

2013–14 CITYWIDE INSTRUCTIONAL EXPECTATIONS

INTRODUCTION

In 2010, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) raised expectations for the quality of student work and teacher practice with the adoption of the [Common Core standards](#). The New York City Department of Education (DOE) has continued to raise the bar through the introduction of [Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching](#), our [College and Career Readiness benchmarks](#), and our [special education reform, A Shared Path to Success](#).¹ In 2011, these reforms led to the development of the first set of citywide instructional expectations and the engagement of our school system in a long-term process to ensure that students at every grade level are on track to graduate from high school ready for college, careers, and other meaningful postsecondary opportunities.

In spring 2013, students in grades 3–8 took State English language arts (ELA) and math tests aligned to the Common Core standards for the first time. Tests for high school students will begin to change in the 2013–14 school year. The results of the new State tests will provide baseline information about where our students are on their path to college and career readiness. Identifying and addressing the gap between what the standards demand and what students know and are able to do is at the heart of what we aim to accomplish as a system. With time, our students will rise to the challenge. In the meantime, the Progress Report will continue to control for changes in State exams, maintaining stability and fairness. Promotion and other policies will adjust gradually to align with this higher standard, supporting students and schools through the [transition](#).

In the fall of 2013, to support shifting teacher practice, we will implement a [new system of teacher evaluation and development](#).² The current system has been in place for over 80 years, and the adjustment to the new system will be a challenge for schools. However, it will allow us to understand and support teachers' growth in a more nuanced, differentiated way. This change is critical because high-quality teaching is the most powerful tool for helping students reach these higher standards.

The simultaneous transition to a new set of standards and a new system of teacher evaluation and development will require hard work and new learning. Schools will develop expertise at different rates. What matters most is that we all keep the needs of our students at the center of every decision we make. The 2013–14 citywide instructional expectations build upon the practices we have engaged in over the past few years. Together with the 2013–14 [Quality Review Rubric](#), these expectations are intended to guide school communities as they focus their efforts and resources toward the goal of creating a rigorous and coherent instructional experience for students and educators.

SUMMARY OF EXPECTATIONS

Prepare: Set up to meet higher standards

- Ensure curricula are aligned to standards in all content areas. (QI 1.1, 2.2)³
- Prepare to implement a new system of teacher evaluation and development. (QI 4.1, 4.2)
- Organize the school to meet the needs of all students.
 - Establish an instructional focus. (QI 1.2, 3.1, 3.4)
 - Ensure school time is used strategically. (QI 1.3, 4.2)
 - Plan for both short-term and sustained professional learning experiences. (QI 1.4, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2)

Implement: Move students toward meeting higher standards

- **Students:** Experience rigorous instruction. (QI 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 3.4)
- **Teachers:** Shift classroom practice. (QI 1.2)
- **School leaders:** Actively support teacher growth. (QI 1.2, 4.1, 4.2)

Assess: Review evidence of meeting higher standards

- Create systems to look for evidence of growth and gaps and make adjustments. (QI 2.2, 4.2, 5.1)

¹A Shared Path to Success is the DOE's special education initiative to ensure that all students have access to rigorous curriculum and inclusive communities and classrooms, with appropriate supports and services, to prepare them for college, careers, and independent living.

²The new teacher evaluation and development system, aligned to New York State Education Law 3012-c, is rooted in assessing a teacher's practice based on multiple measures to increase the accuracy of the assessment. Details of the DOE's new evaluation system will be available in June 2013.

³"QI" denotes each expectation's alignment with quality indicators in the Quality Review Rubric.

PREPARE: SET UP TO MEET HIGHER STANDARDS

Ensure curricula are aligned to standards in all content areas. (QI 1.1, 2.2)

- In PreK–9 ELA and math,⁴ ensure curricula are aligned to the Common Core standards.⁵
- In other grades and content areas, ensure curricula are aligned to the applicable content standards.⁶

Schools should work toward closing curricular gaps during spring and summer 2013, whether through purchasing and integrating publisher-made materials or by adjusting current materials.⁷ Schools must provide dedicated time, resources, and support for reviewing and revising curricula, using [Universal Design for Learning](#) to ensure access for all learners.

Prepare to implement a new system of teacher evaluation and development.⁸ (QI 4.1, 4.2)

- For the remainder of the 2012–13 school year, continue to use Danielson’s *Framework for Teaching* for formative observations and feedback to support teacher growth.⁹
- Participate in trainings to understand the new system of teacher evaluation and development (including measures of student learning), leading to principal certification and accurate use of Danielson’s *Framework for Teaching*.¹⁰
- Plan for and implement required trainings on the new system of teacher evaluation and development for all appropriate members of the school community. More specific information on the new system is forthcoming.
- Engage in activities that build a shared school-wide understanding of what effective teaching looks like in all content areas, working toward a smooth transition to a new system of teacher evaluation and development in the fall.
- Between June 1, 2013 and the beginning of the 2013–14 school year, agree on a plan for selecting the school’s approach to measures of student learning. More specific information is forthcoming.

Organize the school to meet the needs of all students. (QI 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.1, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2)

- Establish an instructional focus that creates coherence among multiple initiatives, clearly frames the work teachers and school leaders will prioritize to narrow the gap between what the standards describe and what students currently know and are able to do, and allows for strategic use of resources (see Appendix).
- Continue to ensure school time is used strategically. The school’s schedule should provide students with: [access to advanced coursework](#), tiered interventions as needed (e.g., [Response to Intervention](#)), special education services in the [least restrictive environment](#) appropriate, language support in the chosen [model of English language learner instruction](#), and [time for teachers to work in teams](#).
- Plan for both short-term and sustained professional learning experiences that connect to school needs.
 - Plan for the use of professional development time to support implementation of the school’s curricula.
 - Ensure [opportunities](#) for staff to collaboratively build a school-wide understanding of the components of Danielson’s *Framework for Teaching* included in the new system of teacher evaluation and development. More specific information is forthcoming.
 - Engage teacher leaders to support the school’s instructional agenda.

⁴Grade 9 ELA and math refers to incoming (cohort S) 9th graders taking Algebra 1 and English courses which ultimately culminate in Common Core-aligned Regents exams.

⁵See the [standards for PreK](#) and information about students who are [alternatively assessed](#).

⁶NYSED has [commencement-level learning standards](#) in the following subject areas: ELA; social studies; math, science, and technology; the arts (including visual arts, music, dance and theater); Languages Other Than English; health, physical education, family and consumer sciences; and career development and occupational studies. The Common Core standards are the first set of standards NYSED has adopted to align to college and career readiness expectations. The NYSED will consider revisions to standards in social studies (draft NYSED K-12 and College of Chief State School Officers College, Career, and Civic Life frameworks), science (Next Generation Science Standards), and the arts (National Coalition for Core Arts Standards), among others.

⁷See [DOE’s Core Curriculum offerings](#). Schools can reference the [DOE’s curricular reviews](#) and these [literacy](#) and [math](#) tools for reviewing other curricular materials.

⁸These expectations may change upon full implementation of a new teacher evaluation system as regulated by Education Law 3012-c. This law regulates annual professional performance reviews of classroom teachers and school principals. Its implementation is subject to a collective bargaining agreement or State mandate.

⁹A new teacher evaluation and development system will employ Danielson’s *Framework for Teaching* as a formal rating tool and require evidence of teacher impact on student learning. Prior to implementation of this new system, work on both fronts can be used only to inform teacher development and not to rate teachers.

¹⁰Education Law 3012-c requires that all lead evaluators are certified in their district’s model of teacher evaluation. In New York City, principals will serve as lead evaluators. More information surrounding certification requirements will be shared in June 2013.

IMPLEMENT: MOVE STUDENTS TOWARD MEETING HIGHER STANDARDS

Students will:

Experience rigorous instruction. (QI 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 3.4)

- Learn content by engaging with standards-aligned curricula in all content areas.
- Reflect on their work products and work habits based on their understanding of the [academic and personal behaviors](#) required for postsecondary success.

Teachers and teacher teams will:

Shift classroom practice. (QI 1.2)

In the 2013–14 school year, teacher teams should focus on changes to classroom practice. In the first year of the transition to the Common Core (2011–12), teachers embedded a performance task into at least one unit. In the second year (2012–13), they worked to integrate selected shifts into at least two units. This work laid a strong foundation for shifting pedagogy, including the use of performance tasks to assess learning.

- In all grades and content areas, plan and teach lessons and units that integrate the literacy and math [Common Core instructional shifts](#) where appropriate. While not every lesson in every content area will include integration of the shifts, students should experience all of the instructional shifts and associated standards over the course of the year. Teachers are responsible for students' content knowledge while at the same time sharing responsibility for students' literacy skills. Identify authentic opportunities for reading, writing, speaking, and listening in service of meeting the content standards of the discipline.
- Know their students as individuals, including their academic and personal behaviors, language development, knowledge, interests, strengths, and special needs.
- Adjust their lessons, units, and classroom assessments to address the [gap](#) between what the standards require and what their students know and are able to do.
 - Work with peers, coaches, and school leaders to achieve both [rigor and access](#) for all students. Plan for interventions as appropriate.
 - In the early grades, pay special attention to the developmental appropriateness of activities.¹¹
 - For students with [Individualized Educational Plans](#), ensure that individual supports and specialized instruction are aligned to the needs of the student and that goals are aligned to Common Core standards where relevant.
- Implement classroom structures and assessment practices across all grades that encourage student self-reflection and engagement of students in the learning process.
- Actively participate in their own [development](#) as teachers, supported by the implementation of a new system of teacher evaluation and development.

School leaders will:

Actively support teacher growth. (QI 1.2, 4.1, 4.2)

- Strengthen the school's system for supervising and supporting teacher development, paying particular attention to the instructional focus.
- Support teachers and teacher teams in planning lessons and units, strengthening teaching practices, looking at student work for evidence of learning and gaps, and making purposeful adjustments to narrow the gap between what the standards require and what students know and are able to do.
- Ensure teachers' deep understanding of the components of Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* included in the new teacher evaluation and development system to help improve instruction and student learning. More information is forthcoming.
- Provide support to teachers through frequent classroom visits, actionable feedback, coaching, and professional development aligned to Danielson's *Framework for Teaching*, the Common Core, and other content standards.
- Align supervisory practices to the new teacher evaluation and development system.
- Support teachers with implementation of measures of student learning.

¹¹The instructional resource "[We Are Experts](#)" (located on the Common Core Library) has been annotated to highlight opportunities for experiential learning, learning centers, and family engagement.

ASSESS: REVIEW EVIDENCE OF MEETING HIGHER STANDARDS

Create systems to regularly and collaboratively look for evidence of growth and gaps in student work and teacher practice in order to make adjustments. (QI 2.2, 4.2, 5.1)

All staff will:

- Ensure families are aware that all students are being challenged this year to complete more difficult work to prepare them to be successful in the world beyond school. Encourage families to support their children in rising to this new challenge.
- Continue to share evidence of student progress with families.

Teachers, teacher teams, and school leaders will regularly:

- Review student work and contributions to classroom activities for evidence of individual student growth and gaps in learning in relation to both standards and academic and personal behaviors, and make evidence-based adjustments to their units, lessons, and teaching practices.
- Share successful instructional practices, and the evidence of their success, through formal and informal structures.
- Reflect on their work to identify areas for growth and actively participate in their own development.

School leaders will regularly:

- Review evidence of teacher effectiveness, including student work and teacher practice aligned to the citywide instructional expectations, to make evaluation and support decisions aligned to Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* and the new teacher evaluation and development system.
- Engage in calibration practice on Danielson's *Framework for Teaching*.
- Make evidence-based adjustments to school-wide practices based on goals that are tracked for progress.
- Reflect on their work and actively participate in their own development based on their understanding of effective school practice as defined by the Quality Review Rubric.

APPENDIX: INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS GUIDANCE

The citywide instructional expectations ask schools to identify an instructional focus as part of their preparation for the 2013–14 school year. It is important for schools to use their goal-setting process as an opportunity to prioritize improving classroom practice across the school. While the goal-setting process will remain in the Quality Review Rubric for 2013–14, the term “instructional focus” will not be added, as this is a practice that supports goal-setting rather than an additional aspect of accountability.

The DOE offers this guidance on identifying an instructional focus based on a belief that a focus creates coherence among multiple initiatives, clearly frames the work teachers and school leaders will prioritize to narrow the gap between what the standards describe and what students currently know and are able to do, and allows for strategic use of resources. The focus is one high-leverage instructional priority that is aligned with a school’s vision and its “coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best.” (QI 1.2)

Characteristics of a strong instructional focus:

- It directly impacts classroom practice.
- It is evident across classrooms, in teacher feedback, and in the school’s year-long professional development plan.
- It is developed collaboratively based on multiple types of data and rooted in the needs of the school.
- It is worthy of study and can be assessed repeatedly over time.
- It allows for multiple teaching strategies that are supported through professional development.

Instructional focus examples include, but are not limited to the following:

Evidence in argument	Students will develop the skill of using evidence to support arguments in discussion, which will then transfer to stronger writing in literacy and math, and develop the communication and collaboration skills that support college and career readiness.
Student-to-student discussion	Students will engage in high-quality discussions, exemplified by responding to and extending each other’s thinking and crafting questions to help each other deepen and elaborate upon their thinking.
Collaborative learning	Through teachers’ strategic use of intentional groupings, students will develop the ability to learn and get along with others through small-group activities with their peers.
Productive struggle	Students will engage in activities that are both cognitively challenging and accessible. Teachers’ planning will strategically provide opportunities for independent practice and instructional supports during lessons, with the aim of building students’ persistence through new or challenging tasks.
Language development	Interdisciplinary teacher teams will scaffold language demands to support the development of syntax as well as general and domain-specific academic vocabulary across all content areas.
Multiple entry points	Rather than relying only on printed materials and whole-class lecture notes, teachers will incorporate multiple formats to represent information and enhance student engagement, e.g. multiple versions of a story or of a math or scientific process; teachers will use multimedia collections, including images, sounds, text, video, concept maps, Web links, or animation of text-meaning.
Using assessing and advancing questions	<p>Math: Based on learning goals, teachers will identify various solution pathways and anticipated challenges to plan questions that both check and deepen students’ understanding of challenging instructional tasks.</p> <p>Literacy: Based on learning goals, teachers will identify possible interpretations of text and anticipated challenges to plan carefully sequenced text-dependent questions that both check and deepen students’ understanding of new content/text.</p> <p>Students will develop persistence and patience while grappling with new and complex tasks and concepts.</p>
Connecting learning to experience	Teachers will ensure that texts and experiences enhance each other to strengthen students’ background knowledge and engagement with learning. Text-based activities will take place in addition to rich, shared experiential learning through hands-on projects, activities, and trips. Students will reflect on their experiences and understanding of new content.