



 PowerMyLearning®

Framework for Teachers

Effective Instruction Through
Strong Learning Relationships

PowerMyLearning.org



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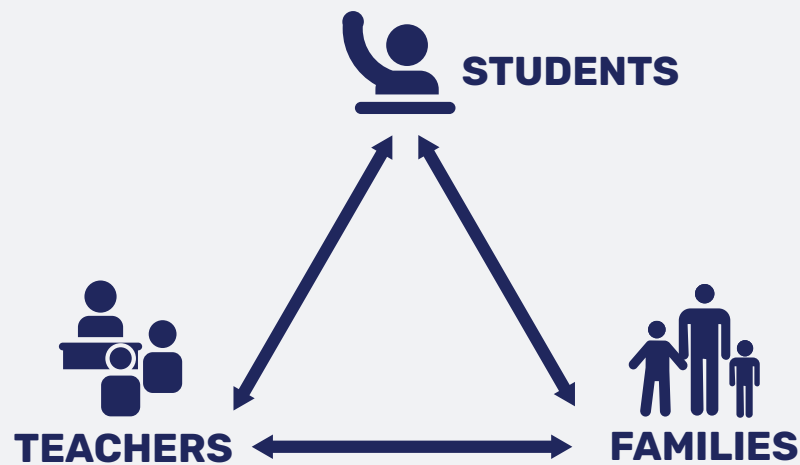
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Introduction



The PowerMyLearning Framework for Teachers is a research-based set of instructional practices that empowers teachers to advance educational equity and accelerate students' social-emotional learning and academic achievement.

The Framework provides a roadmap to a learning community where teachers, families, and students collaborate on the same learning goals—exponentially improving outcomes for students. Activating this “triangle of learning relationships” can be the difference between mediocre and stellar results in all school communities, including schools with large numbers of students of color, English language learners, and students from low-income families.

The Framework is grounded in core concepts from the research literature:



Equity

All students have the capacity to engage in rigorous learning—regardless of race, gender, learning differences, socio-economic status, or background. Students need to feel safe, respected, and valued in order to learn.

Family Engagement

Families are essential partners who want success for their children and can be invaluable assets to student learning when engaged and provided with support. With strong communication and trust in place, all families can provide unique insight to teachers, reinforce high expectations, help students set and work toward goals, encourage meaningful, student-led conversations about what children are learning at school, and support ongoing learning and exploration at home.

Social-Emotional Learning

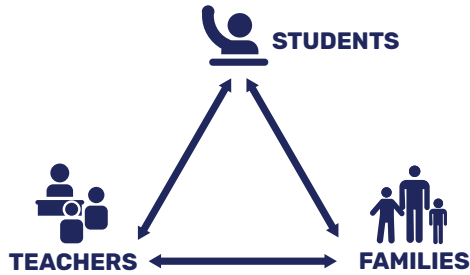
To succeed in school and beyond, students need support developing their social-emotional skills, including opportunities at school and at home to drive their own learning, set and work towards goals, reflect, apply feedback, and collaborate with others.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

All students benefit from seeing a diversity of cultures and ideas reflected in instruction and in their classroom environment, and from engaging in rigorous, personalized learning that connects academic concepts to their lived experiences.

Framework Overview

The PowerMyLearning Framework is a research-based set of instructional practices that empowers teachers to advance educational equity by building a learning community where teachers, families, and students collaborate on the same learning goals. Teachers can activate this “triangle of learning relationships” by growing their instructional practices with students and with families across four domains.



AREAS OF INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

WITH STUDENTS



WITH FAMILIES



DOMAINS



Learning Environment

- Physical Space
- Routines and Procedures
- Inclusive Community
- Culture of Learning

- Communicating with Families
- Building Trust with Families



Instructional Planning and Delivery

- Coherence
- Rigor
- Relevance and Cultural Responsiveness

- Sharing Learning Expectations with Families
- Connecting to Family Context and Culture



Data Driven Decision Making

- Formative Assessment
- Differentiation and Personalization
- Actionable Feedback

- Gathering Data from Families
- Sharing Data with Families



Student Agency

- Goal Setting and Reflection
- Student-Driven Learning
- Peer Collaboration
- Learning Conversations

- Goal Setting with Families
- Extending Learning Beyond the Classroom
- Learning Conversations at Home



Learning Environment

Physical Space



Indicator

Teacher organizes classroom space to create a warm and welcoming learning environment conducive to a variety of different learning experiences. Physical space is designed to support students' emotional well-being and includes references to students' identities, families, and communities.

Exemplar

The teacher ensures that the physical layout of the classroom is adjusted to align with and effectively facilitate different learning activities and opportunities for student collaboration with the teacher as well as with each other. Students can easily see or find necessary materials. The teacher makes effective use of physical resources, including technology. The classroom includes a space designed for students to take a break and calm themselves if needed. Decorations and classroom materials acknowledge students' cultural frames of reference.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Organization of space that facilitates ease of movement for the teacher and students and allows all students to see the instructional area, including any presentation screen if applicable
- Accommodations for students that may need them due to physical or learning differences
- Flexible seating options that facilitate peer collaboration
- Tools and materials that serve a specific purpose and can be accessed by students when needed, including computers/laptops/tablets
- Student work and student-created decorations on display
- Classroom materials that represent student interests and home cultures, such as images of the community, textiles and handicrafts representing student

home cultures, and notable figures and achievements by people in whom students can see their identities reflected

- A "peace corner" or other quiet space students can use if they are feeling upset or stressed

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Effectively integrating tools and resources to enhance instruction, including referencing posted materials and student work examples
- Taking down older materials that are no longer relevant and refreshing with newer, more relevant materials
- Minimizing clutter on surfaces and walls
- Moving (or having students move) furniture and tools as needed to enhance lesson activities
- Regularly moving among and interacting with students as appropriate

- Soliciting student feedback on the organization of the classroom's physical space, including seating arrangements

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Knowing where to find materials they need
- Efficiently transitioning between activities
- Demonstrating respect for each other's and the teacher's personal space
- Following routines for selecting flexible seating options and accessing classroom materials
- Referencing posted materials and student work in classroom discussions

Routines and Procedures



Indicator

Teacher establishes strong and clear classroom routines and procedures. Teacher structures class time to provide students with a balance of different learning experiences.

Exemplar

The teacher recognizes that effective routines contribute to an environment in which students feel safe and supported so they can focus on the important work of learning. The teacher communicates routines clearly, implements them consistently, and adjusts them appropriately to support new learning activities and the needs and interests of individual students in the classroom. The teacher conferences with groups and individual students to ensure they understand success criteria and know what is expected of them. The teacher actively encourages students to participate in helping each other meet those expectations. Classroom transitions are efficient, and supplies and tools are managed effectively.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Key information prominently posted in the room, including rules and procedures, learning objectives, success criteria, and information about student groupings
- Student leadership roles and responsibilities prominently posted in the classroom and rotated on a regular basis to ensure all students have the opportunity to participate
- Instructions available everywhere they are needed, including at stations, within small learning groups, and in different “centers” throughout the classroom
- Organized student folders, notebooks, or digital portfolios that contain student work
- System to help the teacher and the students keep track of usernames and passwords for online tools

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Integrating reminders of key information, including rules and procedures, learning objectives, and success criteria naturally into instruction
- Being attentive to student behavior and interactions, directing and redirecting students as needed using verbal and nonverbal cues
- Using positive narration to reinforce classroom expectations by describing the actions of students who are following instructions
- Implementing efficient routines for distribution and management of materials and tools that include students taking leadership roles to help facilitate
- Providing time to model and practice new routines, procedures, and methods, including transitions between activities; the use of technology and other new tools; student groupings, stations, or centers; and project-based work

- Articulating the instructional purpose of the resources being used
- Regularly soliciting student feedback on the effectiveness of tools and resources, and ensuring they understand the purpose of each in supporting learning
- Holding students accountable and providing them consistent feedback for work they do offline and online

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Demonstrating an understanding of expectations during different learning activities
- Reminding each other of appropriate behavior and routines
- Efficiently transitioning between activities, including logging in and out of technology when applicable
- Demonstrating a high comfort level with asking questions of the teacher when confused about routines and procedures

Inclusive Community



Indicator

Teacher creates a community in which all students feel safe and valued and have a sense of belonging. Teacher supports perspective-taking and encourages students to practice empathy, exhibit kindness, respect differences, and celebrate diversity.

Exemplar

The teacher makes an intentional effort to ensure that all students feel welcome and comfortable in class by prioritizing relationships and trust-building with and among students and celebrating diverse contributions. The teacher engages students in frequent discussions around classroom culture, encourages them to take on different perspectives, and addresses conflict in the classroom in a way that repairs harm and promotes social and emotional learning.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Community norms or classroom contract co-created with students and regularly referenced
- Classroom ambassador program to welcome and support new students
- Wide range of student work and contributions celebrated for unique strengths
- Wall of appreciation, message board, or other forums in which students provide positive feedback to their peers

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Using reflection protocols to unpack the teacher's own cultural frame of reference, and practicing mindfulness regarding the impact of the teacher's interactions on students
- Validating students' personal experiences and acknowledging realities that affect their daily lives

- Enforcing the behavior management system in a way that is fair and culturally responsive—i.e., cognizant of students' cultural differences and potential misperceptions or value judgments
- Celebrating collective effort in addition to individual accomplishment
- Seeking out and demonstrating enthusiasm for contributions from all students, including tracking interactions to ensure that all students receive positive affirmations
- Expressing care and warmth through both verbal and nonverbal communication
- Building personal connections with students by asking about their lives, interests, and emotional well-being, and demonstrating vulnerability by sharing appropriate personal interests and experiences to build trust and rapport
- Noticing and intervening when there is peer-to-peer conflict in a way that reinforces norms of respect in

the classroom, helps students mentally and emotionally reset, and focuses on repairing any harm caused by the incident

- Teaching students that it is okay to disagree and helping them learn to do so productively
- Calling out positive displays of empathy, kindness, and respect in the classroom between peers
- Making time to play and have fun as a class

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Reminding each other of norms and expectations
- Celebrating one another's accomplishments
- Encouraging, offering help, and being kind to classmates
- Demonstrating a high level of comfort in interactions with peers and teacher
- Sharing personal feelings and experiences with the teacher when appropriate

Culture of Learning



Indicator

Teacher establishes a classroom culture that nurtures inquiry and academic mindset, values independent and collaborative learning, and creates a safe space so students can comfortably engage in productive struggle.

Exemplar

The teacher builds on the rapport established with students to create a classroom environment in which learners take academic risks, embrace new challenges, and view mistakes as information to drive improvement. The teacher affirms a strong belief in all students' ability to meet high expectations. The teacher encourages students to view their peers as resources in a shared intellectual community and to learn collaboratively.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Student work on the walls that emphasizes growth through effort
- Images, quotes, and poetry around the room to help students see pathways to success and accomplishment
- System for students to revise work, such as folders with revision sheets or a clear process for students to resubmit assessments online
- Visual representation or celebration of student progress toward personalized goals

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Coupling personal warmth with explicit communication of high expectations for each student
- Reinforcing positive messaging about making mistakes and learning from errors

- Being explicit and specific about the teacher's belief in students' capacity, referencing the way that students have tackled challenges in other areas if applicable
- Modeling positive management of emotions, including taking a deep breath when frustrated, or taking a break to gather thoughts when confused or overwhelmed
- Noticing and addressing students' negative self-talk
- Helping students recognize and create positive counter-narratives to combat negative stereotypes
- Encouraging students to reflect on their current expertise both in and out of school in order to see themselves as capable of becoming good at something through effort
- Allowing students to resubmit work or have another attempt at an assignment
- Celebrating students when they show progress, take intellectual risks, and persevere

- Encouraging students to view each other as resources and seek help from peers when needed
- Providing opportunities for a variety of different learning experiences to support engagement and motivation, including collaborative peer learning in pairs and small groups

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Demonstrating perseverance through difficult tasks
- Expressing a belief in growth mindset, i.e., that the student's ability will grow with effort
- Embracing challenges and attempting tasks even when unsure
- Asking the teacher and peers for feedback and targeted help when needed

Communicating with Families



Indicator

Teacher has systems in place to connect with students' families through meaningful, consistent, two-way communication.

Exemplar

The teacher makes an effort to get to know the person or people who are most important to students by collecting and sharing contact information with families and setting up systems for regular, two-way communication that account for differences in home language, literacy, access to technology, and comfort with educational systems and settings. Two-way communication includes proactively seeking out families' input, valuing and responding to their feedback, and problem-solving with families in positive ways.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Bulletin boards, class websites, social media accounts, newsletters, and other forums where the teacher shares student work with families and/or celebrates families themselves
- Variety of communication tools and strategies (e.g., texts, emails, newsletters, social media, phone calls), including at least some that are two-way
- System for maintaining an updated contact list for families that includes cell phone and email information, where applicable, and home language

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Communicating to families that they are equal partners and allies in supporting student success
- Regularly sharing class and personal updates with students' families via positive phone calls, texts, notes, and photos
- Promptly responding to family communication in a respectful and positive way
- Where possible, reaching out to families in their preferred language using interpretation and translation tools
- Exhibiting patience when families are hesitant to speak with teachers or someone from the school
- Planning time that allows for family communication on a regular basis

FAMILY BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Knowing the teacher's name and how to get in touch with them
- Feeling comfortable reaching out to the teacher with questions, feedback, or concerns
- Responding to texts/emails and commenting on posts/websites
- Letting the teacher know when contact information has changed

Building Trust with Families



Indicator

Teacher demonstrates the value they place in families as partners by taking time to learn about families' backgrounds and priorities. Teacher welcomes family voice and presence into the learning community.

Exemplar

The teacher makes it a priority to build strong, trusting relationships with families in support of student learning and seeks out opportunities to engage with families both in the classroom and the broader community. The teacher opens the classroom to families who may wish to visit, designs the space to be welcoming to them, and offers opportunities to meet or talk outside of formal conferences, including home and community-based visits and phone or video calls. If needed and feasible, the teacher connects families to someone at the school who can provide resources in their home language.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- An introductory message (available in translation if needed) introducing the teacher to families and communicating classroom goals for the year
- Surveys or assignments that invite families to share their hopes and dreams for their children and expertise on their children's strengths, needs, and learning differences
- Poster or door decoration welcoming students, families, and visitors to the classroom—this could include pictures of the students, inspirational messages, and/or welcoming words in multiple languages
- A visiting policy that welcomes families to volunteer, sit in as a guest, or participate in special classroom events
- Adult-sized chairs to accommodate family partners visiting the classroom

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Organizing or attending meet-and-greet events for students' families and making an effort to get to know families' names and backgrounds
- Sharing appropriate personal anecdotes with students' families to build rapport
- Soliciting feedback from families about classroom environment, norms, and instructional activities and materials
- Offering flexible and timely options to talk with families including home visits, meetings at a neutral space such as a public library, and phone/video conferences
- Referencing previous conversations with families, referring to family siblings and other family members by name, and expressing care and concern appropriately
- Spending time in the community where families live and engaging in activities such as shopping at the local grocery store, visiting the local park, and attending school and community events

- Seeking out someone at the school to provide resources in families' home languages if needed
- Helping families who are experiencing extreme stressors outside of school connect with someone at the school who can provide them with resources if needed

FAMILY BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Participating in classroom activities and attending events at the school
- Contributing ideas and feedback about classroom environment, norms, and instructional activities and materials
- Sharing information with the teacher about their family culture, their own experiences with education, and their aspirations for their child



Instructional Planning and Delivery

Coherence



Indicator

Teacher plans and implements instruction that is aligned to instructional standards, has seamless connections among its many elements, and provides students with a clear, logical, and appropriately scaffolded progression towards mastery.

Exemplar

The teacher knows that students build their understanding by connecting new information to previously learned material, and develops instructional plans that reflect coherent, connected development of concepts and topics. Content is organized in a way that focuses on and supports the major work of the grade by building on previously mastered concepts and making connections across domains and subjects.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Instructional plans that identify the key foundational skills or standards that support student understanding of new content
- Games and activities that bridge students' gaps in foundational knowledge
- Logically sequenced learning activities to gradually build the knowledge and skills needed to master objectives
- Lesson starters that prompt students to make connections to prerequisite skills and concepts
- Posters and other classroom displays that students can reference when learning new material
- Student-created concept maps illustrating connections between new and previously taught material

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Introducing new content by making connections to students' prior knowledge
- Articulating how the current lesson fits into the larger learning goals of the unit
- Ensuring all lesson activities and resources are closely aligned to the lesson objectives
- Explaining how lesson objectives are preparing students for more challenging concepts that may be addressed later in the year or the next grade
- Offering different learning modalities that are focused on the same learning objective
- Connecting concepts to larger themes and helping students make cross-content connections
- Posing questions and writing prompts that encourage students to connect the current topic to previous lessons or other areas of study

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Articulating how current learning objectives relate to knowledge and skills that were taught in previous lessons/grades
- Providing feedback that they find the lessons clear and not confusing
- Applying previously learned concepts and skills when tackling new material

Rigor



Indicator

Teacher engages students in learning experiences that are designed to be academically rigorous so that students do work at all levels of cognitive complexity, developing deep understandings of key concepts while building critical thinking skills.

Exemplar

The teacher believes that all students are capable of performing at high levels and engaging with rigorous tasks when offered appropriate challenge and support. The teacher maximizes instructional time and implements learning experiences that require students to engage in thinking at all levels of cognitive complexity. The teacher provides opportunities for extension and challenge to all students and encourages them to attempt tasks at the edges of their comfort zone.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Question stems or sentence starters for students that align with different Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK) or Bloom's Taxonomy levels
- Projects that require students to evaluate and revise their thinking
- Posted learning objectives and "I can" statements that align to standards and reflect high expectations of all students

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Using frameworks like Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK) and Bloom's Taxonomy to ensure that lessons and units include tasks at all levels of cognitive complexity
- Asking open-ended questions and providing adequate wait time

- Approaching concepts from a variety of perspectives in order to challenge learners, help them make thoughtful connections, and engage them in critical thinking
- Providing students with opportunities to theorize and test assumptions
- Introducing tools and models that allow students with learning differences to engage with the material and demonstrate understanding in a variety of ways
- Encouraging students to complete challenge activities
- Using scaffolds to support learning including questioning to assess and advance student thinking and modeling the process of thinking through a cognitively complex problem
- Incorporating technology in ways that support high levels of cognitive complexity by allowing students to explain, apply, create, and make thinking visible

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Using rubrics to clarify what demonstrating mastery looks like
- Completing a range of tasks throughout a unit of study, including recalling information, reproducing procedures, interpreting, evaluating, reasoning, connecting, justifying, investigating, and creating
- Explaining how they were able to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information when approaching a complex problem or task
- Using evidence to justify a position or approach
- Applying what they have learned in novel situations

Relevance and Cultural Responsiveness



Indicator

Teacher helps students understand the relevance of subject matter by making meaningful connections to the real world and plans learning content with attention to students' cultural identities and prior experiences.

Exemplar

The teacher understands that students learn best when they are exposed to diverse voices and perspectives and make connections between their lives and the learning content. The teacher works to bridge students' lived experiences to classroom instruction by analyzing the curriculum for gaps and biases and supplementing it with a variety of culturally specific examples, applications, and texts, with particular attention paid to marginalized perspectives and histories. Students leverage higher-order thinking skills to engage in activities such as applying mathematical and scientific concepts to issues affecting their communities, critiquing texts, and discussing the validity of various perspectives on a topic.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Texts and media representing a diverse array of figures in the relevant field, such as authors, mathematicians, historians, and scientists
- Projects that require students to explore a social, political or environmental issue affecting their community by engaging in activities such as researching, analyzing data, and developing solutions

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Examining the curriculum to determine biases and weaknesses and working to infuse it with diverse cultural content
- Ensuring that content about ethnically diverse groups is accurate, thorough, nuanced, and acknowledges diversity within each group

- Introducing and exploring concepts such as oppression, privilege, and power to bring a new lens to the curriculum
- Building students' background knowledge before they engage with content from cultures other than their own to strengthen their capacity to understand and appreciate it
- Bringing media from popular culture into the curriculum, and prompting students to critically analyze how these materials represent different identities
- Providing students with texts representing multiple perspectives on history, literature, and media, and modeling how to identify biases
- Encouraging students to explain mathematical and scientific concepts in their own words as a bridge to explaining it in academic language

- Connecting mathematical concepts to activities, crafts, practices and games relevant to cultural groups represented in the class

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Critically analyzing the representation of ethnic diversity in literature, media, and historical texts
- Identifying connections between mathematical or scientific concepts and their own experiences
- Articulating more than one perspective on a given topic

Sharing Learning Expectations with Families



Indicator

Teacher shares learning standards and expectations with families along with resources for supporting student learning at home.

Exemplar

The teacher understands that families often look to the school for guidance on what their children should know and be able to do at each grade level. The teacher prioritizes helping families understand grade-level academic and social-emotional expectations and provides resources that families can use to support student learning at home. When assigning homework, the teacher is strategic in ensuring that it is purposeful and well-aligned to what is being covered in class. The teacher collaborates with others in the school to provide input into events such as curriculum nights, conferences, or workshops where families can gain insight into learning topics, standards, and expectations.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Emails, text messages, newsletters, or blog posts for families that communicate learning objectives and provide specific resources for supporting student learning at home
- Standards and college and career readiness criteria written in family-friendly language, available in translation when applicable
- Family-friendly playlists or links to online activities that support relevant content

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Sending families tips for how they can help to reinforce key concepts and skills at home
- Ensuring that class website or learning management system is up to date with homework assignments and resources families can access outside of school

- Examining homework assignments with a family lens, knowing that homework often provides families with a window into learning content
- Organizing engagement events, ideally student-led, to share learning content with families and practice strategies for reinforcement at home, and making resources from these events available on and offline for families that are unable to attend
- Collaborating with family engagement leaders at the schools (e.g., parent coordinators, family liaisons, PTA) to support school-wide efforts to help families understand learning standards
- Partnering with the guidance counselor or social worker to provide information about age appropriate social emotional and interpersonal skills
- Communicating with families about making modifications outlined in students' IEPs and helping parents understand their rights as needed

FAMILY BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Accessing home learning resources provided by the teacher and reaching out for clarification and elaboration as needed
- Participating in school events such as curriculum nights, conferences, and workshops
- Talking with their children about what they are learning in school and confirming that student work and accounts of learning appear to align to grade-level expectations and standards

Connecting to Family Context and Culture



Indicator

Teacher brings family and community voices and experiences into instruction, making connections to families' context, culture, and history.

Exemplar

The teacher values the communities their students come from and sees families as resources in strengthening the curriculum and increasing its relevance for students. The teacher therefore collaborates with families and community members when possible to incorporate projects and field trips related to local cultures, histories, and community issues. Families occasionally join class in person or virtually to share their experiences and expertise on subjects relevant to the curriculum.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Oral histories, memoirs and other student projects that connect students' home cultures and histories to curricular content

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Learning about families' backgrounds, interests, and areas of expertise to draw on throughout the year when planning instruction
- Reaching out to community leaders to learn about the connections between concepts and skills from the curriculum and local cultures and history
- Working with families and community leaders to plan local field trips to community events, museums, cultural centers, libraries, neighborhood landmarks, and sites of historical interest
- Asking families and community members to join the class as guest speakers to share their experiences and expertise on areas relevant to the curriculum
- Using digital tools to connect students to local authors, scientists, activists, elders, and other community members for support with and feedback on class projects

FAMILY BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Joining class as a guest speaker to share expertise on relevant topics
- Communicating with the teacher to share resources to supplement or enhance the curriculum



Data-Driven Decision Making

Formative Assessment



Indicator

Teacher gathers a broad range of data to inform decision-making using formative assessment tools and strategies.

Exemplar

The teacher collects quantitative and qualitative data to inform instructional decisions. Using formative assessment, the teacher continuously develops a holistic view of students' mastery of skills and concepts along with their learning needs and differences. Assessment tools and strategies are suitable for the intended learning objectives and provide students with a variety of opportunities to demonstrate their understanding.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Lesson starter activities that gauge student understanding of pre-requisite skills
- Tracking tools and checklists used to note student strengths and areas of need during a lesson
- Exit slips that assess student understanding of the day's lesson
- Reports generated by online games and activities
- Student-facing surveys and tools designed to understand student interests and motivations

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Establishing norms and routines for how and when formative assessment data will be collected

- Assessing prior knowledge by drawing out students' previous experience with the current topic
- Using a variety of questioning techniques to assess and advance student thinking
- Incorporating checks for understanding into lessons such as thumbs-up, thumbs-down that allow students to rate their understanding and readiness to advance
- Providing regular opportunities for students to explain their thinking and actions
- Taking notes during lessons as students interact with each other and demonstrate understanding or express misconceptions
- Engaging students in conversation before and after class and during transition times to learn more about their interests and motivations

- Designing activities that include opportunities to write about, speak about, and model concepts
- Making accommodations as required by student IEPs and as needed to remove barriers to meaningful data collection (e.g., graphic organizers, speech-to-text tools, extended time)

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Initiating self-assessment activities such as green-yellow-red cards to inform the teacher of the student's level of understanding
- Demonstrating comfort with engaging in a wide range of formative assessment modalities



Differentiation and Personalization

Indicator

Teacher analyzes formative assessment data to understand student learning differences, needs, and interests. Teacher uses the data to respond in real time, determine next instructional steps, and drive lesson planning.

Exemplar

The teacher views the data gathered from formative assessments as actionable information that can be used to best meet the needs of each student. The teacher reviews formative assessment data and anecdotal information to monitor student progress toward learning goals; identify student learning differences, strengths, and needs; and understand class trends. The teacher meets students' varying needs by reorganizing groupings, providing differentiated materials, and re-teaching material in a different way.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Student groupings and seating charts informed by data
- Differentiated materials for groups or individuals
- Individualized student goals and progress plans
- Scaffolded materials like graphic organizers, visuals, videos, or word banks that provide different entry points for students
- A system that enables teachers to analyze student progress over time

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Organizing and reviewing multiple sources of data, including data from online activities, exit tickets, and other formative assessments to identify students who have demonstrated understanding of a skill or concept and to look for class-wide trends

- Communicating to students the purpose of personalized and differentiated work in a positive way that emphasizes the goals of progress and mastery for all students
- Gradually releasing students to work independently on online activities or in collaborative groups once they have demonstrated understanding of a skill or concept
- Using real-time checks for understanding to form student groupings or assign specific activities
- Delivering tailored mini lessons for small groups of students
- Re-teaching challenging concepts in different ways, such as through use of manipulatives, demonstrations, or online tutorials
- Scaffolding tasks and instruction to provide different entry points for students
- Identifying next steps for individual students based on formative assessment data

- Leveraging technology to provide students with personalized or differentiated assignments
- Selecting students to share responses and questions with the group based on formative assessment data and observations of student comprehension
- Adjusting instructional plans to seize teachable moments
- Revising goals and progress plans periodically to reflect learnings from formative assessments

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Transitioning smoothly to personalized assignments and flexible groupings
- Demonstrating understanding that assignments and groupings change regularly based on data
- Articulating benefits of working on differentiated assignments and tasks



Actionable Feedback

Indicator

Teacher shares actionable data and feedback with individual students to help them improve and develop agency over their learning.

Exemplar

The teacher views sharing data and feedback with students as an essential component of student agency and makes it a priority to give feedback regularly through conferences and written comments. When giving feedback, the teacher is straightforward with students about where they stand in relation to the established success criteria and provides them with specific, actionable adjustments they can make. The teacher avoids sharing data publicly in ways that could demotivate students or reinforce negative stereotypes. Students can articulate areas for growth in their own words and take opportunities to apply feedback to their work. Students regularly access their own data and actively document their progress on learning goals over time.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Student-facing rubrics, checklists, and models that clearly define success criteria for tasks
- Comments embedded in student work that provide specific instructions for revision
- Logs that document the frequency and focus of conferences with students
- Assessment portfolios that include work samples, teacher feedback, and student reflections

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Clearly articulating where students are in relation to their learning goals and pre-established success criteria, and how they have grown over time
- Helping students see mistakes as an expected part of the learning process, and explaining that they are being held to high standards in order to help them grow

- Affirming students' ability to improve and providing them with emotional support when giving them critical feedback
- Focusing each student on one or two high-leverage areas for improvement, rather than correcting errors in isolation
- Offering specific praise and positive reinforcement in areas where students demonstrate strengths
- Ensuring that feedback is timely, precise, and provides specific ways for students to improve their work, rather than giving general advice
- Showing exemplars of strong responses to student tasks and facilitating reflections or discussions about the exemplars' strengths and areas of improvement
- Giving students time to go back and revise their work after receiving feedback
- Creating opportunities for students to reflect on their assessment data and track their progress

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Accessing their online gradebook and assessment portfolio regularly
- Creating graphs to visually represent their progress on learning goals over time
- Using real-time data to group themselves or select their next task
- Applying feedback from their teachers and peers to revise their work



Gathering Data from Families

Indicator

Teacher asks families to share information about their children’s learning and development, including their interests, relevant prior experiences at school and home, and the places, people, and tools that are most important to their learning.

Exemplar

The teacher knows that families have insight into how their children learn and what motivates them. The teacher seeks out input from families about their children’s home lives and prior experiences in school to better understand how to best meet each student’s needs. Using conferences, informal conversations, and paper and online tools, the teacher asks families what their children enjoy learning about, who they learn with, and how and where they access information outside of the classroom.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Surveys asking about the child’s interests and how they access information at home
- Notes from conferences and informal conversations with families about students’ learning interests and motivations

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Inviting families to share information about their children’s prior experiences at school, as well as how, where, and with whom their child learns outside of school

- Explaining to families how they will use this information to meet student needs
- Regularly checking in with families about how the child feels when completing homework and engaging in other home learning activities
- Using IEP and 504 plan meetings with families to gain information about what interests and motivates students
- Sharing topics and themes that will be explored in class and asking families about student interests that align with or compliment these topics
- Incorporating families’ input to tailor instructional content and delivery to student interests

FAMILY BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Sharing information with the teacher about their child
- Asking the teacher about adjustments and accommodations made based on the information shared with them
- Talking regularly to their child about their interests and learning



Sharing Data with Families

Indicator

Teacher regularly shares data with families about students' progress in meeting grade-level academic standards and demonstrating social-emotional competencies such as agency, collaboration, and communication.

Exemplar

The teacher keeps families informed of their children's data and progress throughout the school year, giving context about the curriculum and expected growth to help families make sense of the data. The teacher makes clear to families when grades reflect effort and participation and when they reflect academic growth and mastery. The teacher shares not only academic data but also information on students' demonstration of key social-emotional skills such as agency, collaboration, and communication. Families regularly access the teacher's online grade portal and communicate their questions and concerns about student progress with the teacher.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Online grade portal that is updated on a regular basis
- Informal updates on student progress shared with families between report cards
- Family-friendly documents showing student progress in relation to grade-level expectations
- Physical or digital student portfolios with a variety of student work samples shared with families
- Photos and videos to share examples of student learning and work from class, provided that anything shared publicly features only students with signed photo release forms

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Spending time at back-to-school nights and conferences showing families how to access online grade portals or learning management systems
- Using data and student work samples to show families how their children are progressing throughout the year relative to grade-level standards and expected growth
- Clearly communicating to families the extent to which student grades reflect completion of work and learning habits and the extent to which they capture progress toward mastery of grade-level skills and content
- Connecting with families to discuss student progress on important social-emotional skills such as agency, collaboration, and communication
- Providing guidance for families around how to talk to students about their grades and progress

FAMILY BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Regularly accessing online grade portals, portfolios, and other tools for monitoring student data and progress
- Communicating questions and concerns about their child's academic, social and emotional growth and progress with the teacher throughout the school year
- Discussing their child's progress towards mastery of grade level skills and content with the child on a regular basis



Student Agency



Goal Setting and Reflection

Indicator

Teacher shows students how to reflect on their learning process and their areas of strength and need. Teacher supports students to set individual goals and monitor progress towards achieving them.

Exemplar

The teacher models the metacognitive process of setting goals, identifying learning strategies, monitoring progress, and modifying strategies as needed to reach the goals. As students learn to reflect on and evaluate their own areas of strength and need, they set a series of achievable goals for themselves that culminate in meeting the learning standards. The teacher empowers students to improve their work and extend their learning to higher skills and concepts.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Tools that enable students to track their own progress through the course of the lesson, across lessons, or toward mastering objectives presented in online tools
- Goal sheets, learning contracts, or online goal tools in which students articulate their goals related to the learning standards
- Knowledge surveys or exit tickets that ask students to reflect on their current understanding of a topic and where they need additional support
- Student trackers or journals in which students document their study habits, engagement and success with various activities, and plans to improve

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Being explicit with students about the importance of metacognition, or “driving their brains” and learning how to become better learners

- Clearly communicating expected learning outcomes for students
- Setting specific learning goals with students, and helping them break down larger goals into achievable steps
- Allowing students to take ownership over their work towards learning goals while engaging them in dialogue to provide resources, feedback, and encouragement
- Incorporating opportunities for students to choose from different learning activities that address their needs
- Highlighting features within digital tools that help students track their progress
- Modeling the cognitive process of determining one’s own strengths and needs
- “Thinking aloud” about how to approach a difficult problem
- Prompting students to explain their learning strategies as part of assignments

- Facilitating conversation and prompting students to articulate how and what they’ve learned from mistakes

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Setting goals, breaking them down into steps, and reflecting on progress
- Using “I can” statements to unpack and explain their learning goals in their own words
- Clearly articulating how each learning activity they are engaged in supports their learning goals
- Being able to talk about themselves as learners and discuss their strategies for when they get stuck
- Recognizing foundational skill gaps that are barriers to accessing on-level content
- Pursuing self-remediation and extended learning opportunities aligned to their learning goals and that help close specific foundational skills gaps as needed



Student-Driven Learning

Indicator

Teacher fosters students' enthusiasm and curiosity, encouraging students to explore content beyond the assignment to extend their learning. Teacher gives students opportunities to provide input into decisions about what and how they learn.

Exemplar

The teacher wants all students to become independent learners while recognizing that students need support to develop the skills to make decisions about their learning that will keep them in their zone of proximal development. The teacher provides support to help students make those decisions and prompts them to explore possible connections between and pose their own questions about learning topics. The teacher allows students to choose how they will showcase their learning.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Learning menus or choice boards
- Classroom library that allows students to select their own books on topics of interest
- Student-created anchor charts and video tutorials

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Hooking students with a real-world application that connects to lesson content and fuels curiosity
- Engaging students in discussions about making connections to other topics
- Reserving time for "genius hour" or student-led inquiry time

- Developing students' ability to identify relevant external resources and use them to pose or solve problems and/or to explore and deepen their understanding of concepts
- Giving students time to research and explore subject areas that are related to the topic being taught and are of interest to the student
- Making space for students to express their opinions and experiment with their own solutions to problems
- Planning lessons that include creative projects and theme- or project-based learning

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Demonstrating understanding in a variety of ways including oral, written, and multi-media presentations
- Incorporating their own talents, interests, and cultural points of reference into projects and assignments when applicable
- Seeking additional resources about topics of interest from the classroom library or elsewhere



Peer Collaboration

Indicator

Teacher promotes peer collaboration and cooperation, including opportunities for students to teach each other.

Exemplar

The teacher recognizes that learning happens in community and creates the structures and conditions in which students are encouraged to work with, support, and provide feedback to their peers. The teacher incorporates cooperative learning games and group assignments into instruction, and models productive participation in group activities. Students regularly teach and learn from one another.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Group projects or presentations
- Anchor charts to guide groupwork
- Feedback written by students on the work of others
- Self-reflection rubrics for participation in collaborative activities

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Facilitating activities to build trust and rapport between students
- Establishing and practicing roles for effective collaborative work
- Setting up norms for group work, including providing students with specific roles and responsibilities that rotate across projects

- Encouraging students to share their strategies and thinking with each other
- Modeling how to provide constructive feedback to peers
- Strategically grouping students for collaborative activities to ensure a balance of different learning and working styles
- Encouraging students to pose questions to their peers before asking the teacher
- Using digital tools to allow students to collaborate asynchronously with peers and provide feedback on one another's work
- Planning activities where students prepare to teach their peers

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Proactively seeking opportunities to work in small groups or partnerships with peers
- Engaging in effective peer dialogue that is focused on questioning and suggesting areas for improvement
- Evaluating the work of their peers against the learning objectives, a rubric, scoring criteria, or model example
- Explaining or teaching concepts to their peers in pairs, small groups, or to the whole class



Learning Conversations

Indicator

Teacher provides opportunities and resources for peer discussion around learning content to help students process and apply new information while developing strong speaking and listening skills.

Exemplar

The teacher makes speaking and conversation an integral part of the curriculum and uses discussion as a tool for engaging students, helping them process and apply new concepts and information, and developing their critical thinking skills. The teacher establishes expectations for respectful academic discourse and scaffolds student conversations through modeling, structured interaction activities, and tools such as graphic organizers and sentence frames. Students pose questions to one another and the teacher and build on each other's ideas using content vocabulary. Students apply their communication skills to a variety of situations, from small discussions to group presentations and debates.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Desks organized in pairs or small groups to facilitate conversation
- Sentence frames for academic discourse on student desks or anchor charts
- Clearly organized word wall with key vocabulary and concepts from the current unit
- Graphic organizers or manipulatives to spark conversations and help students organize ideas
- Charts displaying a variety of discussion protocols
- Rubrics or checklists with guidelines for presenting to a group

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Co-creating norms for academic discourse with students, and reinforcing those norms regularly
- Prompting students to turn and talk to each other about a concept or skill during a lesson

- Modeling conversation moves such as building off the ideas of others, asking for clarification, disagreeing respectfully, and supporting claims with reasoning and evidence
- Pointing out students' use of academic discourse moves and content vocabulary
- Validating and supporting students' use of their dialects, speech patterns, and cultural ways of communicating
- Planning thought-provoking discussion tasks that engage students in critical and creative thinking
- Scaffolding student discussion by providing time for students to organize their thoughts in writing
- Using protocols to ensure active and equitable participation
- Incorporating movement into student discussions through activities such as concentric circles or four corners
- Giving students opportunities to practice speaking and presenting to groups of their peers

- Encouraging students to engage in debate and articulate arguments

STUDENT BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Demonstrating non-verbal listening skills such as eye contact and nodding
- Building on, responding to, and challenging each other's ideas
- Using vocabulary words in context
- Describing their thought process or problem-solving steps to their peers
- Demonstrating comfort speaking in front of peers

Goal-Setting with Families



Indicator

Teacher enlists families as partners to help students set ambitious goals, reflect on their learning, and monitor progress.

Exemplar

The teacher establishes a shared vision with students' families for the academic, social, and emotional growth and success of their children. This includes meeting ambitious academic goals aligned to grade-level standards and engaging in positive behaviors to support learning. The teacher encourages families and students to talk regularly with each other about students' goals and plans to achieve them, and shows families how to help students reflect on their learning strategies and progress in order to improve.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Goal sheets, learning contracts, or online goal tools that are shared with families and outline a role for families in supporting each goal
- Student-led conferences where students articulate their own areas of strength and need and demonstrate their progress to their families
- Conversation starters sent home to support discussions where students reflect on themselves as learners and identify strategies for improvement

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Asking families about their expectations for their children's academic and social-emotional growth and communicating their own high expectations for each student
- Encouraging families to reflect on goals they have set and achieved in their own lives to motivate and relate to their children
- Assigning students to share their work regularly with families and to discuss their successes, challenges, plans for improvement, and ideas about how their family can support them
- Explicitly sharing with families the importance of metacognition, or having students "drive their brains" and learn how to become better learners
- Providing tools and templates that students and families can access at home to identify and discuss different learning strategies

FAMILY BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Having regular conversations with their children at home about their goals, progress, and strategies for improvement
- Helping students practice skills they have identified as focus areas, and generally serving as supporters and accountability partners as students work toward their learning goals
- Asking their children to talk about their learning strategies and helping them identify resources to use when they get stuck
- Celebrating with their children when they make progress toward learning goals or employ a new learning strategy

Extending Learning Beyond the Classroom



Indicator

Teacher gives families ways to encourage students to continue learning beyond the school day by exploring interests, pursuing passion projects, and finding the answers to questions.

Exemplar

The teacher knows that learning is not confined to school hours and helps families foster curiosity and access learning opportunities beyond the classroom. This includes regularly sharing concepts students are learning in class and suggesting extensions and related concepts that families can explore together. The teacher invites families to share topics of interest to their child and helps them identify resources for gathering more information.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Links to optional resources for continued learning and exploration available online
- Newsletter or online blog that includes ideas for extending learning home
- Classroom library with reading materials, games, experiment kits and other resources that students can take home to explore their interests

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Communicating frequently to families about classroom learning and suggesting related topics for home exploration
- Soliciting input from families about topics of interest to their child and brainstorming together around ways to support their child in exploring those topics further
- Recommending specific resources for extending learning such as books from the classroom library and online resources
- Encouraging families to support their child's participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities and clubs such as robotics, art, or newspaper
- Inviting families to attend student showcases held during and outside of school hours
- Being aware of and connecting families to opportunities to visit and explore educational and cultural institutions in their community

FAMILY BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Sharing topics of interest to their child with the teacher
- Engaging their child in discussion about what they enjoy about school and what they are interested in learning
- Asking questions that encourage their child to connect classroom learning to the real world
- Seeking print and online resources to extend learning beyond the school day
- Visiting libraries, museums, and historical sites in the community with their child

Learning Conversations at Home



Indicator

Teacher creates opportunities for students to deepen understanding of academic content and strengthen communication skills by leading learning activities and discussions at home with their families.

Exemplar

The teacher encourages students and families to engage in academic discussions beyond the school day by providing prompts to continue learning conversations at home, with students taking the lead wherever possible. During class the teacher models and has students model what learning conversations at home might sound like, including teaching academic concepts to someone at home. Families talk regularly with students about their learning, ask probing questions to push their thinking, and feel comfortable sharing feedback about home learning conversations with the teacher.

Evidence could include:

ARTIFACTS SUCH AS:

- Interactive homework assignments that require students to teach a family partner about what they are learning in school
- Sentence frames for academic discourse shared with families
- Fliers, newsletters, class websites, or messages that include prompts for families to engage in home learning conversations about specific concepts and themes from class

TEACHER BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Replacing or supplementing traditional homework assignments with learning conversations or simple, hands on activities that students and families can discuss together
- Modeling and having students model how to explain a concept from class to a family member
- Leveraging communication systems (including digital apps, websites, newsletters) to ensure that families receive resources to engage in learning conversations at home
- Reassuring families that they do not need to be content experts in order to engage in learning conversations with students
- Encouraging families to ask their children to take the lead and share what they know
- Asking families for feedback based on their conversations with students

- Expressing appreciation and encouragement to families that are engaging their child in learning conversations outside of school

FAMILY BEHAVIORS SUCH AS:

- Prompting learning conversations with their child during dinner, while walking to school, at bedtime, or during other times they are already spending together
- Adopting a supportive role and encouraging their child to take the lead in teaching them about what they are learning in school
- Using probing questions to prompt students to explain their problem-solving steps or areas of confusion when supporting with homework
- Sending teachers feedback based on learning conversations with their child



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