



Norwalk Community Schools: Curriculum Review Process

I. Curriculum Leadership PLC

Professional Learning Communities

- Each K-12 curriculum review team functions as a professional learning community.
- The professional learning community (PLC) process is “an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve” (DuFour, et.al., 2010).
- Our PLCs are driven by the following six questions, which serve as guiding and organizing principles of our curriculum review cycle:
 1. What do we want students to know and be able to do?
 2. How will we know when they have learned it?
 3. What will we do if they haven't learned?
 4. What will we do if they already know what we intend to teach?
 5. How will we increase our instructional competence?
 6. How will we coordinate our efforts as a school?

Role of the Curriculum Leadership PLC

- Study research and best practice for the content area under review and develop a K-12 philosophy statement that articulates the goals of our Norwalk programming.
- Come to consensus about critical decisions with regard to curriculum, instruction and assessment (prioritization, pacing, alignment, proficiency scale development, common assessments)
- Develop artifacts and write draft and final curricular documents.
- When appropriate, pilot and select resources for purchase using according to BP 606.1r
- Communicate information regarding the review process to both teachers and administrators

Membership of a Curriculum Leadership PLC

- **Core Areas** (*ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies*)
 - All classroom elementary teachers will belong to either an ELA/SS Curriculum Team or a Math/Science Curriculum Team. Each grade level in K-5 will have representation on each team.
 - All classroom secondary teachers will belong to their Curriculum Leadership PLC.
 - Membership of teachers from student services areas (SPED, At-Risk, ESL, etc.) will be determined by district administration.
- **Elective Areas** (*Art, Music, PE/Health, CTE, Library Science, Modern Language*)
 - All teachers in K-12 Elective Department areas will belong to their content Curriculum Leadership PLC.

II. Studying the Iowa Core/National Standards and Selecting Priorities

Select Priority Standards

- Examine existing Iowa Core or national standards for each content area
- Select priority standards for each grade level/course - consider *endurance, readiness, leverage & professional judgment*
- There are, on average, three to five priority standards in each semester.
- Organize priority standards into categories - may use Iowa Core strands or domains
 - Ex.: *Reading Informational Text, Reading Literature, Writing, Language, Speaking & Listening*
- PLCs may identify a reasonable number of supporting standards to cluster with priority standards to address a major area of emphasis or instruction
- PLCs should review, seek feedback and adjust priorities to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment of standards

Grading and Reporting Decisions

- Group priority standards and units of study into appropriate reporting periods to include pacing/timeframes
 - Elementary = trimester or year long
 - Secondary = semester or year long
- Create a brief, student friendly description for each priority standard
 - *Ex.: Citing Text Evidence, Solving Quadratics, Earth's Systems, Argument Writing*

Resources:

- [Chunking Content](#)
- [Engaging Students in Cognitively Complex Tasks](#)

III. Proficiency Scale and Unit Design

- Create a proficiency scale (4.0) for each priority standard - see district template
 - Develop student-friendly learning targets
- Proficiency scales will be used to define learning targets, to provide feedback to students, and to evaluate and report evidence of student learning

Generic Form of a Proficiency Scale

*****Elementary and Secondary courses use 0.5 score increments**

4	More complex content: in-depth inferences beyond what was taught
3	Target learning goal: the standard
2	Simpler goal: unpacked standard, identify foundational skills and define academic vocabulary
1	With help, partial success at 2.0 and 3.0 content
0	Even with help, no success

Unit Design and Pacing

- Arrange priority standards and proficiency scales into *conceptual* units of study. Priority standards may appear in one or in all of the units of study.
 - Conceptual units are thematic, represent “big ideas”, and include both content and skills
- Develop Course Consensus Maps as brief overviews of the course/grade level curriculum. These should include:
 - Priority standards and corresponding proficiency scales
 - Overview of the units of study (with pacing)
 - Core resources or instructional materials needed
 - *Note: these are NOT intended to be day-by-day lesson plans or an exhaustive list of every resource you will use*
- PLCs should review, seek feedback and adjust units of study to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment of curriculum

Grading and Reporting Decisions

- Assessments (both common and classroom) will be designed based on the scales and scored consistently according to a student's *patterns of response* (as opposed to an average).
- Teachers will use proficiency scales to record formative and summative scores and to provide instructional feedback.
- Elementary and Secondary courses can score using 0.5 increments.

Resources:

- [Providing Scales and Rubrics](#)

IV. Assessment Development

Common Assessments

- Create an assessment plan to ensure that all priority standards are assessed using the common assessment process
- Assessments should involve a variety of item types that assess different levels of thinking
 - *Ex. short answer, extended response, multiple choice, matching, projects, performance tasks, etc.*
- Assessments should have tiered items that align to each priority standard (number and type TBD by PLC and Teaching and Learning Coordinators.)
- Review and adjust common assessment items to ensure that they accurately measure proficiency scale targets and levels of thinking
 - *Ex. Multiple tiered items exist for levels 2, 3 & 4*

Grading and Reporting Decisions

- The goal is to develop a **body of evidence** (3-5) for *each* student and for *every* priority standard. A body of evidence:
 - Is a collection of data, not necessarily student work/assignments
 - Is used to determine a summative grade at the end of a particular interval of time, such as a grading period
 - Should be derived from a variety of assessments (informal, formal, student-generated)
 - More *recent* and *comprehensive* evidence should be prioritized when determining a summative score

Resources:

- [Formal Assessments of Individual Students](#)
- [Informal Assessments of the Whole Class](#)
- [Tracking Student Progress](#)

V. Alignment and Selection of Resources

- Research and select instructional resources to pilot, if appropriate
- When piloting, collect a variety of data to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the resources
- Evaluate resources based on their alignment to our prioritized standards, proficiency scales and units of study, as well as other criteria described in *BP 605.01R1 Selection of Instructional Materials*
- Align all resources (*district provided or teacher developed*) to the prioritized standards, proficiency scales and units of study.

Resources:

- [Providing Resources and Guidance](#)

VI. Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Intervention and Acceleration Plans

- Each Curriculum Leadership PLC will define a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for students to ensure each student learns at high levels.
- For some students, this means increased time and support to attain proficiency in the priority standards.
- For students who already meet or exceed the priority standards, this means defining pathways for them to accelerate in a program of study.
- Each core curriculum review summary will include an intervention and acceleration plan to realize our promise of a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all students.

VII. Glossary of Important Terms

Score vs. Grade

- A **SCORE** is the numerical value assigned to any individual piece of student evidence.

→ A **GRADE** is the number or letter given as the summary of student performance for the semester.

Formative Assessment is a planned **PROCESS**, not any specific assignment or test.

- It is used by *both* teachers and students to elicit **evidence** of where a student is in relation to a learning target.
- The **evidence** is used by *teachers to adjust instruction* and by *students to adjust their learning tactics*.

Formative Score:

- Can be derived from a variety of assessments (informal, formal, student-generated) using a proficiency scale.
- Used to track **evidence** of student progress over time.
- Used to generate a summative score at the end of a particular interval of time, such as a grading period.

Summative Score:

- Represents the teacher's judgment, based on a **body of evidence**, about a student's final status in relation to a learning target.
- Is NOT generated by averaging or simply using the most recent score in the set.
- Is NOT derived from a *single* assessment but rather by the *pattern* of student responses over time, *emphasizing* more recent and comprehensive evidence.

Body of Evidence

- Is a **collection of data**, not necessarily student work/assignments
- Is used to determine a summative grade at the end of a particular interval of time, such as a grading period
- Should be derived from **a variety of assessments** (informal, formal, student-generated)
- More recent and comprehensive evidence should be prioritized when determining a summative score

COURSE CHANGE/APPROVAL FORM

Date: _____

Building: _____

Department: _____

Proposed Course Title: _____

Grade Level (s): _____

Credit(s): _____

Anticipated Enrollment: _____

Semester/Year Long: _____

Requirement/Elective: _____

Prerequisites (if any): _____

Principal's Approval: _____

Date: _____

Comments:

Director of Teaching and Learning Approval: _____

Date: _____

Comments:

Superintendent Approval: _____

Date: _____

Comments:

I. COURSE INFORMATION

- A. Rationale for Course: *(Provide a brief description of student/school needs/purpose of course, benefits, and anticipated student outcomes.)*
- B. Course Description: *(Short descriptive paragraph highlighting the major focus of course. To be used for curriculum guide.)*
- C. Course Syllabus: *(Attach course outline which includes the major topics and concepts, including the standards addressed.)*
- D. Materials & Resources: *(Include text, computer/technology tools, and supplementary information.)*
- E. Student Assessment Procedures: How will students be assessed for this course?
- F. Financial Impact: *(Provide an explanation of projected costs for personnel, materials, and equipment for subsequent years when the proposal is fully implemented.)*
- G. Financial Impact: (First Year)

<u>Added Personnel</u>	How Many		Approx. Cost		Total Cost
Certified Staff	_____	@	\$_____	=	\$_____

Added Materials

Textbooks _____ @ \$ _____ = \$ _____

Supplies _____ @ \$ _____ = \$ _____

Added Equipment Needed:

List/Cost: _____ @ \$ _____ = \$ _____

- I. Explain how this new course will correlate with the Iowa Core Standards.
- II. Explain how this course will align in the course sequence or change the course sequence.

III. OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION

- A. This course will be: (*please check one*)
an addition to the department's offering
a replacement for _____
a pilot study
- B. This course will require (*please check the appropriate spaces*):
the adoption of a new textbook
the use of a text previously adopted and in use
- C. This course will require (*please check appropriate spaces*)
specialized organization of teacher time
specialized room arrangement or equipment (*explain below*)
specialized student grouping or sectioning
curriculum planning time
specialized technology
- D. To what extent will this curriculum change affect the number of teacher preparation each semester? (*Explain*)
- E. If approved, this course will begin: _____
(*semester/year*)