Responsive Classroom®

Responsive Classroom Practitioner Certification Assignments

Assignment 1: Self-Assessment of practice in all components of *Responsive Classroom*
- Use the *Responsive Classroom Practitioner Assessment Tool* (RCPAT) included in this packet to self-assess your implementation and practice in all components of *Responsive Classroom*. Scores must average 4.0 or higher in each section to qualify for certification. You will be required to submit a completed **tracking sheet** and copies of your completed post-assessment **reflection pages** for each section from the Assessment Tool. Your responses to the questions should accurately reflect your continued growth plan.
- For each section reflection you will create a self-improvement plan to help focus your continuing growth with *Responsive Classroom* (RC) implementation. Focus areas could be strengthening your work within a specific domain item, teaching related academic and/or social-emotional competencies to students and/or adult learners, or enhancing your use of specific RC practices. Use the **Four Domains: Strategies and Resources** section at the end of the RCPAT to identify ideas, strategies, and tools to use as you enact your self-improvement plans.

Assignment 2*: Creating and Supporting Engagement
* Complete either Assignment 2a <u>or</u> Assignment 2b based on your role and primary responsibilities.

Assignment 2a: Engaging Academic Lesson *If you work primarily with students in your role, complete this assignment.	Assignment 2b: Engaging Professional Development Session *If you primarily work with adults in your role, complete this assignment.
Video of an engaging academic lesson you are teaching students ○ Video length: between 20-30 minutes- **Please Note:** *Reviewers will not score video after 30 minutes.* ○ Lesson should be content focused and aligned to an objective. ***Please note:*** *Morning Meetings and Responsive Advisory Meetings do not meet the criteria for this assignment.* ○ Use Assignment 2a: Engaging Academics Video Checklist included in this packet.	**Video of engaging professional development session you are facilitating for adult learners** ○ Video length: between 20-30 minutes- **Please Note:** *Reviewers will not score video after 30 minutes* ○ Professional development session should help facilitate new learning or extend understanding of a familiar topic, and should be aligned to an objective. ○ Use Assignment 2b: Engaging Professional Development Session Video Checklist included in this packet.
Lesson plan for the academic lesson video ○ Use Assignment 2a: Academic Lesson Planning Sheet included in this packet.	**Session outline for the professional development session video** ○ Use Assignment 2b: Professional Development Session Planning Sheet included in this packet.
Written reflection of video and the Four Domains of *Responsive Classroom*: Positive Community, Effective Management, Engaging Academics, and Developmentally Responsive Teaching ○ Use Assignment 2a: Academic Lesson Reflection Guide included in this packet.	**Written reflection of video and the Four Domains of *Responsive Classroom*: Positive Community, Effective Management, Engaging Academics, and Developmentally Responsive Teaching** ○ Use Assignment 2b: Professional Development Session Reflection Guide included in this packet.

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Assignment 3*: Responsive Classroom Implementation Impact Essay
   * Complete either Assignment 3a or Assignment 3b based on your role and primary responsibilities.

Assignment 3a: Student Impact Essay (3-5 pages) *If you work primarily with students in your role, complete this assignment.	Assignment 3b: School Impact Essay (3-5 pages) *If you primarily work with adults in your role, complete this assignment.
Explain how implementing *Responsive Classroom* practices has positively impacted your students' growth in both academic and social-emotional skills. o Select at least **two** Academic Competencies and at least **two** Social and Emotional Competencies o Use Assignment 3a: Student Impact Essay Guide included in this packet.	**Explain how implementing *Responsive Classroom* practices has positively impacted your school and adults' and students' growth in both academic and social-emotional skills.** o Select at least **two** Academic Competencies and at least **two** Social and Emotional Competencies o Use Assignment 3b: School Impact Essay Guide included in this packet.

Assignment 4: Two letters of recommendation
   ● One letter from your professional supervisor commenting on your qualities as an effective educator (i.e. relationships with students, families and colleagues, overall management and organization of responsibilities, approaches to instruction and leadership); approach to professional development (i.e. ability to be reflective about one's practice and respond to outside feedback); and, proficiency in *Responsive Classroom* implementation.
   ● One letter from a colleague who can speak to your qualities as an effective educator (i.e. relationships with students, families, and colleagues, overall management and organization of responsibilities, approaches to instruction and leadership); and, demonstration of *Responsive Classroom* practices and strategies. The colleague you choose may not be another applicant for the RC Certification Program.
   ● Recommendations should be submitted here: certification@responsiveclassroom.org

Assignment 5: A current resume

Assignment 1: Self-assessment of practice in all components of *Responsive Classroom*

THE RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM PRACTITIONERS ASSESSMENT TOOL

INTRODUCTION

As a growing body of research shows, educator effectiveness is one of the most important factors in determining how successful students are in school. But how can we educators increase our effectiveness –our ability to create learning environments in which students thrive academically and socially? The *Responsive Classroom* approach is one important route to improving our effectiveness.

Two studies by the University of Virginia, one of them a large-scale, randomized controlled trial, have found that teachers' use of *Responsive Classroom* practices is associated with:

   More high quality standards-based instruction
   Greater student achievement in math and reading, regardless of socioeconomic background
   Greater gains for low-achieving students
   Improvement in students' social skills
   Improved teacher-student interactions
   More positive feeling toward school among students and teachers

The *Responsive Classroom* approach improves educator effectiveness by helping educators build skills in four interrelated areas:

   Effective Management: In well-managed learning environments, educators establish and teach behavior expectations, manage the schedule, and organize physical spaces in ways that enable learners to work with autonomy and focus.
   Positive Community: Effective teaching and learning requires an environment where every learner feels safe, valued, and fully included in the learning community; where educators and learners share a common purpose along with regular routines and traditions that form a comforting underpinning for their days; and where a sense of joy envelops hard work.
   Developmentally Responsive Teaching: Effective teaching results when facilitators use their knowledge of human development, along with regular observations of learners, to create a developmentally appropriate environment for learning.
   Engaging Academics: Effective educators design learning experiences, assignments, and activities that are active and interactive, appropriately challenging, purposeful, and connected to learners' interests.

The *Responsive Classroom Practitioner Assessment Tool* will support your growth in all these domains. Through self-assessment, this tool helps you think about and deepen your understanding of teaching and learning in general and *Responsive Classroom* practices in particular.

This process of reflection and assessment, when approached with genuine curiosity and openness, will ultimately strengthen your teaching practice and enhance others' learning.

WHAT IS *THE RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM PRACTITIONER ASSESSMENT TOOL*?

The *Responsive Classroom Practitioner Assessment Tool* (RCPAT) allows you to evaluate your implementation of key *Responsive Classroom* practices within the four interrelated domains of an optimal learning environment:

- Section 1: Effective Management (pgs. 7-12)
- Section 2: Positive Community (pgs. 13-18)
- Section 3: Developmentally Responsive (pgs. 19-24)
- Section 4: Engaging Academics (pgs. 25-30)

For each of the Four Domains, the assessment tool provides concrete examples of how an aspect of that domain might look when implemented at three different levels:

1	3	5
A beginning level at which practitioners are **developing** their understanding and ability to implement *Responsive Classroom* practices	A middle level at which practitioners are **proficient** at implementation and still have areas for growth	A higher level at which practitioners are **distinguished** or accomplished in their implementation of *Responsive Classroom* practices

In addition to the assessment items, each section has pre- and post-assessment reflection questions. At the end of the RCPAT you will find a list of strategies and resources (pgs. 32-34) to support deeper practice with elements of each of the Four Domains.

Each section is organized predictably to help you understand the goals, aligned RC practices, and learner outcomes associated with each domain. There are also examples of what each item may look like for a *Responsive Classroom* practitioners in non-classroom roles*.* Combined, these are designed to support your thinking around ways the goals, practices, and outcomes apply to your specific role and setting.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS ASSESSMENT TOOL AND WHEN?

Non-classroom teachers who want to achieve Responsive Classroom Practitioner certification will need to complete this tool, with an average score of 4.0 or better in each section, to qualify for certification. Using the tool for this purpose will be most effective after you have completed the Elementary Core Course and Elementary Advanced Course or Middle School Core Course and gained experience in implementing or adapting all practices within the context of your role and setting.

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HOW TO USE THE ASSESSMENT TOOL

To begin your work with the RCPAT, take time to consider how common school terminology translates into your role and setting. For example, what is your classroom? What is the curriculum you teach? Who are your students? Taking time to re-define traditionally classroom-oriented terminology found in this tool will help you more easily translate the goals and intended outcomes of each item to your unique role, responsibilities, and setting. See examples of ways classroom-oriented terms apply for non-classroom *Responsive Classroom* practitioners:

Teacher: An education professional responsible for learners	*Principal* *Art teacher* *School counselor* *Support staff*
Students: People with a responsibility to learn new skills and content	*Classroom teachers* *Social skills group* *Families* *Tennis team*
Classroom: The location where teaching and learning takes place	*Conference Room* *Resource Room* *Gymnasium* *Lunchroom*
Lesson: A period of time designed to help people learn information and/or practice skills	*Faculty meeting* *IEP conference* *Small group push-in* *Professional development session*
Behavioral; behavior: Human actions relative to shared expectations	*Collegiality* *Participation* *Punctuality* *Professional responsibilities*
Misbehavior: Human actions inconsistent with shared expectations, values or norms	*Misconduct* *Missteps* *Mistakes* *Outbursts*
Academic: Related to human education and/or learning	*Professional standards* *School-wide literacy initiative* *School mission* *Marching band*
Curriculum: Content to be taught and learned	*Athletic code of conduct* *Interpersonal skills* *Musicality* *Conflict resolution*
Rules: Shared expectations that govern participation in a group	*Group guidelines* *School covenant* *Student/family/staff handbook* *Recess rules*

Then, proceed through the following steps for your work with each of the four sections:

1. Complete, in writing, the pre-assessment reflection at the beginning of each section.
2. Review the domain introduction, aligned practices and competencies, and assessment items in each section to understand the scope of the assessment.
3. Use the practices in your role and setting. To make the assessment easier, you might want to make a video or audio recording of yourself using each practice.
4. After using each of the domain-aligned practices in your role, circle the rating (1, 3, or 5) that best describes your implementation related to each item being assessed in that domain.
   - If you cannot decide between two ratings for an item, mark the lower number. Uncertainty indicates that you may need to refine your implementation of that item.
   - If you do not answer an item (for instance, because you do not use the practice), give yourself a score of zero and include it in your score calculations for that section.
5. After completing an entire section, calculate you average score for the section:
   - Add up the total points for each section.
   - Divide that number by the number of items in that section. This is your average score for the section.
6. Look over your average scores to determine your present level of implementation.

An average of …	Indicates that …
Less than 3.0	Your implementation is developing
3.0-3.9	You are making good progress
4.0 or above	Your implementation is strong

7. Complete, in writing, the post-assessment reflection at the end of each section.

8. Once you have completed all sections, fill in the score tracking and summary (page 31).

Redoing a Section

If your average score for a section is less than 4.0, refer to the strategies and resources listed at the end of the RCPAT. They will help you make your action plan for improving implementation in your role and setting. Record yourself using the practice, with refinements, and then redo that section of the assessment. Use different-colored ink to include your new score in the final summary sheet.

FINAL THOUGHT

To ensure a high-quality education for every child, every day, we educators must continue to stretch our understanding of teaching and learning and to refine our practices. The *Responsive Classroom Practitioner Assessment Tool* is designed to help you do just that. As you start on this journey of improving your effectiveness as a Responsive Classroom practitioner, remember to celebrate the successes you have achieved in your implementation up to this point. And most importantly, observe the student and adult

learners you teach to see how this approach and your skills in the Four Domains have a positive impact on them every day.

Section 1. Effective Management

Effective Management: The practices educators use to create a calm, orderly environment that promotes autonomy and allows learners to focus on learning.

Aligned *Responsive Classroom* practices:
- Classroom organization
- Giving clear and explicit directions
- Guided Discovery
- Interactive Modeling
- Routines and procedures
- Teacher leadership style
- Visual cues
- Reinforcing, Reminding, and Redirecting Teacher Language

Social and Emotional Competencies:
- **Assertiveness:** A person's ability to take initiative, stand up for their ideas without hurting or negating others, seek help, succeed at a challenging task, and recognize their individual self as separate from the circumstances or conditions they're in.
- **Responsibility:** A person's ability to motivate themselves to take action and follow through on expectations; to define a problem, consider the consequences, and choose a positive solution.
- **Self-Control:** A person's ability to recognize and regulate their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in order to be successful in the moment and remain on a successful trajectory.

Academic Competencies:
- **Academic* Behaviors:** The ways in which a person conducts themselves that supports their success in school, including such things as regular attendance, arriving ready to work, paying attention, participating in instructional activities and group discussions, and devoting out of school time to studying and completing assignments and projects.
- **Academic* Perseverance:** A person's tendency to complete assignments and execute their responsibilities in a timely and thorough manner and to the best of their ability, despite distractions, obstacles, or level of challenge.

   * If translating Academic Competencies to adult learners feels challenging, consider substituting the word academic with terms that relate to the adult community at your school. For example, professional mindset, life-long learner strategies, mission-driven behaviors, etc.

Pre-Assessment Reflection

I.   ***Reflect on your implementation of Responsive Classroom strategies*** and ways they help you to effectively manage the educational environment you have charge of.

II.   ***Read through this section further defining elements and evidence of Effective Management***. Note ideas that confirm you best understanding of this domain and ideas that raise questions for you. Think about what the most important goals/outcomes of this domain would be in your role/setting.

III. **_Complete the Effective Management self-assessment_**. Assign yourself a score of 1, 3, or 5 for each domain item based on your progress so far. If you cannot decide between two ratings for an item, mark the lower number.

Uncertainty indicates that there may be more opportunity to refine your implementation of that item. If you do not answer an item (for instance, because you do not use the practice), give yourself a score of zero and include it in your score calculations for that section.

SECTION 1. EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT – DATE ASSESSED _____

EM1: Establishes and reinforces clear routines

The establishment of routines and procedures is an essential element of an effectively managed learning environment and supports a myriad of learning experiences. Attention to this element impacts both the quantity and quality of learning that can take place. For example,

- Student council members work effectively and successfully in a large group, small groups, or individually.
- Staff members efficiently transition to begin collaborative tasks during staff meetings. The facilitator always invites clarifying questions and frequently offers proactive reminders around shared goals and timelines before releasing teams to their task.
- Artists move quickly and quietly between art room work areas or into groups.

	1	3	5
EM1: **Establishes and reinforces clear routines**	The procedures and routines change frequently, often resulting in loss of instructional time. Individuals require frequent support and prompting in following most routines and procedures. Transitions can feel complicated and often take more time than expected, which detracts from the available learning time.	The procedures and routines are mostly consistent, clear, and well-established, resulting in minimal loss of instructional time. Individuals need some support in following some routines and procedures. Transitions are mostly smooth with minimal loss of learning time.	The procedures and routines are consistent, clear, and well-established, resulting in effective use of instructional time. Individuals consistently follow routines and expectations with minimal prompting. Transitions are clear and smooth, which allows for maximum learning time.

EM2: Organizes the environment for safety and autonomy

Effective schools are organized so that students, families, staff, and visitors can move safely and autonomously through the space. Having resources clearly labeled and procedures in place to collect and return materials, including technology to support learning, opens the door for the types of learning activities that can be structured. For example,

- The teacher pre-plans so all materials and resources are readily accessible before and during the lesson.
- Students consistently know how to access media materials independently in the library.

- Grade-level teams know and utilize various resources (technology, print resources, and instructional supports) to co-create unit plans during non-contact days.

	1	3	5
EM2: **Organizes the environment for safety and autonomy**	Procedures and directions are often unclear, resulting in a number of individuals needing additional reminders and ongoing support to follow through. Expectations for accessing resources and support are unclear and/or change frequently. Often many directions are given for how to care for resources and spaces, however, individuals only follow these inconsistently.	The procedures and directions are delivered clearly, resulting in most people following them with ease. Individuals move independently around the environment and transition with few needing additional support. Expectations for accessing resources and support are mostly clear and followed with few people needing extra support and/or reminders. Most people care for resources and spaces with minimal reminders.	The procedures and directions are clear and consistently followed. People independently move around the environment and transition between and within spaces and activities with autonomy. The expectations for accessing all resources and support are clear and consistently followed. People independently and routinely access all materials and assistance, and care for the resources and spaces they use.

EM3: Leadership style is assertive, authoritative, and approachable.
A leader's presence has a profound impact on community attitudes and actions. A style that is positively assertive and presents from a position of authority – but is also approachable – establishes appropriate contours for individuals and groups. This allows everyone to focus on learning and explore within set boundaries while knowing they can rely on the leader to be there to provide them with necessary feedback and support to be successful. For example,

- Assistant principals circulate to check for misconceptions as co-teaching partners get started crafting their co-vision board for the year ahead.
- A family liaison consistently uses a firm and respectful tone and body language while listening and responding to parents' frustrations about changes to bussing routes and procedures.
- An instructional coach communicates important teacher action-items with clarity, conviction and compassion.

	1	3	5
EM3: **Leadership style is assertive, authoritative, and approachable**	I sometimes present with authority in a clear, firm, and reasonable manner. Frequently people misunderstand my directions or expectations and do not consistently follow them. Some people take academic, social, and emotional risks. Because a number of people need to be refocused and redirected, there is often a loss of instructional time.	I present with authority in a mostly clear, firm, and reasonable manner, most of the time. Individuals usually understand my directions and expectations and act on them. People take academic, social, and emotional risks and rarely approach me for clarification or feedback. Because only a few people need to be redirected and refocused, there is minimal loss of instructional time.	I consistently present with authority in a clear, firm, and reasonable manner with both individuals and groups. People understand and readily act on directions and expectations. People take academic, social, and emotional risks and seek guidance and clarification as needed. Because people stay focused on the work, instructional time is maximized.

EM4: Environment is arranged for maximum learning

The organization of all aspects of classrooms and schools is critical to ensuring that optimal learning takes place. The space needs to be organized in such a way that it can accommodate the diverse learning needs of the community. Therefore, the maximum amount of space – including the wall space – should be arranged in a way that can support the immediate learning at hand. For example,

- The professional development library is easy to navigate, well-organized, and has a clear and effective check-out/check-in system.
- School leadership team agendas and work products are posted in the conference room. Grade level goals and progress maps are posted in the leveled-reader library.
- The balanced literacy coach encourages teachers to categorize active literacy materials by approximate grade level and reading skill in a shared folder on Google Drive.

	1	3	5
EM4: **Environment is arranged for maximum learning**	Both learners and I use the learning environment for activities inconsistently and infrequently. There are some areas of the physical environment where it is difficult for people to move around without bumping into objects or others. There are several areas in the space that are not used by individuals. The visuals largely remain unchanged throughout the course of the year.	Learners have increasing control of their environment, with my guidance. People can usually move throughout the space easily and without bumping into objects or others. Individuals sometimes struggle to arrange furniture in new ways to meet learning needs in the moment. The environment supports learning for most learning styles. Visuals are posted and changed periodically throughout the year.	Both learners and I use the learning environment fully and have shared ownership of how the space will contribute to our work. People easily move around the space without physically interfering with furniture, objects, or each other. People easily arrange furniture to meet learning needs. Most aspects of the environment support learning and visuals posted always support current content and intended learning outcomes.

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Effective Management   Total number of points* = _____ divided by 4 items = _____ (average)

Note: Items that you do not rate should be assigned a point value of zero.

Average score = _____

Area of opportunity:	Good progress:	Strength area:
average = less than 3.0	average = 3.0-3.9	average = 4.0 or more

POST-ASSESSMENT REFLECTION

Average score = _____

Area of opportunity:	Good progress:	Strength area:
average = less than 3.0	average = 3.0-3.9	average = 4.0 or more

- What is an area of particular strength for you with *Responsive Classroom* implementation and Effective Management in your role? Why do you believe this is the case? Provide some specific examples that support your reasoning.

- What would you identify as potential opportunities for your growth with Effective Management? Which *Responsive Classroom* practices would you use to support your efforts? Provide some ideas as to how you might modify a few RC practices to more clearly align with your role and the learners you serve. (For example, a school leader mimics the Responsive Advisory Meeting components and process to structure after-school staff meetings.)

- Prioritize your opportunities for growth and relevant RC practices in order of most importance or urgency for you. To create a self-improvement plan for these areas, include two action items and one resource you will review.

- Now that you have a plan in place, how and when will you know these strategies are positively impacting your Effective Management? When will you assess this plan again?

2. POSITIVE COMMUNITY

Positive Community: The practices educators use to create a safe, predictable, joyful, inclusive learning environment where all people have a sense of belonging and significance.

Aligned *Responsive Classroom* practices:
  • Envisioning language
  • Investing students in rules
  • Morning Meeting
  • Proximity
  • Reminding, reinforcing, redirecting
  • Responding to misbehavior
  • Role play
  • Rule creation process
  • Solving a chronic problem
  • Structured reflection
  • Reinforcing, reminding, and redirecting teacher language

Social and Emotional Competencies:
  • **Cooperation:** A person's ability to establish new relationships, maintain positive relationships and friendships, avoid social isolation, resolve conflicts, accept differences, be a contributing member of the classroom and school community, and work productively and collaboratively with others.
  • **Empathy**: A person's ability to "see into" (recognize, understand) another's state of mind and emotions and be receptive to new ideas and perspectives; to appreciate and value differences and diversity in others; to have concern for others' welfare, even when it doesn't benefit or may come as a cost to one's self.
  • **Self-Control**: A person's ability to recognize and regulate their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in order to be successful in the moment and remain on a successful trajectory.

Academic Competencies:
  ● **Academic* Behaviors:** The ways in which a person conducts themselves that supports their success in school, including such things as regular attendance, arriving ready to work, paying attention, participating in instructional activities and group discussions, and devoting out of school time to studying and completing assignments/responsibilities and projects.
  ● **Academic* Mindset:** Four self-perceptions influence a learner's mindset: 1) I belong in this learning community; 2) my effort improves my performance; 3) I can succeed at this work; and 4) I see value in this work.

  * If translating Academic Competencies to adult learners feels challenging, consider substituting the word academic with terms that relate to the adult community at your school. For example, professional mindset, life-long learner strategies, mission-driven behaviors, etc.

PRE-ASSESSMENT REFLECTION

I. *Reflect on your implementation of Responsive Classroom strategies* and ways they help you to build a positive sense of community among the learners you serve.

II. ***Read through this section further defining elements and evidence of Positive Community***. Note ideas that confirm your best understanding of this domain and ideas that raise questions for you. Think about what the most important goals/outcomes of this domain would be in your role/setting.

III. ***Complete the Positive Community self-assessment***. Assign yourself a score of 1, 3, or 5 for each domain item based on your progress so far. If you cannot decide between two ratings for an item, mark the lower number. Uncertainty indicates that there may be more opportunity to refine your implementation of that item. If you do not answer an item (for instance, because you do not use the practice), give yourself a score of zero and include it in your score calculations for that section.

SECTION 2. POSITIVE COMMUNITY – DATE ASSESSED _____

PC1: Creates the conditions for all to belong and feel significant
Behavior is influenced by one's sense of belonging, significance, and fun. When there is a community to belong to and learners feel like they are significant contributors to that community, they become invested in it. In schools where learners are welcomed and valued as contributors, the conditions are set for valuable relationships to form. For example,
- A principal poses open-ended questions and structures partner chats in a way that allows all ideas to be heard and acknowledged during professional development sessions.
- A music teacher uses interactive learning structures, group activities, and energizers to build connections among musicians and makes sure all students are involved and valued in the music room.
- A school psychologist shares goals for small group sessions before they begin. Afterward, group members are invited to share goals or skills they have been working on that might relate to the session ahead.

	1	3	5
PC1: **Creates the conditions for all to belong and feel significant**	There is the beginning of a community. Most participants and stakeholders have occasional opportunities to contribute. Group conversations can become superficial at times and conclude with varying results. A number of people appear to struggle to find positive belonging and significance in the community. Individuals' positive sense of belonging and significance vary and seem to be dependent on the situation, task, and/or people involved.	There is an established community. All members of the community belong and are valued, though there is a sense that some members are more valued than others. All participants and stakeholders have opportunities to contribute, and I put forth effort to provide all with opportunities to be significant contributors. Structured activities seem to strengthen and reinforce relationships and meet individuals' needs to belong and feel significant.	There is an established and sustained community. All participants and stakeholders make regular, significant contributions to the group and their contributions are acknowledged and accepted by the community. I consistently seek new and varying ways to strengthen and reinforce relationships among individuals and groups. The group affirms every community member's sense of belonging and significance.

PC2: Interactions with students, families and colleagues are respectful.

The interactions that take place between school leaders and staff, among colleagues, between teachers and students, among students, and between school staff and parents, have strong power. Both the verbal and nonverbal communication that takes place has the ability to either preserve or threaten those relationships. Therefore, it is critical to pay attention to the power of the messages being relayed in all interactions. For example,

- An instructional coach makes eye contact, nods to show attentive listening and pauses thoughtfully to fully consider teachers' reflections before responding.
- The school counselor teaches students to initiate the community signal for attention before they begin sharing with the group.
- Principal: "One of our adult guidelines reminds us to 'foster dialogue that reflects diverse perspectives and ideas.' What were some ways you noticed us bringing this ideal to life during our staff meeting this afternoon?"

	1	3	5
PC2: **Interactions with students, families, and colleagues are respectful**	My use of positive and inclusive tone and body language varies in different situations and with different people. Sometimes, I notice I speak one way with a group of people and another way with individuals. I try to provide genuine feedback that conveys belief in others. I model respectful interactions and occasionally provide explicit opportunities for others to practice respectful interactions.	I primarily use positive and inclusive tone and body language. I focus on providing genuine feedback that conveys belief in all people. Sometimes, when individuals or groups of people push back on what I'm saying, my tone and body language may convey that I'm feeling challenged or frustrated. I model respectful interactions with others and regularly take opportunities to foster and promote respectful interactions among others.	I consistently use a positive and inclusive voice tone and body language. Individuals and groups seek my counsel, knowing they will receive clear, genuine feedback that conveys belief in them. I model respectful interactions in all situations, and am able to remain calm and collected regardless of the concerns of, critique from, or emotional state of others. I consistently create conditions for others to practice respectful interactions.

PC3: Approach to discipline is primarily proactive.
Discipline leads to learning, and discipline is something that can be taught and learned. Discipline is also an integral part of forming a community, as it is needed to help individuals function within norms set by the group. When educators take a proactive approach to discipline, they ensure that every person is equipped with the skills needed to be successful. For example,

- Physical Education Teacher: "Our rules say we'll be kind and helpful to our classmates. What will our rules look like, sound like, and feel like as we line up?"
- Librarian: "Miquel, one of the things our partner work chart says we might see and hear is 'paraphrasing' what a partner has said – let's practice paraphrasing passages in this book together first to get ready for partner work in a few minutes."
- Principal: "Hi Pat! Wanted to stop by to make sure you saw the new time for the staff meeting tomorrow. We're meeting a little earlier than usual, at 3:30 instead of 3:45."

	1	3	5
PC3: **Approach to discipline is primarily proactive**	I establish rules and expectations in the beginning of the year and rarely refer to them after the initial introduction. I want to ensure that all people have the social and emotional skill sets needed to successfully approach tasks and preserve their dignity. I am often unsure about modifications or accommodations I could provide to support individuals' ability to contribute fully to their community and work.	I establish rules and expectations and refer to them occasionally, primarily in whole group settings. I introduce and teach the social and emotional skill sets people need to successfully approach tasks at the beginning of the year. I usually give reminders and provide accommodations for the whole group and sometimes struggle to modify these on an individual level for people or groups that need more support.	I establish rules and expectations and consistently refer to and reinforce them to preserve and strengthen the community and quality of work. I consistently preserve the dignity of all people by ensuring everyone has the social and emotional skill sets needed to successfully approach tasks. I give necessary reminders and accommodations to support people individually so they can engage appropriately with the community and work.

PC4: Responses to misconduct preserve dignity of individuals and the group

Misbehavior, mistakes, missteps, and outbursts are a natural part of growth and development. For a variety of reasons, people may falter and misbehave. How an educator responds to those misbehaviors has a strong impact on a learner's sense of self. Appropriate responses to misconduct allow people to stay connected to the community and for the community to keep its focus. For example,

- A technology teacher kneels next to a student to address the student's misbehavior privately.
- Students use the take-a-break chair briefly and are welcomed back by the group.
- An instructional coach uses a signal for attention and waits for the full attention and focus of staff before beginning to speak during professional development sessions.

	1	3	5
PC4: **Responses to misconduct preserve dignity of individuals and the group**	At times, I respond unevenly to different people's misconduct. My primary goal is to stop unwanted behavior and for individuals or groups to return quickly to the learning activity. I keep the dignity of others in mind when responding to misbehavior. I have noticed some responses to misconduct hinder relationships, as individuals or groups isolate themselves.	I mostly communicate in a firm, fair, and brief manner. I respond to all misbehavior as it happens, sometimes showing frustration with certain behaviors or people more than others. I keep the individual's dignity in mind when I respond to their misbehavior. I sometimes struggle to support individuals and groups with re-entering the community or re-engaging with their work.	I communicate with all people in a firm, fair, and brief manner. I respond evenly to misconduct from all people. My responses to misbehavior are consistently respectful, non-punitive, and prioritize supporting the individual and group returning to their work. I consistently work to ensure that my responses to misbehavior do not break relational bonds or isolate anyone from their community or work.

PC5: Opportunities to succeed are equitable, fair, and just

Equity and justice are integral parts of any successful community, and they are essential to the strength of the community. When opportunities are shared and they are equitable, fair, and just, learners are able to focus mental energy on possibilities vs. comparisons. For example,

- A principal has professional learning community teammates rotate facilitation and note-taking responsibilities during meetings to help encourage shared leadership.
- A guidance counselor recruits and coaches new students in running for student council.
- An orchestra teacher focuses on acknowledging growth and incremental progress of each of her sections of musicians before the end of classes.

PC5: Opportunities to succeed are equitable, fair, and just	1	3	5
	I sometimes communicate with individuals in inconsistent or uneven ways. It is easier for me to consider what is fair, equitable, and just for some community members more than others. Individuals who are often disengaged or give up easily are difficult to set-up for success. I use effective language to encourage everyone and sense I am only reaching some.	I communicate with others in a mostly even and consistent manner. When dealing with some people or challenging situations, my communication can become uneven. I work to set all people up for success but can have a hard time supporting individuals or groups that struggle more than others. I use effective language to encourage learners but sometimes struggle to find the right words or phrasing for a few people who often need extra support.	I consistently and evenly communicate with all people in a fair, equitable, and just manner. People are consistently allowed, and equipped with skills they need, to present themselves in the best light. I use language effectively and consistently to ensure all people are contributing to the community, participating in opportunities that interest them, and achieving at high levels.

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Positive Community   Total number of points* = _____ divided by 5 items = _____ (average)

Note: Items that you do not rate should be assigned a point value of zero.

POST-ASSESSMENT REFLECTION

Average score = _____

Area of opportunity: average = less than 3.0	Good progress: average = 3.0-3.9	Strength area: average = 4.0 or more

- What is an area of particular strength for you with *Responsive Classroom* implementation and fostering Positive Community in your role? Why do you believe this is the case? Provide some specific examples that support your reasoning.

- What would you identify as potential opportunities for your growth in fostering Positive Community in your role? Which *Responsive Classroom* practices could you use to support your efforts? Provide some ideas as to how you might modify a few RC practices to more clearly align with your role and the learners you serve.

- Prioritize your opportunities for growth and relevant RC practices in order of most importance or urgency for you. To create a self-improvement plan for these areas, include two action items and one resource you will review.

- Now that you have a plan in place, how and when will you know these strategies are positively impacting your Positive Community? When will you assess this plan again?

Developmentally Responsive: The practices teachers use to respond to students' individual, cultural, and developmental learning needs and strengths.

Aligned *Responsive Classroom* Practices:
- Active teaching
- Age and stage development
- Brain breaks
- Energizers
- Interactive learning structures
- Quiet time
- Responsive Advisory Meeting
- Small group learning
- Visual cues

Social and Emotional Competencies:

• **Cooperation –** A person's ability to establish new relationships, maintain positive relationships and friendships, avoid social isolation, resolve conflicts, accept differences, be a contributing member of the classroom and school community, and work productively and collaboratively with others.

• **Empathy** – A person's ability to "see into" (recognize, understand) another's state of mind and emotions and be receptive to new ideas and perspectives; to appreciate and value differences and diversity in others; to have concern for others' welfare, even when it doesn't benefit or may come as a cost to one's self.

• **Responsibility** – A person's ability to motivate themselves to take action and follow through on expectations; to define a problem, consider the consequences, and choose a positive solution.

Academic Competencies:

- **Academic* Mindset:** Four self-perceptions influence a learner's mindset: 1) I belong in this learning community; 2) my effort improves my performance; 3) I can succeed at this work; and 4) I see value in this work.

- **Learning Strategies:** Techniques, processes, and tactics a person uses to 1) learn, think, remember, and recall, 2) monitor their own comprehension and growth, 3) self-correct when they are confused or have an error in thinking, and 4) set and achieve goals and manage their time effectively.

  * If translating Academic Competencies to adult learners feels challenging, consider substituting the word academic with terms that relate to the adult community at your school. For example, professional mindset, life-long learner strategies, mission-driven behaviors, etc.

PRE-ASSESSMENT REFLECTION

I. *Reflect on your implementation of Responsive Classroom strategies* and ways they help you in fostering a learning environment that represents the individual, developmental, and cultural needs of the learners you serve.

II. *Read through this section further defining elements and evidence of Developmentally Responsive approaches.* Note ideas that confirm your best understanding of this domain and ideas that raise questions for you. Think about what the most important goals/outcomes of this domain would be in your role/setting.

III. *Complete the Developmentally Responsive self-assessment.* Assign yourself a score of 1, 3, or 5 for each domain item based on your progress so far. If you cannot decide between two ratings for an item, mark the lower number. Uncertainty indicates that there may be more opportunity to refine your implementation of that item. If

you do not answer an item (for instance, because you do not use the practice), give yourself a score of zero and include it in your score calculations for that section.

DR1: Uses active and interactive teaching practices

The need to be active and interactive is a human need that transcends all ages and stages of human development. People by nature need to be integrally involved in their learning, every day. We know that when these needs are not met, people may seek unproductive ways to meet them. Therefore, we need to ensure that all opportunities for learning are designed with these needs in mind. For example,

- Professional development designers ensure teachers have a variety of ways to represent and reflect on their learning independently, with partners, teams, and the whole group.
- A principal takes time to teach and model a new interactive learning structure before staff get started in small groups.
- A Professional Learning Community leader gives clear parameters and goals for colleagues during their mid-meeting "Walk and Talk" reflection.

	1	3	5
DR1: **Uses active and interactive teaching practices**	I occasionally design learning experiences that support individual and developmental needs for active and interactive learning, though I usually prefer to remain in control of what learners are doing and saying. When I do structure content-related discussion into the learning, I often find some people are not talking about what they are supposed to be talking about, others dominate discussions, and some disengage altogether.	I usually design learning experiences that support developmental needs for active and interactive learning but do not always know how best to adjust activities to meet the needs of reluctant individuals and groups. I offer learners control of their learning but when I notice mistakes or misconceptions, my tendency is to jump in and correct them rather than coach people to work through errors. I structure time for on-topic discussions, but some people still struggle with sharing ideas.	I consistently design learning experiences that effectively support everyone's individual and developmental needs for active and interactive learning. Learners spend the majority of their time working and driving their own learning. I am confident in turning over control of learning to the learners themselves. As people work and converse, I am always present and circulating, ready to offer guidance and encouragement and support learners' focus on the learning.

DR2: Environment represents students and families

Schools and classrooms exist for the people they serve. Therefore, school and classroom environments need to reflect the students and families they serve. These should be places where all people see themselves. For example,

- A family liaison posts a picture of each student's family around community bulletin boards at the school's main entrance.
- A dance teacher teaches dances from the various countries students around the school come from.

- The principal dedicates a central bulletin board in the office to posting staff members' professional hopes and goals and the adult community guidelines.

	1	3	5
DR2: **Environment represents students and families**	I attempt to organize the environment to be inclusive, accessible to all, and representative of individual and cultural characteristics specific to the community, but results of my efforts sometimes seem superficial or ineffective. I recognize and consider the individual, cultural, and developmental needs of all of the people I serve, but struggle to design an environment that meets the unique needs of all.	I primarily organize the space to be inclusive, accessible to all, and representative of all individual and cultural characteristics but can struggle finding opportunities to build on and connect individuals and cultures to learning. I am empathetic and considerate of the individual, cultural, and developmental needs of all but sometimes struggle to make adjustments based on these needs.	I consistently organize the environment to be inclusive, accessible to all, and representative of all individual and cultural characteristics specific to our community. I am knowledgeable and empathetic to all of the individual, cultural, and developmental needs of all. I am deliberate in my consideration of people's needs and design activities and interaction to reflect and support all accordingly.

DR3: Uses words and nonlinguistic models

Inclusive communication, both verbal and nonverbal, is essential to ensure we are creating a learning environment where people with many different individual, cultural, and developmental needs can be supported. Providing nonlinguistic models can be key to helping people access information they need to participate and experience success. For example,

- The principal creates a flow chart to illustrate the process and timeline for end-of-year materials collection and inventory. The principal shares this with staff digitally and also puts a hardcopy in each staff member's mailbox.
- The music teacher projects lyrics to community songs sung during all-school assemblies.
- The instructional coach introduces a variety of concept maps and invites teachers to think about which will be the best way for them to take notes during the presentation ahead.

	1	3	5
DR3: **Uses words and nonlinguistic models**	I occasionally provide information verbally and visually. When sharing information I sometimes am well organized, clear, and brief, and other times find myself lost in a train of thought or digressing from my point. I sometimes use a nonverbal signal for attention, but its effectiveness with the group is inconsistent. I rarely provide structured choices for multiple pathways for learners.	I usually provide information both verbally and with visual supports but sometimes forget to refer to visuals as I speak or when I am trying to clear up confusion around tasks. I use a nonverbal signal for attention that is successful most of the time. I offer learners various choices for worktimes, but the choices could be more strategically designed to meet learner needs.	I consistently provide all information verbally and visually. I give directions in an organized, clear, and brief manner that provides all equal access. I use a nonverbal signal for community attention to bring everyone together, and the group response is consistent. I strategically structure choices to provide multiple pathways for learners to access and document learning.

DR4: Knows students, families and colleagues

People know when they are known, understood, appreciated, and valued within the school and classroom settings. When educators take the time to get to know the people they serve and connect with them as unique individuals, it strengthens teacher-student relationships, home-school relationships, and relationships among the adult community. Healthy, mutually respectful relationships give students a trusted and respected adult model needed for their success in knowing, understanding, and valuing others. For example,

- A school social worker uses home visits to get to know new families and to learn about their hopes and concerns for their child at school.
- An assistant principal begins School Leadership Team meetings by inviting volunteers to share shout-outs they have for students, colleagues, or families from the previous week with the group.
- A principal leaves a handwritten note to reinforce something specific each teacher does well during drop-in observations.

	1	3	5
DR4: **Knows students, families, and colleagues**	I plan for the environment to demonstrate understanding of developmental, cultural, and individual needs, though the results can feel superficial. I occasionally use examples and models that resonate with my audience well, and at other times tend to over-generalize or try to relate on a peer-to-peer level. I take time to get to know people beyond school, and sometimes this causes me to jump back and forth between professional and friend modes. I try to involve all students, families, and colleagues, but some are consistently hard to reach.	The learning environment is designed to, and mostly demonstrates, a connected understanding of the community's developmental, cultural, and individual needs, but may not reflect the needs of all individuals. The examples I use mostly connect with my audience, though I may occasionally miss the mark. I make time to connect with individuals and usually am the one to initiate these interactions. I work to involve students, families and colleagues in a variety of ways and am usually successful with meeting the needs of all.	Our learning environment clearly demonstrates a connected understanding of the community's developmental, cultural, and individual needs. The examples and models I use connect with learners and display a deep level of understanding of individuals and culture. I take time to connect with and learn about all individuals, beyond their interests or abilities in school. I invite people, and they also take the initiative to offer me input. I utilize knowledge of my and others' communication styles to effectively meet the needs of all students, families, and colleagues.

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Developmentally Responsive   Total number of points* = _____ divided by 4 items = _____ (average)
Note: Items that you do not rate should be assigned a point value of zero.

POST-ASSESSMENT REFLECTION

Average score = _____

Area of opportunity:	Good progress:	Strength area:
average = less than 3.0	average = 3.0-3.9	average = 4.0 or more

- What is an area of particular strength for you with *Responsive Classroom* implementation that facilitates Developmentally Responsive conditions for the people you serve? Why do you believe this is the case? Provide some specific examples that support your reasoning.

- What would you identify as potential opportunities for your growth with taking more of a Developmentally Responsive approach to your role? Which *Responsive Classroom* practices could you use to support your efforts? Provide some ideas as to how you might modify a few RC practices to more clearly align with your role and the learners you serve.

- Prioritize your opportunities for growth and relevant RC practices in order of most importance or urgency for you. To create a self-improvement plan for these areas, include two action items and one resource you will review.

- Now that you have a plan in place, how and when will you know these strategies are positively impacting your Developmentally Responsive approach to your role? When will you assess this plan again?

Responsive Classroom®

SECTION 4. ENGAGING ACADEMICS

Engaging Academics: The practices teachers use to design and deliver high quality, rigorous, and engaging instruction.

Aligned *Responsive Classroom* practices:
- Academic Choice
- Closing Circle
- Diagnostic questions
- Envisioning language
- Language of learning
- Learning cycle
- Lesson design
- Open-ended questions
- Student practice
- Teach and model

Social and Emotional Competencies:
- **Assertiveness** – A person's ability to take initiative, stand up for their ideas without hurting or negating others, seek help, succeed at a challenging task, and recognize their individual self as separate from the circumstances or conditions they're in.
- **Responsibility** – A person's ability to motivate themselves to take action and follow through on expectations; to define a problem, consider the consequences, and choose a positive solution.
- **Self-Control** – A person's ability to recognize and regulate their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in order to be successful in the moment and remain on a successful trajectory.

Academic Competencies:
- **Academic* Mindset** – Four self-perceptions influence a learner's mindset: 1) I belong in this learning community; 2) my effort improves my performance; 3) I can succeed at this work; and 4) I see the value in this work.
- **Learning Strategies** – Techniques, processes, and tactics a person uses to 1) learn, think, remember, and recall, 2) monitor their own comprehension and growth, 3) self-correct when they are confused or have an error in thinking, and 4) set and achieve goals and manage their time effectively.
- **Academic* Perseverance** – A person's tendency to complete assignments and execute their responsibilities in a timely and thorough manner and to the best of their ability, despite distractions, obstacles or level of challenge.

* If translating Academic Competencies to adult learners feels challenging, consider substituting the word academic with terms that relate to the adult community at your school. For example, professional mindset, life-long learner strategies, mission-driven behaviors, etc.

PRE-ASSESSMENT REFLECTION

I.   ***Reflect on your implementation of Responsive Classroom strategies*** and ways they help you in fostering a learning environment that engages each individual and community overall in their work and collaboration.

II.   ***Read through this section further defining elements and evidence of Engaging Academics in various settings***. Note ideas that confirm your best understanding of this domain and ideas that raise questions for you. Think about what the most important goals/outcomes of this domain would be in your role/setting.

III. ***Complete the Engaging Academics self-assessment***. Assign yourself a score of 1, 3, or 5 for each domain item based on your progress so far. If you cannot decide between two ratings for an item, mark the lower number. Uncertainty indicates that there may be more opportunity to refine your implementation of that item. If you do not answer an item (for instance, because you do not use the practice), give yourself a score of zero and include it in your score calculations for that section.

SECTION 4. ENGAGING ACADEMICS – DATE ASSESSED _____

EA1: Instruction is sound and models pedagogy or andragogy standards
Pedagogy (the method and practice of teaching children) and andragogy (the method and practice of teaching adult learners) – or, a facilitator's repertoire of instructional methods and practices for teaching – influences the extent to which learning takes place. Therefore, it is critical that instructional pedagogy, or andragogy for adult learners, is sound in order to achieve optimal learning levels. For example,
- An assistant principal gives staff a choice of a few articles to read about engaging families before presenting a new initiative to increase family engagement at school.
- In a 45-minute specials class lesson, the teacher spends 5 minutes on the opening, 30 minutes on the body with students actively practicing/extending skills, and 10 minutes on the closing, which allows students to reflect on their goals and process and generate ideas and plans for future learning in next week's class.
- An instructional coach circulates, observes, and listens, stopping to give feedback or ask questions as grade-level teams work to apply a new facilitation strategy to their lesson plans in the upcoming week.

	1	3	5
EA1: **Instruction is sound and models pedagogy or andragogy standards**	My lessons/PD sessions have a clear structure, with a distinct beginning, middle, and end, but can lack purpose. I tend to use one resource to support my planning and facilitation. Occasionally I attempt to make modifications as opportunities arise, but these can be haphazard. As a facilitator, I often struggle to deliver content in an organized and clear manner. As people work, I circulate and observe but don't often offer guidance or additional support. Sometimes my answers to questions lack clarity or seem to do little to further the learning or understanding.	My lessons/PD sessions are thoughtfully planned with a clear structure, with a distinct beginning, middle, and end, though occasionally the timing may be off. I typically rely on one set of primary sources to design learning activities, and attempt to make strategic modifications when opportunities arise. As a facilitator, I deliver content in a clear and organized manner, though at times I struggle to answer questions succinctly. I circulate and coach as learners work, though these interactions tend to address errors rather than extend learning.	My lessons/PD sessions consistently have a clear structure, with a distinct beginning, middle, and end and are purposeful and completed in a timely manner. I utilize available resources strategically to design and facilitate learning activities. As a facilitator, I consistently deliver content in a competent, organized, clear way, spending appropriate time on each component. I check for understanding and provide learners with consistent support and guidance. I am a present coach as learners work, consistently identifying and using opportunities to extend individual and group learning.

EA2: Teaches to a learning objective

A clear objective is the cornerstone of an effectively designed lesson. Objectives provide contours and focus for the learning. When objectives are clearly established and communicated, and lessons are constructed to meet these learning objectives, learners are better able to focus and engage in purposeful learning. For example,

- Principal: "Today, we are going to work to identify specific strategies that are working to support student autonomy in their learning in classrooms. Afterwards, we are going to work together to brainstorm ways we could extend these to support students' safe and joyful autonomy at recess and lunch this month."
- An art teacher stops and says to an individual student, "Remember, our objective is to compare and contrast. How is this helping you in your learning?"
- A special education teacher begins IEP meetings by reviewing specific goals and strategies discussed in the previous meeting before providing updates on outcomes or progress.

	1	3	5
EA2: **Teaches to a learning objective**	My lessons/sessions/meetings have a clear objective, though these don't always match the appropriate level of difficulty for learners. I post the objective but do not always communicate it directly to learners. The objective does not always help learners find focus or purpose in their learning. Sometimes, I have a clear plan to help all learners meet the objective. When I make modifications to meet needs in the moment, I usually stray from the objective to focus on re-teaching skills/content. My feedback tends to be more general and can lack an explicit connection to the objective.	My lessons/sessions/meetings have a clear learning objective set at the correct level of difficulty, though sometimes the objective may lack relevance or purpose for learners. I have a clear plan to help all learners achieve the objective but do not always plan specific modifications for individual learners ahead of time. I usually tend to stick to the objective I set with the group, though modifications with individuals are not always connected to the group's objective. I provide targeted whole-group feedback but sometimes struggle with giving feedback one-on-one.	My lessons/sessions/meetings always have a clear learning objective, set at the correct level of difficulty for learners. For each lesson I have a clear plan for specific things I will do to help all learners meet the objective. I communicate the objective in a way that conveys a relevant purpose for learners and what they will be learning. My facilitation follows the objective and any modifications are connected to the objective. I consistently provide targeted, specific feedback related to the objective for both the whole group and individuals.

EA3: Uses effective questioning techniques

Asking questions is the key technique educators use to lift, shift, and extend thinking. Effective questioning is essential to helping learners make meaning and extend thinking around content. When used well, questions help differentiate the learning experiences for the whole community and individual learners. For example,

- A music teacher uses open-ended questions to engage students' interests and background knowledge about notation before introducing the concept of syncopation.
- An engineering teacher uses diagnostic questions to identify underlying misconceptions behind a student's miscalculations.
- A teacher begins family conferences by inviting parents to share questions they hope to have addressed during the conversation ahead and takes notes about their concerns. Throughout the conference the teacher tries to relate topics discussed to families' concerns and wonderings. At the end of the conference she shares her plan to

follow-up on any unanswered questions.

	1	**3**	**5**
EA3: **Uses effective questioning techniques**	I pose questions but they do not always match my desired learner outcomes. I ask a variety of questions in the moment, but these tend to be sporadic as far as how they solidify or extend learning. The questions learners ask do not always seem well-developed or intentional so I tend to ask the majority of questions during lessons. When learners respond to questions that I pose I am not always sure how to use their responses to extend or inform learning.	I pose questions that are connected to desired learning outcomes. I pose a variety of questions that are sometimes planned purposefully and used with an understanding of how they will solidify or extend learning. I ask most of the questions during lessons but also invite learners to ask questions so they can learn and practice the art of asking effective questions. Most of the time I use learners' responses to extend learning or inform instruction.	I thoughtfully plan and pose questions that are connected to the desired learning outcomes. The questions I use are varied, purposeful, and used with my clear understanding of how they will solidify or extend learning. Learners and I both ask questions throughout lessons, providing learners numerous opportunities to learn, practice, and develop skills in the art of effective questioning. I use learners' responses to extend learning or inform further instruction.

EA4: Sets high expectations for all
Expectations set the bar for possibilities. When expectations are set high and coupled with tailored support to reach them, people are able to continuously push the envelope in learning. For example,
- A band teacher tells students, "By the end of this week, all of you are going to be able to complete this. Take a moment to look at the sheet music. What sections are going to challenge you?"
- A student tells the teacher, "This is too hard!" The teacher says, "Tell me what parts of it you do understand. Now, let's think about what you need to figure out the rest and make a plan."
- A principal guides staff in designing their own individual short and long-term goals related to a new schoolwide initiative.

	1	**3**	**5**
EA4: **Sets high expectations for all**	My lessons are primarily designed toward whole group achievement. I convey my belief that all learners can achieve but inconsistently support individuals in reaching their intended level of achievement. I provide feedback to learners whose work products meet expectations.	My lessons are usually designed at a high level of challenge. My expectations for all learners are high, and I convey belief in the potential of all but do not always have clear or strategic plans ready to support individuals in reaching expectations. I provide feedback on work products and works in progress but do not always involve learners in thinking about or reflecting on their own performance.	My lessons are consistently designed to challenge all learners at all levels. My expectations for learners are high, and I convey my belief that all learners can meet expectations and involve learners in scaffolding for their growth and progress. I provide specific feedback that is tailored to help all learners reach expectations.

EA5: Monitors learner practice to make decisions

Observation is one of the most powerful tools educators possess. Observation allows facilitators to truly differentiate in the moment as it provides an opportunity to clear up confusion, analyze the way content is matching with learners, and make important shifts in learning. Observation also allows educators to use the information they glean to inform future lesson design. For example,

- A principal walks around with a notebook and jots down observations as teams discuss connections to and opinions about a new community partnership opportunity.
- A librarian rings the chime and says, "Pause. Our task was to brainstorm reasons. I am seeing a lot of listing of facts. Go back and look at what's on the list. Are these reasons or facts?"
- An instructional coach supports a teacher in modifying his plan, "Let's work together to come up with a few facilitation strategies that can help you bring a strong close to this unit by the end of next week."

	1	3	5
EA5: **Monitors learner practice to make decisions**	I mostly monitor whole group progress. When I try to monitor individuals, feedback is inconsistently timely, thorough, or useful for learners. I observe learners at work but primarily focus my observations on the whole group to inform future instructional decisions and lesson design.	I observe learner progress and sometimes provide immediate feedback and/or modifications to support learning. I assess and take note of learning progress, but the information I note is not always connected to learner outcomes. I sometimes use this information to clarify learner confusion or plan future learning.	I consistently monitor learners' progress, and provide immediate feedback and/or modifications to support learning. I consistently assess and take note of learning progress toward intended outcomes. I use this information to make decisions about future lessons. I am fully present as learners work and am able to quickly address any confusion expressed.

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Engaging Academics   Total number of points* = _____ divided by 5 items = _____ (average)
Note: Items that you do not rate should be assigned a point value of zero.

POST-ASSESSMENT REFLECTION

Average score = _____

Area of opportunity: average = less than 3.0	Good progress: average = 3.0-3.9	Strength area: average = 4.0 or more

- What is an area of particular strength for you with *Responsive Classroom* implementation and facilitating the engagement of the people you serve? Why do you believe this is the case? Provide some specific examples that support your reasoning.

- What would you identify as potential opportunities for your growth with facilitating individual and community engagement? Which *Responsive Classroom* practices could you use to support your efforts? Provide some ideas as to how you might modify a few RC practices to more clearly align with your role and the learners you serve.

- Prioritize your opportunities for growth and relevant RC practices in order of most importance or urgency for you. To create a self-improvement plan for these areas, include two action items and one resource you will review.

- Now that you have a plan in place, how and when will you know these strategies are positively impacting academic engagement? When will you assess this plan again?

Responsive Classroom®

RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM PRACTITIONER ASSESSMENT TOOL SCORE TRACKING AND SUMMARY PAGE

SECTION 1: EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT	
EM1: Establishes and reinforces clear routines	
EM2: Organizes the environment for safety and autonomy	
EM3: Leadership style is assertive, authoritative, and approachable	
EM4: Environment is arranged for maximum learning	
Total	
Average	

SECTION 2: POSITIVE COMMUNITY	
PC1: Creates the conditions for individuals to belong and be significant	
PC2: Interactions with others are respectful	
PC3: Approach to discipline is primarily proactive	
PC4: Responses to misbehavior preserve the dignity of individuals and group	
PC5: Opportunities to succeed are equitable, fair, and just	
Total	
Average	

SECTION 3: DEVELOPMENTALLY RESPONSIVE	
DR1: Uses active and interactive teaching practices	
DR2: Environment represents students and families	
DR3: Uses words and nonlinguistic models	
DR4: Knows students, families, and colleagues	
Total	
Average	

SECTION 4: ENGAGING ACADEMICS	
EA1: Instruction is sound and models pedagogy/andragogy standards	
EA2: Teaches to a learning objective	
EA3: Uses effective questioning techniques	
EA4: Sets high expectations for all	
EA5: Monitors learner practice to make decisions	
Total	
Average	

Responsive Classroom®

Four Domains: Strategies and Resources

Effective Management

Articles available online:

- ☐ Challenge Is a Part of Learning
- ☐ Clearing the Way for New Growth
- ☐ Guest Teacher Handbook
- ☐ Is Your Classroom Organized for Learning?
- ☐ Let's Do Lunch!
- ☐ Making an Entrance
- ☐ Parent Outreach for Busy Leaders
- ☐ Setting a Positive Tone in Special Area Classrooms
- ☐ Teaching Children to Check Their Own Behavior

Publications available for purchase:

- ● Building An Academic Community
- ● Interactive Modeling
- ● Quick Coaching Guide: Classroom Organization
- ● Responsive School Discipline
- ● The First Six Weeks of School
- ● The Power of Our Words
- ● The Power of Our Words The Power of Our Words For Middle School
- ● The Responsive Classroom Assessment Tool for Teachers
- ● Yardsticks

Positive Community

Articles available online:

- ☐ Adapting Morning Meeting: Speech and Anxiety Needs
- ☐ How We Want Our School to Be
- ☐ Playing to Strengths: Morning Meetings Designed for Students with Autism
- ☐ Public Discipline Systems
- ☐ Rebuilding Community by Reuniting School Staff
- ☐ Responding to Defiance in the Moment
- ☐ School Gatherings
- ☐ Taking Positive Language Schoolwide
- ☐ Teaching Without Using Rewards

Publications available for purchase:

- [99 Activities and Greetings](#)
- [How To Bullyproof Your Classroom](#)
- [Quick Coaching Guide: Dealing With Defiant Behavior](#)
- [Quick Coaching Guide: The Power of Envisioning Language](#)
- [Responsive School Discipline](#)
- [Seeing the Good In Students](#)
- [Solving Thorny Behavior Problems](#)
- [Teaching Children to Care](#)
- [Teaching Self-Discipline](#)
- [Teasing, Tattling, Defiance & More](#)
- [The Power of Our Words](#)
- [The Power of Our Words For Middle School](#)
- [Yardsticks](#)

Developmentally Responsive

Articles available online:

- [A Principal's Job Is Also to Teach](#)
- [A Time of Change](#)
  [Changing a School Climate: How Responsive Classroom Helped](#)
- [Having Effective, Affirming and Energizing Conversations with Families](#)
- [Helping Students Give Effective Compliments](#)
- [Know Your Students: Developmentally Responsive Planning](#)
- [Lively Learning for Professional Development](#)
- [Teachers, Specializing in … Everything!](#)
- [The Building Blocks of Collaboration: Partner and Small-Group Chats](#)
- [Time for a Brain Break!](#)

Publications available for purchase:

- [Energize Your Meetings!](#)
- [Energizers!](#)
- [Middle School Motivators!](#)
- [Quick Coaching Guide: Calming Down in Quiet Time](#)
- [Quick Coaching Guide: The Teacher's Role in Responsive Advisory Meeting](#)
- [Quick Coaching Guide: Using Visual Cues to Support Learning](#)
- [Refocus and Recharge! 50 Brain Breaks for Middle Schoolers](#)
- [The Responsive Advisory Meeting Book](#)
- [What Every Teacher Needs to Know K-5 Series](#)
- [Yardsticks](#)

● Yardsticks Guides

Engaging Academics

Articles available online:

- Academic Engagement in the Home Stretch
- Asking Strategic Questions
- Challenge Is a Part of Learning
- Closing Circle
- Engaging Hearts and Minds
- Open-Ended Questions
- Our Hopes and Dreams for School
- Teaching Students to Speak Confidently
  The Language of Learning (Foreword)
- Using Observation to Extend Learning

Publications available for purchase:

- Closing Circles
- Doing Academics in Morning Meeting Series
- Quick Coaching Guide: Developing Effective Listeners
- Quick Coaching Guide: Replacing Direct Teaching with Active Teaching
- Responsive Classroom for Music, Art, PE, and Other Special Areas
- The Joyful Classroom
- Teacher Language for Engaged Learning Kit
- The Language of Learning
- The Power of Our Words
- The Power of Our Words For Middle School
- Yardsticks

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Assignment 2a: Engaging Academic Lesson Planning Sheet

Refer to your Responsive Classroom Course Resource Book and the Four Domains: Strategies and Resources section found at the end of the *Responsive Classroom Practitioner Assessment Tool* for information and ideas as you plan your engaging academic lesson. This lesson plan should identify the following:

Elements of Engagement	Four Domains	Students' Needs
● Active ● Interactive ● Appropriately challenging ● Purposeful ● Connected to strengths/interests ● Provides autonomy/choice	● Positive Community ● Effective Management ● Engaging Academics ● Developmentally Responsive	● Belonging ● Significance ● Fun

Grade level: _____ **Subject Area:** _____

Number of students in class and present in lesson: _____

Estimated length of lesson: _____ **Date lesson will be conducted:** _____

Objective/Learning Goal(s): *What will students be able to do as a result of this lesson?*
- Academic Learning Goals:
- Social-Emotional Learning Goals:

Outline/Sequence of Lesson: *Using bullet points to outline the sequence of the lesson is acceptable. Be sure to include enough detail to provide a clear understanding of what will occur in the lesson and specific actions being used to address the Four Domains.*
- Opening:
- Body:
- Closing:

Elements of Engagement: *Identify a minimum of 3 of the following elements of engagement that will be present in the lesson and describe what the observable indicators will be.*
- Active:
- Interactive:
- Appropriately challenging:
- Purposeful:
- Connected to strengths and interests:
- Provides autonomy/choice:

Students' Needs: *Explain where and how this lesson will meet students' needs.*
- Belonging
- Significance
- Fun

Assessment: *How will you know what students have learned in this lesson?*

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Assignment 2b: Engaging Professional Development Session Planning Sheet

Refer to your Responsive Classroom Course Resource Book and the Four Domains: Strategies and Resources section found at the end of the *Responsive Classroom Practitioner Assessment Tool* for information and ideas as you plan your engaging professional development session. This session outline should identify the following:

Elements of Engagement	Four Domains	Adults' Needs
● Active ● Interactive ● Appropriately challenging ● Purposeful ● Connected to strengths/interests ● Provides autonomy/choice	● Positive Community ● Effective Management ● Engaging Academics ● Developmentally Responsive	● Belonging ● Significance ● Fun

Content/Focus Area: _____

Number of adults in school and present in session: _____

Estimated length of session: _____   **Date session will be conducted:** _____

Objective/Learning Goal(s): *What will adult learners be able to do as a result of this professional development session?*
- Professional Learning Goals:
- Social-Emotional Learning Goals:

Outline/Sequence of Session: *Using bullet points to outline the sequence of the professional development session is acceptable. Be sure to include enough detail to provide a clear understanding of what will occur in the session and specific actions being used to address the Four Domains.*
- Opening:
- Body:
- Closing:

Elements of Engagement: *Identify a minimum of 3 of the following elements of engagement that will be present in the session and describe what the observable indicators will be for each.*
- Active:
- Interactive:
- Appropriately challenging:
- Purposeful:
- Connected to strengths and interests:
- Provides autonomy/choice:

Adults' Needs: *Explain where and how this session will meet adults' needs.*
- Belonging
- Significance
- Fun

Assessment: *How will you know what adults have learned in this session?*

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Assignment 2a: Engaging Academic Lesson Video Checklist

☐	Video submission has clear audio.
☐	All students are visible most of the time during the lesson.
☐	The lesson is content-focused and addresses academic and social-emotional objective(s).
☐	Video is aligned with the lesson plan.
☐	Video illustrates elements of engagement, Four Domains, and student needs being met.
☐	Lesson is between 20 and 30 minutes long. **Note:** The reviewers will not score video after 30 minutes. Video can be edited to fit within the 20-30 minute limit. If edited, elaborate on the edits below. *Example: Lesson was 50 minutes, with group work lasting 25 minutes. Video was edited to 5 to show 5 minutes of group work time to highlight the social-emotional and academic skills being practiced and meet the video length requirement.*
☐	The video demonstrates high level of implementation of *Responsive Classroom* teaching practices, facilitation strategies, and core beliefs about teaching and learning.

Assignment 2b: Engaging Professional Development Session Video Checklist

☐	Video submission has clear audio.
☐	All adult learners are visible most of the time during the session.
☐	The session is content-focused and addresses professional goals and social-emotional objectives for the adult community.
☐	The video is aligned with the professional development session outline.
☐	Video illustrates elements of engagement, Four Domains, and adult needs being met.
☐	Session is between 20 and 30 minutes long. **Note:** The reviewers will not score video after 30 minutes. Video can be edited to fit within the 20-30 minute limit. If edited, elaborate on the edits below. *Example: Session was 50 minutes, with group work lasting 25 minutes. Video was edited to show 5 minutes of group work time to highlight the social-emotional and professional skills being practiced and meet the video length requirement.*
☐	The video demonstrates high level of implementation of *Responsive Classroom* teaching practices, facilitation strategies, and core beliefs about teaching and learning.

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Assignment 2a: Engaging Academic Lesson Reflection Guide

Review the academic lesson video and create a **3-5-page** written reflection explaining how the lesson incorporated the following:

Elements of Engagement	Four Domains	Students' Needs
- Active - Interactive - Appropriately challenging - Purposeful - Connected to strengths/interests - Provides autonomy/choice	- Positive Community - Effective Management - Engaging Academics - Developmentally Responsive	- Belonging - Significance - Fun

Use the following prompts to guide your reflection:
- What went well in this lesson? What were some strengths of your teaching (RC practices used, management, presentation, delivery) as you reflect on this particular lesson?

- What was a time during the lesson that students were most engaged? What might be some reasons this piece led to higher engagement for your students than other points in the lesson? Challenge yourself to cite specific elements of engagement in your rationale by identifying elements that were contributing to students' superior engagement.

- How did you address each of the Four Domains in this academic lesson? Share specific examples from the lesson video that illustrate each of the domains.

- What were examples of evidence that students' needs for belonging, significance, and fun were met during this lesson?

- Reflecting on this lesson, what changes would you make to enhance each of the Four Domains? What are some action steps you'll take to implement these reflections in future teaching opportunities?

Assignment 2b: Engaging Professional Development Session Reflection Guide

Review the professional development session video and create a **3-5-page** written reflection explaining how the session incorporated the following:

Elements of Engagement	Four Domains	Adults' Needs
● Active ● Interactive ● Appropriately challenging ● Purposeful ● Connected to strengths/interests ● Provides autonomy/choice	● Positive Community ● Effective Management ● Engaging Academics ● Developmentally Responsive	● Belonging ● Significance ● Fun

Use the following prompts to guide your reflection:

● What went well in this professional development session? What were some strengths of your facilitation (RC practices used, management, presentation, delivery) as you reflect on this particular lesson?

● What was a time during the session that learners were most engaged? What might be some reasons this piece led to higher engagement for your adult learners than other points in the session? Challenge yourself to cite specific elements of engagement in your rationale by identifying elements that were contributing to adult learners' superior engagement.

● How did you address each of the Four Domains in this professional development session? Share specific examples from the session video that illustrate each of the domains.

● What were examples of evidence that adults' needs for belonging, significance, and fun were met during this session?

● Reflecting on this professional development session, what changes would you make to enhance each of the Four Domains? What are some action steps you'll take to implement these reflections into your facilitation of future professional development?

Assignment 3a: Student Impact Essay Guide

This essay should be 3-5 pages in length. Use 12-point Times Roman font. Double space with 1" margins on all sides.

Implementing *Responsive Classroom* practices with high fidelity makes learning lively and engaging and helps students to build academic and social-emotional (A+SEL) skills that yield positive student outcomes; proximal, intermediate, and long-term.

Show how implementation of the *Responsive Classroom* philosophy and practices has positively impacted student development of A+SEL skills. Include at least **two** specific examples of Academic Competencies and at least **two** specific examples of Social and Emotional Competencies of how students exemplified success and the evidence of growth that was observed for the skills selected. The essay should focus on student growth, and the vignettes used to describe that growth can combine A+SEL skills from throughout the school year.

Academic Competencies:

- **Academic Mindset:** Four self-perceptions influence a student's academic mindset: 1) I belong in this academic community; 2) my effort improves my performance; 3) I can succeed at this work; and 4) I see value in this work.
- **Academic Perseverance:** A student's tendency to complete assignments in a timely and thorough manner and to the best of their ability, despite distractions, obstacles, or level of challenge.
- **Learning Strategies:** Techniques, processes, and tactics a student uses to 1) learn, think, remember, and recall, 2) monitor their own comprehension and growth, 3) self-correct when they are confused or have an error in thinking, and 4) set and achieve goals and manage their time effectively.
- **Academic Behaviors:** The ways in which students conduct themselves that support their success in school, including such things as regular attendance, arriving ready to work, paying attention, participating in instructional activities and class discussions, and devoting out of school time to studying and completing assignments and projects.

Social-Emotional Competencies:

- **Cooperation:** Students' ability to establish new relationships, maintain positive relationships and friendships, avoid social isolation, resolve conflicts, accept differences, be a contributing member of the classroom and school community, and work productively and collaboratively with others.
- **Assertiveness:** Students' ability to take initiative, stand up for their ideas without hurting or negating others, seek help, succeed at a challenging task, and recognize their individual self as separate from the circumstances or conditions they're in.
- **Responsibility:** Students' ability to motivate themselves to take action and follow through with expectations; to define a problem, consider the consequences, and choose a positive solution.
- **Empathy:** Students ability to "see into" (recognize, understand) another's state of mind or emotions and be receptive to new ideas and perspectives; to appreciate and value differences and diversity in others; to have concern for others' welfare, even when it doesn't benefit or may come at a cost to one's self.
- **Self-Control:** Students' ability to recognize and regulate their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in order to be successful in the moment and remain on a successful trajectory.

The focus of this essay should be on the trajectory of growth and the positive impacts that your use of *Responsive Classroom* strategies and practices had on your **students' development of the academic and social-emotional competencies** outlined above. Consider using the graphic organizer below to help plan your essay with at least **two** specific examples from academic competencies and at least **two** specific examples from social and emotional competencies that highlight student impact and growth. You can also read excerpts of exemplar Student Impact Essays from previous applicants to guide you as you craft your own essay.

	Challenges my student(s) faced	**What I did to address the challenges**	**Positive outcomes I observed**
	Specific behaviors I saw/heard that impeded the social, emotional, and/or academic growth in students individually and/or of our learning community overall	Responsive Classroom strategies and practices I implemented to support positive change in students' actions and thinking	*Specific results and changes to student behavior that had a positive social, emotional, and/or academic impact on students individually and/or on our learning community overall*
Cooperation			
Assertiveness			
Responsibility			
Empathy			
Self-Control			
Academic Mindset			
Academic Perseverance			
Learning Strategies			
Academic Behaviors			

Exemplar Student Impact Essay submissions
2021 RCP Exemplars for Assignment 3a FINAL

Example 1:
"This year I have a student who is *known* around the school. At the beginning of the year he would shout out during lessons, yell at other students if he disagreed, bully them into following his ideas, and treat teachers and students with disrespect (not responding, lying, eye rolls, breaths of exasperation). I knew that building a strong community based on Hopes and Dreams, clear and consistent rules, and positive teacher language when redirecting misbehaviours would be essential to his success. He is extremely bright and a quick finisher, so engaging academics was an essential component to my success with practices.

"By providing rigorous academic work that he valued and creating a positive community, he has become a leader in our class. Building compassion and empathy without assuming he is to blame has been essential. Using the strategies of break it- fix it, loss of privilege, and time-out this student has become more accountable than ever for his actions because the consequence is always logical. He is beginning to accept responsibility for his actions (with prompts) and students have complimented him on improving his behaviour and staying on task (academic behaviours). He is managing his facial reactions in more respectful ways (no eye rolling or furrowed brows when redirected) and takes big breaths when he wants to interrupt his peer's ideas; waiting for them to finish speaking before responding. In addition, he has been excited from a weekly student group with the counselor and been able to stay in the classroom when we have substitute teachers; previously he had to work in the office due to his disrespectful behaviour. Our counsellor has commented that this has been his best year yet.

"Responding to misbehaviour has positively impacted this specific student and many others and it is evident in our classroom meeting when other students compliment him on being 'better behaved now'. He has more friends and his peers feel more confident when speaking with him (previously some students were fearful). Other students have noticed that he has the self-control to cooperate with them during partnerships or group work and listens to their ideas sometimes."

Example 2:
"Persevering through challenges can be overwhelming for students whose schooling has not met their emotional and academic needs. They lack trust and don't want to bring attention to themselves. My students come to school with many strategies to leave the classroom when things become difficult. It is up to me to provide resources and strategies so that each student has tools to navigate these challenging situations. Guided Discovery and Interactive Modeling are two Responsive Classroom techniques that I have used to assist my students to persevere through challenges. As my students explore and practice new learning challenges, I can help them refer back to what we have learned together. My teacher language comes into play again, "I noticed that you used the standing desk in order to stay focused. You completed your work and asked questions to help your understanding." As I witnessed my students staying in the classroom more often, referring to tools and strategies independently or with little teacher guidance, regaining composure more quickly, then I knew that they were making positive progress persevering."

Example 3:
"All of the students coming into fifth grade knew L, but they didn't know the role they needed to play in his success. The key to cultivating a community that included L, rather than just tolerating him, was morning meeting. We began with very low-risk greetings and partner shares. I have always used interactive modeling to introduce partner shares, but this year I included a model demonstrating how to interact if your partner was ready to listen, but not yet ready to contribute. *How can we show we are interested and care for the speaker without using words? How can we be sure to give our partner chances to share so he will feel welcome to share when the time is right?*

"A strong sense of **empathy** began to bloom in our classroom. Students were internalizing the message that L wanted to share and be a significant member of our classroom, that he wanted to succeed, and that it was up to us to offer him the patient practice and environment to succeed. This mindset carried over into social **cooperation** on the playground and at lunch. L began to be chosen for teams in gym class and included in learning activities without hesitation. He began to share at morning meeting, a word at a time at first, and then during circle shares with all eyes on him. We stayed away from activities that involve contact for several weeks and later gave L the option to participate in another way when the parameters of the activity were beyond his current comfort level. This is the beauty of an inclusive classroom. Every student witnesses incremental gains, first in others, and then in themselves. Everyone has the opportunity to develop a growth mindset and apply it to his or her own social and academic challenges. **Academic perseverance** develops from the belief that we can all improve with practice and support."

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Assignment 3b: School Impact Essay Guide

This essay should be 3-5 pages in length. Use 12-point Times Roman font. Double space with 1" margins on all sides

Implementing *Responsive Classroom* practices with high fidelity in classrooms makes learning lively and engaging and helps students to build academic and social-emotional (A+SEL) skills that yield positive student outcomes; proximal, intermediate, and long-term.

Implementing the approach with fidelity schoolwide requires school leaders that model and use *Responsive Classroom* practices within their adult communities. In doing so they lead by example and create the conditions for *Responsive Classroom* to take deep root. One critical aspect of leading this approach is working intentionally to cultivate the adults' academic* and social-emotional competencies. Among the many benefits of strengthening adult SEL competence, research from the Collaboration for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) finds "adults who can recognize, understand, label, express, and regulate their own emotions … more effectively teach and model social-emotional competence for their students."

In this essay, describe how your leadership and implementation of *Responsive Classroom* beliefs and practices has positively impacted your school through students' and adults' development of A+SEL competence. For both types of reflections – those illustrating how your RC implementation positively impacted students, and those illustrating positive impacts on staff – provide examples that detail learners' growth in at least **two** academic competencies and at least **two** social-emotional competencies. Include specific examples of how individuals and/or groups exemplified success in A+SEL skills in your reflections and identify what evidence of growth was observed for each of the competencies you focus in on. The essay should focus on students' and adults' A+SEL growth, and the vignettes used to describe that growth can combine A+SEL skills from throughout the school year and throughout the school itself.

Academic Competencies:

- **Academic* Mindset:** Four self-perceptions influence a learner's mindset: 1) I belong in this academic community; 2) my effort improves my performance; 3) I can succeed at this work; and 4) I see value in this work.
- **Academic* Perseverance:** A person's tendency to complete assignments/responsibilities in a timely and thorough manner and to the best of their ability, despite distractions, obstacles, or level of challenge.
- **Learning Strategies:** Techniques, processes, and tactics a person uses to 1) learn, think, remember, and recall, 2) monitor their own comprehension and growth, 3) self-correct when they are confused or have an error in thinking, and 4) set and achieve goals and manage their time effectively.
- **Academic* Behaviors:** The ways in which a person conducts themselves that supports their success in school, including such things as regular attendance, arriving ready to work, paying attention, participating in instructional activities and group discussions, and devoting out of school time to studying, completing assignments/responsibilities and projects.

If translating Academic Competencies to adult learners feels challenging, consider substituting the word academic with terms that relate to the adult community at your school. For example, professional mindset, life-long learner strategies, mission-driven behaviors, etc.

Social-Emotional Competencies:

- **Cooperation:** A person's ability to establish new relationships, maintain positive relationships and friendships, avoid social isolation, resolve conflicts, accept differences, be a contributing member of the classroom and school community, and work productively and collaboratively with others.

- **Assertiveness:** A person's ability to take initiative, stand up for their ideas without hurting or negating others, seek help, succeed at a challenging task, and recognize their individual self as separate from the circumstances or conditions they're in.

- **Responsibility:** A person's ability to motivate themselves to take action and follow through with expectations; to define a problem, consider the consequences, and choose a positive solution.

- **Empathy:** A person's ability to "see into" (recognize, understand) another's state of mind or emotions and be receptive to new ideas and perspectives; to appreciate and value differences and diversity in others; to have concern for others' welfare, even when it doesn't benefit or may come at a cost to one's self.

- **Self-Control:** A person's ability to recognize and regulate their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in order to be successful in the moment and remain on a successful trajectory.

The focus of this essay should be on the trajectory of growth and the positive impacts that your use of *Responsive Classroom* strategies and practices had on **both students' and adults' development of the academic and social-emotional competencies** outlined above. Consider using the graphic organizer below to help plan your essay with at least **two** specific examples from academic competencies and at least **two** specific examples from social and emotional competencies that highlight positive impact and growth in your school. You can also read excerpts of exemplar School Impact Essays from previous applicants to guide you as you craft your own essay.

	Challenges my school faced	What I did to address the challenges	Positive outcomes I observed
	Specific behaviors I saw/heard that impeded the social, emotional, and/or academic growth in students/adults individually and/or of our school community overall	Responsive Classroom strategies and practices I implemented to support positive change in students'/adults' actions and thinking	*Specific results and changes to student/adult behavior that had a positive social, emotional, and/or academic impact on students, families, or adults individually and/or on our school community overall*
Cooperation			
Assertiveness			
Responsibility			
Empathy			
Self-Control			
Academic Mindset			
Academic Perseverance			
Learning Strategies			
Academic Behaviors			

Exemplars School Impact Essay submissions
2021 RCP Exemplars for 3b FINAL

Example 1: Change Challenges the Adult Community

Adult A+SEL: Cooperation, Academic [Professional] Behaviors

This fall a number of last-minute staffing changes really took a toll on our staff. Between a number of colleagues moving, new people joining us, and many professional learning communities experiencing flux due to teachers changing grade levels, our adult community was shaken pretty hard and from various angles. A few weeks into the year I started noticing a dip in adults' professional behaviors. Staff began showing up late to meetings, others arrived ill prepared to participate, and people exhibited visible frustration with their colleagues (sighing, rolling eyes, etc.) A couple individuals began interrupting me and other facilitators to assert opinions before topics or directions were presented completely. More and more people seemed to be engaging in side conversations and a few individuals competed for group attention throughout staff meetings. In my one-on-one check-ins with teachers, I learned that team meetings were suffering in similar ways, too. People shared frustrations around teammates dominating discussion or delegating themselves out of responsibility with group projects.

I realized that our staffing changes were having a negative impact on adults' proficiency with the social, emotional, and professional skills required to do their work well and with others. After challenging myself to see adults' "misbehaviors" as misguided attempts to feel a sense of belonging, significance, purpose, or fun, I sought to devise an approach that would support individuals and our community overall in meeting these needs in positive and productive ways. This approach would also propel us all toward our school's important mission of disrupting inequity through eliminating the opportunity gap and empowering all learners with the knowledge, character, leadership skills, and drive to pursue their individual passions and serve the common good.

To begin, I examined the role my actions (and inaction) as a leader had in contributing to the conditions where unprofessional behaviors were taking root. I recognized that in an effort to get new and existing staff working together quickly, I had neglected opportunities to facilitate new connections, relationships, and awareness of each other's strengths and interests. With this understanding, I focused my efforts on strengthening two specific competencies in adults: Cooperation and Academic [Professional] Behaviors.

At our next meeting, to set the foundation for connection and professional participation in our faculty meetings, I brought everyone back to our school's mission and highlighted ways this year's Big 3 Goals (1. Collaborative planning model, 2. Balanced literacy approach, and 3. Strengthen family-school partnerships) were extensions of our shared vision. With a renewed clarity around the bigger picture, staff created their own hopes and goals for the year ahead. Similar to RC in the classroom, we used our goals as a launching pad to establish our group guidelines that would help everyone make progress toward individual and shared goals. By the end of the meeting that day I saw evidence of positive behavioral change. People exhibited more open and inviting body language, willingness to partner with new colleagues, and respectfully responded to our signal for attention. At the end of the meeting I committed to bringing our new guidelines to life by holding firm to faculty meeting start and end times and implementing a predictable meeting agenda that staff could depend on and prepare for. The new meeting structure was inspired by Morning Meeting and the power it has for supporting students' A+SEL growth and building positive classroom communities. Our new format prioritized 1) staff building positive relationships through energizers and group activities, 2) celebrating effort and

progress with goals, and 3) collaboration around strategies for continuous growth with our Big 3 Goals. In just a few weeks' time nearly everyone was arriving on-time (or early!) and prepared to contribute their ideas respectfully and in ways that advanced community progress toward our mission.

To support the cooperative and professional successes beyond staff meetings, professional learning communities adapted the faculty meeting structure to organize their meetings. The predictable format helped to create a sense of safety and provided them with a solid foundation to build shared leadership and begin rotating facilitation responsibilities. A few weeks after these communities began practicing shared leadership, I made a point to pop-in to each meeting, each week, for a few minutes to demonstrate support by my presence, celebrate their successes, and gain insight into how teams were functioning. Within the first month of visits I saw teammates listening attentively to each other and thoughtfully pausing before responding to each other's ideas and opinions. I saw new groups delegating shared responsibilities in ways that allowed each teammate to make purposeful contributions to the work. Even disagreements became more productive as people acknowledged others' perspectives before offering their own.

Example 2: Rules at Recess and Lunch

Adult A+SEL: Academic [Mission-driven] Mindset, Academic [Professional] Perseverance

Student A+SEL: Responsibility, Self-Control

In the weeks between Halloween and Thanksgiving we noticed a surge of walkie-talkie calls from support staff at recess and lunch. These calls were primarily reserved for emergencies, but the events our colleagues described were things like "talking back," "not following directions," "being disrespectful," and "being willfully defiant." My co-principal and I noticed most calls came during the fifth- and sixth- grade recess and lunch block. To get a clearer picture of the root of the issues we decided to spend a week observing the fifth and sixth grades at recess and lunch.

During observations we noticed fairly predictable misbehaviors during unstructured times of the day – kids taking a little longer to line up, calling out to friends across the way, pushing back on adults' perceptions of their misbehavior, rule-breaking, etc. What stood out wasn't students' behavior but an inconsistency in adults' expectations, and how they were, or were not, communicating expectations to kids. For example, one colleague reminded students to line up when they heard the whistle. Later, I saw students lining up when they heard her whistle. Sure, some sauntered, but they were technically following adult directions and the expectation. Despite this, our colleague was angry and frustrated, calling students' behavior "willful defiance" to follow recess rules. In the lunchroom I heard colleagues telling students to "keep it down" and threatening they would lose the privilege to talk if they didn't comply. Soon I saw a few students out of their seats talking to friends at tables nearby. Again, they were technically "keeping it down" while talking to others; they were just meeting the expectation at a table other than their own. That determined the root of the issue was that adult expectations for recess and lunchroom behavior was much clearer to them than they were for students. And, when students weren't meeting the unwritten rules, adults became frustrated, students became defensive, and we began getting walkie-talkie calls. In both environments it was evident that adults felt overwhelmed executing their responsibilities and that relationships between students and adults were suffering.

To begin to mitigate the inconsistencies around expectations and behavior, I brought the team together and used a modified version of the rules creation process classroom teachers use to guide the team in coming to consensus on a few rules that would apply to both recess and lunch. They agreed on three rules: 1) Honor community signals for attention, 2) Be respectful, responsible and safe, and 3) Take care of our resources and space. They used Looks/Sounds/Feels Like charts to outline specific expectations for students' behavior with each of the new rules. Afterward we brainstormed specific skills and strategies students would need to be successful with the rules and in demonstrating behaviors listed on the charts. One colleague recognized that if "being responsible" meant sitting at their table unless they had permission to leave, they would need to teach students a strategy to ask adults if they could leave. Another "a-ha" was if students

were to respond to signals "immediately, silently, and with focus," they would need a strategy to help them do so, like one hand raised with pointer finger of the other hand over lips to be silent and signal "quiet" to others. Equipped with clear rules and clarity around skills and strategies students would need in order to be successful, the team was eager to share these with kids. First, though, they needed a plan for how they would actually teach the rules. At the end of the week the team had an opportunity to observe my co-principal facilitate our weekly all-school assembly. We had colleagues watch for how we used our school rules, Interactive Modeling, and reinforcing language to teach and reteach behaviors before and throughout the assembly. The next week the team used their observation notes to guide their planning for re-introducing rules to kids, Interactive Modeling lessons to teach the new rules and expectations, and specific reinforcing language they would use to name appropriate behavior.

After Winter Break, well-rested and ready to start fresh, support staff unveiled the new rules, began teaching expectations, and focused on reinforcing what students were doing well. After the first week they decided it would be beneficial if they made extra effort to reinforce behaviors as students arrived, departed, and anytime they used the signal. As the team began enacting, examining, and extending their revised approach to teaching discipline, students demonstrated responsibility and their capacity for exhibiting self-control at recess and lunch. The behavior-related walkie-talkie calls were almost immediately all eliminated.

At a recent faculty meeting the team shared their journey with recess and lunch rules. One person shared "going through [the rules creation process], specifically for recess and lunch rules, helped me feel like our role is recognized and respected." After a teacher shared, and others immediately agreed, that his students were returning from recess and lunch "more content and less stressed." The exchange was evidence that all staff were beginning to each other as crucial contributors to our one, mission-driven team.

Example 3: New Habits Tire Easily

Adult A+SEL Growth: Responsibility; Perseverance

Student A+SEL Growth: Academic Behaviors; Learning Strategies

Last spring [Kaleidoscope data](#) illuminated an opportunity for school growth in the Developmentally Responsive domain, especially in teachers' use of active and interactive teaching practices. With our 2017-2018 PD focus behind us: "Empowering student achievement through SMART goals, purposeful learning targets and achievable success criteria" and our new data in mind, we decided on our focus for 2018-2019 PD: "Facilitating purposeful learning through active, interactive, and joyful teaching practices." That fall we used non-contact days to help teachers learn about, plan for, and begin implementing three key practices: brain breaks, small group learning, and interactive learning structures. Some staff were more enthusiastic than others, but all were humbled by the recent data and open to the notion that a combination of clear learning targets and success criteria, and purposeful active, joyful learning activities could be the winning mix. By December evidence from lesson plans and snapshot observations indicated that active and interactive practices were taking root.

During February observations, however, I noticed an unsettling trend in how inactive and passive the learning had become. It was apparent we had slipped back into old habits and teacher-directed teaching. My anecdotal notes mentioned things like, "kids look bored," "what are students supposed to be doing right now?" The trend was disconcerting because of our intentionality with fall PD, and more so because the weeks ahead of testing season were when students needed purpose, inspiration, and joy most. I understood where teachers were coming from. I taught eighth-grade social studies for 14 years and know well how draining the last few months of school can be. One of our school mottos is, "Be the change." I knew I had an opportunity to "be the change" in how I chose to lead the change, respond to the data, and support teachers getting back on track.

To begin, I shared observation trends with staff: there was a significant decrease in the percentage of time students

spent moving, making, and interacting, and an increase in the percentage of time teachers were talking or students were silent. I also highlighted successes we could build from – increase in teachers referring to learning targets throughout the period and increase in teachers using reinforcing language to name specific academic skills and strategies kids were using. Next, I ensured everyone had appropriate, ample resources to go at this a second time. As a staff we reexamined *Yardsticks* for developmental traits that underscored the importance of students being active, collaborative, and finding purpose in their learning. Then, we gave every teacher their own copy of *50 Brain Breaks* and *22 Motivators* to support their planning. Finally, I employed three strategies to support perseverance and continuous growth:

1. **Notice effort and progress:** Inspired by teachers' relative strengths, I committed to leaving a positive note that reinforced specific teacher actions that contributed to students' active, interactive, or joyful learning during each observation. Soon teachers were stopping me in the hall to thank me and share that they enjoyed hearing what they were doing well and also my blatant omission of what they could have done differently. Teacher responses demonstrated the team had started again seeing themselves as igniters of learning. It is truly amazing how learners of all ages thrive when someone takes the time to notice what they are doing well and recognize their efforts to grow.
2. **Teach and model:** I used quick, easy to facilitate interactive learning structures and brain breaks during Team Huddles, all-staff gatherings Monday and Wednesday mornings that are 15 minutes or less. After each huddle, I challenged people to try something they had just experienced with their students before our next huddle. Teachers responded to this specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound challenge. Soon, teachers began making the trek across the building to my office to tell me which structures they'd tried, what they'd done differently, and that I should stop by their class to see it all in action.
3. **Celebrate to sustain:** To start every meeting (one-on-ones, team, faculty, etc.) I invited people to share what they had been trying and learning or re-discovering about students through their use of active and interactive practices. Often as one-on-ones came to a close, my counterpart or I would naturally revisit what they had shared at the start and then what they were planning to do next. After staff meetings I saw teachers talking to colleagues across content and grade levels to follow-up on ideas people had shared at the meeting's start. Even a few historically reluctant colleagues began to embrace vulnerability and practice growth-oriented thinking as they shared struggles and worries about turning power over to kids.

April-May data showed substantial increases in the amount of time teachers were devoting to active, cooperative, and joyful learning. In rooms that were silent weeks before, I saw teachers weaving brain breaks *and* interactive learning structures into lessons. In classes previously dominated by teacher-voice, I watched students abuzz and invested in small group learning projects. The data showed we had succeeded in re-calibrating our practice and reigniting student-directed, joyful lessons. The real accomplishment is we achieved all this because of teachers' renewed commitment to "whatever it takes" for our kids and the professionalism they displayed, every day.

At our final staff meeting of the school year, colleagues worked in small groups to assess growth and change that occurred in themselves and students between March and the end of May. When I invited people to share takeaways about where we've been and where we are now, the energy was high and victorious. We even heard from a colleague who told me later that she'd hadn't shared at a staff meeting in 22 years but felt compelled to speak that morning. It was clear all were in agreement that the work we were doing was impactful and worthy of recognition.

Later that week during report card spot checks I discovered a development in teacher comments. This year anecdotes focused more on incremental growth and detailed students' focus and effort to achieve goals. Some of the A+SEL competencies they cited mirrored the positive changes I had witnessed in them as adults. Things like learners' "resurgence of goal-oriented behaviors," "drive to access resources," and "executing responsibilities despite distraction." It's no wonder: teachers had become aware, proficient role-models of these life-long learner competencies themselves.