

Learning Expeditions: Producing and Presenting High Quality Student Work

Overview

In Expeditionary Learning schools, students produce high quality work. Projects, papers, and presentations are not considered finished until they have met explicit criteria established by students and teachers. To do excellent work, students take their projects through multiple drafts and critique. Creating real work for real audiences motivates students to revise and to meet standards. In the process, they develop perseverance and realize they can do more than they thought they could. In portfolio presentations and public exhibitions, students articulate what they have learned and why it is important.

BENCHMARK 5:

PRODUCING AND PRESENTING HIGH QUALITY STUDENT WORK

A. Perseverance and Rigor

1. Project and product assignments are rigorous and demanding.
2. Teachers create a classroom climate with a high level of engagement and a sense of urgency about completing work.
3. Products and other student work require students to demonstrate perseverance and responsibility for learning as they work through multiple drafts to “get it right.”
4. Teachers support all students in producing high quality work by adapting projects, differentiating instruction, tutoring, and providing supplementary materials and additional time.

B. Craftsmanship

1. Student work demonstrates ownership and pride through attending to detail, making their work aesthetically pleasing, and meeting high standards.
2. As much as possible, students use professional tools and formats, and master the conventions of the medium.

C. Revision

1. Structured protocols require students to engage in the revision process.
2. Students produce multiple drafts and receive feedback on each successive draft.
3. Teachers facilitate revision by asking probing questions, conferring with students, building rubrics, creating mini-lessons, and modeling revision of their own work.

D. Presentations

1. The school organizes exhibitions to showcase student work.
2. Students make presentations to school and community stakeholders.
3. Student work is displayed in community locations as well as in the school.
4. During presentations all students articulate the content and skills they have learned and how their successive drafts have improved.
5. Students practice presentations using rubrics for content and presentation skills.

E. Portfolios

1. All students present their portfolios.
2. The school provides a variety of formats and audiences for portfolio presentations: student-led conferences, passage presentations, and presentations to formal and informal panels.
3. Teachers model and rehearse with students so that they are articulate and effective when presenting their portfolios.
4. Panelists for portfolio presentations are trained to use rubrics for content and presentation.