

DIGGING DEEPER



Students with a History of Lower Achievement

*Questions at the LEA/District,
School, and Teacher Level*

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Note: This document specifically addresses the needs of students with a history of lower achievement. While many of the examples reference students with IEPs, English Learners, and/or students who are economically disadvantaged, it is important to recognize that there are students with a history of higher achievement from these same student groups. See the companion document, *Digging Deeper: Students with a History of Higher Achievement*.

Background

This *Digging Deeper Guide* focuses on students with a history of lower achievement, including but not limited to general and special education students, students with IEPs, English Language Learners, students who are economically disadvantaged, etc. (Note: There are students with a history of higher achievement from these same student groups. See the companion document, *Digging Deeper: Students with a History of Higher Achievement*.)

This supplemental guide may be most helpful when used in conjunction with one or more of the *Digging Deeper into Content Areas* guides, which are available in *Math/Algebra I*, *ELA/Keystone Literature*, and *Science/Keystone Biology*. These guides can be accessed by clicking on the *Digging Deeper* link found on [the PVAAS website login page](#).

Visit <https://bit.ly/DiggingDeeper-Word> for an editable version of this resource.

Navigating This Guide

The purpose of this supplemental Digging Deeper guide is to provide specific variables in Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Organization (CIAO). This guide may be useful to determine root cause(s) and/or identifying contributing variables to inform planning and instruction.

This guide is divided into two sections:

- **Variables (questions) at the LEA/School level** – Appropriate for LEA/district administrators, school principals, department chairs, content leaders, teacher leaders, teachers, and data team members.
- **Variables at the teacher level** – Appropriate for use by individual teachers who are engaging in self-reflection of their own data and their own practice.

A divider page between the two sections allows one to refer to their relevant work section.

Within each of the two sections, the variables are also organized under four categories or “buckets”, as follows:

- Curriculum
- Instruction
- Assessment
- Organization

Alignment

Additionally, an alignment coding for each question is provided at each level, illustrating a crosswalk between the items in these guides and other PDE frameworks.

PA's Essential Practices for Schools

The LEA/School level section's variables/questions align with the conditions of **PA's Essential Practices for Schools**. The questions in the guide are coded with the condition number(s) that is the most relevant fit, i.e., EP Condition 1, 2, 3, or 4.

EP Condition 1: Focus on Continuous Improvement of Instruction

- Aligned curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Collaborative instructional planning
- Variety of assessments to monitor student learning Identify and address individual student learning needs
- Frequent, timely feedback and support on instructional practices

EP Condition 2: Empower Leadership

- Culture of high expectations for success
- Collective vision for teaching and learning
- Empowered staff
- Needs-based organization and allocation of resources
- Continuous monitoring of school improvement plan implementation

EP Condition 3: Provide Student-Centered Supports

- Positive school environment where all members feel welcomed, supported, and safe schoolwide positive behavior interventions and supports
- Multi-tiered system of supports for academics and behavior
- Family engagement to support learning
- Partnerships with local businesses, community organizations, and other agencies

EP Condition 4: Foster Quality Professional Learning

- Professional learning responsive to teacher and student needs
- Multiple professional learning designs
- Evaluating the impact of professional learning

[View more information about PA's Essential Practices for Schools >](#)

PA Observation and Practice Framework (Act 13)

Each teacher-level section's variables/questions align with the **PA Observation and Practice Framework (Act 13)** domains and are coded with initials as shown below.

The Framework for the Evaluation of Classroom Teachers is adapted by the Pennsylvania Department of Education from Charlotte Danielson's 2011 "Framework for Teachers" and adapted by the Pennsylvania Department of Education from Charlotte Danielson's 2020 "Framework for Remote Teaching."

Planning and Preparation (PP)

- Knowledge of content and Pedagogy
- Demonstrating Knowledge of Students
- Setting Instructional Outcomes
- Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources
- Designing Coherent Instruction
- Designing Student Assessment

Classroom Environment (CE)

- Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport
- Establishing a Culture of Learning
- Managing Classroom Procedures
- Managing Student Behavior Expectations
- Organizing Physical and Digital Space

Instruction (I)

- Communicating with Students
- Questioning and Discussion Techniques
- Engaging Students in Learning Activities and Assignments
- Using Assessment in Instruction
- Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

Professional Responsibility (PR)

- Reflecting on Teaching
- Maintaining Accurate Records
- Communicating with Families
- Participating in a Professional Community
- Growing and Developing Professionally
- Showing Professionalism

[Learn more about PA's Observation and Practice Framework on the SAS Website >](#)

How to Use This Guide

Effective use of this school-level guide requires collaborative reflection on the variables, as well as responses to the variables using evidence (rather than a “yes” or “no”).

This guide is also not a checklist. Rather, it is a listing of contributing factors to explore deeply. It requires careful selection of where to start and which of the questions to use in the discussion. Responding to the question(s) requires deep discussion, honest reflection, and identification of evidence of practice. It is not necessary to ask all of the questions at one time. Schools may find it more effective to start with a few key questions from each section (Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, Organization) to ensure solid, core foundational practices are established in all areas. The focus and starting point are dependent on the school’s current data and needs.

Where to Start

A good starting point is to examine the variables/questions considered to be **foundational** and of **high priority**. The information below highlights those variables typically indicative of high priorities—or, possible starting points—allowing for discussion of foundational variables in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and organization. Using these questions as starting points may prove helpful in designing and implementing practices that are of high impact for students with a history of lower achievement. It is suggested to keep this in mind as you review all variables and questions in this guide.

Suggested Prioritization of Key Questions

Foundation variables are considered high priority contributing factors that can serve as a possible starting point for a Digging Deeper discussion. It is important to note that the questions below are suggestions only. These are not the only questions that can be used as a starting point, and they are *not* intended to be in a prescribed order to follow. Each LEA must determine the best starting points, i.e., which questions/variables to explore. The starting point and the subsequent choices of which variables to explore is dependent on the context of the LEA/school and the LEA/school’s data.

CURRICULUM

Start with:

- **C-1.** Do all students with a history of lower achievement have access to challenging curriculum that facilitates a focus on high standards? (EP Condition 1)
- **C-4.** Is the written curriculum for all grade levels accessible to all teachers, including core and supplemental/support teachers? (EP Condition 1)

Rationale: These two questions address access to a challenging curriculum by both students and teachers. It is important to determine and ensure that all teachers are implementing the challenging written curriculum, and that all students have access to that challenging written curriculum. Once access by students and teachers is confirmed, the next steps are to go deeper to look at specific variables that make a curriculum truly effective with populations of students with a history of lower achievement.

INSTRUCTION

Start with:

- **I-1.** Are all students with a history of lower achievement receiving instruction aligned to the PA Core Standards? (EP Condition 1)
- **I-3.** Do all classrooms demonstrate the use of evidence-based instructional strategies known to be most effective with students with a history of lower achievement? (EP Condition 1, EP Condition 3)

- **I-4.** Are students appropriately challenged at high levels of cognitive complexity? (EP Condition 1, EP Condition 3)
- **I-8.** Do teachers use evidence-based instructional strategies for the teaching of vocabulary, focusing on tiered vocabulary research? (Condition 1, EP Condition 3)

Rationale: These variables represent fundamental practices in the delivery of an effective instructional program, and therefore, represent an effective starting point to “dig deeply” to determine root causes of the data observations and patterns. Once these key variables are addressed, the following items represent additional questions for probing even further:

- **I-17.** Are appropriate and evidence-based materials and resources available and used to meet the needs of students receiving intervention/remediation? (EP Condition 1, EP Condition 3)
- **I-18.** Are interventions aligned with the core instructional program and language proficiency levels? (EP Condition 3)
- **I-21.** Does the amount of “specialized instruction” align with individual students’ needs? (EP Condition 1)

Examples:

- a. Is there evidence that students with IEPs receive an appropriate amount of specially designed instruction?
- b. Is there evidence that English Learners receive an appropriate amount of language development support (reading, writing, listening, speaking) in the general classroom and in a language instruction educational program provided by the ESL teacher?
- c. Is there evidence that students receiving tiered support (MTSS) receive appropriate time at tiers 2 and 3?

ASSESSMENT

Start with:

- **A-1.** Are there screening tools in place to identify students not achieving proficiency? Are PVAAS projections used for that purpose and part of the screening/identification process? (EP Condition 1)
- **A-2.** Are diagnostic assessments (e.g., Core Phonics Survey, CDT) used regularly to determine student needs? (EP Condition 1)
- **A-3.** Is formative assessment used to closely monitor the progress of students who have a history of lower achievement? (EP Condition 1, EP Condition 3)
 - a. Are formal and informal progress monitoring measures used to inform instruction for students receiving tiered support?
 - b. Is there evidence that acquiring English is monitored regularly?
 - c. Is there evidence that students are meeting IEP goals/objectives and achieving incremental steps to proficiency in a specific subject area or language proficiency level through formal progress monitoring measures such as CBM (curriculum-based measurement, including AimsWEB, Easy CBM, DIBELS, Acadience, ACCESS for ELLS, etc.)?

Rationale: These three variables represent starting points for discussion about the health of your assessment system within the context of students with a history of lower achievement. They speak to the importance of having system-wide/school-wide assessment tools in place to continually diagnose the needs of students and monitor progress from starting points and along the way. These key questions or variables allow for changes in incremental steps in the instructional program for students in a proactive manner.

ORGANIZATION

Start with:

- **O-2.** Does the school schedule provide opportunities for specially designed instruction, tiered support, or course remediation for individual students/groups of students in need? (EP Condition 1, EP Condition 3)
- **O-9.** Do teachers have scheduled time to collaborate with other teachers who have instructional responsibility for the same students? (EP Condition 2)
- **O-11.** Does the school have a system and process in place to collect, analyze, and act on data to improve outcomes for all students? (EP Condition 2)
Example: data teams, assessment map, scheduled meeting dates
- **O-14.** Does the school address chronic absenteeism and dropout rates systematically and strategically, with awareness of the statistics relative to students with a history of lower achievement, including the specific needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students, and support these needs? (EP Condition 3)

Rationale: While there are many important variables in the organizational structures of a school, these four questions may represent good starting points for discussion. A school schedule that meets the needs of all students is a fundamental building block, along with time and processes to collaborate among educators. Addressing chronic absenteeism issues and dropout rates are common areas of concern in schools with high numbers of students who have a history of lower achievement.

Note: Again, these are merely suggestions for starting points, representing fundamental practices and structures typically needed to move forward in enhancing the learning outcomes for all students. Choosing the questions to discuss, and the order in which to discuss them, is an important local decision to arrive at the best plans of action for current students.

Students with a History of Lower Achievement

System-Level Questions (LEA/District and School)

THINK ABOUT: How might our system structures and practices at the LEA/district and school level related to Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Organization contribute to our achievement and growth results for **students with a history of lower achievement?**

These questions are offered as a vehicle to guide purposeful reflection and should be considered and answered with clear evidence. This list is not exhaustive and is not a checklist. Note: The questions do not need to be discussed in the order in which they are numbered; they are numbered to reference specific items and for ease of use.

The questions are intended to help generate thinking specific to the district/school level program. Through the information provided by PVAAS, along with other assessment data, this document is intended to assist in determining potential root causes leading to plans of action (looking back and looking forward). School level administrators, teacher leaders, and teachers may find these reflection questions helpful in analyzing data at a system level for the school.

Essential Practice Key:

Each question indicates the related conditions for PA's Essential Practices for Schools:

EP Condition 1

Focus on Continuous Improvement of Instruction

EP Condition 2

Empower Leadership

EP Condition 3

Provide Student-Centered Supports

EP Condition 4

Foster Quality Professional Learning

CURRICULUM SYSTEM LEVEL Students with a History of Lower Achievement

- C-1. Do all students with a history of lower achievement have access to challenging curriculum that creates the conditions for them to meet high standards? *EP Condition 1*
- C-2. Does the written curriculum include strategies to accelerate the learning outcomes of students with a history of lower achievement? *EP Condition 1*
- C-3. Does the curriculum identify materials and resources appropriate to the needs of specific groups of students, such as EL, ED, and IEP students? *EP Condition 1*
- C-4. Is the written curriculum for all grade levels accessible to all teachers, including core and supplemental/support teachers? *EP Condition 1*
- C-5. Does the written curriculum provide vertical views to conduct a skill trace for the purpose of specially designed instruction/remediation/intervention for individual students or groups of students? *EP Condition 1*
- C-6. Is the curriculum culturally responsive in addressing all students' backgrounds and experiences? *EP Condition 1*

- C-7. Does planned curriculum and instruction indicate modifications that are appropriate to the content/skills targeted, as well as goals/objectives in student IEPs based on specific academic standards, assessment anchors, and eligible content? *EP Condition 1*
- C-8. Does the curriculum address social and emotional learning issues? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 2*

INSTRUCTION SYSTEM LEVEL **Students with a History of Lower Achievement**

- I-1. Are all students with a history of lower achievement receiving instruction aligned to the PA Core Standards? *EP Condition 1*
- I-2. Do teachers provide explicit and systematic instruction? *EP Condition 1*
- I-3. Do all classrooms demonstrate the use of evidence-based instructional strategies known to be most effective with students with a history of lower achievement? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*
- I-4. Are students appropriately challenged at high levels of cognitive complexity? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*
- I-5. Do teachers use multi-sensory instructional strategies to provide instruction that meets the needs of all students? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*
- I-6. Is vocabulary instruction prioritized to enhance background knowledge and impact comprehension skills across subjects? *EP Condition 1*
- I-7. Does the academic and content-specific vocabulary used in instruction mirror what is used in core instruction and local and state assessments? *EP Condition 1*
- I-8. Do teachers use evidence-based instructional strategies for the teaching of vocabulary, focusing on tiered vocabulary research? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*
- I-9. Are teachers using flexible student grouping to provide direct instruction and both guided and independent practice on specific learning targets? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*
- I-10. Is homework differentiated to provide meaningful and challenging work? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*
- I-11. Do teachers use differentiation of content, product, and process to address needs of students with a history of lower achievement? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*
- I-12. Is Universal Design for Learning (UDL) used to design and deliver instruction? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*
- I-13. Is personalized learning used to enable students to master a standard set of rigorous competencies while working at their own pace? Are students encouraged to make choices in how they access information and demonstrate their learning? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*
- I-14. Do teachers use scaffolding strategies to address the needs of students with a history of lower achievement? *EP Condition 1*
- I-15. Do teachers use task analyses to determine pre-requisite skills needed for students to be successful for a given task/learning target? *EP Condition 1*

- I-16. Is technology and assistive technology used effectively to address the unique needs of specific students? *EP Condition 1*
- I-17. Are appropriate and evidence-based materials and resources available and used to meet the needs of students receiving intervention/remediation? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*
- I-18. Are interventions aligned with the core instructional program and language proficiency levels? *EP Condition 3*
- I-19. Are students who receive tiered support provided specific instruction targeted to skill deficits? *EP Condition 3*
- I-20. Do teachers understand language proficiency levels and use appropriate strategies for differing proficiency levels of EL students? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*
- I-21. Does the amount of “specialized instruction” align with individual students’ needs? *EP Condition 1*
- Examples:
- Is there evidence that students with IEPs receive an appropriate amount of specially designed instruction?
 - Is there evidence that English Learners receive an appropriate amount of language development support (reading, writing, listening, speaking) in the general classroom and in a language instruction educational program provided by the ESL teacher?
 - Is there evidence that students receiving tiered support (MTSS) receive appropriate time at tiers 2 and 3?
- I-22. Are students taught strategies for self-advocacy? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 2*
- I-23. Are teachers incorporating strategies in instruction to address students who have difficulties with executive functioning (e.g., checklists, self-regulating strategies)? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 2*
- I-24. Are teachers and support staff able to articulate the concept of growth (belief that all students can grow from their starting points), and evidence that belief in their instructional practice by providing equal opportunities and high expectations for all students? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*

ASSESSMENT SYSTEM LEVEL Students with a History of Lower Achievement

- A-1.** Are there screening tools in place to identify students not yet at proficiency, as well as the use of the PVAAS student projections for that purpose and as part of the screening/identification process? EP Condition 1
- A-2.** Are diagnostic assessments (e.g., Core Phonics Survey, CDT) used regularly to determine student needs? EP Condition 1
- A-3.** Is formative assessment used to closely monitor the progress of students with a history of lower achievement? EP Condition 1 EP Condition 3
- a. Are formal and informal progress monitoring measures used to inform instruction for students receiving tiered support?
 - b. Is there evidence that acquiring English is monitored regularly?
 - c. Is there evidence that students are meeting IEP goals/objectives and achieving incremental steps to proficiency in a specific subject area or language proficiency level through formal progress monitoring measures such as CBM (curriculum-based measurement, including AimsWEB, Easy CBM, DIBELS, Acadience, ACCESS for ELLS, etc.)?
- A-4.** Do students have choices on how to demonstrate their learning? EP Condition 3
- A-5.** Are school-level PVAAS projections analyzed and used to plan at the school level for meeting the needs of groups of students, such as ELL, IEP, ED, etc.? EP Condition 1 EP Condition 3
- A-6.** Are growth goals (PVAAS), established at the grade/subject level for groups of students with a history of lower achievement, using the relevant reports available through PVAAS reporting? EP Condition 1 EP Condition 3
- A-7.** Is assessment data disaggregated by cohorts and considered in all related school improvement efforts? EP Condition 1
- A-8.** Do school staff use ACCESS data for student placement and adjusting instructional practices for English Learners? EP Condition 1
- A-9.** For students receiving supplemental support, are diagnostic assessments being used to determine areas of student need and inform instruction? EP Condition 1
- A-10.** For students receiving supplemental support, is there evidence that attained rate of improvement data are being calculated and being compared to typical rates of improvement of peers? EP Condition 1
- A-11.** Are PVAAS projections used to identify individual student's projections to proficiency on upcoming PSSA/Keystone exams? EP Condition 1
- A-12.** Are individual student PVAAS projections used in conferencing with students and families relative to course selection, goal setting, career focus, IEP development, transition planning, English language learning levels, etc.? EP Condition 1

ORGANIZATION

SYSTEM LEVEL

Students with a History of Lower Achievement

- O-1. Does the school model a commitment to high expectations for all students, equal opportunities for meeting high academic standards, and culturally responsive practices? *EP Condition 2*
- O-2. Does the school schedule provide for opportunities for specially designed instruction, intervention/tiered supports, or course remediation for individual students/groups of students in need? *EP Condition 1* *EP Condition 3*
- O-3. Is there a school schedule in place that ensures that students receiving supplemental and/or tiered support do not miss core instructional time? *EP Condition 3*
- O-4. Are supplemental/support services provided tailored to the unique needs of each identified student, e.g., language instruction educational program (LIEP), special education, tiered supports? *EP Condition 3*
- O-5. Are teachers provided with professional learning opportunities that enhance their skills in differentiated instruction and UDL (Universal Design for Learning)? *EP Condition 4*
- O-6. Are teachers, coaches, and support staff provided with ongoing professional learning opportunities to enhance their skills in assessing student performance, adjusting instruction for students, and making decisions about overall student growth? *EP Condition 4*
- O-7. Are teachers provided ongoing support in understanding the needs of students with IEPs and LIEP programming? *EP Condition 4*
- O-8. Have professional learning opportunities been provided on the PA English Language Development Standards and the WIDA “Can Do” Descriptors that outline appropriate expectations for students as they move through the language acquisition process? Is there a process that illustrates an understanding of the differentiation between language acquisition and learning disability? *EP Condition 4*
- O-9. Do teachers have scheduled time to collaborate with other teachers who have instructional responsibility for the same students? *EP Condition 2*
- O-10. Are opportunities in place for collaboration between core teacher and teachers providing additional support (e.g., special education teachers, ESL teachers, tiered support intervention teachers, etc.)? *EP Condition 2*
- O-11. Does the school have a system and process in place to collect, analyze, and act on data to improve outcomes for all students (data teams, assessment map, scheduled meeting dates)? *EP Condition 2*
- O-12. Do professional development opportunities for teachers include strategies for tailoring curriculum and instruction to student needs in ways that accelerate student progress towards state standards and assessments? *EP Condition 4*
- O-13. Do teachers and staff hold all students to the same high expectations and academic standards? Are those expectations clearly communicated to and embraced by families/community? *EP Condition 2*
- O-14. Does the school address chronic absenteeism and dropout rates systematically and strategically, with awareness of the statistics relative to students with a history of lower achievement? *EP Condition 3*

Students with a History of Lower Achievement

Teacher-Level Questions (Classroom)

THINK ABOUT: How might my practices and knowledge level related to Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Organization contribute to the growth and achievement results of my students with a history of lower achievement?

These questions are offered as a vehicle for individual teachers to guide self-reflection in a purposeful and systematic manner. Each question/probe should be thoughtfully considered, reflective of data findings, and answered with clear evidence.

Teachers: As you consider each question/probe, ask yourself, “What is my evidence?”

This list is not exhaustive, and it is not a checklist. The questions do not need to be discussed in the order in which they are numbered; they are numbered to reference specific items and for ease of use. The questions are intended to help generate thinking as a teacher considers classroom/student level data on an annual basis. Teachers are encouraged to use all the data available to them, for example, PVAAS teacher-specific reports, attendance data, summative and benchmark data.

These questions, when considered through the lens of data available through PVAAS and other assessments, are intended to guide the self-reflection process to assist in identifying root causes and in developing action plans for the current group of students.

Teachers are encouraged to access PDE’s Self-Reflection Guides:

- [Teacher Self-Reflection Guide \(Data Available Teachers\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Teacher Self-Reflection Guide \(Non-Data Available Teachers\) \(PDF\)](#)

Framework Key:

Each question in the teacher section(s) are coded to show the related domain(s) from [The Observation and Practice Framework, Act 13:](#)

PP

Planning and Preparation

CE

Classroom Environment

I

Instruction

PR

Professional Responsibilities

CURRICULUM

TEACHER LEVEL

Students with a History of Lower Achievement

- C-1. Am I ensuring that all students with a history of lower achievement have access to challenging curriculum that creates the conditions to meet high standards? PP I
- C-2. Am I able to identify the strategies in the written curriculum to accelerate the learning outcomes of students with a history of lower achievement? PP
- C-3. Do I know and access the materials and resources appropriate to the needs of specific groups of students, e.g. EL, ED, and IEP students, as specified in the written curriculum? PP
- C-4. Am I able to quickly access and use the written curriculum for my grade level? PP
- C-5. Am I able to conduct a vertical skill trace in the written curriculum to allow for specially designed instruction and/or scaffolding and intervention for both individual and groups of students? PP
- C-6. Am I able to access and use the written curriculum to: PP I
 - a. Address all students' backgrounds and experiences?
 - b. Plan for adaptation and modifications for students with IEPs?
 - c. Address goals and objectives for students with IEPs, LIEPs?
 - d. Address social and emotional learning needs?

INSTRUCTION

TEACHER LEVEL

Students with a History of Lower Achievement

- I-1. Am I providing instruction aligned to the PA Core Standards for all students with a history of lower achievement? PP I
- I-2. Is my instruction explicit and systematic? Do I understand what explicit and systematic means in practice? I
- I-3. Am I using evidence-based instructional strategies known to be most effective with students with a history of lower achievement? I
- I-4. Am I ensuring that my students with a history of lower achievement are appropriately challenged at high levels of cognitive complexity? I
- I-5. Am I effectively using multi-sensory instructional strategies? I
- I-6. Am I aware of the importance of enhancing background knowledge and vocabulary development with my students with a history of lower achievement, and do I fully understand the impact of background knowledge on comprehension? I
- I-7. Am I using academic and content specific vocabulary in instruction that mirrors what is used in local and state assessments? I
- I-8. Am I knowledgeable and using evidence-based instructional strategies for the teaching of vocabulary, focusing on tiered vocabulary research? I
- I-9. Do I effectively use flexible student grouping to provide direct instruction and both guided and independent practice on specific learning targets? PP I

- I-10. Do I differentiate homework that addresses the needs of individual students? /
- I-11. Do I know how to differentiate content, product, and process to address needs of students with a history of lower achievement? PP /
- I-12. Do I understand and use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to design and deliver instruction? PP /
- I-13. Do I use personalized learning strategies to enable students to master a standard set of rigorous competencies while working at their own pace, as well as encourage my students to make choices in how they access information and demonstrate their learning? /
- I-14. Do I effectively use scaffolding strategies to address the needs of students with a history of lower achievement? /
- I-15. Do I know how to task analyze a specific learning target/activity to scaffold and differentiate for students to be successful? PP /
- I-16. Do I use technology and assistive technology effectively to address unique needs of specific students? /
- I-17. Do I seek out and use appropriate evidence-based materials and resources to meet the needs of students receiving intervention? /
- I-18. Do I ensure that interventions are aligned with the core instructional program and language proficiency levels? /
- I-19. Do I monitor and ensure that students who receive tiered support are provided with specific instruction targeted to skill deficits? /
- I-20. Do I understand language proficiency levels and use appropriate strategies for differing proficiency levels of EL students? /
- I-21. Do I monitor and ensure that the amount of specialized instruction is aligned with individual students' needs? PP CE /

Examples:

- a. Is there evidence that students with IEPs receive an appropriate amount of specially designed instruction?
 - b. Is there evidence that English Learners receive an appropriate amount of language development support (reading, writing, listening, speaking) in the general classroom and in a language instruction educational program provided by the ESL teacher?
 - c. Is there evidence that students receiving tiered support (MTSS) receive appropriate time at tiers 2 and 3?
- I-22. Do I actively teach students strategies for self-advocacy? /
 - I-23. Do I understand, can I recognize, and do I provide specific strategy instruction to students demonstrating executive functioning difficulties (e.g., checklists, self-regulating strategies)? /
 - I-24. Have I deeply reflected on my beliefs relative to the concept of growth? Do I believe that all students can grow/make progress from their starting points? Do I demonstrate that belief in my instructional practice by providing equal opportunities and high expectations for all students? CE /

ASSESSMENT

TEACHER LEVEL

Students with a History of Lower Achievement

- A-1. Do I effectively use the prescribed screening assessments, including PVAAS projections, to identify students in my classroom who are not at proficiency? /
- A-2. Do I use formal diagnostic assessments (e.g., Core Phonics Survey, CDT) regularly and effectively to determine the needs of my students with a history of lower achievement? /
- A-3. Do I use an array of formative assessment techniques to closely monitor the progress of students with a history of lower achievement? /
- a. Do I employ both formal and informal progress monitoring measures to inform instruction for my students receiving tiered support? Do I have evidence that my students are meeting IEP goals/objectives, and that students are achieving incremental steps to proficiency in specific subjects and/or in language proficiency?
 - b. Do I have evidence that students who are acquiring English are monitored regularly?
 - c. Am I using formal progress monitoring measures such as CBM (curriculum-based measurement, including AimsWEB, Easy CBM, DIBELS, Acadience, ACCESS for ELLS, etc.)?
- A-4. Do I provide my students with choices on how to demonstrate their learning when appropriate? /
- A-5. Do I analyze and use the school-level PVAAS projections to collaborate with colleagues to plan at the school level for meeting the needs of groups of students (EL IEP, ED, etc.)? /
- A-6. Do I establish growth goals (PVAAS) at my grade/subject level for groups of students with a history of lower achievement, using the relevant reports available through PVAAS reporting? PP /
- A-7. Do I disaggregate and act upon my assessment data to improve my instruction for all students? /
- A-8. Do I know how to interpret and use ACCESS data for student placement and adjusting instructional practice for English Learners? /
- A-9. For my students receiving supplemental support, am I using diagnostic assessments to determine areas of student need and inform instruction? PP /
- A-10. For my students receiving supplemental support, am I engaged in using rate of improvement data and comparing that data to typical rates of improvement of peers? /
- A-11. Are PVAAS projections used to identify individual student's projections to proficiency on upcoming PSSA/Keystone? Am I able to use the projections to engage students in goal setting? /
- A-12. Am I appropriately using individual student PVAAS projections in conferencing with students and families relative to course selection, goal setting, career focus, IEP development, transition planning, English language learning levels, etc.? PP /

ORGANIZATION

TEACHER LEVEL

Students with a History of Lower Achievement

- O-1. Do I consistently demonstrate a commitment to high expectations for all students, equal opportunities for meeting high academic standards, and culturally responsive practices? CE I PR
- O-2. Do I create and manage my classroom schedule aligned to the school schedule, creating opportunities for specially designed instruction, intervention/tiered supports, or course remediation for individual students/groups of students in need? I
- O-3. Do I adhere to the school and classroom schedules to ensure that students receiving supplemental and/or tiered support do not miss core instructional time? CE I
- O-4. Do I collaborate, monitor, and ensure that supplemental/support services are tailored to the unique needs of each identified student, e.g., language instruction educational program (LIEP), special education, tiered supports? I
- O-5. Do I seek and participate in professional learning opportunities that enhance my skills in differentiated instruction and UDL (Universal Design for Learning)? PR
- O-6. Do I seek and apply ongoing professional learning specifically designed to improve my skills in effectively adjusting instruction for my students? PR
- O-7. Do I seek ongoing support in enhancing my understanding relative to the needs of students with IEPs and LIEP programming? CE PR
- O-8. Have I engaged in professional learning opportunities on the PA English Language Development Standards and the WIDA “Can Do” Descriptors that outline appropriate expectations for students as they move through the language acquisition process, and do I have a clear understanding of the differentiation between language acquisition and learning disability? PR
- O-9. Do I effectively collaborate with other teachers who have instructional responsibility for my students, taking advantage of scheduled time for this collaboration? PR
- O-10. Do I seek out collaboration opportunities between core teachers and teachers providing additional support (e.g., special education teachers, ESL teachers, tiered support intervention teachers, etc.)? PR
- O-11. Do I use a system and process to collect, analyze, and act on data to improve outcomes for all students? PR
Example: data teams, assessment map, scheduled meeting dates
- O-12. Have I participated in professional development opportunities that include strategies for tailoring curriculum and instruction to address student needs and to accelerate student progress towards benchmarks and state standards? PR
- O-13. Do I hold all students to the same high expectations and academic standards, as well as articulate those expectations to my students and their families? CE I PR
- O-14. Do I systematically and strategically address chronic absenteeism and drop out potential with students in my classroom, with awareness of the statistics relative to students with a history of lower achievement? CE I



Explore these other

DIGGING DEEPER

Guides & Resources:

Digging Deeper into Content Areas: English Language Arts (ELA)

Grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, Keystone Algebra I

Digging Deeper into Content Areas: Mathematics

Grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, Keystone Algebra I

Digging Deeper into Content Areas: Science

Grades 4 & 8, Keystone Biology

Digging Deeper Resource Guide

**Digging Deeper: Students with a History of
Higher Achievement**

at education.pa.gov >