

An Introduction to the 2013-2014 Citywide Instructional Expectations

Hello my name is Josh Thomases. I'm the Deputy Chief Academic Officer at the New York City Department of Education and I'm here today to talk to you about the 2013-2014 Citywide Instructional Expectations. The Citywide Expectations incorporate our work on the Common Core and the new teacher evaluation system, the work in ensuring this is for all students including those with disabilities and English language learners, as well as our work around the college and career readiness benchmarks in our special education reform. At its heart, the Citywide Expectations are about pedagogy, about shifting our teaching practice to ensure our students have the skills and abilities they need to fully participate in America of the 21st century.

There are three key aspects to the 2013-2014 Citywide Instructional Expectations. The first is a set of work you need to do over the next several months to prepare. One aspect of this is around curriculum and ensuring that in each classroom there is curricula aligned to standards. For pre K to 9 in English language arts and mathematics, it is important to ensure that your students have access to a curriculum fully aligned to the Common Core standards. In all other areas the curricula needs to align to the appropriate content standards and integrate the Common Core standards where appropriate in reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematics.

The second part of preparing is to ensure that you and your faculty are fully trained and prepared for the new teacher evaluation system. At its heart, the preparation is making sure that on both the teacher evaluation system and the work around the Common Core, that you've organized that work around the needs and strengths of your school community. That's where it matters.

The second component of the Citywide Expectations is around the work that will happen next year. The implementation is about what happens in the classroom-- the kind of instruction students experience, the shifts in teaching practice the teachers take on, and the resulting changes in the kind of student work that gets developed, that the work of principals and administrators needs to be to get into classrooms and assist teachers in changing their teaching practice by giving them meaningful feedback on their work, on a regular and ongoing basis-- that at its heart, implementation is about rigorous instruction and we should see that in the classroom.

The final component of the Citywide Instructional Expectations is assessment. Assessment is about the systems for monitoring and revising the instructional plan that you've set out as a school community.

This work is hard and you'll need to check on a regular basis for how your students are doing, for how your faculty is doing, and you're going to need to change, whether that's shifting a curricular approach, providing additional supports for students, providing additional supports for teachers. That system for

monitoring and revising, for checking for how we're doing, for where we're achieving what we wanted to and for where we need to adjust it to better meet the needs of our school community, is absolutely critical part of the Citywide Instructional Expectations.

And a final critical part of this assessment work is ongoing feedback and communication with families.

They need to be brought into this conversation. They need to be aware of the changes that you're making in the classrooms and the implications for the work their children are doing. Many of you may recognize that the Citywide Expectations describe aspects of a Well Developed school as reflected in our New York City quality review. This is on purpose, because ultimately that's our goal for all of our schools. In the coming months the New York City Department of Education will be providing a set of supports for you.

There will be training around the new curriculum and the implementation of a Common Core aligned curriculum. There will be supports around all aspects of the new teacher and principal evaluation systems and there will be additional professional development supports that you can find online. These will be available to you, but it remains the responsibility of a school community to integrate those in useful ways, to utilize the training and support for the purposes that you've articulated within your school, to take on the changes that you see need to happen for your students, for your faculty and for your school community.

I want to thank you for the extraordinary work you've done to get here. You've done well. We've done well. Many more of our students are better prepared than they were just a few short years ago. This is hard work. We have set a goal of getting all of our students, including our students with disabilities and English language learners, college and career ready. We know how challenging this is each and every time a student doesn't complete a task or fails a project or a test, but this is the work we signed up for as educators. It's the concept behind the Citywide Instructional Expectations: to shift our practice, to build our students' strengths, to make the improvements necessary so that all of our students have the choices we would want for them. Thank you and have a good day.