

Possible Guiding Questions: Conversations Between Principals and Teachers

ROLE: Special Education – Emotional Support

This document utilizes the components within the Danielson Framework for Teaching to provide possible guiding questions for conversations that occur between a principal and teacher. Note that a few of the guiding questions also provide linkages to the Framework for Leadership in order to establish a level of connectedness among the two frameworks.

Please note: The questions identified here are provided to spur some thoughts as to the individual conversations that occur between a principal and teacher. The actual conversations that occur should be determined locally. It is not mandatory to use these questions, nor should they be viewed as a “checklist” to be followed. They are provided solely as a resource.

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

1a: Demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you routinely collect data to monitor student progress academically and how behavioral needs impact learning? *Data collected and recorded daily of student behavior in classroom and other school areas. Documentation of trends in behavior and awareness on how this impacts academic progress. Student self – collection of data and ownership of data.*
- How does the data collected impact your daily instruction (data driven instruction)? *Instruction offered in multiple modalities and differentiated levels based on data collected by teachers and students. Behavioral instruction provided on relational skill development and self – regulation skills.*
- How does your instruction lead to gains in self – esteem or self – actualization? *Student demonstration of self – monitoring and self – regulatory behavior. Data collection on changes in student behavior.*
- What adaptations do you provide based on the students emotional and behavioral needs? *Changes in classroom time allotment, limited unstructured time, changes in academic theme to engage students, materials reflect students’ prior knowledge.*
- Describe how your students’ emotional and behavioral needs impact your daily lesson planning. *Materials designed to engage students and provide a link to students’ prior knowledge. Time allotments based on student attention span and rate of learning to encourage an increase of positive behavior.*
- Specifically, how do your lessons / instruction lead to positive behavioral growth that impacts academic learning? *Increased time on task, increase ability to self – monitor and self- regulate. Decreased negative outbursts.*

1b: Demonstrating knowledge of students

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What diagnoses apply to your students and what are significant characteristics of these classifications? *Knowledge of both classifications from IEP’s (example: other health impaired, autism, emotional disorder) and from mental health professionals (example: bipolar, ADHD, Autism, Schizophrenic). Able to describe significant characteristics of student’s diagnosis and how that impacts the classroom.*

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- What are some strategies you utilize to promote continued engagement of students in the academic lesson? *Lack of unstructured time, proactive strategies to maintain student engagement, instruction on appropriate level based on data collected.*
- Describe your positive behavioral support plan utilized in your classroom. *Positive rewards, consistent application of rewards and consequences, implemented in timely manner, implement at all times.*
- How are student self – monitoring skills encouraged and facilitated in your classroom? *Set guidelines for student self –monitoring, students are engaged in consistent self – monitoring, students are guided with reflection on their own behavior.*
- How does your instruction and behavioral support plan consider the students’ background, culture and emotional/ behavioral needs? *Instruction and behavioral support plans consider student cultural background, socio – economic levels, and behavioral needs.*
- What contact (type, frequency) do you maintain with students’ parents/ guardians? *Prompt behavioral feedback provided to students, method of communication based on student needs. Parents provided with daily feedback on behavioral and academic needs. Communication is clear, easy to comprehend and information provided is measurable.*

Ic: Setting instructional outcomes

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you utilize student FBAs, IEPs and PA Common Core standards to develop behavioral and academic instruction and outcomes? *Goals and recommendations from student FBAs and IEPs are reflected in daily lesson plans. Outcomes are based on the student needs listed in IEP and FBA. Instruction and outcomes are based on PA Common Core standards with reflection of student individualized IEP and FBA plans.*
- Describe how you adjust expected outcomes. *Lesson outcomes are revised based on data collected along with individual strengths and needs as documented in IEPs and FBA plans.*
- How does your program facilitate students’ development of generalized appropriate behavioral skills and behavioral self – regulation skills? *Students are taught and provided with opportunities to practice skills across a variety of settings and locations. Students are provided with guidance and monitoring/ facilitation of self- monitoring skills and*

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progress is tracked and documented with guidance from teacher.

1d: Demonstrating knowledge of resources

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Describe how you collaborate with therapeutic support staff, counselors, parents/guardians and community supports to develop activities. *Teacher is aware of other supports in the students' life. Teacher communicates regularly with other supports and both provide and receive information from these supports.*
- What information do you provide to students and parents about resources in your school and community? *Teacher is aware of resources available to students and their families in the community and provides information/ referral as appropriate.*
- What resources do you utilize to increase your knowledge and skills for working with students with emotional/ behavioral disabilities? *Teacher seeks outside trainings to increase knowledge of working with students with emotional and behavioral disorders. Teacher collects and utilizes a variety of resources from outside sources to increase instructional and behavioral outcomes of students.*

1e: Designing coherent instruction

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How does your positive behavioral support plan promote student engagement in your lessons? *Incentives/ rewards for engagement, student self –monitoring of engagement, lesson timing and content based on student needs and abilities.*
- What adaptations have been made to meet the emotional and behavioral needs of your students? *Adjusted lesson timing, sequence, and materials based on student needs and strengths.*
- How do your plans include student self -monitoring of behavior and engagement? *Instruction and facilitation of student self – monitoring. Review of results and instruction provided based on student data collection with teacher back up. Guidance of correct method of data collection.*
- What methods are included in your instruction that promote positive behavior and self-regulation during lessons? *Variety of learning modalities, consistent positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior, redirection of negative behavior, direct*

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instruction in self – regulation and self- monitoring.

If: Designing student assessment

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Describe how you and your students collect data on behavioral and emotional gains or needs. *Classroom and individual student behavioral tracking system. Self- monitoring of behavior by students, graphed data, consistent and measurable data.*
- How does the behavioral data you and your students collect impact you lesson plans and classroom behavioral management plan? *Consistent and measurable data pre and post intervention and lesson. Changes made to lesson/ classroom behavioral plan when behavioral data demonstrates increased behavioral/ emotional needs.*
- How does the data collected support IEP goals and FBA data? Data/ graphs are present in IEP and FBAs. *Data collected reflects goals listed in individual students IEPs.*
- How do you provide timely feedback to students and parents on their behavioral and emotional progress and how this is impacting their academic learning? *Data is provided in timely fashion to both students and family. This may be through a variety of means (phone, note, e-mail, etc). IEP updates are complete and based on data collected from school behavior.*
- What outside assessments do you utilize to increase your knowledge of students' behavioral and emotional needs? *Assessments utilized in evaluation reports, psychological reports, psychiatric reports, etc.*

Domain 2: The Classroom Environment

2a: Creating an environment of respect and rapport

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What factors in your students' backgrounds do you feel impact their behavior in the classroom? *Family structure (females not respected in home so not respected in school, education is a waste of time), socio-economic level (I don't know if I am going to have dinner tonight so I am more worried about that than learning about math facts), cultural heritage (it is impolite to look someone in the eye, attire, attitude towards different genders).*
- How does your knowledge of the students' and parents' background impact your interactions with students and family members? *Speaking with respect, acknowledging that just because beliefs are different does not make them wrong, honoring student and parents requests and traditions, empowering students to treat each other with respect and facilitates appropriate interactions based on your knowledge of the students' culture and background.*
- How do you adapt your instruction and positive classroom behavioral system? *Incentives and consequences are based on student needs and respect their traditions and culture (example – a student who is taught to show respect by not looking in someone's eyes would not be demanded to look in the teacher's eyes to show they are paying attention; rewards are based on student interests and activities that are approved by parents).*

2b: Establishing a culture for learning

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you adjust your classroom expectations based on the emotional and behavioral needs of your students? *Structured, positive reinforcement, flexibility, and consistency of expectations, consequences and reinforcement.*
- What behavioral expectations do you have in your classroom to facilitate a positive learning experience? *Expectations of respect of others, lack of physical and verbal aggression, engagement, safety, in seat/ assigned area, calling out, competition of work*
- How do you share behavioral expectations with students? Behavioral expectations should be posted, reviewed and enforced consistently. *Questions about expectations should be clearly explained.*
- How are behavioral expectations implemented and reinforced in your classroom?

Domain 2: The Classroom Environment

Behavioral expectations should be implemented and reinforced consistently. Students should be engaged in self-monitoring and self-regulation of their own behavior as facilitated and monitored by teacher.

2c: Managing classroom procedures

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What is your classroom management plan? *Teacher should be able to detail a clear and consistent classroom management plan with clear and consistent expectations, rewards and consequences. Classroom management plan (including expectations, rewards and consequences) should be appropriate for age and ability of students in classroom. (Example- elementary students may not be able to write a three page paper when they call out in class).*
- How do you handle transitions between activities and areas? *Procedures for transitions between activities and areas are clearly outlined and followed consistently. Students are involved in self-monitoring of behavior during transitions. (Example: When lining up students to go to a different class, students put materials away, push in their chairs and walk to the line rather than leaving materials out, running to the door, pushing others out of way.)*
- What type of environment is provided in the classroom? *The environment should be a physically and emotionally safe environment where students feel respected and safe. Teacher should be proactive in preventing a safe and supportive environment in the classroom. Unsafe behavior is dealt with immediately by teacher in a manner consistent with their training and school regulations.*

2d: Managing student behavior

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Describe your positive behavior management plan. *Behavior management plan should emphasis positive and not utilize negative consequences to manage behavior. Positive behavior interventions should be used to maintain positive behavior. Plan should be proactive in preventing negative behavior but have plans in place to deal with inappropriate actions. Students should have collaborated in the development of the plan and be engaged in self-monitoring and regulation.*

Domain 2: The Classroom Environment

2e: Organizing physical space

- How does your positive behavior management plan include active student engagement? *Plan should include active student self – monitoring of their own engagement. Students should collaborate for incentives and expectations.*
- What would you do if a student had a physically unsafe behavior? *Teacher should be able to detail appropriate methods for handling physically unsafe behavior based on their school regulations and their personal training/ certifications (example: Safe Crisis Management, Crisis Prevention Institute, Quality Behavioral Solutions).*
- What methods can you use to de-escalate a crisis in your classroom? *Calm voice, distraction, planned ignoring, quiet corner, sensory activities, redirection, etc.*

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How does the classroom take student needs into consideration? *Quiet area, safe route of egress for students when someone becomes aggressive, calming materials, ability to view all areas of room.*
- How have students contributed to the classroom design? *Student work is displayed in classroom; students have discussed seating arrangements/ free time areas.*
- Does the classroom environment match the class population? *Classroom materials match age and cultural needs of students. Classroom materials that may be dangerous are placed out of easy student reach (example: if you have a student who throws items, scissors are placed in a cabinet).*

Domain 3: Instruction

3a: Communicating with students

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you communicate behavioral expectations to parents and students? *Behavioral expectations are posted in classroom and sent home with students. Behavioral expectations are reviewed frequently with students. When questions about behavioral expectations arise, they are dealt with in a calm and professional manner.*
- What changes do you make in your instructional presentation to meet students' behavioral and academic needs? *This may apply to pacing, speed of instruction, frequent reviews due to missed areas from behavioral outbursts. This should match items documented in students' IEPs.*
- How do you deal with gaps in student learning due to instruction missed during to behavioral issues? *Frequent review, starting students at their ability level, pre and post assessment, review of gaps documented on assessments.*
- How do you respond to student attempts at communication? *Teachers should respond in a warm and welcoming manner. Students should be comfortable with approaching teachers with questions and concerns. Time should be made to address student needs.*

3b: Using questioning and discussion techniques

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you facilitate classroom discussions? *Discussions are student led with guidance and instruction provided by the teacher to make this possible. Students are encouraged to follow discussion expectations including taking turns and allowing others to have different opinions.*
- How do you guide students in discussing their own behaviors and that of their fellow students? *Students are encouraged and taught necessary skills to discuss and reflect on their own behavior and how it impacts others. The teacher and other students guide that student in discussing how they can change their behavior.*
- What techniques do you use when dealing with a student with emotional and behavioral needs who is growing agitated? *Teacher uses a non-confrontational, questioning approach that allows students to discuss their own behavior, why they need to change it and provides the support needed to accomplish this. Teacher refrains from directives and negative responses that are disrespectful and degrade students.*

Domain 3: Instruction

3c: Engaging students in learning

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you promote student self- regulation and self- monitoring of engaged behavior? *Teacher should have a consistent classroom structure where they instruct students on what active engagement looks like. They instruct students on how to self -monitor their own engagement.*
- What would your response be if a negative behavior occurred in the classroom? *Teacher should respond calmly and provide clear direction to all students for expected behavior to minimize the disruption and promote continued engagement. (Example: If a student becomes physically aggressive, the class will be provided with clear directions on how to exit to a safe area maintaining the safety of all individuals. The teacher will provide staff coverage of both the student in crisis and the other students, being aware of their emotional/ behavioral reactions to the outburst.)*
- How do you adapt your instruction to meet the emotional and behavioral needs of your students? *Teacher may provide shorter, more concise lessons on a topic with frequent reviews of the concepts. Teacher will provide a variety of learning modalities to meet the emotional and behavioral needs of the students. Teacher may provide structured breaks between instruction to maintain focus.*

3d: Using assessment in instruction

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Explain your plan to have students self -assess and correct their own behavior. *Students' self- monitoring methods (example a chart to mark down incidents of calling out on student desk).*
- How do you assess and track student behavior? *Student behavioral data should be assessed and tracked daily and in a measurable not subjective manner. (example: teacher should not track data as “he seemed really off task” rather they should be able to say “he needed more than three reminders for five out of six periods in order to complete his work”.*
- What types of changes have you made in your instruction and classroom management procedures due to the assessments of student behavior you have made? *Changes may*

Domain 3: Instruction

3e: Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness

have been made in pace, modality, different instruction strategies.

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What type of adjustments have you made to the lesson to accommodate students emotional and behavioral needs? *Teacher has made changes in pacing to meet students attention and behavioral needs. Lessons are based on areas that students are interested in (example: a math lesson works on adding number of dinosaurs).*
- How do you empower students to develop effective strategies for self- management? *Instruction is provided on how to self- monitor, students are coached in self- management skills and recognized for realistic self- assessment.*
- What is your reaction when faced with challenging or disruptive student behavior? *The teacher consistently implements a positive behavior plan individualized for each student's emotional and behavioral needs. The teacher seeks out additional strategies when needed to deal with challenging behavior. The teacher remains calm and follows approved school and training (Crisis Prevention Institute, Quality Behavioral Solutions, etc) guidelines. Teacher consistently empowers students to recognize positive and negative consequences to their behavior and make positive behavioral choices.*

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

4a: Reflecting on teacher and student learning

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How are your lessons adapted to meet the individualized needs of a student with emotional and behavioral needs? *Teacher is aware of lessons and activities that will trigger behavioral or emotional challenges. Teacher makes provisions to deal with potential behavioral outbursts.*
- What data is being utilized to influence your instruction plans? *Teacher tracks and adapts lessons to meet individual student behavioral and emotional needs. Lessons teach students skills necessary to improved behavioral and emotional skills and self-monitoring.*
- How do you incorporate student feedback into future lesson plans? *Teacher has students track task performance and emotional stress and identifies areas that were positive and or problematic in past lessons. Teacher reviews lessons with students and requests feedback.*

4b: System for managing students' data

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What is your classroom behavior monitoring system and how does it track student behavior in your classroom? *A behavior monitoring system is implemented consistently and includes active student self-monitoring. Data collected is available in a manner that promotes student self-assessment and self-regulation. Collected data is objective and measurable.*
- Provide documentation of IEPs and FBAs. *Teacher should be able to produce IEPs and FBAs from a secure location and discuss how these impact lesson design and presentation. IEPs and FBAs should be complete and prove an accurate view of students' abilities and needs.*

4c: Communication with Families

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you communicate with parents/ guardians? *Teachers communicate daily with parents about any positive or negative behavior and how they are impacting academic progress. Communication should be via a variety of methods including notes, phone calls, e-mail, ect. Communication should be in a professional, respectful manner and include positive solutions to challenging behaviors.*

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

4d: Participating in a professional community

- How do you involve students in the communication process? *Students are aware of notes sent to parents and are encouraged to share successes and challenges with parents. Students use family communications as part of basis for realistic and accurate self-assessment.*

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you participate in your professional community? *May include membership in professional organizations (example: Pennsylvania Council for Exceptional Children, Special Olympics, Association of School Psychologists',), participates in classes, workshops, activities to increase knowledge and skills in dealing with students with emotional and behavioral needs.*
- How do you act as a resource for your school and colleagues in the area of behavioral management? *Provides an on- going discussion of positive behavioral management solutions, provides trainings in field of emotional and behavioral management, Participates in committees that identify school wide initiatives to promote a positive behavioral school climate.*

4e: Growing and developing professionally

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What goals have you identified to continue your professional growth in the emotional and behavioral classroom? *Teacher has identified a course of continuing professional studies that will promote growth in ability to manage emotional and behavioral management skills. Teacher is aware of community resources that can be adapted to promoting appropriate student behavior (Community Gardening Club, Local Historical Societies, Guest speakers from various fields to come and present).*
- How do you share your knowledge and experience working with students' with emotional and behavioral needs? *Teacher has regular consultation with colleagues from all fields to better meet students' emotional and behavioral needs. Teacher presents workshops for colleagues on best practices in managing students' emotional and behavioral needs. Teacher sits on school wide committees designed to support appropriate student behavior. Teacher serves as a resource to help colleagues improve their classroom management*

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

4f: Showing professionalism

skills.

- What input (sources) do you seek to help you develop your professional skills? *Attending related conventions (Pennsylvania Association for Council for Exceptional Children, Council for Exceptional Children Behavioral Disorders), read related journal articles, college classes, discussions with colleagues and other professionals in the field of emotional and behavioral needs.*

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you perceive that you are seen by the school community? *Teacher should be sought out by students, colleagues, and parents for guidance during times of emotional and behavioral needs. Teacher should be seen as a resource for colleagues, the community and students. Teacher is comfortable asking colleagues and supervisors for suggestions and recommendations to improve their skills.*
- How do you advocate for the needs of your students? *Teacher is able to offer practical, positive suggestions to colleagues for managing the emotional and behavioral needs of their students. Teacher is knowledgeable of outside services that could benefit the students and colleagues (example: Doandlearn.gov; Council for Exceptional Children Publications, Therapeutic Support Services, Mental Health/ Mental Retardation Services).*
- Discuss your compliance with school and state regulations. *Teacher has all IEPs, FBAs and any other required paperwork completed accurately. Teacher has read chapter 14 of the Pennsylvania School Code. Teacher follows appropriate guidelines for any physical interventions including appropriate training (Crisis Prevention and Intervention, Quality Behavior Solutions, Safe Crisis Solutions and Management, etc) and documentation.*