Aligning
The Danielson Framework for Teaching
and the ASD Nest Program
Middle School/High School Nest Essentials

The *Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching* outlines four domains of teachers' responsibilities that "promoting improved student learning."

The *Middle School/High School Nest Essentials* identifies six areas of support necessary to support students on the autism spectrum in ASD Nest schools.

Materials:

- Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching (one page)
- Middle School/High School Nest Essentials (one page front-back)

Procedure:

1) Split the team into six groups (or three groups for smaller teams)

2) Assign each group one of the six categories from the *Nest Essentials* (or two each for smaller teams)

3) Ask groups to read over their *Nest Essential* category in full, and then to scan the Danielson Framework to look for overlap

4) Instruct groups to identify the *Danielson* domain(s) that pertain to their Nest Essentials category and write the number and letter in the corresponding box

5) Ask groups to identify one <u>primary</u> domain for their category and to circle it

6) Ask a representative from each group to share out with the whole team, and for all team members to write each groups' result on their own copy of the *Nest Essentials*

7) Wrap up with a discussion about overlap of best practices, emphasizing that the *Nest Essentials* are a particular subset of practices that support students with ASD

8) Determine follow-up: ask teams to a) set goals, b) write action plans, or c) write to-do lists of how they will make improvements based on these results

Notes:

- Caution against teams jumping to "2d - Managing Student Behavior." It's oversimplifying many Nest strategies to characterize their purpose as behavior management.

- Be sure to go through the steps of the activity yourself before facilitating it with your team. There may be disagreement over which domains correspond to the categories of support, and which is the <u>primary</u> domain. In this case, use your own results to guide the discussion.

Best Responses:
1. Organization of Classroom Environment: primary 2e (also 1b, 1d, 3e)
2. Classroom Structures & Routines: primary 2c, 3a (also 1b, 2b, 2d, 3e)
3. Self-Regulation Routine: primary 1b (also 1c, 2c, 2e, 3e, 4d)
4. Social Supports: primary 2a, 3a (also 2d, 3c, 4f)
5. Instructional Strategies & Classroom Language: primary 1/1b (also 2a, 2b, 2c)
6. Collaboration & Individual Supports: primary 4d (also 1b, 1c, 4a, 4b, 4e)

ASD Nest Program
Middle School/High School Nest Essentials
Key Practices for Supporting Adolescents with ASD

Adolescents on the autism spectrum have predictable challenges that can impact their ability to access the middle and high school experience. Middle and high school Nest classrooms are designed to meet these students' needs.

The six areas below outline expectations for Nest classroom structures and strategies to support students in individual classrooms and consistently across their school day.

1 Organization of Classroom Environment	Danielson domains

Because students with ASD can become distracted or overwhelmed by their environment → **Nest classrooms are arranged and organized in a such a way as to avoid visual and auditory distractions**	At a minimum: • Classrooms are neat and organized, without visible clutter • Only relevant charts are displayed for easy reference • Classroom materials are well organized and clearly labeled • Adjustments are made to address students' sensory needs, such as minimizing sound and adapting lighting

2 Classroom Structures & Routines	Danielson domains

Because students with ASD benefit from structure and predictability → **Common classroom routines are established, taught, and reinforced**	At a minimum: • Classroom procedures are taught, posted & practiced consistently • Entering and exiting routines are established, posted, and used – and referred to daily • An agenda & homework area is displayed in the same location every class session, and is referenced throughout the period • Expectations for behavior are explained, and positive behavior is highlighted and reinforced • Students are prepared ahead of time (*primed*) for changes in routines, new material, and potentially challenging tasks

3 Self-Regulation Routine	Danielson domains

Because students with ASD can become overwhelmed and struggle with self-regulation → **Nest classrooms have a routine for allowing students a break to help them self-regulate and avoid becoming overwhelmed**	At a minimum: • A specified routine is established and/or a designated space (e.g., break area, Nest room) is created to allow students to take a break and ready themselves to return to instruction • The break routine is taught and practiced, and a visual reminder is posted in all classrooms • Students are reminded about the break routine, and breaks are suggested if teachers notice early signs of distress • Sensory tools, such as stress balls, are made available

4	Social Supports	Danielson domains

Because students with ASD may misunderstand aspects of social relationships and social expectations ↓ **Classroom structures, instruction, and activities are planned to support students' social challenges**	At a minimum: • Social concepts explored in SDI are incorporated in the classroom through a) the use of social vocabulary, b) highlighting perspective-taking, and c) facilitating problem solving • Before beginning group work, options for each student's role are determined and clarified • Support is given during class activities that may tap in to social challenges (e.g., finding a partner, accepting feedback from peers)

5	Instructional Strategies & Classroom Language	Danielson domains

Because the academic performance of students with ASD can be impacted by their social challenges and impairments in executive functioning ↓ **Instruction is delivered in a way that is accessible to Nest students**	At a minimum: • Visuals support oral directions and reoccurring abstract concepts • Copying from the board is limited, and note-taking supports are implemented (e.g., graphic organizers and guided notes) • Complex tasks are broken down into clear sub-steps • Instruction and assessment are differentiated according to students' learning needs and special interests • Timers are used to show how long activities last and to prepare students for transitions • Language and directions are: clear, explicit, concise, and positive • Students are given additional time to process when offering verbal responses (*wait time*)

6	Collaboration & Individual Supports	Danielson domains

Because students with ASD benefit from a coordinated, consistent system of supports ↓ **Teachers across subjects collaborate to plan and implement individual supports for Nest students**	At a minimum: • Teachers and teams develop strategies for individual struggling students and continuously refine those supports as necessary • Strategies developed in team meetings are implemented consistently across classes • Teachers share successful individual strategies with the Nest team • Teachers reflect on their practice—considering core challenges and needs for differentiation—to best support students' social and academic success and independence

Charlotte Danielson's FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING

DOMAIN 1: Planning and Preparation

1a Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy
- Content knowledge • Prerequisite relationships • Content pedagogy

1b Demonstrating Knowledge of Students
- Child development • Learning process • Special needs • Student skills, knowledge, and proficiency • Interests and cultural heritage

1c Setting Instructional Outcomes
- Value, sequence, and alignment • Clarity • Balance • Suitability for diverse learners

1d Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources
- For classroom • To extend content knowledge • For students

1e Designing Coherent Instruction
- Learning activities • Instructional materials and resources • Instructional groups • Lesson and unit structure

1f Designing Student Assessments
- Congruence with outcomes • Criteria and standards • Formative assessments

DOMAIN 4: Professional Responsibilities

4a Reflecting on Teaching
- Accuracy • Use in future teaching

4b Maintaining Accurate Records
- Student completion of assignments • Student progress in learning • Non-instructional records

4c Communicating with Families
- About instructional program • About individual students • Engagement of families in instructional program

4d Participating in a Professional Community
- Relationships with colleagues • Participation in school projects • Involvement in culture of professional inquiry • Service to school

4e Growing and Developing Professionally
- Enhancement of content knowledge / pedagogical skill • Receptivity to feedback from colleagues • Service to the profession

4f Showing Professionalism
- Integrity/ethical conduct • Service to students • Advocacy • Decision-making • Compliance with school/district regulations

DOMAIN 2: The Classroom Environment

2a Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport
- Teacher interaction with students • Student interaction with students

2b Establishing a Culture for Learning
- Importance of content • Expectations for learning and achievement • Student pride in work

2c Managing Classroom Procedures
- Instructional groups • Transitions • Materials and supplies • Non-instructional duties • Supervision of volunteers and paraprofessionals

2d Managing Student Behavior
- Expectations • Monitoring behavior • Response to misbehavior

2e Organizing Physical Space
- Safety and accessibility • Arrangement of furniture and resources

DOMAIN 3: Instruction

3a Communicating With Students
- Expectations for learning • Directions and procedures • Explanations of content • Use of oral and written language

3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
- Quality of questions • Discussion techniques • Student participation

3c Engaging Students in Learning
- Activities and assignments • Student groups • Instructional materials and resources • Structure and pacing

3d Using Assessment in Instruction
- Assessment criteria • Monitoring of student learning • Feedback to students • Student self-assessment and monitoring

3e Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness
- Lesson adjustment • Response to students • Persistence