



YES Prep Public Schools Essential Instructional Excellence Rubric (IER)

The YES Prep Instructional Excellence Rubric (IER) exists to clearly establish our standards for excellent teaching and learning. The IER is a dynamic document, evolving as we learn more—from research, best practices, and our most successful classrooms—about what works in instruction.

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Scoring Guidance

Definitions:

- **Indicator Group** – a set of three indicators that assess a big idea (i.e. Classroom Culture of Achievement, Active Learning, Planning and Assessment)
- **Indicator** – an observable characteristic of classroom instruction (i.e. Learning Environment)
- **Strand** – a bullet point within an indicator that defines teacher and student behaviors and serve as evidence of an indicator

Indicator Scoring Matrix:

1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
• All strands in 1	• At least one strand in 1 and 2	• All strands in 2 • At least one strand in 1 and 3 • At least one strand in 1, 2, and 3	• At least one strand in 2 and 3	• All strands in 3	• All strands in 3 AND some in 4	• All strands in 3 AND all in 4

Classroom Culture of Achievement

Learning Environment: *This indicator describes the conditions – tangible or not – that make the classroom run smoothly, allowing the teacher and students to maximize instructional time. Students can access the materials, resources, and visuals they need to do their work, and they know what to expect day to day. The teacher ensures that the physical space works to meet everyone’s needs—whether that space is a classroom or a gym, shared by multiple teachers throughout the day or not.*

Ineffective (1)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)
<p>The teacher rarely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and maintains effective classroom expectations, routines, and procedures. Ensures that the classroom is well-organized and free of clutter. Maintains a print-rich and visually stimulating classroom space that reflects student needs. Groups students strategically in response to data and student needs and keeps those groups dynamic throughout the unit. <p>Few students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know what to expect and follow expectations, routines, and procedures with little prompting. Transition smoothly and efficiently between activities with minimal down time or disruption to the learning environment. Access materials and resources relevant to academic content as needed, including recent student work, and/or student-created models or resources. 	<p>The teacher sometimes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and maintains effective classroom expectations, routines, and procedures. Ensures that the classroom is well-organized and free of clutter. Maintains a print-rich and visually stimulating classroom space that reflects student needs. Groups students strategically in response to data and student needs and keeps those groups dynamic throughout the unit. <p>Some students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know what to expect and follow expectations, routines, and procedures with little prompting. Transition smoothly and efficiently between activities with minimal down time or disruption to the learning environment. Access materials and resources relevant to academic content as needed, including recent student work, and/or student-created models or resources. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and maintains effective classroom expectations, routines, and procedures. Ensures that the classroom is well-organized and free of clutter. Maintains a print-rich and visually stimulating classroom space that reflects student needs. Groups students strategically in response to data and student needs and keeps those groups dynamic throughout the unit. <p>Almost all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know what to expect and follow expectations, routines, and procedures with little prompting. Transition smoothly and efficiently between activities with minimal down time or disruption to the learning environment. Access materials and resources relevant to academic content as needed, including recent student work, and/or student-created models or resources. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains a print-rich and visually stimulating classroom space that reflects student needs and student identities. <p>Almost all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition urgently between activities with no down time or disruption to the learning environment.

Positive Classroom Climate: *This indicator describes a classroom where teachers and students exhibit care for one another so that they can do their best work. The teacher embodies the “warm demanding” stance by setting and maintaining consistent, high expectations while demonstrating that they care and value each student. In the most effective classrooms, students drive the culture by holding one another to agreed-upon norms. In short, this is a classroom that feels safe, welcoming, and inclusive for all students.*

Ineffective (1)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)
<p>The teacher rarely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses clear, direct, and positive language with students. • Communicates high expectations for students, as well as rationale as needed, and equitably enforces those expectations. • Maintains an alert, poised, confident presence and regulates own emotions when responding to students. <p>Few students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact positively with peers and teacher during group and whole-class activities. • Value contributions of other team members through tracking, supportive comments, and/or active listening. • Demonstrate self-management and respond immediately in an age-appropriate manner to redirection or reminders about classroom norms and expectations. 	<p>The teacher sometimes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses clear, direct, and positive language with students. • Communicates high expectations for students, as well as rationale as needed, and equitably enforces those expectations. • Maintains an alert, poised, confident presence and regulates own emotions when responding to students. <p>Some students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact positively with peers and teacher during group and whole-class activities. • Value contributions of other team members through tracking, supportive comments, and/or active listening. • Demonstrate self-management and respond immediately in an age-appropriate manner to redirection or reminders about classroom norms and expectations. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses clear, direct, and positive language with students. • Communicates high expectations for students, as well as rationale as needed, and equitably enforces those expectations. • Maintains an alert, poised, confident presence and regulates own emotions when responding to students. <p>Almost all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact positively with peers and teacher during group and whole-class activities. • Value contributions of other team members through tracking, supportive comments, and/or active listening. • Demonstrate self-management and respond immediately in an age-appropriate manner to redirection or reminders about classroom norms and expectations. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates high expectations for students, as well as rationale as needed, and equitably enforces those expectations by using a variety of verbal and non-verbal techniques differentiated based on student needs and the situation. <p>Almost all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value contributions of other team members through tracking, supportive comments, and/or active listening; they actively encourage each other’s success in the class. • Demonstrate self-management and meet high expectations in an age-appropriate manner with few or no reminders from teacher; students help their peers stay on task with little to no prompting from teacher.

Urgency and Engagement: *This indicator describes a classroom that buzzes with joy and a positive energy. Students are engaged in focused work on rigorous material. Teachers motivate students to achieve and lead them to set and reach meaningful outcomes. Students want to work hard, and they understand the purpose of what they are doing and its relevance to their experiences and goals. They find joy and meaning in their work.*

Ineffective (1)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)
<p>The teacher rarely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates a clear purpose for the lesson that connects to students' experiences and/or goals and holds students accountable for that purpose. Praises student effort and encourages academic risk taking. Maintains an urgent, positive pace in the classroom to maximize learning time. <p>Few students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend to the task at all times, working hard with some prompting from the teacher. Interact with the teacher and each other purposefully, without wasting time. Sustain their urgency and engagement by contributing actively throughout the lesson. 	<p>The teacher sometimes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates a clear purpose for the lesson that connects to students' experiences and/or goals and holds students accountable for that purpose. Praises student effort and encourages academic risk taking. Maintains an urgent, positive pace in the classroom to maximize learning time. <p>Some students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend to the task at all times, working hard with some prompting from the teacher. Interact with the teacher and each other purposefully, without wasting time. Sustain their urgency and engagement by contributing actively throughout the lesson. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates a clear purpose for the lesson that connects to students' experiences and/or goals and holds students accountable for that purpose. Praises student effort and encourages academic risk taking. Maintains an urgent, positive pace in the classroom to maximize learning time. <p>Almost all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend to the task at all times, working hard with some prompting from the teacher. Interact with the teacher and each other purposefully, without wasting time. Sustain their urgency and engagement by contributing actively throughout the lesson. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates a clear purpose for the lesson that connects to students' experiences and/or goals and holds students accountable for that purpose and reinforces that purpose throughout the lesson. <p>Almost all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can articulate the purpose of the day's lesson and its importance to their own goals and/or learning. Attend to the task at all times; they hold each other accountable for working hard without prompting from the teacher.

Active Learning

Purposeful Practice: *This indicator describes the opportunities that teachers create to ensure that students can learn through focused practice. In effective classrooms, the teacher allocates the appropriate time, space, and conditions for students to construct meaning and apply their learning to new situations. Students have ample at-bats to practice the day's material at the appropriate level.*

Ineffective (1)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)
<p>The teacher rarely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paces lesson delivery and activities to ensure that students spend the most time on meaningful practice. • Ensures students have opportunities to listen, think, speak, read, and write, as appropriate. • Includes opportunities for both teamwork and silent, independent processing, balanced in a way that reflects the needs of the lesson and the students in the class. <p>Few students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate their learning independently by the end of the lesson, as appropriate. • Can participate fully and actively in class, including all Emergent Bilinguals, students with IEPs, and students with 504 plans. • Apply new learning through sustained practice with feedback from instructor and/or peers. • Process, practice, and show their learning in ways that are targeted for the day's lesson, and relevant to their needs. 	<p>The teacher sometimes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paces lesson delivery and activities to ensure that students spend the most time on meaningful practice. • Ensures students have opportunities to listen, think, speak, read, and write, as appropriate. • Includes opportunities for both teamwork and silent, independent processing, balanced in a way that reflects the needs of the lesson and the students in the class. <p>Some students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate their learning independently by the end of the lesson, as appropriate. • Can participate fully and actively in class, including all Emergent Bilinguals, students with IEPs, and students with 504 plans. • Apply new learning through sustained practice with feedback from instructor and/or peers. • Process, practice, and show their learning in ways that are targeted for the day's lesson, and relevant to their needs. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paces lesson delivery and activities to ensure that students spend the most time on meaningful practice. • Ensures students have opportunities to listen, think, speak, read, and write, as appropriate. • Includes opportunities for both teamwork and silent, independent processing, balanced in a way that reflects the needs of the lesson and the students in the class. <p>Almost all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate their learning independently by the end of the lesson, as appropriate. • Can participate fully and actively in class, including all Emergent Bilinguals, students with IEPs, and students with 504 plans. • Apply new learning through sustained practice with feedback from instructor and/or peers. • Process, practice, and show their learning in ways that are targeted for the day's lesson, and relevant to their needs. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures all students have frequent opportunities to listen, think, speak, read, and write, as appropriate. <p>Almost all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply new learning through sustained practice with feedback from instructor and/or peers that increases likelihood of mastery of the targeted knowledge or skills. • Process, practice, and show their learning in ways that are individualized, targeted for the day's lesson, and relevant to their needs.

Access and Rigor: *This indicator describes the ways students engage with rigorous material throughout the lesson. In effective classrooms, the teacher strikes a balance that allows students to struggle productively while ensuring that they have the appropriate resources and scaffolds to learn through that struggle. These classrooms look and sound active: the teacher sets up students to do the heavy lifting, the hard work of the class.*

Ineffective (1)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)
<p>The teacher rarely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaks complex material into clear, error-free ideas and/or creates opportunities for students to do so. • Ensures students have access to an effective model of the skills and thought process necessary for learning. • Monitors student practice actively to assess mastery, provide feedback, and identify and correct misunderstandings. • Includes regular, appropriate checks for understanding and makes some adjustments as appropriate based on student level of understanding. <p>Few students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the criteria for success for the day's objective and use those criteria to focus their hard work. • Access prior academic and/or lived knowledge or experience. • Engage actively with complex tasks and rigorous content. • Persist through challenging material. 	<p>The teacher sometimes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaks complex material into clear, error-free ideas and/or creates opportunities for students to do so. • Ensures students have access to an effective model of the skills and thought process necessary for learning. • Monitors student practice actively to assess mastery, provide feedback, and identify and correct misunderstandings. • Includes regular, appropriate checks for understanding and makes some adjustments as appropriate based on student level of understanding. <p>Some students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the criteria for success for the day's objective and use those criteria to focus their hard work. • Access prior academic and/or lived knowledge or experience. • Engage actively with complex tasks and rigorous content. • Persist through challenging material. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaks complex material into clear, error-free ideas and/or creates opportunities for students to do so. • Ensures students have access to an effective model of the skills and thought process necessary for learning. • Monitors student practice actively to assess mastery, provide feedback, and identify and correct misunderstandings. • Includes regular, appropriate checks for understanding and makes some adjustments as appropriate based on student level of understanding. <p>Almost all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the criteria for success for the day's objective and use those criteria to focus their hard work. • Access prior academic and/or lived knowledge or experience. • Engage actively with complex tasks and rigorous content. • Persist through challenging material. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes regular, effective checks for understanding and makes appropriate, timely adjustments to meet students' needs. <p>Almost all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access prior academic and/or lived knowledge or experience and use that knowledge to drive their understanding of new material.

Discourse and Discussion: *This indicator describes a classroom where the teacher holds all students accountable for high levels of discourse. The teacher actively crafts opportunities for students to engage with one another about the learning at hand, including providing essential questions and resources to provoke discussion. In the most effective classrooms, students own the conversation, discussing the content deeply with one another; the teacher facilitates, rather than drives, the conversation.*

Ineffective (1)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)
<p>The teacher rarely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses effective wait time to encourage processing and asks pertinent follow-up questions that push student thinking. • Structures opportunities appropriate to the lesson for students to engage in discourse and discussion with one another. • Employs a variety of questioning techniques to assess student learning and encourage higher-level thinking. <p>Few students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use academic language with some teacher prompting. • Think about questions posed and respond to teacher and peers. • Engage in productive discussion in pairs, small-, and whole-group settings. • Takes an active role in questioning by both responding to the teacher and peers and asking questions or sparking discussion without prompting. 	<p>The teacher sometimes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses effective wait time to encourage processing and asks pertinent follow-up questions that push student thinking. • Structures opportunities appropriate to the lesson for students to engage in discourse and discussion with one another. • Employs a variety of questioning techniques to assess student learning and encourage higher-level thinking. <p>Some students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use academic language with some teacher prompting. • Think about questions posed and respond to teacher and peers. • Engage in productive discussion in pairs, small-, and whole-group settings. • Takes an active role in questioning by both responding to the teacher and peers and asking questions or sparking discussion without prompting. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses effective wait time to encourage processing and asks pertinent follow-up questions that push student thinking. • Structures opportunities appropriate to the lesson for students to engage in discourse and discussion with one another. • Employs a variety of questioning techniques to assess student learning and encourage higher-level thinking. <p>Almost all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use academic language with some teacher prompting. • Think about questions posed and respond to teacher and peers. • Engage in productive discussion in pairs, small-, and whole-group settings. • Take an active role in questioning by responding to both teacher and peers and asking questions or sparking discussion without prompting. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses effective wait time to encourage processing and asks pertinent, scaffolded follow-up questions that push student thinking and engagement. <p>Almost all students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use academic language independently and consistently. • Take an active role in questioning by responding to teacher and peers and driving the inquiry process with their own questions without prompting.

Planning and Assessment

Daily Planning: *This indicator describes the level of planning necessary for learning. Effective teachers complete the intellectual preparation necessary to maximize every second with students. That intellectual prep happens on a large scale, including taking the unit assessment and internalizing the unit plan, ensuring that the teacher can guide students to the overarching themes, questions, and understandings contained therein. It also happens on a daily level, including completing the student work, internalizing each day's plan, and ensuring full familiarity with the materials and texts of the day.*

Ineffective (1)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)
<p>The teacher rarely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses the lesson plan on specific, measurable objectives aligned to the unit. • Defines criteria for success for daily objectives. • Chooses learning activities that are appropriately matched to the objective, and designed to engage students in active, rigorous learning. • Completes the student work to anticipate points in the lesson that could result in student misunderstanding. • Designs the lesson to meet the needs of a variety of students, including accommodating and modifying material as needed for Emergent Bilinguals, students with IEPs, and students with 504 plans. 	<p>The teacher sometimes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses the lesson plan on specific, measurable objectives aligned to the unit. • Defines criteria for success for daily objectives. • Chooses learning activities that are appropriately matched to the objective, and designed to engage students in active, rigorous learning. • Completes the student work to anticipate points in the lesson that could result in student misunderstanding. • Designs the lesson to meet the needs of a variety of students, including accommodating and modifying material as needed for Emergent Bilinguals, students with IEPs, and students with 504 plans. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses the lesson plan on specific, measurable objectives aligned to the unit. • Defines criteria for success for daily objectives. • Chooses learning activities that are appropriately matched to the objective, and designed to engage students in active, rigorous learning. • Completes the student work to anticipate points in the lesson that could result in student misunderstanding. • Designs the lesson to meet the needs of a variety of students, including accommodating and modifying material as needed for Emergent Bilinguals, students with IEPs, and students with 504 plans. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes the student work to anticipate points in the lesson that could result in student misunderstanding and plans accordingly for possible adjustments. • Designs the lesson to meet the specific needs of individual students, including accommodating and modifying material as needed for Emergent Bilinguals, students with IEPs, and students with 504 plans.

Adjusting Course: *This indicator describes the kind of data analysis and adjustment that leads to results for students. Teachers regularly examine results to ensure that all students achieve at high levels, eliminating equity gaps. In the most effective classrooms, students access the data to be able to monitor their own performance and adjust their own course.*

Ineffective (1)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)
<p>The teacher rarely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that every lesson has a student output that provides actionable data from all students. • Invests students in ambitious goals that result in student gains. • Tracks students' daily progress and regularly analyzes student work and assessment results in order to plan instruction and intervention strategies • Makes data readily available to students, such that they may refer to it to track their own progress. • Employs strategies to individualize support and instruction for students based on formative or summative assessment data. 	<p>The teacher sometimes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that every lesson has a student output that provides actionable data from all students. • Invests students in ambitious goals that result in student gains. • Tracks students' daily progress and regularly analyzes student work and assessment results in order to plan instruction and intervention strategies • Makes data readily available to students, such that they may refer to it to track their own progress. • Employs strategies to individualize support and instruction for students based on formative or summative assessment data. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that every lesson has a student output that provides actionable data from all students. • Invests students in ambitious goals that result in student gains. • Tracks students' daily progress and regularly analyzes student work and assessment results in order to plan instruction and intervention strategies. • Makes data readily available to students, such that they may refer to it to track their own progress. • Employs strategies to individualize support and instruction for students based on formative or summative assessment data. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invests students in ambitious goals that result in significant student gains. • Makes data readily available to students, such that they may refer to it regularly to track, monitor, and reflect on their own progress.

Progress and Feedback: *This indicator describes the feedback cycle that allows students multiple opportunities to learn the rigorous material at hand. Effective teachers use feedback consistently to note where students are performing well and where they need to improve. In the most effective classrooms, there are planned, regular touchpoints for students to reflect on their progress and re-learn and re-assess as needed.*

Ineffective (1)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)
<p>The teacher rarely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides informal feedback to students that allows for in-the-moment adjustments that increase the rate of student mastery of daily objectives. Provides formal feedback to students that is frequent and timely. Plans a variety of assessments to monitor student progress. Structures opportunities for students to reassess key objectives and provides structures for students to relearn and practice the material before reassessing. 	<p>The teacher sometimes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides informal feedback to students that allows for in-the-moment adjustments that increase the rate of student mastery of daily objectives. Provides formal feedback to students that is frequent and timely. Plans a variety of assessments to monitor student progress. Structures opportunities for students to reassess key objectives and provides structures for students to relearn and practice the material before reassessing. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides informal feedback to students that allows for in-the-moment adjustments that increase the rate of student mastery of daily objectives. Provides formal feedback to students that is frequent and timely. Plans a variety of assessments to monitor student progress. Structures opportunities for students to reassess key objectives and provides structures for students to relearn and practice the material before reassessing. 	<p>The teacher consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures multiple opportunities for students to reassess key objectives and regularly provides effective, efficient structures for students to relearn and practice the material before reassessing. Provides formal feedback to students that is frequent and timely; feedback is meaningful and fosters student growth by addressing individual strengths and weaknesses.