High Expectations for Student Learning

Component	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Standard	The teacher's expectations are not based on standards, and are not communicated to students. While expectations may be demanding, it is unclear whether they will result in increased learning.	The teacher's expectations are somewhat aligned with standards, but misalignments may allow students to meet the teacher's expectations without meeting standard, or vice-versa. Expectations and standards are communicated in adult language that is hard for students to understand.	Expectations are closely aligned to standards, and both are communicated to students in developmentally appropriate language. Meeting the teacher's expectations results in students also meeting the standards, as a result of close alignment between the two.	Expectations are tightly aligned to standards, and communicated to students in developmentally appropriate language. The teacher identifies specific links between past and current learning, and makes it clear how students' previous work has prepared them to meet the current high expectations. Students engage with standards directly, and can articulate how they are working toward meeting them.
Communication	Students are informed of high expectations, but as a warning to expect difficulties, rather than a reassurance that they'll be able to succeed.	The teacher clearly communicates what students will be expected to do, and personally conveys confidence in all students and a willingness to support them in reaching the standard.	The teacher clearly communicates a specific standard, accompanied by the clear message that the teacher understands that it's a high standard, and has confidence in each student to meet it. The teacher shares exemplars of work that meets the standard, and indicates specific ways in which students will be supported.	The teacher clearly communicates a specific standard, identifying ways in which it builds upon students' past learning and accomplishments, giving students both a verbal commitment and specific evidence that they are capable of reaching this standard. The teacher identifies specific ways in which students will be supported, and provides before-and-after exemplars of student work illustrating the impact of these supports.

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Inclusivity	High expectations are intended to challenge only the highest-achieving students, while remaining out of reach for the majority. To meet high expectations, students must have prior knowledge /skills that the majority of students do not have, and that are not taught by the teacher. Students with IEPs, who speak English as a second language, or who experience other learning difficulties are presumed to be incapable of meeting high expectations regardless of their effort.	High expectations are intended to challenge everyone to do their best, but the teacher presumes that many students—especially students who experience learning difficulties—will be unable to meet then. Both extraordinary effort and prior knowledge/skills are necessary for meeting high expectations, placing them out of reach for the majority of students. The teacher sees it as someone else's job to provide support for students who need it.	High expectations are intended to challenge all students, and the teacher presumes that all students will be able to meet them with appropriate support. The teacher identifies and teaches the knowledge/ skills necessary for meeting high expectations, and collaborates with other professionals to ensure that students with IEPs, who speak English as a second language, or who have other learning needs are fully supported. The teacher takes responsibility for ensuring that every student has appropriate support in reaching high expectations.	High expectations are intended to challenge all students, and the teacher takes responsibility for collaborating with students and other professionals to design the specific supports students will need to meet high expectations. The teacher works with students and colleagues to identify the knowledge/ skills students will need, and assesses and teaches these skills so all students can receive the support they need to meet high expectations. Students and teacher take joint responsibility for ensuring that everyone has appropriate support in reaching high expectations.
Rigor	The teacher views rigor as difficulty, and sees students' struggles in meeting expectations as evidence of rigor. Difficulty reflects teachers' arbitrary personal preferences rather than standards.	The teacher views rigor as high expectations that many, but not all, students can meet. Difficulty is inherent in the standards, rather than a reflection of arbitrary personal preferences. The teacher does not expect that all students can achieve the most rigorous standards, and does not bother to plan how to support them.	The teacher views rigor as high expectations for all students, and supports students in meeting these expectations. Expectations are free of unnecessary difficulty, and difficulty is inherent to and closely aligned with standards. The teacher anticipates the specific supports students will need to achieve the most rigorous expectations.	The teacher assesses students' readiness for various levels of challenge within the scope of the unit, and differentiates support and tasks to ensure that each student meets standard while also being challenged at an appropriate level. Students are involved in choosing the challenges and supports they receive, and assess their progress toward achieving the standards.

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Milestones	Students are given a test at the end of the unit, or a deadline for turning in an assignment, with no intermediate deadlines to serve as milestones. As a result, students do not receive feedback until the end of the unit, and the teacher is unaware of any difficulties students may be facing.	The teacher identifies milestones and admonishes students to keep themselves on track, but does not hold students accountable for their progress. As a result, the teacher is unable to provide feedback, and does not have a sense of what difficulties students may be facing unless they ask for help.	The teacher breaks large assignments and units into sections in order to monitor student progress, provide feedback, and identify needed supports. Students are accountable for their work at each milestone, and have a clear sense of their progress toward the ultimate expectations for the unit or assignment.	The teacher communicates clear milestones, with exemplars of work in progress at each stage. Students have multiple opportunities for feedback from teacher and peers, and are accountable for meeting specific expectations at each stage. The teacher has a clear sense of each student's progress, and is able to address difficulties students are facing at each stage.
Scaffolding	The teacher admonishes students to work hard to meet high expectations, but does not anticipate the difficulties students will face or the supports they will need. The teacher attributes students' difficulties to a lack of ability or effort, and does not take responsibility for providing scaffolds.	The teacher admonishes students to work hard, and offers to help students who are experiencing difficulties, but does not anticipate supports that students will need or provide them proactively. When students do not complete their work and do not ask for help, the teacher is unaware of their progress toward expectations and any difficulties they may be facing.	The teacher anticipates difficulties that students may face, and proactively provides them to all students. Teacher adjusts scaffolds to keep students working at an appropriate level of challenge. Scaffolds do not reduce expectations for student learning or fundamentally alter learning tasks. Teacher communicates that scaffolds are designed to help students meet high expectations, not to reduce expectations.	The teacher anticipates difficulties that students may face, and proactively provides them to all students. Students and teacher jointly adjust scaffolds to maintain an appropriate level of challenge for each student. Scaffolds do not reduce expectations for student learning or fundamentally alter learning tasks. Students understand that scaffolds are designed to help them meet high expectations, not reduce expectations, and stop using them as they become unnecessary.