
Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®)

Environment B: High Expectations

Why It Matters: Teachers often calibrate their expectations differently based how they perceive students, and students detect and respond to those expectations accordingly, whether they are high or low (Rosenthal & Jacobs, 1968). Successful teachers, however, work to foster high expectations for all their students (Marzano, 2010). They do this because it is “through relationships that convey high expectations [that] students learn to believe in themselves and in their futures, developing the critical resilience of self-esteem, self-efficacy, autonomy, and optimism” (Benard, 1995, p.3).

What to Understand

- This environment is about opportunity and response.
- Teachers are responsible for presenting students with rigorous work and content and for holding students to high standards.
- Students are expected to rise to meet the challenges presented by teachers and persevere through difficult work.
- In many cases, students need opportunities to work with others to complete rigorous work.

What Learners Do

- Exhibit signs of wrestling with content and learning objectives
- Extend learning by applying it to both related and seemingly disparate situations and contexts
- Overcome challenges presented by the lesson to achieve success and mastery of material
- Generate new content/materials
- Work collaboratively to solve problems and complete tasks
- Share learning objectives with others

What Observers Do

- Listen for comments and questions from students about their use of rubrics and exemplars to help them complete high-quality work.
- Listen for teachers asking complex and open-ended questions and for students asking clarifying questions and connecting their learning to diverse situations.
- Watch if students are rapidly completing each step of the learning assignment or working through tasks with deliberation and effort.
- Watch to see whether students are working through tasks with deliberation and effort or if they are rapidly completing each step of the learning assignment.
- Observe students showing their previously completed work (or work in progress) through a demonstration, descriptions of a visual, etc.