

# Standards for Effective Christian Teaching

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based on Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1996. Also Timothy C. Ewearitt's *Christian Teacher Performance Instruments*. Lookout Mountain, GA: Center for the Advancement of Christian Education, 1996; and the *Tennessee State Comprehensive Assessment-Summative Report Standards*

Based on study and research in the area of supervision and teacher training, the following Standards for Effective Christian Teaching have been developed. They are an attempt to define Effective Christian Teaching in a comprehensive way, making use of a system of rubrics.

Why is this format used? Spelling out the Standards in this way makes them understandable by all involved in the process – teachers and administrators. For example, in Component Ia, the element of “Knowledge of Content” is defined for four levels of performance. In traditional systems, there might be an element labeled “The teacher knows the content being taught,” with an accompanying rating scale (from 1 to 4, 1 to 10, or something similar). The problem here is that nothing is communicated to the teacher as to what a particular level means. On a four-point rating scale, if a teacher is rated as “2,” that teacher has no idea what is meant with regard to the knowledge of content. What does the teacher need to do to improve to “3” or “4”? It is purely a matter of the administrator’s judgment. With the rubrics, however, the teacher and the administrator have somewhat objective standards spelled out. A teacher who is rated “Basic” in “Knowledge of Content” can see specifically what needs to be done to move up to “Proficient” (be able to connect the subject with other subjects, and be able to demonstrate subject-area knowledge in unplanned situations such as student questions).

To be sure, there is always a measure of subjectivity in any system of evaluation. That simply cannot be avoided in an area such as teaching, which is not as “cut and dried” as, for example, mathematics (where there is one right answer). However, the use of rubrics in the Standards enables both teachers and administrators to be more open about the reasons for particular judgment calls.

There are several uses for the Standards:

- *An instrument of self-evaluation and development.* Teachers can use the Standards as a means of guiding their own professional development. Teachers should honestly evaluate themselves in each area, and determine their strengths and weaknesses. They can then select areas to improve, either on their own or in consultation with the Principal. Following the above example relating to “Knowledge of Content,” a teacher who sees that she is really on the “Basic” level could begin studying more about her subject, to see how it relates to other subjects, and how she can bring out those connections in the classroom.
- *An instrument for initial teacher training.* The Principal will be making use of the Standards in the training given to all new teachers, as outlined on the “Overview of Teacher Supervision/Evaluation Program.” This provides focus for the Initial Staff Development program.
- *An instrument for evaluation of individual class lessons.* When the Principal engages in formal classroom observations, an evaluation form using Components II (“The Classroom Environment”) and III (“Instruction”) will be used, along with any other suitable observation forms.
- *An instrument for yearly evaluation.* When teachers receive a complete year-end evaluation (all teachers in Track I and Track III, and teachers in Track II who are in the biennial evaluation program), that evaluation will be based upon these Standards. Again, this is to provide effective feedback to the teacher as to areas of strength and weakness.