



Possible Guiding Questions: Strategic Discussions between Principals and Teachers

This document utilizes the components within the Danielson Framework for Teaching to provide possible guiding questions for strategic discussions 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 discussions that occur between a principal and teacher. The actual discussions 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.

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

1a: Demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Specifically, what do you expect the student to know and how do you make connections to the PA Core Standards?
- What things do you routinely do to extend your content knowledge in the subject/subjects you teach?
- Describe the process you use as you plan your daily lessons.
- What strategies do you use to check students' prior knowledge and possible 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 a concept?
- What enrichment is available for those who have mastered the concept you are teaching?

1b: Demonstrating knowledge of students

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Is there anything about your class of students 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 do you use/need to support all the varied needs of your students?
- Use evidence to cite some successes you have achieved with at-risk students by differentiating your practice.
- What resources are we lacking in our school that you could use to improve student learning?

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?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the most important considerations in planning your instruction? • What options 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 for as you listen to students working together?
1d: Demonstrating knowledge of resources	<p><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you communicate and work cooperatively with parents, counselors, industry (CTC) and others in the community, and beyond to address your students' needs? • What resources do you visit most often when you plan instruction? • How do you help your students, parents, receive support when it is needed?
1e: Designing coherent instruction	<p><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do your lessons align with PA Core Standards? • 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 experience and keep them engaged and motivated to learn? • How is time allocated to work cooperatively with other teachers to be sure that your instruction is aligned with students' previous knowledge so that they can make connections for deeper understanding? • What connections have you made to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Standards Aligned System (SAS) website for updates that support your practice? • What support is available for the students who may not master a concept the first time it is taught? • Describe the process and design of your lesson plans. How do you plan with your colleagues, observe other teachers' lessons or cooperatively study lessons to maximize student achievement and reflect on your practice? • How do you meet the needs and interests of your students, keeping them engaged and motivated?

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:
 - Exemplary student work
 - Rubrics
 - Explicit directions
 - 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 at your level to inform your expectations and insure high expectations for all students?
- Please share the ways you provide students with timely feedback on their learning and give them opportunities 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	<p><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you model respectful behavior for your students? • What barriers to appropriate behavior do you encounter and what have you done to minimize them? • How do you cultivate communication and rapport with and among all of your students?
2b: Establishing a culture for learning	<p><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways have you established a culture for learning in your classroom? • Student engagement is about the nature of the work and who does it. In what ways do you encourage your students to be active participants? • In addition to the planned lesson, how have you created an environment in which students can pursue knowledge of their own interests?
2c: Managing classroom procedures	<p><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 with non-instructional routines for efficient classroom operations? • When collaborative grouping occurs, how do you manage equitable goals for all group members to share in the learning process?
2d: Managing student behavior	<p><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe your student behavior plan/positive behavior management program. Is it clear, consistent, fair, appropriate and preventive? • Have your students shared the responsibility for determining the plan?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the most persistent behavior problem in your classroom? What are your current solutions?
2e: Organizing physical space	<p><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is your classroom organized to accommodate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students with special needs ➤ Cooperative learning ➤ Appropriate use of technology ➤ Teacher-student conferences ➤ Safety and movement ➤ Project//Performance based learning • In your planning, how do you encourage a pleasant and inviting atmosphere that serves the purpose of your lesson?

Domain 3: Instruction

3a: Communicating with students

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What strategies do you use to check students' misconceptions as you begin the study of a new concept?
- How do you maximize student understanding through:
 - Flexible grouping
 - Differentiation
 - Cross-curricular instruction
- How do you encourage students to share?
- 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 mini-lessons with opportunities for student engagement, reflection and sharing that go beyond memorization of facts.
- How do you provide students with practice in being good consumers of information by:
 - Analyzing
 - Synthesizing
 - Evaluating
 - Thinking critically
 - 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 groups of students who work cooperatively?
- What kinds of things will I hear that will be evidence of a high level of rigor during this lesson?
- What activities are planned to help students to reach a different level of understanding?

<p>3d: Using assessment in instruction</p>	<p><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how you use the following items to clarify expectations in your classroom. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Exemplary student work ➤ Rubrics ➤ Timely feedback • Which opportunities for immediate feedback are most popular with your students and why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Computer exercises ➤ Working in pairs ➤ Student-teacher conferences ➤ Working in small groups • How do you use portfolios to collect student work as a means of assessing change over time and progress on individual tasks?
<p>3e: Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness</p>	<p><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you ensure that all students are respected as they offer solutions to problems? • What classroom strategies do you use to encourage lessons that 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?
- In what ways are you, as a teacher, helping your district to grow?

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?
- How do you use data to guide your planning and instruction?

4c: Participating in a professional community

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Describe your role in our school as a professional learning community?
- What opportunities do you have to share classroom research and successes with your colleagues?
- How would you describe the context of our school and our opportunities for improvement?

<p>4d: Growing and developing professionally</p>	<p><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you a member of any professional organizations? • Do you subscribe to any educational research journals? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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 education? • How would you describe your school to a new family in the district?
<p>4e: Showing professionalism</p>	<p><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you believe to be the characteristics of an exemplary teacher? • What are your personal goals to maintain your professionalism?