



UTAH EFFECTIVE TEACHING STANDARDS

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Utah Effective Teaching Standards



Utah State Board of Education

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Introduction

The Utah Effective Teaching Standards describe the knowledge, skills and dispositions that are the hallmark of effective instruction. The standards reflect Utah's commitment to learner-centered educational experiences. Utah's vision for public education is that upon completion, all Utah students are prepared to succeed and lead by having the knowledge and skills to learn, engage civically and lead meaningful lives. This vision is more explicitly outlined in Utah's Portrait of a Graduate, which identifies the ideal characteristics of a Utah graduate upon exiting the K-12 system.

Using Utah's Portrait of a Graduate as a north star, working group members sought to articulate critical elements of effective teaching within five areas: Learners and Learning, Instructional Design Clarity, Instructional Practice, Classroom Climate and Professional Responsibility.

Rather than providing checklists of educator behaviors, the elements within each standard broadly describe essential aspects of effective teaching. Providing personalized learning experiences for students requires appreciating the importance of individual school and district contexts in learning and teaching. Consequently, the standards and accompanying elements are intentionally crafted to provide a unifying structure for effective teaching while providing enough flexibility for schools and districts to address their own contexts within each standard and element.

The Utah Effective Teaching Standards provide one lens for assessing teacher effectiveness. However, it is important to note that these standards are intended to highlight practices associated with effective *teaching*, rather than to be used to *label* individual teachers as effective or ineffective. While the Utah Effective Teaching Standards should inform educator evaluation practices, caution should be exercised in using the standards or elements as isolated measures of teacher effectiveness. When used to highlight areas of strength and support ongoing educator growth, the standards provide opportunities for developing and facilitating quality professional learning, improved instruction and positive learning outcomes.

Standard 1: Learners and Learning

Effective teachers demonstrate attention to the impact of unique learner characteristics on development and growth by:

Element 1: Personalizing Learning

Designing learning that builds on background knowledge while providing opportunities for each student to access, practice and refine new learning.

Element 2: Building Relationships

Building positive and authentic relationships with students as learning partners and supporting students in developing similar relationships with each other.

Element 3: Respecting Learner Backgrounds and Perspectives

Demonstrating respect for each learner and exhibiting actions consistent with recognizing learners' diverse backgrounds and perspectives as assets to the classroom community.

Element 4: Fostering Student Self-Awareness

Providing formative and timely feedback to guide students in self-assessment of learning and demonstration of competency to support students in understanding themselves as learners.

Standard 2

Standard 2: Instructional Design Clarity

Effective teachers preview classroom content, demonstrate clarity in how they organize and sequence instruction and effectively plan for learning and student engagement by:

Element 1: Content

Demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of Utah Core Standards, communicating relevance of content, communicating clear pathways to student mastery and designing learning experiences aligned to clear learning intentions and success criteria.

Element 2: Learning Progression

Demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of where students have been, where they are now and where they are going using strategically sequenced learning experiences aligned within and across grade levels.

Element 3: Instructional Planning

Planning high quality, personalized instructional activities that are informed by student progress data, provide multiple opportunities for students to reflect upon and assess their own growth and allow multiple opportunities and means for demonstration of competency.

Element 4: Engagement

Designing lessons and activities that actively engage students in their learning and use a variety of effective tools and strategies.

Standard 3

Standard 3: Instructional Practice

Effective teachers engage in high quality instructional practices that are data-informed, exhibit a collaborative approach to teaching and learning and meet the learning needs of each student by:

Element 1: Instructional Strategies

Using appropriate academic language and evidence-based strategies to stimulate higher-level thinking, discourse and problem solving and to scaffold learning experiences to meet the needs of all students.

Element 2: Assessment Practices

Critically analyzing evidence from both formative and summative assessments to inform and adjust instruction and provide feedback to students to support learning and growth.

Element 3: Relevance

Providing relevant learning opportunities that value students' interests and backgrounds and allow learner agency and choice in accessing learning and demonstrating competency.

Element 4: Innovation and Technology

Intentionally selecting the use of technological and non-technological tools to enhance and deepen student learning, encourage creativity and innovation in learning and facilitate students' appropriate use of available tools and resources to achieve desired student outcomes.

Standard 4

Standard 4: Classroom Climate

Effective teachers create academic, physical, social, and emotional conditions, with emphasis on academic performance by:

Element 1: Respectful Learning Environment

Modeling and fostering respectful communication with students while appreciating differences of opinion and facilitating respectful classroom discussion.

Element 2: Classroom Safety

Involving students in establishing clear guidelines for behavior that support a developmentally appropriate and safe learning environment while consistently following through with clear expectations, procedures, norms and protocols.

Element 3: Classroom Organization

Strategically organizing and structuring the physical classroom environment for optimal student learning.

Element 4: Growth-Oriented Classroom Climate

Cultivating a classroom culture that encourages rigorous learning, perseverance and promotes critical thinking.

Standard 5

Standard 5: Professional Responsibility

Effective teachers demonstrate an awareness of and adherence to professional and ethical standards within their school and with families and communities by:

Element 1: Adherence to Laws, Rules and Policies

Maintaining a current educator license and adhering to relevant laws, rules and policies impacting educators.

Element 2: Continuous Professional Learning

Engaging in and valuing constructive feedback, reflective practices, professional learning and collaborative activities that support professional, instructional and schoolwide improvement.

Element 3: Communication

Using effective and responsible communication with students, families and colleagues about student learning.

Element 4: Professional and Ethical Conduct

Treating all with respect and maintaining professional and ethical conduct with students, families and colleagues.



Glossary

Academic Language: Language, tied to specific subject area disciplines, that captures the complex ideas, higher-order thinking processes and abstract concepts of the discipline. It is the language used in classrooms, textbooks and formal presentations in a subject area and differs in structure and vocabulary from everyday spoken English.

Assessment: The productive process of monitoring, measuring, evaluating, documenting, reflecting on and adjusting instruction to ensure students reach high levels of learning. Assessment systems include both formative and summative assessment processes aligned with instructional and curricular goals and objectives.

Collaboration: A style of interaction between individuals engaged in shared decision making as they work toward a common goal.

Developmentally Appropriate: An activity that is generally accepted as suitable for a child of the same age or level of maturity, based on the development of cognitive, emotional, physical and behavioral capacity that is typical of the child's age or age group.

Evidence-Based Strategies: Strategies that:

- (a) demonstrate a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study; moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or promising evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; or
- (b) demonstrate a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such a strategy is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes and includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such a strategy.

Formative Assessment: A planned, ongoing process used by all students and teachers during learning and teaching to elicit and use evidence of student learning to give teachers and students the opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses with specific knowledge, skills and abilities outlined in the Utah Core Standards.

Knowledge: The required cognitive and pedagogical knowledge of theory and practice for creating effective teaching and learning environments.

Learning Environment: Refers to the physical, developmental and emotional conditions for learning in classrooms.

Professional Learning: Ongoing, job-embedded learning that supports transfer of newly acquired knowledge and skills to practice.

Student Centered: Referring to instructional methods that recognize students as active participants in learning by attending to their interests and abilities while providing opportunities for them to access, represent and demonstrate their learning.

Summative Assessment: Assessment with a goal of evaluating student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing results to some standard or benchmark.

Utah Core Standards: Standards outlining the essential knowledge, concepts and skills to be mastered at each grade level within a critical content area.

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