KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

VISION FOR QUALITY INSTRUCTION

Introduction

The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) believes that all Kansas students deserve consistent access to Quality Instruction. Quality Instruction refers to the implementation of evidence-based lesson design that reflects high expectations, meaningful student engagement, and learning activities aligned to the Kansas Curricular Standards. A data-driven system of differentiated supports is necessary to help each student meet rigorous state standards.

This document details five critical elements of Quality Instruction as defined in the Four Fundamentals:

- **Teachers with High Expectations:** *Students* are expected and supported to engage with grade-level work by teachers who genuinely believe ALL students are capable of succeeding. *Teachers* make instructional choices that reflect these beliefs: selecting standards-aligned materials, implementing evidence-based instructional strategies, allowing students to productively struggle while praising their efforts and sharing meaningful feedback, and providing temporary scaffolds only when needed to build independence.
- **Deep Student Engagement in Learning:** *Students* do the majority of the work of their lessons, persevering through difficulty and owning the complex thinking even when teachers provide support. They consistently inquire and explore by reading, writing, and discussing rigorous content in grade-appropriate ways. Students feel empowered and excited to take risks, make mistakes, receive feedback, and work collaboratively to refine their thinking and clarify misconceptions. *Teachers* employ evidence-based instructional strategies to support students' sense-making and promote critical thinking.
- **Standards-Aligned Tasks and Materials:** *Students* engage with tasks and materials that align to the content and rigor of the Kansas Curricular Standards in all content areas. Districts and schools adopt and adapt high-quality instructional materials where available to minimize variation in students' access to worthy, grade-appropriate content and experiences. *Educators* at all levels prioritize putting standards-aligned materials in front of students during Tier 1 instruction, and teachers provide scaffolds to help individual students reach the bar rather than lowering the bar for some.
- **Intentional and Cohesive Instruction:** *Students* experience learning as purposeful and cumulative, not incidental or based on a set of isolated skills. Within and across lessons, students have ample opportunities to explore a concept, refine their understanding, and build more sophisticated schema. The Kansas Curricular Standards provide a foundation for coherence, promoting consistency and equity in students' access to rigorous, grade-level content where new learning is connected to and builds upon prior learning. *Teachers* intentionally backwards plan from the standards to articulate clear learning goals and set students up for success with them, including making clear why the learning matters.

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

- **Data-Driven Instruction:** *Students* have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their proficiency in a variety of ways throughout a lesson. *Teachers* frequently check for understanding using a variety of formative and summative assessments and respond to student misconceptions or unfinished learning at an appropriate scale (individually, small group, or whole class). Teachers provide differentiated supports (scaffolds or extensions) to meet the needs of all individual students, and scaffolds are strategically embedded into lessons to help struggling students access grade-level content.

Sources:

- Kansas School Improvement Model
- Deans for Impact (2015). The Science of Learning. Austin, TX: Deans for Impact. https://www.deansforimpact.org/files/assets/thescienceoflearning.pdf

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