Table 3.4: Best Practices of the Four Cs

Climate: The product of a classroom intentionally designed to foster and promote a safe, consistent, and positive environment	
Best Practice	**Example or Explanation**
Student voice	Students' input and expertise are embraced and help shape their classroom experience, including lessons, assignments, and interactions.
Classroom agreements or contracts	Classroom behavior agreements or contracts co-developed by students and the teacher ensure joint understanding and commitment between all stakeholders in the classroom.
Clear routines and procedures	The teacher develops and implements consistent, predictable routines and procedures.
Taught and reinforced classroom routines and procedures	The teacher intentionally teaches and reteaches the routines and procedures expected in the classroom (such as how to enter and exit the classroom, how to ask for help or take a bathroom break, and where to turn in assignments).
Teacher-managed minor infractions	The teacher understands the difference between teacher-handled and administrator-handled classroom infractions. The teacher also demonstrates ownership and autonomy when handling minor infractions within the classroom, and has adequate tools and resources when responding.
Brief transition times	Transition time between one task and another in the classroom is less than a minute. This requires teachers to intentionally organize lessons and next steps.
Active supervision	The teacher actively scans, moves, and has positive interactions with students in the classroom.
Communication: The product of a classroom intentionally designed to foster the ongoing interchange of expectations, ideas, commitments, voices, and behaviors among all stakeholders	
Best Practice	**Example or Explanation**
Positive teacher language (4:1 to 6:1)	The teacher uses positive (direct) language more often than negative language (four instances to one is the ideal ratio) and even more often for struggling students (six instances to one). Positive language, for example, focuses on what's desired and acknowledges students when they demonstrate appropriate skills.
Classroom management and communication or monitoring system	Classrooms are well managed with a system and have in place a communication or monitoring system to track behaviors for providing additional supports for students who need them.

Positive parent communication system	The teacher follows a process for positively communicating with parents or guardians (making five positive calls a week to different parents or guardians, for example). Contacting them with something positive when they are frequently called for negative reasons tremendously builds parent and guardian support.
Positive contacts	Multiple methods for making positive contact with students are employed: notes, affirmations, one-to-one conversations, fist bumps, and check-ins.
Substitute teacher behavior plans	An intentional preparation plan for substitute teachers helps stave off behavior challenges. Plans can provide appropriate information for substitutes on certain students who may need additional supports.
Updated seating charts	A seating chart is updated to include notes on what a student needs academically, behaviorally, and social-emotionally to access classroom instruction. This can provide a teacher—especially one with multiple class sessions—a quick visual reminder. Those reminders can be as simple as *504*, *IEP*, or *anxiety care plan*.

Curriculum: The product of a classroom intentionally designed to educate the whole child, including academics and beyond

Best Practice	Example or Explanation
Classroom meetings, circles, or check-ins	This intentionally created safe space provides opportunities for students to share and help each other or the community with concerns or challenges.
Alternative options for mastery	Students have opportunities to demonstrate their learning in different modalities. For example, if the physical act of writing triggers a student's sensory challenges, that student can present orally or create a speech-to-text response for an assignment; if a student has severe anxiety about classroom presentations, that student can demonstrate mastery other ways.
Universal design for learning (UDL)	The teacher understands and implements the three areas of UDL in the classroom: (1) engagement (stimulating interest and motivation via lessons), (2) representation (information is presented in different ways, for multiple modalities), and (3) action and expression (students can demonstrate what they learned or know in different ways; CAST, n.d.).
Engaging instruction	Ensuring that students find instruction meaningful and understand how it applies to their learning results in engagement.
Culturally responsive teaching	Student-centered, teacher-facilitated instruction reshapes the traditional curriculum to include instruction and teaching that respect culture, language, and racial identity. Focus on developing students' critical lens regarding injustices.

Embedded SEL core competencies	Developing students' self-awareness and self-management skills, which are essential in school and beyond, means embedding instruction into the classroom setting, assignments, lessons, and projects.
Behavior lessons	Students receive formal or informal behavior lessons in the classroom at least weekly. Lessons can range from actual behavior curriculum lessons (such as anti-bullying, respect, and digital citizenship), to discussing classroom text's character behaviors, to addressing real-life classroom, schoolwide, or community challenges around tolerance and empathy.
21st century skills	Intentionally incorporated instruction and application of 21st century skills includes opportunities to practice communicating and collaborating, as well as encouraging critical thinking and creativity. (The teacher might, for example, teach how to develop and adhere to group work norms so students know how to communicate differences and diversity of thought in a productive way, civil way.)

Culture: The product of a classroom intentionally designed to build and maintain relationships and community	
Best Practice	**Example or Explanation**
Structure for relationship building	Intentionally greeting students is the norm for the classroom teacher. The class creates and repeats mantras about respecting each other and developing a safe, loving classroom environment.
Classroom incentive system	Students can receive individual or classroom-level (team) acknowledgments for demonstrating appropriate behaviors they have learned. Incentives can be tangible or intangible based on student input and motivators.
Trauma-informed practices	Understanding the impact traumatic childhood events have on a student's ability to regulate his or her behavior is trauma informed. Teachers shift their view from *This student is behaving poorly* to *This student is having a difficult time; what does she need?* The behavior is viewed through a lens of support and establishing a relationship rather than punishment and removing the student from class.
Character and service learning projects	At least once-monthly service learning projects provide opportunities to learn and implement character development. The focus is on being good citizens in and out of the classroom.

CAST. (n.d.). Provide multiple means of action and expression. *Accessed at http://udlguidelines.cast.org/action-expression on August 31, 2020.*