



Middletown Public Schools Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Guidelines

Middletown Public Schools
Office of the Assistant Superintendent
2012

The *MPS Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Guideline Manual* has been developed by the Office of the Assistant Superintendent with guidance from the MPS Curriculum Committees. It provides information concerning district policies and procedures for a successful implementation of the curriculum, instruction and assessment.

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Introduction

How can we work as a professional learning community to ensure a vital and rigorous curriculum for all Middletown students, providing them with the opportunity to achieve high educational expectations and standards?

Students learn best when the instruction they receive and the assessments used align with state standards. To ensure student achievement, it is critical that the **curriculum**, **instruction**, and **assessment** align. The Common Core State Standards and RI GSEs provide the foundation of the defined **curriculum** of Middletown Public Schools. Curriculum documents will take a variety of forms: a district curriculum framework or mapping, a course syllabus, or a unit or lesson plan. **Instruction** refers to the implementation of the defined curriculum—the teacher’s strategies and use of instructional resources. **Assessment** takes many forms, including screening, progress monitoring, classroom-based formative and summative assessments that measure student proficiency of the defined curriculum.

At the very core of this work is a focus on and a commitment to the learning of each student. When we function as a **professional learning community**, our educators embrace high levels of learning for all students as both the reason we exist and the fundamental responsibility of us all. In order to achieve this purpose, we create and are guided by a clear and compelling vision of what we must become in order to help all students learn. We must make collective commitments clarifying what each of us will do to create and maintain our district, and use our results-oriented goals to mark our progress. We work together to clarify exactly what each student must learn, monitor each student's learning on a timely basis, provide systematic interventions that ensure students receive additional time and support for learning when they struggle, and extend and enrich learning when students have already mastered the intended outcomes.

While this work is going on it is also essential that we commit to an additional assumption. This assumption is that if the organization is to become more effective in helping all students learn, the adults in the organization must also be continually learning. Therefore, we set the priority to create structures to ensure staff members engage in job-embedded learning as part of their routine work practices.

Position on Key Curriculum Issues

Development of the Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum

Research concludes that implementation of a guaranteed and viable curriculum plays a critical role in the improvement of student achievement. *Guaranteed* means that every child in every school receives essential instruction every day; *viable* means that the curriculum can be taught in the amount of time provided. This curriculum development and implementation guide outlines our positions, processes, formats and protocols to ensure that Middletown Public Schools will provide a guaranteed and viable curriculum that will define the essential knowledge that all students must learn at each grade level and in each course of study.

Excellence and Equity

All students have equitable access to the core curriculum and all the offerings which extend and enrich it.

1. All students will have equitable access to a rigorous curriculum.
2. There will be no academic tracking of students.
3. All students have the right to enroll in any course or program provided that they meet the conditions necessary to succeed. Admittance to some programs is governed by outside regulations.
4. All students have the right to interventions/assistance needed to succeed.
5. For those cases in which a series of courses require a necessary sequence, it is legitimate to require the earlier part of the series prior to the latter unless students demonstrate they have met conditions necessary to succeed.
6. Students within a class may be temporarily clustered through flexible grouping to enhance their achievement of the intended outcomes of the curriculum or to enrich or extend their learning.

All students should be afforded access to a rigorous curriculum. In order to access such a curriculum, some students will need additional instructional supports. These instructional supports will vary depending on the different needs of the students. A student learning English as a second language might need focused support from staff to achieve academic language proficiency. A particularly able learner may require differentiated lessons which extend and enrich the curriculum to ensure appropriate academic challenge.

Tracking refers to the practice of placing students into classes throughout their school careers based on a fixed judgment of their potential or motivation. Flexible grouping / clustering refers to the flexible organization of students into smaller groups within the same classroom or shared with another classroom. Flexible grouping / clustering should be temporary, flexible, and for a specific instructional purpose.

Conditions necessary to succeed are measures of demonstrated achievement. Conditions necessary for success are not mere opinions of a student's potential or motivation. Grade point average, grades in previous courses, student's performance from multiple sources should be considered but not be exclusionary (e.g., advanced placement).

Combining students of all achievement levels enhances student learning. Conversely, tracking and permanent ability grouping compound the disadvantages of lower achieving students and sometimes adversely affect higher achieving students. We are committed to a curriculum which ensures that all students have an equitable opportunity to learn and which does not provide any student or group of students an advantage at the expense of others.

We recognize that all students do not learn at the same rate or may have a variety of learning styles. Diversity among students in their ability or motivation to achieve the intended outcomes of the curriculum cannot be accommodated by rigidly separating students. Short term and flexible groupings within heterogeneous classes, however, offer an equitable and effective means to promote achievement. Achievement for groups or individuals can also be advanced by enrichment or extension of curriculum and by implementing differentiated instruction.

Professional Learning Communities (PLC)

The essence of a Professional Learning Community is a focus on and a commitment to the learning of each student. Educators within this learning community embrace high levels of learning for all students. In order to achieve this purpose, the members of a PLC create and are guided by a clear and compelling vision of what the organization must become in order to help all students learn. Staff work together to clarify exactly what each student must learn, monitor each student's learning on a timely basis, provide systematic interventions that ensure students receive additional time and support for learning when they struggle, and extend and enrich learning when students have already mastered the intended outcomes. PLCs are dedicated to ensure that all students learn essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Four questions that sum up the work of the PLC are:

- 1. What do we want students to know and do? (Outcomes)**
- 2. How do we know if they have achieved what we want them to know and do (assessment)?**
- 3. What do we do if they do not achieve what we want them to know and do (re-teaching)?**
- 4. What do we do for students who need to move beyond (enrichment)?**

Components Necessary to Build Successful PLCs

- Collaborative culture with a focus on learning for all
- Collective inquiry into best practice and current reality
- Action orientation: Learning by Doing
- A commitment to continuous improvement
- Results orientation

Collaborative Culture With a Focus on Learning for All: A PLC is composed of collaborative teams whose members work interdependently to achieve common goals linked to the purpose of learning for all. The team is the engine that drives the PLC effort and the fundamental building block of the organization. It is difficult to overstate the importance of collaborative teams in the improvement process. Collaboration is a means to an end, not the end itself. In many schools, staff members are willing to collaborate on a variety of topics as long as the focus of the conversation stops at their classroom door. In a PLC, collaboration represents a systematic process in which teachers work together interdependently in order to impact their classroom practice in ways that will lead to better results for their students, for their team, and for their school. Therefore, their collaboration centers around certain critical questions:

1. What knowledge, skills, and disposition must each student acquire as a result of this course, grade level, and/or unit of instruction?
2. What evidence will we gather to monitor student learning on a timely basis?
3. How will we provide students with additional time and support in a timely, directive, and systematic way when they experience difficulty in their learning?
4. How will we enrich the learning of students who are already proficient?
5. How can we use S.M.A.R.T. goals and evidence of student learning to inform and improve our practice?

Collective Inquiry Into Best Practice and Current Reality: The staff will engage in collective inquiry into both best practices in teaching and best practices in learning. They also inquire about their current reality—including their present practices and the levels of achievement of their students. Through collaborative discussion, teachers attempt to arrive at consensus on vital questions by building shared knowledge rather than pooling opinions. Teachers develop an acute sense of curiosity and openness to new possibilities. Collective inquiry enables team members to develop new skills and capabilities that in turn lead to new experiences and awareness. Gradually, this heightened awareness transforms into fundamental shifts in attitudes, beliefs and habits, which over time, transform the culture of the school.

Working together to build shared knowledge on the best way to achieve goals and meet the needs of clients is exactly what professionals in any field are expected to do, whether it is curing the patient, winning the lawsuit, or helping all students learn. Members of a professional learning community are expected to work and learn together.

Action Orientation: Learning by Doing: Teachers participating in PLCs become action oriented; they move quickly to turn aspirations into actions and visions into reality. They understand that the most powerful learning always occurs in a context of taking action, and they value

engagement and experience as the most effective teachers. In fact, the very reason that teachers work together in teams and engage in collective inquiry is to serve as catalysts for action. Members of PLCs recognize that learning by doing develops a deeper and more profound knowledge and greater commitment than learning by reading, listening, planning or thinking. Traditional schools have developed a variety of strategies to resist taking meaningful actions, preferring the comfort of the familiar. Professional learning communities recognize that until members of the organization “act” differently, there is no reason to anticipate different results. They avoid paralysis by analysis and overcome inertia with action.

A Commitment to Continuous Improvement: Inherent to a PLC are a persistent anxiety with the status quo and a constant search for a better way to achieve goals that accomplish the purpose of the organization. Systematic processes engage each member of the organization in an ongoing cycle of:

- Gathering evidence of current levels of student learning
- Developing strategies and ideas to build on strengths and address weaknesses in that learning
- Implementing those strategies and ideas
- Analyzing the impact of the changes to discover what was effective and what was not
- Applying new knowledge in the next cycle of continuous improvement

The goal is not simply to learn a new strategy, but instead to create conditions for perpetual learning—an environment in which innovation and experimentation are viewed not as tasks to be accomplished or projects to be completed but as ways of conducting day-to-day business—forever.

Results Orientation. Finally, teachers working in a PLC realize that all of their efforts in these areas—a focus on learning, collaborative teams, collective inquiry, action orientation, and continuous improvement—must be assessed on the basis of results rather than intentions. Unless initiatives are subjected to ongoing assessment on the basis of tangible results, they do not represent purposeful improvement.

This focus on results leads each team to develop and pursue measurable improvement goals that are aligned to school and district goals for learning. This goal-oriented focus will drive teams to create a series of common formative assessments that are administered to students multiple times throughout the year to gather ongoing evidence of student learning. Teams of teachers will review the results from these assessments in an effort to identify and address program concerns (areas of learning where many students are experiencing difficulty). Assessment results will also assist teachers to discover strengths and weaknesses in their individual teaching in order to learn from one another. Most importantly, the assessments are used to identify students who need additional time and support for learning. Frequent common formative assessments represent one of the most powerful tools in teaching and learning (DuFour, 2004).

Common Assessment

Assessment of student learning aligns with curriculum and guides instruction. Teams will design common formative and common summative assessments. The criteria for common assessments are:

- Whether summative or formative in nature, are collaboratively designed in advance of instruction by all of the teachers who will use them
- Common assessments generate accurate data that are used to improved student learning
- Quantity and the strategic placement of small, frequent, common formative assessments help teams identify what their learners have mastered and what they have no regarding specific learning targets s so that the teacher can make timely, targeted, and sufficient changes before the common summative assessment
- Common summative assessments are used at the conclusion of teaching all essential standards so that teams can certify learning of all essential standards.

1. The assessment system will consist of both summative assessment OF learning and formative assessment FOR learning.

a) Assessments of student learning should measure national and state standards and benchmarks.

b) Assessments are varied so that all students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate what they know and are able to do.

c) Assessments are used to report individual progress to students and their parents, to determine the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and/or to report general progress to the community for public accountability.

d) Assessment provides opportunities for comparisons of achievement by students with that of other students in the county, state and nation.

2. Assessments will meet five standards of quality:

a) The achievement target is clearly defined and appropriate.

b) The purpose(s) for the assessment (uses and users) are clear.

c) The method of assessment is aligned with the identified target and purpose.

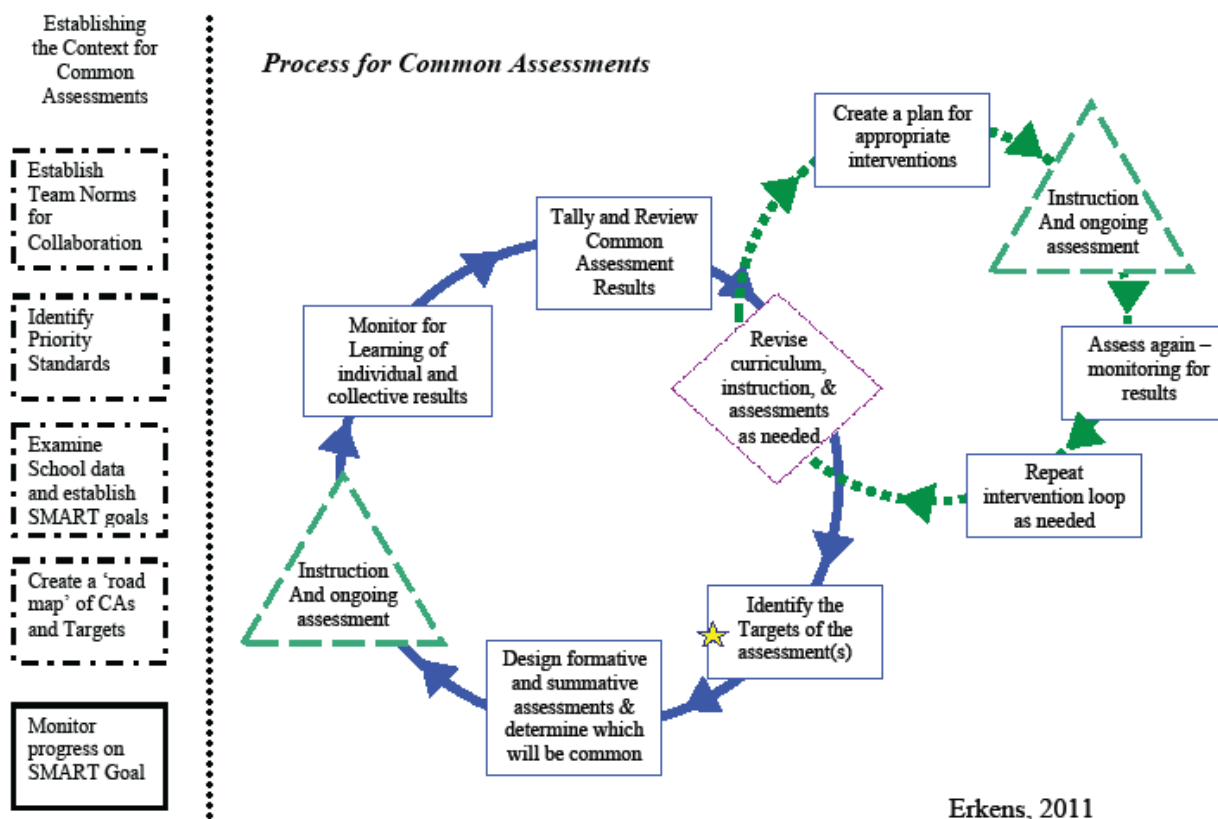
d) The sample of student work collected is representative and sufficient to provide a clear picture of student achievement.

e) Sources of extraneous interference are controlled (e.g., assessment readability, clarity of directions, and environmental distractions).

A high-quality assessment system relies on a variety of assessments that provide timely and understandable information to all who need it, so instructional decisions which maximize student success can be made.

A comprehensive assessment system does the following:

1. Defines the achievement expectations to be assessed.
2. Understands who is to use assessment results and how.
3. Decides when and how achievement will be assessed.
4. Communicates results effectively to the intended users.



Assessment FOR Learning

When teachers use assessment FOR learning, they generate a continuous flow of formative information about student achievement during the instructional process. Such feedback provides teachers, parents and students with valuable information about a student's strengths and places where additional instruction and scaffolding (temporary supports provided learners to promote success on the benchmarks) may be needed. Assessment FOR learning is implemented by teachers:

1. Understanding and articulating to students the achievement targets that they are to hit in advance of the teaching.
2. Informing their students about those learning goals in terms that students understand from the very beginning.
3. Becoming assessment literate so they can transform those expectations into assessment exercises and scoring procedures that accurately reflect student achievement.
4. Using classroom assessments to build students' confidence in themselves as learners, helping them take responsibility for their own learning, which lays the foundation for lifelong learning.
5. Translating classroom assessment results into frequent, descriptive (versus judgmental) feedback for students, providing them with specific insights regarding their strengths as well as how to improve.
6. Adjusting instruction continuously based on the results of classroom assessments.
7. Engaging students in regular self-assessment with standards held constant so they can watch themselves grow over time and thus learn to take charge of their own success.
8. Involving students actively in communication with their teachers and families regarding their achievement status and improvement.
9. Making sure that students understand how the achievement targets that they strive to hit now relate to those that will come later.

Assessment OF Learning

Assessment OF learning works to document individual or group achievement on mastery of the standards, benchmarks or grade level content expectations. It measures achievement status at a point in time for the purposes of gathering and reporting evidence of learning. This data provides the district with information necessary to make decisions about resource allocation and professional development to ensure equitable learning for all students. Examples include unit/course/grade level final exams given by classroom teachers, and state or district-mandated standardized tests. Summative assessments of learning can take the form of exams, tests, quizzes, projects, performances, interviews, reports, and oral presentations designed primarily for the purposes of educational program planning or grading.

Systemic school reform supports the alignment of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and evaluation. If assessment is to serve its purposes, it must parallel what we expect students to know and be able to do as defined by local, state and national curriculum standards. The assessment methods and tools we use should capture authentic demonstrations of student work. This includes the things they make, their oral and written discourse, and their performances. These kinds of assessments are no longer separate events but rather integral aspects of activities that demonstrate learning. Instruction and assessment are becoming increasingly seamless. This melding will improve our ability to inform students and their parents about meaningful learning, to adjust teaching, and to modify the curriculum.

Multiple methods of assessment are used to ensure equity. A single measure is often an inadequate indicator of what a student has learned. All students should be afforded opportunities to demonstrate what they know and are able to do. Whatever measure is used to assess and evaluate student learning, it must meet established standards which are fair, objective and unbiased.

Visible Teaching, Learning and Assessing

John Hattie (2009) synthesized over 800 met-analyses on factors impacting student achievement in his book *Visible Learning*. He concluded that the biggest factors are for improvements when:

1. **Teachers work in collaborative teams.**
2. Teacher **teams clarify the essential learning for each student.**
3. Teacher **teams frequently gather evidence of student learning.**
4. Teacher **teams identify and implement the most powerful instructional strategies,** based on analysis of evidence of student learning.
5. The **school provides a collaborative culture where participants feel safe to learn, re-learn, and explore teaching and learning.**

Hattie (2012) states that it is critical that teaching and learning are visible. The teaching must be visible to the student and that learning must be visible to the teacher. The more that student becomes the teacher and the more the teacher becomes the learner, then the more successful the outcomes will be. **Hattie (2012) states that there are six items that will lead towards excellence in education:**

1. Teachers are among **the most powerful influences in learning.**
2. Teachers need to be **directive, influential, caring and actively engaged** in the passion of teaching and learning.
3. Teachers **need to be aware of what each and every student is thinking and knowing**, to construct meaning and meaningful experiences in light of this knowledge, and have proficient knowledge and understanding of their content to **provide meaningful and appropriate feedback** such that each student moves progressively through the curriculum levels.
4. Teachers **need to know the learning intention and success criteria of their lessons**, know how well they are attaining these criteria for all students, and know where to go next in light of the gap between students' current knowledge and understanding and the success criteria of "Where are you going?", "How are you going?", and "Where to next?"
5. Teachers need to **move from the single idea to multiple ideas**, and to relate and then extend these ideas such that learners construct and reconstruct knowledge and ideas. It is not the knowledge or ideas, but the learner's construction of this knowledge and these ideas that is critical.
6. School leaders and teachers need to create school, staffroom and classroom environments where **error is welcomed as a learning opportunity, where discarding incorrect knowledge and understandings is welcomed, and where participants can feel safe to learn, re-learn, and explore knowledge and understanding.**

VISIBLE ASSESSING Criteria...

- Identifies and communicates **challenging success criteria in checklists and rubrics.**
- **Pre-assesses** to determine what students already know and can do.
- **Checks for understanding and achievement** of learning intentions.
- **Provides** specific **descriptive feedback.**
- Engages **students in self-assessment of their work**, what they learn, and how they learn.
- **Uses existing products or samples** as models for student products.
- **Uses assessments aligned with objectives/learning intentions/standards and instructional processes.**
- Provides **choices in assessment products.**
- **Engages students in giving specific feedback to peers and to the teacher.**
- **Involves students in setting learning goals.**

Examine the Crosswalk to Influences Identified by Hattie with Medium to High Effect Sizes...	Effect Size	Read about It in Hattie (2009)
Self-reported grades	d = 1.28	p. 43-44
Providing formative evaluation	d = .90	p. 181
Feedback	d = .73	p. 173-178
Self-verbalization and self-questioning	d = .64	p. 192-193
Study skills	d = .59	p. 189-192
Worked examples	d = .57	p. 172-173
Goals	d = .56	p. 162-167
Peer tutoring	d = .55	p. 186-187
Self-concept	d = .43	p. 46-47

Summary of Visible Assessing

Visible Assessing is crucial because it links *Visible Teaching* and *Visible Learning*. **Clear learning intentions/objectives provide the foundation for visible assessing**; visible assessing practices clarify learning intentions by making success criteria concrete and transparent for students. Moreover, effective teachers apply learning intentions to **pre-assess** students to determine what they know and can do to differentiate instruction. This is especially important given the research, “finding that most of the material taught in a class is already known by the students (Hattie, 2009, p. 32). In this 21st century information is doubling every year and a half; the necessity to focus on developing 21st century skills behooves us to determine when to reteach, accelerate, or enrich. Visible assessing practices provide tools for ensuring that is being *taught* is what needs to be *learned*.

For visible assessing, **teachers use checklists, rubrics, and worked examples** for, “demonstrating to students what success looks like and thus what the goal could be for their own learning” (Hattie, 2009, p. 172). They teach students how to use rubrics and checklists to reflect on what they do well and how they can improve. Through **self-questioning, self-verbalizing, and self-reported grades students learn to establish concrete learning goals**; learning becomes more personalized and engaging. Such practices empower students thereby helping them to grow positive self-concepts.

Feedback is an important characteristic of visible assessing. In a classroom where visible assessing is evident, **not only do teachers give specific feedback to students, students also give specific feedback to teachers and to their peers**. Peer tutoring provides, “many academic and social benefits for those tutoring *and* those being tutored” (Hattie, 2009, 187).

Visible assessing practices encompass assessment **FOR** learning strategies outlined by the ETS Assessment Training Institute directed by Stiggins. Assessment **FOR** learning differs from assessment **OF** learning. Assessment **OF** Learning is used to determine how much students have learned as of a particular point in time in order to report achievement status to others.

Assessment FOR Learning includes those activities undertaken by teachers and by their students [that] provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged (Black & Wiliam, 1998).

The next table summarizes seven assessments **FOR** learning strategies.

SEVEN ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING STRATEGIES

Stiggins, R.J., Portland, Oregon: ETS Assessment Training Institute-www.ets.org/ati.

Assessment FOR Learning Strategy	Description
1. Share understandable vision of the learning target.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the target (achievement expectation) prior to the lesson or assignment. • Provide focused targets—not too many. • State target in clear terms. • Ask students to brainstorm characteristics of quality work. • Show samples of high and low quality work and alter list of quality work. • Help students to see how they already know much of what is required.
2. Use models of strong and weak work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask student to apply rubric to samples and justify scores. • Begin with single trait and then move to multiple traits. • Share examples of products or performances from life beyond school. • Model creating the product or performance yourself.
3. Offer descriptive feedback instead of grades.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect the learning target. • Tell how close students are to achieving the target. • Be selective in what feedback is provided. • Relate what the learner accomplished and the learner's "next steps."
4. Teach students to self-assess.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help students identify strengths and areas for improvement. • Encourage students to maintain a list of learning targets and identify that have been mastered.
5. Design lessons to focus on one aspect of quality at a time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a task analysis. • Use the rubric as a guide to identify aspects of quality.
6. Teach students to revise by practicing on other people's work and then on their own work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show how you would revise a product or performance and then let them revise a similar, but different piece. • Ask students to analyze your work. • Ask students to revise a work in progress, revising for the trait discussed.
7. Engage students in self-reflection and goal setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a process paper. • Write a letter to parents explaining progress. • Tell a partner how they arrived at an answer. • Write a description of quality. • Reflect on growth: <i>Here's what I have learned...Here's what I need to work on.</i> • Encourage student led parent conferences.

Learning Profiles

There are many variables that impact how a student learns and their profile. Each student profile is dynamic and will change as a student grows. Gregory (2012) identifies six areas that determine the elements of a learning profile:

1. Student strong emotions may generate high interest and may become part of prior knowledge
2. Sensory –based differences: preference based upon how they process information through their senses (visual/verbal, visual/iconic, kinesthetic and tactile)
3. Differences in learning styles – the four similar learning-styles are analytical, emotional, pragmatic, and expressive
4. Differences in multiple intelligences – based upon Gardner and the eight intelligences (verbal-linguistic, musical-rhythmic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal, and naturalistic)
5. Gender differences – boys and girls have different needs in the learning process

6. Cultural differences – all students – regardless of ethnicity – have cultural differences that influence their learning, behavior and attitude towards learning.

Literacy Across All Areas

Schmoker (2011) states that importance of high levels of literacy or reading, writing and speaking cannot be overemphasized in K-12 education. Literacy is the foundation to learning in every subject. There are four standards for success or habits of mind that can powerfully inform student reading, writing, and speaking in every discipline. These standards are:

1. Read to infer/interpret/draw conclusions
2. Support arguments with evidence
3. Resolve conflicting views encountered in source documents
4. Solve complex problems with no obvious answer

Instructional Strategies

To meet the diverse learning needs of today's students, educators must understand and know when to use specialized instructional strategies and techniques.

Ainsworth (2010) organizes instructional strategies into six categories. These categories are 21st century learning skills, research-based effective teaching strategies, differentiated strategies, response to intervention strategies, special education strategies, and English language learners strategies. These lists are only the beginning of what types of strategies need to be considered when implementing curriculum.

21st Century Learning Skills

Incorporating 21st century learning skills into the design of rigorous curricula is essential for providing students with the opportunity to exercise a variety of skills that are arguably indispensable to life in today's world society.

- Authentic (genuine, valid, real)
- Relevant to life situations and contexts
- Interdisciplinary (as distinguished from "thematic")
- Use embedded informational technologies
- Highly motivational, not routine
- Mentally stimulating, thought-provoking
- Incorporate the full spectrum of thinking-skill rigor, especially: reasoning, application, analysis, synthesis, creativity, self-assessment and reflection
- Include both collaborative and individual work

Research-Based Effective Teaching Strategies

To know and understand how to apply research-based effective teaching strategies adds greatly to a teacher's instructional expertise and is perhaps more important than anything they do to advance student learning.

- Identifying similarities and differences
- Summarizing and note taking
- Reinforcing effort and providing recognition
- Homework and practice
- Nonlinguistic representations
- Cooperative learning
- Setting objectives and providing feedback
- Generating and testing hypotheses
- Cues, questions and advanced organizers

Differentiation Strategies

Differentiation strategies are those additional supports that educators can use during lessons to modify or adjust instruction for students who need a different approach in order to understand.

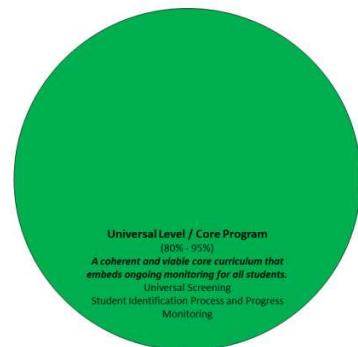
- Multiple intelligences
- Jigsaw
- Varying organizers
- Varied texts and supplementary materials
- "Tiered" lessons and products (learning tasks designed at different levels of complexity according to students' readiness levels)
- Learning contracts
- Small-group instruction
- Group investigation
- Varied questioning strategies
- Varied homework
- "Compacting" (streamlining or modifying basic content to provide students with tiered assignments)

Intervention Strategies

Responses to intervention is a multi-step approach to providing services and interventions to students who struggle with learning at increasing levels of intensity.

Tier 1 (Universal) strategies for all students include, but are not limited to:

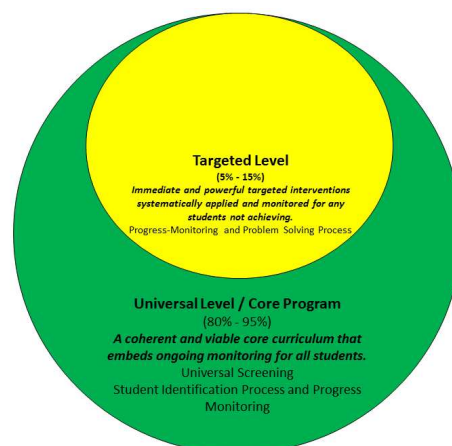
- Differentiated instruction (content, process, product)
- Additional instructional time
- Change of environment
- Assistive technology
- Graphic organizers
- Preteach/reteach
- Change pace
- Repetition
- Systematic, sequential instruction
- Modified curriculum
- Manipulatives
- Collaborative learning activities
- Direct/explicit instructions
- "Chunking" (presenting information to students in smaller "chunks")
- Addressing learning modalities (e.g. visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, smell, taste)
- Accommodating learning-style preferences
- Providing additional guided practice
- Research-based effective teaching strategies (see related category)
- Cueing and signaling
- Appropriate questions and response skills
- Best practice **reading strategies**
 - read aloud
 - think aloud
 - shared reading
 - guided reading
 - self-selected reading.
- Model **reading strategies**
 - using prior knowledge
 - sampling a page for readability
 - summarizing



- predicting and making text-based inferences
- determining importance
- generating literal, clarifying, and inferential questions
- constructing sensory images (making pictures in one's mind)
- making connections (text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world)
- taking notes
- locating, using and analyzing text features (e.g. transition words, subheadings, bold/italics)
- using text structure (clues, e.g. chronological, cause/effect, compare/contrast, proposition and support, description, classification, logical sequential)
- using metacognition strategies for understanding text.
- Facilitate **comprehension strategies**
 - making connections
 - questioning
 - visualizing
 - inferring
 - determining importance
 - synthesizing information
 - self-monitoring or fix-up
 - predicting
 - summarizing
- Model the use of **graphic organizers**: sequence organizers (chains, cycle), concept development (mind map), compare/contrast organizers (Venn diagrams, comparison charts), organizers (word web, concept map), evaluation organizers (charts, scales), categorize/classify organizers (categories, tree) relational organizers (fish bone, pie chart).

Tier 2 (Targeted) strategies provide highly individualized assistance to students *in addition to the Tier 1 strategies* that *all* students receive. Tier 2 strategies should *supplement* the instruction of the teacher by providing additional resources to help struggling students. Tier 2 strategies include, but are not limited to:

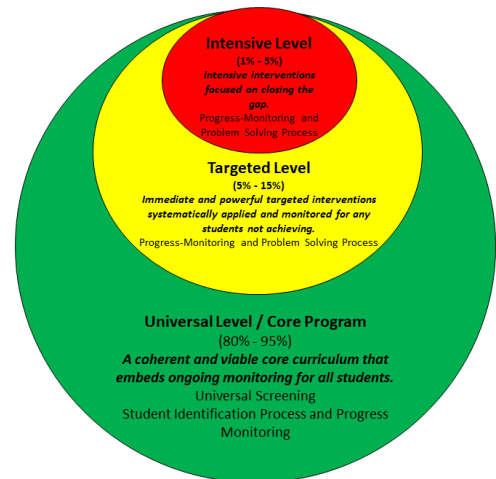
- Evaluation of Tier 1 interventions
- Increased intervention frequency and intensity, and increased duration of instruction
- Personal Literacy/Math/Behavior Plan
- Matching of specific strategy to specific skills and changing as needed
- Inclusion of social worker, reading specialist/coach, math specialist/coach
- Double-dosing of instruction
- Before- or after-school tutorial/intervention program
- Adult or student mentor
- Computer-assisted instruction or device
- Study skills class
- Study buddy
- Social skills class
- Parent conference
- Alteration of class schedule (if possible)
- Homework hotline
- Video instruction
- Accelerated courses
- Computerized (content) programs



- Advance organizers
- Cross-class courses
- Conducting a task analysis
- Enhanced tutorials
- More rigorous curriculum

Tier 3 (Intensive) strategies should *supplement* the Tier 2 intervention strategies with further resources used by the teacher to help struggling students. Tier 3 strategies include, but are not limited to:

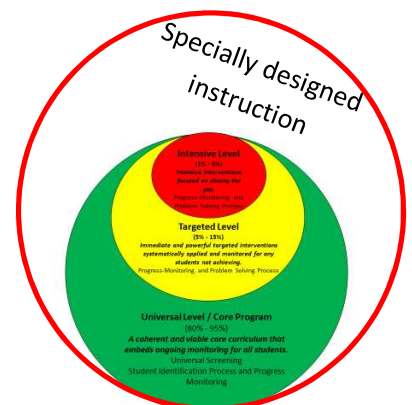
- Evaluation of effectiveness of Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions
- Increased intervention frequency, intensity and duration
- Intensive, core, adult support
- RtI Literacy and/or Math Plan
- RtI behavior plan (assessment, contract, reinforcement, and modeling)
- Inclusion of occupational therapist, speech and language pathologist, paraprofessional, school psychologist, social worker
- Modification of cooperative group
- Individualized intervention
- Triple-dosing of instruction
- Increased opportunities to use learning-style preferences
- Evaluation of teaching style
- Increased use of sensory modalities
- Individual differentiated content, process and/or product
- Evaluation and modification of learning environment
- Development of a focus support program, individual- or small-group pull-out, or resource program for intensive incremental skills



Specially Designed Instruction

Accommodations as per IEP (standards of performance and/or core content are NOT changed)

- Additional time
- Nonlinguistic representations via computer
- Technology (high, medium, or low); alpha smart:word recognition software, text readers
- Small group collaboration



Modifications as per IEP (content, instruction, and/or performances are changed)

- Menu of products
- Match process to learning style
- Modify quantity of work
- Dictation
- Computer graphics
- Comparison matrix
- Extended time
- Scaffold information
- Differentiate the content, process or product

- Change in pace
- Accessible texts

Cognitive Strategies Designed for Individual Students (Delivery of direct instruction designed to meet specific disability)

- Explicit direct instruction to address the area of disability
- Modeling and demonstration
- Visual, auditory, tactical, and/or kinesthetic instruction
- Advance organizers (with instructions)
- Mnemonics or memory strategies
- Frequent and short assessments
- Task analysis with student checklist (demonstrated)

Behavioral Strategies Designed for Individual Students

- Consistent reward system
- Explicit feedback on acceptable and non-acceptable behavior
- Use of tangible and nontangible incentives/rewards

Strategies for English Language Learners

- Daily, explicit, and systematic ELD/ESL/ENL curriculum instruction
- Flexible grouping
- Cooperative learning groups
- Questioning strategies appropriate to student's level of language acquisition
- Active participation and interactive learning experiences
- Differentiated instruction

ELL Sheltered Instruction strategies appropriate to make content comprehensible:

- Simplification of the input (verbal or written instructions)
- Scaffolding of information
- Total Physical Response (students respond with body movements to show comprehension)
- Connections to primary language and cultures
- Sufficient "think time"
- Sufficient practice and reinforcement activities
- Ongoing comprehension checks (both oral and written)
- Use of contextual clues
- Frequent checks for understanding
- Learning that is student-centered and content driven
- Accessing of student's prior knowledge; building background knowledge
- Use of realia (words and expressions for culture-specific material things), visuals, graphic organizers
- Addressing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills throughout instruction

Teaching with Webb's Depth of Knowledge Framework

There are many frameworks for measuring cognitive demand. Webb's Depth of Knowledge Framework (2002), outlines four levels of cognitive demand that are applicable to all content levels:

1. Level 1 is Recall and is characterized by simple retelling or recitation of facts or a procedure.
2. Level 2 is Skill/Concept and necessitates some type of decision-making. The response to a prompt will not be automatic and will require more than one step for the student to arrive at the answer.
3. Level 3 is Strategic Thinking. This is where reasoning becomes more complex and demanding. Tasks of this variety require greater planning, abstraction, evidence, and justification from the student. A student engaged in Level 3 is often required to form a hypothesis or conjecture.
4. Level 4 is Extended Thinking and manifests itself in tasks that require an extended period of time utilizing complex thinking and planning. Level 4 tasks compel students to make connections within a discipline and/or to other disciplines. More than likely, there are multiple solutions to a problem and multiple pathways for attaining a solution. Level 4 tasks are not typically found in large-scale assessments as they usually require multiple days of thought and consideration by the student. Students should be applying what they know to new situations to come up with complex answers and justifications.

It is important to note that Depth of Knowledge levels are not discrete but rather they are on a continuum. For this reason, it is important to discuss test items and be familiar with DOK levels in order to ensure that students apply their skills and knowledge in the ways that encourage creativity, proficiency, and independence. Furthermore, DOK levels do not necessarily involve steps to solving a problem but rather how the students are being asked to apply their skills and knowledge. So while multi-digit multiplication involves more than one step, it is not necessarily a level 2 DOK because students are still applying a procedure.

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1. **Recall & Reproduction** – Memorize something whether simple or complex
2. **Basic Application** -- Acting on the information in some way, need to understand relationships,
3. **Strategic Thinking**– Need reasoning and plan a strategy, non-routine, drawing on prior knowledge, Now not one right answer, but multiple ways to get to the answer or multiple answers
4. **Extended Thinking** – Have to synthesize information from multiple texts, and then put together presentation in a unique way

Teaching with the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's taxonomy was developed in the 1950's and is still used today to categorize ways of learning and thinking in a hierarchical structure. A revised model was developed in the 1990's to better fit educational practices of the 21st century. It is important to employ the revised Bloom's taxonomy to help plan effective instruction and challenge students to move from the most basic skills (remembering) to more complex learning which leads to higher order thinking (creating).

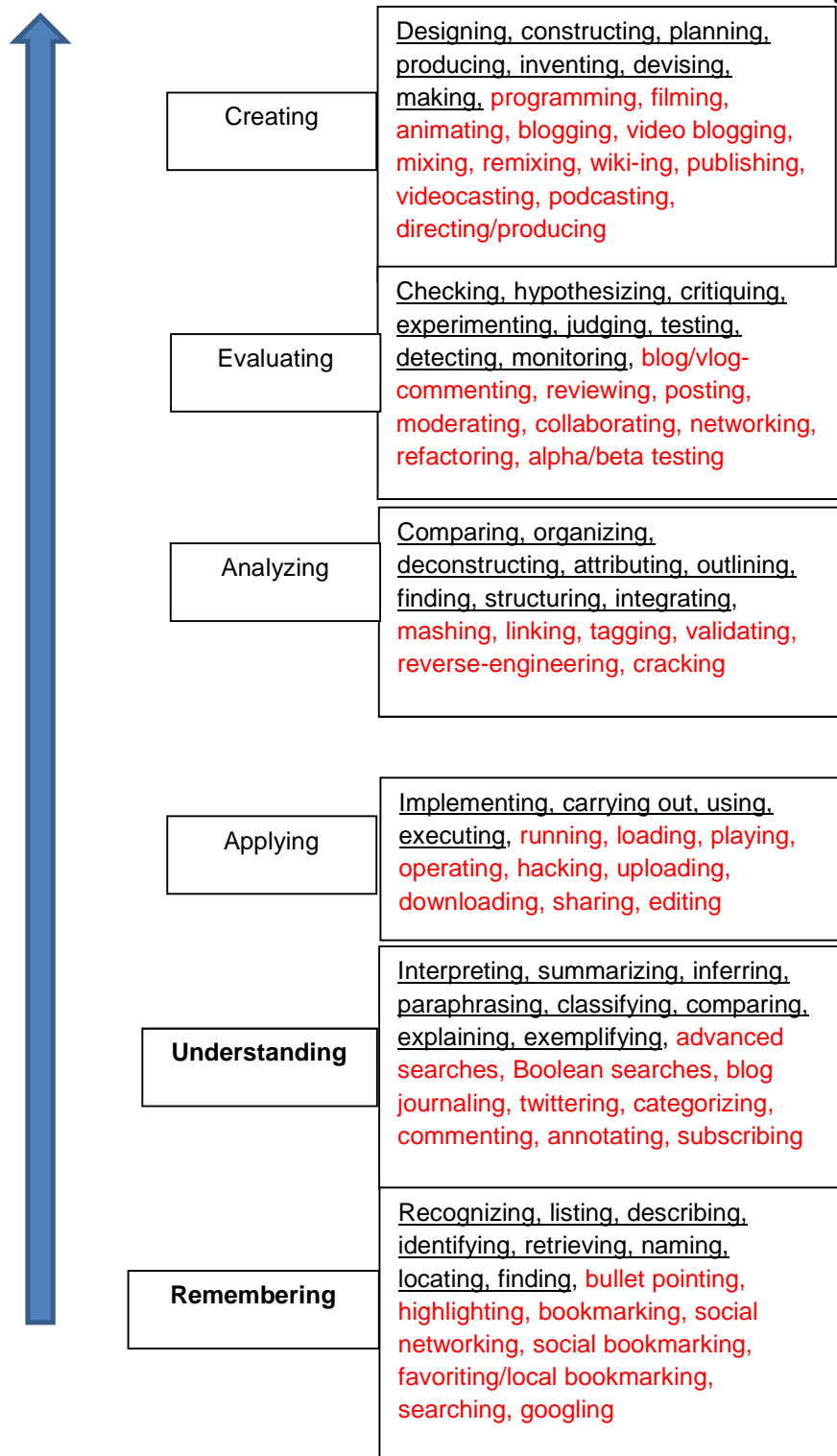
Bloom's Taxonomy

Level	Example Question	Example Question	Tasks
Creating	Putting elements together to form a coherent or functional whole; reorganizing elements into a new pattern or structure through generating, planning, or producing	can the student create new product or point of view?.	assemble, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, write
Evaluating	Marking judgments based on criteria and standards through checking and critiquing	can the student justify a stand or decision?	appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, evaluate
Analyzing	Breaking material into constituent parts, determining how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose through differentiating, organizing, and attributing	can the student distinguish between the different parts?	appraise, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test:
Applying	Carrying out or using a procedure through executing or implementing	can the student use the information in a new way?	choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write.
Understanding	Constructing meaning from oral, written, and graphic messages through interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, and explaining	can the student explain ideas or concepts?	classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate, paraphrase
Remembering	Retrieving, recognizing, and recalling relevant knowledge from long-term memory	Can the student recall or remember the information?	define, duplicate, list, memorize, recall, repeat, reproduce state

Bloom's Digital Taxonomy Map

Elements colored in **black** and **underlined** are recognized and existing verbs.

Elements colored in **red** are new digital verbs.



Curriculum Procedures

These guidelines guide the construction and delivery of our curriculum for all subject areas and grade levels. The concluding component of the Curriculum Guidelines is a set of Procedures. The Procedural Guidelines establish procedures to guide the actual construction of the K-12 curriculum.

The Procedural Guidelines respond to the following eight questions:

- I. Who constructs the curriculum?
- II. What steps are followed to produce the curriculum?
- III. What are the content areas of the curriculum?
- IV. What are the components of the curriculum and according to what format will these components be written?
- V. How are instructional resources procured and documented?
- VI. What provisions are made for professional development activities that build understanding of the curriculum, effective teaching, and valid assessment of student learning?
- VII. How is the curriculum presented to all concerned groups?
- VIII. How does the District ensure that the curriculum is being delivered?

Responsibility for Constructing the Curriculum

Office of Assistant Superintendent will....	Provide monitoring and support of curriculum development and implementation, collaborate with teacher writing team members and consultants, and ensure that the work of the initiative is aligned to the district's overall plan for increasing student achievement.
Building leadership will...	Ensure teacher participation in professional development, provide regular opportunities for teachers to collaboratively plan and implement instruction aligned to the standards and curriculum, monitor implementation of the curriculum, and provide teachers with ongoing meaningful feedback.
Teachers will.....	Attend and actively participate in professional development, implement the curriculum in every classroom for every child on every day, and regularly collaborate with grade level/department colleagues to plan and implement instruction aligned to the standards and curriculum documents.
Curriculum Writers will....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write curriculum that includes standards, GLEs/GSEs, benchmarks, variety of assessments, and best instructional practices • Develop consistent grade level assessments (rubrics) • Create grade level map • Review and edit work
Curriculum Task Force will....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet monthly after school (Sept.- June) to oversee entire process during development cycle • Serve as a liaison to colleagues • Review research, data, and literature,

	standards, and GLSS/GSEs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write the mission statement and philosophy • Align (map) current curriculum with standards, GLEs/GSEs, NEASC standards • Work with new grade level writers • Facilitate the selection of resources, e.g. core books • Select glossary words • Review all documents
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The District web site will provide clear communication regarding the processes and timelines for curriculum development in order to facilitate opportunities for participation in the process by all of our stakeholders. The posting will provide an up-to-date listing of the anticipated curriculum projects for the school year and contact information for the staff member facilitating that project. The dates of the District Framework and Board Curriculum Committees will be posted.

All approved curriculum documents will be referred by the Assistant Superintendent to the Superintendent and the School Committee for review and adoption.

Curriculum Design Cycle

1. The curriculum is constructed by content area in accordance with a five-phase Design Cycle. The phases are:

Phase One - Research and Study

Current research and best practice are reviewed to update knowledge in the field including new understandings regarding teaching and learning when appropriate. Local assessment data will be analyzed to determine how well students are performing.

Phase Two - Drafting the Curriculum Framework

A curriculum framework is drafted. . Each component of the document is reviewed by the task force committee and curriculum staff during writing, and outside consultants as deemed necessary by the committee and the Assistant Superintendent.

Phase Three – Adoption and Implementation

Once the curriculum is adopted, teachers are provided with the necessary resources and training to implement it at the classroom level. During this phase, teachers will implement appropriate differentiation techniques, curricular integration, and standards-based common assessments.

Phase Four - Monitoring

Implementation of the curriculum will be supervised by building administrators. The administrators may seek support from the appropriate leadership in understanding the particular curriculum and instructional practices associated with it. While being delivered in schools, the curriculum may be adjusted to improve student learning, and additional support will be provided to teachers as needed.

Phase Five - Evaluation

The curriculum will be reviewed to assess the extent to which all students have met the standards of achievement it sets, and to begin planning for Phase One of the next cycle. This evaluation can be based on a variety of data, including, but not limited to, standardized assessment data, common assessments, parent and staff surveys, and performance assessments. It will also be evaluated for its compatibility with the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process.

Any component of the curriculum may be slightly modified during any phase of the design cycle upon approval of the content coordinator and the Assistant Superintendent. However, major modifications or changes will have to follow the original process of new curriculum development and will be rewritten and submitted to the Curriculum Taskforce Committee.

2. The Assistant Superintendent annually schedules the cycles for all content areas and sets timelines for the completion of tasks and the delivery of products.

Knowledge is increasing dramatically in every content area. New discoveries, modes of inquiry, and communication technologies accelerate the rate of change, rapidly outdated information in a field of study. Understanding about teaching and learning also evolves. Both the increase in academic knowledge, and its uses for educating young people, must be considered when planning the curriculum. The five-phase-cycle described here assures that the curriculum will be kept current. It also enables the District to allocate and manage resources efficiently when constructing the curriculum. Moreover, it provides vehicles for involving all pertinent staff in curriculum planning, and on-going assessment of instructional programs with input from parents and community members.

Content Areas

1. Curriculum will be designed for each of the following content areas:

- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Fine Arts (Visual Arts & Music)
- Applied Arts
- Physical Education & Health
- Social/Emotional (Behavior & Comprehensive Guidance)
- World Languages
- Early Childhood
- Alternate Assessment Expectations

2. For each content area, curriculum documents/courses will be produced following the format established by the district.

Knowledge must be organized in order to construct a curriculum. Categories of subject matter provide a basis for ordering what students are expected to learn and increase the chances that important content is neither omitted nor duplicated during a student's school career. The content areas of the curriculum encompass all fields of learning within general education.. The curriculum for each content area encompasses its constituent disciplines. For example, Science includes life sciences, physical sciences, and earth/space sciences; and Fine Arts include music, visual arts, and performing arts. Integration of learning can be accomplished by merging disciplines within a content area or by coordinating the study of subject matter from various content areas of the

curriculum. For example, chemistry and biology could be merged within science, or the study of American History in social studies could be coordinated with the study of American Literature in English Language Arts. Structuring curriculum by content area supports the learning of essential concepts both within and among the fields of study generally considered vital for the development of a well-rounded person.

Curriculum Components & Format

1. A curriculum document/s for each content area is written following a uniform format that is consistent with these guidelines.
2. The curriculum document consists of the following components:
 - **K-12 Content Standards**
 - **Curriculum Framework** (unpacked standards, benchmarks, strategies, resources, assessments)
 - **Curriculum Map**
 - **Curriculum Mission & Vision**
 - **Curriculum Glossary**
 - **Assessment Questions**
 - **Rubric(s)**
 - **Checklist**
 - **Learning Targets/Essential Learning Targets/Goals**
 - **Units of Study**
 - **Common Assessments** – The district has begun the process of developing standards-based common assessments that:
 - a. are aligned and cited with the standards and benchmarks
 - b. use an assessment method that reflects the content and complexity of the achievement target,
 - c. effectively employ a variety of assessment methods that allow students to demonstrate their learning in multiple ways,
 - d. are developed through an evolutionary process that begins with focus on the essential objectives of a grade or course,
 - e. support the Professional Learning Community (PLC) by producing usable data, and
 - f. are used by all appropriate staff at the identified grade/course level.

The curriculum document for a course or grade level will include a summary of the progress on common assessment development.

Unit Key Concepts/Focus Questions – Articulates major ideas students are expected to comprehend as a result of each unit of study.

Unit Benchmarks - Statements of what students should know and are able to do as indicators that they are making progress toward meeting the content standards set for the course.

Unit Activities and Assessment Tasks – Examples of activities that may be used during the instructional process are designed to engage students in the content of the unit and measure whether, and to what degree, students have attained the benchmarks of the unit (assessment FOR learning).

Instructional Resources – This is a list of materials and technology that have been screened by the authoring committee, curriculum staff, and outside consultants as deemed necessary to support the teaching of the course. Each curriculum will contain a list of essential materials to be used, and may include a list of enrichment materials. The authoring committee will determine whether to report the resources by unit or as a single list at the end of the document.

Opportunities for Integration – A list of possible connections between key concepts within a course of study, and subject matter from other disciplines. This component of the curriculum may be delineated by unit, or at the end of the document for the course of study.

Authentic Applications - Descriptions of how the learning within a course of study is actually used in the world outside of school. It answers the question of “Where and when will I use this beyond school?” This component of the curriculum may be delineated by unit, or at the end of the document for the course of study.

The written curriculum, when constructed according to these guidelines, can be made available as a whole or in part to school district staff, parents, and members of the community. The use of a consistent format in the written curriculum enhances understanding of the various audiences that read it, including parents. Furthermore, teachers, especially those who are new to the profession, or assigned to teach a course for the first time, will find that a common curriculum format will enhance their understanding and effectiveness when teaching. Writing curriculum according to this format offers a rich opportunity for professional development. Participants are engaged by the format in thinking carefully about what is most important to teach, how best to assess student learning, how to bridge learning across content areas, and how to equip themselves for imaginative and effective instruction.

Instructional Resources (procured & documented)

GUIDELINES

1. A list of instructional resources is identified in the curriculum document for teaching each unit of study. Resources will be identified as either essential or enrichment. The list of essential resources will include materials formatted with universal design principles in mind. Universal design is achieved by providing a variety of materials that support multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement. This effort will increase the points of access to the curriculum, ensuring access to high standards for a diverse group of learners.
2. The list of instructional resources identified in a curriculum document may include published print materials, unpublished print materials, manipulatives, electronic resources, and learning activities that have been designed by local teachers. When selecting online electronic resources teachers should consider directing students to district, community library, and state provided subscription databases of information sources.
3. When selecting resources to support curricula developed around current events or potentially sensitive topics, special care must be taken to avoid bias. Lists of resources must be developed in a balanced manner and never to advance a political position or ideology. Such an agenda would be outside the parameters of ethical instruction.
4. The explosive growth of the internet as an information resource has been both an asset and a challenge. Lists of web sites should be routinely re-examined to ensure that they meet standards and are educationally sound. Web sites can be used in a variety of ways to support instruction and provide opportunities for critical thinking. This includes providing background information, examples of various viewpoints on a topic, and a source of information to support the development of discussion, debates, and essays. In the exploration of various viewpoints, it is essential to distinguish fact from opinion and maintain an overall balanced, unbiased approach with regard to instructional delivery and the materials used.
4. When teaching a unit, teachers are expected to use the essential resources identified in each unit of study. They are also encouraged to select materials from the district. They may also use enrichment resources at their own discretion provided they pertain to the unit topic, meet accepted quality standards, and are used to help students achieve the unit

benchmarks. Teachers are encouraged to submit enrichment resources they find beneficial to the content area coordinator to have them considered for addition to building/department/district media centers.

5. When appropriate, the task force committee of a curriculum document may recommend a textbook be adopted as an essential support for the course. Textbooks will be selected on the basis of their alignment with the benchmarks and standards of the course, and will, at minimum, be reviewed using the Instructional Resource Review Form. The recommendation of the task force committee will then be reviewed by additional staff with knowledge and experience in the content of the course. These additional reviewers may be staff members who teach at the same or similar grade levels or within the same department. If there is still some dissatisfaction with the recommendation following these two reviews, additional reviews may be sought from sources outside the school district (e.g., universities, professional associations and reputable research organizations) . Care will be taken to ensure that the textbook is of high quality, free of bias and developmentally appropriate for the grade for which it is intended.
6. Prior to phase three of the curriculum design cycle, all essential instructional resources are procured by the district. New instructional resources can be added during phase two, three, or four of the curriculum design cycle by recommendation and review by teachers, and other educational staff/specialists.
7. All essential instructional resources identified for a course of study are made available to all teachers expected to use them, utilizing district funds during an adoption year.
8. Enrichment resources, that are not already available, may be purchased with discretionary funds as they become available.

These guidelines provide for identification of appropriate instructional resources for teaching each unit of study. Teachers are expected to use essential resources and may choose from the enrichment resources or use other resources that enhance student learning. The repertoire of high quality instructional resources is continually evolving. If the appropriateness of instructional resources is challenged, they can be defended as screened and recommended in the curriculum guide or as enrichment items aligned with the benchmarks for a unit of study.

Professional Development

What provisions are made for staff development activities that build understanding of the curriculum, effective teaching, and assessment of student learning?

1. Professional development experiences for the continuing education of teachers and administrators correspond with, but are not limited to the phases of the curriculum design cycle.
2. District and building leadership, and individual teachers, assume responsibility to design and conduct appropriate local professional development activities.
3. In addition to locally conducted professional development activities coordinated with the phases of the curriculum design cycle, teachers are encouraged to attend regional, state, and national conferences and workshops; to pursue relevant advanced formal education; and to visit other schools to observe best practice and confer with colleagues.
4. Training should be job-embedded whenever possible to allow for appropriate follow-up and feedback.

Ongoing staff development is provided and teachers are encouraged to keep abreast of new developments in their field. To ensure that both the curriculum document meets high standards and that teachers learn what is essential, professional development activities are planned and implemented. In that way, teachers are systematically learning what they need to know about new thinking within a content area, state and federal guidelines, curriculum writing technique,

effective teaching, improved assessments of student learning, selection of instructional resources, integration of subject matter, and other pertinent topics. Professional development involves both programming designed by and for local staff, as well as experiences that draw teachers to events where they encounter experts and master teachers. Workshop presenters for all professional development opportunities must model the teaching strategies we expect from teachers. This includes, but is not limited to, such best practices as differentiation, cooperative learning, brain-based learning strategies, and effective inclusion of technology

Publicizing the Curriculum

How is the curriculum presented to all concerned groups?

GUIDELINES

1. A current edition of the Curriculum Framework and the curriculum guides for each course are made available on the website.
2. Curriculum units and assessments are stored in TIEnet.
3. All official descriptions of curriculum presented to the public, including those in course syllabi, handouts for parents, newsletters, and web resources, should correspond to information in the Curriculum Framework and course curriculum maps.

These provisions ensure that a clear and current version of the curriculum is always available to the public. Consequently, there is less chance for confusion about major topics within a course, what students are expected to learn, and the materials that are recommended for instruction. A readily accessible curriculum framework informs students, parents, community members, those who are considering moving to the school district, as well as people from other school districts, about the content of our curriculum.

Monitoring

How does the District ensure that the curriculum is being delivered?

GUIDELINES

1. Teachers are responsible for delivering the curriculum as adopted by the School Committee including curriculum map, assessments, and time allocation.
2. It is a responsibility of building administrators to monitor the delivery of curriculum through instructional supervision. A monitoring system assures quality and consistency in the delivery of the curriculum.
3. Central office will collaborate with school building personnel to monitor student achievement data, identify significant trends, and support curriculum development and delivery as assigned by the Assistant Superintendent.
4. School improvement/Rtl/Data teams use assessment data to identify areas of weakness in student achievement and to recommend adjustments in curriculum that address those deficiencies.
5. Teachers are responsible for participating in district, building and grade level/department Professional Learning Communities (PLC) common planning times. Duties include identifying critical course outcomes, assessing student progress toward the specified outcomes, and implementing interventions to ensure all students meet learning objectives.
6. Students, parents, teachers and administrators are encouraged to report concerns they encounter in the delivery of the adopted curriculum to the Assistant Superintendent.

Once a curriculum has been written and adopted, there must be a means of determining the effectiveness of its implementation. Both formal and informal instructional supervision ensure that the written curriculum is translated into practice. Administrators are expected to be knowledgeable about the curriculum, and to discuss it directly with teachers in connection with

their observation. In addition to supervision, the school improvement/accreditation processes and routine communication among staff members are used to identify possible concerns with the curriculum, or its delivery, and to guide corrective action.

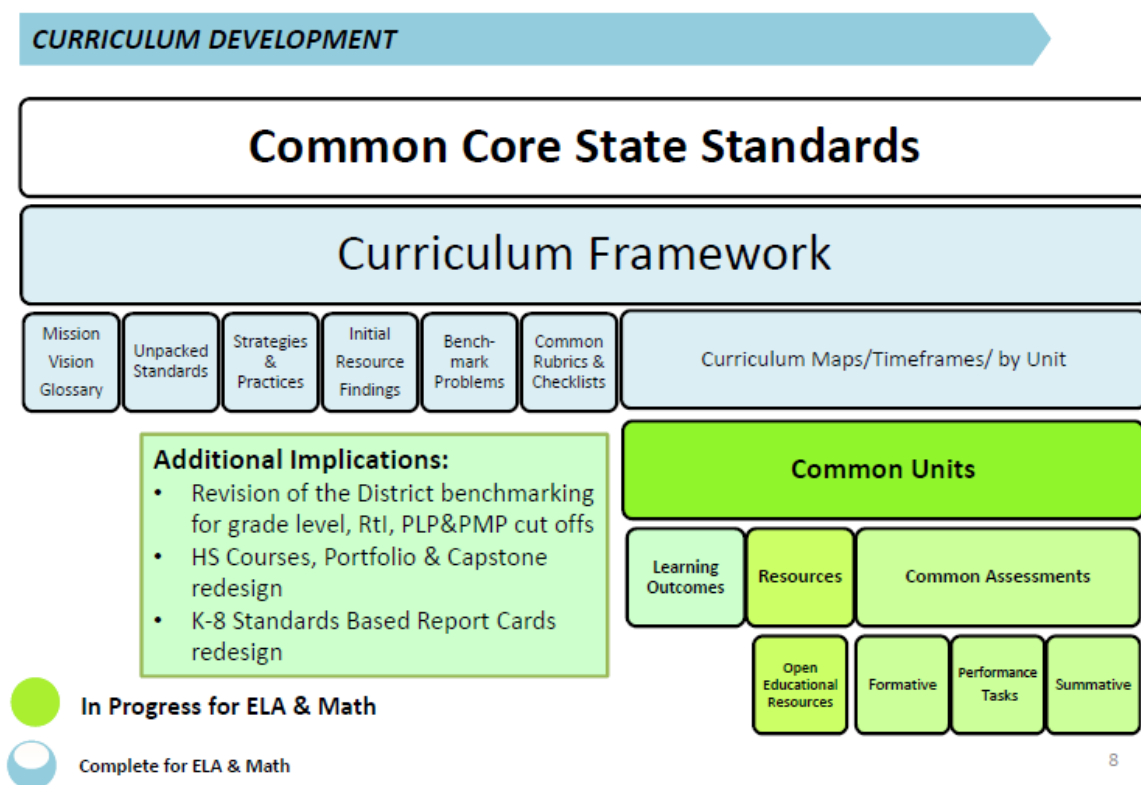
Formatting Guidelines for the Development of Curriculum Documents

In order to ensure quality, consistency, and alignment when developing curriculum documents, the following guidelines are provided:

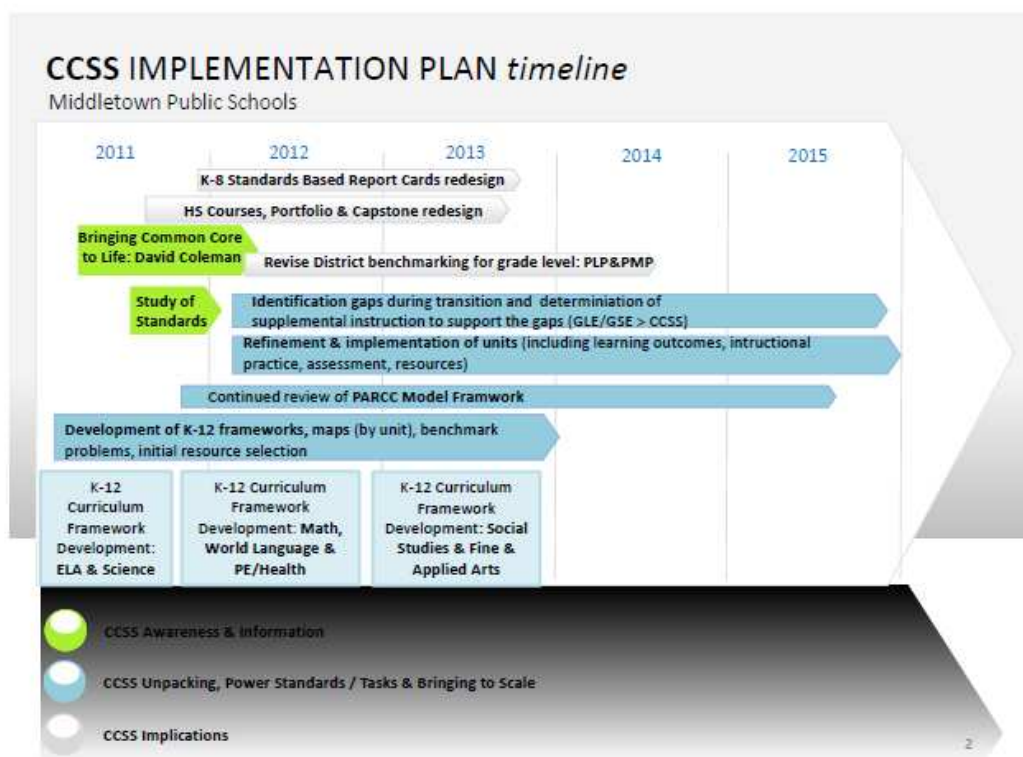
- **Curriculum Framework** (unpacked standards, benchmarks, strategies, resources, assessments) – *Microsoft word template*
- **Curriculum Map** – *Microsoft word template*
- **Curriculum Mission & Vision** – *Microsoft word template*
- **Curriculum Glossary** – *Microsoft word template*
- **Assessment Questions** – *in TIEnet*
- **Rubric(s)** – *in TIEnet & Microsoft word*
- **Checklist** – *Microsoft Word*
- **Learning Targets/Essential Learning Targets/Goals** – *as part of Unit in TIEnet*
- **Units of Study** - *in TIEnet*
- **Common Assessments** – *linked to Unit in TIEnet*

1. Develop documents in *Microsoft Word* format so they can be made available on the district network and support later updates/revisions.
2. K-12 Content Standards are drawn from state and nationally recognized sources and delineate the primary content domain of the course. The document should include a complete list of all the content standards from the content area. Where available, standard numbering codes should also be used. The sources of these standards must be clearly identified.
3. Each benchmark must be clearly identified with the code numbers used in the Curriculum Framework when applicable. If another source of benchmarks is used, benchmarks must be indicated with appropriate code numbers and the outside source must be identified. Locally developed benchmarks should be identified with the code "CCSS." Identifying codes, numbers and letters should appear after each benchmark within parentheses.
4. Assessments are aligned with State Standards and Curriculum Maps.
5. All essential resources needed to teach the course should be listed by unit with appropriate reference information including title, author, publisher, copyright date, ISBN number, and/or other identifying information (video, audio tape, CD, music, software, etc.) using the curriculum framework.

Transition to the Common Core State Standards / Curriculum Development Diagram



8



2

CCSS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN *timeframe*

Middletown Public Schools

Grade	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
K	C	C	C	C
1	G	C	C	C
2	G	Ct	C	C
3	G	Ct	C	C
4	G	Ct	C	C
5	G	Ct	C	C
6	G	Ct	C	C
7	G	Ct	C	C
8	G	Ct	C	C
9	G	Ct	C	C
10	Gt	Ct	C	C
11	Gt	Ct	C	C
12	G	G	Ct	C

C common core state standards

G GLEs/GSEs

Gt GSEs with strong migration to CCSS

Ct common core state standards transition year

3

Instructional Resource Review Form

Curriculum committees utilize this form when reviewing possible textbook/resources which best support curriculum delivery. Thoughtful review of the available resource options results in a match between our instructional goals and student learning. Professional discernment when recommending textbooks/resources is facilitated by responding to the questions below:

Title: _____ Publisher: _____

Copyright Date: _____

Course: _____ Reviewer(s): _____ Date: _____

Characteristics Rating

1. The resource is well aligned with the curriculum key concepts & benchmarks.
1 2 3 4
2. It provides multiple perspectives for examining a topic.
1 2 3 4
3. It is thorough in terms of its coverage of identified topics.
1 2 3 4
4. It is free of bias; including, but not limited to, race, gender, ethnicity, religion and culture.
1 2 3 4
5. The page layout/format is inviting and supportive of student engagement
1 2 3 4
6. The content provides thoughtful challenge for higher level critical analysis.
1 2 3 4
7. The reading level is appropriate.
1 2 3 4
8. There are appropriate support materials (i.e., transparencies, maps, charts, CDs, test generators, online resources, etc.).
1 2 3 4
9. There are video/computer support materials.
1 2 3 4
10. Strengths of this resource:
11. Weaknesses of this resource:
12. How can we address the weaknesses?
13. Other Comments:

Signature of reviewer(s): _____ Date: _____

Glossary

Academic content and performance standards: General and specific descriptions of knowledge and skills that students need to acquire in a given content area.

“Aligned” pre-assessment: Contains the same concepts and skills as the end-of-unit post-assessment, but has fewer questions.

Big Ideas: The three or four foundational understandings—main ideas, conclusions, or generalizations relative to the unit’s “unwrapped” concepts—that educators want their students to discover and state in their own words by the end of the unit of study. Written as *complete sentences*, not phrases, Big Ideas convey to *students* the benefit or value of learning the standards in focus that they are to remember long after instruction ends.

Common formative assessment (CFA): An “in-process” assessment based on the “unwrapped” Priority Standards for a unit of study that grade-alike and course-alike educators collaboratively create and administer to all of their students at approximately the same time. When aligned to summative assessments of learning (whether school-based, district- or school-division-based, or state- or province based) they provide educators with predictive value of how students are likely to perform on those summative assessment measures *in time* for them to “change up” instruction as needed.

Common summative assessment (CSA): A culminating or final assessment that is typically graded and recorded. Even though summative, the results can be used formatively to diagnose individual student learning needs and to inform instruction accordingly, either the next day or in the next unit of study.

Compacting: Streamlining or modifying basic content to provide students with tiered assignments (see “Tiered assignments”).

Curriculum: The high-quality delivery system for ensuring that all students achieve the desired end—the attainment of their designated grade- or course-specific standards.

- A curriculum is a course to be run.
- An effective standards-based curriculum is planned “with the end in mind.”
- Founded upon the intentional alignment between standards, instruction, and assessment.

Data Teams: A grade-level or course-specific group of educators who are teaching the same unit of study at the same time that also includes special educators, English Language Learner educators, and other instructional specialists and student support staff. Together they complete the Data Teams stepby-step process with common formative assessment data and use the results to differentiate instruction and improve student learning. (Ainsworth) Data teams use common priority standards, generate common formative assessments, and use common scoring guides to monitor and analyze student performance. They are small, grade-level, department, course, content, or organizational teams that examine work generated from a common formative assessment in order to drive instruction and improve professional practice. They have scheduled, collaborative, structured meetings that concentrate on the effectiveness of teaching and learning. (Leadership and Learning Center, 2010)

Differentiation: “The practice of adjusting the curriculum, teaching strategies, and classroom environment to meet the needs of all students” (Tomlinson, 2001).

Differentiation strategies: Additional supports that educators use during all high-quality lessons to modify or adjust instruction for students who need a different approach in order to understand. Differentiation strategies can be used with students learning the standards-based concepts and skills in focus as well as with proficient and advanced students who need enrichment experiences that go beyond those learning targets.

Engaging learning experiences: Authentic performance tasks. *Engaging* is synonymous with interesting and compelling. *Experiences* produce personal insights that are deeper and longer lasting than explanations. A rigorous curriculum ought to provide students with meaningful learning tasks that are both engaging and experimental.

Essential Outcomes: See “Priority Standards.”

Essential Questions: Engaging, open-ended questions that educators use to spark student interest in learning the content of the unit about to commence. Even though plainly worded, they carry with them an

underlying rigor. Responding to them in a way that demonstrates genuine understanding requires more than superficial thought. Along with the “unwrapped” concepts and skills from the Priority Standards, educators use the Essential Questions *throughout the unit* to sharply focus instruction and assessment.

Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) or Course-Level Expectations (CLEs): Specific descriptions of standards for particular grade levels and courses, respectively; terms vary by state and province.

Guaranteed Curriculum: Students have access to the same essential learning regardless of who is teaching the class. (Marzano)

Instructional Data Teams: See “Data Teams.”

Instructional strategies: The specific actions educators take to help students achieve specific learning targets; the variety of research-based and experience-based methods teachers use to increase student understanding.

Learning progressions: “The step-by-step building blocks students are presumed to need in order to successfully attain a more distant, designated instructional outcome” (Popham, 2008).

Learning outcomes: Often used synonymously with the term “standards.”

“Mirrored” pre-assessment: Contains the exact same number and type of questions that appear on the post-assessment.

Pacing Calendar: A yearlong or course-long schedule for delivering all of the planned units of study for a designated grade level or course, *not* the instructional materials used within those units; helps educators ensure that students learn all of the grade- or course-specific Priority Standards and their related supporting standards *in the right order* through a sequenced delivery of the units; provides *suggested* horizontal “learning progressions” *within* grades and courses and *suggested* vertical “learning progressions” *between* grades and courses.

Performance assessment: A *collection* of several related standards-based performance tasks, distributed throughout a unit of study, that progressively develop and reveal student understanding of the “unwrapped” concepts, skills, and Big Ideas along the way.

Priority Standards; original term, **Power Standards:** A carefully selected subset of the total list of academic content and performance standards or learning outcomes within each content area that students must know and be able to do by the end of each school year so they are prepared to enter the *next* level of learning.

Progress-monitoring check: Short, frequent, informal, non-graded assessments—aligned to the end-of-unit post-assessment—that help educators accurately infer student understanding during a unit of study and change instruction accordingly.

Response to Intervention: A multistep approach to providing services and interventions to students who struggle with learning that includes increasing levels of intensity.

Rigor: The reaching for a higher level of quality in both effort and outcome; the intentional inclusion of and alignment between all necessary attributes or components of a rigorous curriculum. Rigor usually refers to a level of difficulty and the ways in which students apply their knowledge through higher-order thinking skills.

Rigorous Curriculum: An inclusive set of intentionally aligned components—clear learning outcomes with matching assessments, engaging learning experiences, and instructional strategies—organized into sequenced units of study that serve as both the detailed road map *and* the high-quality delivery system for ensuring that all students achieve the desired end: the attainment of their designated grade- or course-specific standards within a particular content area.

Scoring guide: A written list of *specific* criteria describing different levels of student proficiency on a standards-based assessment task.

“Singletons”: Educators who alone teach a particular grade level or course within an individual school.

Specifically Designed Instruction (SDI): A customized instructional approach based on a special education student’s particular disability or disabilities identified on the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Supporting Standards: Those standards that support, connect to, and enhance the Priority Standards. They are taught *within the context* of the Priority Standards but do not receive the same degree of instruction and assessment emphasis.

Tiered assignments: Learning tasks designed at different levels of complexity according to students' instructional readiness levels.

Total Physical Response: A Sheltered Instruction strategy for English Language Learners whereby students respond with body movement to show comprehension.

Unit of Study: A series of specific lessons, learning experiences, and related assessments based on designated Priority Standards and related supporting standards for a topical, skills-based, or thematic focus that may last anywhere from two to six weeks.

“Unwrapping” the standards: Analyzing and deconstructing grade-level and course-specific standards for a unit of study to determine exactly what students need to know (concepts) and be able to do (skills).

Viable Curriculum: The curriculum can be taught in the amount of time available. (Marzano)

Curriculum Framework/Matrix Template (sample)

Standard	Benchmark	Instructional Strategies	Resources	Assessments
1. READING – LITERATURE 1.1 Craft and Structure	Students 1.3.1 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.) (RL.11-12.4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select appropriate words or explaining the use of words in context, including connotation or denotation, shades of meanings of words/nuances, or idioms; or use of content-specific vocabulary, words with multiple meanings, precise language, or technical vocabulary. R-12-3.2 (state assessment grade 11) Identify literary devices as appropriate to genre (e.g., similes, metaphors, alliteration, rhyme scheme, onomatopoeia, imagery, repetition, flashback, foreshadowing, personification, hyperbole, symbolism, allusion, diction, syntax, bias, or point of view). R-12- 4-5 Examine author's style or use of literary devices to convey theme. R-12-6.1b Grade 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does Crane use repetition to convey theme in "War is Kind"? Grade 12 What were the unique characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessments The Beowulf" bragging rights" poem (alliteration, assonance, kenning, caesura) Macbeth (imagery, foreshadowing) 	Models the following reading strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using prior knowledge sampling a page for readability summarizing predicting and making text-based inferences determining importance generating literal, clarifying, and inferential questions constructing sensory images (making pictures in one's mind) making connections (text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world) taking notes locating, using and analyzing text features (e.g. transition words, subheadings, bold/italics) using text structure (clues, e.g. chronological, cause/effect, compare/contrast, proposition and support, description, classification, logical sequential) using metacognition strategies for understanding text Facilitates comprehension strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> making connections questioning visualizing inferring determining importance synthesizing information self-monitoring or fix-up predicting summarizing Models the use of graphic organizers : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sequence organizers cause and effect (chains, cycle), concept development (mind map), compare/contrast organizers (Venn diagrams, comparison charts), organizers (word web, concept map), evaluation organizers (charts, scales), categorize/classify organizers (categories, tree) relational organizers (fish bone, pie chart) Employs best practice reading strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> read aloud think aloud shared reading guided reading self-selected reading Models readers'/writers' workshop Employs best practice reading strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> read aloud think aloud shared reading guided reading self-selected reading 	Textbook Grade 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elements of Language, Fifth Course, Holt Grade 12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elements of Literature, Sixth Course, Holt Literature: The British Tradition, Prentice Hall Core Books Lexile rates 1215–1355 LITERATURE - GRADE 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Raisin in the Sun, Hansberry The Catcher in the Rye, Salinger The Crucible, Miller The Great Gatsby, Fitzgerald SUGGESTED - GRADE 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Farewell to Arms, Hemingway A Separate Peace, Knowles Death of a Salesman, Miller Heart of Darkness, Conrad Moby Dick, Melville My Ántonia, Cather Native Son, Wright O Pioneers! Cather The Color Purple, Walker The Grapes of Wrath, Steinbeck The Old Man and the Sea, Hemingway The Red Badge of Courage, Crane The Scarlet Letter, Hawthorne The Slave Narrative of Frederick Douglass, Douglass The Sound and Fury, Faulkner Their Eyes Were Watching God, Hurston LITERATURE - GRADE 12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Modest Proposal/Gulliver's Travels, Swift Beowulf, Avon Macbeth, Shakespeare The Canterbury Tales, Chaucer SUGGESTED - GRADE 12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "The Seafarer" "The Wanderer" "The Wife's Lament" David Copperfield, Dickens Emma, Austen Frankenstein, Shelley from Morte d' Arthur from Sir Gawain and the Green Knight Hard Times, Dickens Jane Eyre, Charlotte Brontë Pride and Prejudice, Austen Sense and Sensibility, Austen The Metamorphosis, Kafka Wuthering Heights, Emily Brontë Supplementary	R REQUIRED COMMON ASSESSMENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essential Question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is literature a reflection of history and culture? How did English historical writers reveal their shared beliefs through their writing? Guiding Questions Common Prompts Narrative Arguments Informational Responding to informational text NWEA Tests MID-TERM EXAM FINAL EXAM SUGGESTED FORMATIVE and SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anecdotal records Exhibits Interviews Graphic organizers Journals Multiple Intelligences assessments e.g. role-playing – bodily kinesthetic, graphic organizing – visual, collaboration- interpersonal Oral presentations Performance/problem-based tasks Rubrics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arguments Informative Narrative Oral communication Tests and quizzes Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arguments Informational Narrative Research Responding to literary and informational text

		Facilitates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • literature circles • readers' theater 	<u>books/material</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 Keys to Comprehension: How to Help Your Kids Read It and Get It, Zimmermann, Hutchins • <i>Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects</i> • Formative Assessment and Standards-Based Grading, Classroom Strategies That Work, Marzano • <i>Grade Level and Grade Span Expectations for English Language Arts</i> • Literature Circles, Daniels • Mosaic of Thought, Keene, Zimmerman • <i>Rhode Island PreK-12 Literacy Policy</i> • Strategies that Work, Non Fiction Matters, Harvey <u>Technology</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computers • LCD projectors • Smartboards • www.commoncore.org/maps • www.corestandards.org • www.ride.ri.gov 	
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Curriculum Map (sample)

UNIT	COMMON CORE CLUSTERS AND STANDARDS Curriculum Common Core Math Algebra I Middletown.docx	MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE
Unit 1: Relationships between Quantities and Reasoning with Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reason quantitatively and use units to solve problems N.Q.1,2,3 Interpret the structure of expressions A.SSE.1 Create equations that describe numbers or relationships A.CED.1,2,3,4 Understand solving equations as a process of reasoning and explain the reasoning A.REI.1 Solve equations and inequalities in one variable A.REI.3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> € Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
Unit 2: Linear and Exponential Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the properties of exponents to rational exponents N.RN.1,2 Solve systems of equations A.REI.5,6 Represent and solve equations and inequalities graphically A.REI.10,11,12 Understand the concept of function and function notation F.IF.1,2,3 Interpret functions that arise in applications in terms of a context F.IF.4,5,6 Analyze functions using different representations F.IF.7,9 Build a function that models a relationship between two quantities F.BF.1,2 Build new functions from existing functions F.BF.3 Construct and compare linear, quadratic, and exponential models and solve problems F.LE.1,2,3 Interpret expressions for functions in terms of the equations they model F.LE.5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> € Reason abstractly and quantitatively € Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others € Model with mathematics ★
Unit 3: Descriptive Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarize, represent, and interpret data on a single count or measurement variable S.ID.1,2,3 Summarize, represent, and interpret data on two categorical and quantitative variables S.ID.5,6 Interpret linear models S.ID.7,8,9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> € Use appropriate tools strategically
Unit 4: Expressions and Equations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret the structure of expressions A.SSE.1,2 Write expressions in equivalent forms to solve problems A.SSE.3 Perform arithmetic operations on polynomials A.APR.1 Create equations that describe numbers or relationships A.CED.1,2,4 Solve equations and inequalities in one variable A.REI.4 Solve systems of equations A.REI.7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> € Attend to precision
Unit 5: Quadratic Functions and Modeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use properties of rational and irrational numbers N.RN.3 Interpret functions that arise in applications in terms of a context F.IF.4,5,6 Analyze functions using different representations F.LE.5 Build a function that models a relationship between two quantities F.BF.1 Build new functions from existing functions F.BF.3,4 Construct and compare linear, quadratic, and exponential models and solve problems F.LE.3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> € Look for and make use of structure € Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

Unit Template

The following template provides guidance as you think through the design of your unit. As you work through the various components you will find questions to help guide your thinking. While a template is provided for your use, you may wish to design your own format - one that best suits your needs. It should, though, contain the following:

- Unit organizer
- Standards addressed
- Essential/Guiding questions
- Assessments
- Learning experiences
- Strategies for addressing individual student needs
- Scoring criteria
- Resources

As this manual has been designed for use by a variety of teachers, the Standards Addressed component has a listing of various standards. In this way, teachers will be able to focus on those that are most applicable to their situation. You may, however, wish to address or connect some standards as “supporting standards.” These are standards that will be addressed but not assessed and may come from other content areas.

Note: You will likely find yourself moving between the various components in a non-sequential order. For example, as you begin developing your end of unit assessment, you may go back to your targeted standards, adding or removing some. As you begin sequencing your unit, you may make changes to your determined learning experiences and/or assessments.

Remember, your unit plan is just that—a plan. It is a living document to which you will often refer and revise.

Unit Title _____

Teacher _____

Grade Level _____ **Approximate Length of Unit** _____

Unit Organizer – a statement or question that communicates the content standards in a way that engages students by connecting learning to prior knowledge, skills, experiences, beliefs, and/or customs.

Organizer Checklist

Does your organizer meet these criteria?

___ provides relevance; the “why” for learning

___ standards-based

___ inquiry-based

___ connects to prior knowledge

Standards Addressed

Academic Expectations

Standards-

Targeted Standards - content and skills/processes to be taught and assessed

Supporting Standards - content that is relevant to the unit but may not be assessed; may include connections to other content areas

What do students have to know and be able to do in order to meet the targeted standards?

The targeted standard(s) should be deconstructed to determine what students should know and be able to do (learning target).

Once the targets are determined, formative and summative assessments are developed and aligned with learning targets.

Students will know:

Students will be able to do:

Essential/Guiding Questions – are used to gain student interest in learning and are limited in number. They promote critical or abstract thinking and have the potential of having more than one right answer.

Do the essential questions:

- ___ connect to targeted standards?
- ___ narrow the focus of the organizer?
- ___ encourage critical thinking skills?

Summative/End of Unit Assessment – the final assessment piece of the unit which should evaluate student progress in achieving each of the targeted standards

Does the assessment:

- ___ assess all targeted standards?
- ___ align to Depth of Knowledge level?
- ___ demonstrate critical thinking skills?
- ___ demonstrate learning in different ways?
- ___ allow for diverse needs of students?

Scoring Criteria

Develop a scoring criteria tool that will evaluate your summative/end of unit assessment.

Entry-level Assessment – Once learning targets are determined and your summative assessment has been designed, students are pre-assessed to determine their strengths, weaknesses, understandings and misconceptions in order to inform instruction.

Questions for Consideration

- ___ How well do we want them to know it and be able to do it?
- ___ What do we want students to know and be able to do?
- ___ How will we know when they know it or do it well?

How do I...

- ___ find out what my students already know and are able to do?
- ___ find out what additional support students need to meet a given learning target?
- ___ form flexible groups for instruction based on what students know and are able to do?

Type of Assessments – In addition to your summative/end of unit assessment, what other assessments will you use throughout the unit (e.g., formative, summative assessments, diagnostic assessments, pre-assessment aligned with learning targets, classroom assessments, learning checks)?

Other Assessment

- Anecdotal records _____
- Class discussions _____
- Conferences and interviews _____
- End of unit tests (including MC and OR) _____
- Journals, learning logs _____
- Performance events _____
- Performance tasks _____
- Projects _____
- Running records _____
- Selected and/or constructed responses _____
- Self-assessment/reflection _____
- Student revision of assessment answers _____
- Student work folder _____
- Writing tasks (e.g., journals, memoirs) _____
- Other: _____

Learning target aligned to assessment Write F for Formative and S for Summative (may be both) How Often?

Unit Sequencing - Order/sequence your lessons after determining your assessments and learning experiences. This sequencing should build upon students' previous knowledge, allowing them to make connections to their learning.

Learning Experiences / Activities - When designing learning experiences, consider varied and rigorous instructional strategies to teach content. As you design instruction, plan learning experiences that reinforce and enrich the unit while connecting with the standards and assessments. Specific details can be recorded in lesson plans. Indicate your unit learning experiences here.

How do the learning experiences...

- ☐ *address individual student needs?*
- ☐ *consider the perspective of the learner?*
- ☐ *include varied and rigorous experiences?*
- ☐ *incorporate appropriate literacy strategies/skills?*
- ☐ *incorporate appropriate content literacy strategies/skills?*
- ☐ *integrate inquiry?*
- ☐ *connect to other content areas as appropriate?*
- ☐ *integrate technology as appropriate?*

Consider the following questions when sequencing the unit.

- *What sequence of instruction will work best for my students to understand this content?*
- *How will the learning experiences be organized to maximize engaging and active learning?*
- *How do the lessons move students from foundational to critical thinking skills?*

Resources/Tools

List resources/materials that are needed to support student learning.

Do the resources:

- ☐ *relate to the identified targeted standards?*
- ☐ *enhance student learning?*
- ☐ *allow for the diverse needs of students?*
- ☐ *move beyond the textbook?*
- ☐ *help make learning relevant to students?*
- ☐ *integrate technology in a meaningful way?*

Open Education Resource Rubrics



Rubrics for Evaluating Open Education Resource (OER) Objects

The following rubrics represent an evaluation system for objects found within Open Education Resources. An object could include images, applets, lessons, units, assessments and more. For the purpose of this evaluation, any component that can exist as a stand-alone qualifies as an object. The rubrics in this packet can be applied across content areas and object types.

In general, the rubrics should be applied to the smallest meaningful unit. In some cases, this may be a single lesson or instructional support material, while in others it might be a complete unit of study or set of support materials. If multiple lessons are included in an OER, the reviewer needs to determine if all lessons will be examined, if only those lessons that deal with essential aspects of the curriculum are to be considered, or if it would be best to evaluate random lessons, looking at, for example, every third or fifth lesson.

These rubrics are typically used to rate the potential, not actual, effectiveness of a particular object in a learning environment. Each rubric should be scored independently of the others using the following five scores that describe levels of potential quality, usefulness, or alignment to standards:

- 3: Superior
- 2: Strong
- 1: Limited
- 0: Very Weak / None
- N/A: Rubric Not Applicable

The *not applicable (N/A)* rating should be used any time a particular rubric does not apply to the object being rated. This is not a pejorative score; it simply means it would be inappropriate to apply this rubric to this object. For example, Rubric IV: Quality of Assessment would not be applicable to an object that does not have an assessment component.

The following rubrics are included:

- Rubric I. Degree of Alignment to Standards
- Rubric II. Quality of Explanation of the Subject Matter
- Rubric III. Utility of Materials Designed to Support Teaching
- Rubric IV. Quality of Assessment
- Rubric V. Quality of Technological Interactivity
- Rubric VI. Quality of Instructional and Practice Exercises
- Rubric VII. Opportunities for Deeper Learning
- Rubric VIII. Assurance of Accessibility



Rubric I: Degree of Alignment to Standards

This rubric is applied to learning objects that have suggested alignments to standards. It is used to rate the degree to which an individual object actually aligns to each proposed standard. The rubric was designed specifically for the Common Core State Standards, but can be used with any set of standards. Before the rubric can be applied, the assumption is that a user has proposed an alignment between the object and the selected standard(s).

There are two major aspects of standards that are vital to a meaningful alignment review: content and performance expectations. It is important that the *content* addressed in the object matches the content addressed in each proposed standard. Evaluating the alignment of the *performances* required in both the object and the standard is equally essential and should be considered along with the content.

Rubric I Scoring Guide:

- 3: An object has *superior* alignment only if both of the following are true:
- All of the content and performance expectations in the identified standard are completely addressed by the object.
 - The content and performance expectations of the identified standard are the focus of the object. While some objects may cover a range of standards that could potentially be aligned, for a superior alignment the content and performance expectations must not be a peripheral part of the object.
- 2: An object has *strong* alignment for either one of two reasons:
- Minor elements of the standard are not addressed in the object.
 - The content and performance expectations of the standard align to a minor part of the object.
- 1: An object has *limited* alignment if a significant part of the content or performance expectations of the identified standard is not addressed in the object, as long as there is fidelity to the part it does cover. *For example, an object that aligns to CCSS 2.NBT.2, "Count within 1000; skip-count by 5s, 10s, and 100s," but only addresses counting numbers to 500, would be considered to have limited alignment. The object aligns very closely with a limited part of the standard.*
- 0: An object has *very weak* alignment for either one of two reasons:
- The object does not match the intended standards.
 - The object matches only to minimally important aspects of a standard. These objects will not typically be useful for instruction of core concepts and performances covered by the standard.
- N/A: This rubric does not apply for an object that has no suggested standards for alignment. *For example, the rubric might not be applicable to a set of raw data.*

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Rubric II: Quality of Explanation of the Subject Matter

This rubric is applied to objects designed to explain subject matter. It is used to rate how thoroughly the subject matter is explained or otherwise revealed in the object. Teachers might use this object with a whole class, a small group, or an individual student. Students might use the object to self-tutor. For objects that are primarily intended for teacher use, the rubric is applied to the explanation of the subject matter not to the planning instructions for the teacher.

Rubric II Scoring Guide:

- 3:** An object is rated *superior* for explanation of subject matter only if all of the following are true:
- The object provides comprehensive information so effectively that the target audience should be able to understand the subject matter.
 - The object connects important associated concepts within the subject matter. *For example, a lesson on multi-digit addition makes connections with place value, rather than simply showing how to add multi-digit numbers. Or a lesson designed to analyze how an author develops ideas across extended text would make connections among the various developmental steps and the various purposes the author has for the text.*
 - The object does not need to be augmented with additional explanation or materials.
 - The main ideas of the subject matter addressed in the object are clearly identified for the learner.
- 2:** An object is rated *strong* for explanation of subject matter if it explains the subject matter in a way that makes skills, procedures, concepts, and/or information understandable. It falls short of *superior* in that it does not make connections among important associated concepts within the subject matter. *For example, a lesson on multi-digit addition may focus on the procedure and fail to connect it with place value.*
- 1:** An object is rated *limited* for explanation of subject matter if it explains the subject matter correctly but in a limited way. This cursory treatment of the content is not sufficiently developed for a first-time learner of the content. The explanations are not thorough and would likely serve as a review for most learners.
- 0:** An object is rated *very weak or no value* for explanation of subject matter if its explanations are confusing or contain errors. There is little likelihood that this object will contribute to understanding.
- N/A:** This rubric is *not applicable* (N/A) for an object that is not designed to explain subject matter, for example, a sheet of mathematical formulae or a map. It may be possible to apply the object in some way that aids a learner's understanding, but that is beyond any obvious or described purpose of the object.



Rubric III: Utility of Materials Designed to Support Teaching

This rubric is applied to objects designed to support teachers in planning or presenting subject matter. The primary user would be a teacher. This rubric evaluates the potential utility of an object at the intended grade level for the majority of instructors.

Rubric III Scoring Guide:

- 3: An object is rated *superior* for the utility of materials designed to support teaching only if all of the following are true:
- The object provides materials that are comprehensive and easy to understand and use.
 - The object includes suggestions for ways to use the materials with a variety of learners. These suggestions include materials such as “common error analysis tips” and “precursor skills and knowledge” that go beyond the basic lesson or unit elements.
 - All objects and all components are provided and function as intended and described. For example, the time needed for lesson planning appears accurately estimated, materials lists are complete, and explanations make sense.
 - For larger objects like units, materials facilitate the use of a mix of instructional approaches (direct instruction, group work, investigations, etc.).
- 2: An object is rated *strong* for the utility of materials designed to support teaching if it offers materials that are comprehensive and easy to understand and use but falls short of “superior” for either one of two reasons:
- The object does not include suggestions for ways to use the materials with a variety of learners (e.g., error analysis tips).
 - Some core components (e.g., directions) are underdeveloped in the object.
- 1: An object is rated *limited* for the utility of materials designed to support teaching if it includes a useful approach or idea to teach an important topic but falls short of “strong” for either one of two reasons:
- The object is missing important elements (e.g. directions for some parts of a lesson are not included).
 - Important elements do not function as they are intended to (e.g. directions are unclear or practice exercises are missing or inadequate). Teachers would need to supplement this object to use it effectively.
- 0: An object is rated *very weak or no value* for the utility of materials designed to support teaching if it is confusing, contains errors, is missing important elements, or is for some other reason simply not useful, in spite of an intention to be used as a support for teachers in planning or preparation.
- N/A: This rubric is *not applicable* (N/A) for an object that is not designed to support teachers in planning and/or presenting subject matter. It may be possible that an educator could find an application for such an object during a lesson, but that would not be the intended use.

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Rubric IV: Quality of Assessments

This rubric is applied to those objects designed to determine what a student knows before, during, or after a topic is taught. When many assessment items are included in one object, as is often the case, the rubric is applied to the entire set.

Rubric IV Scoring Guide:

- 3: An object is rated *superior* for the quality of its assessments only if all of the following are true:
- All of the skills and knowledge assessed align clearly to the content and performance expectations intended, as stated or implied in the object.
 - Nothing is assessed that is not included in the scope of intended material unless it is differentiated as extension material.
 - The most important aspects of the expectations are targeted and are given appropriate weight/attention in the assessment.
 - The assessment modes used in the object, such as selected response, long and short constructed response, or group work require the student to demonstrate proficiency in the intended concept/skill.
 - The level of difficulty is a result of the complexity of the subject-area content and performance expectations and of the degree of cognitive demand, rather than a result of unrelated issues (e.g. overly complex vocabulary used in math word problems).
- 2: An object is rated *strong* for the quality of its assessments if it assesses all of the content and performance expectations intended, but the assessment modes used do not consistently offer the student opportunities to demonstrate proficiency in the intended concept/skill.
- 1: An object is rated *limited* for the quality of its assessments if it assesses some of the content or performance expectations intended, as stated or implicit in the object, but omits some important content or performance expectations and/or fails to offer the student opportunities to demonstrate proficiency in the intended content/skills.
- 0: An object is rated *very weak or no value* for the quality of its assessments if its assessments contain significant errors, do not assess important content/skills, are written in a way that is confusing to students, or are unsound for other reasons.
- N/A: This rubric is *not applicable* (N/A) for an object that is not designed to have an assessment component. Even if one might imagine ways an object could be used for assessment purposes, if it is not the intended purpose, *not applicable* is the appropriate score.



Rubric V: Quality of Technological Interactivity

This rubric is applied to objects designed with a technology-based interactive component. It is used to rate the degree and quality of the interactivity of that component. "Interactivity" is used broadly to mean that the object responds to the user, in other words, it behaves differently based on what the user does. This is not a rating for technology in general, but for technological *interactivity*. The rubric does not apply to interaction between students, but rather to how the technology responds to the individual user.

Rubric V Scoring Guide:

- 3: An object, or interactive component of an object, is rated *superior* for the quality of its technological interactivity only if all of the following are true:
- The object is responsive to student input in a way that creates an individualized learning experience. This means the object adapts to the user based on what s/he does, or the object allows the user some flexibility or individual control during the learning experience.
 - The interactive element is purposeful and directly related to learning.
 - The object is well-designed and easy to use, encouraging learner use.
 - The object appears to function flawlessly on the intended platform.
- 2: An object, or interactive component of an object, is rated *strong* for the quality of its technological interactivity if it has an interactive feature that is purposeful and directly related to learning, but does not provide an individualized learning experience. Similarly to the *superior* objects, *strong* interactive objects must be well designed, easy-to-use, and function flawlessly on the intended platform. Some technological elements may not be directly related to the content but for a *strong* rating they must not detract from the learning experience. These kinds of interactive elements, including earning points or achieving levels for correct answers, might be designed to increase student motivation and to build content understanding by rewarding or entertaining the learner, and may extend the time the user engages with the content.
- 1: An object, or interactive component of an object, is rated *limited* for the quality of its technological interactivity if its interactive element does not relate to the subject matter and may detract from the learning experience. These kinds of interactive elements may slightly increase motivation but do not provide strong support for understanding the subject matter addressed in the object. It is unlikely that this interactive feature will increase understanding or extend the time a user engages with the content.
- 0: An object, or interactive component of an object, is rated *very weak or no value* for the quality of its technological interactivity if it has interactive features that are poorly conceived and/or executed. The interactive features might fail to operate as intended, distract the user, or unnecessarily take up user time.

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N/A: This rubric is *not applicable (N/A)* for an object that does not have an interactive technological element. For example, the rubric does not apply if interaction with the object is limited to, for example, opening a user-selected PDF.



Rubric VI: Quality of Instructional and Practice Exercises

This rubric is applied to objects that contain exercises designed to provide an opportunity to practice and strengthen specific skills and knowledge. The purpose of these exercises is to deepen understanding of subject matter and to routinize foundational skills and procedures. When concepts and skills are introduced, providing a sufficient number of exercises to support skill acquisition is critical. However when integrating skills in complex tasks, the number of exercise problems is less important than their richness. These types of practice opportunities may include as few as one or two instructional exercises designed to provide practice applying specific concepts and/or skills. Sets of practice exercises are treated as a single object, with the rubric applied to an entire group.

Rubric VI Scoring Guide:

- 3: An object is rated *superior* for the quality of its instructional and practice exercises only if all of the following are true:
- The object offers more exercises than needed for the average student to facilitate mastery of the targeted skills, as stated or implied in the object. For complex tasks, one or two rich practice exercises may be considered more than enough.
 - The exercises are clearly written and supported by accurate answer keys or scoring guidelines as applicable.
 - There are a variety of exercise types and/or the exercises are available in a variety of formats, as appropriate to the targeted concepts and skills. For more complex practice exercises the formats used provide an opportunity for the learner to integrate a variety of skills.
- 2: An object is rated *strong* for the quality of its instructional and practice exercises if it offers only a sufficient number of well-written exercises to facilitate mastery of targeted skills, which are supported by accurate answer keys or scoring guidelines, but there is little variety of exercise types or formats.
- 1: An object is rated *limited* for the quality of its instructional and practice exercises if it has some, but too few exercises to facilitate mastery of the targeted skills, is without answer keys, and provides no variation in type or format.
- 0: An object is rated *very weak or no value* for the quality of its instructional and practice exercises if the exercises provided do not facilitate mastery of the targeted skills, contain errors, or are unsound for other reasons.
- N/A: This rubric is *not applicable* (N/A) to an object that does not include opportunities to practice targeted skills.



Rubric VII: Opportunities for Deeper Learning

This rubric is applied to objects designed to engage learners in at least one of the following deeper learning skills, which can be applied across all content areas:

- Think critically and solve complex problems.
- Work collaboratively.
- Communicate effectively.
- Learn how to learn.
- Reason abstractly.
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
- Apply discrete knowledge and skills to real-world situations.
- Construct, use, or analyze models.

Rubric VII Scoring Guide:

- 3: An object is rated *superior* for its opportunities for deeper learning only if all of the following are true:
- At least three of the deeper learning skills from the list identified in this rubric are required in the object.
 - The object offers a range of cognitive demand that is appropriate and supportive of the material.
 - Appropriate scaffolding and direction are provided.
- 2: An object is rated *strong* for its opportunities for deeper learning if it includes one or two deeper learning skills identified in this rubric. *For example, the object might involve a complex problem that requires abstract reasoning skills to reach a solution.*
- 1: An object is rated *limited* for its opportunities for deeper learning if it includes one deeper learning skill identified in the rubric but is missing clear guidance on how to tap into the various aspects of deeper learning. *For example, an object might include a provision for learners to collaborate, but the process and product are unclear.*
- 0: An object is rated *very weak* for its opportunities for deeper learning if it appears to be designed to provide some of the deeper learning opportunities identified in this rubric, but it is not useful as it is presented. *For example, the object might be based on poorly formulated problems and/or unclear directions, making it unlikely that this lesson or activity will lead to skills like critical thinking, abstract reasoning, constructing arguments, or modeling.*
- N/A: This rubric is *not applicable* (N/A) to an object that does not appear to be designed to provide the opportunity for deeper learning, even though one might imagine how it could be used to do so.



Rubric VIII: Assurance of Accessibility Standards

This rubric is used to assure materials are accessible to all students, including students identified as blind, visually impaired or print disabled, and those students who may qualify under the Chafee Amendment to the U.S. 1931 Act to Provide Books to the Adult Blind as Amended. It was developed to assess compliance with U.S. standards and requirements, but could be adapted to accommodate differences in other sets of requirements internationally.

Accessibility is critically important for all learners and should be considered in the design of all online materials. Identification of certain characteristics will assist in determining if materials will be fully accessible for all students. Assurance that materials are compliant with the standards, recommendations, and guidelines specified assists educators in the selection and use of accessible versions of materials that can be used with all students, including those with different kinds of challenges and assistive devices.

The Assurance of Accessibility Standards Rubric does not ask reviewers to make a judgment on the degree of object quality. Instead, it requests that a determination (yes/no) of characteristics be made that, together with assurance of specific Standards, may determine the degree to which the materials are accessible. Only those who feel qualified to make judgments about an object's accessibility should use this rubric.

Rubric VIII Scoring Guide (see table next page):

- Yes:** The object displays the characteristic or complies with the standards, recommendations or guidelines.
- No:** The object does NOT display the characteristic or comply with the standards, recommendations or guidelines.
- Comment:** Comments on Rubric 8 Object determination may include notes that describe the reason materials do not comply with the standard, recommendations or guidelines or further description that may clarify the characteristics of the object.



	YES/NO/NA	Comment or Explanation	Organization that Maintains the Standard
Available in Tagged PDF Format			Adobe
Available in ePUB Format			International Digital Publishing Form
Accessible Course within an Open Learning Management System (LMS)			Moodle
Accessible Course within another Learning Management System (LMS)			LMS Provider
Available in an accessible media format and includes alternate text or subtitles			Provider or Publisher
Includes alternative text (image)			Provider or Publisher
Includes captions and subtitles (video)			Provider or Publisher
Includes flash accessibility functions (SWF)			Adobe
Includes functionality that provide accessibility			Provider or Publisher
Complies with WC3 WCAG2 Recommendations for web pages			WC3 Recommendations
Compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act			US Government
Is accessible as determined by Utah State WebAIM Web Accessibility Evaluation (WAVE) Tool			Utah State WebAIM
Available in National Accessible Instructional Materials Standard (NIMAS) Format – Accessible XML			NIMAS Center at CAST
Complies with Audio/Video Cassette Production Standards			ITA Standards
Complies with DVD/DVD-ROM Production Standards			DVD Forum Specifications
Complies with Blue-ray Disk Production Standards			UDF 2.5 – Blue-ray Disk Association
Complies with NCAM Guidelines for Movies, Web and Multimedia			NCAM Guidelines

Additional references for accessibility:

Accessible Instructional Materials at the Center for Applied Special Technology

- http://aim.cast.org/learn/e-resources/accessibility_resources

National Center for Accessible Media

- <http://ncam.wgbh.org/about/accessibility-links>

Accessible Publishing: Best Practice Guidelines for Publishers.

-PDF: <http://www.editeur.org/109/Enabling-Technologies-Framework/>

-HTML: <http://www.editeur.org/files/Collaborations/Accessibility/WIPO.html>

Quality Indicators for Common Assessments

Quality Indicators for Common Assessments

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When designing common assessments to support teacher and student learning, be sure the assessment plans satisfy the following criteria:

- 1 I understand the concept but would have difficulty engaging with it in my team.
- 2 Our team has just begun to try this practice but it is not 'natural' or embedded in our routines yet.
- 3 Our team engages in this practice routinely.
- 4 Our team has refined this practice and we could easily share our protocols, processes and results to teach the process to others.

Design <i>(accurate assessments)</i>				
1. The assessment is <i>collaboratively</i> developed.	1	2	3	4
2. The assessment is <i>aligned</i> with the priority standards (most important learning expectations).	1	2	3	4
3. The assessment is tied tightly to clearly <i>identified learning targets</i> within the power standards.	1	2	3	4
4. The assessment is designed to meet <i>challenging expectations</i> (e.g. identified levels of rigor or depths of knowledge) as outlined by the district, school, and/or team itself.	1	2	3	4
5. The assessment is designed for <i>accuracy</i> , and the selected method is appropriate for the target requirements.	1	2	3	4
6. Any supporting assessment tools (rubrics, exemplars, etc.) align with any <i>quality, focused indicators</i> of learning as established in the standards and/or outlined in team identified expectations.				
7. The assessment is designed to avoid <i>sources of bias</i> that distort results.	1	2	3	4
8. The assessment itself, or the overall assessment plan for the intended learning, <i>gathers sufficient evidence</i> to indicate mastery of student learning.	1	2	3	4
Delivery <i>(effectively used)</i>				
9. All staff members are aware of and <i>supportive</i> of the assessment plan.	1	2	3	4
10. The team delivers the common assessments in the same <i>time frame</i> .	1	2	3	4
11. The team's focus is <i>results-oriented</i> by learning target to measure whether or not students are learning and the results empower learners in addressing their own gaps through the intervention strategies.	1	2	3	4

Promising Practices in the Design and Use of Common Assessments

12. All of the team's efforts – before, during, and after the assessment is given – are based on determining ways for teachers /staff to identify children needing <i>interventions and/or enrichments</i> .	1	2	3	4
13. The team employs tools, processes, and policies that allow for <i>student involvement</i> in responding to the results (data interpretation, self-assessment, goal-setting, intervention planning, and reflection)	1	2	3	4
14. The team's assessment plan <i>promotes continued learning</i> with formative opportunities and additional assessments to monitor for achievement.	1	2	3	4
15. Staff and procedures are in place to <i>monitor</i> the execution of the plan.	1	2	3	4
Data (<i>monitoring achievement</i>)				
16. The data are gathered and analyzed in a <i>timely</i> fashion for immediate responses.	1	2	3	4
17. The data shared with learners are presented as meaningful feedback and/or information designed to <i>engage the learners</i> in motivated responses to support continued learning.	1	2	3	4
18. All decisions regarding the data are aligned with <i>proficiency levels</i> that have been predetermined by district, school and/or team itself.	1	2	3	4
19. Practices and protocols are utilized to <i>guarantee common data</i> result from the use of common assessments (collaborative scoring is used to calibrate all scores to be consistent with team expectations).	1	2	3	4
20. The data are arranged in a manner that enables teaching teams to <i>target appropriate interventions</i> for specific classrooms and students.	1	2	3	4
21. The data are arranged in a manner that enables teaching teams to identify appropriate <i>program</i> (curriculum, instruction, and assessment) <i>modifications</i> .	1	2	3	4
22. The <i>data report</i> requires a display of the data, a reflection of team learning and a response plan to address the results with clearly determined ways for teachers /staff to respond to learners needing interventions.	1	2	3	4
23. The data are used to monitor progress toward achieving <i>SMART goals</i> .	1	2	3	4
24. The data are shared for <i>school wide involvement</i> to support learning when/as necessary.	1	2	3	4
25. The data are monitored for <i>celebrations</i> of student and teacher learning (and are not used to judge teacher performance).	1	2	3	4

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Promising Practices in the Design and Use of Common Assessments

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