North Carolina
Professional Teaching Standards

A NEW VISION OF TEACHING
The different demands on 21st Century education dictate new roles for teachers in their classrooms and schools. The following defines what teachers need to know and do to be able to teach students in the 21st Century:

- Leadership among the staff and with the administration is shared in order to bring consensus and common, shared ownership of the vision and purpose of work of the school. Teachers are valued for the contributions they make to their classroom and the school.
- Teachers make the content they teach engaging, relevant, and meaningful to students’ lives.
- Teachers can no longer cover material; they, along with their students, uncover solutions. They teach existing core content that is revised to include skills like critical thinking, problem solving, and information and communications technology (ICT) literacy.
- In their classrooms, teachers facilitate instruction encouraging all students to use 21st Century skills so they discover how to learn, innovate, collaborate, and communicate their ideas.
- The 21st Century content (global awareness, civic literacy, financial literacy, and health awareness) is included in the core content areas.
- Subjects and related projects are integrated among disciplines and involve relationships with the home and community.
- Teachers are reflective about their practice and include assessments that are authentic and structured and demonstrate student understanding.
- Teachers demonstrate the value of lifelong learning and encourage their students to learn and grow.

Every public school student will graduate from high school, globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21st Century.

Mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education, August 2006

The North Carolina State Board of Education charged the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission to align the Core Standards for the Teaching Profession (1997) with the newly adopted mission. To this end, Commission members, 16 practicing educators from across the state, considered what teachers need to know and be able to do in 21st Century schools. This document contains the aligned standards adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education in June 2007.

Why are these Standards important to you? The North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards are the basis for teacher preparation, teacher evaluation, and professional development. Colleges and universities are changing their programs; a new teacher evaluation instrument is being created; and professional development is taking on a new look based on these Standards. Each of these will include the skills and knowledge needed for the 21st Century teaching and learning. The document is provided in this format so that it may be kept in a plan book to guide instruction as we move forward in the 21st Century.
Teachers demonstrate high ethical standards.
Teachers demonstrate ethical principles including honesty, integrity, fair treatment, and respect for others. Teachers uphold the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators (effective June 1, 1997) and the Standards for Professional Conduct adopted April 1, 1998. (www.ncptsc.org)

- Demonstrate ethical principles
- Uphold the Code of Ethics and Standards for the Professional Conduct

Teachers provide an environment in which each child has a positive, nurturing relationship with caring adults.
Teachers encourage an environment that is inviting, respectful, supportive, inclusive, and flexible.

- Encourage an environment that is inviting, respectful, supportive, inclusive, and flexible

Teachers embrace diversity in the school community and in the world.
Teachers demonstrate their knowledge of the history of diverse cultures and their role in shaping global issues. They actively select materials and develop lessons that counteract stereotypes and incorporate histories and contributions of all cultures.

Teachers treat students as individuals.
Teachers maintain high expectations, including graduation from high school, for students of all backgrounds. Teachers appreciate the differences and value the contributions of each student in the learning environment by building positive, appropriate relationships.

- Maintain high expectations for all students
- Appreciate differences and value contributions by building positive, appropriate relationships

Teachers adapt their teaching for the benefit of students with special needs.
Teachers collaborate with the range of support specialists to help meet the special needs of all students. Through inclusion and other models of effective practice, teachers engage students to ensure that their needs are met.

- Collaborate with specialists
- Engage students and ensure they meet the needs of their students through inclusion and other models of effective practice
**III**

**STANDARD III: TEACHERS KNOW THE CONTENT THEY TEACH**

*Teachers align their instruction with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.*

In order to enhance the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, teachers investigate the content standards developed by professional organizations in their specialty area. They develop and apply strategies to make the curriculum rigorous and relevant for all students and provide a balanced curriculum that enhances literacy skills.

Elementary teachers have explicit and thorough preparation in literacy instruction. Middle and high school teachers incorporate literacy instruction within the content area or discipline.

- Teach the North Carolina Standard Course of Study
- Develop and apply strategies to make the curriculum rigorous and relevant
- Develop literacy skills appropriate to specialty area

*Teachers know the content appropriate to their teaching specialty.*

Teachers bring a richness and depth of understanding to their classrooms by knowing their subjects beyond the content they are expected to teach and by directing students’ natural curiosity into an interest in learning. Elementary teachers have broad knowledge across disciplines. Middle school and high school teachers have depth in one or more specific content areas or disciplines.

- Know subject beyond the content they teach
- Direct students’ curiosity into an interest in learning

*Teachers recognize the interconnectedness of content areas/disciplines.*

Teachers know the links and vertical alignment of the grade or subject they teach and the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Teachers understand how the content they teach relates to other disciplines in order to deepen understanding and connect learning for students. Teachers promote global awareness and its relevance to the subjects they teach.

- Know links between grade/subject and the North Carolina Standard Course of Study
- Relate content to other disciplines
- Promote global awareness and its relevance

**IV**

**STANDARD IV: TEACHERS FACILITATE LEARNING FOR THEIR STUDENTS**

*Teachers make instruction relevant to students.*

Teachers incorporate 21st Century life skills into their teaching deliberately, strategically, and broadly. These skills include leadership, ethics, accountability, adaptability, personal productivity, personal responsibility, people skills, self-direction, and social responsibility. Teachers help their students understand the relationship between the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and 21st Century content which includes global awareness; financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy; civic literacy; and health awareness.

- Incorporate life skills which include leadership, ethics, accountability, adaptability, personal productivity, personal responsibility, people skills, self-direction, and social responsibility
- Demonstrate the relationship between the core content and 21st Century content that includes global awareness; financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy; civic literacy; and health and wellness awareness

*Teachers know the ways in which learning takes place, and they know the appropriate levels of intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development of their students.*

Teachers know how students think and learn. Teachers understand the influences that affect individual student learning (development, culture, language proficiency, etc.) and differentiate their instruction accordingly. Teachers keep abreast of evolving research about student learning. They adapt resources to address the strengths and weaknesses of their students.

- Know how students think and learn
- Understand the influences on student learning and differentiate instruction
- Keep abreast of evolving research
- Adapt resources to address the strengths and weaknesses of students

*Teachers plan instruction appropriate for their students.*

Teachers collaborate with their colleagues and use a variety of data sources for short and long range planning based on the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. These plans reflect an understanding of how students learn. Teachers engage students in the learning process. They understand that instructional plans must be constantly monitored and modified to enhance learning. Teachers make the curriculum responsive to cultural diversity and to individual learning needs.

- Collaborate with colleagues
- Use data for short and long range planning
- Engage students in the learning process
- Monitor and modify plans to enhance student learning
- Respond to cultural diversity and learning needs of students

*Teachers use a variety of instructional methods.*

Teachers choose the methods and techniques that are most effective in meeting the needs of their students as they strive to eliminate achievement gaps. Teachers employ a wide range of techniques including information and communication technology, learning styles, and differentiated instruction.

- Choose methods and materials as they strive to eliminate achievement gaps
- Employ a wide range of techniques using information and communication technology, learning styles, and differentiated instruction
Teachers integrate and utilize technology in their instruction.

Teachers know when and how to use technology to maximize student learning. Teachers help students use technology to learn content, think critically, solve problems, discern reliability, use information, communicate, innovate, and collaborate.

- Know appropriate use
- Help students use technology to learn content, think critically, solve problems, discern reliability, use information, communicate, innovate, and collaborate

Teachers help students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Teachers encourage students to ask questions, think creatively, develop and test innovative ideas, synthesize knowledge and draw conclusions. They help students exercise and communicate sound reasoning; understand connections; make complex choices; and frame, analyze, and solve problems.

- Encourage students to ask questions, think creatively, develop and test innovative ideas, synthesize knowledge and draw conclusions
- Help students exercise and communicate sound reasoning; understand connections; make complex choices; and frame, analyze, and solve problems

Teachers help students work in teams and develop leadership qualities.

Teachers teach the importance of cooperation and collaboration. They organize learning teams in order to help students define roles, strengthen social ties, improve communication and collaborative skills, interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds, and develop leadership qualities.

- Teach the importance of cooperation and collaboration
- Organize learning teams in order to help students define roles, strengthen social ties, improve communication and collaborative skills, interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds, and develop leadership qualities

Teachers communicate effectively.

Teachers communicate in ways that are clearly understood by their students. They are perceptive listeners and are able to communicate with students in a variety of ways even when language is a barrier. Teachers help students articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively.

- Communicate clearly with students in a variety of ways
- Assist students in articulating thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively

Teachers use a variety of methods to assess what each student has learned.

Teachers use multiple indicators, including formative and summative assessments, to evaluate student progress and growth as they strive to eliminate achievement gaps. Teachers provide opportunities, methods, feedback, and tools for students to assess themselves and each other. Teachers use 21st Century assessment systems to inform instruction and demonstrate evidence of students’ 21st Century knowledge, skills, performance, and dispositions.

- Use multiple indicators, both formative and summative, to evaluate student progress
- Provide opportunities for self-assessment
- Use assessment systems to inform instruction and demonstrate evidence of students’ 21st Century knowledge, skills, performance, and dispositions

Teachers analyze student learning.

Teachers think systematically and critically about student learning in their classrooms and schools: why learning happens and what can be done to improve achievement. Teachers collect and analyze student performance data to improve school and classroom effectiveness. They adapt their practice based on research and data to best meet the needs of students.

- Think systematically and critically about learning in their classroom: why learning happens and what can be done to improve student achievement
- Collect and analyze student performance data to improve effectiveness

Teachers link professional growth to their professional goals.

Teachers participate in continued, high quality professional development that reflects a global view of educational practices; includes 21st Century skills and knowledge; aligns with the State Board of Education priorities; and meets the needs of students and their own professional growth.

- Participate in continued, high quality professional development

Teachers function effectively in a complex, dynamic environment.

Understanding that change is constant, teachers actively investigate and consider new ideas that improve teaching and learning. They adapt their practice based on research and data to best meet the needs of their students.

- Actively investigate and consider new ideas that improve teaching and learning
- Adapt practice based on data

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Carolyn McKinney, Executive Director
6328 Mail Service Center | Raleigh, NC 27699-6328
Phone: 919.807.3423 | Fax: 919.807.3426 | www.ncptsc.org