February 2019

High Standards and Expectations for All Students

9 Characteristics of High-Performing Schools

Big Picture

Teachers and staff believe that all students can learn and meet high standards. While recognizing that some students must overcome significant barriers, these obstacles are not seen as insurmountable. Students are offered an ambitious and rigorous course of study.

Definition and explanation

Standards and expectations address several concepts:

- **content standards** - which are the learning targets
- **performance standards** - which answer the question, "how good is good enough?"
- **expectations** - which is confidence that students will meet both the content and performance standards that have been set.

Three types of teacher expectations:

1. teacher's **perceptions** of a student's current level

Three types of teacher expectations:

2. teacher's **prediction** about the amount of academic progress a student will make over a given time

Three types of teacher expectations:

3. degree to which a teacher "**over**- or **under**-estimates a student's present level of performance" (Bamburg, 1994).

Teachers tend to have lower expectations for students of color and poor students than for white students and more affluent students.

Process of Self-Fulfilling Prophecy:

1. "The **teacher expects different, specific behavior and achievement** from particular students.

2. Because of these different expectations, the **teacher behaves differently** toward various students.

Process of Self-Fulfilling Prophecy:

3. This **treatment tells students what behavior and achievement the teacher expects from them** and how they are expected to behave and perform.

4. If this treatment is consistent over time, and if students do not resist or change it in some way, it will likely **affect their self-concepts, achievement, motivation, levels of aspiration, classroom conduct and interactions** with the teacher.

Process of Self-Fulfilling Prophecy:

5. These effects generally will complement and reinforce the teacher's expectations, so that **students will come to conform to these expectations** more than they might have otherwise.

6. With time, students' achievement and behavior will conform more and more closely to that originally expected of them. **High-expectations students will be led to achieve at high levels**, while **low-expectations students will not gain** as much as they could have" (p. 79).
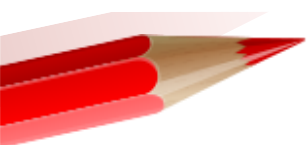
Getting to Work

Implementation Suggestions:

1. Examine level of expectations:

- Focus, individually or as part of a team, on **questioning strategies**, which are important instructional tools that often reflect expectations
- Read and discuss the research in a **study group setting**
- **Work together** to improve their use of the strategies
- **Reflect on instructional practice** related to expectations

Implementation Suggestions:

2. Teachers should ask: Am I...

- providing sufficient **wait time** for all students to answer questions?
- helping all students **improve their responses** to questions by giving clues or repeating or rephrasing questions?

Implementation Suggestions:

2. Teachers should ask: Am I...

- providing all students with appropriate **reinforcement** and not inadvertently rewarding incorrect answers or inappropriate behavior?
- giving **feedback** to public responses of all students regardless of level of achievement?

14

Implementation Suggestions:

2. Teachers should ask: Am I...

- calling on <u>all</u> students to respond to questions that include **analysis and high cognitive content**?
- seating **struggling students** closer to the teacher?

Implementation Suggestions:

2. Teachers should ask: Am I...

- using **eye contact and communicating nonverbally** through attention and re-sponsiveness (leaning forward, nodding head positively) in interaction with all students.
- holding **high expectations** for all students?

Implementation Suggestions:

2. Teachers should ask: Am I...

- engaging all students with **friendly interaction**, smiling, and providing nonverbal indicators of support?
- using **effective**, even when time consuming, **instructional methods** with all students?
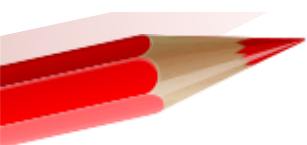
Implementation Suggestions:

2. Teachers should ask: Am I...

- exposing all students to a **rich curriculum** including lesson-extending discussion, application and high-level thinking tasks?
- being **fair-handed** in administering and grading tests and assignments including treatment in borderline cases?

Implementation Suggestions:

3. Avoiding negative expectations:

- Consider students' **full range of abilities** when developing expectations, including different types of intellectual abilities
- Keep **expectations flexible and current**. Teachers need to keep expectations in perspective to be sure interpretations of what they notice in classrooms are accurate
- Emphasize the positive by providing **feedback, diagnosis, re-teaching, and "stretching** the students' minds by stimulating them and encouraging them to achieve as much as they can" (p. 108-109)

Implementation Suggestions:

4. Culturally Competent Attributes:

- "Students are respected and responded to in warm and accepting ways.
- Students have opportunities to find connections between their lives and what they are studying.

Implementation Suggestions:

4. Culturally Competent Attributes:

- Students' knowledge, culture, and learning styles are considered and incorporated into class instruction.
- Teachers and school staff are familiar with their students' home cultures and know how to work in multicultural settings" (Council for Exceptional Children, in Henderson, et al., p. 121).

Implementation Suggestions:

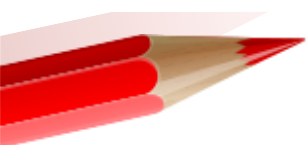## 5. Change Perceptions through Collaboration

- Work with peers to plan curriculum and analyze assessments to examine and challenge perceptions and assumptions about students and their learning. Collaborative planning provides basis for comparison and encourages teachers to raise expectations.

Best Practices

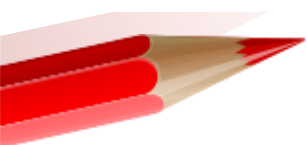# Increase Rigor and Relevance:

Authentic pedagogy, advanced thinking skills, and application of learning to new or different situations are ways to increase rigor and relevance in curriculum and student learning. Authentic pedagogy is instruction that **emphasizes intellectual quality** and includes **construction of knowledge**, disciplined **inquiry**, and **value beyond school...**

In Practice:

- "Treat **learning as a process of questioning, trying out, and grappling with new ideas and skills**
- Aim to teach students **a network of understandings, to connect and use** in new ways

In Practice:

- **Treat 'getting it' as groundwork to teach deeper** understandings
- Help students **relate new learning to larger issues** in the discipline and the world
- Teach strategies for **ways to think about and use the content** in assignments and activities" (p. 52).

Thank You!

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