The COVID-19 pandemic has created a new and unique context for teaching and learning. While prioritizing a safe return to in-person learning, districts are also implementing hybrid or fully remote learning models over the course of the 2020-21 school year. In alignment with DESE’s Remote Learning Guidance for Fall 2020, this resource supports school and district leaders, professional development providers, and other educators to focus meaningful supervision and feedback on critical practices for administrators in all learning models during the COVID-19 pandemic, while allowing for important innovations and learning as educators navigate these new models.

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
- Provide all students with access to grade-level instruction and essential content
- Strive for coherence within and across grade levels, subject areas, and learning settings
- Engage students and families in learning in a meaningful and consistent manner
- 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

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 2020-21 school year.
3. Focus Points for Feedback, Collaboration, and Support provide examples of specific practices within this context.
4. Supportive Resources

The following definitions were approved by the MA Board of Elementary & Secondary Education in June 2020. We define remote learning as no in-person instruction, where instruction occurs through synchronous and/or asynchronous teaching in virtual formats and includes 1) procedures to ensure that all students participate, including a system for tracking attendance and engagement, 2) alignment to state standards, 3) policies for grading students’ remote academic work; and 4) regular communication with students’ parents and guardians. We define hybrid learning as a mix of in-person and remote instruction.
Overview

The Focus Indicators highlight the highest priority practices for teaching and leading during the COVID-19 pandemic. 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.

STANDARDS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

ADMINISTRATORS

I-A Curriculum

I-B Instruction

II-A Environment

II-B HR Management & Development

III-C Communication

IV-B Cultural Proficiency

TEACHERS

I-A Curriculum & Planning

II-B Learning Environment

II-D Cultural Proficiency

III-B Family Collaboration

IV-A Reflection

IV-B Professional Collaboration

GENERAL RESOURCES

Remote Teaching and Learning Module Series | DESE

Supports and Resources for Educator Evaluation Implementation in 2020-2021 | DESE

Building Blocks of Equitable Remote Learning LearnLaunch

Restart & Recovery: Considerations for Teaching and Learning | Council of Chief State School Officers

Guide: TNTP’s Re-imagining Teaching in a Blended Classroom | The Learning Accelerator and TNTP
STANDARD I
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

I-A Curriculum
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
Provides supports to all educators and teams to adapt as needed and implement standards-based units comprised of well-structured lessons, in-person and online, such that students are able to learn the knowledge and skills defined in state standards/local curricula. Frequently provides feedback as necessary.

FOCUS FOR FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT:
► Ensuring that educators have access to the core curriculum being used for each subject and grade level, relevant adaptations (including publishers’ updates to curricula relative to remote teaching) needed to function in online settings, and resources for learning at home (e.g. manipulatives, texts, foundational skills practice materials) aligned to essential content and learning targets
► Supporting collaboration and teaming structures (e.g., grade-level teams, course/content teams, co-teachers, etc.) to facilitate instructional planning and delivery in hybrid and remote settings
► Preparing guidance, expectations, and supports for teachers to share with students and families, relative to how the curriculum will function in all teaching and learning scenarios that may occur

RESOURCES
Restart & Recovery: Considerations for Teaching and Learning | Council of Chief State School Officers
Accessing Grade Level Content | The Rennie Center
CURriculum RATings by TEachers (CURATE) | DESE
Alignmenting Curriculum to Massachusetts Standards | DESE
Guidance for Accelerating Student Learning | Instruction Partners
Learn Launch Building Block: Set Priorities for Learners
Learn Launch
STANDARD I

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

I-B Instruction

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

| While observing practice and reviewing unit and/or lesson plans, regularly provides quality feedback on the use of effective, high-leverage instructional practices that are likely to motivate and engage students in the content of the lesson. |
|---|---|---|
| Defines high expectations for the quality of instruction, student work, and the perseverance and effort required to produce it; supports all educators to uphold these expectations for all students across learning contexts (in-person and remote). |
| Regularly provides quality feedback to teachers on the use of appropriate inclusive practices that meet the diverse learning needs of all students, including those of academically advanced students, students with disabilities, and English learners. |

FOCUS FOR FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT:

- Prioritizing relationship-building with teachers and staff to support trusting, collaborative, and culturally responsive coaching supports
- Providing timely feedback on specific strategies for engaging students in remote and hybrid settings, including students with disabilities and English learners
- Distributing feedback and coaching responsibilities to ensure that teachers receive regular and meaningful feedback tailored to content-specific instructional needs and professional growth goals
- Providing professional learning opportunities focused on calibrating teachers’ perceptions of high-quality, standards-aligned learning tasks and student work in hybrid and remote learning environments, and the feedback offered to students to help them progress
- Strategically distributing roles and responsibilities for planning, adapting, and implementing standards-based units and well-structured lessons in hybrid and remote settings to support the quality and coherence of instruction
- Setting the expectation that each and every student can successfully access and engage with essential, grade-level content that accelerates their learning, regardless of starting point
- Providing resources to help teachers build their own and their students’ digital literacy and capacity to work independently in remote and hybrid settings
- Providing feedback on the cultural responsiveness of the teacher’s practice, focused on helping educators implement asset-based and anti-racist instructional strategies within both in-person and remote settings

RESOURCES

- **National Standards for Quality Online Teaching, 3rd ed**
- **Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance**
- **Research-Based Engagement Strategies | Council of Chief State School Officers**
- **Online Platform for Informed Teaching & Calibration (OPTIC) | DESE**
- **Virtual Learning Walk | The Danielson Group**
- **Remote Teaching and Learning Modules 3 and 5 | DESE**
- **Learn Launch Building Block: Set Priorities for Learners | Learn Launch**
STANDARD II
MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

II-A Environment

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY PRACTICES</th>
<th>KEY PRACTICES, CONT.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensures both physical and virtual learning environments are accessible, welcoming, and safe.</td>
<td>Provides training and supports to assist staff in developing age-appropriate social emotional competencies in students as they progress academically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishes operational systems, procedures, and routines in both in-person and online learning environments that are supportive of staff and student engagement, health, wellbeing, and safety.</td>
<td>Fosters and utilizes partnerships with outside agencies and organizations to address student needs in a proactive and systematic way.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordinates and effectively supports custodial/maintenance workers, transportation staff, clerical and administrative assistants, food service workers, and other staff.</td>
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FOCUS FOR FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT:

► Maintaining physical buildings in accordance with current public health and DESE guidance
► Implementing systems that support a positive school environment across all learning contexts (in-person and remote), such as advisories or community circles, consistent routines, student and staff celebrations, and frequent and open home-school communication
► Conducting “equity walks” (both in-person and virtual) to support and reinforce an anti-racist and culturally responsive school environment
► Creating a system to identify students, families, and staff who may be experiencing trauma and/or require additional supports from the school and community partners
► Supporting scheduling that promotes daily connections between students and educators, provides time for teacher collaboration and planning, and ensures services and supports to students with disabilities and English learners
► Creating procedures for monitoring student attendance and engagement and developing plans to support students who become disengaged
► 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

FOCUS FOR FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT:

► Developing professional learning plans to support culturally responsive, social-emotional learning that can be adapted and integrated into remote and hybrid learning contexts.
► Connecting with families early on and using systems to maintain regular two-way communication throughout the year
► Identifying and connecting with community organizations that can support students and families with physical and mental health, housing, food, and legal needs.
► Connecting families and students to community organizations that can provide safe learning spaces when students are not in the classroom
STANDARD II
MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

II-B Human Resources Management & Development
Implements a cohesive approach to recruitment, hiring, induction, development, and career growth that promotes high-quality and effective practice.

Leads the school’s recruitment, hiring and retention strategies and, through it, consistently identifies 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 recruitment and hiring processes for a variety of educator roles and responsibilities to mitigate potential teacher shortages and meet student learning needs, including student teacher, paraprofessional, and emergency/provisionally licensed teacher pipelines
► Supporting flexibly-designed staffing structures that leverage specific teachers’ skills and competencies (e.g. co-teaching, differentiated roles, strategic student assignment) while mitigating circumstances that may limit personnel availability, such as extended leaves of absence or health considerations
► Investing in efforts to recruit and retain more Black/Latinx/Asian/Indigenous and mixed-race educators, while maintaining awareness of the disproportionate impact of the public health crisis on specific workforce demographics
► Prioritizing a robust induction and mentoring program—in-person OR virtual, as needed—that provides direct, ongoing supports to new educators
► Differentiating coaching and mentoring models to support novice educators 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, particularly in virtual settings)
► Ensuring PD is aligned to high-quality instructional materials, and leveraging content experts (coaches, teacher leaders, department chairs) in the identification and implementation of shared learning targets aligned to essential content
► Establishing and sustaining regular, collaborative settings for small groups of educators to plan, assess, and share best practices
► Using professional development offerings to support culturally responsive, trauma-informed care practices, 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

RESOURCES for STANDARD II FOCUS INDICATORS

Virtual Talent Guide | TNTP
High Quality Mentoring & Induction Practices | TNTP
Leveraging Student Teachers in 2020-21 | DESE
Learn Launch Building Block: Prepare Educators | Learn Launch
Supporting Student Resilience and Well-Being with Trauma-Informed Care: Educator Self-Assessment & Planning Tool | Center for Great Teachers & Leaders
Remote Teaching and Learning Module 5: Professional Collaboration | DESE
STANDARD III
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**Family Communication**
Engages in regular, two-way, culturally proficient communication with families about student learning and performance.

**KEY PRACTICES**

- Ensures that all communication with families demonstrates understanding of and respect for different home languages, culture, and values.
- Sets clear expectations for and provides appropriate supports to educators regarding regular, two-way, culturally proficient communication with families.

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

- Ensuring that all communications are 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 even if they use their home language
- Establishing a system to proactively and regularly collect feedback from families about factors affecting student engagement with remote and hybrid learning (consider establishing a team of teacher leaders to support implementation of this system across multiple forums)
- Establishing a system to support outreach to unreached families, including relationship-building measures and alternative means of communication
- Establishing the expectation early on for regular, two-way communication with families around expectations for student learning and behavior in both in-person and remote settings, and concrete strategies for supporting learning at school and at home (including appropriate adaptations for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency)
- Providing educators with resources to support, manage, and monitor family communications and engagement, including translation services as necessary
- Providing teachers with professional learning and resources on culturally responsive communications with families
- Offering support in outreach to families using multiple strategies to connect with families
- Regularly asking families for feedback on how remote learning is going, and how it could be improved

**RESOURCES**

- Strategies to Engage Unreached Families | Flamboyan Foundation
- Getting Started with Real Family Engagement During Distance Learning | Flamboyan Foundation
- Rethinking Family Engagement During School Closures Teaching Tolerance
- Learn Launch Building Block: Support Parents | Learn Launch
- Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Family Engagement in the Time of COVID-19 and Remote Learning, and Always | Education Justice Research and Organizing Collaborative at the NYU Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools
- Remote Teaching and Learning Module 4: Family Collaboration | DESE
STANDARD IV
PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

IV-B Cultural Proficiency

Ensures that policies and practices enable staff members and students to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment in which students' backgrounds, identities, strengths, and challenges are respected.

KEY PRACTICES

Develops and implements culturally responsive policies and practices that acknowledge the diverse backgrounds, identities, strengths, and challenges of students and staff.

Provides staff with relevant resources to support them in building cultural proficiency and promotes a culture that affirms individual differences.

FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

► Cultivating authentic, culturally responsive relationships with all staff members
► Seeking out the perspectives, feedback, and voices of every demographic represented in the school community and incorporating those voices into decision-making around hybrid and remote learning
► Regularly reviewing disciplinary, attendance, engagement, and academic progress data, including grading, for students in both in-person and remote learning settings 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 this moment in time (i.e., pandemic, protest movement against systemic racism)
► Providing and requiring professional learning opportunities to support anti-racist, asset-based teaching practices
► Modeling, supporting, and promoting personal anti-racist work that addresses one's own explicit and implicit biases, blind spots, and behaviors

RESOURCES

Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Schools and Classrooms | DESE
Teacher Evaluation as Cultural Practice: A Framework for Equity and Excellence | María del Carmen Salazar and Jessica Lerner
Data Equity Walk Toolkit | The Education Trust

Culturally Responsive Social-Emotional Competency Development | DESE
The Principal’s Guide to Building Culturally Responsive Schools | National Association of Elementary School Principals