



PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING



The **Institute for Learning**, established at the University of Pittsburg in 1995, provides educators with current research about the learning process and resources to effect student achievement. The Institute has identified nine principles that are tantamount to teaching and learning and are designed to guide decisions about the quality of instruction for students:

- **Organizing for Effort** - Effort-based education replaces the belief that aptitude determines what students can learn. All students need a rigorous curriculum that requires sustained effort for mastery.
- **Clear Expectations** - High-level student achievement necessitates concrete learning goals. Students must know what they are learning, why the learning is important, and how they can improve their work. Standards, criteria, rubrics, and models of student work need to be posted and discussed so that students are able to evaluate and improve their own work.
- **Fair and Credible Evaluations** - Student assessments and evaluations must be fair, credible, and comprehensible. Fair evaluations are tests, assignments, and exams that students can prepare for and which are graded against a standard that students understand.
- **Recognition of Accomplishment** - Recognition of student accomplishments and celebrations of their success are essential in motivating and sustaining high levels of effort.
- **Academic Rigor in a Thinking Curriculum** - The skills of critical thinking and problem solving are essential to a knowledge-based curriculum. The California Content Standards in core subject areas establish explicitly what students need to know and master at each grade level and provide the foundation and framework for high level teaching and learning.
- **Accountable TalksSM** - Discussions and conversations about ideas and information are essential for learning. Accountable talk includes instructional discussions, classroom presentations, small group projects, interviews, Socratic dialogues, and student-teacher conferences.
- **Socializing Intelligence** - Socializing intelligence is demonstrated when students actively ask questions, seek information, analyze problems, and explore solutions.
- **Self-Management of Learning** - Students must monitor and manage their own learning based on the expectations provided by the teacher. This means they must learn to question when they do not understand, assess the feedback they receive from others, foresee difficulties, manage their time wisely, and evaluate their progress toward a goal.
- **Learning as Apprenticeship** - In apprenticeship learning, teachers model for students as they

develop projects, presentations, and portfolios that demonstrate complex understanding and comprehensive knowledge of concepts, theories, and ideas.

Articles for Further Reading (from the Institute for Reading - Institute Resources Web Page):

"Learning Organizations for Sustainable Education Reform"

"From Aptitude to Effort: A New Foundation for Our Schools"

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