

MAT-JDS/ DeLeT
Brandeis University

DeLeT Program Teaching Standards¹ and
Continuum for Teacher Development²

Introduction

The standards outlined below and the continuum for teacher development that follows represent the vision of the kind of teacher and teaching we are trying to foster in the MAT-JDS/DeLeT program.

The standards and continuum function as an important tool for interns, mentors, field instructors, and faculty. They are not intended to serve as a checklist. Rather they provide a common framework and language for talking about teaching and learning in Jewish day schools and a set of outcomes toward which we aspire. We use them to frame classroom observations and guide instructional planning, to document and assess interns' progress and learning over time, and to frame our "Snapshots of Emerging Practice" events where interns share publicly about their practice and provide evidence of their developing capacities.

The program standards are organized around seven broad areas that together add up to a rounded portrait of good day school teaching in the elementary grades. Each standard is broken down into three to six elements of teaching practice in that area. Because of the holistic nature of teaching, some overlap is inevitable. The continuum describes what each element of the standard might look in practice like at various stages in a teacher's development.

Learning to teach well takes time. It is not a process that is completed in a teacher preparation program. Therefore, we expect MAT-JDS/DeLeT graduates to continue working toward these standards as they move into teaching.

These standards and continuum are a work in progress. DeLeT's national design team initially developed the standards during the pilot phase of the program, drawing on state and national efforts to frame professional standards for beginning elementary teachers. The continuum was developed in later years, also building on the work of experts in the field of education. They will continue to evolve as we clarify their meaning in practice.

¹ In developing these standards over time, we have drawn on the work of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), California's and Massachusetts' Standards for the Teaching Profession, and standards documents from Michigan State University, Trinity University, and the New Teacher Center in Santa Cruz, Ca.

² This continuum draws on the work of many other previously made tools for assessing teacher development, including the New Teacher Center Continuum of Teacher Development for Jewish Educators, the Trinity University continuum, and DeLeT's own earlier versions. Special thanks to Nili Pearlmuter for her leadership in developing this continuum.

DeLeT Teaching Standards and Elements

A good beginning day school teacher...

Standard 1: Knows children as learners

- a. Gets to know children as individuals and learners, with diverse intellectual, emotional, and spiritual needs
- b. Refines knowledge of learning and child development through interactions with students
- c. Uses knowledge of children as learners in planning and teaching
- d. Maintains open communication and works with families and caregivers to support student learning
- e. Respects and learns about families' diverse religious practices, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, and family structures

Standard 2: Builds a classroom learning community rooted in Jewish experiences and values

- a. Infuses Jewish experiences and values into the learning environment
- b. Creates an emotionally safe culture of learning that promotes intellectual risk taking
- c. Encourages democratic processes and habits
- d. Establishes and maintains clear expectations and consequences for individual and group behavior
- e. Develops procedures for the smooth operation of the classroom and the efficient use of time
- f. Arranges the physical environment to support student learning

Standard 3: Knows subject matter for teaching

- a. Assesses and develops subject matter knowledge
- b. Acquires and uses subject specific pedagogy
- c. Aligns instructional content with standards

Standard 4: Plans for student learning

- a. Frames clear, developmentally appropriate, and worthwhile goals for student learning
- b. Designs short and long term plans that foster student inquiry and understanding
- c. Organizes coherent lessons and prepares for the "particulars"
- d. Uses materials and resources to make subject matter accessible to all students
- e. Plans assessment and instruction in tandem
- f. Connects information and ideas within and across subjects and between general and Jewish studies

Standard 5: Teaches for understanding

- a. Builds on students' prior knowledge, life experiences, and interests
- b. Monitors and maintains students' intellectual engagement
- c. Adjusts instruction based on ongoing assessment
- d. Engages students in problem solving, critical thinking, and other activities that promote subject matter understanding
- e. Communicates effectively with students

Standard 6: Assesses student learning

- a. Uses a variety of formal and informal assessments to monitor student learning
- b. Provides students with criteria and informative feedback to guide their learning and involve them in self-assessment
- c. Uses the results of assessments to inform future planning and instruction

Standard 7: Develops as a professional Jewish educator

- a. Exhibits professional judgment and behavior
- b. Collaborates with colleagues to support and improve student learning
- c. Demonstrates commitment to ongoing learning as a Jew
- d. Demonstrates commitment to ongoing learning as an educator

DeLeT Continuum for Teacher Development

Standard 1: Knows children as learners

Elements	Pre-professional	Approaching	Enacting	Excelling	Evidence
a) Gets to know children as individuals and learners, with diverse intellectual, emotional, and spiritual needs	Is unaware of or disinterested in learning about students' interests, needs, and capacities; labels students; tends to see limits rather than capacity.	Recognizes that students are individuals and members of families and various communities; asks questions that elicit students' prior knowledge, life experiences, and interests.	Creates multiple opportunities to learn about students and their backgrounds; learns about students in the context of different subjects and learning activities and social relationships; looks beyond labels to learn about the whole child.	Creates multiple opportunities for students to express themselves as individuals and as members of a community; closely observes students in all settings; looks for evidence of students' capabilities.	
b) Refines knowledge of learning and child development through interactions with students	Has simplistic or naïve understanding of the learning process and child development; ignores evidence that challenges personal beliefs.	Understands and responds to general developmental needs of students; notices variation in development and learning styles.	Refines understanding of child development and learning by studying and responding to patterns and variation among students; identifies students who require specialized expertise.	Demonstrates an awareness of and sensitivity to the diverse learning and developmental needs of students; is quick to notice mistaken assumptions about students' needs and abilities.	

Standard 1: Knows children as learners (continued)

Elements	Pre-professional	Approaching	Enacting	Excelling	Evidence
c) Uses knowledge of children as learners in planning and teaching	Creates plans that are developmentally inappropriate; does not take student learning styles, needs, and interests into account.	Builds developmentally appropriate instruction with students' intellectual, social, and spiritual needs in mind.	Accommodates for a range of developmental and learning needs; uses information from IEPs and colleagues to modify instruction; works hard to include all students.	Combines knowledge of individual students with an understanding of learning and child development to guide planning and teaching.	
d) Maintains open communication and works with families and caregivers to support student learning	Communicates ineffectively or disrespectfully with families; fails to contact or respond to families; withholds information.	Informs families about student progress at reporting periods and conferences; initiates communication about students when issues arise; responds to requests for information from parents; listens to families' concerns;	Regularly communicates information about student progress; creates opportunities to learn from families; responds to families' concerns; provides general information about school through "back to school" night and newsletters.	Establishes respectful, substantive, and consistent two-way communication; elicits parents' knowledge and perspective on their children and children's learning; involves families in supporting student learning; encourages family involvement in the classroom;	
e) Respects and learns about families' diverse religious practices, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, and family structures	Assumes that the class is homogenous regarding religion, cultural and socio-economic background, and family structure; embarrasses students who do not match preconceptions.	Expects diversity within the class; is open to learning about the range of students' religious practices, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, and family structures.	Treats diversity as the norm; creates opportunities to learn about families; responds to embarrassing or hurtful situations; uses language sensitively.	Seeks out opportunities to broaden understanding of families; anticipates potentially embarrassing or hurtful situations and takes proactive steps to avoid them or use them as positive learning opportunities.	

Standard 2: Builds a learning community rooted in Jewish experiences and values

Elements	Pre-professional	Approaching	Enacting	Excelling	Evidence
a) Infuses Jewish experiences and values into the learning environment	Lacks interest or knowledge to plan classroom Jewish experiences and integrate Jewish values.	Treats Jewish text studies and engagement in Jewish activities and rituals as isolated parts of the school day; occasionally connects personal and social responsibility to Jewish values.	Builds Jewish texts, rituals, and experiences into classroom life; uses Jewish texts and rituals to shape classroom culture; articulates connection between personal and social responsibilities and Jewish values.	Seamlessly integrates Jewish texts, rituals, and experiences into daily classroom life; spontaneously takes advantage of opportunities to promote Jewish experiences; uses Jewish values to guide own behavior and to construct student understanding of responsibilities.	
b) Creates an emotionally safe culture of learning that promotes intellectual risk taking	Establishes positive rapport with some students; suppresses or ignores student conflicts and social/emotional issues; ignores mistakes.	Builds positive rapport with most students; imposes solutions to conflicts and social/emotional issues; corrects mistakes.	Models respectful relationships; helps students develop equitable solutions to conflicts and address social/emotional issues; uses mistakes as learning opportunities.	Maintains a learning community where all learners are accepted socially, intellectually, and spiritually; creates structures for students to manage conflicts independently; helps students perceive mistakes as an integral part of the learning process.	
c) Encourages democratic processes and habits	Creates tightly controlled environment with no opportunities for student leadership; promotes uniform thinking; makes all decisions without student input.	Creates some opportunities for student leadership; encourages a range of opinions and ideas; solicits student input when making decisions.	Supports student leadership; solicits diverse opinions and ideas; provides opportunities for students to discuss classroom issues and make meaningful decisions about the classroom.	Promotes student leadership; supports student understanding of diverse perspectives; creates structures for students to regularly discuss and address classroom issues and make community decisions.	

Standard 2: Builds a learning community rooted in Jewish experiences and values (continued)

Elements	Pre-professional	Approaching	Enacting	Excelling	Evidence
d) Establishes and maintains clear expectations and consequences for individual and group behavior	Fails to communicate rules, expectations, and consequences; ignores most disruptive behavior; relies excessively on punishment.	Establishes rules, expectations, and consequences for students' behavior; inconsistently and/or selectively responds to disruptive behavior; promotes some positive behaviors.	Establishes and maintains classroom rules in collaboration with students; consistently communicates expectations and applies logical consequences; uses verbal and non-verbal strategies to respond to disruptive behavior.	Facilitates a positive environment in which students are guided to take a strong role in maintaining and monitoring their own behavior and that of their peers.	
e) Develops procedures for the smooth operation of the classroom and the efficient use of time	Does not develop or maintain classroom procedures; forgets to use established routines and procedures; spends a disproportionate amount of time on transitions and routines.	Establishes some procedures to support student learning and communicates them effectively to students; sometimes manages transitions effectively.	Develops and maintains routines for common tasks and procedures; manages transitions effectively; uses time efficiently.	Assists students in developing and maintaining routines and procedures; monitors and revises routines as appropriate; promotes student responsibility and leadership.	
f) Arranges the physical environment to support student learning	Arranges physical environment that interferes with students' abilities to learn and teacher's need to monitor students; leaves materials disorganized; provides no visible Jewish text, images, or objects.	Creates and maintains functional and organized physical environment; does not accommodate the range of needs and learning activities in classroom set up; displays student work prominently; displays Jewish text, images, and/or objects.	Arranges materials and furniture for accessibility and visibility, smooth traffic flow, and responsiveness to learning needs and activities; uses displays to reinforce the current curriculum and promote Jewish values and ideas.	Creates a physical environment that encourages students' exploration and use of materials, integrates Jewish values and ideas, and changes with the rhythm of the Jewish year.	

Standard 3: Knows subject matter for teaching

Elements	Pre-professional	Approaching	Enacting	Excelling	Evidence
a) Assesses and develops subject matter knowledge	Displays limited or uneven understanding of basic content knowledge in core subjects; makes content errors; does not notice or address students' content errors; does not work to deepen subject matter knowledge.	Displays basic content knowledge in core subjects; is aware of need to strengthen subject matter knowledge and takes limited steps to do so.	Understands central concepts in core subjects and their connections with content knowledge; recognizes that content knowledge is constantly evolving; takes appropriate steps to deepen and extend content knowledge.	Demonstrates a flexible understanding of content and concepts in core subjects; has sufficient subject matter knowledge to assess curricular materials and interpret student ideas.	
b) Acquires and uses subject specific pedagogy	Lacks subject specific pedagogical knowledge; fails to consider what prerequisite knowledge students need in order to gain new learning; does not anticipate what might be difficult or confusing.	Explores subject specific methods, curricula, technology, and resources; sometimes considers what students need to know and be able to do in order to learn new content; begins to anticipate what might be difficult or confusing.	Demonstrates ability to select and use subject specific methods, curricula, technology, and resources; consistently considers what students need to know and be able to do in order to learn new content; anticipates potential difficulties or confusions.	Consistently draws from a wide repertoire of subject specific methods; possesses knowledge of broad range of curricula, relevant technology, and other resources; flexibly uses knowledge about the way students construct understanding of the content.	
c) Aligns instructional content with standards	Fails to consult or identify relevant school, district, state, or national standards when planning.	Is familiar with standards in some content areas.	Consults content standards when planning; aligns lessons and units with specific standards; analyzes and uses standards based assessments when available.	Possesses a working knowledge of the standards; critically examines their strengths and weaknesses when selecting instructional content.	

Standard 4: Plans for student learning

Elements	Pre-professional	Approaching	Enacting	Excelling	Evidence
a) Frames clear, developmentally appropriate, and worthwhile goals for student learning	Frames goals that are unclear and/or not attuned to the developmental and learning needs of most students.	Frames goals for student learning that begin to reflect knowledge of developmental needs and worthwhile content.	Frames clear, developmentally appropriate goals for student learning based on knowledge of what content, concepts and skills are important for students to learn.	Frames short and long-term goals that reflect high expectations for all students; considers the range of student learning needs.	
b) Designs short and long term plans that foster student inquiry and understanding	Plans only daily lessons and activities based on available materials and resources; has little vision of long-term planning; uses “telling” as primary mode of instruction; does not anticipate potential misconceptions or confusions.	Plans daily and weekly lessons around short-term goals with some attention to long-term goals; experiments with strategies that promote inquiry and understanding; attempts to anticipate misconceptions or confusions.	Plans curricular units that link short and long-term goals with learning activities; provides opportunities for students to investigate significant questions and deepen understandings; anticipates and addresses students’ common misconceptions and confusions.	Coordinates short and long-term plans across subjects; creates regular opportunities for students to pursue their own inquiries; structures plans to draw out and address student misconceptions and confusions.	
c) Organizes coherent lessons and prepares for the “particulars”	Plans lessons that lack internal coherence and/or do not build on previous learning; fails to consider the details for enacting lessons (intro, explanations, discussion questions, transitions, timing, etc.)	Plans some connected and coherent lessons; thinks through some details so that lessons proceed fairly smoothly from beginning to end.	Plans lessons with internal coherence and links each lesson to prior and future lessons; carefully considers particulars so that plans proceed smoothly from beginning to end.	Structures lessons so that students make connections; prepares thoroughly in order to respond flexibly.	

Standard 4: Plans for student learning (continued)

Elements	Pre-professional	Approaching	Enacting	Excelling	Evidence
d) Uses materials and resources to make subject matter accessible to all students	Uses available materials and resources with little or no modification to fit students' interests and learning needs.	Selects and uses materials and resources in ways that begin to address students' interests and learning needs; provides accommodations for individual learners.	Adapts materials and resources to address students' interests and learning needs; creates plans that accommodate diverse learning needs.	Adapts and creates materials and resources to accommodate and challenge students with diverse interests and learning needs; draws on a broad repertoire of strategies to make the subject matter accessible to all students.	
e) Plans assessment and instruction in tandem	Fails to consider how to assess student learning when planning; creates assessments that are not aligned with learning goals.	Considers how to assess student learning when planning and uses a limited repertoire to build in assessment; develops assessments that begin to reflect learning goals.	Plans instruction and assessment together and uses a range of strategies to assess student learning; designs assessments based on learning goals.	Designs instruction that integrates a variety of differentiated assessments based on learning goals.	
f) Connects information and ideas within and across subjects and between general and Jewish studies	Is unaware of or disinterested in creating links across subjects and between general and Judaic studies.	Notices and points out natural connections as they occur; begins to seek out further links.	Creates appropriate links across subjects and between general and Jewish studies that support conceptual understanding.	Connects key concepts and underlying themes across subjects and between general and Jewish studies; seeks opportunities for authentic integration.	

Standard 5: Teaches for understanding

Elements	Pre-professional	Approaching	Enacting	Excelling	Evidence
a) Builds on students' prior knowledge, life experiences, and interests	Makes no explicit connection to students' prior knowledge, experiences and interests; ignores opportunities to build on students' prior knowledge and experiences.	Opens lessons to capture students' attention and interest; asks questions that elicit students' prior knowledge and life experiences.	Makes room for planned and unplanned opportunities to build on prior knowledge and interests; helps students make connections between prior knowledge and new content and skills.	Provides learning experiences that deepen students' understanding of prior knowledge; helps them reflect on their changing understandings.	
b) Monitors and maintains students' intellectual engagement	Ignores or does not notice when students are disengaged; confuses compliance with engagement; ignores student questions.	Notices when students are not attentive; uses a limited repertoire to re-engage students; sometimes makes room for student questions; provides assistance when students ask for help.	Monitors students' intellectual engagement and takes steps to re-engage them; makes room for substantive student questions; challenges students to persist in exploration of difficult material; elicits students' thoughts; listens carefully and builds on students' ideas.	Consistently monitors and maintains student's interest and attention; encourages student questions; implements learning opportunities that engage and challenge students; allows students to make meaningful choices about their learning; teaches students to self-monitor.	
c) Adjusts instruction based on ongoing assessment	Follows lessons as planned despite evidence that adjustment is necessary; creates few opportunities to uncover student thinking; occasionally recognizes student confusion and re-teaches using the same strategy.	Checks for understanding with some students and makes limited adjustments to address confusions; assumes that understanding on the part of one or two students can be generalized to other students.	Listens carefully and observes for evidence of individual student's understanding; adjusts lessons based on information gathered while teaching; uses a limited repertoire to address student confusion.	Uses a broad repertoire to uncover student understanding from most students, to adjust lessons to promote student understanding, and to address student confusion.	

Standard 5: Teaches for understanding (continued)

Elements	Pre-professional	Approaching	Enacting	Excelling	Evidence
d) Engages students in problem solving, critical thinking, and other activities that promote subject matter understanding	Relies on lectures and other activities that limit student participation; poses questions that have one right answers; serves as sole evaluator of student thinking; emphasizes memorization and superficial repetition of concepts.	Uses activities and questions that connect facts and concepts; supports students in problem solving; asks critical thinking questions; allows limited opportunities for students to explain their thinking; sometimes responds to student questions and comments.	Uses activities and questions that get students to consider multiple perspectives and big ideas; supports students in problem posing and problem solving; asks well-crafted questions and allows students ample opportunities to respond; encourages students to listen and respond to each other.	Organizes teaching around big ideas and core questions; creates opportunities for students to generate and pursue questions; asks follow up questions that deepen student learning; expects students to think critically about other students' questions and responses and to explore multiple perspectives.	
e) Communicates effectively with students	Uses confusing language; gives unclear directions; relies on verbal communication; is difficult to hear or speaks in a monotone.	Generally explains ideas and directions clearly; checks for student understanding and rephrases when appropriate; occasionally provides visual support; speaks confidently.	Consistently explains ideas in age appropriate language; gives clear directions and provides appropriate visual support; models procedures and expectations; uses an engaging tone.	Draws from a repertoire of verbal and non-verbal strategies to give directions and communicate ideas; engages students in constructing shared understanding of ideas and directions.	

Standard 6: Assesses student learning

Elements	Pre-professional	Approaching	Enacting	Excelling	Evidence
a) Uses a variety of formal and informal assessments to monitor student learning	Uses one source of information to monitor student learning; relies on formal assessments.	Uses several sources of information to monitor student learning; uses a limited repertoire of formal and informal strategies to gather information about student learning.	Uses multiple assessments, both formal and informal, to assess student understanding; creates opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding in ways that reflect and expand their individual strengths and learning styles.	Uses differentiated assessments that allow all students to demonstrate their understanding; systematically gathers information about student learning; uses observation and strategic questions to monitor student understanding on a regular basis.	
b) Provides students with criteria and informative feedback to guide their learning and involve them in self-assessment	Fails to communicate assessment criteria to students; provides limited feedback about student work.	Provides students with some assessment guidelines; monitors and responds to student work; involves students in correcting their work.	Presents clear guidelines for assessment; uses results of assessments to set student learning goals; assists students in reflecting on and assessing their own work.	Involves students in developing assessment guidelines; uses results of assessments to collaboratively set learning goals with students; engages all students in monitoring progress and assessing learning.	
c) Uses the results of assessments to inform future planning and instruction	Does not adjust plans to reflect information gathered about student achievement and understanding.	Uses information from assessments to plan learning activities; occasionally uses assessment results to reflect on instruction.	Intentionally gathers assessment information in order to guide short and long term plans; uses information about student learning to assess own effectiveness and modify instruction.	Collects, organizes, and reflects upon evidence of student understanding to guide short and long-term plans and to improve instruction.	

Standard 7: Develops as a professional Jewish educator

Elements	Pre-professional	Approaching	Enacting	Excelling	Evidence
a) Exhibits professional judgment and behavior	Has a negative attitude in the classroom; exercises poor judgment; is frequently late or absent; fails to follow through on responsibilities; appears disengaged or bored when taking a supporting role; is unaware of professional norms.	Generally has a positive attitude in the classroom; seeks advice from mentor when professional judgment is called for; arrives on time; is rarely absent; dresses professionally; inconsistently follows through on responsibilities; serves as a role model within the classroom; is aware of professional norms.	Maintains a positive attitude throughout the day; exercises sound judgment; seeks advice on sensitive issues; fulfills responsibilities in a timely and thoughtful manner; serves as a role model both in and outside the classroom; follows professional norms.	Maintains motivation and commitment to all students; demonstrates and models professional norms in all interactions with students, families, and colleagues.	
b) Collaborates with colleagues to support and improve student learning	Alienates or avoids colleagues; communicates mainly complaints; disregards advice and offers of support.	Establishes a positive working relationship with a few colleagues; consults colleagues to problem solve challenging situations; works responsibly as a team member.	Participates in events that involve the broader school community; collaborates with colleagues to problem solve and develop curriculum; seeks out teachers with special expertise.	Regularly engages colleagues in serious discussions about teaching and learning; contributes to faculty meetings when appropriate.	
c) Demonstrates commitment to ongoing learning as a Jew	Demonstrates little or no interest in Judaism either academically or personally	Willingly engages in Jewish learning experiences provided by the school.	Expands knowledge about and explores personal relationship to Judaism as part of evolving professional identity.	Actively seeks out opportunities to extend and deepen knowledge about Judaism; is deeply committed to ongoing reflection about personal Jewish identity.	

Standard 7: Develops as a professional Jewish educator (continued)

Elements	Pre-professional	Approaching	Enacting	Excelling	Evidence
d) Demonstrates commitment to ongoing learning as an educator	Does not reflect on practice; is defensive, evasive, or resistant to feedback and disinterested in using suggestions to make changes in practice; avoids observation of and by other teachers.	Reflects on some elements of teaching and begins to develop questions rooted in practice; participates in required opportunities to reflect; makes a limited effort to improve practice; occasionally observes other teachers.	Demonstrates a serious commitment to ongoing learning; uses problems and questions to further learning; seeks out and acts on constructive feedback; consistently attempts to act on insights and improve practice; welcomes opportunities to observe and be observed.	Integrates analysis and reflection into daily practice; develops goals for continued learning; uses observation to further learning goals.	