

Equitable Classroom Practices

Equitable Classroom Practices is a companion tool to the Expectations: Effort-based Intelligence element of the *Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning*. This document elaborates on the qualities of each look-for by describing the specific, observable teacher behaviors that communicate high expectations to students. The document is a catalyst for reflection and discussion about how educators may unconsciously interact with students from different racial, ethnic, socio-economic, gender, language, and disability groups in ways that have a tangible consequence on student achievement.

The research on teacher expectations has a long history beginning with the work of R.K. Merton in 1948 and continuing with Rosenthal and Jacobson in the 1960's, Brophy and Good in the 1980's, and Ferguson in the 1990's. These researchers and others have identified factors that may lead to lower teacher expectation for some students. These factors include race, ethnicity, socio-economics, gender, appearance, and oral language patterns. It is important to note that teacher expectations based on these factors are unconscious and unintentional. No one intends to negatively affect students' achievement, but decades of research confirms that differential treatment based on expectations promotes the academic success of perceived high-achieving students and inhibits the learning of perceived low-achieving students. Research indicates that perceived low-achieving students are:

- Given less wait time
- Less likely to be asked to respond in class
- Asked fewer higher order questions
- Given fewer opportunities to learn new material
- Less likely to be given opportunities to improve their answers
- Less likely to receive feedback on public responses
- Given briefer and less informative feedback
- Given more frequent criticism

Over time, these experiences not only hinder learning, but also negatively affect students' attitudes and motivation, resulting in self-fulfilling prophecies. Clearly, every teacher must consciously and consistently demonstrate these specific, observable, and measurable behaviors to all students regardless of their current academic performance if we are to eliminate the achievement gap. Our challenge is to be ever vigilant in ensuring that students from all racial, ethnic, socio-economic, language, and disability groups receive the same consistent messages of high expectations.

The equitable classroom practices described in this document are also aligned with the standards in the Teachers Professional Growth System (PGS). Evidence and examples of equitable classroom practices are described as well as the contrasting practices that can perpetuate inequities in student achievement. Like the PGS, the equitable classroom practices are research-based, and the examples represent the best practices for communicating high expectations to students.

Equitable Classroom Practices is not an all-inclusive description of best instructional practice. The teacher behaviors and practices here attached reflect the research for communicating high expectations to all students.

Equitable Classroom Practices

| Evidence of Equitable Classroom Practices | Evidence of Inequitable Classroom Practices |
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| 1. Welcomes students by name as they enter the classroom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correctly pronounces students' names | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not greet students at the door • Mispronounces students' name • Acknowledges only high performing students and/or behaviorally compliant students |
| 2. Uses eye contact with high- and low-achieving students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not make eye contact with all students |
| 3. Uses proximity with high- and low-achieving students equitably | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remains in the same area or part of the room |
| 4. Uses body language, gestures, and expressions to convey a message that all students' questions and opinions are important <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smiles • Nods head in affirmation • Leans toward the student | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses non-verbal behavior to convey negative messages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolls eyes • Turns away from student • Frowns • Does not use non-verbal cues to validate students' questions and opinions • Uses body language, facial expressions or voice tone not congruent with the verbal message |
| 5. Arranges the classroom to accommodate discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher to student • Student(s) to student(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps classroom arrangement stable regardless of the instructional activity • Structures all activities from teacher to students |
| 6. Ensures bulletin boards, displays, instructional materials, and other visuals in the classroom reflect the racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds represented by students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays materials that do not reflect students' cultural backgrounds |
| 7. Uses a variety of visual aids and props to support student learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaches without use of visual aids or props |
| 8. Learns, uses, displays, some words in students' heritage languages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes no attempt to use or display words in students' heritage language |
| 9. Models use of graphic organizers, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venn diagram • Anticipation guide • Flow chart • Concept ladder | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not teach or model use of graphic organizers • Uses the same graphic organizer without assisting students to transfer to new organizers and content |

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| 10. Uses class building and team building activities to promote peer support for academic achievement, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncommon commonalities • Round-the-clock buddies • Four corners • Line-up • People searches or treasure hunts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows students to self-segregate • Does not structure academic interactions between students |
| 11. Uses random response strategies, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbered heads • Color-coded cards • Equity sticks/calling sticks/calling cards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls only on students who raise their hands • Calls only on perceived high-achieving students • Uses round robin methods for student responses • Calls on students as a consequence for inattention |
| 12. Uses cooperative learning structures, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think-Pair-Share • Teammates consult • Jigsaw • Pairs check • Partner A and B • Boggle • Last word | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses only teacher-directed instruction • Does not structure opportunities for students to learn together |
| 13. Structures heterogeneous and cooperative groups for learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structures only homogeneous groups • Fails to provide structure for small group learning |
| 14. Uses probing and clarifying techniques to assist students to answer, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restates the question • Breaks down the question into smaller ones • Asks a related question • Gives the student a hint, clue, or prompt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepts answers without providing opportunities for students to explain their thinking • Moves to another student when there is no response or an incorrect response • Fails to assist students' answers to respond |
| 15. Acknowledges all students' comments, responses, questions, and contribution by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affirming • Correcting • Probing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignores students' comments, responses and questions • Responds more readily to high performing students |
| 16. Seeks multiple perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "That's one idea. Does anyone else have another?" • "That was one way to solve the problem. Who did it another way?" | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validates only one perspective and/or response • Does not acknowledge a variety of strategies to solve problems • Implies one correct response or perspective to open-ended questions |

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| <p>17. Uses multiple approaches to consistently monitor students' understanding of instruction, directions, procedures, processes, questions, and content, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thumbs up • Unison response • One question quiz • Envelope please | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaches without pausing to check for understanding • Uses a single approach to check for understanding • Does not use a strategy for checking understanding throughout instruction • Uses only self-assessment tools to check for understanding |
| <p>18. Identifies students' current knowledge before instruction, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word splash • K-W-L • "What do you think when you hear the word ____?" • Evidence of pre-assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaches prior to pre-assessing student knowledge • Teaches without activating students' prior knowledge |
| <p>19. Uses students' real life experiences to connect school learning to students' lives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks students to reflect upon and discuss the following questions at the start and throughout a unit of study • "What events or situations occur in your family or neighborhood that require some knowledge of ____?" • How does knowing about ____ benefit your interactions in your family, neighborhood, or school?" • How does not knowing about ____ impede your interactions in your family, neighborhood, or school?" | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses examples or illustrations not reflective of students' lives to teach curriculum • Relies primarily on teacher-generated statements of curricular relevance • Does not ask students to make curricular connections to their own lives |
| <p>20. Uses Wait Time 1 and 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Wait Time 1</u>: Teacher silently waits at least 3-5 seconds for a student's response after posing a question • <u>Wait Time 2</u>: Teacher silently pauses at least 3 seconds to consider the student's response before affirming, correcting, or probing • Pauses silently following a student's response to allow other students to consider their reactions, responses and extensions • Structures silent think time before expecting students to respond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to provide silent think time to individuals or the class • Comments immediately following a student's response • Answers own questions • Rephrases a question immediately after asking • Does not allow students to respond to each others' answers or comments • Asks more than one question before stopping to allow students to respond |

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| <p>21. Asks students for feedback on the effectiveness of instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks students to indicate the learning activities that are effective in helping them to learn • Uses the plus/delta quality tool to discern what instructional practices help students learn • Uses interviews, surveys, and questionnaires to gather feedback from students • Uses exit cards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to ask students for feedback on the effectiveness of instruction • Does not use student feedback to reteach |
| <p>22. Provides students with the criteria and standards for successful task completion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluates student work by providing performance criteria (i.e. rubrics, exemplars, anchor papers) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to provide students with models of excellence • Does not develop rubrics with students |
| <p>23. Gives students effective, specific oral and written feedback that prompts improved performance</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not provide feedback needed by students to improve their work |
| <p>24. Provides multiple opportunities to use effective feedback to revise and resubmit work for evaluation against the standard</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refuses to accept work for re-evaluation purposes • Provides feedback without opportunities to revise and resubmit work |
| <p>25. Models positive self-talk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses think-aloud • Consistently gives students four key messages • Shares stories of overcoming obstacles through effort • Recognizes students' use of effective effort | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to use encouraging language with students • Posts the four key messages but does not refer to them • Does not provide time for students to reflect upon and share effective use of effort |
| <p>26. Asks higher-order questions equitably of high- and low-achieving students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis questions • Synthesis questions • Evaluation questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks higher-order questions to those perceived as high-achievers only |
| <p>27. Provides individual help to high- and low-achieving students</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists only higher-achieving students with independent work |

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Bibliography

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