Syracuse City School District
Teaching and Learning Framework

Executive Summary

The SCSD Teaching and Learning Framework and Rubric are intended to serve as tools to aid in the observation, coaching, development and evaluation of classroom teachers. The Rubric should be used to guide conversations about the development and growth of all teachers. Rather than using the Rubric as a checklist, observers should be rating teachers based on the 'preponderance of evidence' collected. This means that a teacher may not demonstrate each bullet within a level, but observers should use their professional judgment to determine ratings and subsequent growth plans.

Within the rubric there are several terms used repeatedly. Each of these terms may have many meanings both within and outside of education. It is important to apply the following terms consistently throughout the rubric:

Term	Definition
Mastery	Students' demonstrated understanding of skills and concepts at a predetermined, measurable bar. **Example:** *Students will be able to write a structured five-paragraph essay identifying one cause, one effect, and the significance of the effect, of the Civil War.* On a four-point scale of mastery, a student would earn a **4** if all of the following components are met: • Student includes five paragraphs (an introductory paragraph, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph) • Student correctly indents all five paragraphs • Student clearly identifies one cause, one effect, and the significance of the effect of the Civil War, and lists at least **three supporting details** per body paragraph
Differentiate	Intentionally addressing students' individual learning needs and making the learning accessible to students at their current understanding level while building their capacity to master concepts at the required level (by grade level and Bloom's Taxonomy). Differentiation can take different forms, including: • Varying levels of scaffolding and teacher support or student partnering • Modified instructional materials • Time adjustments to task deadlines • Taking into consideration students' specific interests when designing learning activities and options • Adapting auditory or visual modes of instruction

Rigor	Rigor is characterized by: 1. Clear understanding of and focus on the core knowledge of each discipline (learning standards) 2. Challenging mental efforts (high cognitive demand) appropriate to mastery of the core knowledge 3. Active use of the knowledge in meaningful ways In SCSD, access to academic rigor is supported through: • Depth in teacher content knowledge • Adherence to a high quality core curriculum • The use of best practices in core instruction • Supports and scaffolds for equal access to rigorous learning and standards mastery • Assessments, instructional tools/resources, and professional development geared to mastery of the standards
Meaningful Connections	Drawing relevance among learning topics or ideas. Meaningful connections can be made between current learning and: 1. Prior learning 2. Future learning 3. Real life application 4. Students' experiences *Current learning to real-life application connection:* **Example:** We've been learning about the rules of force and motion in nature. Now that you know those rules, what considerations do you think car manufacturers have to study when they're designing the look of a new vehicle?
Precise	Precise refers to the extent to which instruction is delivered using the best, most direct language, examples, and learning activities to teach an objective.
Learning Tools	Any object used in the teaching or practicing of academic content that enables students to better understand a concept or idea. Examples of learning tools include math manipulatives, SMART Board technology, graphic organizers, science equipment, etc.
Procedural Fluency	A basic understanding of facts, information, or formulas. Procedural fluency addresses the questions of "what" or "how."
Deep Conceptual Knowledge	Deep understanding of facts, information, or formulas that goes beyond the "what" or "how" and instead addresses questions of "why" and "in what context?" When reaching deep conceptual knowledge, students are able to make connections between ideas and information, know how the information relates to other information, and knows when and what information to integrate together in a given context.
Academic Feedback	Verbal or written feedback to students that is grounded in hard data from student work, formative assessment, or summative assessment. Academic feedback should leave students with a concrete understanding of their performance and specific next steps for academic improvement. **Example:** "I love the hook that you wrote, but there aren't enough details in the body of the essay for me to create a vivid picture of what's happening." **Example:** "Based upon your quiz this week, I see that I need to give you extra help in understanding rounding place value to the hundredths place. While you correctly answered all the problems about rounding to the nearest tenth, you missed four of the five questions about rounding to the nearest hundredth."

Plan 1: Uses Data

Teachers will be expected to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding, provide timely and effective feedback and make adjustments based on a variety of student data.

	Highly Effective	Effective	Developing	Ineffective
A	• Teacher **collects student data** and uses them to **inform class-level, group-level, and individual student-level** planning.	• Teacher **collects student data** and uses them to **inform class-level and group-level** planning.	• Teacher **collects student data** and uses the data to **inform class-level** planning.	• Teacher **does not collect student data** or does collect student data but **does not use them to inform** planning.
B	• Teacher **involves students in setting their own short- and long-term goals.**	• Teacher sets **short- and long-term goals** for individual students.	• Teacher **sets short- or long-term goals** for individual students.	• Teacher **does not set short- or long-term goals** for individual students.
C	• Teacher **uses data** in a way that allows him/her to **strategically plan and differentiate** for individual students.	• Teacher **uses data** to **accurately determine individual students' progress** toward mastery of lesson objectives.	• Teacher **uses data**, but they **do not help to accurately determine** students' mastery of the lesson objectives.	• Teacher **does not use data** to determine students' mastery of lesson objectives.

Plan 2: Plans Rigorous, Common Core Aligned Lessons

A key shift is that students do most of the heavy intellectual lifting to develop problem-solving skills. One way this happens is through teachers providing students with access to the content and developing fluency with mechanics and computation and essential skills. Students are engaged in tasks that are at an appropriate level of complexity, are authentic and help students apply their knowledge.

	Highly Effective	Effective	Developing	Ineffective
A	• Teacher designs lesson **plans that align** with the district curriculum and pacing guides and **enhance the content.**	• Teacher designs lesson **plans that align** with the district curriculum and pacing guides.	• Teacher designs **some lessons that align** to the district curriculum and pacing guides, **but others are not aligned.**	• Teacher designs lesson plans that are **not aligned** to the district curriculum and pacing guides.
B	• Teacher **plans appropriately scaffolded instructional activities** and **provides students a choice of rigorous instructional activities** that allow students to meet the objective at the level of thinking it requires.	• Teacher **plans appropriately scaffolded and rigorous instructional activities** that allow students to meet the objective at the level of thinking it requires.	• Teacher **plans some instructional activities** that lack the appropriate scaffolding, lack rigor, or are too rigorous to allow students to meet the objective at the level of thinking it requires.	• Teacher **does not plan appropriately scaffolded and rigorous instructional activities** that will allow students to meet the objective at the level of thinking it requires.

Plan 3: Plans Differentiated Instruction

The Common Core State Standards require teachers to make connections across disciplines and provide students the opportunity to exchange and analyze multiple perspectives. They must also give students the opportunity to practice using their knowledge base in authentic situations with real purpose. Teachers not only provide information for students, but also provide methods for students to seek out their own knowledge.

	Highly Effective	Effective	Developing	Ineffective
A	• Lesson plans **show evidence of differentiation in which students have a choice based upon data.**	• Lesson plans **show evidence of differentiation for subgroups of students**, which is **based on data.**	• Lesson plans **show evidence of differentiation for subgroups** of students.	• Lesson plans **do not show evidence of differentiation** for students.
B	• Lesson plans **show evidence of varied instructional strategies that are effective** in increasing student understanding and enable students to **facilitate their own learning.**	• Lesson plans **show evidence of varied instructional strategies that are effective** in increasing student understanding of the learning target.	• Lesson plans **show evidence of varied instructional strategies**, but **they may not be effective** in moving forward student learning/ understanding.	• Lesson plans **do not show evidence of varied instructional strategies** to address multiple learning modalities.
C	• Teacher **appropriately** differentiates grade-level texts and materials in a way that **enables all students to reach mastery of the objective, and students can select from multiple equally rigorous options of text and/or materials.**	• Teacher **appropriately** differentiates grade-level texts and materials in a way that **enables all students to reach mastery of the objective.**	• Teacher **attempts** to differentiate grade-level texts and/or materials, but **the planned differentiation does not adequately address the needs of all students.**	• Teacher **does not** differentiate grade-level texts and materials.

Teach 1: Delivers Accurate Content and Connects Learning

The Common Core State Standards require that students have a depth of knowledge through a narrow focus of standards. Accurate content is key to building students' knowledge in specific disciplines. Making connections to the learning builds the bridge to current and lifelong learning.

	Highly Effective	Effective	Developing	Ineffective
A	• Teacher presentation of content is **accurate**, **precise**, **clear** to students, and **aligned** to the objective.	• Teacher presentation of content is **accurate**, **clear** to students**, and aligned** to the objective.	• Teacher presentation of content **is accurate**, but **not clear** to students.	• Teacher presentation of content is **inaccurate and not clear** to students.
B	• Teacher makes **explicit and meaningful connections** between current and prior learning, as well as **future learning.**	• Teacher makes **explicit and meaningful connections** between current and prior learning.	• Teacher makes **connections** between current and prior learning, but the **connections do not build student understanding and interest.**	• Teacher **does not make connections** between current and prior learning.
C	• Teacher **makes connections** between current learning and real-life application that push student learning and are **relevant to students' experiences.**	• Teacher **makes connections** between current learning and real-life application that **push student learning.**	• Teacher **makes surface-level connections** between current learning and real-life application.	• Teacher **does not make connections** between current learning and real-life application.

Teach 2: Delivers Common Core Aligned Instruction

Higher-order thinking is central to the Common Core State Standards. Teachers must engage **all** students in a full range of complex informational texts so that students are consistently required to think and engage at high levels. Students should be doing most of the heavy intellectual lifting so that they develop skills that will allow them to problem solve on their own once they are in college and careers. In order to thrive in the post-high school world, students also need to be able to interact meaningfully and positively with others. Academic vocabulary aids students in building a language that helps them to be successful across all content areas.

	Highly Effective	Effective	Developing	Ineffective
A	• Teacher **uses and models academic vocabulary** and **holds students accountable** for using academic vocabulary correctly.	• Teacher **uses and models academic vocabulary** that is **essential to the discipline.**	• Teacher **uses and models some academic vocabulary** that is essential to the discipline, but **some terms are left out or used incorrectly.**	• Teacher **does not use or model academic vocabulary.**
B	• Teacher **gives students opportunities to select from multiple appropriate learning tools** to **enhance student learning.**	• Teacher **gives students opportunities to use available learning tool(s)** to **enhance student learning.**	• Teacher **gives students opportunities to use available learning tool(s)**, but **they are ineffective at enhancing student learning.**	• Teacher **does not use** available **learning tool(s)** to enhance student learning.
C	• Teacher **appropriately balances building procedural fluency or background knowledge with deep conceptual knowledge** in a way that **extends students' understanding** of the subject area.	• Teacher **appropriately balances building procedural fluency or background knowledge with deep conceptual knowledge.**	• Teacher **attempts to build procedural fluency or background knowledge and deep content knowledge**, but there is an **inappropriate balance** between the two.	• Teacher **does not balance** building **procedural fluency or background knowledge with deep conceptual knowledge**.
D	• Tasks provided for students are **appropriately complex for each student** and **allow students a choice of task**.	• Tasks provided for students are **appropriately complex for each student.**	• Tasks provided for students are at the **appropriate level of complexity for subgroups** of students.	• Tasks provided for students are at the **wrong level of complexity.**

Teach 3: Facilitates Questioning and Thinking

The Common Core standards are a considerable step up in rigor from past standards. A knowledge base is more than isolated disciplinary knowledge. It is a cross-disciplinary compilation of information from which students can use for a variety of purposes. In many ways, a rich knowledge base may be among a student's greatest assets when they enter college or work. Applying this knowledge base is more than simply reciting facts; it is understanding the connections that can be made across disciplines, knowing where gaps in knowledge exist and better understanding how to fill existing gaps. Furthermore, students must have the habit of mind to continually seek out new knowledge and make connections between new ideas in order to remain competitive and relevant in a constantly changing world.

	Highly Effective	Effective	Developing	Ineffective
A	• Teacher asks **appropriately complex questions** that require students to make **inferences based on the evidence.**	• Teacher asks **questions that require evidence-based answers**, and they are **appropriately complex questions.**	• Teacher **asks questions that require evidence-based answers**, but **they may not be appropriately complex questions.**	• Teacher **does not ask** questions **that require evidence-based answers**.
B	• Teacher **provides varied and appropriate opportunities** for students to explain their thinking, **defend their claims**, and **build upon their peers' use of evidence.**	• Teacher **provides varied and appropriate opportunities** for students to **explain their thinking and defend their claims to their peers.**	• Teacher **provides opportunities for students to explain their thinking and defend their claims.**	• Teacher **does not provide opportunities** for students to **explain their thinking or defend their claims**.
C	• Teacher **scaffolds questions** to appropriately **increase rigor** throughout the lesson and **models instructional strategies** so that **students can generate their own questions.**	• Teacher requires students to answer questions that are **related to the objective and scaffolded appropriately** to **increase rigor** throughout the lesson.	• Teacher requires students to answer questions, but **they are primarily low-level questions or do not move students forward to master the objective.**	• Teacher **does not require** students to **answer questions or asks primarily low-level questions**.

Teach 4: Assesses Progress Toward Mastery

The Common Core State Standards require that students understand the connections between what they are learning and how they can apply it to real life. Helping students understand the relevance of daily learning objectives and real life connections will aid in their understanding. Similarly, students should understand how they will know if they are achieving the learning objective and should be able to communicate, in their own words, what success looks like or how it will be measured.

	Highly Effective	Effective	Developing	Ineffective
A	• **Teacher clearly communicates the objective(s) and connects it to standards,** and **students can restate objective(s) in their own words.**	• Teacher **clearly communicates the objective(s)** and **connects it to standards.**	• Teacher **communicates the objective(s),** but it is **not clear how it connects to standards.**	• Teacher **does not communicate** the objective(s).
B	• Teacher **models what is required for mastery** of the objective(s), and **provides students with an exemplar of what mastery looks like.**	• Teacher **clearly models what is required for mastery** of the objective(s).	• **Teacher models what is required for mastery** of the objective(s), but the modeling is **unclear.**	• Teacher **does not model what is required for mastery** of the objective(s).
C	• Teacher's **checks for understanding yield quality data** and enable **students to know their own progress toward mastery.**	• Teacher's **checks for understanding yield usable information that allows him/her to monitor progress toward mastery.**	• Teacher's **checks for understanding yield usable information.**	• Teacher **does not check for understanding** during the lesson, or **teacher checks for understanding, but the checks do not yield usable information.**
D	• Teacher **provides quality, academic feedback** so that **students can direct their own learning.**	• Teacher **provides quality academic feedback** so that **students understand the gaps in their knowledge or performance**.	• Teacher **provides feedback** but it is **not academic and does not lead students to understand their gaps** in knowledge or performance.	• Teacher **does not provide** students with **feedback** during the lesson.
E	• Students **know and can articulate** their **own progress** toward short and long-term goals, and they **understand why that progress is significant.**	• Students **know** and **can articulate their own progress toward** short and long-term goals.	• Students **have seen**, but **cannot articulate their own progress** toward short and long-term goals.	• Students **do not know** their **own progress toward short and long-term goals**.

Create a Learning Environment 1: Build and Maintain a Culture for Learning				
	Highly Effective	**Effective**	**Developing**	**Ineffective**
A	• Teacher demonstrates **high expectations for all students** and **encourages students to have high expectations for their peers.**	• Teacher demonstrates **high expectations for all students.**	• Teacher demonstrates **high expectations for some students**, but not all.	• Teacher **does not demonstrate high expectations** for students.
B	• Teacher demonstrates a **positive rapport with all students** and **reinforces positive interactions among students.**	• Teacher demonstrates a **positive rapport with all students.**	• Teacher demonstrates a **positive rapport with some students, but not others.**	• Teacher **does not demonstrate a positive rapport** with students.
C	• Teacher **encourages all students to take on challenges** or academic risks and **encourages students to support their peers to take on challenges and academic risks.**	• Teacher **encourages all students to take on challenges** or academic risks.	• Teacher **encourages some students to take on challenges** or academic risks.	• Teacher **does not encourage students to take on challenges** or academic risks.
D	• Teacher **has systems that encourage positive relationships, teamwork, and conflict management** among students that are **successfully implemented with few teacher directions.**	• Teacher **has systems that encourage positive relationships, teamwork and conflict management** among students that are **successfully implemented.**	• Teacher **has systems that encourage positive relationships, teamwork, and conflict management** among students, but they are **not successfully implemented.**	• Teacher **does not have systems that encourage positive relationships, teamwork, and conflict management** among students.

Create a Learning Environment 2: Manage Student Social and Emotional Behavior to Reach Academic Goals				
	Highly Effective	**Effective**	**Developing**	**Ineffective**
A	• Teacher **creates** an **environment** where **students are aware** of and **follow behavioral expectations** and **encourage their peers to do the same.**	• Teacher **creates** an **environment** where **students are aware of behavioral expectations** and **follow these expectations, needing few, if any, reminders.**	• Teacher **creates** an **environment** where **students are aware of behavioral expectations** but **need frequent reminders** to follow the expectations.	• Teacher **does not create** an **environment** where students are **aware of behavioral expectations** or **students are aware of behavioral expectations but they do not follow them.**
B	• Teacher is **minimally involved in redirecting off-task behavior (or there is no evidence of off-task behavior) with no negative impact on instructional time**; students routinely and effectively **monitor their own behaviors.**	• When needed, teacher **redirects off-task behavior** in a manner that **solves the issue** and has a **minimal negative impact on instructional time.**	• When needed, teacher **redirects off-task behavior** in a manner that **does not solve the issue,** or **redirection has a significant negative impact on instructional time.**	• When needed, teacher **does not redirect off-task behavior or inconsistently redirects** off-task behavior.
C	• **Routines** and **procedures run smoothly** with **minimal prompting from the teacher.**	• **Routines** and **procedures run smoothly with teacher direction.**	• **Routines** and **procedures** are **in place**, but **require significant teacher direction.**	• **Routines** and **procedures** are **not evident.**
D	• **Transitions** are **orderly, efficient,** and **systematic;** they require **minimal teacher direction.**	• **Transitions (with teacher direction)** are **orderly**, **efficient**, and **systematic**.	• **Transitions** are **fully directed by the teacher** and **may not be orderly or efficient.**	• **Transitions** are **disorderly and inefficient,** and this leads to **loss of instructional time.**

Analyze and Adjust 1: Monitor Student Progress and Intervene as Needed

The Common Core State Standards are demanding in the skills they require of students. Regular and meaningful feedback from teachers is essential to student success. In order to help students drive their own learning, teachers should help them understand their progress toward mastery.

	Highly Effective	Effective	Developing	Ineffective
A	• Teacher **appropriately recommends students** for **tiered interventions based upon student data.**	• Teacher **appropriately recommends students** for **tiered interventions**.	• Teacher **recommends students** for **tiered interventions**, but **may over- or under-identify students requiring interventions.**	• Teacher **does not recommend students** for **tiered interventions**.
B	• Teacher **develops intervention plans** or **ensures created intervention plans are implemented** to meet student needs, and teacher **communicates progress** of interventions **to students** and their **families**.	• Teacher **develops intervention plans** or **ensures that created intervention plans are implemented** to meet student needs.	• Teacher **inconsistently implements intervention plans** as designed or **does not develop intervention plans** when needed.	• Teacher **does not attempt to implement intervention plans** as designed and **does not develop intervention plans** when needed.
C	• Teacher **communicates with families** regarding student progress in a **proactive manner** that **allows parents** to see how they can **support student learning.**	• Teacher **communicates with families** regarding student progress in a **proactive manner**.	• Teacher **communicates with families** regarding student progress, but the communication is **reactive**.	• Teacher **does not communicate** with **families** regarding student progress.

Analyze and Adjust 2: Engage in Professional and Reflective Conversations

The indicators provide a way for educators to talk, using the "language" of the Common Core, about specific teaching practices and habits of mind to help students master the common standards and succeed in school and beyond. Engaging is professional and reflective conversations is vital to one's growth.

	Highly Effective	Effective	Developing	Ineffective
A	• Teacher **proactively leads data analysis** with colleagues and **offers positive suggestions.**	• Teacher **regularly participates** in **data analysis conversations** with colleagues.	• Teacher **occasionally participates** in **data analysis conversations** with colleagues.	• Teacher **does not participate** in **data analysis conversations** with colleagues.
B	• There is evidence that the **teacher uses data to reflect** on his/her own strengths and weaknesses and the success of his/her teaching; teacher **proactively seeks ways to address his/her weaknesses.**	• There is evidence that **the teacher uses data to reflect** on his/her own strengths and weaknesses and the success of his/her teaching.	• There is evidence that **the teacher reflects** on his/her own strengths and weaknesses and the success of his/her teaching.	• There is **no evidence that the teacher reflects** on his/her own strengths and weaknesses and the success of his/her teaching.
C	• Teacher **actively participates** in **professional development,** there is evidence that **new learning is incorporated into teaching practice,** and **teacher shares new learning with peers.**	• Teacher **actively participates** in **professional development,** and there is evidence that **new learning is incorporated into teaching practice.**	• Teacher **actively participates** in **professional development.**	• Teacher **does not participate in professional development** or is **not an active participant**.