



Where Excellence Is Tradition

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The Value of Rigor in the Classroom

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Rigor is defined as “strictness, severity or harshness;” however, in the educational setting we extend the definition to include "challenging" and "pushed to think critically and flexibly." When we ensure a rigorous learning environment, students are challenged to think, develop in-depth understandings and work hard to apply what they've learned.

Ensuring higher learning standards that result in students experiencing rich content, engaging in inquiry, collaborating with others and creating new knowledge and projects is not easy work. The following are key practices that the great teachers in our local public schools are following to ensure rigor in the classroom:

Introducing Academic Rigor at an Early Stage

Even in early elementary grades, students are being exposed to complex multi-step problems. Students learn the value of effort as they experience frustration in working to arrive at the right answers. They are learning the importance of trial and error and persistence.

Ensuring All Students Experience On-Grade-Level Instruction

Rigor is not only determined by what is taught, but how it is taught and how it is assessed. A school's rigor is strengthened when all students are expected to meet specific grade level expectations and we identify what students should be doing to be on track for success.

Providing Supports

When students are in the appropriate challenging classes, there will be times when some will struggle. Intentionally providing supports is critical. Intervening quickly and providing students with opportunities for additional assistance, both during and after class, will strengthen them.

Increase the Number of Challenging Courses

Research shows that most students rise to the challenge of higher expectations. In the Glenbard schools, we are committed to students “leveling up," where they are challenged to take honors and Advanced Placement courses. The number of students who have taken an AP exam in the past eight years has increased by 118%.

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Invest in Professional Development for Staff

Through demonstrations, peer coaching and attending workshops, teachers are regularly strengthening and enhancing their craft. Teachers are deploying high leverage practices that result in deeper, rigorous learning experiences for students.

Ensure Equity

Our schools have a standard of rigor for all students, regardless of race, family income level or year in school. It's critical that all students have access to course work that challenges them and prepares them for life after high school.

Our great nation was founded in part on the principles of hard work, diligence and persistence. These are the key traits your amazing local public schools are seeking to develop in students. We are working to provide all students the experiences they deserve to have access to in order to achieve their goals after high school.

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