

2014-15 Quality Review School Quality Expectations

Throughout the year, Quality Review Directors collect “look fors” from reviewers and vet them to create a set of expectations for what a rating of Well Developed entails for a given Quality Indicator. The goal of these expectations is to foster a common understanding of practices aligned to that rating. Below are examples of expectations aligned to a rating of Well Developed on selected Quality Indicators.

Quality Indicator 1.1

To be Well Developed, it is expected that:

- School leaders and teachers can articulate how they ensure curricula are aligned to the CCLS and other content area standards; they can also articulate a chosen strategy for integrating the instructional shifts. These strategies have resulted in coherence across grades and subjects. Coherence is defined as a fluid connection and coordination between the topics students study in each subject within a grade and as they advance through the grades. (a)
- The school has clearly defined criteria for what it means to exit a grade level and to attain the enduring understandings and key skills that ensure success in college and career. (a)
- School leaders and teachers integrate the instructional shifts by making purposeful connections between the shifts and the topics in each subject—both within a grade and as students advance through the grades—so as to promote college and career readiness. (a)
- School leaders and teachers can articulate how curricula, across and within grade levels, are aligned to the CCLS and scaffold student success to promote college and career readiness for all students. (a)
- Rigorous habits and higher order skills—such as those that require students to create their own meaning, integrate skills into processes, and use what they have learned to solve real world problems—are identified, defined, and embedded within curricula and academic tasks coherently across grades and subjects. (b)
- Curricula and academic tasks require students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, to think accurately and with clarity, identify and consider multiple meanings and interpretations, take and support positions, resist impulsivity and engage in disciplined inquiry and thought, use and adapt what they know, deal with ambiguity, and demonstrate their thinking in new learning situations. (b)
- Teachers across grades and subjects use student work and data to plan and refine curricula and academic tasks in order to cognitively engage all students, including lowest and highest achieving students. (c)
- Habits, as follows, are explicitly embedded in classroom instruction and academic tasks: persisting, managing impulsivity, listening with understanding and empathy, thinking flexibly, metacognition, questioning and problem posing, applying past knowledge to new situations, thinking and communicating with clarity and precision, creating, imagining, and innovating, taking responsible risks, thinking interdependently, and remaining open to continuous learning. (b)

- Curricula and tasks, across grades and subjects, challenge all students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, to think critically; instruction provides scaffolds to ensure students can demonstrate their thinking through the work products they are asked to create. (b)
- School leaders and teachers provide a data-based rationale that identifies areas of growth or achievement gaps for all students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities and other subgroups, and explain how curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined accordingly so that all students access curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged at a level consistent with the academic expectations for that grade level or beyond. (c)
- Curricula and academic tasks are designed to engage students, advance them through the content, and assess their understanding as evidenced by their work products. (c)

Quality Indicator 1.2

To be Well Developed, it is expected that:

- Across a preponderance of classrooms, teacher practices consistently reflect and support school wide beliefs about how students learn best; teachers and administrators can articulate how those beliefs are informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to curricula, and shaped by teacher team and faculty input. (a)
- Instruction, outcomes, strategies, and learning activities are derived from standards-based curricula and reflect school leadership's espoused beliefs about optimal student learning situations; beliefs are influenced by the priorities of the Danielson Framework for Teaching and CCLS instructional shifts. (a)
- Instructional student groups are organized thoughtfully and are varied as appropriate; they build on student strengths and incorporate student choice as appropriate to maximize learning. Plans for lessons or units are well-structured with appropriate pacing and time allocations. (b)
- Lessons and teaching documents represent deep content knowledge, understanding of diverse students' linguistic differences and other needs, and available resources (including technology) resulting in a series of learning activities that engage students in high level cognitive activity. The lesson and unit structure is clear and allows for different pathways to understanding according to diverse student needs. (b)
- Teachers can explain how particular teaching strategies and instructional tasks address the needs of individual students and sub-groups (English Language Learners and students with disabilities, lowest third, and highest performers) by articulating how the task is designed and/or identifying examples of ways student learning is supported or extended. (b)
- Teaching practices leverage strategies such as inquiry, project-based and collaborative learning, questioning, and discussions that promote high levels of thinking. Strategic use of scaffolding techniques (e.g., modeling, needs-based grouping, activating prior knowledge, effective use of graphic organizers, visuals, imagery, and technology, building academic vocabulary—all of which may be in the student's native language or in English) provides multiple entry points to lessons and tasks for all learners including English Language Learners and students with disabilities. (b)
- Across classrooms, teachers strategically use scaffolds, questioning, opportunities for choice, and other teaching practices to create a variety of ways for students to access the content, learning project, or task, and be supported in learning or extend it to different possible endpoints so that all students show mastery of the learning objectives and corresponding standards. (b)

- Teachers across classrooms provide students with challenging learning tasks that require them to use critical thinking, analysis, and problem solving; tasks encourage inquiry, collaboration, and ownership among students. (b, c)
- Teachers use a variety or series of questions or prompts to challenge students cognitively, advance high level thinking and discourse, and promote metacognition. These high quality questions encourage students to make connections among concepts or events previously believed to be unrelated and arrive at new understandings of complex material. Students formulate many questions, initiate topics, and make unsolicited contributions. Students themselves ensure that all voices are heard in the discussion. (b, c)
- Students, across classrooms, produce work and engage in discussions that reflect critical thinking, creativity, innovation, and problem solving, as well as student ownership of the learning process. (c)
- Ample student-to-student dialogue, using academic vocabulary and evidence-based accountable talk, is built into the lesson. Students can articulate what they are working towards, why it is important, and how they help determine the direction of lessons. (c)

Quality Indicator 2.2

To be Well Developed, it is expected that:

- Teachers and administrators articulate coherent reasons for assessment choices; assessments are aligned to CCLS and/or content standards in the curriculum. These choices deliver a range of data, some daily, some monthly, and some quarterly, to sustain collaborative inquiry and continuously improve instruction. (a)
- Teachers collaborate on designing and/or modifying common grade-wide, curriculum-aligned assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are customized to address data-defined student and sub-group needs. These tools are used by teachers and administrators to track progress towards goals across grades and subject areas and make instructional decisions. (a, b)
- A variety of feedback to students, from both teachers and peers, is accurate, specific, and timely -advancing learning. (a, c)
- Teachers in teams determine important topics to assess with common formative assessments. Teachers effectively “unpack” the standards and analyze the instructional shifts for those topics to pinpoint concepts and skills students need to know and be able to do. The validity and reliability of school level assessments are ensured through the consistent, collaborative structures for norming and interpretation of evidence used to evaluate student performance. (b)
- Teacher teams agree on learning goals and benchmark performances for units, tasks, and courses prior to designing or using formative assessments to measure student mastery of the goals. (b)
- Teachers and teams effectively analyze data to glean information about students’ progress and learning needs relative to the learning goals. (b)
- Teachers accurately identify specific instructional responses to the data, which might include re-teaching content, changing instructional approaches to meet the needs of all students, and/or developing more challenging tasks/units. Adjustments to lessons/tasks are effective and teachers can explicitly cite the impact of their instructional responses/adjustments. (b, c)
- Assessment criteria are written clearly, students are aware of and able to articulate them, and there is evidence that students have helped establish the assessment criteria according to teacher-specified learning objectives. (b, c)

- All learning outcomes have a method for assessment; assessment types match learning expectations and are authentic with real-world applications as appropriate. Plans indicate student choice in assessments, student participation in the design of assessments for their own work, and modified assessments for some students as needed. (c)
- Students are actively involved in collecting information from assessments and provide input. (c)
- Teacher monitoring of student understanding during lessons is visibly active and continuous: the teacher is constantly “taking the pulse” of the class and makes frequent use of strategies (e.g., cold call, questioning for explanation, stop and jot prompts, parking lot, double entry journals, exit slips) to elicit information about individual student understanding and trends. (c)
- Students consistently self/peer-assess against the assessment criteria (rubrics) and monitor their own understanding and progress either by taking initiative or as a result of tasks set by the teacher. Students are aware of their next learning steps. (c)

Quality Indicator 3.4

To be Well Developed, it is expected that:

- School leaders create elevated level of expectations for all staff, which is evidenced throughout the community through verbal and written structures (e.g., new teacher orientations, ongoing workshops, staff handbook, school website) that emulate a culture where accountability is reciprocal between all constituents. (a)
- The school has clearly defined standards for professional development (including professional development plans that incorporate staff input) and classroom practices embedding elements of the Danielson Framework for Teaching to ensure that learning for all stakeholders consistently reflects high expectations. (a)
- School leaders and other staff members work as a team in study groups, planning sessions, and other professional development modes, establishing a culture of professionalism that results in a high level of success in teaching and learning across the school. (a)
- Staff members implement effective strategies for communicating high expectations (e.g., tasks encouraging inquiry, collaboration, and ownership) that are clearly connected to college and career readiness so that all students are challenged to meet or exceed those expectations. (b)
- The school orchestrates ongoing events and creates multiple opportunities to partner with and engage families in learning, fostering their participation in a culture of high expectations connected to college and career readiness, and offering them feedback on their children’s progress towards meeting those expectations. (b)
- The school provides ongoing, clear lines of verbal and written communication (e.g., online progress reports, parent/teacher conferences, parent informational sessions and workshops, parent handbook, student handbook, student led conferences) with families to deepen their understanding of college and career readiness expectations for their children and empower them to help support their children in meeting or exceeding those expectations. (b)
- Teachers and other staff have a set of clear, systematic structures (e.g., advisory, guidance, college counseling) for articulating high expectations and sharing information with students, leading to student progress towards mastery of CCLS and college and career readiness expectations. (c)

- Staff members have instituted a culture for learning that provides all students, especially those in high-need subgroups, with focused, effective feedback including clear next steps that determine student accountability for learning goals and expectations to prepare them for their next grade while ensuring their ownership of the learning process. (c)

Quality Indicator 4.2

To be Well Developed, it is expected that:

- The vast majority of teachers collaborate in professional teams where they develop and implement school wide instructional practices, embedding the CCLS and instructional shifts to continuously promote improved achievement for all learners. (a)
- Teacher teams clearly articulate how they implement structured professional collaborations using protocols (e.g., Looking at Student Work, Tuning, Notices and Wonderings) and other structures to strengthen teacher capacity as they create, revise, and /or adopt curricula to ensure effective integration of the CCLS and instructional shifts into instruction across grades and content areas. (a,b)
- School leaders and teachers have built a culture of professional collaboration (e.g., team-initiated inter-visitations, lesson study) in which they share insights relative to the coherence of teacher pedagogy, thus fostering improvement of outcomes for all learners. (a, b)
- Teacher teams effectively implement systems to monitor a variety of student data and classroom practices that inform instruction leading to the achievement of goals for individual as well as groups of students. (b)
- Teacher teams provide a data-based rationale and analysis of student work that inform their decisions to adjust teacher practice and create strategic goals for groups of students. (b)
- School leaders and teachers offer specific and clear examples of teacher leadership that illustrate how teachers and teacher leaders play a vital role in school level decision-making. (c)
- Administrators and teacher leaders (e.g., team leaders, coaches, mentors, cabinet members, instructional leaders, department chairs) are able to identify distributed leadership structures that are deeply-rooted in the school's day to day operations and articulate how they serve as a conduit for teacher input in strategic decisions that affect student achievement. (c)

Sources:

- Ainsworth, L., & Viegut, D. (2006). *Common formative assessments: How to connect standards-based instruction and assessment*.
- Schmidt, W., Hsing C., & McKnight, C. (2005). *Curriculum coherence: an examination of US mathematics and science content standards from an international perspective*.
- Stiggins, R. J., Arter, J., Chappuis J., & Chappuis, S. (2004). *Classroom assessment for student learning: Doing it right, using it well*.