of student competence, e.g., the student will demonstrate competence in critical thinking, problem solving, etc.</p> <p>This descriptor is foundational to all other descriptors, as it provides the basis for instructional design. When the teacher is clear about the learning goals, lessons are developed and implemented to address clear, well-articulated learning objectives and outcomes that are rigorous, challenging and presented in a manner that allows the teacher to measure how student learning is occurring. As the standards are displayed and referenced throughout the lesson, students are also clear about learning expectations. This creates the alignment between the learning goal(s), objective(s) and outcome(s). For this to occur, a teacher must clearly define the learning objective for the lesson and then maintain the focus of the lesson on this objective, i.e., “What are students expected to know and be able to do as a result of this lesson?” This may require the teacher to redirect students’ comments or provide academic feedback which refocuses the students on these learning outcomes.</p>		
<p>District/Campus Connections</p>	<p>Possible Teacher Behaviors</p>	<p>Possible Student Behaviors</p>

<p>Descriptor 2</p>	<p>All activities, materials and assessments that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are sequenced - are relevant to students’ prior understanding - integrate other disciplines - provide appropriate time for student work, lesson and lesson closure - are vertically aligned to state standards - are appropriate for diverse learners
---------------------	---



Clarification

This descriptor addresses the variety and appropriateness of activities, materials and assessments the teacher chooses to implement during a lesson. Through the use of a variety of materials and activities, teachers are able to address students' backgrounds, experiences, learning styles and intelligences. Therefore, the criteria used by teachers in choosing materials and activities should be those that clearly support the lesson objectives and are related to the needs of the students. The sub-bullets in this descriptor further clarify how activities, materials and assessments should be chosen to further connect learning, i.e., they are logically sequenced, relevant to students' prior understanding and real-world applications, etc. The "how do we know..." question can be used with each of these bullets to clarify the planning process, e.g., "How do we know that the activities, materials, and assessments are logically sequenced to support student mastery of the learning objectives?" or "How do we know that the activities, materials and/or assessments are relevant to students' prior understanding and connection to the real-world?" These types of questions ensure that all teachers are clear about how the standards and objectives are included to maximize teaching and learning.

This dimension and descriptor are closely related to Differentiation, Activities and Knowledge of Students. In order to plan appropriate activities and materials, a teacher must have knowledge of the needs and interests of the students. Instruction that is demanding for every student and creates opportunities for all students to experience success can be implemented only when a teacher's knowledge of students is utilized during instruction. When a teacher sets high and demanding expectations for every student, he/she is also able to develop, select, and apply activities and materials that are challenging. Sub-bullets for this descriptor are further clarified, as follows:

Sequenced – Refers to the efficient order of processes and content in such a way that assists the learner in mastering the objective. Learner-related sequencing is often based on five student-learning concepts:

- Identifiable prerequisites - The teacher understands and teaches prerequisite skills which are required to be taught first, as they are fundamental to the new knowledge and skills, e.g., knowing the alphabet before using a dictionary/encyclopedia.
- Familiarity – Begin with the most familiar or known information – what students already know – and progress to the unknown or most remote. For example, when teaching a math unit on measurement, you might begin with a clear understanding of inch, foot, and yard, before solving conversion problems involving calculations with centimeters and meters.
- Difficulty – Teach the less difficult and move to the more/most difficult, e.g. simple sentences to complex sentences, etc.

- Interest – Begin with the topics or tasks that will create the most learning interest to engage and hook the students, then move to one of the other sequencing methods. For example, an introductory course in robotics might begin with how to make the robot move, before introducing structured programming techniques.
- Development – Ensure that the learner has reached the appropriate developmental level before moving to the next topic or task.

It is important to note the differences between procedural (order of the steps) versus topical (order of the content) sequencing. The characteristics of the learner and nature of the content drive sequencing decisions.

Relevance to students' prior understanding – The term ‘relevance’ typically refers to learning experiences that are either directly applicable to personal aspirations, interests, or cultural experiences of students or that are connected in some way to real-world issues, problems or contexts. For instruction to be relevant, students generally want to know:

1. Why am I studying/learning this information?
2. When and how am I going to use this information?

Therefore, it is important for students to see the need for learning and to present the information in ways that answer these questions while connecting to their prior knowledge and understanding of the content. The instruction is also connected to real-world examples and applications which appeal to their interest so that students are able to immediately see the significance with their own lives, short- and long-term. Effective teachers increase depth and complexity of the learning goals and objectives while using students’ prior experiences and knowledge to help students master the content and skills.

Integrate other disciplines – Interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary instruction includes the integration and reinforcement of knowledge, skills, principles, etc., to more than one academic discipline at a time. The disciplines are connected through themes, concepts, issues, problems, etc., with standards for instruction to specify what students are learning within and across classrooms. Teachers engage in focused, collaborative, and interdisciplinary planning to integrate and reinforce concepts through multiple lessons.

Provide appropriate time for student work, lesson and lesson closure – Lesson structure, pacing, time-on-task, and lesson closure are all embedded in this sub-bullet. Decades of research show that quality time-on-task is directly linked to academic achievement. This includes the amount of time students spend actively working on tasks of appropriate level of difficulty. Teachers must assess each student’s knowledge and skills levels, assign learning tasks to match these levels, and design engaging lessons with learning tasks that include varied strategies for

<p>learning, processing, reflecting, connecting and closing the lesson.</p> <p><u>Vertically aligned to state standards</u> – Vertically aligned curriculum is organized in a manner that shows the progression of knowledge and skills from one grade or course to the next, preparing students for more advanced and challenging learning. Knowing and understanding the standards in the grades/courses that come before and after each teaching assignment is key to creating vertically aligned standards.</p> <p><u>Appropriate for diverse learners</u> – This sub-bullet addresses the need to design and structure lessons which meet the unique learning needs of diverse learners, including addressing the accommodations and modifications noted in their individual learning plans, as appropriate. Planning for diverse learners includes first knowing each individual student’s strengths and needs, then determining how to include content, process, and product expectations in lesson planning.</p>		
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 3	All objectives aligned and logically sequenced to the lesson’s goal.
Clarification	<p>The learning objectives are brief, clear statements that describe what the students will be expected to learn at the end of the year, course, unit, lesson, project or class period. These are the interim academic goals that teachers establish for students as they work towards meeting more comprehensive learning standards. Learning outcomes identify what the students will know and be able to do at the end of a given period of time – the essential and enduring knowledge and skills. Objectives are <u>intended</u> results, while outcomes are measured as <u>achieved</u> results. There are three types of learning objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cognitive objectives: What do you want your students to know? - Affective objectives: What do you want your students to think or care about? - Behavioral objectives: What do you want your students to be able to do?

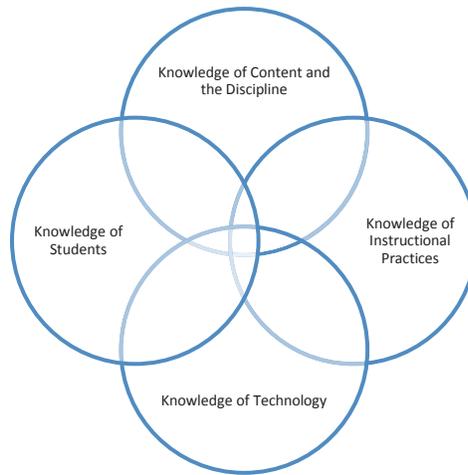


	<p>The alignment and sequencing of the lesson relates to how the objectives and sub-objectives are presented, taught, connected, and extended within a lesson and linked to the TEKS. Objectives should be taught or reviewed in an appropriate sequence for the grade level and address the unique learning needs of the students. Including sub-objectives allows the teacher to review prior learning, teach a new sub-skill or teach content or a process that supports the main objective. The segmenting of the lesson relates to the chunking or pacing of the lesson. An effective teacher will provide sufficient time for the introduction of the lesson, instruction within the lesson, the students to process the content, and closure to further relate and extend the content in meaningful ways where students see the connections with the lesson and are motivated to learn. As noted in Descriptor 2, although these elements may be embedded during a given lesson, the segmenting of the lesson allows sufficient time for each to take place so that students can have opportunities to master the learning objective.</p>	
<p>District/Campus Connections</p>	<p>Possible Teacher Behaviors</p>	<p>Possible Student Behaviors</p>

<p>Descriptor 4</p>	<p>Integration of technology to enhance mastery of goal(s).</p>
<p>Clarification</p>	<p>Instructional technology and other like resources are purposefully incorporated into lesson design to facilitate and enhance learning outcomes. There is a clear connection with how the technology is selected and incorporated in the lesson to make learning meaningful for students.</p> <p>Technology integration includes the use of technology resources such as computers, mobile devices, tablets, digital cameras, social media platforms and networks, software applications, student response systems, the Internet, and others in daily classroom practices. Effective teachers ensure that technology integration is routine, seamless, transparent, accessible and readily available for lessons or tasks at hand, and most important, that it supports the curricular goals and overall student performance. Student motivation and engagement increases when technology is an integral part of the learning process. The end result is an opportunity to build a deeper understanding of the content. Specific student skills which may be tapped with technology access include accessing primary source</p>

resources and materials, research, collecting and recording data, collaborating and communicating with others worldwide through multimedia sources, project-based learning, etc. These options allow students to think and problem solve at higher levels. **Figure 3** below shows us that there are four critical elements which must be present in order for teachers to effectively integrate technology. Teachers must have strong knowledge of the content or subject matter taught and the structure of the discipline; knowledge about research-based instructional practices; knowledge about technology resources and tools; including when to use them and how to support students with these resources and tools; and knowledge of the students they teach and how they learn. Students in today's schools use technology in multiple modalities. As digital natives, it is important that lesson design and delivery include technology when appropriate to advance teaching and learning.

Figure 3. Four Elements Needed for Teachers to Effectively Integrate Technology



District/Campus Connections

Possible Teacher Behaviors

Possible Student Behaviors

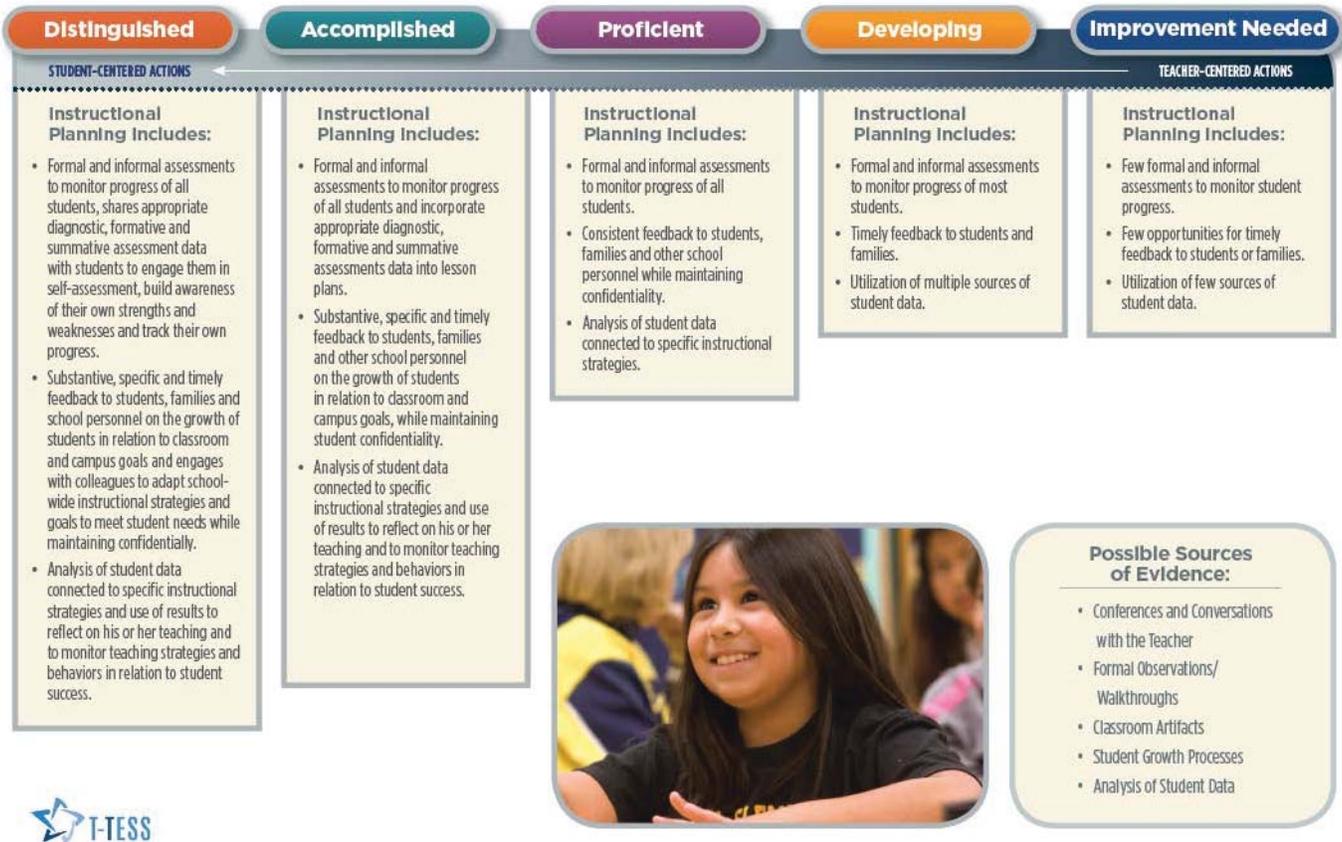
Data and Assessments

Dimension 1.2

The teacher uses formal and informal methods to measure student progress, then manages and analyzes student data to inform instruction.

PLANNING DIMENSION 1.2 Data and Assessment

The teacher uses formal and informal methods to measure student progress, then manages and analyzes student data to inform instruction.
Standards Basis: 1B, 1F, 2B, 2C, 5A, 5B, 5C, 5D



This dimension focuses on how teachers use formal and informal data and assessments to assess student progress and growth in relation to the instructional goals and content objectives. Teachers review and analyze multiple sources of data to measure progress and growth, then adjust instructional strategies and lesson delivery, as necessary, to ensure that students are successful in mastering the learning expectations.

Data and assessments may include some of the following:

- State assessment data
- TELPAS and AMAO Results
- Content-based assessments, common benchmarks, or unit assessments

- Criterion- or norm-referenced tests
- Classroom assessments, formal and informal
- Teacher observations
- Running records
- Individualized education plans
- Student work, journaling, etc.
- Lesson study and delivery processes
- Scope and sequence, pacing guides and/or other curricular/focus documents

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Data and assessments are used to set individual and group learning goals.
- Teachers consistently review student data in relation to student curriculum standards to ensure instruction is on track and make adjustments, as necessary, to meet the needs of all students.
- Teachers consistently utilize both formal and informal methods of measuring student progress and mastery of learning objectives and content knowledge and skills.
- Learning outcomes are directly linked to assessment measures that most accurately predict and assess student learning.
- Teachers use varied methods of assessing student learning, accommodate students' learning needs with these assessments, and compare data measure, as appropriate to determine trends and patterns over time and develop a holistic picture of students' strengths and learning needs.
- Processes are established to regularly collect, review, analyze and apply data to monitor student progress in a timely, thorough, accurate and appropriate manner.
- Teachers use data and assessments to inform instructional practices, design and delivery, and differentiate their teaching practices to improve student learning based on assessment outcomes.
- Students are involved in self-assessment, goal setting and monitoring their progress with both formal and informal measures.
- Teachers consistently communicate with students and their families using data and assessments to share timely and comprehensible feedback so that both students and families understand the learning goals and how students are meeting these goals.

Key Questions:

1. How is data collected and managed in your school to facilitate access for teachers?
2. What types of data and assessments does your school use to guide instructional decisions?
3. How is data used to inform instructional practices and individualize learning for all students?
4. How are other stakeholders, including students, involved in reviewing and understanding data and assessment measures?

Descriptor 1	Formal and informal assessments to monitor progress of all students and incorporate appropriate diagnostic, formative and summative assessment data into lesson plans.	
Clarification	<p>Effective teachers clearly identify learning goals or performance objectives, create instructional plans to best address these learning objectives, then assess these performance objectives. The construct of the assessment or format should match the purpose for assessing the learning outcomes to yield the desired assessment outcomes. It is important to use a variety of forms of diagnostic, formative and summative assessments, as some students struggle and/or perform different with one type of assessment versus another. Including a variety of types of assessments will ensure that students are provided with ample opportunities to demonstrate what they know and are able to do, and that teachers have accurate information to complete the learning profile for each student. This descriptor addresses using diagnostic, formal and informal assessments to monitor the progress of all students. All types are equally important in lesson planning and developing students' learning profiles.</p> <p>An effective assessment plan answers the questions, "What do I want my students to be able to do as a result of my teaching?" and "How do/will I know the students learned what I taught?" When these questions are asked and answered regularly, teachers can effectively plan, diagnose, and intervene to raise student performance.</p>	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 2	Substantive, specific, and timely feedback to students, families and school personnel on the growth of students in relation to classroom and campus goals, while maintaining confidentiality.	
Clarification	This descriptor addresses how teachers involve students, families and school personnel in reviewing and understanding data and assessments. This feedback is used to communicate how the students are progressing in relation to classroom and campus goals, and as indicated in the previous descriptor, used to build awareness of each student’s strengths, weaknesses and also to track their own progress. Ideally, both teachers and students understand the types of instructional strategies which support the student in mastering the objectives and those that may present issues for the student. A strong relationship exists between the teacher, students, families and school personnel where all stakeholders are involved in connecting data and assessments to curriculum and instruction. The data and assessments are used to inform other school processes, such as the Response to Intervention (RtI), Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC), Admission Review and Dismissal (ARD), 504, and other decision-making committees which plan for instructional programming to close performance gaps. Specific processes, e.g., data binders, progress folders, etc., are systematically implemented to ensure that ongoing data loops are in place, with evidence to support that two-way communication is established.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 3	Analysis of student data connected to specific instructional strategies and uses results to reflect on his or her teaching and to monitor teaching strategies and behaviors in relation to student success.	
Clarification	Effective teachers analyze multiple sources of student data in relation to the implementation of specific instructional strategies to determine the cause and effect relationship between teaching and learning, and specifically how adjustments in instruction are necessary to increase student performance. The effective teacher is, therefore, a reflective practitioner who critically analyzes his or her teaching strategies and behaviors and determines which strategies have the	



greatest impact on each student's performance. Teachers design instruction, change strategies and differentiate their teaching practices to improve student learning based on assessment outcomes and feedback. There are also systematic feedback loops in place for the teacher to gather instructional effectiveness data from administrators and peers. Teachers collaborate with colleagues in forums such as team meetings that include opportunities for teachers to assess those who are having a significant impact on student learning, why that is happening, and peer coaching to support each other in maximizing implementation and impact. Questions to consider include:

1. Which instructional strategies will best address the student data needs and standards being taught?
2. How will we collect data and feedback to assess how the strategies are implemented and the impact the strategies are having on student performance?
3. What specific data do we have or need to collect that will inform us about the impact?
4. When strategies are working, why is this true? When they are not working, why not?
5. Which strategies are yielding the highest results? Why?

There is a direct connection with this dimension and the Professional Practices and Responsibilities dimension through targeted professional learning opportunities.

District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Knowledge of Students Dimension 1.3

Through knowledge of students and proven practices, the teacher ensures high levels of learning, social-emotional development and achievement for all students.

PLANNING DIMENSION 1.3 Knowledge of Students

Through knowledge of students and proven practices, the teacher ensures high levels of learning, social-emotional development and achievement for all students.
Standards Basis: 1A, 1B, 1C, 2A, 2B, 2C

Distngulshed	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS	
<p>Instructional Planning Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All lessons that connect to students' prior knowledge, experiences, interests and future learning expectations across content areas. Guidance for students to apply their strengths, background knowledge, life experiences and skills to enhance each other's learning. Opportunities for students to utilize their individual learning patterns, habits and needs to achieve high levels of academic and social-emotional success. 	<p>Instructional Planning Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All lessons that connect to students' prior knowledge, experiences and future learning expectations. Guidance for students to apply their strengths, background knowledge, life experiences and skills to enhance their own learning. Opportunities for students to utilize their individual learning patterns, habits and needs. 	<p>Instructional Planning Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All lessons that connect to students' prior knowledge and experiences. Adjustments to address strengths and gaps in background knowledge, life experiences and skills of all students. 	<p>Instructional Planning Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most lessons that connect to students' prior knowledge and experiences. Adjustments to address strengths and gaps in background knowledge, life experiences and skills of most students. 	<p>Instructional Planning Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few lessons that connect to students' prior knowledge and experiences. Adjustments to address strengths and gaps in background knowledge, life experiences and skills of few students.



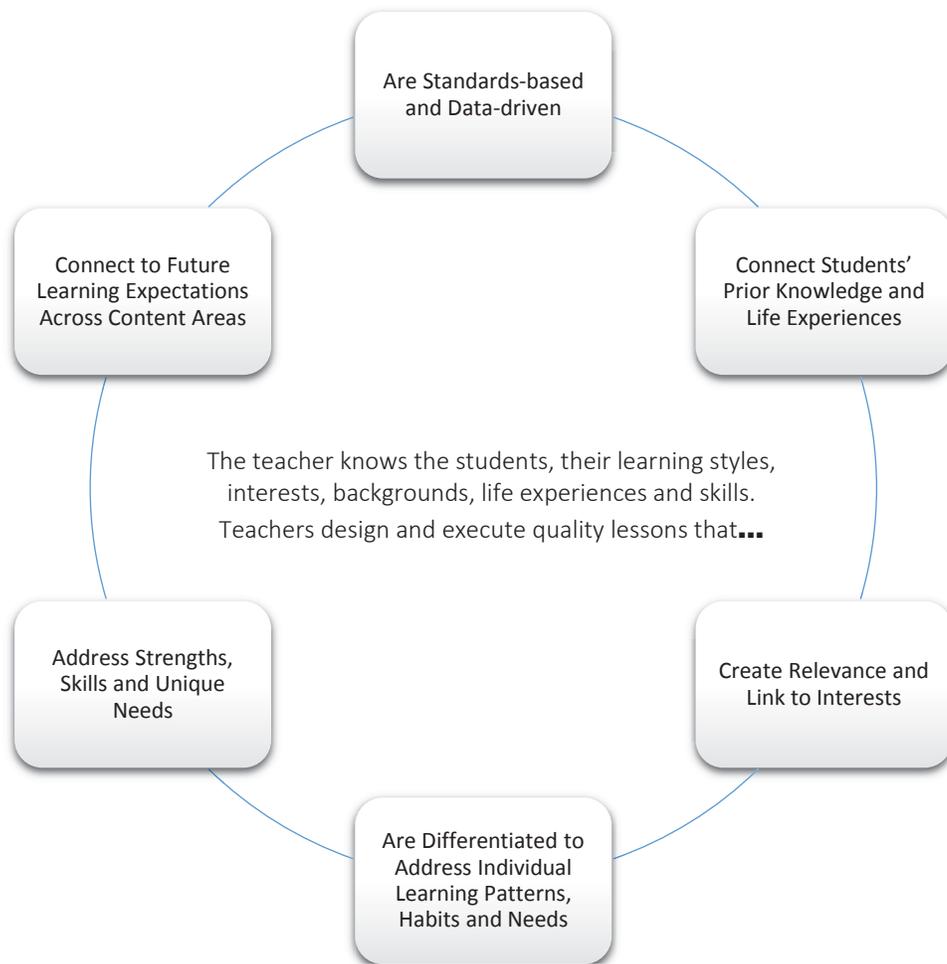
Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher
- Formal Observations/ Walkthroughs
- Classroom Artifacts
- Student Growth Processes
- Analysis of Student Data



This dimension focuses on teachers having a strong understanding of the students they teach, their educational and developmental backgrounds, and individual learning needs. In highly effective classrooms, there is a direct connection between students' learning needs and how the teacher implements proven practices to ensure high levels of learning, social-emotional development and achievement for all students. Figure 4 provides the connection between how the dimension, *Knowledge of Students*, is linked to the design and execution of quality lessons.

Figure 4. Connection Between *Knowledge of Students* and Lesson Execution



T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- All teachers advocate for their students, believe that students have the potential to achieve at high levels, and accept responsibility to ensure high levels of performance of each learner.
- Teachers are purposeful in utilizing students' individual strengths as a basis for academic and social-emotional growth.
- Teachers anticipate students' learning difficulties and incorporate differentiated strategies to address these needs and master what is being taught.
- A community of learners is established where teachers model continuous improvement and differences in learning and background are viewed as an asset and platform for growth.
- Teachers understand the unique qualities of students with exceptional needs, including cultural, educational, linguistic, disabilities, and giftedness, and seek opportunities to learn how to effectively address these needs so that instruction is fully accessible.

- Teachers understand how learners develop and construct meaning and the relationship of these concepts to acquiring specific knowledge and skills as readiness and supporting standards.

Key Questions:

1. What processes do teachers use to gain a thorough knowledge of their students?
2. How are lessons connected to students’ prior knowledge, life experiences, interests, and subsequent expectations for learning?
3. How do lessons connect across content areas and disciplines?
4. How are lessons adjusted to address individual student needs?
5. How are students encouraged and supported in understanding and utilizing their individual learning patterns, habits and needs to facilitate academic and social-emotional success in classrooms?
6. In what ways are students guided to apply their own strengths, background knowledge, life experiences and skills to enhance each other’s learning?

Descriptor 1	All lessons that connect to students’ prior knowledge, experiences, interests and future learning expectations.	
Clarification	Effective teachers incorporate varied strategies in lesson design to assess what students already know and the experiences they bring to the lesson, using this information as a basis for connecting new learning. This descriptor, therefore, focuses on a teacher’s ability to bridge the content being taught to the background and experiences of the students so that it is personally meaningful, relevant, and motivating.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 2	Guidance for students to apply their strengths, background knowledge, life experiences and skills to enhance their own learning.		
Clarification	Effective teachers know and understand their students and design and implement learning experiences which promote student-to-student interactions that capitalize on their varied strengths, background knowledge about the content and subject matter, life experiences as they relate to the learning goals and outcomes, and other skills. Guidance is provided to students as a transition to classroom interactions where students assume more responsibility for making this happen. Student feedback is used to further connect and tap their strengths with subsequent learning experiences which validate and challenge them to grow. Establishing processes for these student behaviors to occur regularly is paramount.		
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors	

Descriptor 3	Opportunities for students to utilize their individual learning patterns, habits and needs.		
Clarification	<p>Teachers encourage students to capitalize on their unique learning qualities as a means to achieve success by highlighting students’ styles – their patterns, habits, and needs. They also integrate activities, materials and resources that focus on the use of visual, auditory, kinesthetic and/or tactile methods to teach key concepts and skills. Lessons are planned to include varied grouping strategies: pairs, triad, small-group, etc., with other instructional techniques to keep students motivated and engaged in learning. Effective teachers provide clear and specific feedback to students and validate questions and responses as a means of advancing and connecting learning within and across disciplines.</p> <p>The research regarding Howard Gardner’s “Multiple Intelligences” also addresses tapping students musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, naturalistic, intrapersonal, visual-spatial and musical as primary sensory modalities for learning. The planning consideration becomes, “How do I know my students’ individual and collective learning styles/modalities, and how might I structure learning to address these strengths?”</p>		

District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Activities

Dimension 1.4

The teacher plans engaging, flexible lessons that encourage higher-order thinking, persistence and achievement.

PLANNING DIMENSION 1.4

Activities

The teacher plans engaging, flexible lessons that encourage higher-order thinking, persistence and achievement.

Standards Basis: 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E

Distinguished

Accomplished

Proficient

Developing

Improvement Needed

STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS ←

→ TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS

Instructional Planning Includes:

- Opportunities for students to generate questions that lead to further inquiry and promote complex, higher-order thinking, problem solving and real-world application
- Instructional groups based on the needs of all students, and allows for students to take ownership of group and individual accountability.
- The ability for all students to set goals, reflect on, evaluate and hold each other accountable within instructional groups.
- Activities, resources, technology and instructional materials that are all aligned to instructional purposes, are varied and appropriate to ability levels of students and actively engage them in ownership of their learning.

Instructional Planning Includes:

- Questions that encourage all students to engage in complex, higher-order thinking and problem solving.
- Instructional groups based on the needs of all students and maintains both group and individual accountability.
- All students understanding their individual roles within instructional groups and facilitates opportunities for student input on goals and outcomes of activities.
- Activities, resources, technology and instructional materials that are all aligned to instructional purposes, are varied and appropriate to ability levels of students.

Instructional Planning Includes:

- Questions that encourage all students to engage in complex, higher-order thinking.
- Instructional groups based on the needs of all students.
- All students understanding their individual roles within instructional groups.
- Activities, resources, technology and instructional materials that are all aligned to instructional purposes.

Instructional Planning Includes:

- Questions that promote limited, predictable or rote responses and encourage some complex, higher-order thinking.
- Instructional groups based on the needs of most students.
- Most students understanding their individual roles within instructional groups.
- Activities, resources, technology and/or instructional materials that are mostly aligned to instructional purposes.

Instructional Planning Includes:

- Encourages little to no complex, higher-order thinking.
- Instructional groups based on the needs of a few students.
- Lack of student understanding of their individual roles within instructional groups.
- Activities, resources, technology and/or instructional materials misaligned to instructional purposes.



Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher
- Formal Observations/Walkthroughs
- Classroom Artifacts
- Student Growth Processes
- Analysis of Student Data



The effective teacher has a strong ability to organize and present the content in a manner that motivates students to learn. As the last dimension in the Planning domain, this section focuses on how the teacher individually and collectively plans for engaging, flexible lessons that encourage higher-order thinking and increase levels of achievement for all learners. It addresses the variety and appropriateness of activities and materials that the teacher implements during the lesson. The criteria used in choosing materials, and activities should clearly support the lesson objectives and relate to the needs of students. Planning includes activities, materials and resources that encourage students' persistence and best effort. There are, therefore, direct connections between this dimension and the Instruction and Learning Environment domains. In addition, the learning environment features a high degree of student engagement through facilitated discussions, student-centered activities, as well as direct instruction which makes the learning clear and meaningful.

In order to develop these types of learning experiences, the teacher must have an in-depth knowledge of the students. This dimension, therefore, connects strongly to Knowledge of Students, Standards and Alignment, and Content Knowledge and Expertise.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers purposefully plan activities which are challenging for all students and keep them engaged and motivated to learn.
- The teacher serves as a facilitator, incorporating activities that best match the content, and move towards student-centered actions that allow for them to take ownership of their own learning.
- Lessons that value inquiry, curiosity and exploration allow students to connect with the learning at higher levels of cognition.
- Teachers model effective questioning techniques and how to respond to students' questions. This modeling leads to lessons which purposefully incorporate opportunities for students to generate questions for student-to-student interactions that lead to thinking and promote complex, higher-order thinking, problem solving and real-world connections.
- Teachers use data and assessments to create instructional groups which are based on the academic and social-emotional needs of all students. These groups are dynamic and change based on the lesson objectives and student needs. During these group activities, clear expectations are communicated which allow students to assume responsibility for both group and individual participation and accountability.
- Ongoing opportunities are available for students to review and understand expectations for performance in relation to their data and current levels of performance. This information is used to set goals and review progress over time for these learning goals. Students reflect on their goals and progress towards these goals and hold each other accountable as they interact within their instructional groups.

Key Questions:

1. How are students provided opportunities to generate questions that lead to complex, higher-order thinking, problem solving and real-world applications at varying times during the lesson?
2. How are data and assessments used to guide decisions regarding varying student groups?
3. How are expectations for individual and group roles, responsibilities, and accountability communicated and monitored to promote student-centered actions and behaviors?
4. How are students led through goal setting processes and provided structures for assessing progress and goal attainment?
5. How do teachers purposefully select activities, resources, technology and other instructional materials to maximize learning and encourage student-centered instruction?

Descriptor 1	Opportunities for students to generate questions that lead to further inquiry and promote complex, higher-order thinking, problem solving and real-world application.	
Clarification	Activities are planned where students are specifically expected to generate their own questions about the lesson to clarify their own thinking or promote thinking with peers. Teaching students to generate their own questions is a critical life-long skill. Teachers can use student-generated questions to introduce students to a new unit of study or lesson, assess students' knowledge, process content, extend learning, conclude a lesson, create their own research projects, analyze information, or think deeply about a challenging assignment, among others. In thinking about generating questions as a learned skill, the teacher models effective questioning techniques. Students are taught how to generate questions using protocols or a set of rules, and analyze and prioritize their questions as a more advanced skill over time with a focus on the intent of the inquiry. Students learn how to produce, improve, and prioritize their questions and are expected to reflect on what they have learned, including how it promotes thinking and learning. This descriptor helps students cultivate a skill that is fundamentally important for all learning.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 2	Instructional groups based on the needs of all students, and allows for students to take ownership of group and individual accountability.	
Clarification	Effective teachers are purposeful about using data and assessments, both formal and informal to create varied configurations of student groups. Instructional activities, materials and resources are specifically tailored to address the needs of these students with targeted content, modifications and accommodations, as necessary. Teachers develop lessons that are developmentally appropriate and also understand, actively anticipate, and adapt instruction to address common misunderstandings and preconceptions. Expectations are communicated and feedback is provided to students regarding their roles and responsibilities during this structured time to hold them individually and collectively accountable for learning, products and other outcomes.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 3	The ability for students to set goals, reflect on, evaluate and hold each other accountable within instructional groups.	
Clarification	Teachers work with students to set academic, as well as social-emotional learning goals in response to data from formal and informal assessments. Therefore, structured time is provided for students to review their data and set learning goals. Teachers encourage all students to overcome obstacles and remain persistent in facing challenges with achieving desired outcomes. They validate each student's goals, progress towards the goals, and use this to advance learning for all students. Teachers communicate regularly, clearly and in language formats that ensure parents and families can understand to provide detailed and constructive feedback which furthers students' performance and facilitates reaching established goals.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

--	--	--

Descriptor 4	Activities, resources, technology and instructional materials that are aligned to instructional purposes, are varied and appropriate to ability levels of students and actively engage them in ownership of their learning.	
Clarification	Teachers consistently ensure that learning includes a high degree of student engagement by designing lessons which facilitate student discussions and include student-centered activities that provide opportunities for deeper learning. Effective teachers exhibit a strong understanding of their content and discipline, and related pedagogy as demonstrated through the quality of the design and execution of lessons, and their ability to link activities, materials and resources to the address students’ individual ability levels and the learning objectives in ways that are highly engaging and motivating. Teachers serve as advocates for their students and value inquiry, curiosity, and exploration that allow students to connect with the learning at higher levels of cognition.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Instruction *Domain*

This section provides guidance regarding the instruction domain and correlating five dimensions:

- Achieving Expectations
- Content Knowledge and Expertise
- Communication
- Differentiation
- Monitor and Adjust

This domain specifically addresses “how” learning is structured and executed during the lesson to ensure that student mastery of the learning objectives is occurring. Quality planning is the

precursor to quality instruction, and as discussed in the previous section, is a multi-faceted process.

Achieving Expectations Dimension 2.1

The teacher supports all learners in their pursuit of high levels of academic and social-emotional success.

INSTRUCTION DIMENSION 2.1 Achieving Expectations

The teacher supports all learners in their pursuit of high levels of academic and social-emotional success.

Standards Basis: 1B, 1D, 1E, 2A, 2C, 3B, 4A, 4D, 5B

Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS	
<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides opportunities for students to establish high academic and social-emotional expectations for themselves. Persists with the lesson until there is evidence that all students demonstrate mastery of the objective. Provides opportunities for students to self-monitor and self-correct mistakes. Systematically enables students to set goals for themselves and monitor their progress over time. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides opportunities for students to establish high academic and social-emotional expectations for themselves. Persists with the lesson until there is evidence that most students demonstrate mastery of the objective. Anticipates student mistakes and encourages students to avoid common learning pitfalls. Establishes systems where students take initiative of their own learning and self-monitor. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets academic expectations that challenge all students. Persists with the lesson until there is evidence that most students demonstrate mastery of the objective. Addresses student mistakes and follows through to ensure student mastery. Provides students opportunities to take initiative of their own learning. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets academic expectations that challenge most students. Persists with the lesson until there is evidence that some students demonstrate mastery of the objective. Sometimes addresses student mistakes. Sometimes provides opportunities for students to take initiative of their own learning. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets expectations that challenge few students. Concludes the lesson even though there is evidence that few students demonstrate mastery of the objective. Allows student mistakes to go unaddressed or confronts student errors in a way that discourages further effort. Rarely provides opportunities for students to take initiative of their own learning.



Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher
- Formal Observations/Walkthroughs
- Student Growth Processes
- Analysis of Student Data



There is a direct correlation between high expectations and high levels of student performance. The overall goal is to ensure that students are achieving at their highest potential and connecting learning. This dimension focuses on ensuring that high expectations are consistently and systematically communicated and expected as a part of the classroom and school culture to develop goal setting as a lifelong skill.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers believe that all students can achieve at high levels and establish expectations which clearly and consistently communicate this message.
- Teachers effectively communicate goals, expectations, and objectives to help all students reach high levels of achievement.
- Teachers set high expectations and create challenging learning experiences for students, encouraging them to apply disciplinary and cross-disciplinary knowledge to real-world problems.
- Teachers model expectations for learning using varied strategies, including think-aloud models to assist students in understanding the cognition and thought process behind each step of the new learning.
- Teachers consistently involve students in establishing high expectations for performance through ongoing communication of what they are expected to know and do and regularly provide opportunities for students to review current performance compared to desired goals and outcomes.
- Students are provided with strategies to self-monitor their performance and evaluate the cause and effect relationship for those strategies, actions and behaviors that contribute to their successes.
- The school and classroom culture are aligned to send a consistent message about goal setting and monitoring their progress over time. This includes staff goal setting as a means of modeling the expectation for high levels of achievement and continuous learning.

Key Questions:

- How are students consistently provided with opportunities to set high academic and social-emotional goals for themselves, including monitoring progress towards these goals?
- How do teachers communicate to collectively support students in goal setting and progress monitoring results?
- How is “mastery” of the discipline communicated to students so they are clear about the learning expectations?

Descriptor 1	Provides opportunities for students to establish high academic and social-emotional expectations for themselves.
Clarification	Teachers are intentional about providing opportunities for students to understand what high expectations look like in various contexts and structure time for students to set high academic, social-emotional and behavioral expectations for performance. The teacher provides direct modeling and concrete examples to convey desired outcomes. In order to do so, the teacher must be clear about what the students are expected to know and do, and identify the critical elements of these desired outcomes. In other words, what knowledge, actions and behaviors would the teacher and students expect to see if the outcomes were met?

	Teachers assist the students in identifying the steps necessary to achieve the desired outcomes and provide exemplars for what the outcomes would look like when achieved. The teacher must clearly understand the students' strengths and limitations to build on and overcome them; therefore, knowledge of students is a direct connection to this descriptor.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 2	Persists with the lesson until there is evidence that most students demonstrate mastery of the objective.	
Clarification	This descriptor is of paramount importance and focuses on what the students have learned, as opposed to what teachers have taught. Teachers must first know how evidence will be collected to show students' mastery of learning, including learning over time, as it relates to mastery of the learning objectives. The key questions are, "What do I expect students to know and be able to do as a result of this lesson, and how will I know that this has happened?" This evidence is tied to both formal and informal data, assessments, and specific tools to measure learning. The evidence is also tied to both specific learning objectives during the lesson and learning that occurs over the course of the year as a profile for mastery of all expected standards and objectives. This descriptor also addresses "all students" to reinforce that there is accountability to ensure that every student in every classroom is learning what is expected and making expected gains. The teacher understands where the achievement gaps are occurring and knows how to address these gaps so that students are successful. Purposeful planning occurs to check for understanding and mastery, then modifications are made during the lesson and in subsequent lessons to meet the individual learning needs of all students. Because instruction is designed from basic to complex and scaffolded to support learning, specific checks for mastery are incorporated throughout the lesson, and teachers understand and anticipate when readiness skills need to be reinforced as a foundation for learning. For multi-day assignments, there should still be a clear way to assess whether or not the students master each segment of the lesson and sub-objectives.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors



--	--	--

Descriptor 3	Anticipates student mistakes and encourages students to avoid common learning pitfalls.
---------------------	---

Clarification	<p>Self-monitoring requires students to be active in their own learning with the responsibility for assessing and evaluating actions and behaviors against the expectations. This is a critical life skill which will benefit students in the long term. Students who are expected to measure and act on modifying their actions through self-correction will target new actions in the desired direction. Students need to be taught how to self-monitor their academic and social-emotional behaviors. They must first know the expectations as described in the first two descriptors of this dimension and why these expectations are important. The self-monitoring strategies must be used consistently and overtly when introduced in order for students to internalize how to use this strategy in other contexts. Teachers can incorporate various types of self-monitoring tools and resources, e.g., rubrics, checklists, rating scales, frequency counts, etc.</p> <p>Considerations for self-monitoring include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define the behavior or expectation to self-monitor. 2. Identify a method for self-monitoring and how the data will be collected. 3. Communicate the self-monitoring schedule, e.g., daily at the end of class, etc., and whether it will be teacher cued or the student’s responsibility to self-assess. 4. Identify reinforcement, rewards, validation, and feedback loop (teacher and/or peer) options to provide the student with external data about progress. 5. Determine how periodic checks will be established and communicated at both the teacher and individual student levels. This may include random spot checks by the teacher. 6. As learning outcomes are met, establish new expectations as a cycle of continuous improvement and refinement.
----------------------	--

District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors



Descriptor 4	Establishes systems where students take initiative of their own learning and self-monitoring.	
Clarification	<p>This descriptor addresses how students engage in goal setting to improve student performance and results over time. Goal setting is a critical component of achievement, motivation, persistence and focusing direction as students work to perform or attain goals. Students are more likely to commit to reaching their goals when goals are specific, measurable, attainable, timely and moderately difficult. Students' confidence and self-efficacy also increases when they see progress; therefore, self-monitoring and establishing milestones is an important element to the process, including making decisions about how to alter their strategies so that they move closer to goal attainment when the present options are not working. In addition, the goal setting process explicitly connects teaching and learning and allows teachers to also see how their instructional practices and performance needs to shift to address students' needs. Teachers can help students think through long-term goals and segment these into short-term sub-goals, determine strategies, timelines, and assess progress. They can also help students facilitate the process by coaching them through their thinking, problem solving, actions and behaviors related to the goals, e.g., asking students about how well their strategy(ies) are working and why, which specific strategies are having the greatest effect and why, etc. As students transition from high schools with goal setting skills and a clear mindset that values this type of thinking and problem solving, they will be much better prepared to face future challenges.</p>	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Content Knowledge and Expertise Dimension 2.2

The teacher uses content and pedagogical expertise to design and execute lessons aligned with state standards, related content and student needs.

INSTRUCTION DIMENSION 2.2

Content Knowledge and Expertise

The teacher uses content and pedagogical expertise to design and execute lessons aligned with state standards, related content and student needs.

Standards Basis: 1A, 1C, 1E, 1F, 2C, 3A, 3B, 3C

DistInguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS	
<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays extensive content knowledge of all the subjects she or he teaches and closely related subjects. Integrates learning objectives with other disciplines, content areas and real-world experience. Consistently anticipates possible student misunderstandings and proactively develops teaching techniques to mitigate concerns. Consistently provides opportunities for students to use different types of thinking (e.g., analytical, practical, creative and research-based). Sequences instruction that allows students to understand how the lesson fits within the structure of the discipline, the state standards, related content and within real-world scenarios. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conveys a depth of content knowledge that allows for differentiated explanations. Integrates learning objectives with other disciplines and real-world experiences. Anticipates possible student misunderstandings and proactively develops teaching techniques to mitigate concerns. Regularly provides opportunities for students to use different types of thinking (e.g., analytical, practical, creative and research-based). Sequences instruction that allows students to understand how the lesson fits within the structure of the discipline and the state standards. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conveys accurate content knowledge in multiple contexts. Integrates learning objectives with other disciplines. Anticipates possible student misunderstandings. Provides opportunities for students to use different types of thinking (e.g., analytical, practical, creative and research-based). Accurately reflects how the lesson fits within the structure of the discipline and the state standards. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conveys accurate content knowledge. Sometimes integrates learning objectives with other disciplines. Sometimes anticipates possible student misunderstandings. Sometimes provides opportunities for students to use different types of thinking (e.g., analytical, practical, creative and research-based). 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conveys inaccurate content knowledge that leads to student confusion. Rarely integrates learning objectives with other disciplines. Does not anticipate possible student misunderstandings. Provides few opportunities for students to use different types of thinking (e.g., analytical, practical, creative and research-based).
				
<p>Possible Sources of Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher Formal Observations/ Walkthroughs Student Growth Processes Analysis of Student Data 				

This dimension focuses the teacher's knowledge of the content, structure of the discipline, as well as the ability to connect the content being taught to other ideas and concepts to help students create cognitive maps, relate one idea to another, address misconceptions, and connect ideas within and across disciplines to real life experiences. This knowledge and expertise is critical to successful teaching and learning.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers exhibit a comprehensive understanding of their content, discipline, and related pedagogy as demonstrated through the quality of the design and execution of lessons and their ability to match objectives and activities to relevant state standards.
- Teachers understand the major concepts, key themes, multiple perspectives, assumptions, processes of inquiry, structure, and real-world applications of their grade-level and subject-area content.

- Teachers design and execute quality lessons that are consistent with the concepts of their specific discipline, are aligned to state standards, and demonstrate their content expertise.
- Teachers have expertise in how their content vertically and horizontally aligns with the grade-level/subject-area continuum, leading to an integrated curriculum across grade levels and content areas.
- Teachers keep current with developments, new content, new approaches, and changing methods of instructional delivery within their discipline.
- Teachers demonstrate content-specific pedagogy that meets the needs of diverse learners, utilizing engaging instructional materials to connect prior content knowledge to new learning.
- Teachers make appropriate and authentic connections across disciplines, subjects, and students' real-world experiences.
- Teachers regularly highlight key concepts and ideas, and use them as a basis to connect other powerful ideas.
- Teachers understand how varied types of thinking are applied in classroom lessons and how instruction is structured to provide ongoing opportunities for students to use different types of thinking skills at increasing levels of complexity.

Key Questions:

- What processes does the grade level, department and/or school implement to ensure that teachers have extensive content knowledge of all subjects taught, including closely related fields?
- How are learning objectives and sub-objectives integrated with other disciplines and grounded in real-world experiences that students can relate to and understand?
- How do teachers know and anticipate student misunderstandings and proactively address these?
- How do teachers expand their expertise of the content in ways that allow them to present the information in multiple, differentiated ways?
- How is instruction sequenced in a way that coherently makes sense to all students?
- How is thinking modeled and purposefully taught with the expectation that students engage in various types of thinking at higher, complex levels?

Descriptor 1	Conveys a depth of content knowledge that allows for differentiated explanations.
Clarification	Teachers clearly understand the content and structure of the discipline so that instruction can be presented multiple ways to differentiate for students who do not master learning when presented information is explained. Learning styles are matched to increase the likelihood that students will understand the content. Teachers use data to determine each student’s need for differentiation and effectively plans instruction as part of the Response to Intervention (RtI) progress to focus on the knowledge and skills the student needs in order to fully comprehend the concepts and skills in each unit of study.

District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 2	Integrates learning objectives with other disciplines and real-world experiences.	
Clarification	Teachers are deliberate in integrating learning objectives in one discipline with other disciplines to help learners construct and connect learning. When ideas, concepts and skills from one discipline are connected to others, teachers also maximize instructional time and reinforce learning across subjects. Students are then also able to see how the learning is applicable in other contexts. When students who use their background knowledge to understand information that is presented in other ways, the potential for more effective, complex learning increases. Studying and understanding the TEKS across disciplines to identify the connections and commonalities increases teachers' ability to plan and execute lessons which are interconnected.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 3	Anticipates possible student misunderstandings and proactively develops teaching techniques to mitigate concerns.	
Clarification	This dimension is addressed in both the planning and instruction domains, as teachers will consider possible student misunderstandings, reactions, and challenges through the planning process, and proactively incorporate strategies to address these during instruction. The teacher, therefore, knows the students' strengths and needs in order to anticipate the issues they may face in processing	

	the content. Alternative strategies, activities, differentiated instruction, modifications and/or accommodations that will best support them in mastering the learning objectives are then incorporated to address specific misunderstandings.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 4	Regularly provides opportunities for students to use different types of thinking (e.g., analytical, practical, creative and research-based).
Clarification	<p>Effective teachers create learning opportunities which challenge students to think in complex ways, apply their learning to solve meaningful problems, and create projects/products that extend the content and learning objectives. Thinking allows students to make connections to existing cognitive maps and create new connections and meaning. The following descriptions further define each type of thinking:</p> <p>Analytical Thinking: Most teachers focus only on analytical thinking in their classrooms. This type of thinking demands that students analyze, evaluate, and explain phenomena. Analyzing, evaluating, and explaining information is a skill that applies to all disciplines and is critical for an informed and educated society.</p> <p>Practical Thinking: Many students often do not see the connections between what they learn in school and how they can use this knowledge in the real world. Teachers who integrate practical thinking into their teaching, design learning activities where students are forced to use and apply concepts and ideas that they learn in real-world scenarios.</p> <p>Creative Thinking: By teaching students to create, design, and imagine, teachers prepare students for the flexible and creative thinking they will need to exercise later in life. Creative thinking allows students to generate new ideas by bringing together existing ideas in new configurations, developing new possibilities for things that already exist, or discovering or imagining something new.</p> <p>Research-Based Thinking: In the midst of the information age, students need to know not only how to research to find information, but also how to review a variety of ideas and come to solutions that are well-supported and make sense.</p>

	With this type of thinking, students learn to problem solve, apply critically, evaluate, create, and collaborate – important skills for the 21 st Century learner and for life.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 5	Sequences instruction that allows students to understand how the lesson fits within the structure of the discipline and the state standards.	
Clarification	Effective teachers have an in-depth knowledge of the structure of their content and the state standards so that they are able to sequence and segment instruction in ways that make learning comprehensible for students. They study the district’s scope and sequence and have a clear understanding of how the units of study are organized and use this information to logically sequence and scaffold instruction. Teachers also understand which learning strategies, activities, materials and resources best support processing the content and purposefully bring all components together.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Communication Dimension 2.3

The teacher clearly and accurately communicates to support persistence, deeper learning and effective effort.

INSTRUCTION DIMENSION 2.3 Communication

The teacher clearly and accurately communicates to support persistence, deeper learning and effective effort.

Standards Basis: 1D, 1E, 2A, 3A, 4D

Distigulshed	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS	
<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes classroom practices that encourage all students to communicate safely and effectively using a variety of tools and methods with the teacher and their peers. Uses possible student misunderstandings at strategic points in lessons to highlight misconceptions and inspire exploration and discovery. Provides explanations that are clear and coherent and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct. Asks questions at the creative, evaluative and/or analysis levels that require a deeper learning and broader understanding of the objective of the lesson. Skillfully balances wait time, questioning techniques and integration of student responses to support student-directed learning. Skillfully provokes and guides discussion to pique curiosity and inspire student-led learning of meaningful and challenging content. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes classroom practices that encourage all students to communicate effectively, including the use of visual tools and technology, with the teacher and their peers. Anticipates possible student misunderstandings and proactively develops techniques to address obstacles to learning. Provides explanations that are clear and coherent and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct. Asks questions at the creative, evaluative and/or analysis levels that focus on the objective of the lesson and provoke thought and discussion. Skillfully uses probing questions to clarify, elaborate and extend learning. Provides wait time when questioning students. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes classroom practices that provide opportunities for most students to communicate effectively with the teacher and their peers. Recognizes student misunderstandings and responds with an array of teaching techniques to clarify concepts. Provides explanations that are clear and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct. Asks remember, understand and apply level questions that focus on the objective of the lesson and provoke discussion. Uses probing questions to clarify and elaborate learning. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads lessons with some opportunity for dialogue, clarification or elaboration. Recognizes student misunderstandings but has a limited ability to respond. Uses verbal and written communication that is generally clear with minor errors of grammar. Asks remember and understand level questions that focus on the objective of the lesson but do little to amplify discussion. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directs lessons with little opportunity for dialogue, clarification or elaboration. Is sometimes unaware of or unresponsive to student misunderstandings. Uses verbal communication that is characterized by inaccurate grammar; written communication that has inaccurate spelling, grammar, punctuation or structure. Rarely asks questions, or asks questions that do not amplify discussion or align to the objective of the lesson.
			<p>Possible Sources of Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher Formal Observations/Walkthroughs Student Growth Processes Analysis of Student Data 	



This dimension focuses on how the teacher clearly and accurately communicates with students to support learning. Teachers effectively communicate goals, expectations, and objectives to help all students reach high levels of achievement. In many ways, this dimension is the foundation for all other dimensions, as there must be a clearly communicated purpose for learning. Communication must be two-way, where teachers and students clearly understand and articulate learning expectations. There are descriptors across other dimensions that are clearly linked to this dimension and support the holistic nature of the T-TESS Rubric.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers communicate clearly and accurately and engage students in a manner that encourages students' persistence and best efforts.
- Teachers identify gaps in students' knowledge of subject matter and communicate with their leaders and colleagues to ensure that these gaps are adequately addressed across grade

levels and subject areas.

- Teachers ensure that the learning environment features a high degree of student engagement by facilitating discussion and student-centered activities as well as leading direct instruction.
- Teachers promote complex, higher-order thinking, leading class discussions and activities that provide opportunities for deeper learning.
- Teachers ensure that instruction includes opportunities for students to generate questions that lead to further inquiry and promote complex, higher-order thinking, problem solving and real-world application.
- Teachers understand, actively anticipate, and adapt instruction to address common misunderstandings and preconceptions.
- Teachers use and adapt resources, technologies, and standards-aligned instructional materials to promote student success in meeting learning goals.
- Teachers establish, implement, and communicate consistent routines for effective classroom management, including clear expectations for student behavior.
- Teachers communicate regularly, clearly, and appropriately with parents and families about student progress, providing detailed and constructive feedback and partnering with families in furthering their students' achievement goals.
- Teachers communicate consistently, clearly, and respectfully with all members of the campus community, including students, parents and families, colleagues, administrators, and staff.

Key Questions:

- How are lessons structured in ways that promote student-led learning that is challenging, meaningful and deeply engages them in discussion?
- How are explanations presented in a clear and logically sequenced manner to facilitate mastery of learning and a clear understanding of lesson goals and outcomes?
- How are higher-order questions consistently used during instruction?
- How is instruction orchestrated to balance questioning techniques, wait time, and the integration of resources that move towards student-centered actions?
- How are technology and other media tools used to process instruction and communicate students' understanding of the content?

Descriptor 1	Establishes classroom practices that encourage all students to communicate effectively, including the use of visual tools and technology, with the teacher and their peers.
Clarification	Given that this dimension addresses “Communication,” this descriptor defines how teachers establish classroom practices that encourage and teach students to safely communicate information about the lesson’s objective using a variety of visual tools and technology, and other media platforms which support their learning style. As digital natives students use technology in their everyday lives as commonplace communication tools. Students, therefore, who use technology as a tool for communicating with others play an active role in their learning, as opposed to students who are not provided with these opportunities to use these

	tools and resources. When using these tools and resources, students are expected to think and problem-solve to make decisions about how to best communicate their information. Student motivation and involvement increases when they are involved in learning using this format. Rich multi-media products can be generated when students have the latitude to create and design learning around the content and standards. This dimension is closely tied to the following dimensions: Activities, Knowledge of Students, and Achieving Expectations.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 2	Anticipates possible student misunderstandings and proactively develops teaching techniques to address obstacles to learning.	
Clarification	Effective teachers consistently assess student behaviors and know when students are confused. These cues are used during the lesson to redirect instruction, highlight specific misconceptions, and refocus the lesson through clarifications, questions to redirect learning, asking students to explore new information that leads to new connections. This descriptor is closely tied to the Content Knowledge and Expertise dimension and the teacher’s ability to monitor and adjust instruction during the lesson and present information in a differentiated manner – two additional dimensions (monitor and adjust/differentiation).	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 3	Provides explanations that are clear and coherent and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct.	
Clarification	<p>Explanations are critical to the learning process and are presented through verbal and written communication with students. Given that learners process information in different manners, e.g., modalities, individual/group, etc., effective teachers review the content and process standards that will be taught and determine which verbal and written explanations will best communicate learning for students.</p> <p>At a minimum, the following factors are considered when providing effective explanations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear, connected language that aligns with students’ language and the standards, including key vocabulary – comprehensible language; - Teacher knowledge of the subject matter delivered in simplified, logical chunks; - Knowledge of students, including what they already know, their learning styles, etc.; - Clear examples, analogies, etc.; - Ongoing use of questions and probes to check for understanding; - Follow-up with specific students to address their individual needs; and - Strategies for engaging and motivating students. - 	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 4	Asks questions at the creative, evaluative and/or analysis levels that focus on the objective of the lesson and provoke thought and discussions.	
Clarification	<p>This questioning, often referred to as higher-order thinking, is an instructional strategy supported by extensive research tied to cognitive strategies, meta-cognition, and critical thinking. Linked to the concepts in the cognitive domain of Bloom’s Taxonomy, the skills are tied to analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information, rather than simple recall of facts or information. Effective teachers develop the skill to design and incorporate questions that engage students in higher-level instructional processes. Students are expected to solve problems and develop meaning for themselves by synthesizing, generalizing, explaining,</p>	

	<p>hypothesizing and drawing conclusions or interpretations. They have a strong depth of knowledge to understand concepts and central ideas of the discipline and use this knowledge to understand arguments, solve problems, construct meaning and connect learning beyond the classroom to real-world scenarios. These types of questions are used to generate considerable discussion and peer interactions which authentically engage students in developing a shared understanding of what is presented. As opposed to asking questions and having a few students answer, all students should be required to answer the question using varied strategies, e.g., think-pair-share, all-write, journaling, index card share, etc., and students should be required to defend and justify their responses.</p>	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 5	Skillfully uses probing questions to clarify, elaborate and extend learning.	
Clarification	<p>Effective teachers use multiple strategies to engage students in meaningful dialogue and discussion about the content and learning objectives. Lessons begin with an engage or hook activity to capture students' attention and inspire them to further explore the content. Questions and probes are used to clarify, elaborate and extend learning, allowing students to make connections with what they already know and to extend and connect new concepts and skills. As a result, this strategy of using probing questions, when authentically connected will also motivate students, pique curiosity and inspire students to persistently challenge themselves. At this level, teacher strategies are used to move students towards student-centered instruction where they assume responsibility for developing and applying probing questions to challenge and extend their own learning through specific expectations for products and outcomes. Students understand why the content or skill being taught is important for them to master and how mastery will impact their own lives. Lessons that value inquiry, curiosity and exploration facilitate student-centered teaching and learning.</p>	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 6	Provides wait time when questioning students.	
Clarification	<p>Effective teachers are deliberate about structuring wait time through specific strategies. This descriptor moves beyond simply allowing a few seconds for students to think, to structured, deliberate wait time for students to process the content individually and collectively with other students, e.g., think-pair-share, etc., as a means of making connections within and among the discipline. For students who struggle with providing responses, this strategy provides safety in supporting and validating their thinking and how they communicate their responses.</p> <p>"Wait Time" refers to that period of teacher silence that follows the posing of a question (Wait Time I) as well as that following an initial student response (Wait Time II). Extensive research has consistently demonstrated that the quality of student verbal responses improves when teachers regularly employ the "Wait Time" technique (Rowe). Research shows that teachers often wait less than 1.5 seconds before moving on.</p> <p>Advantages of Wait Time</p> <p>A. Wait Time - Before Calling on Student:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gives the teacher time to count those students who have been answering questions and those who have not. 2. Gives the teacher time to assess which students might answer the question correctly. <p>B. Wait Time I - After Calling on Student:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gives student time to frame an answer. 2. Gives teacher time to think of what a comprehensive answer could be. <p>C. Wait Time II - After Student Answer:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gives the student time to elaborate on or complete an answer. 2. Gives the teacher time to think about whether the answer was correct, incorrect, partially correct or evasive. 3. Provides time for the teacher to frame a response. <p><i>Source: Better Thinking and Learning (MSDE)</i></p> <p>In addition, teachers are deliberate about using classroom strategies to purposefully think through and problem-solve content and processes. As the content becomes more complex, students are provided additional time to reflect and connect.</p>	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Differentiation Dimension 2.4

The teacher differentiates instruction, aligning methods and techniques to diverse student needs.

INSTRUCTION DIMENSION 2.4 Differentiation

The teacher differentiates instruction, aligning methods and techniques to diverse student needs.

Standards Basis: 1C, 1F, 2A, 2B, 2C, 3C, 4A, 5A, 5C, 5D

Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS	
<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapts lessons with a wide variety of instructional strategies to address individual needs of all students. Consistently monitors the quality of student participation and performance. Always provides differentiated instructional methods and content to ensure students have the opportunity to master what is being taught. Consistently prevents student confusion or disengagement by addressing learning and/or social/emotional needs of all students. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapts lessons to address individual needs of all students. Regularly monitors the quality of student participation and performance. Regularly provides differentiated instructional methods and content to ensure students have the opportunity to master what is being taught. Proactively minimizes student confusion or disengagement by addressing learning and/or social/emotional needs of all students. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapts lessons to address individual needs of all students. Regularly monitors the quality of student participation and performance. Provides differentiated instructional methods and content to ensure students have the opportunity to master what is being taught. Recognizes when students become confused or disengaged and responds to student learning or social/emotional needs. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapts lessons to address some student needs. Sometimes monitors the quality of student participation and performance. Sometimes provides differentiated instructional methods and content. Sometimes recognizes when students become confused or disengaged and minimally responds to student learning or social/emotional needs. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides one-size-fits-all lessons without meaningful differentiation. Rarely monitors the quality of student participation and performance. Rarely provides differentiated instructional methods and content. Does not recognize when students become confused or disengaged, or does not respond appropriately to student learning or social/emotional needs.



Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher
- Formal Observations/Walkthroughs
- Classroom Artifacts
- Student Growth Processes
- Analysis of Student Data

This dimension addresses how instruction is tailored, or differentiated, to meet the individual learning needs of all students. Teachers can differentiate the **content** that is taught by segmenting the learning objectives; how students are expected to **process** information through varied instructional strategies; the types of **products** or outcomes students are to produce; or the **learning environment** through grouping strategies, student work areas, tapping students' learning styles or other participation approaches.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers design lessons to meet the needs of diverse learners, adapting methods when appropriate.
- Teachers differentiate instruction, aligning methods and techniques to diverse student needs, including acceleration, remediation, and implementation of individual education plans.

- Teachers design instruction, change strategies, and differentiate their teaching practices to improve student learning based on assessment outcomes.
- Teachers combine results from different measures to develop a holistic picture of students' strengths and learning needs.
- Teachers plan student groupings, including pairings and individualized and small-group instruction, to facilitate student learning.
- Teachers integrate the use of oral, written, graphic, kinesthetic, and/or tactile methods to teach key concepts.
- Teachers create a physical classroom set-up that is flexible and accommodates the different learning needs of students.
- Teachers design effective assessments as a fundamental part of teaching and learning to formally and informally assess students' progress and learning needs.

Key Questions:

- What types of data do teachers use to determine the strengths and learning needs of all students?
- How are students' individual learning plans, e.g., 504, IEP, etc., used as a means of designing instruction that is targeted and meets the needs of each student?
- How is student participation activated and monitored?
- How are instructional strategies designed to ensure that students master what is taught?
- What verbal and non-verbal cues does the teacher use to recognize when students become confused or disengaged and respond accordingly?
- How are instructional strategies varied to teach and assess student learning?

Descriptor 1	Adapts lessons to address individual needs of all students.	
Clarification	Effective teachers have a strong understanding of how instructional strategies should be varied and an extensive repertoire of teaching strategies to adjust these based on individual student needs and targeted groups of students. They also know how to design lessons which begin with the content standards – what students are expected to know and be able to do – and purposefully link the instructional strategies – how students process the content to understand what is being taught to best support students' mastery of the learning objectives. The strategies should focus on addressing student-specific strengths and needs, creating student-centered learning, with deeper and challenging learning expectations.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 2	Regularly monitors the quality of student participation and performance.		
Clarification	<p>Teachers implement various methods to consistently monitor the quality of student participation and performance in classroom instruction and with extended learning assignments, e.g., homework, projects, etc. Students are provided with clear expectations for participation and performance, along with focused feedback to ensure that they understand whether levels of participation and performance are on target. As teachers monitor performance, they are also assessing how students are responding to varied intervention strategies, including those identified through the RtI process. All levels of performance are addressed through rigorous and challenging instruction.</p> <p>At this level, teacher strategies are used to move students towards student-centered instruction where they assume responsibility for monitoring their own and others' participation and performance through various strategies.</p>		
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors	

Descriptor 3	Regularly provides differentiated instructional methods and content to ensure students have the opportunity to master what is being taught.		
Clarification	<p>Teachers know their students and their individual learning strengths and needs and use this information as the basis for planning instruction based on student readiness, interest and learning styles. Differentiation may include adjustments in content, process, products or the learning environment. Differentiation of content offers students the opportunity to begin at different places in the curriculum and/or proceed at different paces. Differentiation of process refers to how activities are varied to meet student interests or preferences for learning. Product differentiation means that students have some choice in how they will demonstrate what they have learned. The use of product choices is a common way for students to meet the required learning objectives while tapping the students' areas of strengths and increase motivation. Teachers also consistently use data and assessments to determine each student's current level of performance in relation to specific learning standards and objectives as a way to design instruction which best increases the likelihood that students will master both the prerequisite knowledge and skills, as well as the learning objectives. The readiness and supporting</p>		

	standards are used to purposefully plan lessons that address each student's learning needs. Teachers understand how to differentiate the content, activities and materials to scaffold teaching and learning, provide acceleration, remediation, and address the requirements of the individual education plans for students participating in specific special programs.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 4	Proactively minimizes student confusion or disengagement by addressing learning and/or social/emotional needs of all students.	
Clarification	Effective teachers recognize signals that indicate that students are confused or disengaged with the lesson, e.g., bored, frustrated, feeling inadequate, not participating, etc. They have an extensive repertoire of teaching strategies and are well-informed about when to specifically use these strategies to teach the learning standards. They plan for student groupings, including individual, pair, and small group instruction. The use of oral, written, graphic, kinesthetic, and/or tactile methods of instruction are integrated to teach key concepts and skills. Consistent and ongoing checks for understanding, feedback and lesson adjustments are implemented to reinforce learning and increase motivation. Teachers adjust content delivery in response to student progress and participation through the use of developmentally appropriate strategies which maximize student engagement, including looking closely at the specific aspects of the learning environment. When a safe, motivating environment is established, students are able to assume responsibility for informing the teacher that some of these barriers to learning are present.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Monitor and Adjust Dimension 2.5

The teacher formally and informally collects, analyzes and uses student progress data and makes needed lesson adjustments.

INSTRUCTION DIMENSION 2.5 Monitor and Adjust

The teacher formally and informally collects, analyzes and uses student progress data and makes needed lesson adjustments.

Standards Basis: 1D, 1F, 2B, 2C, 3B, 4D, 5C, 5D

Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS	
<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematically gathers input from students in order to monitor and adjust instruction, activities or pacing to respond to differences in student needs. Adjusts instruction and activities to maintain student engagement. Uses discreet and explicit checks for understanding through purposeful questioning and academic feedback. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizes input from students in order to monitor and adjust instruction, activities and pacing to respond to differences in student needs. Adjusts instruction and activities to maintain student engagement. Continually checks for understanding through purposeful questioning and academic feedback. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently invites input from students in order to monitor and adjust instruction and activities. Adjusts instruction and activities to maintain student engagement. Monitors student behavior and responses for engagement and understanding. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes utilizes input from students in order to monitor and adjust instruction and activities. Adjusts some instruction within a limited range. Sees student behavior but misses some signs of disengagement. Is aware of most student responses but misses some clues of misunderstanding. 	<p>The Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely utilizes input from students in order to monitor and adjust instruction and activities. Persists with instruction or activities that do not engage students. Generally does not link student behavior and responses with student engagement and understanding. Makes no attempts to engage students who appear disengaged or disinterested.



Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher
- Formal Observations/Walkthroughs
- Classroom Artifacts
- Student Growth Processes
- Analysis of Student Data



This dimension focuses on how teachers use formal and informal measures to collect, analyze and apply student progress data to make necessary adjustments to lessons and informed instructional decisions.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers analyze and review data in a timely, thorough, accurate, and appropriate manner, both individually and with colleagues, to monitor student learning.
- Teachers combine results from different measures, including student-specific feedback, to develop a holistic picture of students' strengths and learning needs.
- Teachers use the data they collect and analyze to inform their instructional strategies and inform short- and long-term plans, accordingly.
- Teachers vary methods of assessing learning to accommodate students' learning needs, linguistic differences, and/or varying levels of background knowledge.
- Teachers apply evidence-based strategies to address individual student learning needs and

differences, adjust their instruction, and support the learning needs of each student.

- Teachers gauge student progress and ensure student mastery of content knowledge and skills by providing assessments aligned to the instructional objectives and outcomes as accurate measures of student learning.
- Teachers regularly compare their curriculum scope and sequence with student data to ensure they are on track and make adjustments, as necessary.
- Teachers understand how the readiness and supporting standards are used to support students' mastery of the standards and learning objectives.
- Teachers effectively use questioning and feedback strategies to check for understanding.

Key Questions:

- How are formal and informal data measures collected, analyzed and applied to assess how students are progressing with the curriculum expectations?
- How is data systematically tracked to show trends and patterns over time?
- How are lessons monitored and adjusted, including activities and pacing, to align with student progress data and students' learning needs?
- How is questioning and feedback used to check for understanding?
- How are instruction, activities and materials utilized in ways that are meaningful, relevant, motivating and engaging for students?

Descriptor 1	Utilizes input from students in order to monitor and adjust instruction, activities and pacing to respond to differences in student needs.
Clarification	When teachers are methodical about the types of activities they use to gather input from students and track their progress, they are better able to identify students who need additional assistance or some alternate form of instruction. Data should be used to monitor student progress, adjust instructional plans, strategically target activities that build on each other, and pay close attention to how pacing needs to be adjusted to students' learning patterns. Figure 5 shows the key aspects of the monitor and adjust dimension. Figure 5. Key Aspects of the Monitor and Adjust Dimension

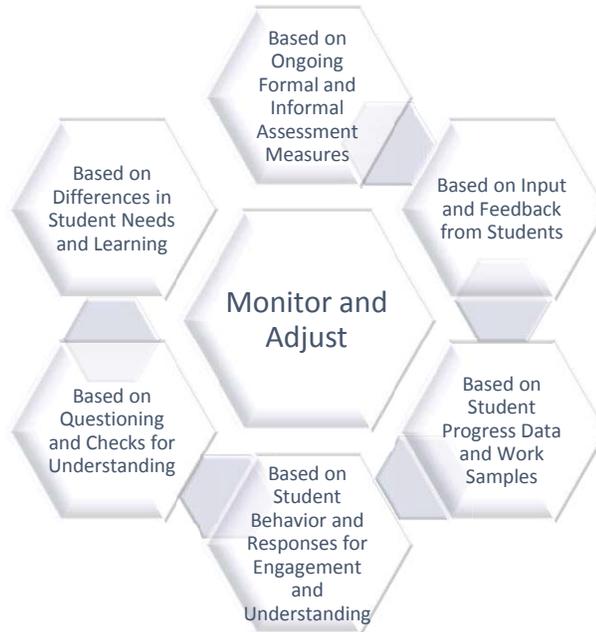


Figure 5.

District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 2	Adjusts instruction and activities to maintain student engagement.
Clarification	Effective teachers plan instructional activities which embrace students' likes and interests to keep them motivated and engaged. For content and instruction to be personally meaningful to students, there must be a clearly communicated purpose for learning with connection to students' interests and ideas where they easily relate. Students need to understand why the content or skill being taught in a lesson is important for them to master and how their mastery will impact them personally in real life. Lessons that value inquiry, curiosity and exploration provide opportunities for students to generate questions and conduct their own research or explore to locate the answers. When students have opportunities to generate their own questions about a given topic, their motivation to learn is usually increased as the learning becomes more student-directed than teacher-directed.

District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 3	Continually checks for understanding through purposeful questioning and academic feedback.
Clarification	<p>Both questioning and academic feedback strategies are powerful tools to check for student understanding. When using questioning, the teacher utilizes questions that are purposeful and coherent, then students' responses, including follow-up questions and responses, may be utilized as a formative assessment in determining which students have mastered the learning objective. Teachers understand how the verbs in the questions, e.g., compare, contrast, explain, justify, etc., target specific cognitive functions. The effective teacher does not limit the use of questions in a lesson to only teacher-generated questions, but guides students in generating questions that support their own learning. In leading students to generate their own questions, it is also important for them to have knowledge of the different question types. These can be modeled for them through the teacher's questions and through a purposeful teaching of Bloom's Taxonomy. As with teachers, student may be taught how to use question stems as a means of generating questions. Teacher questions should be varied, high quality, and provide a balanced mix of question types to move from basic to complex thinking, e.g., remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, synthesize. Questions are also consistently purposeful and coherent, sequenced with attention to the instructional goals, and promote student generated questions that lead to further inquiry, self-directed learning, and student-centered actions.</p> <p>This descriptor also focuses on how teachers respond to students' comments and questions and addresses the quality of the feedback in supporting student learning as opposed to feedback that only informs students of the accurateness of their responses. Academic feedback may take the form of oral and written feedback that is academically focused, frequent, and high quality; feedback that is frequently given during guided practice and other assignments; cues that prompt student thinking and assess student's progress; and students providing specific, high quality feedback to their peers. The feedback is used as a monitoring strategy for the teacher to make adjustments in instruction which impact student performance.</p> <p>Figure 6 provides examples to illustrate how teachers might monitor and adjust</p>

classroom activities. Actual adjustments should be based on the unique needs of students.

Figure 6. Potential Monitor and Adjust Activities

Increase/Decrease Direct Instruction or Other Lesson Elements	Change the Type of Thinking or Problem Solving	Modify the Amount and Types of Questions, Cues and Prompts	Change the Amount and Type of Academic Feedback
Increase/Decrease Instructional Groupings	Adjust the Pacing to Rate of Learning	Change Mode of Presentation and Instructional Materials	Modify Written and Oral Directions
Adjust Behavioral Strategies	Use Ongoing Checks for Understanding	Modify Student Response Strategies	Review Prior Learning

District/Campus Connections

Possible Teacher Behaviors

Possible Student Behaviors

Learning Environment *Domain*

This section provides guidance regarding the learning environment domain and correlating three dimensions:

- Classroom Environment, Routines, and Procedures
- Managing Student Behavior
- Classroom Culture

This domain specifically addresses “how” the learning environment is structured both physically and culturally so that it is conducive to teaching and learning. Establishing a safe, respectful, inclusive, and efficient learning environment is critical to students’ social-emotional readiness to learn and ensuring that academic learning goals and outcomes are met. Students who feel connected, valued, and inspired in the classroom are more likely to exhibit positive attitudes to

learning. Quality planning for how to structure the classroom learning environment to align with respective lessons is the precursor to quality instruction, and as discussed in the previous sections.

Classroom Environment, Routines and Procedures Dimension 3.1

The teacher organizes a safe, accessible, and efficient classroom.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT DIMENSION 3.1 Classroom Environment, Routines and Procedures

The teacher organizes a safe, accessible and efficient classroom.
Standards Basis:
1D, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D

Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
<p>STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and uses effective routines, transitions and procedures that primarily rely on student leadership and responsibility. Students take primary leadership and responsibility for managing student groups, supplies, and/or equipment. The classroom is safe and thoughtfully designed to engage, challenge and inspire students to participate in high-level learning beyond the learning objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and uses effective routines, transitions and procedures that she or he implements effortlessly. Students take some responsibility for managing student groups, supplies and/or equipment. The classroom is safe, inviting and organized to support learning objectives and is accessible to all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All procedures, routines and transitions are clear and efficient. Students actively participate in groups, manage supplies and equipment with very limited teacher direction. The classroom is safe and organized to support learning objectives and is accessible to most students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most procedures, routines and transitions provide clear direction but others are unclear and inefficient. Students depend on the teacher to direct them in managing student groups, supplies and/or equipment. The classroom is safe and accessible to most students, but is disorganized and cluttered. 	<p>TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few procedures and routines guide student behavior and maximize learning. Transitions are characterized by confusion and inefficiency. Students often do not understand what is expected of them. The classroom is unsafe, disorganized and uncomfortable. Some students are not able to access materials.



Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher
- Formal Observations/Walkthroughs
- Classroom Artifacts
- Analysis of Student Data



This dimension focuses on how teachers organize and operate the classroom to ensure that it is safe, accessible, and efficient on a day-to-day basis. Including consistent routines and procedures allows students to understand the teacher's expectations and makes it predictable where students can anticipate and act, accordingly. Classroom instruction is maximized when the learning environment, routines, and procedures are well-managed and organized.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers create a mutually respectful, collaborative, and safe community of learners by tapping students' developmental needs and backgrounds, including embracing their backgrounds and experiences as assets to the learning environment.

- Teachers maintain and facilitate respectful, supportive, positive and productive interactions with and among students.
- Teachers establish and sustain learning environments that are developmentally appropriate and respond to students' needs, strengths, and personal experiences.
- Teachers establish a physical environment that is flexible, accommodates varied learning needs, and provides access to supplemental resources which complement learning.
- Teachers engage students in establishing, communicating, implementing, and reinforcing classroom expectations, including clear expectations for behavior and how it will operate to create buy-in and ownership.
- Teachers model, monitor, and reinforce expectations for the environment, routines, and procedures and explain the rationale behind why they are established.

Key Questions:

- How do the classroom environment, routines, and procedures serve to promote quality teaching and learning?
- In what ways are students involved in establishing classroom expectations for the learning environment?
- How are expectations consistently modeled, communicated, monitored, and reinforced?

Descriptor 1	Establishes and uses effective routines, transitions and procedures that she or he implements effortlessly.
Clarification	<p>If one of our outcomes is to establish student-center classrooms, then it is important to include students in establishing how the classroom will function to increase their ownership, leadership and responsibility in the learning process. Effective teachers carefully plan and clarify for themselves the types of routines, transitions and procedures that support their personal styles and maximize teaching and learning. Using this information, students are then included in helping design the actual structure and procedures to create a sense of community in the classroom. Routines and procedures are explicitly taught and reinforced. Therefore, in a well-managed classroom, students know what is expected of them, transitions are clear and seamless, learning time is maximized with little confusion or disruptions, and there is a smooth flow with each aspect of the learning environment. Routines and procedures may include some of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entering/exiting the classroom; - Managing attendance, grading, homework and other routine tasks; - Managing activities and materials, including distribution and collection; - Transitioning during the lesson; - Signaling for attention, questioning techniques, student responses, etc.; - Establishing time frames for student activities, i.e., timers, etc.; and - Assigning, monitoring, and maintaining accountability for student roles, responsibilities, group work, and others.

District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 2	Students take some responsibility for managing student groups, supplies and/or equipment.	
Clarification	Effective teachers seek opportunities for students to assume primary roles in the management and operations of the classroom based on clear expectations of roles and responsibilities. There are significant benefits to empowering students, including having them assume responsibility for their actions and behaviors; developing decision-making and other critical life skills; developing confidence and leadership; understanding their own strengths and limitations; and many others. Empowering students to take primary leadership in the classroom allows the teacher to focus on other critical elements of instruction.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 3	The classroom is safe, inviting and organized to support learning objectives and is accessible to all students.	
Clarification	High-performing classrooms include a classroom culture and organizational structures where high expectations for performance are consistently communicated and students are encouraged to take risks, try new skills, and push themselves to learn new information without fear of failure. Effort is rewarded and students are encouraged to set stretch goals and develop plans to monitor their progress and accomplishments. Teachers maintain a culture that is based on high expectations for student performance, behavior, self-motivation and taking responsibility for their own learning. Student ownership is the focus when developing classroom culture and norms. Every aspect of the school system values and communicates an expectation for growth and high levels of performance.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Managing Student Behavior Dimension 3.2

The teacher establishes, communicates, and maintains clear expectations for student behavior.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT DIMENSION 3.2: The teacher establishes, communicates and maintains clear expectations for student behavior. Managing Student Behavior Standards Basis: 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D

Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently monitors behavior subtly, reinforces positive behaviors appropriately and intercepts misbehavior fluidly. Students and the teacher create, adopt and maintain classroom behavior standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently encourages and monitors student behavior subtly and responds to misbehavior swiftly. Most students know, understand and respect classroom behavior standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently implements the campus and/or classroom behavior system proficiently. Most students meet expected classroom behavior standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistently implements the campus and/or classroom behavior system. Student failure to meet expected classroom behavior standards interrupts learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely or unfairly enforces campus or classroom behavior standards. Student behavior impedes learning in the classroom.



Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher
- Formal Observations/Walkthroughs
- Classroom Artifacts
- Analysis of Student Data



This dimension focuses on how teachers establish, communicate and maintain clear expectations for student behavior during classroom instruction. One of the teacher's most important responsibilities is managing the classroom effectively, as it has a significant impact on student performance. Teachers with effective classroom management and management of student conduct create an atmosphere that positively enhances learning, as there are no distractions for students. Research consistently shows that the relationship between the teachers and students plays a significant role in classroom and student behavior management, and those teachers that have a high quality, respectful relationship with their students have fewer classroom problems.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers cultivate student ownership in developing the classroom culture and norms.
- Teachers implement behavior management systems by involving students in the process. These systems establish and maintain an environment where all students learn at peak levels.
- Teachers maintain a strong culture of individual and group accountability for classroom

expectations for behavior.

- Respectful relationships are evident with all classroom interactions, e.g., teacher to student and student to student, where effort and achievement is recognized and affirmed.
- Teachers maximize instructional time, including managing transitions before, during and after the lesson.
- As part of the learning environment, teachers manage and facilitate groupings in order to maximize student collaboration, participation and achievement.

Key Questions:

- How do teachers include students in defining and developing a classroom culture and correlating norms to maximize teaching and learning?
- What process do teachers use to develop and implement a positive behavior management system?
- How is misbehavior addressed?
- How is the behavior system aligned schoolwide to create consistency in non-classroom areas?
- How are student groups used to cultivate the learning environment?

Descriptor 1

Consistently encourages and monitors student behavior subtly and responds to misbehavior swiftly.

Clarification

An effective classroom arrangement can create the physical learning conditions that support teaching and learning, including clear rules and procedures, along with fair and consistent consequences. This descriptor is tied to the Classroom Environment, Routines and Procedures dimension in that it is critical for teachers to establish and monitor behavior expectations. The teacher should be able to move and transition throughout the classroom to observe all students at all times and monitor their participation and behavior. Since desirable student behavior may vary depending on the type of activity and perhaps a change in instructional location, e.g., lab, outdoor instruction, field trips, etc., explicit expectations for behavior are important and should be reinforced. Positive student behavior is more likely to occur when structures, procedures, and positive reinforcement are in place. Effective teachers monitor students carefully and consistently to anticipate and detect early signs of misbehavior and intervene before the issues escalate. They also know which students are their 'high need' students and require specific behavior management strategies and attention. Providing students with specific feedback regarding the expected behavior to redirect them reinforces the desired behaviors. This includes citing the applicable procedure or rule that was violated and the behavior that is expected. Teachers with effective classroom management techniques know when and how to use specific techniques with certain students, because they know and understand their students' needs and potential behavior triggers.

	Student feedback should be provided immediately when the student performs the desirable behavior. The feedback should specifically describe the behavior, effort, progress or accomplishments which meet the desired outcome and helps students understand what success looks like and how similar successes can be expected in the future. Consistency is the key factor in classroom management and managing student behavior.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 2	Most students know, understand and respect classroom behavior standards.	
Clarification	Effective teachers include students in creating, adopting, modeling, reinforcing, and maintaining classroom behavior standards. All students are held accountable for consistent implementation of these standards with both teacher and student feedback used to keep all students focused on the expectations. Teachers interact with students in respectful ways at all times, maintaining a physically and emotionally safe, supportive learning environment that is characterized by efficient and effective routines, clear expectations for student behavior, and organization that maximizes student learning.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Classroom Culture Dimension 3.3

The teacher leads a mutually respectful and collaborative class of actively engaged learners.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT DIMENSION 3.3 Classroom Culture

The teacher leads a mutually respectful and collaborative class of actively engaged learners.
Standards Basis:
1E, 1F, 3B, 4C, 4D, 5A, 5B, 5D

Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
<p>STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently engages all students with relevant, meaningful learning based on their interests and abilities to create a positive rapport amongst students. Students collaborate positively and encourage each other's efforts and achievements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages all students with relevant, meaningful learning, sometimes adjusting lessons based on student interests and abilities. Students collaborate positively with each other and the teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages all students in relevant, meaningful learning. Students work respectfully individually and in groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes a learning environment where most students are engaged in the curriculum. Students are sometimes disrespectful of each other. 	<p>TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes a learning environment where few students are engaged in the curriculum. Students are disrespectful of each other and of the teacher.



Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher
- Formal Observations/Walkthroughs
- Classroom Artifacts
- Analysis of Student Data



This dimension focused on what the teacher does to establish a classroom culture that is mutually respectful, collaborative and consistently represented by students who are authentically engaged in learning, and social-emotional needs are met.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers lead and maintain classrooms where all students are actively engaged in learning as evident through their level of motivation and on-task behaviors.
- Teachers maintain a culture that is based on high expectations for student performance and encourages students to be self-motivated, taking responsibility for their own learning.
- All interactions within and outside the classroom demonstrate caring and respect for others.
- Respectful relationships are evident with all classroom interactions, e.g., teacher to student and student to student, where collaboration is encouraged, structured, and used to build

relationships at all levels.

Key Questions:

- How are students empowered and expected to support a positive classroom culture?
- How does everyone in the classroom exhibit patience and respect with peers?
- What opportunities are there for students to collaborate and model expected cultural norms?
- How does the culture support all students feeling comfortable sharing their thoughts, feelings and concerns with others, including communication when there are internal struggles?

Descriptor 1	Engages all students with relevant, meaningful learning, sometimes adjusting lessons based on student interests and abilities.	
Clarification	Teachers consistently ensure that all learning experiences are designed and delivered in a manner that is connected with students’ interests and abilities, making learning relevant and meaningful. The classroom conveys a culture for high expectations for student performance and encourages students to be self-motivated, connected to learning and assuming responsibility for their own learning. Students are authentically involved in the lesson, because they see relevance to their own lives and are consequently motivated to learn. The teacher creates collaborative activities where relationships are fostered and positive rapport is evident with all interactions. The classroom reflects a mutually respectful, collaborative and safe community of learners where differences in cultures, backgrounds, and personal experiences are used as a springboard for learning.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 2	Students collaborate positively with each other and the teacher.	
Clarification	<p>Creating a positive classroom climate begins with showing respect to one another. Teachers most often set this in motion when they develop a set of collaborative ground rules for their classrooms and then model these for the students on a regular basis.</p> <p>Teachers are purposeful about implementing activities where students collaborate in various group settings and structures. As a result, they provide feedback to each other and are encouraged to affirm and validate each other’s efforts and achievements as a community of learners.</p>	



	<p>Teacher cues that indicate respect and interest include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tone of voice • Eye contact • Affirmative head nods • Smiles • Wait time • Proximity to student • Goal setting and coaching 	
<p>District/Campus Connections</p>	<p>Possible Teacher Behaviors</p>	<p>Possible Student Behaviors</p>

Professional Practices and Responsibilities *Domain*

This section provides guidance regarding the Professional Practices and Responsibilities domain and correlating four dimensions:

- Professional Demeanor and Ethics
- Goal Setting
- Professional Development
- School Community Involvement

This domain specifically addresses “how” teachers fulfill their professional roles and responsibilities, engage in ongoing review and development of their practices, and adhere to legal and ethical requirements of the profession. Research consistently indicates that the primary factor for increasing student achievement is the effectiveness of the teacher. Therefore, teachers and other professionals clearly understand the importance of using reflection and ongoing self-assessment to enhance their effectiveness and impact on student performance. The T-TESS system, therefore, focuses on continuous professional growth where teachers consistently hold themselves to a high standard for individual development to improve their instructional effectiveness, knowledge and skills.

Professional Demeanor and Ethics Dimension 4.1

The teacher formally and informally collects, analyzes and uses student progress data and makes needed lesson adjustments.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES AND RESPONSIBILITIES DIMENSION 4.1

Professional Demeanor and Ethics

The teacher meets district expectations for attendance, professional appearance, decorum, procedural, ethical, legal and statutory responsibilities.

Standards Basis: 6B, 6C, 6D

Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
<p>STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaves in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators. Models all professional standards (e.g., attendance, professional appearance and behaviors) across the campus and district for educators and students. Advocates for the needs of all students in the classroom and campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaves in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators. Models all professional standards (e.g., attendance, professional appearance and behaviors) within the classroom. Advocates for the needs of all students in the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaves in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators. Meets all professional standards (e.g., attendance, professional appearance and behaviors). Advocates for the needs of students in the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaves in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators. Meets most professional standards (e.g., attendance, professional appearance and behaviors). 	<p>TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fails to meet the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators. Meets few professional standards (e.g., attendance, professional appearance and behaviors) or violates legal requirements.



Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher
- Formal Observations/Walkthroughs
- Classroom Artifacts
- Analysis of Student Data
- Daily Interaction with Others



As professional educators, Texas teachers assume responsibility and accountability for their actions and behaviors and conduct themselves according to these expectations at all times.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers know, understand and adhere to the Code of Ethics and Standards Practices for Texas Educators as adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification.
- Teachers model ethical and respectful behaviors and demonstrate integrity in all situations.
- Teachers know, understand and comply with the procedures and requirements for maintaining accurate student records.
- Teachers consistently serve as advocates for students and the profession.
- Teachers do not use institutional or professional access or privileges for personal gain.

Key Questions:

- What evidence is there that teachers consistently adhere to the Code of Ethics and Standards Practices for Texas Educators?

- How do teachers model exemplary practices and performance for the profession?
- How do teachers hold each other accountable for legal and ethical behaviors?
- What evidence is there that teachers serve as advocates for all students and the profession?

Descriptor 1	Behaves in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.		
Clarification	<p>Teachers are familiar with the Texas Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators document which outlines the expectations for teacher behaviors and begins with the following statement of purpose:</p> <p><i>“The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community.”</i></p> <p>In addition, they know and understand other legal requirements for educators, including the requirements for providing services to students in special programs, student discipline, child abuse, bullying, and other requirements which have a potential effect on classroom decision-making. Other aspects related to the structure of the education system in Texas are understood, including relationships between the campus, local, and state components.</p>		
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors	

Descriptor 2	Models all professional standards, e.g., attendance, professional appearance, and behaviors within the classroom.	
Clarification	Teachers are clear about the standards for the profession, including local expectations for attendance, professional appearance and behaviors, and exemplify the highest ethical standards.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 3	Advocates for the needs of all students in the classroom.	
Clarification	Teachers accept responsibility for advocating for the needs of all students and interact with them in a considerate and fair manner to address their academic and social-emotional needs. They also accept personal responsibility for fostering personal character traits that are necessary in real-world settings, e.g., cooperation, loyalty, integrity, respect, and others. Teachers protect the students from any conditions or situations that may prove detrimental to learning, health or safety. When student information is shared, it is attributed to their learning needs, and all students are represented with complete confidentiality, respect and without distortion, bias or other unfavorable views. There is also a direct connection with the Knowledge of Students dimension, as teachers who have a strong understanding of their students’ strengths and needs are able to advocate for them, accordingly.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Goal Setting Dimension 4.2

The teacher reflects on his/her practice.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES AND RESPONSIBILITIES DIMENSION 4.2 Goal Setting

The teacher reflects on his/her practice.
Standards Basis: 5D, 6A, 6B

Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
<p>STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently sets, modifies and meets short- and long-term professional goals based on self-assessment, reflection, peer and supervisor feedback, contemporary research and analysis of student learning. Implements substantial changes in practice resulting in significant improvement in student performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets some short- and long-term professional goals based on self-assessment, reflection, peer and supervisor feedback, contemporary research and analysis of student learning. Meets all professional goals resulting in improvement in practice and student performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets short- and long-term professional goals based on self-assessment, reflection and supervisor feedback. Meets all professional goals resulting in improvement in practice and student performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets short-term goals based on self-assessment. Meets most professional goals resulting in some visible changes in practice. 	<p>TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets low or ambiguous goals unrelated to student needs or self-assessment. Meets few professional goals and persists in instructional practices that remain substantially unimproved over time.



Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan (GSPD)
- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher, Including the End-of-Year Conference
- Analysis of Student Data



Texas teachers assume responsibility and accountability for their performance and growth through strategic goal-setting, ongoing self-reflection, and professional growth in order to refine their knowledge about the content and pedagogy. A goal setting process is used to identify areas of professional growth and also address the needs of the students and school community.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers self-reflect on teaching practices to improve their instructional effectiveness and engage in continuous professional learning and application.
- Teachers engage in self-reflection as individuals, with team members, and as a school community where they use this information to develop action plans for improvement.
- Teachers establish learning targets and professional goals to stay current in the field, strengthen their instructional effectiveness and better meet students' needs.
- Teachers collaborate with their colleagues to identify similar learning needs and joint professional development options.

Key Questions:

- What supports are available for teachers to engage in ongoing self-reflection, goal setting and subsequent follow-through with professional development?
- How do teachers and other colleagues support one another with the goal setting process, particularly as it relates to the T-TESS domains, dimensions and descriptors?
- How are self-reflection and goals used to refine practices and the impact on student performance?
- How is time structured for teachers to formatively review their goals and progress towards these goals?

<p>Descriptor 1</p>	<p>Sets some short- and long-term professional goals based on self-assessment, reflection, peer and supervisor feedback, contemporary research and analysis of student learning.</p>	
<p>Clarification</p>	<p>The purpose of the <i>Teacher Goal Setting and Professional Development</i> process is to support teachers in reflecting on current professional practices to determine professional growth goals, build a professional development plan to attain those goals, and track the progress of their development over the course of the year based on the application of new learning, assessment of professional practices, feedback received during formative and summative conversations with the appraiser, and impact on students’ academic and social-emotional needs. Teachers engage in goal setting, followed by ongoing, relevant and targeted professional learning opportunities that align with their professional growth goals to strengthen instructional effectiveness with the overall purpose of addressing students’ needs and improving performance – teacher and student.</p> <p>Teachers independently review data and reflect on their professional practices, including reviewing the domains, dimensions, and descriptors of the T-TESS rubric. As a result of this self-assessment, the teachers formulate targeted goals to discuss with the appraiser during the Goal Setting Conference. The initial goal-setting conference with the appraiser and teacher is critical to the T-TESS support system, as it ensures that both the teacher and appraiser are clear about the goals and subsequent actions to reach the desired outcomes. It is also an opportunity for the teacher to outline the support systems needed to achieve the goals.</p>	
<p>District/Campus Connections</p>	<p>Possible Teacher Behaviors</p>	<p>Possible Student Behaviors</p>



Descriptor 2	Meets all professional goals resulting in improvement in practice and student performance.	
Clarification	Throughout the year, teachers formatively review their goals and professional development plan to determine how goals are being met. Ideally, this includes reflective conferences with administrators, peers, or other professional colleagues. As result of the self-reflection and goal setting processes, teachers implement changes in practice. Evidence is collected to support how professional practices are enhanced as a result of this continuous improvement cycle and the impact those changes are having on student performance. Establishing systems where administrators and other colleagues use coaching to assist teachers in planning and reflecting on changes in practice is a proven method of supporting other professionals and a part of goal-setting.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Professional Development Dimension 4.3

The teacher enhances the professional community.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES AND RESPONSIBILITIES DIMENSION 4.3 Professional Development

The teacher enhances the professional community.
Standards Basis: 3A, 6A, 6B, 6C

Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
<p>STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads colleagues collaboratively in and beyond the school to identify professional development needs through detailed data analysis and self-reflection. Seeks resources and collaboratively fosters faculty knowledge and skills. Develops and fulfills the school and district improvement plans through professional learning communities, grade- or subject-level team leadership, committee leadership or other opportunities beyond the campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads colleagues collaboratively on campus to identify professional development needs through self-reflection. Fosters faculty knowledge and skills in support of the school improvement plan through professional learning communities, grade- or subject-level team leadership, committee membership or other opportunities beyond the campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboratively practices in all scheduled professional development activities, campus professional learning communities, grade- or subject-level team membership, committee membership or other opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages in most scheduled activities, professional learning communities, committee, grade- or subject-level team meetings as directed. 	<p>TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages in few professional development activities, professional learning communities or committees to improve professional practice.



Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan (GSPD)
- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher, including the End-of-Year Conference
- Analysis of Student Data
- Daily Interaction with Others



As professionals in the field, it is important to stay current and refine one's knowledge and skill set. The Professional Development dimension is directly tied to all other dimensions in that the T-TESS process is about continuous improvement and growth in multiple professional development platforms. Based on the self-analysis, goal setting process, and feedback from others, effective teachers focus on continuous improvement so that student performance is ultimately enhanced. Although learning needs to be personalized, in high-performing organizations, a culture of ongoing, sustained, and quality professional development is established and threaded throughout the year, rather than one-time professional development sessions held in isolation. Learning is ideally directed to one or more of the T-TESS dimensions with some aspect of coaching and mentoring to guide the implementation phase. Changes in practice and mastery of new skills are a result of continuous practice with specific feedback about performance.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers engage in ongoing self-analysis to identify and target professional learning opportunities.
- Teachers seek feedback from supervisors, coaches, and peers.
- Teachers apply what is learned and value job-embedded professional development as a means of refining their practice.
- Teachers engage in relevant, targeted professional learning that aligns with their professional growth goals and students’ academic and social-emotional needs.
- Teachers collaborate with their colleagues, are self-aware about their interpersonal interactions, and are open to feedback.
- Teachers play an active role in participating and leading professional learning communities to improve instructional practices and student learning.
- Teachers continuously seek opportunities to lead learning with students, other educators, and the school community within and beyond their classroom.

Key Questions:

- How are teachers supported in the self-analysis, goal setting, and professional development phases?
- How does current professional development align with research about teacher and student learning?
- How is job-embedded professional development supported by coaching, mentoring, and feedback loops during the implementation phase?
- How does the professional development impact student learning?
- How are resources identified and utilized to enhance outcomes and initiatives?

Descriptor 1	Leads colleagues collaboratively on campus to identify professional development needs through self-reflection.
Clarification	It is important to recognize which teachers have mastered specific strategies and skills in order to highlight them in leadership roles and share their expertise with colleagues and other professionals. These teachers can lead sessions with peers, share proven ideas and strategies, and challenge their colleagues to think critically about their craft as a strategy for helping students reach high standards. Teachers feel valued and appreciated when they are afforded opportunities to share their strengths with others. This collaborative process also fosters collegiality, professionalism, pride, and confidence with their own practices and encourages other teachers to refine theirs. Providing teacher teams with specific structures or protocols for team learning helps with consistency and a predictable format to structure the time.

District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 2	Fosters faculty knowledge and skills in support of the school improvement plan through professional learning communities, grade- or subject-level team leadership, committee member or other opportunities beyond the campus.
Clarification	<p>Successful professional development programs enable teachers to share ideas with one another. Professional development which focuses on teachers' critical thinking and reflection through job-embedded practice and some aspect of external coaching helps support changes in practice over time. Teachers assume responsibility for leading and facilitating professional development to foster and build capacity within and among the team. The platform for how this occurs may vary, though there is consistency in how these learning forums are scheduled and authentically used to support others. While there are many options for professional development, teachers who view recordings of their lessons are able to engage in data analysis and self-reflection that is powerful. This same method may also be used to cultivate other teachers' practices through team reviews. Effective teachers understand the importance of using self-reflection and ongoing self-assessment to enhance teaching effectiveness, and identify and use appropriate resources and support systems inside and outside the school to address professional development needs for themselves and others. They also have a clear understanding of the characteristics, goals, and procedures associated with the teacher evaluation system used to evaluate their performance and impact on student learning. Teacher mentoring programs also provide critically needed support and advice to colleagues who are either new to the profession or an area of teaching. Support from peers and mentors is a proven key factor with teacher efficacy and professional competence. Successful schools and teachers continuously interact with other educators and contribute to the overall school goals and outcomes. They are involved in problem solving, decision-making, and sharing ideas and expertise to contribute to the overall improvement planning process through various forums within the school community, connecting this work with similar district-level initiatives. They work productively with supervisors and colleagues to address issues which enhance</p>

	professional skills and knowledge schoolwide and understand which available educator support systems are available, e.g., consultants, education service centers, state initiatives, universities, etc.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

School Community Involvement Dimension 4.4

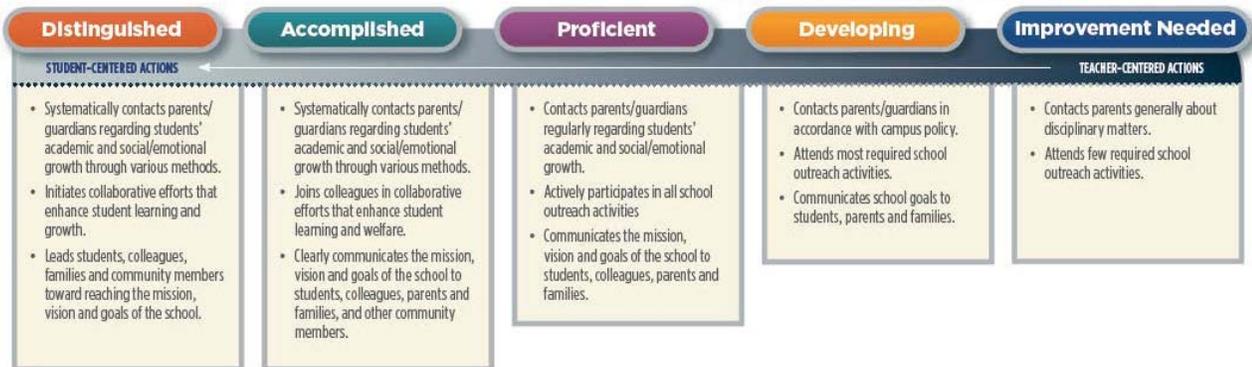
The teacher demonstrates leadership with students, colleagues, and community members in the school, district, and community through effective communication and outreach.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES AND RESPONSIBILITIES DIMENSION 4.4

School Community Involvement

The teacher demonstrates leadership with students, colleagues, and community members in the school, district and community through effective communication and outreach.

Standards Basis:
2A, 2B, 4A, 4D, 5B, 6B, 6C, 6D



Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher, Including the End-of-Year Conference
- Classroom Artifacts
- Student Data
- Daily Interaction with Others



This last dimension of the Professional Practices and Responsibilities domain – School Community Involvement - focuses on how the teacher assumes and takes on leadership roles and responsibilities in the school community. Effective communication and outreach activities are evaluated over the course of the year to ensure that the teacher is relating to and staying connected through leadership activities with students, colleagues, community members in the school, district, and overall community.

T-TESS Alignment to Practice:

- Teachers clearly communicate the mission, vision, and goals of the school, and how they align to classroom expectations, for students, colleagues, parents, families, and other community members.
- Teachers assume leadership opportunities and communicate consistently, clearly and respectfully with all members of the school community, including students, parents, families, colleagues, administrators, and the community at large.
- Teachers understand that they hold a position of influence in the school community and seek opportunities to lead and improve connections with all stakeholders.
- Teachers understand the importance of family involvement in school operations to increase student performance.
- Teachers participate in decision-making forums through school committees to plan improvements for excellence within the school.

Key Questions:

- How are teachers involved in leading learning with all stakeholders?
- In what ways do teachers systematically communicate with families regarding students’ academic and social-emotional growth?
- How is information provided to families in a language and format that they understand and can use to support their child(ren)?
- What forums and media do teachers use to communicate with families and how do they know it is effective?

Descriptor 1	Systematically contacts parents/guardians regarding students’ academic and social-emotional growth through various methods.	
Clarification	Teachers establish systematic methods to communicate consistently with parents/guardians regarding students’ academic and social-emotional needs. They know and understand appropriate ways for working and communicating effectively with families through varied contexts, particularly those with diverse characteristics, backgrounds, and needs.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors



Descriptor 2	Joins colleagues in collaborative efforts that enhance student learning and welfare.	
Clarification	Teachers work collectively with other staff members and colleagues to communicate with families on a regular basis as a means of sharing information about students' learning needs, progress and attainment of learning goals, and respond appropriately to families' concerns. They engage families in their child's education and in other varied aspects of the instructional program and school community so they are connected and contributors at multiple levels. Parent-teacher conferences and other forums are used to interact and communicate with parents to build and inspire trust and positive relationships with the school community. Data, assessments and other instructionally-related information is shared and explained in a manner that parents can understand and use to support their child. This means that appropriate language and formats are used, including engaging families in discussions about how they can support their child at home to bridge the school-home connections.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Descriptor 3	Clearly communicates the mission, vision and goals of the school to students, colleagues, parents and families, and other community members.	
Clarification	Effective teachers know and understand the value of including all stakeholders in the education of all students. They use their role as teachers to influence others to embrace the mission, vision, and goals of the school and contribute to the school community in ways that create overall positive outcomes. Varied strategies are used to communicate, message, and model the mission, vision, and goals ensuring that all parties are consistently receiving the same information and to convey that these expectations are the driving force for all campus operations.	
District/Campus Connections	Possible Teacher Behaviors	Possible Student Behaviors

Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) Rubric

PLANNING					
Standards and Alignment (Dimension 1.1)					
Dimension 1.1 Standards and Alignment:	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<p>The teacher designs clear, well-organized, sequential lessons that reflect best practice, align with standards and are appropriate for diverse learners.</p> <p>Standards Basis: 1A, 1B, 3A, 3B, 3C</p> <p>Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; classroom artifacts; student growth processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All rigorous and measurable goals aligned to state content standards. All activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are logically sequenced are relevant to students' prior understanding and real-world applications integrate and reinforce concepts from other disciplines provide appropriate time for student work, student reflection, lesson and lesson closure deepen understanding of broader unit and course objectives are vertically aligned to state standards are appropriate for diverse learners Objectives aligned and logically sequenced to the lesson's goal, providing relevant and enriching extensions of the lesson Integration of technology to enhance mastery of goal(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All measurable goals aligned to state content standards. All activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are sequenced are relevant to students' prior understanding integrate other disciplines provide appropriate time for student work, lesson and lesson closure reinforce broader unit and course objectives are vertically aligned to state standards are appropriate for diverse learners All objectives aligned and logically sequenced to the lesson's goal. Integration of technology to enhance mastery of goal(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All goals aligned to state content standards. All activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are sequenced are relevant to students provide appropriate time for lesson and lesson closure fit into the broader unit and course objectives are appropriate for diverse learners. All objectives aligned to the lesson's goal. Integration of technology when applicable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most goals aligned to state content standards. Most activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are sequenced sometimes provide appropriate time for lesson and lesson closure Lessons where most objectives are aligned and sequenced to the lesson's goal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few goals aligned to state content standards. Few activities, materials and assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are sequenced rarely provide time for lesson and lesson closure Lessons where few objectives are aligned and sequenced to the lesson's goal.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS		

PLANNING					
Data and Assessment (Dimension 1.2)					
Dimension 1.2 Data and Assessment: The teacher uses formal and informal methods to measure student progress, then manages and analyzes student data to inform instruction. Standards Basis: 1B, 1F, 2B, 2C, 5A, 5B, 5C, 5D Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; classroom artifacts; student growth processes; analysis of student data	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal and informal assessments to monitor progress of all students, shares appropriate diagnostic, formative and summative assessment data with students to engage them in self-assessment, build awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses and track their own progress. Substantive, specific and timely feedback to students, families and school personnel on the growth of students in relation to classroom and campus goals and engages with colleagues to adapt school-wide instructional strategies and goals to meet student needs while maintaining confidentiality. Analysis of student data connected to specific instructional strategies and use of results to reflect on his or her teaching and to monitor teaching strategies and behaviors in relation to student success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal and informal assessments to monitor progress of all students and incorporate appropriate diagnostic, formative and summative assessments data into lesson plans. Substantive, specific and timely feedback to students, families and other school personnel on the growth of students in relation to classroom and campus goals, while maintaining student confidentiality. Analysis of student data connected to specific instructional strategies and use of results to reflect on his or her teaching and to monitor teaching strategies and behaviors in relation to student success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal and informal assessments to monitor progress of all students. Consistent feedback to students, families and other school personnel while maintaining confidentiality. Analysis of student data connected to specific instructional strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal and informal assessments to monitor progress of most students. Timely feedback to students and families. Utilization of multiple sources of student data.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS →		

PLANNING					
Knowledge of Students (Dimension 1.3)					
Dimension 1.3 Knowledge of Students: Through knowledge of students and proven practices, the teacher ensures high levels of learning, social-emotional development and achievement for all students. Standards Basis: 1A, 1B, 1C, 2A, 2B, 2C Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; classroom artifacts; student growth processes; analysis of student data	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All lessons that connect to students' prior knowledge, experiences, interests and future learning expectations across content areas. Guidance for students to apply their strengths, background knowledge, life experiences and skills to enhance each other's learning. Opportunities for students to utilize their individual learning patterns, habits and needs to achieve high levels of academic and social-emotional success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All lessons that connect to students' prior knowledge, experiences and future learning expectations. Guidance for students to apply their strengths, background knowledge, life experiences and skills to enhance their own learning. Opportunities for students to utilize their individual learning patterns, habits and needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All lessons that connect to students' prior knowledge and experiences. Adjustments to address strengths and gaps in background knowledge, life experiences and skills of all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most lessons that connect to students' prior knowledge and experiences. Adjustments to address strengths and gaps in background knowledge, life experiences and skills of most students.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS		

PLANNING
Activities (Dimension 1.4)

Dimension 1.4	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<p>Activities: The teacher plans engaging, flexible lessons that encourage higher-order thinking, persistence and achievement.</p> <p>Standards Basis: 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E</p> <p>Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; classroom artifacts; student growth processes; analysis of student data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for students to generate questions that lead to further inquiry and promote complex, higher-order thinking, problem solving and real-world application • Instructional groups based on the needs of all students, and allows for students to take ownership of group and individual accountability. • The ability for all students to set goals, reflect on, evaluate and hold each other accountable within instructional groups. • Activities, resources, technology and instructional materials that are all aligned to instructional purposes, are varied and appropriate to ability levels of students and actively engage them in ownership of their learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions that encourage all students to engage in complex, higher-order thinking and problem solving. • Instructional groups based on the needs of all students and maintains both group and individual accountability. • All students understanding their individual roles within instructional groups and facilitates opportunities for student input on goals and outcomes of activities. • Activities, resources, technology and instructional materials that are all aligned to instructional purposes, are varied and appropriate to ability levels of students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions that encourage all students to engage in complex, higher-order thinking. • Instructional groups based on the needs of all students. • All students understanding their individual roles within instructional groups. • Activities, resources, technology and instructional materials that are all aligned to instructional purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions that promote limited, predictable or rote responses and encourage some complex, higher-order thinking. • Instructional groups based on the needs of a few students. • Most students understanding their individual roles within instructional groups. • Activities, resources, technology and/or instructional materials that are mostly aligned to instructional purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages little to no complex, higher-order thinking. • Instructional groups based on the needs of a few students. • Lack of student understanding of their individual roles within instructional groups. • Activities, resources, technology and/or instructional materials misaligned to instructional purposes.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←		→ TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS			

INSTRUCTION					
Achieving Expectations (Dimension 2.1)					
Dimension 2.1 Achieving Expectations: The teacher supports all learners in their pursuit of high levels of academic and social- emotional success. Standards Basis: 1B, 1D, 1E, 2A, 2C, 3B, 4A, 4D, 5B Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; student growth processes; analysis of student data	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides opportunities for students to establish high academic and social- emotional expectations for themselves. Persists with the lesson until there is evidence that all students demonstrate mastery of the objective. Provides opportunities for students to self-monitor and self-correct mistakes. Systematically enables students to set goals for themselves and monitor their progress over time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides opportunities for students to establish high academic and social- emotional expectations for themselves. Persists with the lesson until there is evidence that most students demonstrate mastery of the objective. Anticipates student mistakes and encourages students to avoid common learning pitfalls. Establishes systems where students take initiative of their own learning and self-monitor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets academic expectations that challenge all students. Persists with the lesson until there is evidence that most students demonstrate mastery of the objective. Addresses student mistakes and follows through to ensure student mastery. Provides students opportunities to take initiative of their own learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets academic expectations that challenge most students. Persists with the lesson until there is evidence that some students demonstrate mastery of the objective. Sometimes addresses student mistakes. Sometimes provides opportunities for students to take initiative of their own learning.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS		

INSTRUCTION					
Content Knowledge and Expertise (Dimension 2.2)					
Dimension 2.2	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<p>Content Knowledge and Expertise: The teacher uses content and pedagogical expertise to design and execute lessons aligned with state standards, related content and student needs.</p> <p>Standards Basis: 1A, 1C, 1E, 1F, 2C, 3A, 3B, 3C</p> <p>Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; student growth processes; analysis of student data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays extensive content knowledge of all the subjects she or he teaches and closely related subjects. Integrates learning objectives with other disciplines, content areas and real-world experience. Consistently anticipates possible student misunderstandings and proactively develops teaching techniques to mitigate concerns. Consistently provides opportunities for students to use different types of thinking (e.g., analytical, practical, creative and research-based). Sequences instruction that allows students to understand how the lesson fits within the structure of the discipline, the state standards, related content and within real-world scenarios. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conveys a depth of content knowledge that allows for differentiated explanations. Integrates learning objectives with other disciplines and real-world experiences. Anticipates possible student misunderstandings and proactively develops teaching techniques to mitigate concerns. Regularly provides opportunities for students to use different types of thinking (e.g., analytical, practical, creative and research-based). Sequences instruction that allows students to understand how the lesson fits within the structure of the discipline and the state standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conveys accurate content knowledge in multiple contexts. Integrates learning objectives with other disciplines. Anticipates possible student misunderstandings. Provides opportunities for students to use different types of thinking (e.g., analytical, practical, creative and research-based). Accurately reflects how the lesson fits within the structure of the discipline and the state standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conveys accurate content knowledge. Sometimes integrates learning objectives with other disciplines. Sometimes anticipates possible student misunderstandings. Sometimes provides opportunities for students to use different types of thinking (e.g., analytical, practical, creative and research-based). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conveys inaccurate content knowledge that leads to student confusion. Rarely integrates learning objectives with other disciplines. Does not anticipate possible student misunderstandings. Provides few opportunities for students to use different types of thinking (e.g., analytical, practical, creative and research-based).
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS →		

INSTRUCTION
Communication (Dimension 2.3)

Dimension 2.3	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<p>Communication: The teacher clearly and accurately communicates to support persistence, deeper learning and effective effort.</p> <p>Standards Basis: 1D, 1E, 2A, 3A, 4D</p> <p>Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; student growth processes; analysis of student data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes classroom practices that encourage all students to communicate safely and effectively using a variety of tools and methods with the teacher and their peers. • Uses possible student misunderstandings at strategic points in lessons to highlight misconceptions and inspire exploration and discovery. • Provides explanations that are clear and coherent and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct. • Asks questions at the creative, evaluative and/or analysis levels that require a deeper learning and broader understanding of the objective of the lesson. • Skillfully balances wait time, questioning techniques and integration of student responses to support student-directed learning. • Skillfully provokes and guides discussion to pique curiosity and inspire student-led learning of meaningful and challenging content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes classroom practices that encourage all students to communicate effectively, including the use of visual tools and technology, with the teacher and their peers. • Anticipates possible student misunderstandings and proactively develops techniques to address obstacles to learning. • Provides explanations that are clear and coherent and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct. • Asks questions at the creative, evaluative and/or analysis levels that focus on the objective of the lesson and provoke thought and discussion. • Skillfully uses probing questions to clarify, elaborate and extend learning. • Provides wait time when questioning students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes classroom practices that provide opportunities for most students to communicate effectively with the teacher and their peers. • Recognizes student misunderstandings and responds with an array of teaching techniques to clarify concepts. • Provides explanations that are clear and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct. • Asks remember, understand and apply level questions that focus on the objective of the lesson and provoke discussion. • Uses probing questions to clarify and elaborate learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leads lessons with some opportunity for dialogue, clarification or elaboration. • Recognizes student misunderstandings but has a limited ability to respond. • Uses verbal and written communication that is generally clear with minor errors of grammar. • Asks remember and understand level questions that focus on the objective of the lesson but do little to amplify discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directs lessons with little opportunity for dialogue, clarification or elaboration. • Is sometimes unaware of or unresponsive to student misunderstandings. • Uses verbal communication that is characterized by inaccurate grammar; written communication that has inaccurate spelling, grammar, punctuation or structure. • Rarely asks questions, or asks questions that do not amplify discussion or align to the objective of the lesson.
	STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←			TEACHER CENTERED ACTIONS	

INSTRUCTION
Differentiation (Dimension 2.4)

Dimension 2.4 Differentiation: The teacher differentiates instruction, aligning methods and techniques to diverse student needs.	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<p>Standards Basis: 1C, 1F, 2A, 2B, 2C, 3C, 4A, 5A, 5C, 5D</p> <p>Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; classroom artifacts; student growth processes; analysis of student data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapts lessons with a wide variety of instructional strategies to address individual needs of all students. Consistently monitors the quality of student participation and performance. Always provides differentiated instructional methods and content to ensure students have the opportunity to master what is being taught. Consistently prevents student confusion or disengagement by addressing learning and/or social/emotional needs of all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapts lessons to address individual needs of all students. Regularly monitors the quality of student participation and performance. Regularly provides differentiated instructional methods and content to ensure students have the opportunity to master what is being taught. Proactively minimizes student confusion or disengagement by addressing learning and/or social/emotional needs of all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapts lessons to address individual needs of all students. Regularly monitors the quality of student participation and performance. Provides differentiated instructional methods and content to ensure students have the opportunity to master what is being taught. Recognizes when students become confused or disengaged and responds to student learning or social/emotional needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapts lessons to address some student needs. Sometimes monitors the quality of student participation and performance. Sometimes provides differentiated instructional methods and content. Sometimes recognizes when students become confused or disengaged and minimally responds to student learning or social/emotional needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides one-size-fits-all lessons without meaningful differentiation. Rarely monitors the quality of student participation and performance. Rarely provides differentiated instructional methods and content. Does not recognize when students become confused or disengaged, or does not respond appropriately to student learning or social/emotional needs.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←		→ TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS			

INSTRUCTION					
Monitor and Adjust (Dimension 2.5)					
Dimension 2.5 Monitor and Adjust: The teacher formally and informally collects, analyzes and uses student progress data and makes needed lesson adjustments. Standards Basis: 1D, 1F, 2B, 2C, 3B, 4D, 5C, 5D Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; classroom artifacts; student growth processes; analysis of student data	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematically gathers input from students in order to monitor and adjust instruction, activities or pacing to respond to differences in student needs. Adjusts instruction and activities to maintain student engagement. Uses discreet and explicit checks for understanding through questioning and academic feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizes input from students in order to monitor and adjust instruction, activities and pacing to respond to differences in student needs. Adjusts instruction and activities to maintain student engagement. Continually checks for understanding through purposeful questioning and academic feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently invites input from students in order to monitor and adjust instruction and activities. Adjusts instruction and activities to maintain student engagement. Monitors student behavior and responses for engagement and understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes utilizes input from students in order to monitor and adjust instruction and activities. Adjusts some instruction within a limited range. Sees student behavior but misses some signs of disengagement. Is aware of most student responses but misses some clues of misunderstanding.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←			TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS →		

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Classroom Environment, Routines and Procedures (Dimension 3.1)

Dimension 3.1 Classroom Environment, Routines and Procedures:	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<p>The teacher organizes a safe, accessible and efficient classroom.</p> <p>Standards Basis: 1D, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D</p> <p>Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; classroom artifacts; analysis of student data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and uses effective routines, transitions and procedures that primarily rely on student leadership and responsibility. Students take primary leadership and responsibility for managing student groups, supplies, and/or equipment. The classroom is safe and thoughtfully designed to engage, challenge and inspire students to participate in high-level learning beyond the learning objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and uses effective routines, transitions and procedures that she or he implements effortlessly. Students take some responsibility for managing student groups, supplies and/or equipment. The classroom is safe, inviting and organized to support learning objectives and is accessible to all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All procedures, routines and transitions are clear and efficient. Students actively participate in groups, manage supplies and equipment with very limited teacher direction. The classroom is safe and organized to support learning objectives and is accessible to most students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most procedures, routines and transitions provide clear direction but others are unclear and inefficient. Students depend on the teacher to direct them in managing student groups, supplies and/or equipment. The classroom is safe and accessible to most students, but is disorganized and cluttered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few procedures and routines guide student behavior and maximize learning. Transitions are characterized by confusion and inefficiency. Students often do not understand what is expected of them. The classroom is unsafe, disorganized and uncomfortable. Some students are not able to access materials.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←					TEACHER CENTERED ACTIONS →

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT					
Managing Student Behavior (Dimension 3.2)					
Dimension 3.2 Managing Student Behavior: The teacher establishes, communicates and maintains clear expectations for student behavior. Standards Basis: 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; classroom artifacts; analysis of student data	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently monitors behavior subtly, reinforces positive behaviors appropriately and intercepts misbehavior fluidly. Students and the teacher create, adopt and maintain classroom behavior standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently encourages and monitors student behavior subtly and responds to misbehavior swiftly. Most students know, understand and respect classroom behavior standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently implements the campus and/or classroom behavior system proficiently. Most students meet expected classroom behavior standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistently implements the campus and/or classroom behavior system. Student failure to meet expected classroom behavior standards interrupts learning.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←		→ TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS			

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
Classroom Culture (Dimension 3.3)

Dimension 3.3	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<p>Classroom Culture: The teacher leads a mutually respectful and collaborative class of actively engaged learners.</p> <p>Standards Basis: 1E, 1F, 3B, 4C, 4D, 5A, 5B, 5D</p> <p>Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; classroom artifacts; analysis of student data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently engages all students with relevant, meaningful learning based on their interests and abilities to create a positive rapport amongst students. Students collaborate positively and encourage each other's efforts and achievements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages all students with relevant, meaningful learning, sometimes adjusting lessons based on student interests and abilities. Students collaborate positively with each other and the teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages all students in relevant, meaningful learning. Students work respectfully individually and in groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes a learning environment where most students are engaged in the curriculum. Students are sometimes disrespectful of each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes a learning environment where few students are engaged in the curriculum. Students are disrespectful of each other and of the teacher.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←		← TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS			

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Professional Demeanor and Ethics (Dimension 4.1)

Dimension 4.1	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<p>Professional Demeanor and Ethics: The teacher meets district expectations for attendance, professional appearance, decorum, procedural, ethical, legal and statutory responsibilities.</p> <p>Standards Basis: 6B, 6C, 6D</p> <p>Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; classroom artifacts; analysis of student data; daily interaction with others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaves in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators. Models all professional standards (e.g., attendance, professional appearance and behaviors) across the campus and district for educators and students. Advocates for the needs of all students in the classroom and campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaves in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators. Models all professional standards (e.g., attendance, professional appearance and behaviors) within the classroom. Advocates for the needs of all students in the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaves in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators. Meets all professional standards (e.g., attendance, professional appearance and behaviors). Advocates for the needs of students in the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaves in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators. Meets most professional standards (e.g., attendance, professional appearance and behaviors). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fails to meet the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators. Meets few professional standards (e.g., attendance, professional appearance and behaviors) or violates legal requirements.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←			→ TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS		

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Goal Setting (Dimension 4.2)

Dimension 4.2	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<p>Goal Setting: The teacher reflects on his/her practice.</p> <p>Standards Basis: 5D, 6A, 6B</p> <p>Potential Sources of Evidence: Goal-setting and professional development plan (GSPD); conferences and conversations with the teacher, including the end-of-year conference; analysis of student data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently sets, modifies and meets short- and long-term professional goals based on self-assessment, reflection, peer and supervisor feedback, contemporary research and analysis of student learning. Implements substantial changes in practice resulting in significant improvement in student performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets some short- and long- term professional goals based on self-assessment, reflection, peer and supervisor feedback, contemporary research and analysis of student learning. Meets all professional goals resulting in improvement in practice and student performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets short- and long-term professional goals based on self-assessment, reflection and supervisor feedback. Meets all professional goals resulting in improvement in practice and student performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets short-term goals based on self-assessment. Meets most professional goals resulting in some visible changes in practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets low or ambiguous goals unrelated to student needs or self-assessment. Meets few professional goals and persists in instructional practices that remain substantially unimproved over time.
<p align="center">STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ← ————— → TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS</p>					

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Professional Development (Dimension 4.3)

Dimension 4.3	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<p>Professional Development: The teacher enhances the professional community.</p> <p>Standards Basis: 3A, 6A, 6B, 6C</p> <p>Potential Sources of Evidence: Goal-setting and professional development plan (GSPD); conferences and conversations with the teacher, including the end-of-year conference; analysis of student data; daily interaction with others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads colleagues collaboratively in and beyond the school to identify professional development needs through detailed data analysis and self-reflection. Seeks resources and collaboratively fosters faculty knowledge and skills. Develops and fulfills the school and district improvement plans through professional learning communities, grade- or subject-level team leadership, committee leadership or other opportunities beyond the campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads colleagues collaboratively on campus to identify professional development needs through self-reflection. Fosters faculty knowledge and skills in support of the school improvement plan through professional learning communities, grade- or subject-level team leadership, committee membership or other opportunities beyond the campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboratively practices in all scheduled professional development activities, campus professional learning communities, grade- or subject-level team membership, committee membership or other opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages in most scheduled professional development activities, professional learning communities, committee, grade- or subject-level team meetings as directed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages in few professional development activities, professional learning communities or committees to improve professional practice.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←		← TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS			

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
School Community Involvement (Dimension 4.4)

Dimension 4.4	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<p>School Community Involvement: The teacher demonstrates leadership with students, colleagues, and community members in the school, district and community through effective communication and outreach.</p> <p>Standards Basis: 2A, 2B, 4A, 4D, 5B, 6B, 6C, 6D</p> <p>Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher, including the end-of-year conference; classroom artifacts; student data; daily interaction with others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematically contacts parents/guardians regarding students' academic and social/emotional growth through various methods. Initiates collaborative efforts that enhance student learning and growth. Leads students, colleagues, families and community members toward reaching the mission, vision and goals of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematically contacts parents/guardians regarding students' academic and social/emotional growth through various methods. Joins colleagues in collaborative efforts that enhance student learning and welfare. Clearly communicates the mission, vision and goals of the school to students, colleagues, parents and families, and other community members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contacts parents/guardians regularly regarding students' academic and social/emotional growth. Actively participates in all school outreach activities Communicates the mission, vision and goals of the school to students, colleagues, parents and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contacts parents/guardians in accordance with campus policy. Attends most required school outreach activities. Communicates school goals to students, parents and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contacts parents generally about disciplinary matters. Attends few required school outreach activities.
STUDENT CENTERED ACTIONS ←					→ TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS

RUBRIC WORD BANK
(with examples of qualifiers that are interchangeably used)

DIMENSION EXAMPLE:	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: CLASSROOM CULTURE	ALL	ALL	ALL	MOST	FEW
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: MANAGING STUDENT BEHAVIOR	CONSISTENTLY	CONSISTENTLY	CONSISTENTLY	INCONSISTENTLY	RARELY
INSTRUCTION: ACHIEVING EXPECTATIONS	ALL	MOST	MOST	SOME	FEW
INSTRUCTION: CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE	CONSISTENTLY	REGULARLY	DOES (ACTION)	SOMETIMES	FEW
INSTRUCTION: DIFFERENTIATION	ALWAYS	REGULARLY	DOES (ACTION)	SOMETIMES	DOES NOT (ACTION)
	MOVES TO STUDENTCENTERED ACTIONS	MOVES TO STUDENTCENTERED ACTIONS	FOCUSES ON MOSTLY TEACHER- CENTERED ACTIONS	FOCUSES ON TEACHER- CENTERED ACTIONS	FOCUSES ON TEACHER- CENTERED ACTIONS