CENTER · FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

5 Dimensions of Teaching and Learning

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5D	Sub-Dimension	The Vision	Guiding Questions
Purpose	Standards	• The lesson is based on standard(s) that are meaningful and relevant beyond the task at hand (e.g., relate to a broader purpose or context such as problem-solving, citizenship, etc.), and help students learn and apply transferable knowledge and skills. • The lesson is intentionally linked to other lessons (previous and future) in support of students meeting standard(s).	• How do the standard and teaching point relate to content knowledge, habits of thinking in the discipline, transferable skills, and students' assessed needs as learners (re: language, culture, learning styles, etc.)? • How do the standard and teaching point relate to the ongoing work of this classroom? To the intellectual lives of students beyond this classroom? To broader ideals such as problem-solving, citizenship, etc.? • What is the teaching point of the lesson? How is it meaningful and relevant beyond the specific task/activity? • Is the task/activity aligned with the teaching point? How does what students are actually engaged in doing help them to achieve the desired outcome(s)? • How are the standard and teaching point communicated and made accessible to all students? • How do students communicate their understanding about what they are learning and why they are learning it? • What will students know and be able to do as a result of the lesson? What will be acceptable evidence of student learning?
	Teaching Point	• The teaching point is based on knowledge of students' learning needs in relation to standard(s). • The teaching point is clearly articulated, linked to standard(s), embedded in instruction, and understood by students. • The teaching point is measurable. The criteria for success are clear to students and the performance tasks provide evidence that students are able to understand and apply learning in context.	
Student Engagement	Intellectual Work	• Students' classroom work embodies substantive intellectual engagement (reading, thinking, writing, problem-solving, and meaning-making). • Students take ownership of their learning to develop, test, and refine their thinking.	• What is the frequency of teacher talk, teacher-initiated questions, student-initiated questions, student-to-student interaction, student presentation of work, etc.? • What does student talk reveal about the nature of students' thinking? • Where is the locus of control over learning in the classroom? • What evidence do you observe of student engagement in intellectual, academic work? What is the nature of that work? • What is the level and quality of the intellectual work in which students are engaged (e.g. factual recall, procedure, inference, analysis, meta-cognition)? • What specific strategies and structures are in place to facilitate participation and meaning-making by all students (e.g. small group work, partner talk, writing, etc.)? • Do all students have access to participation in the work of the group? Why/why not? How is participation distributed? • What questions, statements, and actions does the teacher use to encourage students to share their thinking with each other, to build on each other's ideas, and to assess their understanding of each other's ideas?
	Engagement Strategies	• Engagement strategies capitalize on and build upon students' background knowledge, experience and responses to support rigorous and culturally relevant learning. • Engagement strategies encourage equitable and purposeful student participation and ensure that all students have access to, and are expected to participate in, learning.	
	Talk	• Student talk reflects discipline-specific habits of thinking and ways of communicating. • Student talk embodies substantive and intellectual thinking.	

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Curriculum & Pedagogy	Curriculum	• Instructional materials (e.g., texts, resources, etc.) and tasks are appropriately challenging and supportive for all students, are aligned with the teaching point and content area standards, and are culturally and academically relevant. • The lesson materials and tasks are related to a larger unit and to the sequence and development of conceptual understanding over time.	• How does the learning in the classroom reflect authentic ways of reading, writing, thinking and reasoning in the discipline under study? (e.g., How does the work reflect what mathematicians do and how they think?) • How does the content of the lesson (e.g., text or task) influence the intellectual demand (e.g. the thinking and reasoning required)? • How do lesson content and instructional strategies provide all students with access to the intellectual work and to participation in sense-making? • What does the instruction reveal about the teacher's understanding of how students learn, of disciplinary habits of thinking, and of content knowledge? • How is students' learning of content and transferable skills supported through the teacher's intentional use of instructional strategies and materials? • How does the teacher differentiate instruction for students with different learning needs?
	Teaching Approaches and/or Strategies	• The teacher makes decisions and utilizes instructional approaches in ways that intentionally support his/her instructional purposes. • Instruction reflects and is consistent with pedagogical content knowledge and is culturally responsive, in order to engage students in disciplinary habits of thinking.	
	Scaffolds for Learning	• The teacher's use of instructional approaches balances the interplay of explicit teaching, scaffolding for the gradual release of responsibility and for student choice/ownership. • The teacher uses different instructional strategies, based on planned and/or in-the-moment decisions, to address individual learning needs.	
Assessment for Student Learning	Assessment	• Students are able to assess their own learning in relation to the teaching point. • The teacher creates multiple assessment opportunities and expects all students to demonstrate learning. • Assessment methods include a variety of tools and approaches to gather comprehensive and quality information about the learning styles and needs of each student (e.g., anecdotal notes, conferring, student work samples, etc.). • The teacher uses observable systems and routines for recording and using student assessment data (e.g., charts, conferring records, portfolios, rubrics). • Assessment criteria, methods, and purposes are transparent and students have a role in their own assessment to promote learning.	• How does the instruction provide opportunities for all students to demonstrate learning? How does the teacher capitalize on those opportunities for the purposes of assessment? • How does the teacher gather information about student learning? How comprehensive are the sources of data from which he/she draws? • How does the teacher's understanding of each student as a learner inform how the teacher pushes for depth and stretches boundaries of student thinking? • How does assessment help students to become more meta-cognitive and to have ownership in their learning? • How does the teacher's instruction reflect planning for assessment? • How does assessment inform the teacher's instruction and decision-making? • How does the teacher adjust instruction based on in-the-moment assessment of student understanding?
	Adjustment	• The teacher plans instruction based on ongoing assessment and an understanding of students, standards, texts, tasks, and pedagogical content knowledge. • The teacher makes in-the-moment instructional adjustments based upon student understanding.	
Classroom Environment & Culture	Use of Physical Environment	• The physical arrangement of the room (e.g., meeting area, resources, student seating, etc.) is conducive to student learning. • The teacher uses the physical space of the classroom to assess student understanding and support learning (e.g., teacher moves around the room to observe and confer with students). • Students have access to resources in the physical environment to support learning and independence (e.g., libraries, materials, charts, technology, etc.).	• How does the physical arrangement of the classroom, as well as the availability of resources and space to both the teacher and students, purposefully support and scaffold student learning? • How and to what extent do the systems and routines of the classroom facilitate student ownership and independence? • How and to what extent do the systems and routines of the classroom reflect values of community, inclusivity, equity, and accountability for learning? • What is the climate for learning in this classroom? How do relationships (teacher-student, student-student) support or hinder student learning? • What do discourse and interactions reveal about what is valued in this classroom? • What are sources of status and authority in this classroom (e.g., reasoning and justification, intellectual risk-taking, popularity, aggressiveness, etc.)?
	Classroom Routines and Rituals	• Classroom systems and routines facilitate student responsibility, ownership and independence. • Available time is maximized in service of learning.	
	Classroom Culture	• Classroom discourse and interactions reflect high expectations and beliefs about all students' intellectual capabilities and create a culture of inclusivity, equity and accountability for learning. • Classroom norms encourage risk-taking, collaboration and respect for thinking.	