

Standard II **Element C**

LEVEL 3 PRACTICES

THE TEACHER:

6 *Initiates collaboration with colleagues to better understand and respond to student learning needs.*

The opportunity to learn from others' experiences and expertise deepens one's knowledge and strengthens the effectiveness of classroom instruction. Learning is a social endeavor. Just as students need opportunities to interact and learn from their peers, teachers need to engage in collaboration that is solution-oriented and improves the quality of lessons for all students.

Planning can be done in many ways, but the most powerful is when teachers work together to develop plans, develop common understandings of what is worth teaching, collaborate on understanding their beliefs of challenge and progress, and work together to evaluate the impact of their planning on student outcomes. One of the major messages from *Visible Learning* is the power of teachers learning from and talking to each other about planning. (Hattie, 2012, p. 41)

Collaboration does not happen automatically. Schools must create an environment in which teachers and leaders can feel safe to take risks, ask questions, and accept feedback from peers. Effective norms and protocols for collaboration can help maximize the time teachers are together and ensure teachers are equipped to find solutions that will result in achievement for all students.

According to Langer & Colton (2005), "These skills help teachers and organizations move beyond a 'culture of polite conversation' to deep analysis of teacher and learning." (p. 26)

See also [Standard III, Element A.](#)

Refer to this external resource for additional information:

- Article: "The Benefits of Teacher Collaboration" by Carla Thomas McClure
<http://www.districtadministration.com/article/benefits-teacher-collaboration>
Article examines the impact of teacher collaboration on student achievement.

7 *Provides opportunities and support for students to self-select tasks that accelerate progress toward their learning goals.*

According to Vatterott (2009), "When we customize tasks to fit student learning styles and interests, the task becomes theirs, not ours. The goal of ownership is to create a personal relationship between the student and the content."

Giving students choices is as much a fundamental principle of good teaching as it is a specific intrapersonal teaching strategy. Essentially, choice... consists of building in opportunities for students to make decisions about their learning experiences. Making choices is like lifting weights. The more frequently students choose from a group of options, the thicker their responsibility muscles become. (Armstrong, 2009, p. 92)

Examples of sentence starters to use when presenting students with choices:

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- “You may choose to work on _____ or _____.” (small and limited)
- “Select the kind of project you would like to do.” (significant and open ended)
- “Decide which topic you would like to explore.” (choices related to content)
- “Choose from this list a method for...” (choices related to process)
- “Okay, would you rather stop now or continue talking about this?” (informal and spur-of-the-moment). (Armstrong, 2009, p. 92)

Accelerated progress towards learning goals occurs when students are allowed to learn in their preferred style and in a manner that challenges their thinking and promotes the acquisition of knowledge.

Factors that help students accelerate progress towards their learning goals:

- *Positive Learning Environment:* Students learn best in a positive physical, emotional, and social environment, one that promotes safety and risk-taking and values individual differences.
- *Engagement:* Students need to be actively involved in the learning process and take responsibility for their own learning. Knowledge is not something students can passively absorb.
- *Collaboration:* Students need opportunities to share their thinking with others. Learning is a shared experience that involves peer collaboration and communication in which students learn from one another.
- *Choices:* Students are more motivated to learn when they have a variety of materials and tasks from which to choose based on their interests, learning preferences, and academic needs.

8 ***Integrates coping skills such as self-reflection, self-regulation and persistence into instruction.***

Self-advocacy refers to: an individual's ability to effectively communicate, convey, negotiate or assert his/her own interests and/or desires.

“Self-determined people know what they want and use their self-advocacy skills to get it. From an awareness of personal needs, self-determined individuals choose goals and then doggedly pursue them. This involves asserting their presence, making their needs known, evaluating progress toward meeting their goals, adjusting their performance, and creating unique approaches to solve problems (Martin, Huber Marshall, & Maxson, 1993).”

- *Career exploration activities*
- *Job shadow*
- *Interview adults in a particular line of work*
- *Establish goals*
- *School and work based learning*
- *Creation of an ICAP*
- *Learning how to request resources in order to complete a goal*

Refer to this external resource for additional information:

- Article: “Self-Determination and Career Development: Skills for Successful Transitions to Postsecondary Education and Employment” by Margo Izzo
[http://www.rrtc.hawaii.edu/documents/products/phase2/pdf/062d\(1\)-H01.pdf](http://www.rrtc.hawaii.edu/documents/products/phase2/pdf/062d(1)-H01.pdf)

Article examines the impact of teaching self-advocacy skills to students

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Planning/Coaching Questions

- What is the best way to obtain information on my students' needs?
- How have you adapted the physical environment to support individual student needs?
- How do you plan instruction that addresses the learning needs of all students?
- How do you apply the knowledge of specialists and colleagues to plan instruction that addresses student needs?
- How have you obtained information on my students' interests?
- How do you utilize students' interests when planning lessons and materials students will utilize?
- How do you ensure all students participate in class activities?
- How did you plan instruction and tasks that provided choices to motivate students to participate?
- How do you encourage students to self-advocate?

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