Performance Standard 8: Academically Challenging Environment

The teacher consistently creates a student-centered, academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels and students are self-directed learners.

Sample Performance Indicators

*Examples may include, but are not limited to:*

**The teacher:**
- 8.1 Maximizes instructional time.
- 8.2 Conveys the message that mistakes should be embraced as a valuable part of learning.
- 8.3 Encourages productivity by providing students with appropriately challenging and relevant material and assignments.
- 8.4 Provides transitions that minimize loss of instructional time.
- 8.5 Communicates high, but reasonable, expectations for student learning.
- 8.6 Provides academic rigor, encourages critical and creative thinking, and pushes students to achieve goals.
- 8.7 Encourages students to explore new ideas and take academic risks.

Contemporary effective teacher research has found that an effective teacher:
- Adapts teaching to address student learning styles.27
- Implement good classroom management with an ultimate purpose of establishing and maintaining an environment conducive to instruction and learning.28
- Conveys high expectations to students.29

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Needs Development</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient...</strong></td>
<td><strong>Proficient is the expected level of performance.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The teacher continually creates an academic learning environment where students are encouraged to set challenging learning goals and tackle challenging materials. (Teachers rated as Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)</td>
<td>The teacher consistently creates a student-centered, academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels and students are self-directed learners.</td>
<td>The teacher inconsistently provides a student-centered, academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels or where students are self-directed learners.</td>
<td>The teacher does not provide a student-centered, academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels, or where students are self-directed learners.</td>
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