

## Element

# Importance of the Content

### Description

In a classroom with a strong culture of learning, teachers convey the importance of what the students are learning.



### A Closer Look

To help you recognize the subtle differences between the higher levels of performance for this element, note the keywords emphasized in the descriptions and review the activities common to those levels.

#### PROFICIENT

The teacher conveys *genuine enthusiasm* for the content, and students demonstrate *consistent commitment* to its value.

At the proficient level of performance, teaching practices may include the following types of activities:

- Teacher shares with students personal learning experiences, such as a new technique or strategy he is trying, a book he has read, or a peer observation with a colleague.
- Teacher shares the learning goal for the lesson and explains the lesson's importance and purpose.
- Teacher reinforces the importance of work with charts and posters that convey high expectations.
- Teacher's voice inflection and body language convey enthusiasm for the learning.
- Teacher provides opportunities for students to choose their own projects and methods for demonstrating their learning.

#### DISTINGUISHED

Students demonstrate through their *active participation*, *curiosity*, and *taking initiative* that they value the importance of the content.

At the distinguished level of performance, teaching practices may include the following types of activities:

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- Students conduct research related to the current topic and share their results with each other.
- Students develop questions related to the current topic and ask these questions of each other as they share their findings.
- Students articulate the learning goal and can explain to each other why it is important.
- Students' voice inflection and body language convey enthusiasm for the learning.
- Students post relevant, high-quality work on a designated bulletin board.
- Students make posters or signs that convey positive learning expectations.
- Students take advantage of opportunities to choose their own projects and show individualism and creativity in their methods of demonstrating their learning.

The tools that follow will help you explore how to put the activities of these high levels of performance into practice in your classroom.

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## Element Reflection

**Teacher tool**

**Student tool**

1. How do you convey the sense to your students that the work they are doing in your classroom is important? That it is fun?

2. What strategies do you use to reinforce and cultivate student curiosity?

## Student Portfolio Selection Reflection

Teacher tool

Student tool

Distribute this template to students as they determine the work they will include in a required portfolio.

Work Selected	Why I Chose This Piece	What It Tells Me About My Learning

## Element

# Expectations for Learning and Achievement

### Description

In classrooms with robust cultures for learning, all students receive the message that, although the work is challenging, they are capable of achieving the goals if they are prepared to work hard.



### A Closer Look

To help you recognize the subtle differences between the higher levels of performance for this element, note the keywords emphasized in the descriptions and review the activities common to those levels.

#### PROFICIENT

Instructional outcomes, activities and assignments, and classroom interactions convey high expectations for *most students*.

At the proficient level of performance, teaching practices may include the following types of activities:

- Teacher develops and shares high-quality instructional outcomes and expectations with most students.
- Teacher develops a mission statement that points out the purpose of the work in the class.
- Teacher sets high standards for most students regarding completion of assignments.
- Teacher discusses the importance and significance of the content and shares personal experiences related to the topic.
- Teacher models high expectations through language when conversing with most students.
- Teacher attributes student success to hard work and effort rather than the task being easy or luck.

**DISTINGUISHED**

Instructional outcomes, activities and assignments, and classroom interactions convey high expectations for *all students*. Students appear to have *internalized these expectations*.

At the distinguished level of performance, teaching practices may include the following types of activities:

- Teacher develops and shares high-quality instructional outcomes and expectations with all students.
- Students help develop a mission statement that addresses the purpose and importance of the work in the class.
- Teacher holds all students to high standards for completion of assignments.
- Teacher models high expectations for all students when conversing with the class.
- Students determine the relevance of assignments to real-life examples. For example, in a lesson on the environment, students establish a recycling program for the classroom or the school and collect materials that can be recycled.
- Students attribute their success to hard work and effort rather than the task being easy or luck.

The tools that follow will help you explore how to put the activities of these high levels of performance into practice in your classroom.



## Element Reflection

**Teacher tool**

**Student tool**

1. Describe a situation in which you have conveyed a belief that a student was highly capable, even when the student did not seem to initially believe it.

2. How do you recognize high levels of student achievement in your class? To what extent do all students receive such recognition?

## Creating a Class Mission Statement

Teacher tool

Student tool

Ask students to answer the following prompts on sticky notes, writing down as many answers for each prompt as they can. Then gather the notes and put them on a large version of the chart, arranging the answers into groups of similar ideas. Work as a class to write a mission statement based on the common themes.

Why are we here?	What do we have to do in order to successfully work together?	How will we make it happen?



## Example Classroom Mission Statement

The mission of our class is to work together so that we are all top-quality learners and outstanding readers, writers, thinkers, and problem solvers.

As a class we will:

- Help each other understand the class.
- Create a positive, comfortable learning environment.
- Help each other work toward personal achievement of the goals.
- Work toward having the necessary skills to perform well on the chapter tests.
- Prepare for and get a 3 or better on the semester exam.

## Element

# Student Pride in Work

### Description

When students are convinced of their capabilities, they are willing to devote energy to the task at hand, and they take pride in their accomplishments. They may undertake revisions on their own or show a visitor a recent paper or project they have produced.



### A Closer Look

To help you recognize the subtle differences between the higher levels of performance for this element, note the keywords emphasized in the descriptions and review the activities common to those levels.

#### PROFICIENT

Students *accept the teacher's insistence* on work of high quality and demonstrate pride in that work.

At the proficient level of performance, teaching practices may include the following types of activities:

- Teacher consistently reinforces students' development of conceptual understanding. For example, students must retake some assessments until they demonstrate a level of proficiency.
- Students must turn in all work. Even if work is not completed within the given time frame, it must be completed.
- Students are engaged in their work and give their best effort at all times.
- Teacher creates and maintains an environment where students feel free to take risks and ask questions.

#### DISTINGUISHED

Students demonstrate *attention to detail* and take obvious pride in their work, *initiating improvements* in it by, for example, revising drafts on their own or helping peers.

At the distinguished level of performance, teaching practices may include the following types of activities:

- Students encourage each other to take risks and continually ask questions.

Student Pride in Work

- Students provide each other with assistance in understanding a concept.
- Students peer-edit writing, providing constructive feedback.
- Students encourage each other to continually deepen their understandings.
- Students reflect on their own work and consider how they might improve it.
- Students use blogs or wikis to keep a digital notebook of their work, editing and refining it throughout the year.<sup>1</sup>

The tools that follow will help you explore how to put the activities of these high levels of performance into practice in your classroom.

<sup>1</sup> Calvert, J. (2009). *Blogs in the classroom*. Retrieved June 11, 2009, from <http://calvert.wiki.ccsd.edu/page/diff/Blogs+in+the+Classroom/69204799>

Student Pride in Work



## Element Reflection

**Teacher tool**

**Student tool**

1. What evidence do you have that your students take pride in their work? How have you encouraged this attitude?

2. What strategies can you use to encourage students to take pride in their work and to acknowledge the good work of their classmates?

Student Pride in Work

## Assignment Revision Checklist

Teacher tool

Student tool

- Review the work you are about to turn in.
- Review the standards for this assignment.
- Determine how you could improve your work based on the standards.
- Choose the improvements you will make and revise as necessary.

## Peer Review Worksheet

Teacher tool

Student tool

Have students answer these questions as part of their peer review to help them provide constructive comments.

1. What were the standards for this assignment?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What areas of your peer's work meet or exceed the standards?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What areas of your peer's work do not meet the standards?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Make 1–2 suggestions to your peer for improving this work:

Student Pride in Work

# I Blew It Card

Teacher tool

Student tool

To encourage students to try something new, hand out this coupon at the beginning of a unit. Alternatively, you could give each student a certain number for the term or year. Explain that you learn by taking risks, even if the risk was not successful.

## I Blew It

I tried something new and innovative and it didn't work as well as I wanted.  
This COUPON entitles me to be  
free of criticism for my efforts and to try again.

## I Blew It

I tried something new and innovative and it didn't work as well as I wanted.  
This COUPON entitles me to be  
free of criticism for my efforts and to try again.

## I Blew It

I tried something new and innovative and it didn't work as well as I wanted.  
This COUPON entitles me to be  
free of criticism for my efforts and to try again.

Source: Patterson, J. L. (1993). *Leadership for tomorrow's schools*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. Reprinted with permission.

Student Pride in Work

# Take a Chance

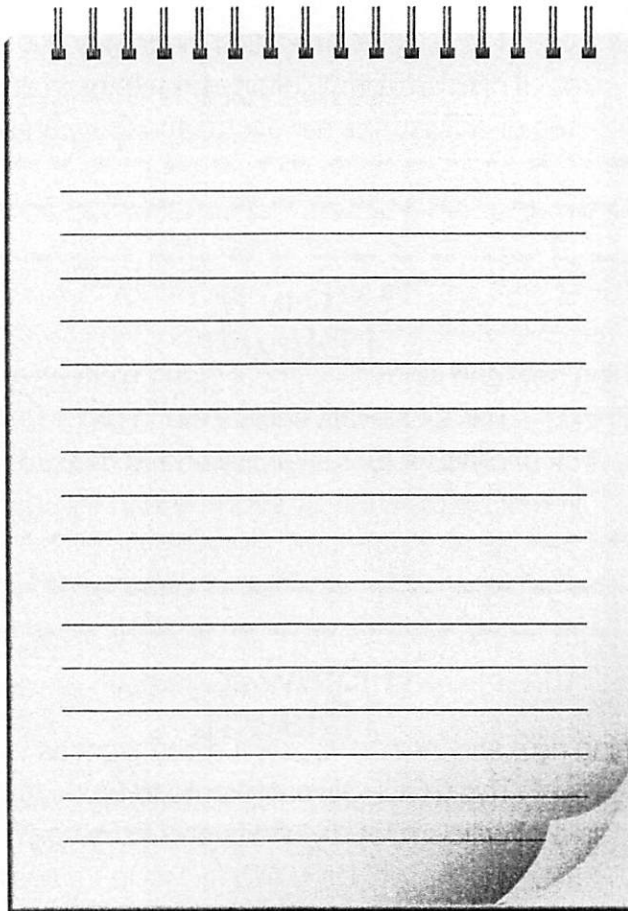
Teacher tool

Student tool

Distribute “Take a Chance Pads” to all students each semester. By periodically collecting the pads, you can determine what students are struggling with.

## TAKE A CHANCE PAD

Use this pad to write down answers or solve problems, even when you are not sure of the answers. All tries are risk- and criticism-free.





Component 2b



# Action Planning and Reflection

**Teacher tool**

**Student tool**

Look over the tools for this component and choose a strategy or strategies that you are committed to trying in your classroom. Then return to this page and record what happened. If there was a change, what evidence indicates the extent to which this strategy was successful? Finally, think about what you might do differently to continue to bring about further growth in this component.

What will I try?	How did it go?	What will I do differently next time?