In Seattle Public Schools we understand that a shared vision of practice is essential to fostering the learning communities that each of our students and adults needs to thrive. This shared vision enables educators to work in concert to build their practice with a focus on student learning.

As such, in Seattle Public Schools we believe that…

* (1) Teaching is intellectually complex, difficult, and demanding work, and that the development of skillful teaching requires deep collaboration and non-defensive self-examination of practice in relation to student results.

This requires collaborative inquiry – educators working together to examine practice through a cycle of planning, teaching, reflecting, applying. The Danielson Framework provides the structure that guides this inquiry.

The total environment of a school has a powerful effect on students' learning, which reinforces that need for collaborative inquiry.

* (2) By collaborating with families in authentic partnerships, we create a path for students to reach their highest potential, engaging with families as the first and lifelong teachers of students. Rich, ongoing, two-way communication and a dynamic sense of opportunities to support student learning is essential to build this partnership.
* (3) Children's learning is primarily determined by their effective effort and use of appropriate strategies. "Intelligence," or the ability to learn is not a fixed, inborn trait. All children have the raw material to learn rigorous academic material at high standards.

Our work to that end is to build students’ academic mindset (*Hammond*):

* + I belong to this academic community.
  + I can succeed at this.
  + My ability and competence grow with my effort.
  + The work has value for me.
* (4) By recognizing and cultivating the gifts and strengths of every student we can get each student to believe in themselves and transcend any of their own internalized stereotypes.

We accomplish this work by building dynamic and meaningful relationships with our students, taking the stance of a warm demander – high demand with deep care.

Through these relationships we accomplish the work of moving students from dependent to independent learners, focusing our work around building students’ intellectual capacity.

* (5) Racism in our society exerts a downward force on the experiences and achievement of students of color that must be met with active countermeasures. In order to achieve our goal of educating all students to a high level, we need to become culturally responsive and actively anti-racist practitioners.

This means we explore and identify our implicit biases, build our understanding of how culture operates in our classrooms, and examine individualist and collectivist frames of engaging.

Our commitment to these beliefs is the route to institutionalizing racial equity and fostering a context where each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential, and we make educational equity (justice) the cornerstone of our system.

\**This statement incorporates language of The Skillful Teacher, CRT and the Brain, the National Equity Project equity definition, and the SPS African American Male Advisory Committee*.