

Curriculum Information Page

Curriculum vs. Standards

Curriculum is the day-to-day outline of strategies that teachers use to help students learn. Curriculum involves textbooks, homework assignments, classroom activities and assessments – the “how” of teaching. In Missouri, school districts design or select their own curriculum based on local needs. Teachers adjust the curriculum to help students reach and go beyond the standards for learning. While curriculum is the process, standards are the goal.

Copied from <https://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/curriculum-vs-standards>

The Missouri Learning Standards define the knowledge and skills students need in each grade level and course for success in college, other post-secondary training and careers. These expectations are aligned to the Show-Me Standards, which define what all Missouri high school graduates should know and be able to do. The Missouri Learning Standards do not dictate curriculum. Local districts and schools make their own decisions about curriculum, instructional strategies, materials and textbooks.

Standards vs. Curriculum

What is the difference between standards and curriculum?
Standards define the knowledge and skills students need in each grade level and course for success in college, other post-secondary training and/or careers. Standards are established at the state level and provide a foundation for school districts to develop curriculum. Curriculum, which includes coursework, co-curricular activities and other school-approved educational experiences, is the school’s formal plan to fulfill its mission statement and expectations for student learning. The curriculum links the school’s beliefs, its expectations for student learning and its instructional practices. A district’s curriculum will not contain everything a teacher will say and do in a classroom. The district curriculum should include those items all teachers are expected to implement, administrators will monitor and districts will evaluate. A district curriculum defines required elements of instruction.

How are standards and curriculum used in Missouri?
The Show-Me Standards represent the foundation for skills and knowledge we, as Missourians, believe are essential to student success. The Missouri Learning Standards Expectations represent the specific knowledge and skills students are expected to know at each grade level. Curriculum, which is aligned to statewide standards, is created, defined and evaluated by the local school district.

Copied from <https://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/curriculum/mls-for-parents>

Curriculum Definition

Curriculum - Curriculum is a standards-based sequence of planned experiences where students practice and achieve proficiency in content and applied learning skills. Curriculum is the central guide for all educators as to what is essential for teaching and learning, so that every student has access to rigorous academic experiences. The structure, organization, and considerations in a curriculum are created in order to enhance student learning and facilitate instruction. Curriculum must include the necessary goals, methods, materials and assessments to effectively support instruction and learning.

Goals - Goals within a curriculum are the standards-based benchmarks or expectations for teaching and learning. Most often, goals are made explicit in the form of a scope and sequence of skills to be addressed. Goals must include the breadth and depth to which a student is expected to learn.

Methods - Methods are the instructional decisions, approaches, procedures, and routines that teachers use to engage all students in meaningful learning. These choices support the facilitation of learning experiences in order to promote a student’s ability to understand and apply content and skills. Methods are differentiated to meet student needs and interests, task demands, and learning environment. Methods are adjusted based on ongoing review of student progress towards meeting the goals.

Materials - Materials are the tools selected to implement methods and achieve the goals of the curriculum. Materials are intentionally chosen to support a student's learning. Material choices reflect student interest, cultural diversity, world perspectives, and address all types of diverse learners.

Assessment - Assessment in a curriculum is the ongoing process of gathering information about a student’s learning. This includes a variety of ways to document what the student knows, understands, and can do with their knowledge and skills. Information from assessment is used to make decisions about instructional approaches, teaching materials, and academic supports needed to enhance opportunities for the student and to guide future instruction.

Copied from <https://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/Curriculum/CurriculumDefinition.aspx>
See also https://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Instruction-and-Assessment-World-Class-Standards/Curriculum/curriculum%20definition_final_format.pdf