

ESSENTIAL DIMENSIONS OF TEACHING

**Division of Certification and Accreditation
Program Approval and Assessment Branch**

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RATIONALE

The State of Maryland views learning to teach as a developmental process in which there is continuous engagement with research, best practice, and expert opinion. With this perspective, the **Essential Dimensions of Teaching** identifies ten performance-based standards for guiding career-long development for the following:

- ✎ The initial learning of teacher candidates;
- ✎ The continuing professional growth of teachers;
- ✎ The development and assessment of teacher education programs, with assessment based upon performance of graduates;
- ✎ The basis of hiring decisions and teachers' professional development plans.

Learning to teach is viewed in a continuous learning cycle, represented in the following diagram:

The diagram displays four leaning domains, **Knowledge, Analysis, Action** and **Reflection**. Teacher candidates and experienced teachers who are learning new skills first develop a knowledge base; next analyze events or documents to discern critical elements; then plan and implement a course of action; and finally reflect upon the outcomes of actions, in order to modify their knowledge base. The predominant pattern is a sequential movement, as indicated by solid lines. To demonstrate learning occurring in the non-predominant pattern, this diagram uses broken lines and reverse arrows. For example, a reflective learner is often reflective in each stage of learning.

Each Essential Dimension is followed by a set of performance-based indicators, i.e., outcomes, organized according to the four domains of the learning cycle. These indicators may be modified or expanded to meet individual and/or institutional needs.

ESSENTIAL DIMENSIONS OF TEACHING

The highly effective classroom is one in which every student is fully engaged at all times with curriculum that is inviting, motivating, and personally relevant. To achieve this,

Teacher Candidates and Teachers Will:

1. Demonstrate mastery of appropriate academic disciplines and a repertoire of teaching techniques.
2. Demonstrate an understanding that knowledge of the learner's physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and cultural development is the basis of effective teaching.
3. Incorporate a multicultural perspective which integrates culturally diverse resources, including those from the learner's family and community.
4. Demonstrate a knowledge of strategies for integrating students with special needs into the regular classroom.
5. Use valid assessment approaches, both formal and informal, which are age-appropriate and address a variety of developmental needs, conceptual abilities, curriculum outcomes and school goals.
6. Organize and manage a classroom using approaches supported by student learning needs, research, best practice, and expert opinion.
7. Use computer and computer-related technology to meet student and professional needs.
8. Demonstrate an understanding that classrooms and schools are sites of ethical, social, and civic activity.
9. Collaborate with the broad educational community, including parents, businesses and social service agencies.
10. Engage in careful analysis, problem-solving, and reflection in all aspects of teaching.

1. Demonstrate mastery of appropriate academic disciplines and a repertoire of teaching techniques.

KNOWLEDGE

- a. Describe the theoretical framework and the concepts, principles, facts, and modes of thinking of the subject area(s) to be taught.
- b. Discuss historical and current trends and issues within the subject area(s).
- c. Describe major pedagogical theories, concepts, principles, and strategies appropriate for specific subject areas.

ANALYSIS

- a. Interpret the contributions of major thinkers in the subject area(s).
- b. Compare and contrast significant forms, elements, and processes of the subject area(s).

ACTION

- a. Model the attitudes, dispositions, and behaviors related to the subject area(s), e.g. the teacher as scientist, writer, artist, etc..
- b. Facilitate student learning in authentic forms, e.g., students behaving as scientist, writers, artists, etc.
- c. Translate subject content into developmentally appropriate instruction.
- d. Integrate instruction to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills and to see relationships among subject areas.
- e. Develop a broad repertoire of valid teaching techniques.

REFLECTION

- a. Critique one's own and other's subject area expertise, e.g., depth, breadth, and currency.
- b. Assess one's own and others' efforts to translate subject content into classroom instruction.
- c. Assess classroom techniques and refine those that are most effective.

2. Demonstrate an understanding that knowledge of the learner's physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and cultural development is the basis of effective teaching.

KNOWLEDGE

- a. Explain the following influences on development: physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and cultural.
- b. Describe major developmental theories addressing the learner's physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and cultural development and their implications for teaching and learning.
- c. Explain a child's/adolescent's uniqueness in terms of developmental factors.

ANALYSIS

- a. Critique classroom environment, management techniques, instructional strategies, and curriculum content for developmental appropriateness.
- b. Analyze classroom elements from multiple developmental perspectives.
- c. Evaluate curriculum and instruction from a developmental perspective.

ACTION

- a. Model use of developmentally appropriate practices in designing and managing the classroom and the learning process.
- b. Demonstrate a learning activity and its adaptation to meet individual needs.
- c. Design lessons which accommodate diverse developmental needs.

REFLECTION

- a. Assess one's own and others' efforts to adjust lessons, environments, and behavioral expectations for developmental appropriateness.
- b. Validate planning and classroom management decisions from a developmental perspective.
- c. Judge the reaction of all students to planned learning activities.

3. Incorporate a multicultural perspective which integrates culturally diverse resources, including those from the learner's family and community.

KNOWLEDGE

- a. Identify the cultural, ethnic, religious, social, and gender factors that influence teaching and learning.
- b. Identify differences in social behavior that originate in cultural or ethnic group beliefs, values, and customs.
- c. Identify socioeconomic, familial, and biological factors which affect students' lives.

ANALYSIS

- a. Acknowledge one's own cultural values and experiences as they may influence actions and attitudes with a diverse student population in the classroom.
- b. Interpret student behaviors in terms of cultural influences.

ACTION

- a. Demonstrate cross-cultural sensitivity.
- b. Provide equitable opportunities for all students to learn.
- c. Use information about students' prior knowledge, skills, and cultural experiences in making instructional decisions.
- d. Use innovative strategies, materials, and technologies to address student diversity.

REFLECTION

- a. Reflect upon a lesson's inclusion of contributions of diverse cultures.
- b. Assess the effectiveness of one's own and others' teaching from the perspective of cultural and gender sensitivity and responsiveness.

4. Demonstrate a knowledge of strategies for integrating students with special needs into the regular classroom.

KNOWLEDGE

- a. Identify categories of disability and the continuum of special education services according to the least restrictive environment principle of public laws.
- b. Explain the special education services and resources available in schools and what their implications are for regular teachers.
- c. Identify instructional strategies which are effective for all children in heterogeneous classrooms.

ANALYSIS

- a. Compare the performance of students who are under consideration for special education services with established criteria.
- b. Discern elements of effective inclusion in authentic contexts.

ACTION

- a. Use appropriate curriculum materials and instructional approaches based on diagnosed strengths and needs to accommodate students' special needs in heterogeneous classrooms.
- b. Integrate special needs students into social and academic environments.
- c. Collaborate with special educators to develop, implement, assess, and modify students' Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

REFLECTION

- a. Assess the adaptability of materials and approaches based on diagnosed strengths and needs to accommodate the special needs of students.
- b. Assess the match between the curriculum and the special need student(s) and make changes as necessary to promote progress.

5. Use valid assessment approaches, both formal and informal, which are age-appropriate and address a variety of developmental needs, conceptual abilities, curriculum outcomes, and school goals.

KNOWLEDGE

- a. Explain basic and current concepts of assessment.
- b. Specify outcomes to be assessed.
- c. Describe the purposes and types of assessments and the criteria for successful use.

ANALYSIS

- a. Interpret scores, reporting formats, and other assessment data from multiple sources.
- b. Compare and contrast two or more assessment instruments and/or techniques.
- c. Critique one or more standardized instruments for such variables as gender, race, ethnicity, disability, and age bias.

ACTION

- a. Select or construct assessment instruments or approaches appropriate for specified topics or goals.
- b. Use valid, age-appropriate assessment approaches, both formal and informal.
- c. Use student self-assessment and peer assessment for instructional planning.
- d. Use sources of quantitative and qualitative information about individual students to assist in planning instruction.
- e. Apply ethical principles in collecting and reporting information about students.

REFLECTION

- a. Evaluate the use of assessment instruments and techniques and their implications for instructional planning and student performance.
- b. Adapt assessment approaches appropriately.

6. Organize and manage a classroom using approaches supported by student learning needs, research, best practice, and expert opinion.

KNOWLEDGE

- a. Identify principles of classroom management which promote responsible student behavior.
- b. Identify principles regarding motivation, including the appropriate use of rewards, discipline, and praise.
- c. Relate research and best practice to positive expectations for every student.
- d. Discuss alternatives for managing disruptive behaviors and resolving conflicts within a classroom.

ANALYSIS

- a. Compare and contrast a variety of management approaches and their appropriateness to identified populations and situations.
- b. Discern effective classroom management practices in natural context, e.g. classroom or video observation.

ACTION

- a. Establish and maintain a positive and equitable classroom environment.
- b. Develop clear short-term and long-term instructional goals and objectives.
- c. Articulate clear objectives, expectations, and performance feedback to students.
- d. Apply principles of classroom management which promote positive student behaviors and prevent disruptive student behaviors.
- e. Use flexible grouping practices appropriately.
- f. Ask multi-level questions which encourage and extend student thinking.
- g. Use instructional time effectively.
- h. Use instructional space to maximize student learning.
- i. Implement a variety of teaching strategies to maximize student participation.

REFLECTION

- a. Monitor/modify instruction as needed.
- b. Observe and critique one's own and others' delivery of instruction.
- c. Assess the effectiveness of a variety of management approaches and adjust strategies to increase effectiveness.

7. Use computer and computer-related technology to meet student and professional needs.

KNOWLEDGE

- a. List the main uses of computers and related technologies for instruction and professional use.
- b. Articulate the value of computer and computer-related technology integration in education.

ANALYSIS

- a. Use existing criteria to evaluate instructional software.
- b. Discern principles of effective classroom management that apply when computers and computer-related technology are used in labs and in classrooms.

ACTION

- a. Select software for instruction to meet specific purposes.
- b. Select computer applications to meet specific professional development needs.
- c. Integrate computer and computer-related technology into instruction to meet student learning needs.

REFLECTION

- a. Assess the effectiveness of technology-supported instruction.
- b. Assess the usefulness of computer technology for meeting professional development needs.

8. **Demonstrate an understanding that classrooms and schools are sites of ethical, social, and civic activity.**

KNOWLEDGE

- a. Describe the social, political, and ethical characteristics of teaching as a profession.
- b. Describe the elements of an effective school based on research and professional judgment.
- c. Describe the role of the school in the socialization of children and young people in a multicultural, global society.
- d. Describe the impact of major historical events, philosophical movements, and artistic influences on educational theory and practice.
- e. Explain the legal and political influences on public education.
- f. Discuss classrooms and schools as communities and as organizations, identifying the roles and expectations of constituents.

ANALYSIS

- a. Analyze in natural context the social, cultural, and historical influences on schools.
- b. Analyze in natural context the legal, political, and economic influences on schools.

ACTION

- a. Demonstrate a sense of efficacy and acceptance of professional responsibility for student learning.
- b. Model ethical behavior and decision-making in one's professional life.
- c. Create a values-oriented classroom environment that supports students' personal responsibility for their own learning and behaviors.
- d. Promote a school-wide, values-oriented culture.

REFLECTION

- a. Assess the influence of changing values and ideologies on one's own practice.
- b. Critique the school as a values-oriented culture.

9. **Collaborate with the broad educational community including parents,**

businesses,
and social service agencies.

KNOWLEDGE

- a. Demonstrate familiarity with agencies, organizations, and businesses which influence the life of the school.
- b. Discuss a variety of approaches for successful collaboration among agencies, organizations, and businesses which influence the life of the school.

ANALYSIS

- a. Identify and compare the elements of effective partnerships.
- b. Study existing partnerships and analyze for strengths and weaknesses.

ACTION

- a. Maintain effective communication among home, school, and community.
- b. Promote experiences which strengthen positive parent-child interactions.
- c. Encourage parental and community involvement in the life of the school.
- d. Work collaboratively with colleagues to achieve school and district goals.

REFLECTION

- a. Assess the school's communication and collaboration efforts.
- b. Adapt existing partnerships in response to identified strengths and needs.

10. Engage in careful analysis, problem-solving, and reflection in all aspects of teaching.

KNOWLEDGE

- a. Identify significant topics for reflection and inquiry.
- b. Describe several theories and models of reflection.
- c. Discuss various approaches to problem-solving.
- d. Explain the value and efficacy of a positive disposition toward research.

ANALYSIS

- a. Analyze one's own and others' problem-solving in natural context.
- b. Analyze one's own and others' modes of reflection.

ACTION

- a. Use journals, logs, seminars, and other strategies.
- b. Develop one's own reflection style.
- c. Use a variety of problem-solving approaches.
- d. Propose workable solutions to classroom and school-wide problems.
- e. Collaborate with others to address instructional problems and dilemmas.

REFLECTION

- a. Adapt one's reflection style to meet changing needs.
- b. Modify problem-solving approaches to meet contextual demands.

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