

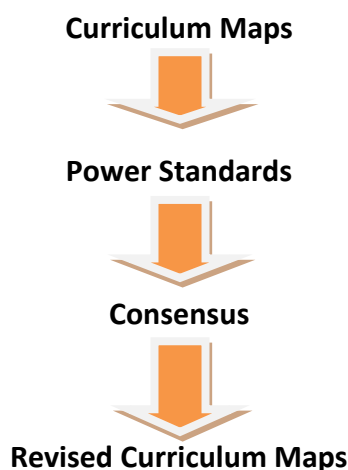
District Curriculum Update

POWER STANDARDS 201

As I mentioned at our opening day program, the major focus for this school year is becoming familiar with the Common Core and developing power standards that match the Common Core. Recognizing that each school and program are in slightly different places and also recognizing that collaborative work is critical during this process, much of the work this year will be handled through PLCs as well as staff development time already set aside in the calendar.

I also wish to reiterate the importance of the curriculum maps that were developed during the last few years. If you go to our district website, www.bidschools.org and scroll down to departments/curriculum/curriculum maps, you will find most of the curriculum maps that have been completed to this point. All of these curriculum maps are essential as we realign with the Common Core. Without the maps, the standards would have no meaning or relationship to content. ***I also want to emphasize again that is not the district's intent to throw out existing curricular documents and curriculum maps. Rather, we will be using the maps and adjusting them to better match the new standards.***

In essence, the following is the chain of events that we will be following over the next couple of years. Please note that I said a couple of years rather than one year. I understand that this kind of work cannot be completed in one year and none of us has the time to do that.



As you begin the work of developing power standards, keep in mind the three criteria that should be met before a **power standard** is determined to be essential:

1. **Endurance:** Can the given standard be practiced and utilized beyond merely the assessment at hand?
2. **Leverage:** Can the standard carry over to other content areas?
3. **Readiness:** Does the standard allow students to be ready and successful at the next level of instruction?

A question that often is asked by teachers was addressed by Larry Ainsworth in his book *Power Standards*: If I emphasize only the power standards, won't I be neglecting to teach my students the concepts and skills from other standards that are sure to be on the state test?

Mr. Ainsworth answers that question in this way: "Some standards are unequivocally more important than others, period. What you will find is that a good set of power standards will cover about 88% of the items on the state test, but not 100%. If you go after that extra 12%, you will have to cover many more standards and hence have less teaching time to thoroughly teach each of the power standards. The rationale for deeply teaching the power standards is simply this: ***It is wiser to have students proficient at 88% of what will likely be on the test that have been exposed to 100% of what could be on the test, but proficient at only a few of those items***".

In other words, you will be far more effective in helping your students learn the essential content and standards if you can narrow the standards down. For the small percentage of standards that do not fall within the power standards, do not spend time worrying about them.

The following will occur this fall in preparation for our work with the common core and power standards:

1. Each school and program's identified facilitators will meet and develop procedures for implementing the new standards.
2. Each school and program will begin to use their PLC time for implementing the new standards.
3. Crosswalks, or gap analysis documents, will be completed and provided to the schools with the help of the district's Standards Committee.

ESL UPDATE

You may have noticed that there is an increase in the numbers of students whose first language is not English in our schools. Over the last two years, there has been a 40% increase in the numbers of ESL students in our district. Additionally, we are experiencing families moving into the community from many other nations and backgrounds than before. We have also noticed an increase in the request for interpreting and translation services so that we may communicate better with families. Please consult with your school's ESL teacher if you are in need of resources for professional development materials to assist you in meeting the needs of ESL students in your classroom.

SOCIAL STUDIES AND SCIENCE

With the emphasis on the areas of ELA in mathematics due to the Common Core standards, you may be wondering when we will revisit social studies and science. There are district committees for both of these content areas and both have done work recently. However, neither content area has a completed curriculum guide or curriculum maps that are ready to be used in the classroom.

It is not my intention to sideline these two very important content areas, but for the sake of necessity in the need to keep our eyes on the Common Core in the development of power standards for ELA and math this year, I do not see the feasibility of being able to address these content areas in depth. With that being said, I will be meeting with the K-12 science and social studies committees for a status check this year.

DROPOUT PREVENTION

The district's dropout prevention committee has a new name: **Graduate Success committee**. This committee has three major areas of focus for the school year:

1. Provide all students with skills for college and career readiness.
2. Define the root cause of truancy in our district.
3. Review the role of homework and its impact upon students and families.

WORTH REFLECTING...

"Practice makes permanent, not perfect."

--Heidi Hayes Jacobs



HEALTH GRANT

The school department received a three-year grant in 2010 to help promote the importance of health education in the schools. Last year, the funds were used to support school climate initiatives, preventing hate and violence, increasing physical activity among children, and improving nutritional awareness and intake. The wellness and tobacco policies were reviewed and updated last year.

The grant funds this year will be used to support staff wellness, health awareness for adult education, 5-2-1-0 nutrition program, physical activity, and continued emphasis on preventing hate at the high school level. Additionally, our schools will participate in the Maine School Health Profiles survey.

If you would like more information on the health activities of the district, you can contact the members of the committee: Bobbi Jo St. Peter (chair), Sandy Lewis, Joe Fairfield, Caroline York, Ken Bissell, Donna Maguire, and Barbara Adriance.

DID YOU KNOW?

Education Secretary Arne Duncan announced that 82% of public schools in the United States are failing to meet their annual education targets in reading and math, or AYP.

FALL ASSESSMENTS

AIMSWEB grades K-2: Universal screening tool to identify students in need of interventions

NECAP grades 3 – 8: Current State assessment

PSAT grade 10: Preparation for the Maine High school Assessment and SAT

DRA grades 1 and 2 (3-5 as needed): Universal screening of reading progress

NWEA grades 3-9: Universal screening of reading and math progress

Writing prompts grades K – 3 and 6 – 9: Universal screening of writing progress

For more detail, please refer to the general assessment schedule located on the district's website.

REMEMBERING WHAT IS IMPORTANT...

1. **What is it we want our students to learn?**
 - ✓ How has your school begun to unpack the *intended* district curriculum to ensure that it will become the *implemented* curriculum?
2. **How will we know if each student is learning each of the skills and concepts we deem essential?**
 - ✓ What is the status of universal screenings, progress monitoring, and formative assessments in your school at this time?
3. **What happens in our school when a student does not learn?**
 - ✓ What is the status of your intervention pyramid and its implementation in your school at this time?
4. **What happens in our school when a student already knows it?**
 - ✓ Have you had discussions about how to address students who have already mastered skills and concepts? If not, how do you plan to incorporate these students into your intervention pyramid?
 - ✓

Adapted from *Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap*, DuFour, DuFour, Eaker & Karhanek, p.33.



YOUR 2011-12 DISTRICT CURRICULUM LEADERS

Assistant Superintendent/ Curriculum Director

Literacy Coach

RTI Chair

ELA Chair

Math Chair

Science Chair

Social Studies Chair

Technology Chair

Standards-Based Chair

PLCSS Chair

Study Group Leaders

Mentor Coordinators/Trainers

Common Core Leaders

Health Grant committee

Jeff Porter

Patsy Gendron

Paulette Bonneau

Sharon Cyr/ Krysten Gorrivan

Heidi Miller

Gordon Cutten

Vacant

Peg Levasseur/ Donna Sieron

Chuck Lomonte

Karen Scontras

Patsy Gendron,

Susan Dee, Judy Huot

Vicki Salo/ Denise Ryan

Patsy Gendron, Susanne Dunn, Heidi

Miller

Bobbi-Jo St. Peter

