



Understandings Continuum 2018

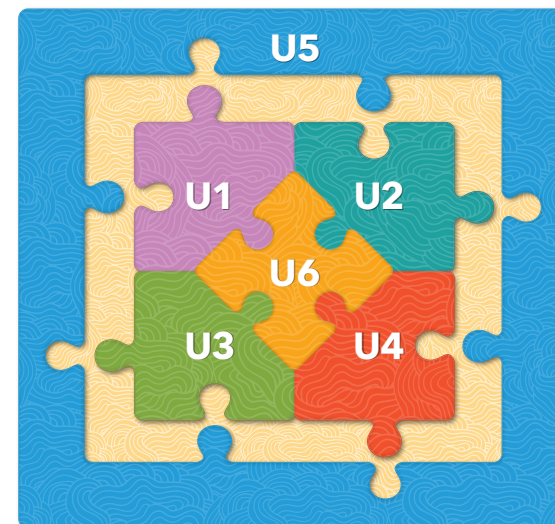
Since the transition to the Common Core Standards, the LBUSD Understandings have been used to describe effective classroom practices and elements of pedagogy desired across all LBUSD classrooms. The *Understandings Continuum* is a tool that helps further define these Understandings. While it is not a tool that captures every classroom practice in an LBUSD teacher's toolkit, it is an overarching vision of what we want classroom instruction to look like across our schools.

In their first iteration, the Understandings were presented in an evidence guide format, engaging teachers and leaders in the process of describing both continuing and new methodologies for helping students to meet the standards. As LBUSD teachers' and leaders' knowledge of high quality classroom practices and pedagogy

increased, there was a need for the Understandings to evolve. The current Understandings reflect knowledge that is worth understanding: enduring, at the heart of instruction, cause reflection and promote engagement for all who interact with learning and teaching.

The 2018 *Understandings Continuum* is intended to provide teachers and leaders with a resource for planning high quality instruction, helping them to integrate key teacher practices as part of daily instruction, build collective efficacy, promote caring relationships with students and to inspire reflection throughout the instructional process. Specifically, it provides a starting point and outlines a progression of the implementation of these key practices. This *Continuum* was developed with teachers and leaders, for teachers and leaders.

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What the *Continuum* is...

- ◆ a planning and reflection tool
- ◆ a tool for use across content areas
- ◆ a source for informing feedback and professional development
- ◆ a tool to engage students in thinking about themselves as learners (as age appropriate)

What the *Continuum* is not...

- ◆ a checklist
- ◆ an exhaustive list of effective instructional practice
- ◆ a tool for evaluating each Understanding in isolation
- ◆ an evaluation document



A thorough understanding of standards provides a foundation for high quality differentiated instruction that results in all students meeting college and career readiness expectations through the Linked Learning approach.

Teacher Practice: Delivers standards aligned instruction

Step 1

- ◆ Aligns instruction to the grade level/course content standards
- ◆ Aligns the learning goal/intention and success criteria to the level of rigor indicated by the standards
- ◆ Supports literacy development by including reading, writing, speaking and listening with content instruction

Step 2

- ◆ Supports content using ELD Standards and Literacy Standards
- ◆ Sequences lessons to build the knowledge and skills necessary that lead to key understandings
- ◆ Facilitates learning by using essential or guiding questions and/or prompts

Step 3

- ◆ Targets a set of content standards integrated with ELD and Literacy Standards
- ◆ Establishes relevance by helping all students make connections in order to access the critical content

Teacher Practice: Differentiates instruction for ALL learners

Step 1

- ◆ Pre-assesses students to determine readiness and/or interest
- ◆ Adjusts content, process, product or affect/learning environment by allowing student choice or using flexible grouping
- ◆ Uses district-adopted and other appropriate resources for scaffolds and extensions

Step 2

- ◆ Incorporates information from various types of assessments (academic and social-emotional)
- ◆ Monitors and responds to students in the moment by providing individualized scaffolds or extensions
- ◆ Utilizes collaboratively developed strategies and resources

Step 3

- ◆ Integrates learner profile (academic and social-emotional) to provide, ongoing differentiation of content, process, product, and/or affect/learning environment
- ◆ Implements individualized supports and interventions co-developed with colleagues reflective of student needs and input

Teacher Practice: Integrates career awareness (K - 5), career exploration (6 - 8), or career preparation (9 - 12)

Step 1

- ◆ Provides students with opportunities to apply academics to authentic real-world contexts
- ◆ Makes explicit connections across disciplines

Step 2

- ◆ Uses outside professionals and resources to enhance academic learning and ground that learning in a real-world context
- ◆ Explicitly teaches and integrates critical employability skills identified by industry (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, innovation, adaptability)

Step 3

- ◆ Integrates standards-based, complex and extended projects, or problem-based learning (K-8) aligned to the Pathway theme (9-12)
- ◆ Uses student learning outcomes to design short-term and long-term assignments that are aligned to appropriate career fields



Providing all learners with cognitively demanding tasks and complex text with the goal of making meaning is essential in order for students to build conceptual understanding of content and transfer their learning to new contexts.

Teacher Practice: Provides cognitively demanding tasks and complex texts for all learners

Step 1

- ◆ Provides engaging, inquiry-based learning opportunities that require problem solving, reasoning and/or argumentation
- ◆ Anticipates content or processes that may cause students to struggle and provides support for a range of learners without removing the challenge

Step 2

- ◆ Provides students with opportunities to use their own reasoning, strategies and methods for engaging with texts or tasks
- ◆ Adapts tasks to provide appropriate challenge for a range of learners by using scaffolds or increasing the intellectual rigor

Step 3

- ◆ Provides inquiry-based learning opportunities that require exploration into the core ideas of a discipline or problems authentic to the real world
- ◆ Encourages students to generate questions and tasks worthy of inquiry
- ◆ Requires students to use appropriate discipline-specific methodology

Teacher Practice: Builds conceptual understanding

Step 1

- ◆ Supports and honors students' home language and prior knowledge in making connections from home and/or community to academic learning at school
- ◆ Links new content, procedures, and skills to larger, more enduring concepts
- ◆ Asks students to explain their thinking and justify their reasoning

Step 2

- ◆ Anticipates and utilizes questions, cues, and/or prompts to support students as they deepen their understanding
- ◆ Provides opportunities for students to evaluate and revise thinking at different points in the learning, including discussions about mistakes, misconceptions, and struggles

Step 3

- ◆ Engages students in the development, analysis, and evaluation of multiple pathways and solutions to address unclear problems or questions
- ◆ Provides opportunities for students to critique the reasoning and counter-arguments of others

Teacher Practice: Provides time and opportunity for students to transfer learning to new contexts

Step 1

- ◆ Selects tasks that are relevant to students and require independent application of new knowledge and skills to novel situations or new real-world contexts (not simply recognition or recall)

Step 2

- ◆ Provides on-going opportunities for students to transfer their learning between disciplines to a real-world problem

Step 3

- ◆ Requires the strategic use of academic understanding, knowledge, and skills along with good judgment, self regulation, and persistence
- ◆ Encourages students to use metacognition to analyze problems or contexts in order to select and revise solutions



Orchestrating opportunities for technical and academic discourse including collaborative conversations allows students to develop a deeper understanding of content and support a point of view in varied contexts.

Teacher Practice: Creates a collaborative classroom culture where all student voices are valued

Step 1

- ◆ Provides a safe place for ALL students to share their ideas
- ◆ Establishes norms, structures and routines
- ◆ Provides engaging questions and tasks
- ◆ Engages students in team building activities

Step 2

- ◆ Groups students strategically to allow for equitable and accountable discourse
- ◆ Constructs questions and discussion prompts worthy of collaboration
- ◆ Provides appropriate linguistic support

Step 3

- ◆ Helps students value discourse as a way to learn
- ◆ Integrates student led discourse daily and authentically to support learning
- ◆ Encourages students to adjust communication to address varied contexts/audience

Teacher Practice: Provides opportunities for students to communicate ideas and support a point of view

Step 1

- ◆ Uses discourse to support standards and lesson purpose
- ◆ Builds content knowledge and prepares students for discourse
- ◆ Provides opportunities for students to share, clarify, and paraphrase ideas

Step 2

- ◆ Aligns the length and frequency of the discourse to the purpose and context of the lesson
- ◆ Provides opportunities for students to elaborate using examples, evidence, and reasoning to logically ground or strengthen complex ideas

Step 3

- ◆ Provides opportunities to critique the evidence and reasoning of others
- ◆ Provides opportunities for argumentation or discourse with multiple perspectives
- ◆ Uses available technology to enhance collaboration

Teacher Practice: Listens carefully to determine students' conceptual understanding of content

Step 1

- ◆ Checks for participation of ALL students
- ◆ Elicits evidence of application of conversational skills (e.g., turn-taking, asking for clarification, body language)
- ◆ Keeps students on topic

Step 2

- ◆ Elicits evidence of student learning of content and understanding of complex concepts and thinking skills
- ◆ Identifies and selects student responses for whole group sharing

Step 3

- ◆ Elicits evidence of multiple perspectives, points of view and connections
- ◆ Sequences responses strategically for small or whole group discussion



The strategic planning and consistent use of formative assessment strategies allow teachers and students to collect evidence about where students are and to determine immediate next steps.

Teacher Practice: Clarifies and shares learning intentions and success criteria

Step 1

- ◆ Establishes clear learning intentions and success criteria
- ◆ Shares learning intentions and success criteria with students

Step 2

- ◆ Explains how learning intentions fit within the learning progression
- ◆ Refers to learning intentions and success criteria throughout the lesson

Step 3

- ◆ Discusses quality work with students
- ◆ Provides students with samples of quality work
- ◆ Co-constructs success criteria with students

Teacher Practice: Elicits evidence of student learning

Step 1

- ◆ Aligns tasks, discussions, and activities to the learning intention and success criteria
- ◆ Provides think time after posing questions to allow all students an opportunity to respond
- ◆ Uses a variety of techniques (beyond raised hands) to elicit evidence of learning throughout the lesson

Step 2

- ◆ Anticipates and prepares responses for possible student outcomes
- ◆ Elicits evidence aligned to the learning intention and success criteria
- ◆ Gathers evidence of what every student understands at strategic points during instruction

Step 3

- ◆ Asks questions that make evidence of student learning more visible
- ◆ Provides students opportunities to peer and self-assess throughout the lesson
- ◆ Uses available technology to elicit evidence of student learning in real time

Teacher Practice: Acts on evidence to move learning forward

Step 1

- ◆ Provides specific feedback related to the learning intention and success criteria
- ◆ Provides feedback during the learning
- ◆ Provides time in class to act on the feedback

Step 2

- ◆ Provides feedback that causes student thinking
- ◆ Limits corrective feedback to what students can act on
- ◆ Provides students opportunities to look at anonymous work and comment on it

Step 3

- ◆ Provides students opportunities to give feedback to one another - both positive comments and suggestions
- ◆ Provides students opportunities to self-assess using success criteria

Effective instructional teams (any team that meets regularly for the purpose of learning together to increase student achievement) embody a culture of collective efficacy leading to a focus on improving common instructional practice resulting in increased student achievement for all.

Team Practice: Establishes the conditions for collaborative learning teams

Step 1

- ◆ Establishes a collaborative compact focusing on building relationships that encourage honesty, respect, vulnerability, and trust
- ◆ Initiates collegial discussions using site data and/or relevant research
- ◆ Tests a variety of collaborative protocols and/or structures to help move the learning forward

Step 2

- ◆ Adheres to a collaborative compact while sharing student evidence, interpreting results, discussing ideas, and revising action plans with colleagues
- ◆ Engages in collegial discussion grounded in data and research to promote actionable change
- ◆ Uses adopted collaborative protocols and structures consistently

Step 3

- ◆ Advances collaborative growth by problem-solving, acknowledging conflict, appreciating members' expertise, admitting challenges, and seeking help from others
- ◆ Schedules regular opportunities for collegial discussion to reflect and move instructional practices across the school
- ◆ Adapts collaborative protocols and structures to support instructional decision-making

Team Practice: Engages in cycles of team learning (analyze data, develop shared goals, learn, implement, reflect)

Step 1

- ◆ Analyzes one form of data to create a learning goal for both students and teachers that somewhat aligns to site and/or district priorities
- ◆ Acquires new knowledge or skills tied to the learning goal, with varied levels of participation from team members
- ◆ Experiments with new knowledge and skills through planning of instruction and assessment for own classroom
- ◆ Reflects on initial attempts to incorporate new knowledge and skills to identify further learning needed to reach goals

Step 2

- ◆ Begins to use multiple forms of student data to develop learning goals for both students and teachers that align to site and district priorities
- ◆ Practices, individually and collaboratively, new knowledge and skills that are tied to learning goals, with all team members taking some part in the learning process
- ◆ Shares individual plans for instruction and assessment based on new knowledge and skills; invites support and feedback to refine new practices
- ◆ Reflects on both successful practices and/or further learning needs aligned to goals, using one or more pieces of evidence

Step 3

- ◆ Uses multiple forms of student data to analyze trends and prioritizes common learning goals for students, as well as personalized learning goals for teachers, all aligned to site and district priorities
- ◆ Implements, both individually and collaboratively, the learning of new knowledge and skills, tied directly to learning goals
- ◆ Co-constructs plans for common instruction and assessment based on implementation of acquired learnings; provides support and feedback regularly
- ◆ Monitors and adjusts implementation, using several forms of evidence, to advance to the next stage of the learning cycle or revisit previous stages, with successful practices being scaled school-wide and beyond

Team Practice: Develops a shared belief that through collective action, student outcomes will be positively influenced

Step 1

- ◆ Develops an interest in others' successes through vicarious experiences (e.g. site visits, watching video, networking, or professional reading) generating expectations of achieving similar results
- ◆ Attempts new instructional practices, building a greater sense of self-efficacy, with each incremental success
- ◆ Makes purposeful instructional decisions to ensure that all students in the individual teacher's classroom are successful
- ◆ Engages in emerging conversations with colleagues around identified goals and/or gaps in student achievement

Step 2

- ◆ Fosters a supportive team dynamic by routinely sharing instructional materials, methods, and ideas to replicate success
- ◆ Broadens the notion that collective teacher action (knowledge, skills, effort) directly impacts student achievement
- ◆ Develops and commits to instructional decisions with team(s) to support teaching and learning for all students

Step 3

- ◆ Increases interdependence around common priorities, transparency of practice, and the co-construction of curriculum as a result of continued success
- ◆ Attributes student success to collective team actions propelling the expectation that continued gains are attainable
- ◆ Embodies the belief that the collective responsibility for the success of all students lies with the team and, therefore, all members are accountable



Cultivating a classroom atmosphere, where teachers deliberately balance caring relationships with high expectations and supports for student success, provides a foundation for a safe learning environment that values diversity, trust, and respectful communication.

Foundational Belief(s) - All students and communities come with cultural and linguistic assets, and deserve to be treated with dignity, fairness, respect, and unconditional positive regard. In a warm-demanding learning environment, every student matters and needs to feel that they do. All students can learn and achieve at high levels, and we have a responsibility for their success. Confronting our own bias is important work for us to do if we are to truly set high expectations for all students.

Teacher Practice: Establishes a classroom climate of warm, caring relationships

Step 1

- ◆ Uses a process to get to know individual students, to build personal connections so students feel welcomed and included.
- ◆ Shows empathy and unconditional positive regard.
- ◆ Recognizes student growth and effort.
- ◆ Is present and approachable to students.

Step 2

- ◆ Demonstrates care and concern for students' lives outside of the classroom.
- ◆ Keeps commitments to students, maintaining appropriate confidentiality, and practicing fairness to build trust.
- ◆ Protects students' self-esteem and dignity.

Step 3

- ◆ Addresses students' needs flexibly and with sensitivity, based on the situation.
- ◆ Uses engagement strategies to make learning meaningful, and to help students connect with the teacher and each other.
- ◆ Ensures that the learning environment enhances learning and reflects student diversity.

Teacher Practice: Sets high expectations and provides necessary supports for student success

Step 1

- ◆ Communicates clearly to all students that learning is a non-negotiable expectation.
- ◆ Insists that all students participate and make attempts to engage in the learning.
- ◆ Encourages student effort and a growth mindset.
- ◆ Provides help when students are struggling.
- ◆ Informs parents/guardians when students are struggling.

Step 2

- ◆ Shares ownership of and takes personal responsibility for student outcomes.
- ◆ Remains accessible, available, and responsive to help students during and outside of class.
- ◆ Expects success from every student, and offers differentiated support to help all students achieve.
- ◆ Provides resources to parents/guardians to support their children at home.

Step 3

- ◆ Implements a variety of learning experiences to help diverse learners attain concepts.
- ◆ Provides actionable feedback and opportunities for students to revise and resubmit work to demonstrate growth toward mastery.
- ◆ Develops and implements systems of prevention, intervention, and extension to ensure that all students achieve.
- ◆ Creates opportunities for parents/guardians and/or the community to support student learning.

Teacher Practice: Creates a safe learning environment that values diversity, trust, and respectful communication

Step 1

- ◆ Acknowledges one's own cultural lens and understands its impact on instruction and student learning.
- ◆ Establishes, communicates, and implements clear and inclusive classroom norms and management system.
- ◆ Learns about the socio-cultural and linguistic assets that guide the values, beliefs, and behaviors of students, parents, and the community.
- ◆ Teaches personal coping skills, self-regulation, and self-reflection strategies to support students' emotional well-being.

Step 2

- ◆ Engages in regular peer and/or self-reflection to examine and address personal cultural bias.
- ◆ Co-constructs and implements classroom norms with students.
- ◆ Applies understanding of students' socio-cultural and linguistic assets, so as to better select instructional activities.
- ◆ Models and facilitates effective conflict resolution, self-regulation, and self-reflection skills with students.

Step 3

- ◆ Anticipates potential cultural bias in instruction and plans for student diversity.
- ◆ Revisits and revises classroom norms with students to build shared ownership and responsibility for learning environment.
- ◆ Contextualizes or connects content to students' socio-cultural and linguistic assets.
- ◆ Creates meaningful opportunities for students to self-reflect and collaboratively resolve conflicts as a learning community.