

DVUSD is committed to fostering student success through high-level instructional strategies designed to enhance engagement and learning. This year, teams across the district, including the PLC team, CIAS, and teacher mentors, participated in cross-collaboration to finalize the rollout of The DVUSD Way: High-Level Instructional Strategies for Engagement. For the 2025-2026 school year, these best practices will be implemented district-wide to support teachers in maximizing student engagement and achievement.

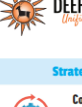


As DVUSD continues to prioritize student engagement and instructional excellence, these research-based, high-level strategies will play a crucial role in shaping effective teaching and learning. To facilitate the professional development of these strategies, dedicated sessions will be offered at the upcoming PLC Summit, ensuring that educators have the tools and training needed for seamless integration into their classrooms. By working together, we are building a culture of collaboration, clarity, and high expectations, ensuring that every student in DVUSD has the opportunity to thrive.



The DVUSD Way: High-Level Instructional Strategies for Engagement

Strategy	Practice
 Procedures and Routines	• Create connections with students • Post and teach school-wide and classroom Tier I behavior expectations • Communicate consistent daily routines • Teach essential social and academic behaviors • Use attention signals • Actively scan the room and adjust proximity to ensure student engagement
 Clarity of Learning Targets	• Post and communicate learning targets and connect to previous learning • Communicate the success criteria • Consistently reference learning targets • Ask students to summarize their understanding verbally or in writing throughout the lesson
 Vocabulary Instruction	• Provide explicit tiered instruction for general and content-specific words • Use visuals, student-friendly definitions, word banks, sentence frames, graphic organizers, and models • Provide opportunities for practice and repetition
 Modeling	• Provide step-by-step instructions • Incorporate effective modeling strategies: think-alouds, role-playing, peer modeling, etc. • Teach students how to use thinking strategies to plan for and monitor their learning
 Guided Practice with Formative Feedback	• Provide multiple opportunities to practice each new skill • Use formative checks for understanding (exit tickets, observations, checklists, think-pair-share, etc.) to assess student learning, provide feedback, and adjust instruction • Provide opportunities for students to engage in self-assessment to prompt student reflection and self-correction
 Collaborative Learning	• Clearly communicate the learning targets • Hold students accountable for group contributions and task expectations • Teach procedures for effective group work: communication, conflict resolution, and time management



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 Cognitive Interest Cues	• Hook student curiosity with questions, visuals, and personal connections • Connect interest cues to the learning outcome • Activate prior knowledge
 Student Goal Setting	• Create opportunities for students to set and monitor clear, specific learning goals • Graph assessments to hold students accountable and allow reflection on learning • Provide frequent and targeted progress feedback • Make connections between effort and progress
 High-Level Questions	• Design open-ended thought-provoking questions aligned to the learning target • Prompt students to offer explanations and make thinking visible • Provide think time when questioning students • Teach students to create and ask their own high-level questions • Encourage students to reinforce and rationalize their peers' thinking and explanations • Use follow-up questions for incorrect and correct answers
 Visualizations and Concrete Examples	• Embed visual representations: diagrams, graphic organizers, manipulatives, work examples, and simulations • Explain abstract principles with familiar, concrete examples
 Tier II Supports	• Focus first on high-quality Tier I instruction • Use data to assess student learning and create groups • Focus on grade-level essentials • Reengage students with interventions or extensions
 Cognitive Writing	• Engage students in high-order processing of new learning through writing tasks • Extend and apply prior learning • Explicitly teach and model thinking skills • Develop rubrics, provide feedback, and offer opportunities for revisions