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# Teaching Quality Standard

Alberta Education





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## Teaching Quality Standard

**Whereas** Alberta’s teachers, students, parents, educational leaders and members of the public have a strong will to ensure all Alberta students have access to quality learning experiences that enable their achievement of the learning outcomes outlined in programs of study.

**Whereas** Alberta teachers provide inclusive learning environments in which diversity is respected and members of the school community are welcomed, cared for, respected and safe.

**Whereas** Alberta teachers play a fundamental role in establishing the conditions under which the learning aspirations and the potential of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students will be realized.

**Whereas** quality teaching occurs best when teachers work together with other teachers in the common interest of helping all students succeed in diverse and complex learning environments.

**Whereas** the *Teaching Quality Standard* provides a framework for the preparation, professional growth, supervision and evaluation of all teachers.

**Whereas** students, parents and other partners in education should be confident that Alberta teachers demonstrate the *Teaching Quality Standard* throughout their careers.

**Whereas** it is important to recognize the value of a consistent standard of professional practice for all teachers in the province.

## 1. In the context of this document:

- a. **“competency”** means an interrelated set of knowledge, skills and attitudes, developed over time and drawn upon and applied to a particular teaching context in order to support optimum student learning as required by the *Teaching Quality Standard*;
- b. **“inclusive learning environment”** means a classroom, school, online learning environment or other educational setting structured to anticipate, value and respond to the diverse strengths and needs of all learners;
- c. **“indicators”** means actions that are likely to lead to the achievement of a competency and which, together with the competency, are measurable and observable;
- d. **“local community”** means community members who have an interest in education and the school, including neighbouring Métis settlements, First Nations and other members of the public;
- e. **“school authority”** means a public school board, separate school board, Francophone regional authority, charter school operator or accredited private school operator;
- f. **“school community”** means students, teachers and other school staff members, parents/guardians and school council members;
- g. **“school council”** means a school council established under the *Education Act* or a parent advisory council established under the Private Schools Regulation;
- h. **“student”** means, for the purpose of this standard, an individual enrolled in a school or required by law to attend, and includes a child younger than 6 years of age who is enrolled in an early childhood services program;
- i. **“teacher”** means an individual who holds a certificate of qualification as a teacher issued under the *Education Act*.

## 2. The *Teaching Quality Standard*:

**Quality teaching occurs when the teacher’s ongoing analysis of the context, and the teacher’s decisions about which pedagogical knowledge and abilities to apply, result in optimum learning for all students.**

- 3. All Alberta teachers are expected to meet the *Teaching Quality Standard* throughout their careers. In any given context, reasoned professional judgment must be used to determine whether the *Teaching Quality Standard* is being met.

4. The *Teaching Quality Standard* is described by the following competencies and indicators:

## Fostering Effective Relationships

1

**A teacher builds positive and productive relationships with students, parents/guardians, peers and others in the school and local community to support student learning.**

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. acting consistently with fairness, respect and integrity;
- b. demonstrating empathy and a genuine caring for others;
- c. providing culturally appropriate and meaningful opportunities for students and for parents/guardians, as partners in education, to support student learning;
- d. inviting First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents/guardians, Elders/knowledge keepers, cultural advisors and local community members into the school and classroom;
- e. collaborating with community service professionals, including mental health, social services, justice, health and law enforcement; and
- f. honouring cultural diversity and promoting intercultural understanding.

## Engaging in Career-Long Learning

2

**A teacher engages in career-long professional learning and ongoing critical reflection to improve teaching and learning.**

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. collaborating with other teachers to build personal and collective professional capacities and expertise;
- b. actively seeking out feedback to enhance teaching practice;
- c. building capacity to support student success in inclusive, welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments;
- d. seeking, critically reviewing and applying educational research to improve practice;

- e. enhancing understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit worldviews, cultural beliefs, languages and values; and
- f. maintaining an awareness of emerging technologies to enhance knowledge and inform practice.

## Demonstrating a Professional Body of Knowledge

3

**A teacher applies a current and comprehensive repertoire of effective planning, instruction and assessment practices to meet the learning needs of every student.**

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. planning and designing learning activities that:
  - address the learning outcomes outlined in programs of study;
  - reflect short, medium and long range planning;
  - incorporate a range of instructional strategies, including the appropriate use(s) of digital technology, according to the context, content, desired outcomes and the learning needs of students;
  - ensure that all students continuously develop skills in literacy and numeracy;
  - communicate high expectations for all students;
  - foster student understanding of the link between the activity and the intended learning outcomes;
  - consider relevant local, provincial, national and international contexts and issues;
  - are varied, engaging and relevant to students;
  - build student capacity for collaboration;
  - incorporate digital technology and resources, as appropriate, to build student capacity for:
    - » acquiring, applying and creating new knowledge;
    - » communicating and collaborating with others;
    - » critical thinking; and
    - » accessing, interpreting and evaluating information from diverse sources;

- consider student variables, including:
  - » demographics, e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, religion;
  - » social and economic factors;
  - » maturity;
  - » relationships amongst students;
  - » prior knowledge and learning;
  - » cultural and linguistic background;
  - » second language learning;
  - » health and well-being;
  - » emotional and mental health; and
  - » physical, social and cognitive ability;

b. using instructional strategies to engage students in meaningful learning activities, based on:

- specialized knowledge of the subject areas they teach;
- an understanding of students' backgrounds, prior knowledge and experiences;
- a knowledge of how students develop as learners;

c. applying student assessment and evaluation practices that:

- accurately reflect the learner outcomes within the programs of study;
- generate evidence of student learning to inform teaching practice through a balance of formative and summative assessment experiences;
- provide a variety of methods through which students can demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes;
- provide accurate, constructive and timely feedback on student learning; and
- support the use of reasoned judgment about the evidence used to determine and report the level of student learning.

## Establishing Inclusive Learning Environments

4

**A teacher establishes, promotes and sustains inclusive learning environments where diversity is embraced and every student is welcomed, cared for, respected and safe.**

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. fostering equality and respect with regard to rights as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;
- b. using appropriate universal and targeted strategies and supports to address students' strengths, learning challenges and areas for growth;
- c. communicating a philosophy of education affirming that every student can learn and be successful;
- d. being aware of and facilitating responses to the emotional and mental health needs of students;
- e. recognizing and responding to specific learning needs of individual or small groups of students and, when needed, collaborating with service providers and other specialists to design and provide targeted and specialized supports to enable achievement of the learning outcomes;
- f. employing classroom management strategies that promote positive, engaging learning environments;
- g. incorporating students' personal and cultural strengths into teaching and learning; and
- h. providing opportunities for student leadership.

## Applying Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit

5

A teacher develops and applies foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit for the benefit of all students.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. understanding the historical, social, economic and political implications of:
  - treaties and agreements with First Nations;
  - legislation and agreements negotiated with Métis; and
  - residential schools and their legacy;
- b. supporting student achievement by engaging in collaborative, whole school approaches to capacity building in First Nations, Métis and Inuit education;
- c. using the programs of study to provide opportunities for all students to develop a knowledge and understanding of, and respect for, the histories, cultures, languages, contributions, perspectives, experiences and contemporary contexts of First Nations, Métis and Inuit; and
- d. supporting the learning experiences of all students by using resources that accurately reflect and demonstrate the strength and diversity of First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

## Adhering to Legal Frameworks and Policies

6

A teacher demonstrates an understanding of and adherence to the legal frameworks and policies that provide the foundations for the Alberta education system.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. maintaining an awareness of, and responding in accordance with, requirements authorized under the *Education Act* and other relevant legislation;
- b. engaging in practices consistent with policies and procedures established by the school authority; and
- c. recognizing that the professional practice of a teacher is bound by standards of conduct expected of a caring, knowledgeable and reasonable adult entrusted with the custody, care or education of students.

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