NATIONAL COMPETENCY-BASED TEACHER STANDARDS (NCBTS)

A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDE FOR FILIPINO TEACHERS



Republic of the Philippines Department of Education

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE NCBTS

What is the NCBTS?

The NCBTS is an integrated theoretical framework that defines the different dimensions of effective teaching, where effective teaching means being able to help all types of students learn the different learning goals in the curriculum.

Why Do We Need the NCBTS?

Filipino teachers often get mixed signals about what it means to be an effective teacher. For example, they may have been taught definitions of good teaching by teacher educators in their pre-service education that seem to be different from what their principals and supervisors expect in their schools. Or teachers are taught new teaching approaches that seem inconsistent with the Performance Appraisal System. What is worse is when teachers who have the reputation of being ineffective teachers are promoted to higher ranks.

The NCBTS provides a single framework that shall define effective teaching in all aspects of a teacher's professional life and in all phases of teacher development. The use of a single framework should minimize confusion about what effective teaching is. The single framework should also provide a better guide for all teacher development programs and projects from the school-level up to the national level.



Who Should Use the NCBTS?

Anyone who is interested in improving teaching practices should refer to the NCBTS. Thus, teacher education institutions shall use the NCBTS to design and implement effective pre-service teacher education curricula. The PRC shall refer the NCBTS in designing the Licensure Exam for Teachers. Organizations and agencies that implement in-service education for teachers (INSET) shall refer to the NCBTS in developing their interventions. Award-giving bodies shall refer to the NCBTS in defining their criteria for outstanding teachers.

The DepED shall use the NCBTS in formulating its hiring, promotion, supervision, and other policies related to the teaching profession. It shall also use the NCBTS to guide its INSET programs for teachers.

Most important, individual teachers in all the public elementary and high schools all over the country shall use the NCBTS for their professional development activities.



How Should Teachers Use the NCBTS?

Teachers can use the NCBTS in many ways:

- As a guide to reflect on their current teaching practices
- As a framework for creating new teaching practices
- As a guidepost for planning for professional development goals
- As a common language for discussing teaching practices with other teachers



The best way to begin using the NCBTS is to use the competency-based framework as the guide for thinking critically about whether the teacher's current practices are helping students attain the learning goals in the curriculum.

A teacher can use the various elements of the NCBTS to determine whether their different actions and strategies as teachers are effective in helping their students learn the desired curriculum objectives. Thus, the NCBTS can be used as a self-assessment tool.

It is most likely that in using the NCBTS, a

teacher will see herself as demonstrating some dimensions of effective teaching, but not others. As all teachers aim to be more effective facilitators of student learning, the NCBTS can then serve as a framework for revising current practices or for developing new teaching practices that would make teaching more effective. In other words, the NCBTS can cue the teacher about what she should be doing, in case she finds her current practice less than ideal.

This self-assessment can help teachers plan for their professional develop in the short-term and in the long-term. For example, using the NCBTS the teacher can be aware of her strengths as a teacher and ensure that she becomes more consistent in demonstrating her strengths. At the same time, she can plan on professional development strategies so that she can improve on her weaknesses.

Thus, the NCBTS can help each Filipino teacher become a better teacher, and assist each teacher to continuously think about improving professional to become even better and better as facilitators of student learning.

With the NCBTS all Filipino teachers also share a common vocabulary for discussing their teaching practice, for defining their ideals as teachers, for negotiating and creating strategies to improve their practice, and for addressing their various stakeholders regarding the improvement of the teaching profession.

Is the NCBTS New? How Similar or Different is it?

Many of the specific items under the NCBTS are not new. This is because many ideas about good teaching have been practiced for some time now. But what is "new" about the NCBTS is that these ideas have been integrated into a singular



integrated framework.

In addition, there are actually relatively "new" ideas that the NCBTS is emphasizing. For example, the idea of "competency-based" standards is a relatively new idea in teacher development in the Philippines, which is being emphasized in the NCBTS.

What Does Competency-Based Mean?

Basically, competency-based means that the standards or criteria for characterizing good teaching are defined in terms of what the teacher is competent to do. So instead of defining good teaching practice in terms of the teacher's credentials, LET scores, grades in graduate school, degrees, personality traits, and so on, we look at what the teacher can do competently. In the NCBTS, good teaching is being defined in terms of those practices that help students learn better. So the NCBTS is concerned with whether teachers are competent in helping students learn.

How Were These Competencies Chosen? How Was the NCBTS Decided?

The competencies in the NCBTS were derived from (a) educational theories and empirical research on characteristics learning environment and teaching practices that lead to effective student learning, and (b) documented successful practices and programs of schools, divisions, regions, and educational reform projects in different parts of the country. A technical working group was set up to study what types of classroom learning experiences were associated with high levels of student learning in the Philippines. Then the teaching practices associated with these learning experiences were defined. These practices were then organized and then presented in a series of national, zonal, and sectoral consultations for validation and finalization.

The bulk of the participants in the consultation were teachers and master teachers, so we can be sure that actual classroom teachers validated these competencies. But there were also school heads, principals, supervisors, superintendents and other division officials, regional directors and other regional officials, representatives from academe, teacher education institutions, NGOs and other government agencies like the CHED, PRC, CSC, and NEDA, among others.

Is the NCBTS Just A List of Competencies? Or is there A Theory or Framework That Integrates All These Competencies?

The NCBTS does not adhere to a single educational theory. Indeed, it is a balanced framework that adopts assumptions of different educational theories. But underlying this framework is a core set of assumptions about teaching that is significantly different from the traditional conceptions of teaching.

For example, the NCBTS articulates a view of ideal teaching that is closely linked to new paradigms about effective learning. So the qualities of the good teacher are not defined in an abstract technical sense, because teaching is not viewed as a technical process. Instead, the NCBTS defines a new paradigm of teaching where the teacher is viewed as a knowledge professional who is responsible for facilitating learning in variety of learners and learning environments.

This view also emphasizes the technical knowledge of teacher, but more important, it emphasizes the essential link between teachers' knowledge and students' learning. Therefore, teachers' knowledge and skills are meaningful, useful, and effective only if they help students learn within their learning environment.

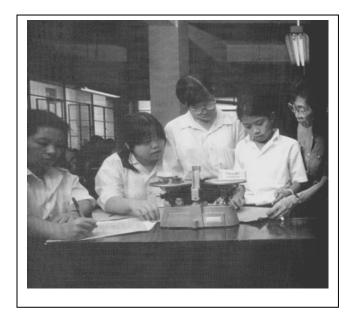
This makes the process of teaching essentially complex and problematic in that it has to be suited to varieties of learners and learning environments. So teaching is not a one-strategy-fits all undertaking. Instead, it means choosing among a variety of strategies and maybe even creating new strategies, all with the goal of helping learners learn.

Therefore, good teaching requires the teacher's active involvement in designing, redesigning, and evaluation of the learning experiences of students. Thus, the image of the good teacher is one who is constantly reflecting about how best to help different types of learners learn. The teacher is not a mere implementer of pre-defined or prescribed sets of actions. Instead, the teacher is an active agent engaged in higher level thinking about how to help the students learn.

This high level thinking processes involved in teaching necessarily refer to factors in the learning context. So the definition of good teaching needs to be closely linked to the contexts in which they will be agents of learning in students. Teaching processes never occur in a vacuum; that teachers will always aim to be effective within their actual contexts; and the contexts can provide constraints as well as opportunities for effective student learning.

We can say express the theme of this new paradigm of teaching as follows:

"Teaching involves the reflective acquisition and application of complex and problematic technical knowledge to facilitating student learning in actual contexts."



We can summarize this new paradigm by comparing it to the traditional views, as shown in the following table:

The Traditional View	The NCBTS View	
Teaching is a technical process, and the good qualities of this technical process are well defined.	Teaching is facilitating learning, and the qualities of good teaching are defined in terms of whether students learn or not.	
Teacher knowledge is technical knowledge applicable to all learners and contexts.	Teacher knowledge is essentially complex and problematic; applicability varies across learners and contexts.	
Teaching involves consistent application of technical knowledge.	Teaching involves reflective and flexible application of technical knowledge in ways that best bring about student learning.	
Effective application of teacher knowledge dependent on prerequisite inputs in teaching environment.	<i>Effective teaching is determined within the limits and opportunities found in the learning environment.</i>	

Table 1.	Contrasting	the Paradigms	of Teaching
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Does the NCBTS Make Teaching More Difficult?

Actually, NO. Teachers have always been expected to help all their students learn given the constraints in the learning environment. So there's nothing new here. The NCBTS has simply articulated this expectation so that it is clear to all concerned.

What If the Teachers Cannot Do This Type of Teaching?

The NCBTS is not just a standard against which teachers will be evaluated. More important, the NCBTS is a guide for helping teachers become more effective teachers or more effective facilitators of student learning. In other words, the NCBTS takes a developmental perspective about teaching standards. The framework provides concrete guideposts to help teachers become better and better.



Actually, the NCBTS assumes that teachers themselves are interested in improving their practice. It disagrees with the stereotype that Filipino teachers are not interested or motivated to change and improve their teaching.

How Can the NCBTS Help Teachers Improve Their Teaching?

First, the NCBTS makes certain assumptions about improving teaching. In particular, the NCBTS assumes that:

- Individual teachers have various types and levels of motivation to improve their teaching in ways that better enhance student learning.
- Individual teachers have different capabilities to constantly improve their teaching for better student learning.
- Individual teachers have diverse ranges of opportunities to pursue their motivations and raise their capabilities to teach better, in whatever situations they are.
- The process of improving teacher is an individual process, but this is sustained and enhanced when the efforts are collaborative and synergistic among communities of teachers.
- Individual teachers may develop improved teaching practice for enhanced student learning, but the full impact on student learning is best achieved by integrated and cumulative improved efforts of many teachers.
- The qualities of good teaching for enhanced student learning are found in individual teachers, but such qualities are strengthened and valued more when it is supported by communities of teachers and educators.

These assumptions point to the understanding that teachers themselves are the most important agents in the improvement of their teaching. But their personal efforts are enhanced when groups of teachers work together to improve their teaching and when the immediate and larger work environment supports the efforts of the teachers.

Therefore, the NCBTS shall ensure that all the stakeholders in the teachers' work environment (i.e., the principal/school head, supervisors, superintendents, community, parents, etc.) would marshal all their efforts to support the improvement of the teachers' practices to be in better alignment with the NCBTS.

How Does the NCBTS Define Good Teaching?

The competency-based teacher standards are organized hierarchically. The "basic" level categories of the standards are seven **domains**. A domain is defined as a distinctive sphere of the teaching-learning process, and is also a well-defined arena for demonstrating positive teacher practices. Each domain

is defined in terms of a principle of ideal teaching associated with enhanced student learning.

Under each domain, there are **strands**. Strands refer to more specific dimensions of positive teacher practices under the broad conceptual domain.



At the lowest level of the hierarchical organization,

under the strands, specific **indicators** are defined. These indicators are concrete, observable, and measurable teacher behaviors, actions, habits, actions, routines, and practices known to create, facilitate, and support enhanced student learning.

The domains, strands, and indicators may be characterized in terms of the following dimensions:

- Nature/quality: This dimension refers to question, "How well are the essential qualities or critical features demonstrated/observed in the positive teacher practices?"
- Frequency, consistency and appropriateness: This dimension refers to the questions, "How often is the ideal teaching practice demonstrated?", "Is the demonstration appropriate to the particular teacher-learning process?", and "Is the teacher consistent in demonstrating this ideal?"
- Self-awareness: This dimension refers to the question, "Is the teacher aware or mindful of the premises, rationale, nature, and effects of the demonstrated teacher-learning process?"

What Are These Seven Domains?

The seven domains are:

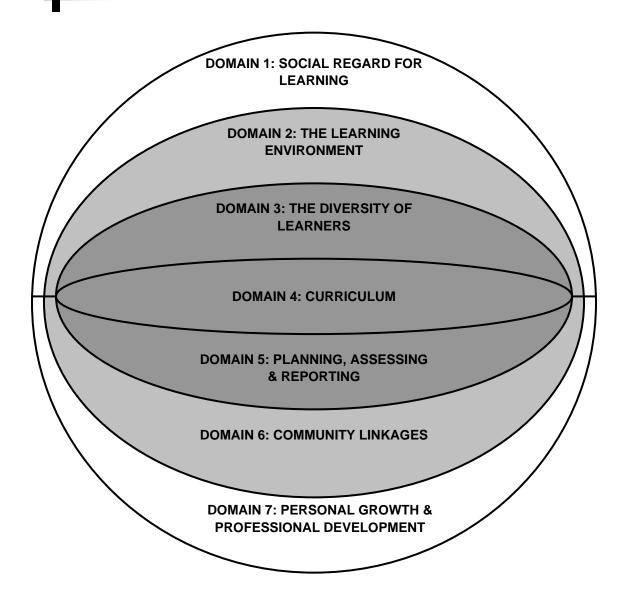
- (1) social regard for learning
- (2) learning environment
- (3) diversity of learners
- (4) curriculum
- (5) planning, assessing, and reporting
- (6) community linkages
- (7) personal growth and development



Each domain will be defined in greater detail in the later parts of this guide. But it is important to know that the seven domains are closely connected to each other in very meaningful ways, and that the seven domains is best understood a constituting an integrated whole as shown in the figure below.

To understand how the seven domains comprise an integrated whole, it would help to see the seven domains as falling under two broad categories. The middle domains 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 [the shaded areas] represent standards referring to "The Teacher as Facilitator of Learning," whereas the two outer domains 1 and 7 [the unshaded areas] represent standards referring to "The Teacher."

The middle domains can further be divided into two sub-categories. The innermost domains 3, 4, and 5 [the darker shaded areas] represent the specific teacher practices related to the technical aspects of the teaching-learning processes, whereas the other domains 2 and 6 [the lighter shaded areas] represent the specific teacher practices that embed the learning process in appropriate contexts.



We can discuss the integration of the seven domains from the inside going out. At the center of the series of domains [the dark shaded areas] are the technical aspects of the teaching-learning process. The domains of The Diversity of Learners (3), Curriculum (4), and Planning, Assessing, and Reporting (5) refer to what may be called good teaching strategies, and are very closely related to each other. These domains express the new paradigm on teaching shown in Table 1.

Table 1 also explains the links between the next to outer domains [the light shaded areas]: The Learning Environment (2) and Community Linkages (6). The two domains refer to the teaching practices that attempt to situate or at least link the teaching-learning process to appropriate contexts: the immediate physical, psychological and the social context of the classroom, and the larger socio-cultural, economic, political, and historical context of the community. In other words, Domains 2 and 6 provide the context for Domains 3, 4, and 5.

Together, Domains 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 represent the full range of teacher practices that relate to effectively facilitating learning.

On the other hand, the two outermost domains [the unshaded areas] represent the important teacher practices that relate to the teacher as learner. Domain 1 represents the ideal that the teacher serves as a model of all the positive values associated with learning, and Domain 7 represents the behaviors that demonstrate the teachers' actual aspirations to continue learning as a

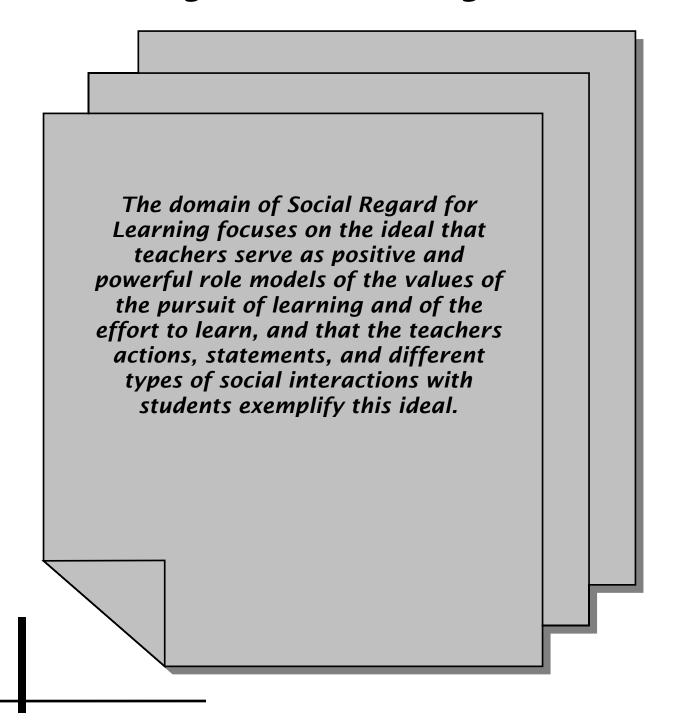


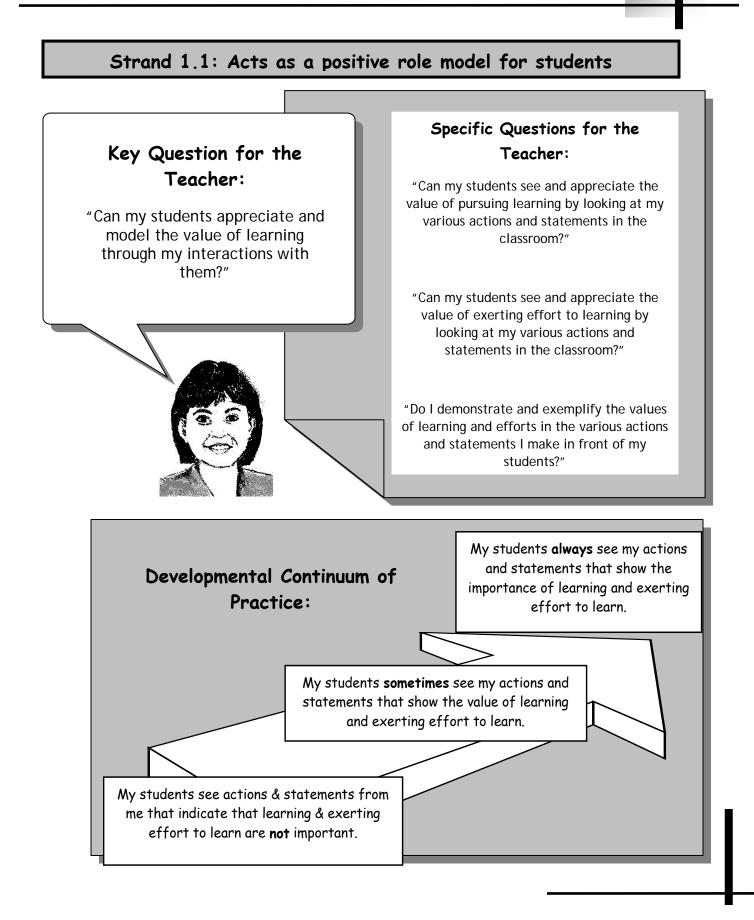
professional teacher. These two domains are not distinct and separate from those five domains related to facilitating learning. Instead, the teachers' personal demonstration of the values and activities of learning make the teachers more credible and effective facilitators of learning in students. Indeed, Domains 1 and 7 can be the domains that fuel and drive teacher development in the other five domains.

IN THE NEXT SECTIONS, THE SEVEN DOMAINS AND THEIR UNDERLYING STRANDS ARE PRESENTED AS A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS PERSONAL REFLECTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING.

Domain 1:

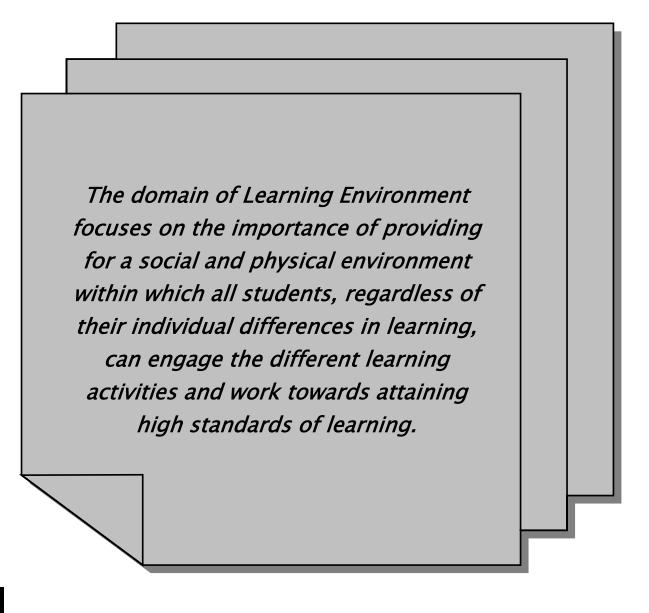
Social Regard for Learning





Domain 2:

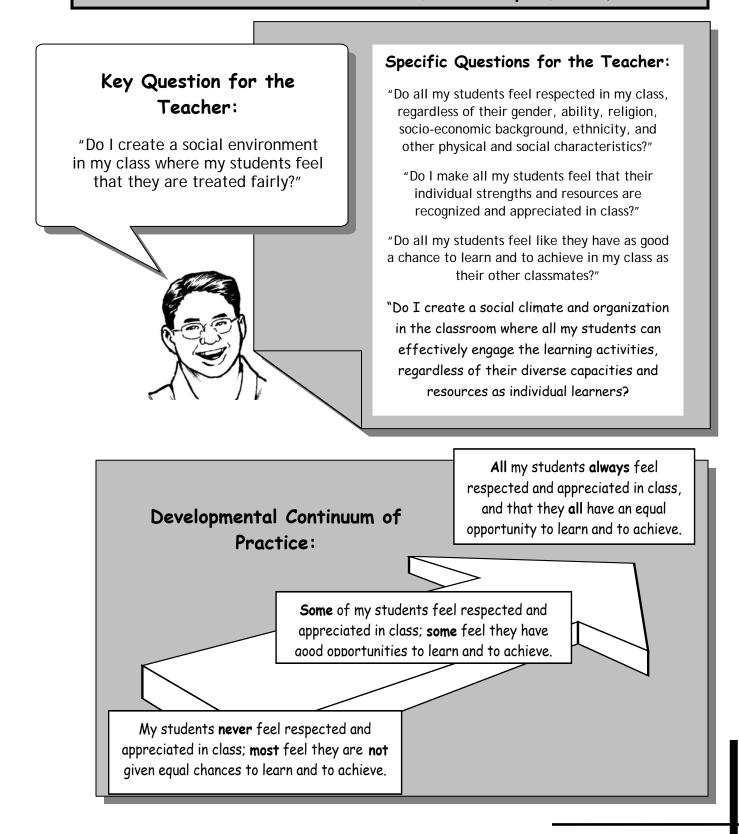
Learning Environment

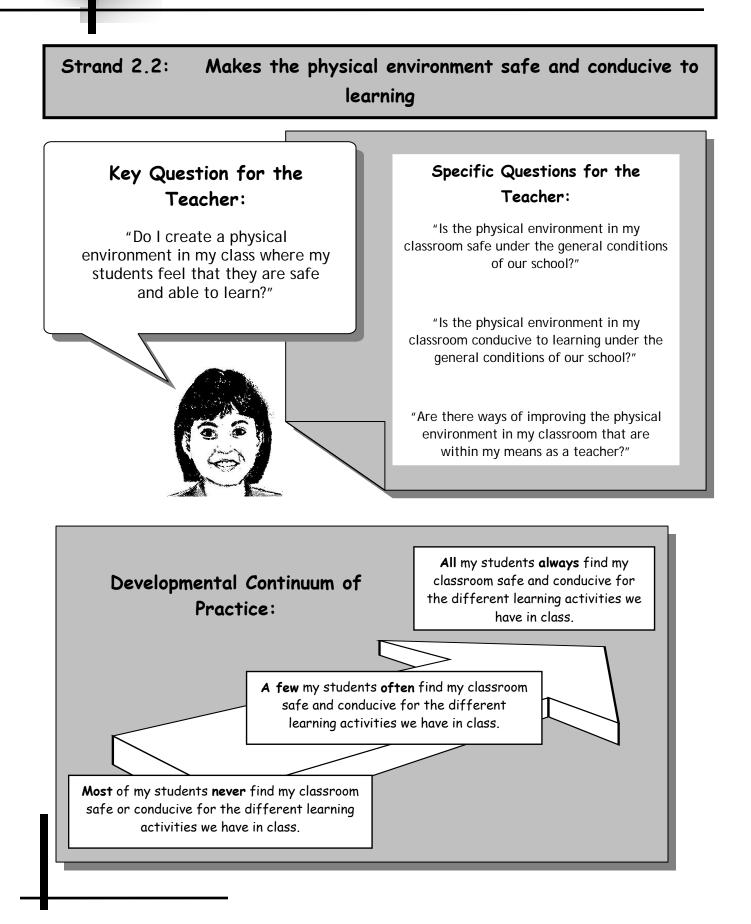


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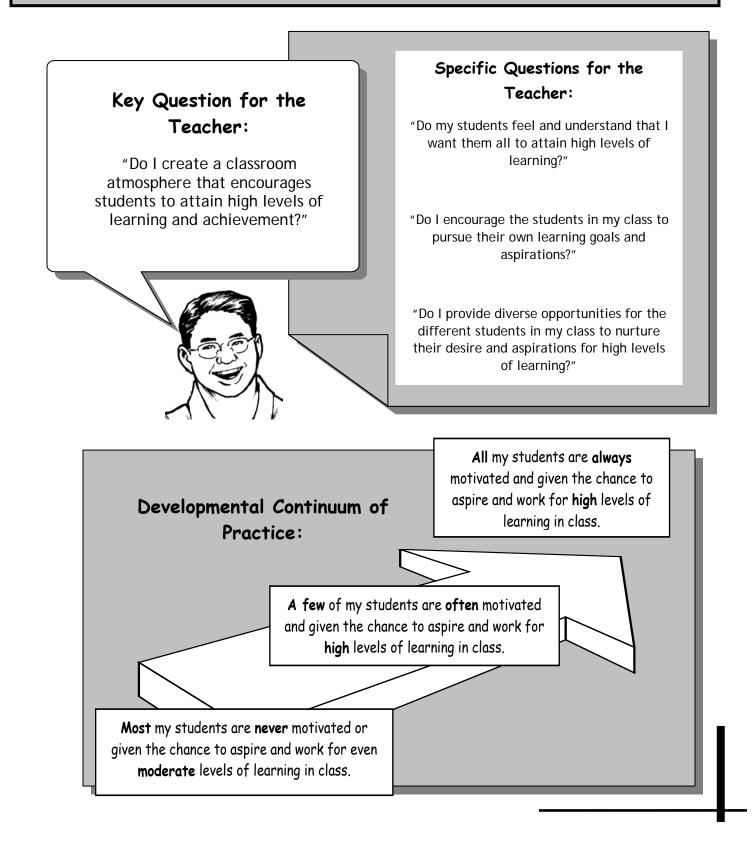
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Strand 2.1: Creates an environment that promotes fairness





Strand 2.3: Communicates higher learning expectations to each learner

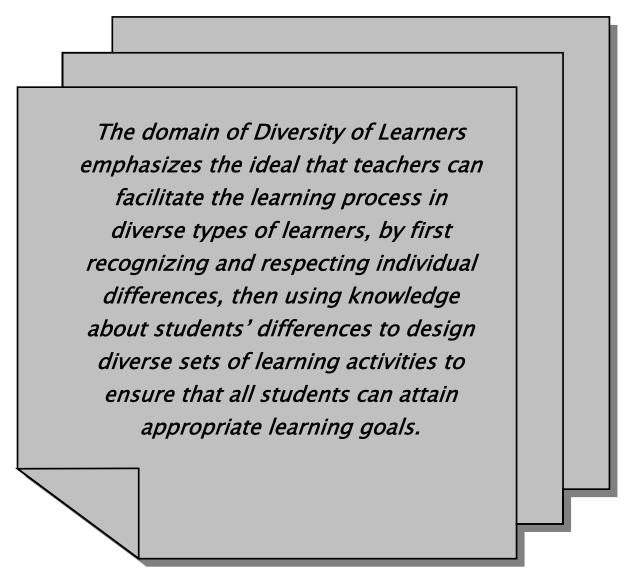


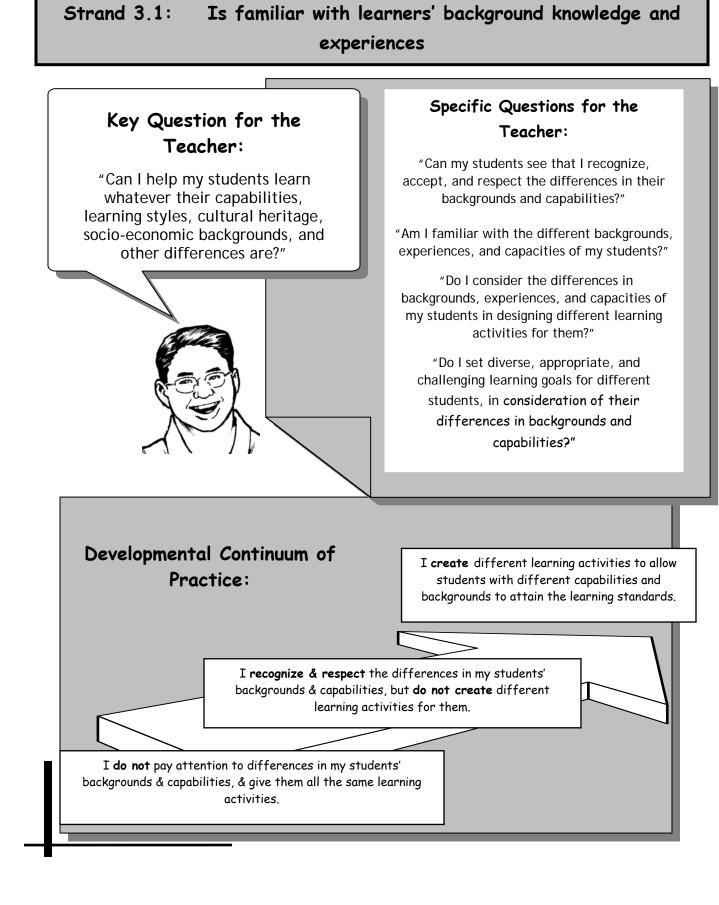
Establishes and maintains consistent standards of Strand 2.4: learners' behavior Specific Questions for the Key Question for the Teacher: Teacher: "Do I respond to learning and behavior problems quickly, appropriately, "Do I create a consistent and respectfully, and consistently?" orderly social climate and organization in the classroom for my students?" "Do I provide all my students with timely, appropriate, and consistent feedback on their learning behaviors?" "Do I clearly communicate and consistently observe school and classroom policies on appropriate classroom behaviors?" My students see my how highly consistent I am in responding to Developmental Continuum of their appropriate and inappropriate behaviors in class. **Practice:** My students see my how I'm somewhat inconsistent I am in responding to their appropriate and inappropriate behaviors in My students see my how very inconsistent I am in responding to their appropriate and inappropriate behaviors in class.

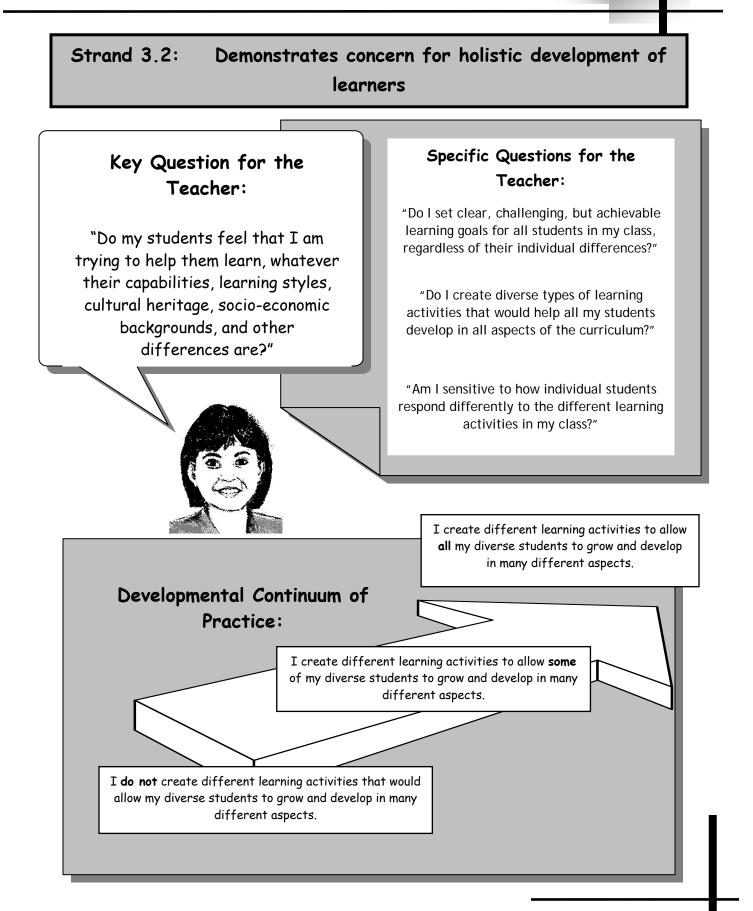
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Domain 3:

Diversity of Learners

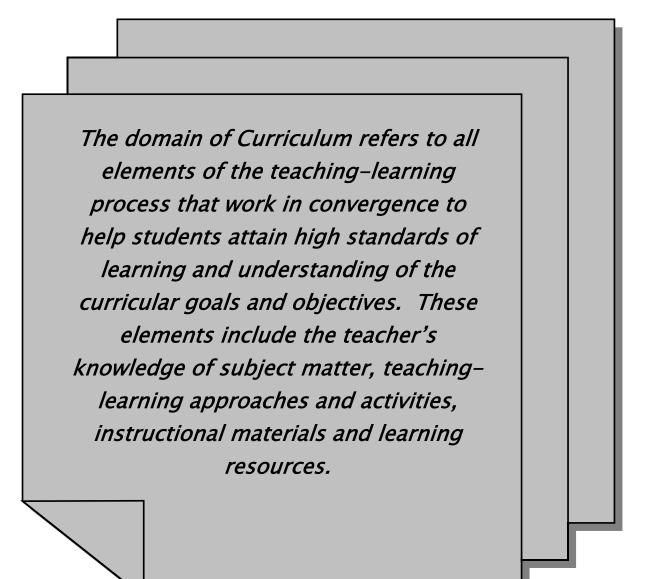






Domain 4:

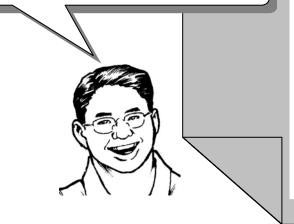
Curriculum



Strand 4.1: Demonstrates mastery of the subject

Key Question for the Teacher:

"Do my students see how well I understand the subject matter I am teaching, enough that they understand and appreciate the importance of the lessons?"



Specific Questions for the Teacher:

"Can I clearly and accurately explain the goals, procedures, and content involved in the lessons?"

"Can I clearly and meaningfully show the relationships between the different lessons in the subject?"

"Can I design learning activities and assessment procedures that are truly aligned with the important objectives of the lessons?"

"Can I present the subject matter in meaningful and relevant ways that engage the students' interest and motivation to learn?"

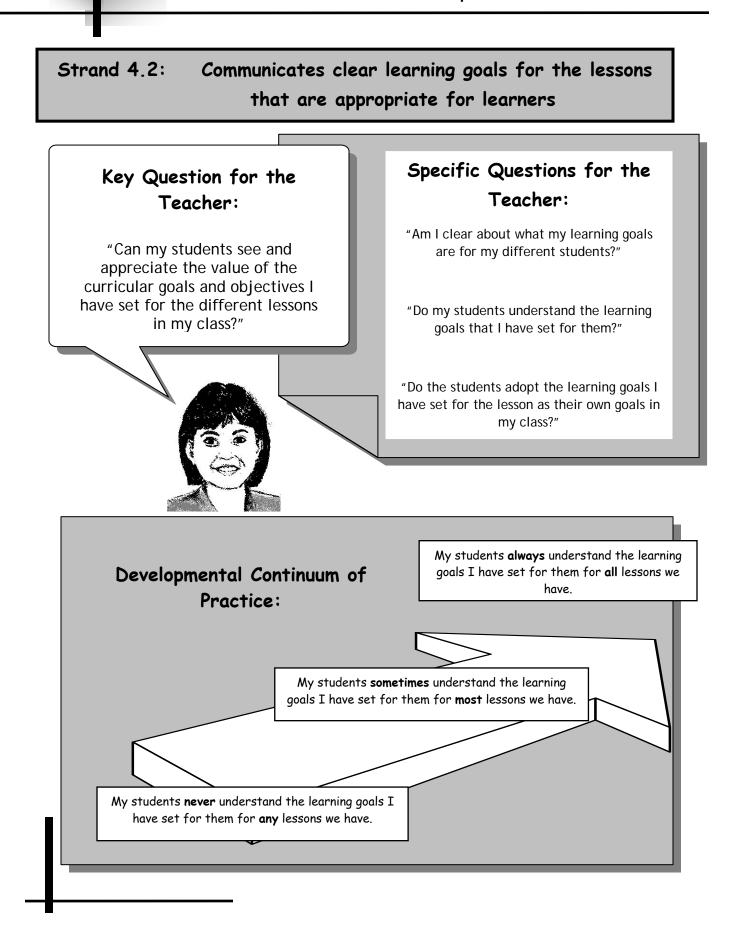
"Can I encourage my students to engage in higher order thinking in my class and interact with them appropriately?"

Developmental Continuum of Practice:

My subject matter knowledge is **deep** enough to allow me to design lessons that motivate my students and engage them in **higher order thinking**.

My subject matter knowledge is **adequate** to allow me to design **some** lessons that **sometimes** motivate my students to learn.

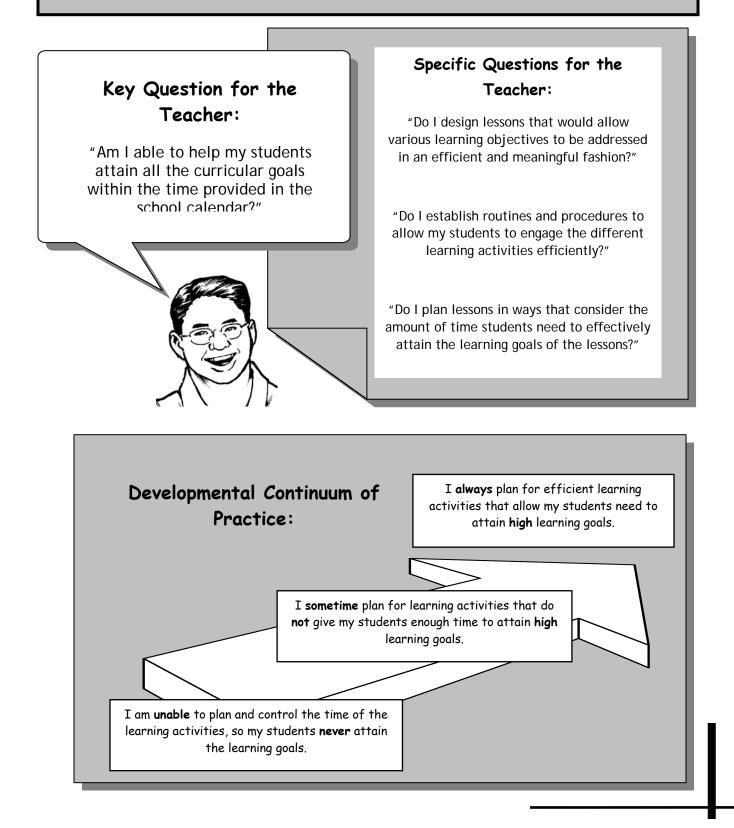
My subject matter knowledge is **so** that I am **unable** to design lessons that motivate my students to learn.



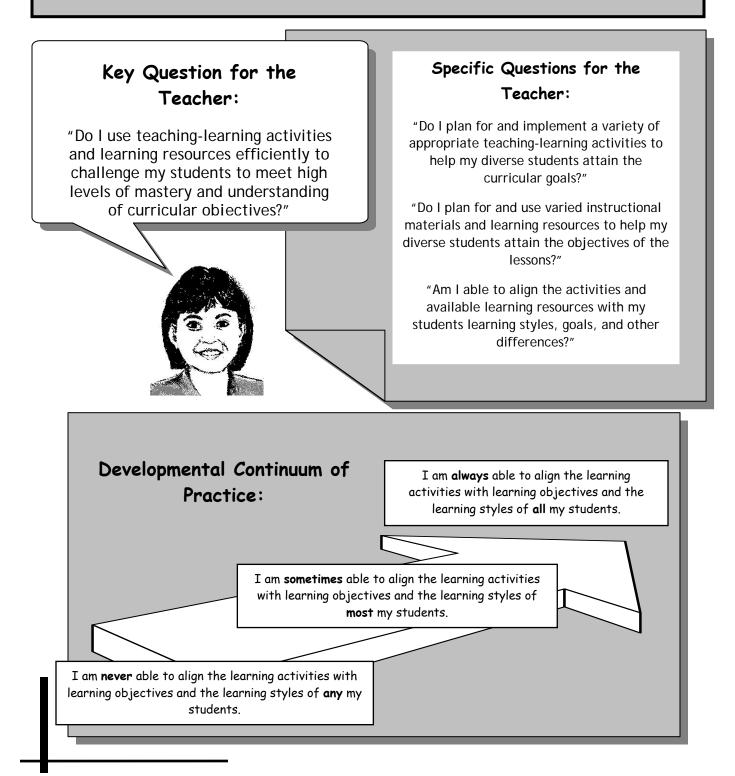
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Strand 4.3: Makes good use of allotted instructional time



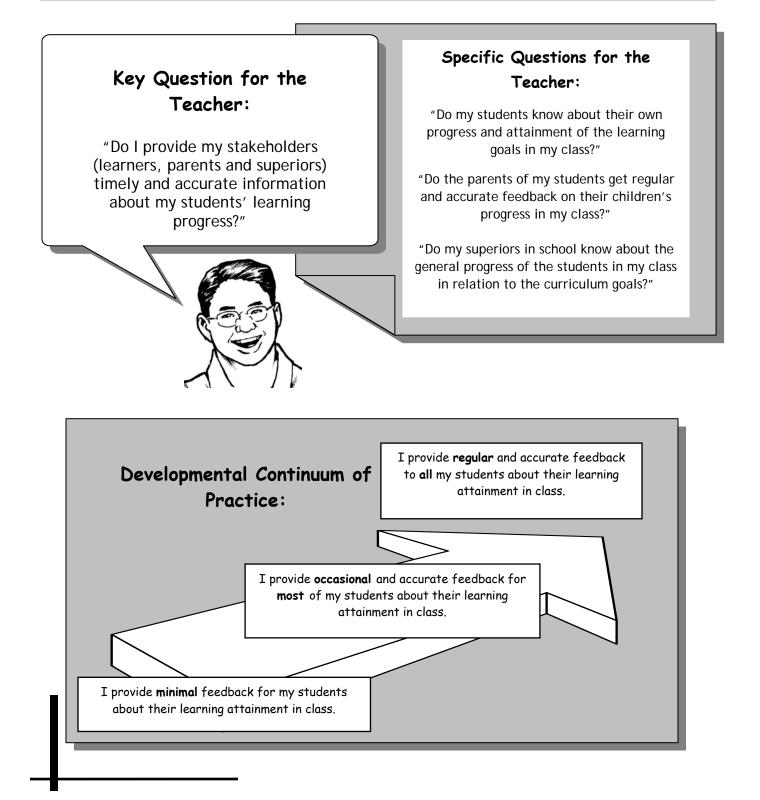
Strand 4.4: Selects teaching methods, learning activities and instructional materials or resources appropriate to learners and aligned to the objectives of the lesson



Domain 5:

Planning, Assessing and Reporting

The domain of Planning, Assessing and Reporting refers to the aligned use of assessment and planning activities to ensure that the teaching-learning activities are maximally appropriate to the students' current knowledge and learning levels. In particular, the domain focuses on the use of assessment data to plan and revise teaching-learning plans, as well as the integration of formative assessment procedures in the plan and implementation of teaching-learning activities. Strand 5.1: Communicates promptly and clearly to learners, parents, and superiors about the progress of learners.



Strand 5.2: Develops and uses a variety of appropriate assessment strategies to monitor and evaluate learning.

Key Question for the Teacher:

"Do I assess my students' learning and knowledge using appropriate educational assessment procedures, and use the information from these assessment procedures in planning my teaching-learning activities for the students?"



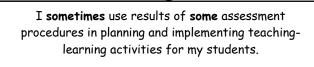
Specific Questions for the Teacher:

"Do I use effective and appropriate educational assessment procedures to determine whether my students are learning during the different parts of the teachinglearning activities?"

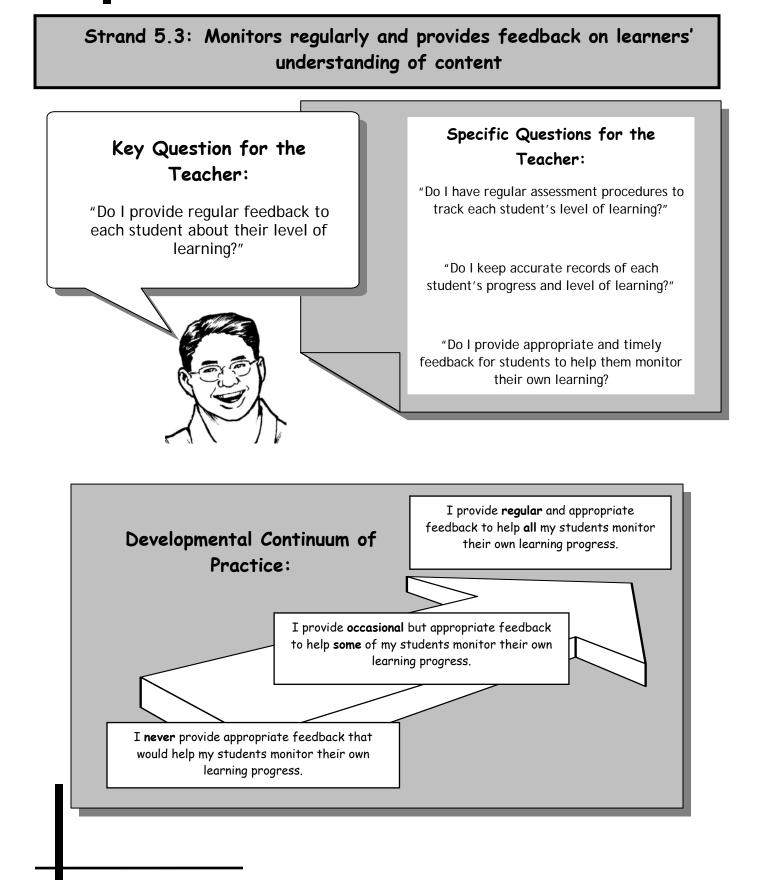
"Do I use a variety of educational assessment procedures to determine whether my students are learning?"

"Do I use the results of the various educational assessment procedures to guide how I plan, implement, and revise the teaching-learning activities I prepare for my students?"

Developmental Continuum of Practice: I always use results of varied assessment procedures in planning and implementing teaching-learning activities for my students.



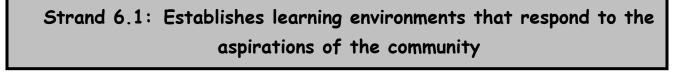
I **never** use assessment results in planning and implementing teaching-learning activities for my students.



Domain 6:

Community Linkages

The domain of Community Linkages focuses on the ideal that school activities are meaningfully linked to the experiences and aspirations of the students in their homes and communities. Thus the domain focuses on teachers' efforts directed at strengthening the links between school and community activities, particularly as these links help in the attainment of the curricular objectives.



Key Question for the Teacher:

"Are the goals and characteristics of the teaching-learning activities I implement relevant to the experiences, values and aspirations in my students' communities?"

"Do I draw fro from my stude



Specific Questions for the Teacher:

"Can my students see how the goals and activities in school relate to the values and aspirations in their homes and communities?"

"Do I draw from resources, ideas, and activities from my students' communities in my teachinglearning activities?"

"Do I try to involve members of the community in supporting the learning goals of my classes?"

Developmental Continuum of Practice: Some of my students perceive that most of the class activities are relevant to their activities & aspirations at home & in the community. All my students perceive that the class activities are irrelevant to their activities & aspirations at home & in the community.

Domain 7:

Personal Growth and Professional Development

The domain of Personal Growth and Professional Development emphasizes the ideal that teachers value having a high personal regard, concern for professional development, and continuous improvement as teachers.

Strand 7.1: Takes pride in the nobility of teaching as a profession. Specific Questions for the Teacher: Key Question for the Teacher: "Can my colleagues see in my actions and "Do my actions and statements statements how I value my profession as a indicate a high regard for the teacher?" teaching profession and for my continuous development as a professional teacher?" "Do I take systematic steps to ensure that I continuously improve myself as a professional teacher?" "Am I enthusiastic about my responsibilities as a teacher?" I regularly allocate time for activities to help me improve my knowledge and skills as a teacher. Developmental Continuum of **Practice:** I sometimes allocate time for activities to help me improve my knowledge and skills as a teacher. I never allocate time for activities to help me improve my knowledge and skills as a teacher.



