

# Focus Indicators

FOR LEADING IN  
2022-2023

The *Focus Indicators* are a subset of Indicators from the Model School-Level Administrator Rubric that represent high-leverage practices for supporting students' academic and social-emotional needs and promoting an ant-racist, culturally responsive school environment.

By prioritizing a subset of Indicators, districts can establish shared expectations and supports for practice in key areas and better focus and streamline the evaluation process. Educators and evaluators can use this resource alongside the [Educator Evaluation Implementation Resources](#) to guide goal-setting, evidence-collection, feedback, support, and professional learning around high-priority practices.

## FOCUS INDICATORS

CLICK ON AN INDICATOR TO GET STARTED

**I-A** Curriculum

**I-B** Instruction

**II-A** Environment

**II-B** HR Management & Development

**III-A** Family and Community Engagement

**IV-D** Continuous Learning

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Focus Indicators are informed by the following guiding principles, which reflect the unique context of teaching and learning in the year ahead:

- Prioritize the **social-emotional wellbeing of students and educators** as the foundation for effective teaching and learning.
- Promote **culturally responsive, anti-racist teaching and leading practices** that aim directly to disrupt patterns of inequities and systems of oppression against Black/Latinx/Asian/Indigenous/Mixed race communities.
- Provide all students with the supports they need to **access to grade-level instruction**.
- **Engage students and families** in learning through meaningful partnerships.

### EACH INDICATOR PAGE FEATURES:

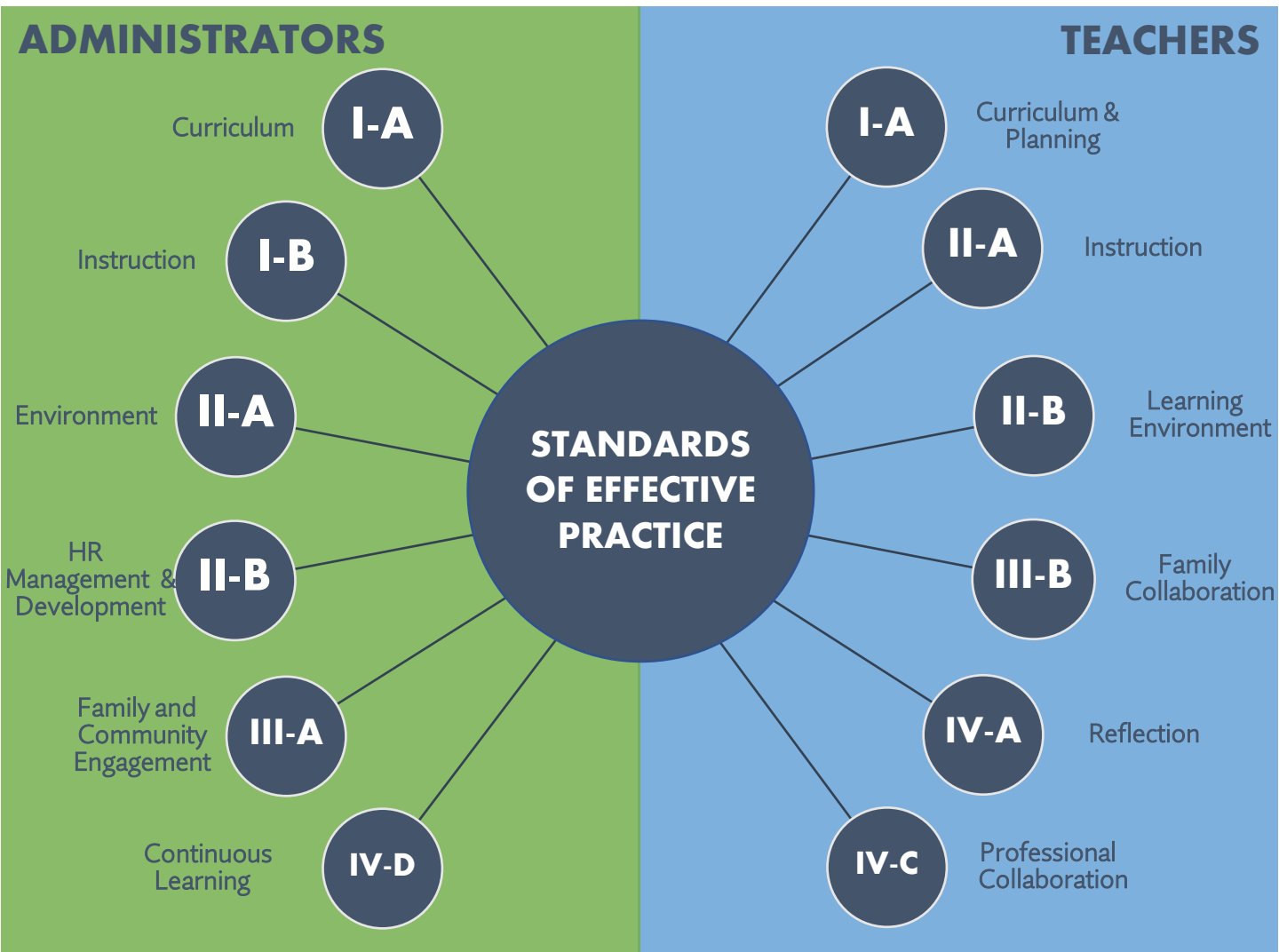


1. **Standard and Indicator Description**
2. **Key Practices**, adapted from elements associated with the Focus Indicator to highlight practices of specific relevance to the unique context of the 2022-23 school year.
3. **Focus Points for Feedback, Collaboration, and Support** provide examples of specific practices within this context.
4. **Supportive Resources**

# Overview

## FOCUS INDICATORS

The Focus Indicators highlight high priority practices for anti racist and culturally responsive teaching and leading in SY2022-23. Because teachers and administrators depend on one another to be effective in meeting the needs of every student, the Focus Indicators for teachers and administrators are complimentary.



## GENERAL RESOURCES

[Supports and Resources for Educator Evaluation Implementation](#) | DESE

[Acceleration Roadmap](#) | DESE and TNTF

[Massachusetts Blueprint for English Learner Success](#)  
DESE

[Restart & Recovery: Considerations for Teaching and Learning](#) | Council of Chief State School Officers

[Culturally responsive teaching: What you need to know](#) | Understood

[A Restorative Approach for Equitable Education](#)  
Learning Policy Institute

# I-A Curriculum

## STANDARD I INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Ensures that all teachers implement and adapt as needed effective and rigorous standards based units of instruction consisting of well structured lessons with measurable outcomes.

### KEY PRACTICES

**Builds understanding of the characteristics and value of high quality instructional materials, and the curricula taught by educators in the building.**

**Provides teachers with professional learning, feedback, and resources to support the skillful use of curricular materials through evidence based, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically responsive practices.**

### FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

- ▶ Ensuring that educators have access to high-quality, culturally responsive instructional materials and curriculum for each subject and grade level
- ▶ Discerning high-quality curricular materials from low-quality curricular materials in order to advocate for high-quality materials
- ▶ Supporting educators' skillful use and implementation of materials by providing professional learning, feedback, and resources, with a focus on scaffolds and supplements to support students' needs
- ▶ Providing professional learning opportunities focused on calibrating teachers' perceptions of high-quality, standards-aligned learning tasks and student work, and the feedback offered to students to help them progress
- ▶ Monitoring implementation of instructional materials to identify areas for additional professional development or coaching
- ▶ Engaging with the school community (including faculty, staff, students, families, and community members/organizations) to identify and interrupt racism and bias in instructional materials and ensure curricula and its implementation are culturally responsive and locally contextualized
- ▶ Supporting collaboration and teaming structures (e.g., grade-level teams, course/content teams, co-teachers) to facilitate instructional planning and delivery
- ▶ Strategically distributing roles and responsibilities for planning, adapting, and implementing standards-aligned units and lessons among instructional staff in order to effectively target learning needs within and across classrooms

### RESOURCES

[Curriculum RATings by TEachers \(CURATE\)](#) | DESE

[Implement MA Resource Guide](#) | DESE

[MASS Literacy](#) | DESE

[Guidance for Accelerating Student Learning](#) | *Instruction Partners*

[Accessing Grade Level Content](#) | *The Rennie Center*

**I-B**

# Instruction

STANDARD I

## INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Ensures that instructional practices in all settings reflect high expectations regarding content and quality of effort and work, engage all students, and are personalized to accommodate diverse learning styles, needs, interests, and levels of readiness.

### KEY PRACTICES

**Establishes and communicates a clear vision for instruction grounded in culturally and linguistically responsive practices for all students**

**Supports educators to uphold high expectations for all students to meet or exceed grade-level standards**

**Provides professional learning, feedback, and support for educators on the use of evidence-based, engaging and inclusive instruction**

### FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

- ▶ Consistently communicating to the school community that standards-aligned, culturally responsive instruction using high-quality materials is essential for equity
- ▶ Prioritizing relationship-building with teachers and staff to support trusting, collaborative, and culturally responsive coaching supports
- ▶ Setting the expectation that each and every student can successfully access and engage with grade-level content that accelerates their learning, regardless of starting point
- ▶ Providing professional learning, feedback, and support on specific strategies for engaging all students as active learners of meaningful, standards-aligned content
- ▶ Providing professional learning, feedback, and support to educators to develop students' abilities to think critically, ask questions, and analyze sources, perspectives, and biases in order to deepen learning and make connections between the content and real-world problems and events (e.g., issues of identity, equity, power, and justice).
- ▶ Providing professional learning, feedback, and support on the use of appropriate inclusive practices, such as tiered supports, technology, scaffolded instruction, and Universal Design for Learning principles
- ▶ Supporting teachers to use multilingual students' native language(s) to support instruction, such as through cognates and translanguaging practices
- ▶ Distributing feedback and coaching responsibilities to ensure that teachers receive regular and meaningful feedback
- ▶ Seeking out the perspective and feedback of all students and families and incorporating those voices into decision-making about school-wide instructional practices

### RESOURCES

[The Opportunity Myth](#) | *TNTP*

[Culturally Responsive Teaching & Leading](#) | *DESE*

[Universal Design for Learning Guidelines](#) | *CAST*

[Translanguaging](#) | *WIDA*

[Critical Consciousness: A Key to Student Achievement](#) | *Phi Delta Kappan*

Develops and executes effective plans, procedures, routines, and operational systems to address a full range of safety, health, and emotional and social needs of students.

## KEY PRACTICES

Ensures learning environments are accessible, welcoming, and safe.

Establishes operational systems, procedures, and routines that are supportive of staff and student engagement, health, wellbeing, and safety.

Provides training and supports to assist staff in nurturing age appropriate social emotional competencies in students as they progress academically.

Coordinates and effectively supports custodial/maintenance workers, transportation staff, clerical and administrative assistants, food service workers, and other staff.

## FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

- ▶ Supporting all students to feel safe physically, socially, emotionally, behaviorally, and academically
- ▶ Providing multi-tiered supports to build students' sense of belonging in the school community
- ▶ Building positive, caring relationships with students, family members, and staff
- ▶ Ensuring that school policies and practices support a culturally sustaining environment that honors students' and staff members' backgrounds, identities, strengths, and challenges
- ▶ Providing staff with relevant learning opportunities and resources to support them in developing culturally and linguistically responsive practices and promoting a culture that affirms individual differences
- ▶ Consistently examining policies, procedures, and systems to identify and eliminate bias or systemic barriers to inclusive and culturally and linguistically responsive practice, including policies and practices that reinforce white dominant culture and/or disproportionately impact Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous, and multiracial students
- ▶ Collecting feedback from staff to check in on their well-being and assess their needs, and providing resources to support staff with their mental health and well-being while offering flexibility and empathy
- ▶ Developing and supporting culturally responsive, trauma-informed care practices for students, offering all staff members the opportunity to address the intersections of trauma with culture, history, race, gender, location, and language, and to acknowledge the compounding impact of structural inequity
- ▶ Fostering and utilizing partnerships with outside agencies and organizations to address student needs, including mental health, in a proactive and systematic way

## RESOURCES

[Safe and Supportive Schools](#) | DESE

[Three Signature SEL Practices](#) | CASEL

[Supporting Student Resilience and Well-Being with Trauma-Informed Care: Educator Self-Assessment & Planning Tool](#)  
Center for Great Teachers & Leaders

[Helping Students Heal from Trauma](#) | Rennie Center

[Evidence-Based Strategies for Assessing Students' Social and Emotional Wellbeing](#) | Annenberg Institute & Results for America

**II-B**

# Human Resources Management & Development

**STANDARD II  
MANAGEMENT  
& OPERATIONS**

Implements a cohesive approach to recruitment, hiring, induction, development, and career growth that promotes high quality and effective practice.

**KEY PRACTICES**

**Leads the school's recruitment, hiring and retention strategies and, through it, consistently identifies and supports diverse and effective educators who share the school's mission and will meet the learning needs of the school's students.**

**Supports implementation of school based induction supports for new teachers.**

**Organizes high quality professional development that includes job embedded and teacher led learning opportunities.**

**FOCUS FOR FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT:**

- ▶ Leading anti-bias recruitment and hiring processes for a variety of educator roles and responsibilities to meet student learning needs, including the development of student teacher, paraprofessional, and emergency/provisionally licensed teacher pipelines
- ▶ Including a diverse group of family members, students, and staff in recruitment and hiring procedures
- ▶ Prioritizing recruitment, hiring, and development practices that ensure access and ongoing support to Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous, and multiracial educators
- ▶ Examining existing HR policies and procedures to identify and eliminate bias
- ▶ Supporting flexibly-designed staffing structures that leverage specific teachers' skills and competencies (e.g. co-teaching, differentiated roles, strategic student assignment) to meet student learning needs
- ▶ Prioritizing a robust induction and mentoring program—in-person or virtual, as needed—that provides direct, ongoing support to new educators, differentiated based on their preparation experience (i.e., educators on emergency and provisional licenses may benefit from additional hours of coaching and opportunities to observe more veteran teachers)
- ▶ Ensuring professional development supports educators to skillfully implement high-quality instructional materials
- ▶ Establishing and sustaining regular, collaborative settings for small groups of educators to plan, assess, and share best practices

**RESOURCES**

[MA Guide to Building Supportive Talent Systems for Educators](#) | DESE

[Professional Learning Partner Guide](#) | Rivet Education

[High Quality Mentoring & Induction Practices](#) | New Teacher Center

[Supporting Student Resilience and Well-Being with Trauma-Informed Care: Educator Self-Assessment & Planning Tool](#)  
Center for Great Teachers & Leaders

[Principal Induction and Mentoring](#) | DESE

[MA Teacher Diversification Guidebook](#) | DESE & TNTP

# Family and Community Engagement

Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.

## KEY PRACTICES

**Provides a variety of asset based, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically responsive opportunities for all families to engage as partners in the school community.**

**Establishes strategic relationships with community organizations, community members, and businesses either individually or through district initiatives and partnerships. Engages them to maximize community contributions for school effectiveness.**

## FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

- ▶ Welcoming, encouraging, and providing regular opportunities and resources for all families to be active partners in the district and school community
- ▶ Using disaggregated data to determine whether families are being equitably and effectively engaged and adjusting practice accordingly
- ▶ Establishing a system to proactively and regularly collect feedback from families about factors affecting student learning and engagement and working with staff and families to identify and remove barriers to families' involvement
- ▶ Ensuring that all communications are accurately available in families' home languages and easily accessible, particularly to families who do not have consistent access to technology
- ▶ Encouraging and supporting families of English learners to use their home language, reinforcing the message to those families that they can support and continue their children's progress
- ▶ Modeling and establishing the expectation for regular, two-way communication with families around student expectations and concrete strategies for supporting learning at school and at home
- ▶ Providing educators with resources to support, manage, and monitor family communications and engagement, including high-quality translation services
- ▶ Providing teachers with professional learning and resources on culturally responsive communication and engagement with families
- ▶ Identifying and connecting with community organizations that can support students and families with physical and mental health, housing, food, and legal needs

## RESOURCES

[Strengthening Partnerships: A Framework for Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement in Massachusetts](#) | *Massachusetts Family Engagement Coalition*

[MA Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals Self-Assessment](#) | DESE  
[Family Portal](#) | DESE

**IV-D**

# Continuous Learning

## STANDARD IV PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

Develops and nurtures a culture in which staff members are reflective about their practice and use student data, current research, best practices and theory to continuously adapt instruction and achieve improved results. Models these behaviors in the administrator's own practice.

### KEY PRACTICE

Develops a culture of continuous, data-focused, growth-oriented reflection and adjustments to practice.

### FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

- ▶ Setting expectations and ensuring that systems are in place for educators to reflect on the effectiveness of their instruction and how their identities, biases, and practices impact student learning and well-being
- ▶ Modeling, supporting, and promoting personal anti-racist work that addresses one's own explicit and implicit biases, blind spots, and behaviors
- ▶ Supporting all educators to contribute to the development of an antiracist school/district culture, including actively dismantling barriers that prevent Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous, and Multiracial educators from being supported and successful
- ▶ Seeking out the perspectives, feedback, and voices of every demographic represented in the school community and incorporating those voices into decision-making
- ▶ Regularly reviewing disciplinary, attendance, engagement, and academic progress data, including grading, to identify and quickly address potentially biased policies and practices
- ▶ Working with educators to ensure that curricula and instructional materials promote understanding of the strengths and cultures of Black, Indigenous and People of Color, explicitly address systemic racism, and include authentic opportunities to help students make meaning of and process inequities in their world and communities
- ▶ Designing, implementing, and monitoring ongoing professional learning for all educators that builds educators' critical consciousness and results in improved outcomes and experiences especially for Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous and multiracial students

### RESOURCES

[Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading](#) | DESE

[Culturally Responsive Social-Emotional Competency Development](#) | DESE

[Teacher Evaluation as Cultural Practice: A Framework for Equity and Excellence](#) | María del Carmen Salazar and Jessica Lerner

[The Principal's Guide to Building Culturally Responsive Schools](#) | National Association of Elementary School Principals

[Data Equity Walk Toolkit](#) | The Education Trust