**Characteristics of Highly Effective**

**Teaching and Learning**

The following statements represent characteristics that are common to all content areas.

**Learning Climate:**  a safe environment supported by the teacher in which high, clear expectations and positive relationships are fostered; active learning is promoted

**Teacher Characteristics:**

A. creates learning environments where students are active participants as individuals and as members of collaborative groups

B. motivates students and nurtures their desire to learn in a safe, healthy and supportive environment which develops compassion and mutual respect

C. cultivates cross cultural understandings and the value of diversity

D. encourages students to accept responsibility for their own learning and accommodates the diverse learning needs of all students

E. displays effective and efficient classroom management that includes classroom routines that promote comfort, order and appropriate student behaviors

F. provides students equitable access to technology, space, tools and time

G. effectively allocates time for students to engage in hands-on experiences, discuss and process content, and make meaningful connections

H. designs lessons that allow students to participate in empowering activities in which they understand that learning is a process and mistakes are a natural part of learning

I. creates an environment where student work is valued, appreciated and used as a learning tool

**Student Characteristics:**

A. accepts responsibility for his/her own learning

B. actively participates and is authentically engaged

C. collaborates/teams with other students

D. exhibits a sense of accomplishment and confidence

E. takes educational risks in class

F. Practices and engages in safe, responsible and ethical use of technology

**Classroom Assessment and Reflection:**  the teacher and student collaboratively gather information and reflect on learning through a systematic process that informs instruction

**Teacher Characteristics:**

A. Uses multiple methods to systematically gather data about student understanding and ability

B. Uses student work/data, observations of instruction, assignments and interactions with colleagues to reflect on and improve teaching practice

C. Revises instructional strategies based upon student achievement data

D. Uncovers students’ prior understanding of the concepts to be addressed and addresses students’ misconceptions/incomplete conceptions

E. Co-develops scoring guides/rubrics with students and provides adequate modeling to make clear the expectations for quality performance

F. Guides students to apply rubrics to assess their performance and identify improvement strategies

G. Provides regular and timely feedback to students and parents that moves learners forward

H. Allows students to use feedback to improve their work before a grade is assigned

I. Facilitates students in self- and peer-assessment

J. Reflects on instruction and makes adjustments as student learning occurs

**Student Characteristics:**

A. Recognizes what proficient work looks like and determines steps necessary for improving his/her work

B. Monitors progress toward reaching learning targets

C. Develops and/or uses scoring guides periodically to assess his/her own work or that of peers

D. Uses teacher and peer feedback to improve his/her work

E. Reflects on work and makes adjustments as learning occurs

**Instructional Rigor and Student Engagement:** a teacher supports and encourages a student’s commitment to initiate and complete complex, inquiry-based learning requiring creative and critical thinking with attention to problem solving

**Teacher Characteristics:**

A - Teacher instructs the complex processes, concepts and principles contained in state and national standards using differentiated strategies that make instruction accessible to all students.

B – Teacher scaffolds instruction to help students reason and develop problem-solving strategies.

C - Teacher orchestrates effective classroom discussions, questioning, and learning tasks that promote higher-order thinking skills.

D -Teacher provides meaningful learning opportunities for students.

E -Teacher challenges students to think deeply about problems and encourages/models a variety of approaches to a solution.

F -Teacher integrates a variety of learning resources with classroom instruction to increase learning options.

G -Teacher structures and facilitates ongoing formal and informal discussions based on a shared understanding of rules and discourse.

H -Teacher integrates the application of inquiry skills into learning experiences.

I -Teacher clarifies and shares with students learning intentions/targets and criteria for success.

**Student Characteristics:**

A -Student articulates and understands learning intentions/targets and criteria for success.

B - Student reads with understanding a variety of texts.

C -Student applies and refines inquiry skills.

**Instructional Relevance:** a teacher’s ability to facilitate learning experiences that are meaningful to students and prepare them for their futures.

**Teacher Characteristics:**

A-Teacher designs learning opportunities that allow students to participate in empowering activities in which they understand that learning is a process and mistakes are a natural part of the learning.

B-Teacher links concepts and key ideas to students’ prior experiences and understandings, uses multiple representations, examples and explanations.

C-Teacher incorporates student experiences, interests and real-life situations in instruction.

D-Teacher selects and utilizes a variety of technology that support student learning.

E-Teacher effectively incorporates 21st Century Learning Skills that prepare students to meet future challenges.

F-Teacher works with other teachers to make connections between and among disciplines.

G-Teacher makes lesson connections to community, society, and current events**.**

**Student Characteristics:**

A-Student poses and responds to meaningful questions.

B-Student uses appropriate tools and techniques to gather, analyze and interpret information from quantitative and qualitative evidence.

C-Student develops descriptions, explanation, predictions, and models using evidence.

D-Student works collaboratively to address complex, authentic problems, which require innovative approaches to solve.

E-Student communicates knowledge and understanding in a variety of real-world forms.

F-Student communicates knowledge and understanding for a variety of purposes.

**Knowledge of Content:**  a teacher’s understanding and application of the current theories, principles, concepts and skills of a discipline.

**Teacher Characteristics:**

A- Teacher demonstrates an understanding and in-depth knowledge of content and maintains an ability to convey this content to students.

B- Teacher maintains on-going knowledge and awareness of current content developments.

C- Teacher designs and implements standards-based courses/lessons/units using state and national standards.

D- Teacher uses and promotes the understanding of appropriate content vocabulary.

E- Teacher provides essential supports for students who are struggling with the content.

F- Teacher accesses a rich repertoire of instructional practices, strategies, resources and applies them appropriately.

**Student Characteristics:**

A- Student demonstrates growth in content knowledge.

B-Student uses and seeks to expand appropriate content vocabulary.

C-Student connects ideas across content areas.

D- Student uses ideas in realistic problem solving situations.