

Possible Guiding Questions: Conversations Between Principals and Teachers

ROLE: Early Childhood Certified Teachers

This document utilizes the components within the Danielson Framework for Teaching to provide possible guiding questions for conversations that occur between a principal and teacher. Note that a few of the guiding questions also provide linkages to the Framework for Leadership in order to establish a level of connectedness among the two frameworks.

Please note: The questions identified here are provided to spur some thoughts as to the individual conversations that occur between a principal and teacher. The actual conversations that occur should be determined locally. It is not mandatory to use these questions, nor should they be viewed as a “checklist” to be followed. They are provided solely as a resource.

**For the purposes of this document “Instruction” includes but is not limited to the following: child-centered with teacher facilitation, child-directed with an intentional environment, and teacher directed.*

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

1a: Demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Specifically, what do you expect the student to know?
- What things do you routinely do to extend your content knowledge in all learning domains you teach?
- Describe the process you use as you plan your daily lessons.
- What strategies do you use to check students' misconceptions as you begin the study of a new concept?
- How do you adapt instruction for those students who need extra time and alternative strategies to master/practice a concept/skill?
- What enrichment is available for those who have mastered/practiced the concept/skill you are teaching?

1b: Demonstrating knowledge of students

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Is there anything about your class I should know before I come in?
- Tell me about your greatest challenges with your students and the strategies you are using to meet those challenges.
- What resources, including outreach to other adults who are familiar with the child, have you investigated to support your efforts?

1c: Setting instructional outcomes

Possible Guiding Questions:

- After you look at the standards you are teaching toward, how do you determine the goals you will set for your students?
- How do you plan your instruction and what are your most important considerations during your planning?
- What alternatives are available for students who need extra support and time to meet the instructional goals and those who may have already mastered them?
- What are you going to be listening and looking for as you observe students working?

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

1d: Demonstrating knowledge of resources

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you communicate and work cooperatively with parents, counselors and others in the community and beyond to address your students' needs?
- What resources do you visit most often when you plan instruction?

1e: Designing coherent instruction

Possible Guiding Questions:

- As the designer of your classroom instruction, how do you plan to meet the needs and interests of all of your students to give them varied experiences and keep them engaged and motivated to learn?
- How is time allocated to work cooperatively with other teachers/therapist/family to be sure that your instruction is aligned with students' previous knowledge and experiences so that they can make relevant connections to the lesson?
- What connections have you made to the PDE SAS website and OCDEL resources for updates that support your practice?
- What kinds of support are available for the students who need more practice with a concept/skill?

1f: Designing student assessment

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you use multiple forms of assessment including diagnostic, formative and summative to plan instruction and inform your work?
- Before you design your instruction, do you consider what you want the students to know and how you will assess it? Explain your process.
- Explain how you clarify expectations for students by using:
 - explicit directions including visual cues
 - modeling
 - student repetition of details
- What formative assessments do you use most often to identify student needs and to plan your instruction?
- How do you benchmark your assessments with other teachers/therapists to inform your

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

expectations and insure high expectations for all students?

- Please share the ways you provide students and families with timely feedback on the student's learning and provide guidance for improvement?
- What should I expect to hear your students say or do that would be evidence that they have met the instructional goals for today?

Domain 2: The Classroom Environment

2a: Creating an environment of respect and rapport

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you model respectful behavior for your students?
- What challenging behaviors do you encounter and what have you done to minimize them?

2b: Establishing a culture for learning

Possible Guiding Questions:

- In what ways have you reflected on how students learn?
- In what ways do you encourage your students to be active participants?

2c: Managing classroom procedures

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What rituals and routines have you encouraged in your classroom to set a tone of respectful behavior?
- How do you encourage your students to share roles and responsibilities for routines for efficient classroom operations?

2d: Managing student behavior

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Describe your classroom management plan. Is it clear, consistent, fair, appropriate and preventive?
- Have your students shared the responsibility for determining the plan?
- What is the most challenging behavior in your classroom? What are your current solutions?

2e: Organizing physical space

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How is your classroom organized to accommodate:
 - Students with special needs
 - Learning centers
 - Appropriate use of technology
 - Space for privacy
 - Safety and movement

Domain 2: The Classroom Environment

- In your planning, how do you arrange your classroom environment to meet your instructional goals?

Domain 3: Instruction

3a: Communicating with students

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What strategies do you use to assess students' understanding as you introduce the study of a new concept/skill?
- How do you encourage students to ask questions?
- How are you utilizing technology in your classroom?

3b: Using questioning and discussion techniques

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Explain how your classes are a combination of teacher-directed mini-lessons and opportunities for student engagement, practice, and demonstration of the concept/skill that go beyond memorization of facts.
- How do you provide students with opportunities to be actively engaged in the learning process through:
 - Analyzing
 - Synthesizing
 - Evaluating
 - Critical thinking
 - Summarizing
 - Strategic thinking
 - Application to real life situations and new learning

3c: Engaging students in learning

Possible Guiding Questions:

- In your planning, how do you determine student grouping?
- What strategies do you engage in to promote a high level of rigor during instruction?

3d: Using assessment in instruction

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Describe how you use the following items to clarify expectations in your classroom.
 - Timely feedback
 - Social Stories

Domain 3: Instruction

3e: Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness

- Modeling
- Explicit directions including visual cues
- Student repetition of details
- How do you use portfolios to collect student work as a means of assessing change over time and progress on individual tasks?

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you ensure that all students' questions, needs, and interests are respected?
- What classroom strategies do you use to create and ensure that lessons are rigorous, relevant, and related to real life?

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

4a: Reflecting on teacher and student learning

Possible Guiding Questions:

- In what ways have you reflected on the observed lesson?
- What Professional Development contributed to the strategies you used during the lesson?
- In retrospect, what would you do differently?
- Would you be willing to share your effective practices with your peers?

4b: System for managing students' data

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Describe the system you use for managing the daily information you collect concerning your students' instruction and needs.
- In what ways do students have opportunities to view and maintain their assessment information?
- How is individual progress shared and/or celebrated with students and families?
- How do you use data to guide your planning and instruction?

4c. Communicating with Families

Possible Guiding Questions

- What systems do you have in place for ongoing and reciprocal communication with families?
- How are families encouraged to be involved and engaged in their child's learning experience?

4d: Participating in a professional community

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What do you think your role is in our school/organization's professional learning community?
- What opportunities do you have to share research and successes with your colleagues?
- Give me your perspective of our school's/organization's opportunities for improvement and the role you could play in these efforts.

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

4e: Growing and developing professionally

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Are you a member of any professional organizations?
- Do you subscribe to any educational research journals?
 - Which have been most helpful to you and why?
 - Would you recommend any journals or recent books to be part of our professional library?
- What do you see as urgent issues now in the field of early care and education?

4f: Showing professionalism

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What do you believe to be the characteristics of an exemplary teacher?
- What are your personal goals to maintain your professionalism?