

# Educators Rising STANDARDS



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RISING**



*Great Public Schools for Every Student*

Educators Rising is transforming how America develops aspiring teachers. Starting with high school students, we provide passionate young people with hands-on teaching experience, sustain their interest in the profession, and help them cultivate the skills they need to be successful educators. The result is a pipeline of accomplished teachers who are positioned to make a lasting difference — not only in the lives of their students, but also in the field of teaching more broadly. Learn more at [educatorsrising.org](http://educatorsrising.org).

Educators Rising is powered by PDK International, a professional association for educators. PDK, which is committed to growing and connecting leaders in education, provides governance and support for Educators Rising. Additionally, the PDK Educational Foundation has provided seed funding since 2013 to establish and develop Educators Rising. Learn more at [pdkintl.org](http://pdkintl.org).

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**“OUR STUDENTS DESERVE THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST EDUCATORS. WE NEED TO PROACTIVELY RECRUIT PASSIONATE YOUNG PEOPLE INTO TEACHING, WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON INCREASING DIVERSITY AND ATTRACTING THE MOST CREATIVE, COMPETENT CAREER PROFESSIONALS. EDUCATORS RISING STANDARDS — CREATED FOR TEACHERS BY TEACHERS — LIGHT THE PATH TO ACHIEVING THAT DREAM.”**

— Lily Eskelsen García, President, National Education Association

## INTRODUCTION

Great teachers are built, not born. Since America is on track to hire 300,000 new teachers every year, we need a better plan to attract and to build a lot of them.<sup>1</sup>

We can't overstate the importance of this work. The imperative to cultivate a new generation of diverse, skilled practitioners is at the root of all hopes for a more equitable and competitive future for our country. Research has long indicated that, among school factors, nothing influences student achievement more than the effectiveness of one's teacher.<sup>2</sup> All students deserve excellent teachers at every step of their learning journeys. Right now, they aren't getting them, and our most vulnerable students endure enormous collateral damage as a result.

It's time to change the system. We urgently need to increase diversity in a teaching profession that is 82 percent white but serves a student population in which students of color comprise the majority.<sup>3</sup> In 2015, only 5 percent of high school graduates who took the ACT indicated a plan to pursue a career in education.<sup>4</sup> Bright young people, with no mechanism to explore the extraordinary rewards of teaching, are steering away from the profession. Declining enrollment in teacher preparation programs is creating teacher shortages, especially in high-needs areas like STEM and special education. Band-Aid solutions abound.

There is hope.

Teacher recruitment and preparation, at the core, are community-based issues. Over 60 percent of teachers work within 20 miles of where they attended high school.<sup>5</sup> A majority of each community's future teachers — who will have extraordinary influence on that community — are sitting right there on the student side of the desks today! Starting intentionally and early — in secondary school — to build a broad, diverse, skilled, committed teaching talent pool is an important and logical, yet historically overlooked endeavor. Educators Rising is paving a path to help communities break through in this crucial enterprise.

Educators Rising has developed seven standards to define what high school students exploring teaching need to know and be able to do to take their first steps on the path to accomplished teaching. The standards in this report represent a new, shared vision from the field; the teaching profession is mapping the front end of a coherent continuum, from the initial exploratory phase to entry into the profession to becoming an accomplished practitioner. The standards were created for teachers, by teachers via the professional consensus model developed by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). Additionally, NBPTS's Five Core Propositions provided a philosophical anchor for the standards committee throughout the development process.

Educators Rising Standards reflect a broad and powerful recognition that building the teaching profession begins by engaging secondary students. The standards will form the backbone of new secondary-based pathway programs and “Grow Your Own” efforts in high schools across the country. To bring these standards to life for aspiring teachers, Educators Rising will release a set of micro-credentials (i.e. portfolio-based assessments of specific competencies) in Fall 2016. The EdRising Academy curriculum will be available for implementation in high schools in the 2017-2018 school year.

There’s power in teaching. High school students, who hunger for impact and experiential learning, can gain early opportunities in these Educators Rising Standards-aligned programs to begin to build the skills and mindsets they will need to thrive as educators in the 2020s and beyond.

**EDUCATORS RISING HAS DEVELOPED SEVEN STANDARDS TO DEFINE WHAT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS EXPLORING TEACHING NEED TO KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO TO TAKE THEIR FIRST STEPS ON THE PATH TO ACCOMPLISHED TEACHING.**

The programs, while boosting local efforts on career readiness and teacher leadership, will help rising educators become empowered, informed consumers as they plan their trajectories to postsecondary programs and into the workforce. Additionally, the programs will serve as a pipeline for districts, postsecondary programs, and educator preparation providers seeking talented, diverse rising educators who are actively taking steps on the path to accomplished teaching.

## ABOUT THE STANDARDS

### A Guide to the Educators Rising Standards Document

This document presents seven standards for rising educators. While each standard discusses a different area of teaching practice, all of them are structured the same way. Every standard begins with a statement that captures its main ideas concisely, providing a view of the standard “at a glance.” This statement is followed by one or two introductory paragraphs describing related dispositions and demeanors that rising educators may possess or develop as they contemplate a career in education.

The main body of each standard lies in the section titled “Know, Understand, and Practice.” Each paragraph in this section has a descriptive subheading. All but the last paragraph explains what rising educators should know and be able to do based on their understanding. These paragraphs end with a description of what rising educators can expect after high school. Each tells a story about the knowledge and skills that rising educators will acquire, and the models they may observe in professional educators. The paragraphs build on each other to provide rising educators with a comprehensive appreciation of the standard topic and their development as teachers. The final paragraph concludes the section by addressing reflection as it relates to the standard. Reflection is such an integral aspect of teaching practice that it is emphasized within every standard and considered additionally on its own in the seventh standard.

Educators Rising Standards are sequenced based on conceptual relationships, with each standard making way for the next. Importantly, this configuration should not be interpreted as a rank ordering, because each standard is critically important. Attention to all of them will foster profound growth, preparing rising educators to evolve into accomplished teachers.

Here are the seven Educators Rising Standards, with their statements:

### **Standard I: Understanding the Profession**

*Rising educators learn about the profession to explore career opportunities, develop skills they need, and make informed decisions about pathways to accomplished teaching.*

### **Standard II: Learning About Students**

*Rising educators learn about themselves and their students for the purpose of building relationships and supporting student development.*

### **Standard III: Building Content Knowledge**

*Rising educators learn how to build content knowledge for the purpose of creating relevant learning opportunities for their students.*

### **Standard IV: Engaging in Responsive Planning**

*Rising educators learn how to respond to students' needs through thoughtful planning.*

### **Standard V: Implementing Instruction**

*Rising educators learn effective instructional strategies to engage students and promote learning.*

### **Standard VI: Using Assessment and Data**

*Rising educators learn to use assessments and interpret data for the purpose of making decisions that will advance teaching and learning.*

### **Standard VII: Engaging in Reflective Practice**

*Rising educators learn how reflective practice enables them to advance student learning and grow professionally.*

The standards document moves from the determination of pathways (Standard I) to the initial steps of learning about students and subjects (Standards II-III). It then proceeds through the major aspects of instruction: planning, teaching, assessing, and reflecting (Standards IV-VII). This cycle is continuous and by no means fixed since the dynamic nature of instruction requires flexibility. For instance, assessment might occur before teaching in the form of a pre-test, administered for diagnostic purposes to hone planning. Similarly, reflection is infused throughout the cycle — before, during, and after instruction — because effective teachers reflect upon every thought and action, making adjustments



as needed to advance learning. Finally, the document ends with a standard on reflection that builds on prior discussions to explore the essential qualities and characteristics of this definitive act.

**THE MAIN BODY OF EACH STANDARD LIES IN THE SECTION TITLED “KNOW, UNDERSTAND, AND PRACTICE.”**

## The Role of Rising Educators

Rising educators are students engaging in a guided exploration of teaching under the wings of teacher leaders serving as mentors. The rising educator is a transitional figure, moving from student (during coursework) to teacher (during clinical internships) while remaining a learner, because every effective teacher is a lifelong learner.

Today’s rising educator is tomorrow’s accomplished teacher. The standards document guides rising educators as they take their first steps on a coherent career continuum. It draws attention to the examples that other teachers provide as rising educators strive to understand major concepts, develop mindsets, and practice their skills. The standards document focuses most closely on rising educators as they progress through secondary programs and internships but also envisions their movement along pathways to become pre-service teachers, novice teachers, professional teachers, accomplished National Board Certified Teachers, and finally, teacher leaders who can spread their expertise.

## The Reading Experience

Teacher leaders serving as mentors to secondary students exploring teaching can read the standards document as a guide for areas of focus when building activities and assessments for their programs. Additionally, the forthcoming Educators Rising micro-credentials — a set of performance-based assessments — and the EdRising Academy curriculum will be explicitly mapped to these standards.

Students aspiring to teach are also an important audience for this document. Part of the document’s goal is to inspire rising educators, to show them that they can become accomplished teachers if they dedicate themselves to building certain dispositions, knowledge, and skills. Reading the standards document may represent a challenge for rising educators, and this challenge is intentional. Reading and understanding professional standards are important parts of preparing to join a profession. The document is written in professional language, demanding that rising educators read closely and carefully on their own, with their peers, and with their mentors.

**A SET OF OVERARCHING THEMES GUIDED THE COMMITTEE’S AUTHORSHIP OF THIS DOCUMENT ... THESE THEMES ARE ASPIRATIONAL, COMMUNICATING A SENSE OF DIRECTION FOR RISING EDUCATORS AND A VISION FOR THE PROFESSION AS A WHOLE.**

The document should be interpreted by rising educators and their mentors based on student needs and regional demands — in relation to a variety of factors influencing their teaching context, including grade levels, content areas, learning environments, local communities, and school and district cultures. Thus, when examples appear in the text, they are intended for illustrative purposes only and should not be considered exhaustive. This document is a starting point for a much larger conversation about the components of great teaching.

## Cross-Cutting Themes

A set of overarching themes guided the committee’s writing of this document. These themes are referenced explicitly and implicitly throughout the standards. While some concepts may hold more meaning for rising educators at present, others will accrue greater significance as rising educators gain experience and grow professionally. These themes are aspirational, communicating a sense of direction for rising educators and a vision for the profession as a whole.

### ▶ **CULTURAL COMPETENCE**

Developing cultural competence, the ability to successfully teach students who come from a culture or cultures other than one’s own, is fundamental to becoming a skilled teacher. It entails developing certain personal and interpersonal awareness and sensitivities, understanding certain bodies of cultural knowledge, and mastering a set of skills that, taken together, underlie effective cross-cultural teaching and culturally responsive teaching.<sup>6</sup> To achieve this level of understanding and respect, rising educators must build cultural competence early in their journeys.

### ▶ **FAIRNESS, EQUITY, AND DIVERSITY**

Teachers must work vigilantly to provide all students with fair and equitable access to resources and learning opportunities. This means teachers must achieve clear-eyed understandings of historical context and work proactively to nurture an anti-bias learning environment. In addition to infusing these tenets into their practice, teachers should actively facilitate meaningful discussions with students about fairness, equity, and diversity. These conversations will prepare students as global citizens, helping them expand their worldviews and become productive members of a more just and equitable society.

### ▶ **REFLECTIVE PRACTICE**

Reflection is a habit of mind that is essential within all aspects of teaching, from planning through instruction, assessment, and adjustment. To promote student learning, teachers must find ways to evaluate themselves honestly and act responsively and resiliently. They must identify failures and successes so they can analyze their practice and determine what works in different contexts.

### ▶ **ETHICS**

Successful teachers commit themselves to be responsible, ethical professionals who do no harm. An ethical outlook guides their decision-making, inspiring them to elevate students’ needs, honor diversity, and take action when necessary. It aligns their personal values and professional conduct. The responsibility that these teachers accept for their students, schools, communities, and profession encourages them to serve as role models in and out of the classroom.

### ▶ **COLLABORATION**

Building relationships through collaboration with students, peers, experts, leaders, families, and stakeholders is essential. It helps teachers strengthen their practice, enhance learning environments, and invigorate the profession. Thoughtfully aligned efforts between educators and stakeholders benefit students. Collaboration requires patience, hard work, and humility, but it is essential for any teacher who promotes student learning first and foremost.

## ▶ **SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ADVOCACY**

The teaching profession is a helping profession that advocates for education and opportunity for all. Rising educators' voices are important in working toward this vision. Teachers should be articulate and skilled in the ability to promote the interests of students and communities. They must learn the proper channels to take appropriate actions as change agents and to empower peers, students, and other stakeholders to express their views as well.

## ▶ **SELF-EFFICACY**

Promoting self-efficacy in students is about capacity-building — acquiring knowledge, skills, abilities, and dispositions to build confidence and achieve impact. Self-efficacy and empowerment develop when rising educators are recognized as important members of the teaching profession. They build networks, take initiative to broaden their perspectives, respond to feedback, reflect on what they learn, and proactively take on new projects.

## **Developing the Standards**

A diverse group of 12 professional educators formed the Educators Rising Standards Committee. The processes and protocols used for empowering the committee to define the Educators Rising Standards were borrowed from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, who served as a partner and advisor at every stage of the project.

In a December 2015 stakeholder meeting which included teacher and student voice, national organizations (see page 28 for a list of participants) provided input on priority areas for the standards as well as recommendations for criteria to use in determining the selection of the committee members.

In January 2016, the committee was selected and seated. From January to June 2016, the committee met in person for a total of 16 days and collaborated virtually throughout the process.

In the spirit of back-mapping the path to accomplished teaching, the committee referred to numerous standards and taxonomies during their deliberations, including:

- ▶ *InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (Council of Chief State School Officers)*
- ▶ *NBPTS standards for multiple certificate areas*
- ▶ *Deeper Learning Framework*
- ▶ *High leverage teaching practices (TeachingWorks)*
- ▶ *Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner-Centered Teaching (Council of Chief State School Officers, Jobs for the Future)*
- ▶ *Model Code of Ethics for Educators (National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification)*
- ▶ *edTPA Critical Dimensions of Teaching*
- ▶ *Education and Training Career Cluster, Teaching and Training Pathway Knowledge and Skill Statements (Advance CTE)*

The cross-cutting themes guided the composition of the standards document and informed subsequent stages of revision. Prior to the final meeting, a draft version of the standards document was released for public comment. Before finalizing the standards, the committee reviewed and responded to each

comment. The process as a whole demonstrates the importance of collaboration and reflection. The standards document is shared with the reader in this spirit.

<sup>1</sup>Hussar, W.J., and Bailey, T.M. (2013). *Projections of education statistics to 2021* (NCES 2013-008). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

<sup>2</sup>Hightower, A.M., Delgado, R.C., Lloyd, S.C., Wittenstein, R., Sellers, K., & Swanson, C.B. (2011). *Improving student learning by supporting quality teaching: Key issues, effective strategies*. Bethesda, MD: Editorial Projects in Education, Inc.

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service. (2016). *The state of racial diversity in the educator workforce*. Washington, DC.

<sup>4</sup>ACT. (2015). *The condition of future educators 2014*. Iowa City, IA: ACT, Inc.

<sup>5</sup>Reininger, M. (2012). Hometown disadvantage? It depends on where you're from: Teachers' location preferences and the implications for staffing schools. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 34, 127-145.

<sup>6</sup>National Education Association. *Diversity toolkit: Cultural competence for educators*. Retrieved from <http://www.nea.org/tools/30402.htm>

## KEY PARTNERS

*This groundbreaking effort to develop Educators Rising Standards was made possible by a grant from the National Education Association (NEA). NEA's leadership and impact in elevating the teaching profession is being felt in positive and powerful ways across the country. Educators Rising is honored to collaborate with NEA members, affiliates, and national staff.*

*Educators Rising and the Educators Rising Standards Committee are indebted to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards for providing intensive guidance and support at every stage of the project to ensure that Educators Rising Standards truly reflect the professional consensus of the field.*



*Great Public Schools for Every Student*

**NATIONAL BOARD**  
for Professional Teaching Standards®

# OVERVIEW OF EDUCATORS RISING STANDARDS



## **Standard I: Understanding the Profession**

*Rising educators learn about the profession to explore career opportunities, develop skills they need, and make informed decisions about pathways to accomplished teaching.*



## **Standard II: Learning About Students**

*Rising educators learn about themselves and their students for the purpose of building relationships and supporting student development.*



## **Standard III: Building Content Knowledge**

*Rising educators learn how to build content knowledge for the purpose of creating relevant learning opportunities for their students.*



## **Standard IV: Engaging in Responsive Planning**

*Rising educators learn how to respond to students' needs through thoughtful planning.*



## **Standard V: Implementing Instruction**

*Rising educators learn effective instructional strategies to engage students and promote learning.*



## **Standard VI: Using Assessments and Data**

*Rising educators learn to use assessments and interpret data for the purpose of making decisions that will advance teaching and learning.*



## **Standard VII: Engaging in Reflective Practice**

*Rising educators learn how reflective practice enables them to advance student learning and grow professionally.*

## STANDARD I

# UNDERSTANDING THE PROFESSION

**Rising educators learn about the profession to explore career opportunities, develop skills they need, and make informed decisions about pathways to accomplished teaching.**

*Rising educators view teaching as a rewarding profession with the power to influence and transform the future for students, communities, and the nation as a whole. They believe they are ambassadors for learning, and they maintain high expectations for themselves and others. They envision themselves as scholars, role models, and lifelong learners who will become leaders, problem solvers, and change agents. Rising educators are team players, and they enjoy working with young people. They are committed to promoting equity. They are advocates for their own learning and that of others. Rising educators are inspired to pursue paths toward accomplished teaching which start in high school, proceed through college, and extend across the profession.*

## KNOW, UNDERSTAND, AND PRACTICE

### *Exploring the Profession*

Rising educators know there are numerous career opportunities within the educational field — in addition to becoming teachers, they could be counselors, instructional coaches, school psychologists, administrators, or other types of professionals. Based on this understanding, rising educators explore various options, researching potential career paths by observing professional educators at work in different settings — by interviewing them, shadowing them, and completing internships. Rising educators increase their knowledge of the field to identify the careers that interest and compel them the most. Given their choices, they investigate the coursework, licensures, and certifications they will need, in addition to the salary trends and employment projections they can expect. Using everything they discover, rising educators make informed decisions about the teacher preparation programs they select to reach their professional goals. After high school, rising educators will continue to learn about the challenges and rewards they can look forward to as they pursue their chosen careers.

### *Becoming Accomplished Professionals*

Rising educators know that teachers begin their careers by building their knowledge of academic language and content while developing an understanding of professional skills and terminology. Rising educators recognize that teachers advance their abilities over the course of their careers. They know

that as lifelong learners, teachers promote their professional growth and that of their colleagues to improve student learning and achievement. They understand that teachers are ethical and professional, striving to build mutual respect and a positive rapport with colleagues and students. Accomplished teachers work productively and intentionally with other educators to strengthen the vertical alignment of curricula, enhance interdisciplinary connections, and create a culture of innovative practice. Based on this understanding, rising educators read about, reflect on, and practice the skills they will need in the learning environment. They participate in, plan, and deliver professional development opportunities, appreciating the importance of dressing, behaving, and interacting as professionals. After high school, rising educators will learn about evaluation systems and use feedback to augment their professional growth. They will set challenging goals and meet critical milestones in the pursuit of excellence, such as the achievement of advanced degrees or the recognition of accomplished practice that comes with National Board Certification.

**USING EVERYTHING THEY DISCOVER, RISING EDUCATORS MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT THE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS THEY SELECT TO REACH THEIR PROFESSIONAL GOALS.**

### ***Engaging Stakeholders***

Rising educators know that teachers are members of extended learning communities, and are committed to building relationships with all stakeholders. They understand that accomplished teachers are particularly proactive on this front, adept at reaching out and engaging individuals so students may benefit from their contributions. Rising educators appreciate that open communication and productive collaboration are instrumental to ensuring equity, respecting diversity, and advancing student learning. Based on this understanding, they develop skills to help build vibrant learning communities, determining how to use different modes of communication in different contexts. They work in teams and share ideas with various groups to achieve common goals. After high school, rising educators will extend their commitment to collaboration, moving from participation to facilitation. They will utilize innovative approaches to communicate with stakeholders, employing technology and adopting a wide range of techniques to broaden their reach and strengthen the impact of community collaboration.

### ***Advocating for the Profession***

Rising educators know about the history of the profession, appreciate the current state of education, and believe in the impact they can have on the future. They are aware that accomplished teachers serve as leaders and role models for their colleagues and students, inspiring engagement across learning communities and strategizing solutions that leverage individual strengths. Based on this understanding, rising educators learn how political systems influence the educational field and how educators advocate for themselves and their students on a local, state, and national level. They identify professional organizations and advocacy groups within the field and begin seeking opportunities and platforms to elevate their voices by participating in education-related activities. After high school, rising educators will increase their knowledge of the

**RISING EDUCATORS KNOW THAT TEACHERS ARE MEMBERS OF EXTENDED LEARNING COMMUNITIES, AND ARE COMMITTED TO BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS.**

social, political, and economic factors influencing educational practices and policies. They will become change agents, and they will make a difference.

### ***Reflecting on the Profession***

Rising educators reflect on their understanding of what the educational profession is about and which skills they will need to be successful in it. Committed to developing ethical practices, they examine their values, interests, and strengths in relation to this service profession. As they establish short- and long-term goals along paths leading to accomplishment, they consider the benefits of individual initiative and professional collaboration. Rising educators think about the importance of educational professionals and their significance to society. They contemplate their roles as future change agents and imagine the impact they will have on students and other educators.

## STANDARD II

# LEARNING ABOUT STUDENTS

**Rising educators learn about themselves and their students for the purpose of building relationships and supporting student development.**

*Rising educators care about people. They are committed to empowering themselves and those around them. They gain an awareness of their own identities while appreciating the uniqueness of individuals. Rising educators are open to the diversity of human experience and value different cultures. Demonstrating empathy, they seek out personal connections with the goal of establishing meaningful, respectful relationships.*

*Rising educators believe in fairness and equity. These principles guide their interactions. Motivated to challenge themselves and others, rising educators discover the rewards of stepping outside their comfort zones.*

## KNOW, UNDERSTAND, AND PRACTICE

### ***Gaining Self-Knowledge***

Rising educators know they must explore their own identities before they can distinguish those of others. Based on this understanding, they examine their histories, values, and beliefs to assess their personal attitudes. Rising educators discover their passions and strengths, and they uncover their biases and weaknesses. They gain an awareness of themselves as learners, with unique talents, preferences, and motivations. Rising educators appreciate that these qualities differ from person to person. Using all this knowledge, they address preconceptions that may limit students so they can create opportunities that will maximize student potential instead. After high school, rising educators will continue to consider how their experiences impact their view of themselves and those around them.

### ***Developing Cultural Competence***

Rising educators know that students are individuals, each possessing a unique story. They understand they must learn about students as people, each with diverse qualities, characteristics, and talents. Students come from different social, cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds and have different family structures, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, physical traits, intellectual attributes, and career ambitions. Rising educators recognize that accomplished teachers engage students and other stakeholders to learn as much as possible about students. Accomplished teachers know their students' interests, motivations, and aspirations. They understand their students' social, emotional, physical, and

cognitive development. They identify their students' knowledge and skills. Rising educators appreciate the complexity of their students as people. They believe that every student can learn, and they see all students as assets to themselves and their communities. Based on this understanding, rising educators learn about students and develop cultural competence, responding positively to students' individual needs to help them succeed and to elevate their voices. After high school, rising educators will continue to advance this pivotal understanding of how diversity contributes to the learning environment.

## ***Understanding Different Learning Needs***

Rising educators know that teachers must consider their students' individual talents and learning needs when planning and providing instruction. They appreciate that accomplished teachers customize their interaction with students by forming relationships with them as people and distinguishing them as learners. Based on this understanding, rising educators study how different types of learners build knowledge and skill at various stages of development, from infancy through adulthood. They use this information to gain a greater awareness of their students and how to support them. After high school, rising educators will extend their practice, reaching out to students based on their individual needs to create inclusive learning environments that value equity.



**RISING EDUCATORS DISCOVER THEIR PASSIONS AND STRENGTHS, AND THEY UNCOVER THEIR BIASES AND WEAKNESSES.**

## ***Reflecting on Students***

Rising educators reflect on how they learn about themselves and how they develop an understanding of their students. They consider their own experiences and those of others, thinking about how their interactions affect students. Rising educators examine how they can strengthen their relationships with students to help them feel valued, important, and capable of realizing their potential. Rising educators evaluate what students need, why they need it, and how best to provide it.

## STANDARD III

# BUILDING CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

**Rising educators learn how to build content knowledge for the purpose of creating relevant learning opportunities for their students.**

*Rising educators embrace learning. Their curiosity inspires interest and engagement in others. They are critical thinkers dedicated to seeking diverse views and sources of information. Rising educators are inquisitive, eager to explore topics and ask questions. Their intrinsic drive to delve deeply within topics generates powerful discoveries. They appreciate that knowledge is not always definitive. They are able to acknowledge gaps in their understanding and supplement their learning strategically, demonstrating resilience to expand their intellectual horizons. Rising educators gain empowerment through the journey of learning.*

## KNOW, UNDERSTAND, AND PRACTICE

### ***Planning an Educational Pathway***

Rising educators know they need specific coursework and learning opportunities to acquire content knowledge within a subject area or grade level. A full range of educational experiences may include classes as well as job and volunteer positions within their communities. Based on this understanding, rising educators plan a challenging course of study and establish an educational pathway to explore their interests and build their content expertise. They appreciate that learning is a process and they are taking their first steps in a long, exciting journey. After high school, rising educators will continue gaining content and pedagogical knowledge to become the teaching experts that students will need.


### ***Developing Content Expertise***

Rising educators know they can build content expertise in formal and informal ways — by taking classes, reading and discussing ideas, observing the instruction of effective teachers, or researching topics that fascinate them. Based on this understanding, they strive to question, evaluate, and extend what they know, broadening and deepening their content knowledge to develop increasingly complex insights within their subject areas. After high school, rising educators will continue their studies. They will advance their content and pedagogical knowledge, incorporating evolving theories and concepts to challenge themselves and inspire their students.

## ***Considering Multiple Perspectives***

Rising educators know they must consider multiple perspectives as they gain content knowledge. There is often more than one version of a story, one answer to a question, or one way to solve a problem. Based on this understanding, rising educators investigate various sources to evaluate the social, historical, and intellectual context of the topics they are studying. They learn the significance of different opinions and beliefs, recognizing that some of these ideas may challenge their thinking.

After high school, rising educators will continue to build their knowledge this way to promote a fuller understanding of the world for themselves and the students they teach. They will be proactive, diversifying the scope of their knowledge to engage students across learning environments.



**RISING EDUCATORS KNOW THEY CAN BUILD CONTENT EXPERTISE IN FORMAL AND INFORMAL WAYS — BY TAKING CLASSES, READING AND DISCUSSING IDEAS, OBSERVING THE INSTRUCTION OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS, OR RESEARCHING TOPICS THAT FASCINATE THEM.**

## ***Making Content Connections***

Rising educators know that creative teachers pique their students' curiosity and motivate them to learn by framing subject matter in compelling ways. Based on this understanding, rising educators relate content ideas to explore the practical and theoretical implications of what they learn. As they study a wide variety of topics, they compare concepts and draw distinctions, formulating knowledge that intrigues them and interests others. After high school, they will continue to nurture their enthusiasm for learning. Embracing the belief that knowledge lives and grows when it is shared, rising educators will make exciting content connections with their students. They will collaborate with stakeholders throughout the learning environment to extend concepts, juxtapose ideas, and identify real-world applications.

## ***Reflecting on Content Knowledge***

Rising educators reflect on their understanding of content knowledge. They evaluate what they do and do not know, comparing it to what they need and wish to know. They think about useful ways to build knowledge — ways that will provide them with a thorough understanding of subject matter by contrasting different views and perspectives to avoid bias. Rising educators consider what makes knowledge relevant and how it can inspire them and their students.

## STANDARD IV

# ENGAGING IN RESPONSIVE PLANNING

**Rising educators learn how to respond to students' needs through thoughtful planning.**

*Rising educators are attentive and observant planners. They blend optimism, imagination, and knowledge to develop creative ideas. They understand that being successful depends on working hard behind the scenes, and they take pride in their determination always to deliver their best efforts. Rising educators work collaboratively and welcome feedback because they are confident and inquisitive, eager to learn from other views and perspectives. Self-reflective and empathetic, their sensitivity toward people supports their willingness to become positive forces in the lives of others.*

*Rising educators are confident that they can make an impact. Able to set ambitious but achievable short- and long-term goals, they hold high expectations for themselves and others. Their belief that all students can and will learn drives their desire to make a difference by helping others exceed their expectations.*

## KNOW, UNDERSTAND, AND PRACTICE

### **Meeting Student Needs**

Rising educators know that student needs must inform all aspects of the planning process to create a dynamic and productive learning environment. They understand the importance of designing student-centered instruction that responds to learner input, engages interests, and encourages exploration. They also appreciate the need to foster safe, supportive school cultures which help students build confidence and discover their individual voices. Based on this understanding, rising educators strive to create plans that facilitate student growth and development by addressing students' changing needs. After high school, rising educators will design increasingly ambitious lesson plans to nurture and motivate students while providing them with compelling learning opportunities.

### **Designing Learning Environments**

Rising educators know the importance of addressing physical and social aspects of the learning environment while planning to meet students' individual needs. They realize that effective planning takes into account physical layouts, available resources, student groupings, and class procedures to

support positive social interaction, encourage full participation, and promote safe and productive learning spaces. Based on this understanding, rising educators craft their plans to anticipate potential issues and strategize successful solutions by establishing norms and routines that support positive school culture. After high school, they will continue to refine their planning skills to create learning environments that engage students and nurture their growth.

## ***Utilizing Content and Pedagogical Knowledge***


Rising educators know that teachers utilize content knowledge and pedagogical expertise within their planning and practice. Based on this understanding, they learn about educational theories and cognitive science, studying the impact that child development has on instruction. As they begin creating lesson plans, rising educators combine the pedagogical information they gain with subject area content. After high school, they will draw on their growing body of knowledge to plan challenging instruction that excites students about learning.

## ***Developing Instructional Methods and Strategies***

Rising educators know various instructional methods and understand how they inform planning and influence teaching. Rising educators also appreciate the strategies that teachers use and the learning resources that they draw on to support the implementation of these methods. Based on this understanding, rising educators develop a set of methods and strategies to facilitate instruction, incorporating these techniques within their lesson plans in response to student needs. After high school, they will continue to hone their skills, seeking out effective teachers to serve as mentors and advisors. Rising educators will consult with peers and colleagues on a regular and ongoing basis, and they will create increasingly sophisticated lesson plans that foster a culture of excellence within their learning environments.

## ***Building Lesson Plans***

Rising educators know that planning is a significant stage within the ongoing cycle of planning, instruction, assessment, and adjustment. They also understand that the preparation of well-designed lesson plans takes a range of critical information into account. They are aware of how important it is to align plans by balancing learning objectives with short- and long-term curricular goals, academic content standards, and student needs and interests. Based on this understanding, rising educators address alignment issues as they begin developing lesson plans. They consider the current status of student learning as demonstrated in observations and other assessment data, and they evaluate the potential impact that time, materials, and other resources may have. As rising educators reflect on these factors, they differentiate instruction and scaffold learning in their lesson plans, thinking about how they might correct any misconceptions and utilize exemplars to model quality work. They respond to their students' diverse needs while challenging them to advance their learning. Throughout this process, rising educators welcome feedback from others to create effective lesson plans. After high school, they will deepen their understanding, expand their skills, and become strategic planners.



**RISING EDUCATORS KNOW THAT STUDENT NEEDS MUST INFORM ALL ASPECTS OF THE PLANNING PROCESS TO CREATE A DYNAMIC AND PRODUCTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.**


## ***Collaborating with Stakeholders***

Rising educators know that collaborative planning helps teachers engage students and stimulate learning. They understand that accomplished teachers communicate with students and other stakeholders, asking questions and responding to feedback so they can extend the reach of their learning environments. They witness

accomplished teachers partnering with these groups to share resources and benefit from various perspectives, promoting fairness and equity by evaluating student needs from different viewpoints.

Based on this understanding,

rising educators learn about collaboration and begin using feedback from mentors and peers to enhance their lesson plans. After high school, they will continue to collaborate with others, utilizing diverse resources to design innovative instruction that makes meaningful cross-curricular, real world, and global connections.



**RISING EDUCATORS WILL CONSULT WITH PEERS AND COLLEAGUES ON A REGULAR AND ONGOING BASIS, AND THEY WILL CREATE INCREASINGLY SOPHISTICATED LESSON PLANS THAT FOSTER A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE WITHIN THEIR LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS.**

## ***Reflecting on Planning***

Rising educators reflect on the connections between responsive planning, instruction, and assessment. They set high expectations for meeting student needs as they examine the appropriateness of instructional methods, strategies, and techniques within different teaching contexts. Following instruction and assessment, rising educators identify how their plans did or did not engage and advance student learning. They recognize that every student learns differently, so they re-teach, adjust, or modify plans to ensure their students' academic success. They seek feedback as well, speaking with students, colleagues, mentors, and other stakeholders to enhance their plans further. Rising educators bring the knowledge they gain from reflection to their future plans. They evaluate their strengths and weaknesses during this process, and they establish short- and long-term goals for personal improvement.

## STANDARD V

# IMPLEMENTING INSTRUCTION

**Rising educators learn effective instructional strategies to engage students and promote learning.**

*Rising educators are passionate about helping people develop and grow. They are eager to try creative ideas that can foster learning. They care about others and want to establish opportunities for people to share their ideas and express their views. Rising educators are resourceful, drawing ideas from a broad variety of perspectives and experiences. They are flexible and dynamic in their thinking as well, willing to adapt so they can achieve their goals. Rising educators embrace chances to serve as positive role models because they are committed to making a difference. Rising educators are aspiring leaders.*

## KNOW, UNDERSTAND, AND PRACTICE

### ***Establishing Learning Environments***

Rising educators know that a school culture that promotes mutual respect and rapport will support the growth of all students. They understand that every student benefits from the routines and procedures within a safe and supportive learning environment. A collaborative space that builds trust among students lays the groundwork for high expectations and successful classroom management while engaging and challenging all students. Based on this understanding, rising educators contribute to the creation of positive learning environments that value students as individuals and advance their growth. After high school, rising educators will continue to develop the strategies and techniques they need to create productive, inspiring learning environments for students.

### ***Communicating with Students***

Rising educators know that student-centered environments motivate learning, foster growth, and encourage achievement through clear communication. They understand that accomplished teachers use a range of communication strategies and facilitation techniques to influence students positively by capturing their interest, nurturing their voices, and supporting their leadership skills. Rising educators appreciate that teachers convey their instructional purpose clearly to students, engaging them as partners within the learning environment. Based on this understanding, rising educators carefully consider their methods of communication with students, determining how to share information and exchange ideas so they can help develop equitable, empowering learning environments. After high

school, they will hone their communication skills further to facilitate instruction that supports and celebrates student growth and achievement.

## ***Utilizing Instructional Strategies***

Rising educators know the importance of using effective instructional strategies to engage student interest and support meaningful learning. They understand that cross-curricular, real world, and global connections fascinate students. Rising educators also know that teachers advance student learning in many ways. For example, they differentiate instruction and draw on various teaching materials to reach all learners, they model skills and behaviors to communicate expectations, they facilitate hands-on activities to support student initiative, and they scaffold instruction to encourage higher levels of performance.

Based on this understanding, rising educators utilize different strategies and techniques to implement instruction and remain prepared to make adjustments as needed. After high school, their teaching practice will become increasingly innovative as they learn to adapt their instructional approach, maximize their use of resources, and heighten intellectual engagement.



**RISING EDUCATORS KNOW THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING THEIR STUDENTS' HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS.**

## ***Leveraging Technology to Promote Learning***

Rising educators know that technology is a tool that can transform and redefine how, when, and where learning takes place. Based on this understanding, they use it strategically to make learning relevant and engaging for their students. They employ technology to investigate and communicate, utilizing it to help students access content, expand their worlds, and connect with other learners and thinkers. After high school, rising educators will refine their use of technology to support student learning through inquiry, experimentation, research, and development.

## ***Fostering Critical Thinking***

Rising educators know the importance of developing their students' higher order thinking skills. They recognize the need to integrate problem solving, critical thinking, technology application, and other crucial skills within activities so students have the opportunity to analyze ideas and synthesize learning. Based on this understanding, rising educators learn to ask students effective questions that probe their thinking and inspire them to ask questions of their own. Rising educators model their methods on those of accomplished teachers, who use inquiry-based learning to extend student investigation, pursue additional research, and deepen conceptual engagement. After high school, rising educators will explore successful strategies further. As their practice becomes accomplished, they will pioneer new approaches to empower thinking and learning by strengthening their students' cognitive skills and abilities.

## ***Reflecting on Instruction***

Rising educators reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching by analyzing student learning and engagement. They use observations, outcomes, and feedback to evaluate their practice before, during, and after instruction. Rising educators consider the dynamics within their learning environments, the quality of their communication with students, their implementation of instructional strategies, their use of technology, and their ability to nurture critical thinking. They consult mentors and study examples of accomplished teaching. To advance their practice, rising educators leverage their strengths and identify courses of improvement.

## STANDARD VI

# USING ASSESSMENTS AND DATA

**Rising educators learn to use assessments and interpret data for the purpose of making decisions that will advance teaching and learning.**

*Rising educators are inquisitive. They want to understand themselves and the world around them. They are analytical thinkers who ask questions, gather evidence, and draw conclusions in fair and equitable ways. They use their inquiries to discern the root cause of issues and to seek ways of improving situations. Rising educators appreciate that the information they collect can support meaningful insights, whether it confirms or challenges their understanding.*

## KNOW, UNDERSTAND, AND PRACTICE

### ***Acquiring Assessment Literacy***

Rising educators know that teachers select, create, modify, and administer a broad range of assessments. They know teachers measure learning based on curricular goals and objectives as well as the diverse needs of students. They also understand that formal and informal assessments are used in different contexts for different purposes: the diagnostic, formative, or summative measurement of knowledge, skills, and abilities. Rising educators realize that all assessments should be developed and interpreted in a fair, ethical, and equitable manner, with modifications and accommodations made to meet students' cognitive, social, emotional, and physical needs. Based on this understanding, rising educators begin creating and using assessment materials to evaluate student achievement and growth in a variety of ways. After high school, they will extend their knowledge of how assessments should be constructed and administered to advance teaching and learning.

### ***Using Assessment to Inform Instruction***

Rising educators know that teachers use assessment to obtain information about student learning before, during, and after instruction. They understand that teachers view assessment as a step within a larger process that involves planning, teaching, assessing, reflecting, and adjusting to strengthen instructional practices and promote learning. To gain a full appreciation of what students know and can do, rising educators are innovative, administering creative, thought-provoking assessments that engage and motivate students while measuring their abilities. Making the best use of the data they attain, they know that teachers are strategic, examining assessment outcomes alongside other forms of information to plan activities that will advance their students' abilities. Based on this understanding, rising educators

participate in a range of assessment activities to support teaching and learning. They use exemplars to model performance expectations with students, create rubrics to evaluate student work, and reflect on assessment outcomes to help students meet their learning goals. After high school, rising educators will acquire greater experience with assessment. They will learn to integrate instructional and assessment practices skillfully so they can identify new possibilities and opportunities for students.


## ***Analyzing and Interpreting Data***

Rising educators know that teachers analyze and interpret assessment data to advance student learning. For instance, they study observational records to track student performance, examine work portfolios to monitor student development over time, and review data to determine the importance of patterns and trends. They are aware that accomplished teachers purposefully select and utilize a variety of data to plan, modify, or redirect instruction. Based on this understanding, rising educators ask questions and think about student growth as it is reflected within group or individual data. After high school, they will review assessment outcomes from a variety of sources to evaluate student progress, examine teaching practice, and maximize learning for all students.

## ***Collaborating with Stakeholders***

Rising educators know that collaboration is important for the successful implementation of assessment. They understand that teachers work with colleagues to select and create assessments and self-evaluations for students, to analyze assessment data, to reflect on learning outcomes, and to determine strategies for increasing student growth. Rising educators know that teachers work with families as well to ensure that students can be successful.

Together, they help prepare students for assessments, and they discuss outcomes and progress to advance student learning. Based on this understanding, rising educators participate in collaborative discussions about instruction and assessment. They speak with their peers and receive feedback from their mentors. They learn not only the benefits of utilizing assessments effectively, but also the advantages of considering multiple viewpoints carefully. After high school, rising educators will collaborate with others to empower students by helping them use assessments to take charge of their learning.



**RISING EDUCATORS KNOW THAT TEACHERS USE ASSESSMENT TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT STUDENT LEARNING BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER INSTRUCTION.**

## ***Reflecting on Assessment***

Rising educators reflect on the use of assessment to support learning in alignment with goals, objectives, and needs. They know that assessments, when employed ethically, benefit students and advance their learning. Rising educators examine their analysis of assessment data and contemplate its utility in the improvement of teaching and learning. They think in depth about their students and determine how to celebrate student success while they boost learning. Rising educators consider how they can make assessment outcomes as beneficial as possible by communicating them to students in a clear and timely manner. They scrutinize feedback from students and other stakeholders as well to gauge the equity, fairness, and quality of their assessments. Throughout their reflection, rising educators evaluate their assessment literacy, identifying strengths and weaknesses to improve their instruction and use of assessment. Rising educators realize that their effectiveness as teachers will have the greatest impact on student achievement.

## STANDARD VII

### ENGAGING IN REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

**Rising educators learn how reflective practice enables them to advance student learning and grow professionally.**

*Rising educators are thoughtful about the work they do and optimistic about the results. They continually explore ways to adapt and make improvements in themselves and the world around them. They are motivated to set goals and achieve them. As they gain experience and develop wisdom, they seek different viewpoints and ask for constructive feedback. They strive to understand their biases, aware that their personal perspectives will influence their actions and outlooks. Rising educators are critical and creative thinkers who are committed to helping other people.*

### KNOW, UNDERSTAND, AND PRACTICE

#### ***Developing a Reflective Mindset***

Rising educators know that reflection is a habit of mind embedded within a cycle that uses planning, instruction, assessment, and adjustment to enhance student learning. As they reflect, teachers engage in various activities to address the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development of students. Based on this understanding, rising educators cultivate a reflective mindset and take their first steps toward accomplished practice. After high school, their insights will become stronger as their reflection becomes more sustained, invigorating their practice at every turn. Reflection will require rising educators to internalize critical questions about their teaching. They will make overt efforts to understand the effect their work has on their students and colleagues. The insights gained from this reflection will help them improve their teaching practice and support their professional growth.


#### ***Reflecting to Support Learning***

Rising educators know that productive reflection requires careful judgment. To promote student success, teachers direct their attention and engage their efforts strategically. They draw on their growing knowledge of student interests, demeanors, and aspirations. They think critically about their students to develop their teaching skills and abilities. During this process, they use journals and other records to analyze their instruction, expanding their viewpoints by watching videos of themselves teaching, observing other educators at work, and engaging in dialogue with peers and mentors. Rising educators understand that teachers evaluate their beliefs and biases throughout their reflection, challenging themselves constantly to assess and adjust their practice. They witness teachers establishing

meaningful goals and target opportunities that will help them grow professionally and advance student learning. Based on this understanding, rising educators work with other teachers to reflect on student needs and address them. After high school, they will continue to reflect on their practice, collaborating with stakeholders to support all aspects of student development.

## ***Reflecting with Purpose***

Rising educators learn to think about all aspects of reflection. They evaluate the questions they must ask themselves about their students and practice. They consider the time they must take to examine their thoughts carefully. They contemplate the mindset they must develop to be open and honest with themselves. Reflection is an intentional and continuous act, requiring discipline and dedication. It allows teachers to determine what is meaningful and why, and it thus shapes their sense of identity.



**THEY DRAW ON THEIR GROWING KNOWLEDGE OF STUDENT INTERESTS, DEMEANORS, AND ASPIRATIONS. THEY THINK CRITICALLY ABOUT THEIR STUDENTS TO DEVELOP THEIR TEACHING SKILLS AND ABILITIES.**

Rising educators understand that teachers are busy professionals and could easily neglect reflection if they are not mindful. But they realize that teachers would lose crucial opportunities to learn about their students and improve their practice if they did so. They know that accomplished teachers are purposeful and deliberate about their reflection. They take the time and create the space to reflect because they value the power of their thoughts and actions. Reflection is the hallmark of accomplished teaching practice. Rising educators commit themselves to reflection because they want to develop this strength within themselves. They commit themselves to reflection because they envision something greater for themselves and their students.

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*Advance CTE*

*Alliance for Excellent Education*

*American Association of Colleges for  
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*American Federation of Teachers*

*American School Counselor Association*

*Association for Career and Technical Education*

*The College Board*

*Council of Chief State School Officers*

*Deans for Impact*

*Digital Promise*

*Harvard Graduate School of Education*

*Learning Forward*

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*National Council on Teacher Quality*

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*National Network of State Teachers of the Year*

*Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning  
and Equity*

*Teach Plus*

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Technical, and Adult Education*

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## About Educators Rising

Educators Rising — powered by PDK International — is transforming how America develops aspiring teachers. Starting with high school students, we provide passionate young people with hands-on teaching experience, sustain their interest in the profession, and help them cultivate the skills they need to be successful educators. The result is a pipeline of accomplished teachers who are positioned to make a lasting difference — not only in the lives of their students, but also in the field of teaching more broadly.

Launched in 2015, Educators Rising cultivates highly skilled educators by guiding young people on a path to becoming accomplished teachers, beginning in high school and extending through college and into the profession. As a free national network and Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO), Educators Rising supports over 13,000 secondary students exploring teaching in school-based programs under the wings of accomplished teacher leaders. Forty-nine percent are students of color.

Students who join Educators Rising participate not just in school-based programs to explore teaching, but also in local, state, and national activities and events. Through the EdRising Virtual Campus, a dynamic online community, students and teachers leading the high school courses can access resources and learning opportunities that deepen and expand their school-based programs. They are part of a movement proclaiming: “There’s power in teaching.” Learn more at [educatorsrising.org](http://educatorsrising.org).

## About NEA

The National Education Association ([www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org)) the nation’s largest professional employee organization, is committed to advancing the cause of public education. Representing 3 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, retired educators and students preparing to become teachers, NEA’s 3 million members work at every level of education — from pre-school to university graduate programs. With affiliate organizations in every state and in more than 14,000 communities across the United States. NEA has a long, proud history of advocating for America’s educators, children, and public schools. NEA has worked uncompromisingly to further the interests of educators and advocate for human, civil, and economic rights for all.

## About the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

The founding mission of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards ([www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org)) is to advance the quality of teaching and learning by: (1) maintaining high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do; (2) providing a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet these standards; and (3) advocating related education reforms to integrate National Board Certification in American education and to capitalize on the expertise of National Board Certified Teachers. Recognized as the “gold standard” in teacher certification, the National Board believes higher standards for teachers means better learning for students.





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